TOTALITARIANISM AND POLITICAL RELIGIONS

CONCEPTS FOR THE COMPARISON OF DICTATORSHIPS

Edited by **HANS MAIER**

Translated by **JODI BRUHN**

Totalitarianism and Political Religions

Volume I: concepts for the comparison of dictatorships

We are used to distinguishing the despotic regimes of the twentieth century—Communism, Fascism, National Socialism, Maoism—very precisely according to place and time, origins and influences. But what should we call that which they have in common? On this question there has been and remains a passionate debate. Indeed, the question seemed for a long time not even to be admissible. Clearly, this state of affairs is unsatisfactory.

The debate has been renewed in the past few years. After the collapse of the Communist systems in Central, East and Southern Europe, a (scarcely surveyable) mass of archival material has become available. Following the lead of Fascism and National Socialism, communist and socialist regimes throughout the world now belong to the historical past as well. This leads to the resumption of old questions: What place do the modern despotisms assume in the history of the twentieth century? What is their relation to one another? Should they be captured using traditional concepts—autocracy, tyranny, despotism, dictatorship—or are new concepts required?

This book documents the first international conference on this theme, a conference that took place in September 1994 at the University of Munich. The book shows how new models, by which to understand political history, arose from the experiences of modern despotic regimes. Here, the most important concepts—totalitarianism and political religions—are discussed and tested in terms of their usefulness.

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Volume I: concepts for the comparison of dictatorships

Edited by

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Translated by Jodi Bruhn

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Contents

Series Editor's Preface

This volume, originally published in German in 1996, gathers the papers and commentaries given at a conference on the theme of totalitarianism and political religion held in Munich in September 1994. As Hans Maier, the organiser of the conference and editor of the German edition, notes in his preface, the scholars who participated did so on the basis that they would be analysing the validity of the totalitarianism and political religion concepts in order to further historical enquiry. In other words, they were seeking to interpret the new forms of political regime that emerged in the twentieth century in the guise of Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism.

From as early as the mid–1920s the concepts of totalitarianism and political religion were being used by scholars who, for the first time, were attempting to define what appeared to be the common characteristics of new, single party regimes that emerged in the wake of the Great War. That is, these regimes clearly set out to win total control over the state and society by way of the police apparatus and the use of terror, the organisation and mobilisation of the masses, the exalting of their respective ideologies as an integral conception of existence imposed over the collective as an undeniable truth, and the worship of the leader as an earthly quasi deity. In order to describe these regimes the traditional language of politics, embodied in terms like 'dictatorship', 'tyranny', 'despotism', 'absolutism', seemed insufficient, simply because they did not permit an adequate expression of the originality of these experiments in political domination, and especially so when compared to the traditional experience of concentrating power in the hands of one individual or group.

It was the very desire of these new regimes to expand and exert total control that induced scholars to make use of the terms 'totalitarian' and 'totalitarianism', that were themselves first conceived of by anti-fascist Italians between 1923 and 1926 in order to define the new fascist regimes. As Hans Maier rightly argues,

> It was this characteristic of the total, the 'totalitarian', that predetermined and fascinated in the early formation of the theory: the rulers' challenging declarations of belief in coercion and force, their rejection of constitutional state orders, the militarization and 'theatralisation' of public life, the threatening presence of leader and party and the use of the street as a 'mass medium'.

In the same way, the determination of the leaders of such regimes to impose their ideology as an integral, and absolute conception of life that had to permeate both the individual and collective lives of the governed by way of a system of dogmas, myths, rites and symbols encouraged early analysts of this phenomenon to introduce the concept

of political religion, or other analogous expressions such as secular religion or lay religion.

Up until the 1950s, these concepts were nearly always associated with analysis of Bolshevism, fascism and National Socialism, whereas in subsequent years many of them were marginalised, only to return to circulation after the end of Communism in Europe.

An important contribution to the re-emergence of these academic concepts was, in fact, made by the Munich conference of 1994, which forms the basis of this volume. In the following decade, and right up to the present day, the themes of totalitarianism and political religion have become the object of new research and debates. More especially, interest in the study of past events has become intermingled with contemporary events, given that, tragically, new manifestations of the linkage between religion and politics, of the 'politicisation of religion' and the 'religionisation of politics' have begun to emerge. The very existence of the journal *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions,* founded by Michael Burleigh and Robert Mallett at the beginning of 2000, demonstrates the increasing interest that international scholars are attributing to the analysis of these problems.

Perhaps the most innovative results of the last ten years are to be found in the field of political religion, which can be considered not only as the expression of the totalitarian regimes, but can also be included as part of the wider modern phenomenon of the 'sacralisation of politics', a term, as I have defined it, whose origins are to be found in the 'civil religions' that were part of the democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century—as I have shown in my own study, *Le religioni della politica (The Religion of Politics),* published in 2001. All of this demonstrates how important it is to make both an historical and conceptual distinction between 'political religion' and 'civil religion', and, equally, to better identify the historical origins of the concept and expression, 'political religion'.

In fact, while the historical origins of the concept totalitarianism are clear, there are still differing views on the origins of the term political religion. For instance, the various contributors to this volume attributed the origins of the term political religion to Eric Voegelin, whereas secular religion was first coined by Raymond Aron. In reality, this is not exactly true. The term 'secular religion' had already appeared at the beginning of the 1930s, at the time of the first comparative analysis of the totalitarian regimes, and, therefore, the invention of the term should not be attributed to Raymond Aron, who only began to use it many years later.

Even the expression 'political religion' appeared many years before Voegelin began to use it in 1938. One needs, therefore, to make a clear distinction between the *expression* and the *concept* 'political religion', which evolved only when it became connected to the concept of totalitarianism. This is a fact that should be borne in mind by the current debate on the nature and significance of the two concepts. As far as we are aware this expression dates back to the era of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, but one cannot exclude that it may be found in writings that pre-date even these epochs. Later, the expression was used by Abraham Lincoln who declared that the constitution and laws must become the 'political religion' of the American nation. A few years later still the Italian patriot, Luigi Settembrini, defined Mazzini's 'Young Italy' movement as a 'new political religion.'

The concept of political religion in reference to the totalitarian regimes was already in use in the 1920s, and the analogous concept of secular religion was in circulation by the

beginning of the 1930s. In 1935, for example, Karl Poyani wrote that National Socialism had the tendency to produce a political religion, and the same term was applied to Bolshevism by Reinhold Neibhur. Perhaps the first attempt to use the concept of political religion in order to comparatively interpret Fascism, Bolshevism and National Socialism was made by Rudolf Rocker in his book *Nationalism and Culture,* written in Germany in 1933 and published in the United States in 1937; sadly this work has remained practically ignored in the various studies and debates on totalitarianism and political religion.

These historical considerations aside, the reader will find in this volume useful material that will lead to a better understanding of the concepts 'totalitarianism' and 'political religion', as first conceived by early scholars of these phenomena. This, it is hoped, will lead to some reflection on their significance and on the value of their application as a means of grasping the nature of movements like Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism, both individually and collectively.

The scholars who have contributed to this present volume have assumed the most diverse of positions. Some have expressed strong reservations, while not being entirely negative on the value of these concepts and, therefore, they doubt whether they have any value to the process of historical analysis. Others assume a less sceptical position, and do not appear disposed to reject such concepts outright, although they do stress the importance of verifying their validity after having better established their significance and the true extent to which they can be applied in historical terms. But even among this second group of scholars there are differences and contrasts, whether in defining the two concepts or whether in deciding which phenomena to apply them to.

In terms of the concept of totalitarianism, one of the most controversial questions is whether one should apply such terms to an historical phenomena, or, instead, simply employ traditional terminology like 'dictatorship', 'tyranny', 'despotism', 'authoritarianism'. For instance, the majority of the scholars that have contributed to this volume seem inclined to think of Fascism as not effectively totalitarian, even if it was Fascism that not only gave birth to the concept itself, but was the only single party regime that explicitly made use of it to define its very conception of politics and the state. Other scholars believe that neither can the concept of totalitarianism be applied to National Socialism. And there are even those who doubt that this concept can even be used to define Stalinism and the various Communist regimes that emerged after the Second World War, while others argue that the original and most complete form of totalitarianism was that assumed by regimes that had their origins in Marxism-Leninism.

The theoretical positions assumed in this volume as regard the concept of political religion are widely contrasting; there are those who reject the validity of the term and those who suggest a cautious application of it based on the notion that political religion is not a genuine religion, but a surrogate of religion or even a simple substitute metaphor for the traditional ideological concept. Equally, there is a great deal of diversity between those who do accept political religion theory; does this refer to a phenomenon with ancient roots and manifestations that has endured into the modern era, or, on the contrary, is it an entirely modern phenomenon the roots of which are to be found in secularisation, mass society and the expansion of political control over all aspects of human life?

It does not take a prophet to predict that the debate on totalitarianism and political religion, possibly, will never reach a conclusion that everyone will agree with. Moreover, neither do I think that the debate will remain stalemated between two opposing camps,

destined to confront each other with the same arguments, with the risk that the debate itself will end up resembling Penelope's cloak; forever sown up and torn asunder and never finished as she awaits her heroic rescuer.

Even if within the debate on totalitarianism and political religion, one cannot imagine the sudden arrival of a heroic rescuer who will bring the ultimate solution, we should bear in mind the effective progress made over the last ten years by the various studies undertaken, and which go beyond many of the ideas expressed in this volume. These studies have contributed to the removal of inexistent or badly posed problems. They offer us a deeper understanding of the facts about totalitarianism and political religion, open up new avenues of enquiry and pose new problems that are, now, at the very heart of the debate itself. Ultimately, this enables us to develop new ideas about the two concepts, with greater precision as regard their historical origin, and with greater critical understanding of their application to the historical phenomenon of which they were the origin.

Historical research is, naturally, open to all, just as the debate on totalitarianism and political religion remains open. To that debate this volume makes an important contribution, and no student of these phenomena can do without it.

Emilio Gentile
(Translated by Robert Mallet
Series Co-Editor)

Preface

This volume comprises the presentations and discussion papers of the International Conference that was held in Munich from 26 to 29 September 1994. The conference took place in connection with the project, 'Totalitarianism and Political Religions'.

    This work is structured into four parts. The first part, 'Totalitarianism', conceives of modern despotisms in categories that were developed a long time ago. The second, 'Political Religions', enters new terrain by enlisting sociological and philosophical concepts from religious studies in interpreting historical phenomena. The part, 'General Discussion', analyses the appropriateness of both concepts to the material: are they suited to understanding historical reality? Can one learn from them anything about the features shared by the despotisms of our century: about Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism? In establishing the connection to older and parallel investigations, five essays—by Kamaludin Gadshiiev, Karl Dietrich Bracher, Michael Rohrwasser, Hermann Lübbe and Leszek Kolakowski—have been included in Part IV

    The following people co-operated in preparing the conference: Ines de Andrade, Angelika Mooser-Sainer, Karin Osthues, Winfrid Hover, Michael Schäfer and Johannes Seidel. To them I extend my warm thanks. I also extend thanks to the Catholic Academy in Bavaria, which provided the rooms for the conference, and the Volkswagen Foundation, which provided the financing. Special thanks are due to my colleagues for their punctual preparation, submission and revision of the presentations, as well as to the publisher and Gottfried Lehr, the editor responsible for the work. Further publications (source texts, bibliography) are foreseen in connection with the project.

    Alongside scholars of the German-speaking countries, colleagues from central, eastern and southern Europe have also taken part in the conference. Their reports not only shed light upon the themes being treated here, but also provide a vibrant picture of the transitions now occurring in post-Communist Europe.

Hans Maier
Munich, Summer 1995

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Part I
Totalitarianism

1
The history of the concept of totalitarianism in Italy

Jens Petersen

I

Since the 1930s, the concept of totalitarian rule that regards it as a specifically modern phenomenon of state and social existence has played a significant, at times even predominate, role in the self-understanding of the Western democracies. Gerhard Leibholz called the total state '*the* political phenomenon of the twentieth century'. The totalitarian experience left its mark on 'an entire epoch of the comparison of political systems'.[1] As a glance at the literature confirms, the concept has entered as a new 'ism' into the theory of forms of political rule. In the concept of totalitarian rule an experience had been articulated that was perceived as toppling for Western constitutional thought. With the institution of the Bolshevist, Fascist and National Socialist dictatorships, the relation of state, society and individual was perceived to have entered a qualitatively new phase that would have to be captured conceptually. Previously, certain streams of political thought had regarded questions concerning the political freedom of the individual and the legal and institutional securities that protected him to be the decisive criteria in assessing a state. Now, the potentizing concept of the totalitarian arched above such older concepts of the theory of rule as tyranny, absolutism and dictatorship to become the sign of this new experience of reality. The Fascist revolution—so wrote the professor of legal theory, Hermann Heller, in 1929—had destroyed 'the legal state, its distribution of powers and its guarantees of fundamental rights'. It had 'abolished all the legal guarantees that the past centuries of European political history…[had] developed'.[2] At the same point in time, Filippo Turati, the Nestor of Italian democratic-socialism who had gone into exile in France, described the same impression:

> The example of Italy proves that the Fascist attack, which seemed to have been aimed at socialism at first, now turns against all parties and classes…[it] destroys all appearance and reality of democracy… As soon as it has formed a party, it becomes totalitarian. That is, it ceases being a party in order to become a foreign occupying army against which any rebellion is technically impossible and ineffectual… If Fascism continues to extend and consolidate itself, then it is very well in a position to create a state of continual war in Europe and perhaps beyond… Fascism is the constantly impending war. To fight and destroy Fascism means to work for peace among the nations.[3]

A leading member of the Partito Socialista Unitario, Turati had experienced and combated the rise, power-seizure and consolidation of Fascism in the years following the end of the war. In the session of November 1922, he was almost the only one to defend the dignity and rights of the parliament—a parliament that Mussolini had mockingly threatened to turn into a pawn. None of his speeches, newspaper articles or private letters corresponds even remotely, however, to the almost apocalyptic understanding expressed in the passage cited above. In November 1923, Turati still warned his party not to overestimate the Fascist danger:

> I have no illusions, but I do not allow myself to become discouraged either. The world is larger…than Fascism. Socialism involves a reality that is intimately connected with the structure of capitalist society, one that no voluntaristic arrogance can ever exterminate and destroy.[4]

In the view of Piero Gobetti, this was a view that displayed 'naïve optimism' and an 'innocent, provocative faith'.[5] The Turati of the years from 1922 to 1925 seems a different person from the one of the year 1928–a person belonging to an entirely different world.

The same observation might be made of many other main actors on the Italian scene in those years as well. If one investigates the series of crises that shook the democratic, parliamentary systems, then one is continually surprised. 'The insight of even leading politicians into the development in progress was almost as though it were restricted'.[6] He who acts is blind, as Goethe says. This claim seems even more applicable to times of great political revolutions, times when experiences that had been reflected in habits, morals, norms and laws to that point become obsolete and when 'classes, interest groups, institutions, unions and parties no longer conduct themselves in a way that one would expect, given their world-views, their prior behaviour, and the attitudes of their members'.[7] More recent historiography has correctly emphasized the insight that the Fascists themselves, the main actors in this crisis, had no precise ideas as to where they should actually take their seizure of power. 'The Fascists' ideas about their own movement…were no more precise; none went beyond a heap of negations and confused strivings for renewal'.[8] Among other sources, the Fascists' own statements of the years after 1920–years in which an imminent transformation or even dissolution of the movement was expected—impressively evince this state of affairs. The same assumption can be found among the other forces on the Italian political stage, among Catholics no less than Liberals, Democrats no less than Socialists. The great majority had not even remotely realized the dynamic of the Fascist movement: a dynamic that would soon yield the institution of a one-party dictatorship.

Among the great services of more recent historiography has been its recreation of the actors' restricted horizon of action, its presentation of their naivety, blindness and illusions as elements that helped to influence the developments. In 1935, even Palmiro Togliatti spoke of the necessity of dissolving the developmental process of the dictatorship into its individual genetic moments again, as a means of comprehending Fascism. In 'Lessons on Fascism', a lecture held in Moscow at that time, he criticized the 'schematism' and 'revolutionary pessimism' of certain interpretations holding that 'Fascism necessarily had to develop' as it then did.[9]

> It is a grave mistake to believe that, beginning in 1920 or with the March on Rome, Fascism had had clearly defined, pre-set plans and intentions to institute a dictatorship, something like the regime that was then organized in the course of ten years and that we today see before ourselves… All historical facts defy such a conception… The Fascist dictatorship has assumed its current form under the force of objective, real factors. To these factors belong the economic situation and the mass movements that this situation determined.[10]

In the opinion of Renzo De Felice, these considerations are 'of greatest interest' because they anticipate 'several of the central theses' of his interpretation of Fascism. He correctly regretted that no one had taken note of this correspondence. According to De Felice, January 1925 possesses greater significance than October 1925; for only then was the destiny of Fascism decided, a Fascism that, beginning in January 1925, had transformed itself into the 'regime'.[11]

> One cannot say that the majority of the population and political powers were actually aware as to what the success of Fascism really signified from October 1922 on. Above all, it becomes increasingly clear today that this success was not yet definitive. The situation in Italy was still open to solutions other than that of transforming Mussolini's government into a Fascist 'regime'—a transformation that was by no means unavoidable.[12]

We begin by assuming that historical concepts should be regarded 'as both factors and indicators of historical movement', and that new formations and transformations of them offer 'evidence of new experience of the world'. This new experience reveals 'politically and socially important facts' as well as 'corresponding experiences, thoughts or theorems'.[13] If this is true, then the reflections on the history of the origin of the concept of totalitarianism that follow might also contribute to the historicization of the Fascist theme.

Turati already alluded to what would later be called the strength and weakness of the totalitarian concept. Whereas its strength consists in its acknowledgement of the 'new and independent character of the great dictatorial regimes under twentieth-century conditions',[14] its weakness lies in its Manichaean distinction between good and evil, white and black. Each analysis thereby runs the danger of losing its object in pure negativity. In the words of Hans Mommsen: 'The theory of totalitarianism is the mythos *ante portas* of any *genuine* historical explanation of the processes leading to the rise of fascist systems.'[15] It is 'the myth that stands in the path of every genuine social-historical explanation, because it presupposes the final result of the complex in question before even having investigated the prerequisites of the formation of that complex'.[16] In my reflections today, I will offer no further contributions to the definition of the concept of Fascist Italy. The question as to whether Mussolini's dictatorship can be placed among the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century is still disputed—with characteristic national-political differences. Whereas this question will remain open for the foreseeable future, my question is of a far simpler nature: I would like to investigate the role that the

totalitarian concept played in the interpretation of Fascism both within and outside Italy in the years before and after 1925.

In an essay published some years ago,[17] I was able to prove that, contrary to what had been assumed to that point, Mussolini and the Fascist intellectuals were not the first to define the concept of the totalitarian and declare it as their own self-understanding. From early 1923 onward, rather, the concept emerged within the radius of the anti-Fascist opposition groups that had developed. Beginning with the resumption and revival of such traditional concepts as tyranny, dictatorship and absolutism, the concept of the totalitarian was developed by intransigent liberalism and by popular Catholicism (Luigi Sturzo), republicanism and reform socialism.

The liberal Giovanni Amendola, who would later lead the anti-Fascist opposition of the so-called Aventin, plays a central role here.

Beginning in early 1925, Amendola criticized the tendency to identify party and state—a tendency that had gained expression in many aspects of Fascism and was symbolized by the concept of the 'regime'. With increasing intensity, he criticized attempts 'to sort Italian citizens into two boxes, a lower and a privileged one', and to draw a line consciously 'between Fascist government and all the constitutional parties'. Fascism seeks to 'form a mass of Italian citizens that has not yet been legally robbed of its political rights, and to create a minority of select groups that has the exclusive right…to command the entire remaining population'. Thus is 'the will of a master caste' imposed upon a 'people of slaves'.[18]

Amendola demanded that the Fascists cease

> to regard themselves as an armed, political army that has set up camp in a country in order to convince it, by reason or force, to live in a condition of subjugation… The opposition that Fascism has raised and still raises most intensely against all other parties finally resembles…an opposition against the majority of the country. No party opposes Fascism, but Fascism opposes all forces that do not bend to it.[19]

Amendola recognized this spirit of intolerance and 'hard-headed party-egoism' on the level of practical politics: above all in local and regional politics, where the Fascist seizure of power began to emerge in all self-administrating corporate bodies. The Fascists either forcibly occupied the councils and forced the mayors and state representatives to resign or they installed acting administrations at a level above the prefects. In both cases, new elections followed—elections for which, through force or blackmail, the same Fascists who had previously hindered the formation of an opposing list drew up both majority and minority lists. In an article of 12 May 1923, Amendola called this procedure a *'sistema totalitario',* a 'totalitarian system', by contrast to a *'sistema maggioritario'* and *'sistema minoritario'*. This system promised 'absolute…and unrestricted rule in the sphere of communal politics and administration'.[20]

As far as can be seen, this is the first time that the word 'totalitarian' appears. It seems significant that it is used here in a partly technical sense, in order to describe an abusive electoral procedure. Yet at the same time, this procedure is the foundation of every democracy that respects the decision of the majority as it recognizes the rights of the minority. The losing party remains a minority in the hope of gaining a majority in the

next election. In the *sistema totalitario,* this rule of play was transformed into its opposite.

I have since discovered a further component of this puzzle of conceptual history: the dissident Fascist.

Two weeks after Amendola had denounced the monopolizing tendencies of the Fascists in the communal sphere, Alfredo Misuri, one of the leading representatives of Fascism in Umbria, made a sensational speech in the chamber. Misuri later founded the movement Patria e Libertà in January 1924. In his speech of 29 May 1923, he stressed his unconditional loyalty to Mussolini, but criticized his entourage at the same time. Here, he said, was a climate of servility, of 'collaboration crawling about on one's knees'. Italy threatened to turn from a 'garden' into 'barracks'. Misuri advocated a strict distinction between party and state, as well as an incorporation of the Fascist Miliz into the army. Necessarily, the attempt of Fascism to monopolize all areas of society would fail. 'One must allow other parties, to the extent that they have a strictly national orientation, to exist alongside Fascism, and this to its own benefit.' Any movement or party that isolated itself from the living forces of society would necessarily fall into decay. 'Thus, unfortunately, will we soon see the Fascist communal representatives exhausted as well, representatives who were created by a system that someone has astutely described as "totalitarian". That is a foretaste of what a totalitarian chamber could be.'[21] With gaze trained again upon the parliament and its legitimacy, Misuri spoke a few months later of an 'almost totalitarian chamber, which will be Fascist and forced into line'. The constitution is wounded to the point of death.'[22] On 29 May 1923, the evening after this parliamentary speech was made, Misuri was attacked by a troop of Fascist thugs and beaten so badly that he had to be taken to hospital.

At this point, the new conceptual formations evinced in these citations were still entirely technical. They spread quickly in the anti-Fascist press. Aside from the examples offered in my essay of 1976, I could now name a whole series of further citations that establish the progressively spreading use of the neologism in its adjectival form. At the end of 1923, Giovanni Amendola wrote that 'the most significant characteristic of the Fascist movement' for future historians would be its 'totalitarian spirit'.[23] On 2 January 1925, the young socialist Leo Basso described the new order to which Fascism strove in the newspaper, *La Rivoluzione Liberale*. In the eyes of the Fascists, he stated, the state is permitted to do anything:

> Any opposition to it is…treason against the nation, each Fascist crime is justified by referring to its national goals… All state organs—the Crown, the Parliament, the administration of justice…the armed forces…become a single party that makes itself the interpreter of the people's will, of undifferentiated totalitarianism.[24]

As far as is known to date, the concept of the totalitarian appeared here for the first time in substantive form. At about the same time, Mussolini assumed 'the political, moral, historical responsibility for all that has happened' in his famous speech of 3 January 1925. This speech signified the transition to an open dictatorship.

Under the influence of the dictatorial manifestation of Fascism, the fronts became clearer. In June 1925, Giovanni Amendola could see the quintessence of Fascism in its

wild radicality and its 'obsessed, totalitarian will'. 'Fascism has never allowed political collaboration, has never found itself prepared…to share responsibility for leadership of the state [with others] and to moderate its integral understanding of Italian politics.'[25] Amendola now regarded two political concepts as equally threatening to the liberal system. Communism and Fascism were both a 'totalitarian reaction to liberalism and democracy', and both threatened 'to overturn the foundations of modern political life that are over a century old'.[26] One week after Amendola characterized Fascism as a 'terrible disease of the modern world', Mussolini again took up the concept of struggle and spoke of 'the goal that is defined as our relentless totalitarian will'. 'With even greater relentlessness' Fascism would pursue this goal further—the 100 per cent Fascizization of the nation.[27] At this moment, the two lines of the concept's history intersected, for the concept of the totalitarian that was developed by intransigent anti-Fascism now became the banner of the future dictator's triumphant programmatic mission.

At the beginning, Fascism was aware that it had taken over the enemy's fighting concept. This is indicated, for example, in the speech made by Roberto Forges Davanzati, a member of the Fascist Party Directorate, in February 1926:

> If the opponents tell us that we are totalitarian, Dominicans, irreconcilable, tyrannical, then do not be afraid of these adjectives. Accept them with honour and pride… Deny nothing! Yes indeed, we are totalitarian! Without diverging thoughts, we seek to be it from morning to night… We want to be Dominicans…we want to be tyrannical.[28]

II

Following the dictatorial turn of early 1925, this double history of the concept of the totalitarian persisted both within and outside Italy. Owing both to the emigration of the anti-Fascists and to their journalistic presence in the major European languages, they could in part gain an audience for their views.

Worth mentioning here, for one, is Luigi Sturzo, the founder and most significant representative of the Partito Popolare Italiano. Under the pressure of Fascism and at the instruction of the Vatican, Sturzo had gone into exile in London. From here, and later from New York, he developed a rich journalistic activity; indeed, his lectures, essays and book publications established him as one of the most significant representatives of European, democratic Catholicism. Numerous contributions devoted to the struggle against Fascism, the defence of the dignity of the human being and the preservation of peace and Christian culture appeared in the English, French, Belgian and Spanish presses.

On 30 March 1925, Sturzo held a well-attended lecture, 'Contemporary Italian Politics and the Problem of Freedom', in Paris. Further lectures on this theme attained their final form in *Italy and Fascism* one year later. Published in May 1926, the original version was soon followed by French, German and Spanish editions. The first fully developed form of the concept of totalitarianism can be found in this book. Sturzo saw the goal of Fascism to lie in the total establishment of power and the exclusion of all opposing political parties.

> The instinct of self-preservation drives Fascism to institute a system of power that is to be the sole and exclusive expression of the country. This leads to suppression of its opponent at any price. Opponents are collected under the name, anti-Fascism. Because it collects together peoples, parties, orientations and ideas of great variety—indeed, of a contradictory nature—this word has no actual meaning. Yet it certainly has a specific meaning if it is understood as the counter-pole of the totalitarian and absolutissimist position of Fascism *(posizione totalitaria e assolutista del fascismo[29]),* namely, as a promotion of and emphasis on the principle of freedom.[30]

The opposition of Aventin had failed. Yet according to Sturzo, it had performed the great service of having forced Fascism to reveal its true nature and objectives. Between it and the 'moral, legal and political principles of the traditional society', a clear anti-thesis had revealed itself. Fascism now appeared to him to be

> a movement of intransigence and intolerance, that which one calls today the 'totalitarian system *(totalitarismo)*', a system which—through its heightened centralisation of political life, its suppression of all free expression and its transformation of the state powers into a single power that is at once an executive and governing power—subordinates all kinds of public activity to oligarchic and personal dictatorships.[31]

Here is clear proof that the concept of totalitarianism had already made the transition into general linguistic usage by 1926. In a book on Italy that was published in 1925, Hans-Erich Kaminski wrote that Fascism did not intend to consolidate rule for the long term. 'In internal politics, its "totalitarianism", which seeks not to acknowledge any parties, becomes all the more impossible in that no clearly profiled classes support it.'[32] In the *Frankfurter Zeitung* as well, the concept of 'totalitarianism' emerges for the first time in autumn 1925.[33]

In one of the concluding chapters, 'Bolshevist Russia and Fascist Italy', Sturzo saw in the two new regimes a dual and parallel challenge to the constitutional regimes of western Europe and their commitment to free pluralism. He now regarded the opposition between Fascism and anti-Fascism as 'irreconcilable and insurmountable'. 'The freedom principle destroys Fascism; the principles of dictatorship and reaction negate anti-Fascism.'[34] An adaptation to one direction or the other must occur in the long term. And here he believed himself to have had cause for optimism. As it had in the reactionary period after 1849, the principle of freedom would again be established in Italy.

This is not the place to pursue the development of these ideas within Sturzo's *œuvre* of the following years. It is certain, however, that the concept of the totalitarian gained a growing significance in his state and social theory, above all following Hitler's seizure of power in 1933. In 1935, he published an essay in Spanish, 'El Estado Totalitario',[35] which was devoted to comparing Fascist, Nazi and Bolshevist totalitarianism. He regarded the totalitarian regime as a specific phenomenal form of mass society in the twentieth century. In this essay, almost all elements of the later theory of totalitarianism are named: the one-party system, the dictatorial personal pinnacle, the suppression of the

rights and freedoms of all citizens, the centralization of the administration, the elimination of all federalist characteristics as well as autonomous, regional and local free spaces, the elimination and internment in camps of all political and intellectual opponents, the terrorist intimidation of the population by secret police, the militarization of social life, the monopolization of education of the young, the propagandization of the respective nations' pseudo-religious ideologies, the permanent mobilization and indoctrination of the masses by a mass media that is administered as a monopoly.

Thus did Sturzo, together with Mounier and Maritain, become one of the most important representatives of a Catholic, anti-totalitarian theory of state and society: a theory whose true fertility would be revealed only after the catastrophe of the Second World War.

The commentaries that Alcide De Gasperi wrote under the pseudonym, 'Spectator' in the bi-weekly newspaper *Illustrazione Vaticana* from 1933 to 1938 belong to the same intellectual traditions. As Sturzo's successor, De Gasperi was the last general secretary of the Partito Popolare Italiano. Persecuted by Fascism and imprisoned for a time, he found refuge in the Papal States as the librarian of the Vatican's library.[36] His personal position, the character of his publication and the position of the Vatican placed extensive restrictions upon him. Any treatment of the reality of Fascist Italy was almost entirely forbidden to him, just as commentary on the present seemed in general to be thoroughly mined territory. On the occasion of the reprinting of several of his historical essays, De Gasperi wrote in retrospect that 'we could act publicly in the treatment of historical themes only by projecting our fears and desperate hopes back on the long-distant past. To speak of the present was forbidden, or at least of utmost danger'.[37] De Gasperi's commentary concerned central and eastern Europe primarily, with occasional glances at North America and the Soviet Union. Naturally, the development of the Catholic churches stood in the foreground. Yet Hitler's Germany, with its cultural and ecclesiastical struggle against both Christian confessions, quickly moved to the centre as well.

He placed the development of the National Socialist revolution, its racist neo-paganism, postulate of the omnipotence of both state and movement and elimination of equality before the law and all guarantees of a constitutional state under the sign of the totalitarian and totalitarianism. The restriction and abolition of all free social spaces—including the ghettoization of the Catholic Church—is infused with the 'pagan concept of the modern monism of the totalitarian state'.[38] With fearful concern, he followed the struggle of the Confessional Church: 'Do the Unitarianism and totalitarianism of National Socialism finally encounter an area of insurmountable opposition?'[39] The events of summer 1934 seemed to him a clear proof of the regime's violent and illegal character, of the 'oppressive totalitarianism of the Third Reich'.[40] In no case could the call upon reasons of state and the right of revolution be permitted to justify murder and the abolition of moral and ethical laws. 'Such deeds can be praised only in times when the true concept of human dignity and humanity has been lost.'[41] Without building upon these reflections further, De Gasperi also incorporated the Soviet Union, as a further phenomenal form of the modern coercive state, into his condemnation of the totalitarian. 'Against the excesses of collectivism, socialism, National Socialist or Communist statism, there is only one aid: the claim of the individual as a metaphysical unity.'[42] 'The path upon which Stalin and Hitler march takes humanity backward'.[43] Despite all the

pressure to exercise self-censorship, the concept of the totalitarian still seems to me to have been one of his key concepts in interpreting the present.

The same observation can be made if one directs one's gaze toward other groups of the anti-Fascist resistance in exile. The observation holds for the Anti-Fascist Concentration in Paris, for example, to which social democrats, socialists, republicans and the radically democratic movement, Giustizia e Libertà, belonged. In *La Libertà,* the weekly newspaper of the Concentrazione, the concept of the totalitarian is increasingly present in the analysis of Fascist Italy, although it does attain central significance. One finds this concept articulated much more clearly in the publications of Giustizia e Libertà following 1931. Here it becomes one of the key concepts by which to construe the basic questions and developmental tendencies of the present era. Thus, for example, did Nicola Chiaromonte compare the 'constitutional state' in December 1932 with the 'Myth State…which is construed as a person…as a divine being, an idol. This Leviathan of the present' demonstrates a 'morphological affinity…between the state of Mussolini, the state of Stalin and the possible "Third Reich" of Hitler'. 'In Moscow, as in Rome, the oligarchic, centralizing state established through violence—in a word, the tyrannical state—now triumphs.'[44]

Following Hitler's seizure of power, Chiaromonte wrote the following:

> Fascism is a word. Only after German Fascism demonstrated the grave, serious and definitive characteristics that can be assumed by a social organization thus described has the concept received a general meaning… Fascism, pseudo-Fascism and ascendant Fascism are expressions of the same phenomenon: modern tyranny… German and Italian Fascism…are exemplary forms of the same phenomenon. Here, it is no longer a matter of an authoritarian government…but of the totalitarian state. It disbands the society in order to incorporate in it a technical, military discipline. To this end, a psychology of dynamism comprehending the entire population is implemented.[45]

For Carlo Rosselli, the true creator of Giustizia e Libertà in both its political and its intellectual forms, the concept of the anti-totalitarian was the core of his political struggle. Along with his brother, Nello, Rosselli was murdered by French Fascists in 1937—presumably at the instruction of Mussolini. Rosselli criticized the modern central and interventionist *state per se*. Fascism appeared to him to be only the extreme consequence of a development that was embedded within the history of the European states as a whole. In September 1934, in an essay entitled 'Against the State', he wrote the following:

> There is a monster in the contemporary world, the state, which is in the process of devouring the society. The contemporary dictator state has deeply changed all human relationships…has replaced freedom with arbitrariness and equality with military camp discipline… In the modern dictator state, the logical consequence of statism, there is no longer a place for the human being.[46]

Rosselli advocated the primacy of society, voluntary associations and small groups. 'The human being, not the state, is the end.'[47] In 1936, he intensified his polemic:

> Anti-statism, anti-totalitarianism is now the fighting sign of the suppressed society. Against the old state in the name of the new, social, human state… Socialism against statism; freedom against dictatorship; right against privilege; and the immanence of the human being against every kind of transcendence.[48]

According to Rosselli, the freedom that is won back for oneself must be central. For us, he stated, 'the myth of freedom' holds 'political and spiritual freedom… is the assumption, instrument and indispensable atmosphere of our struggle'.[49]

With great clarity of understanding, Rosselli saw that war would return to Europe following Hitler's seizure of power. Moreover, he forecast this conflict to be a war of expansion of the two Fascisms. 'Fascism is a European fact. Fascism now stands at the heart of the struggle.' 'In order to win, or even to survive, it is necessary to fight. Humanity can now save itself only if it tackles the demon on its own terrain, in the Fascist hell.'[50] Thus, it was only logical that Rosselli was the first of the Italian anti-Fascists to demand intervention in the Spanish Civil War and then to practise it himself— 'today in Spain, tomorrow in Italy', his motto stated. He paid for this involvement with his life. Mussolini had Rosselli and his brother Nello murdered by French Fascists in Normandy in summer 1937.

We find an extensive shaping of the 'as yet still young phenomenon of the totalitarian' in the works of the ex-Communist politician and writer, Ignazio Silone, who lived in exile in Switzerland in the 1930s. In 1934, he published a study entitled *Der Fascismus,* which appeared in Italian only recently.[51] In this work, Silone still interpreted the Italian dictatorship by using the Marxist terminology of class struggle and capital interests. At the same time, however, this text already evinces the first beginnings of the development of totalitarianism as a concept. While in Zurich a few years later, Silone published *The School of the Dictators,* a work that was translated into English in 1938.[52] This book is written in the form of a conversation among three people: a US politician with dictatorial cravings, his political advisor and a European emigrant, 'Tommaso the Cynic'. In this text, the concept of the totalitarian plays a central role.

After 1918, according to Silone, the wish for dictatorship became as predominant throughout the world as the idea of freedom had been in the nineteenth century. Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism emerge as the three totalitarian threats to Western democracy, parliamentarism and individual freedom. As in Machiavelli's *Principe,* so in this text: an enemy of dictatorship instructs as to how one can overcome the weak defensive positions of democracy through appeals to the masses, propaganda, terror and violence, and how one can safe-guard the power of a dictatorship once it has been established. Within the framework of the concept of the totalitarian, Silone presents a lively portrait of the European dictatorships of the 1930s in this work.

During these years, the totalitarianism concept became increasingly significant for the non-Communist, anti-Fascist resistance operating both within and outside Italy. One finds the concept, for example, in the first declaration of European federalism, the famous *Manifesto of Ventotene* drafted by Altiero Spinelli, Ernesto Rossi and Eugenio Colorni in

1944.[53] This manifesto was the product of long discussions on the prison-island of Ventotene. The new Leviathan emerged under the sign of the totalitarian:

> The totalitarian states are those that have collected all powers in the most uncompromising way. They have achieved the greatest level of centralization and autarchy, a level with which they have proven themselves the organisms best suited to the contemporary international environment. Only one nation need step in the direction of an explicit totalitarianism for the other ones to follow the same path.[54]

The manifesto saw a 'totalitarian era' to mark the end-phase of the sovereign European national state and the nationalisms that had been provoked by it. It also spoke of a

> totalitarian, reactionary civilization that has characterized Europe since Versailles. After 1918, the conviction spread that only the totalitarian state, because it abolished the freedoms of the people, could somehow resolve the conflicts of interest with which the existing political institutions were no longer capable of coping. Following their successes in a series of countries, these reactionary, totalitarian doctrines have most recently gained power in Nazi Germany, a power with which they believe themselves capable of the most extreme results… Their victory would signify the permanent establishment of totalitarianism in the world.[55]

In the authors' opinion, the future anti-totalitarian order of state and society would have to be federalist and pluralistic, an order granting extensive jurisdictions to intermediary powers and having its roots in a broad array of autonomous social activities.

III

If we now cast our gaze upon the self-interpretation of the Fascists themselves, then it can safely be stated that the concept of the totalitarian progressively gained significance without thereby attaining canonical validity. In September 1925, the party secretary, Roberto Farinacci, already spoke of the 'totalitarian programme of our revolution'.[56] Mussolini began to use the concept more frequently: for example, whenever he spoke of 'totalitarian regime', 'totalitarian party' or 'totalitarian movement'.[57]

In the *Doctrine of Fascism,* published in 1931, Mussolini wrote the following: 'To the Fascist, everything is found within the state and nothing can or may be found outside the state. In this sense, Fascism is totalitarian.'[58] *De facto,* this text had been drafted by the philosopher and cultural politician, Giovanni Gentile, who had sought as far back as 1929 to discover the nature of Fascism in the 'totalitarian character' of its doctrine. For Gentile, the totalitarian state was the incarnation and potentization of the power state, charged with controlling and steering all activities of the society. As Gentile traced it, the nationalization and 'statification' of Fascism corresponded to the interests and programmes of the liberal, conservative and nationalist factions of the Fascist power

cartel. Theorists like Rocco or Gentile posited the self-dissolution of Fascism as soon as it had served as a tonic for strengthening the state and the state authority.[59]

Aside from this state-absolutism, however, we find a dynamic version of the concept of the totalitarian both in radical Fascism and in the writings of Mussolini himself. When Mussolini spoke of the 'fierce totalitarian determination' of Fascism or the 'totalitarian way' in which he wanted to educate Italian youth, he meant a new political style, an attitude of radicality and reckless energy.[60] Mussolini coined the concept of 'totalitarity' in 1928 in order to describe this attitude and to denote the dynamic, revolutionary and radical defining features of Fascism.[61] By use of this concept, theorists promoting an on-going dynamization of Fascism—Panunzio, Costamagna or Bortolotto, for example— sketched an image of the movement and the one-party system in which the dynamic features outweighed the rest.[62] If one looks through the four volumes of the *Dizionario di politica* published in 1939 and 1940 by the Fascist Party, one finds countless examples of this dual understanding of the totalitarian.[63]

IV

Fascist Italy profited in various ways from the National Socialists' rise and seizure of power in Germany. The date 30 January 1933 is a watershed date in the history of the totalitarian concept. A Communist like Giorgio Amendola (son of the liberal opposition leader Giorgio Amendola named above) experienced this day in prison in Rome. In retrospect, he called it the most horrible moment of his life. He recalled Schiller's *Don Carlos:* the passage where Philipp says, '"I am old and my days are coming to an end; but time still remains for me to set the fields afire and devastate so that no farmer can sow them for the next ten generations."

One had the impression that Fascism could in fact…destroy European culture for a long time.'[64] According to Carlo Rosselli, Hitler's victory 'historicized' and 'generalized' Fascism. The condemnation of the German case would now also extend to the Italian model. 'One will understand us better now. We will be more highly esteemed and will receive more help in Europe.'[65] Following the success of the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP, the National Socialist German Workers' Party) in the September elections of 1930, Mussolini began to praise Fascism as the phenomenon of the century and a product for export. In the view of the English historian Elizabeth Wiskemann, he became the most powerful man in Europe for several years after January 1933.[66] Rome became the end-station of pilgrimages made by almost all politicians of western Europe. The shadow of Hitler enlarged the stature of the Duce. On the lee-side of the German political and military ascent, Mussolini conquered his imperium in Abyssinia.

In 1936 and 1937, the wind shifted. That which had been an advantage to that point— his role as the 'elder' dictator, the 'appeaser' and tutor of Hitler—now increasingly became a burden. Following the formation of the Rome-Berlin Axis in autumn 1936 above all, the dark and threatening image of National Socialist Germany, with its race politics, its militarism, its anti-Semitic persecutions and its emigration, now tarnished the image of Fascist Italy as well. With its united intervention in the Spanish Civil War of 1936, the European public began increasingly to speak of the confrontation between

democratic and 'totalitarian' powers. At their meetings in Germany in September 1937 and in Italy in May 1938, Hitler and Mussolini spoke about the future trial of strength between the decadent, plutocratic Western powers and the 'totalitarian' states of the Axis. After 1936, the Duce often used the positive concept of the totalitarian in order to emphasize political and ideological commonalities of the Axis powers. So it was in November 1936, as he praised the successes of demographic politics: 'The totalitarian regimes have shown that statistics and numbers do not rule the nations. On the contrary, the latter can rule the statistics.'[67] In May 1938, Mussolini warned the Western powers not to begin an 'ideological war'. 'lf this were to happen, then the Western powers would have to be aware that the totalitarian states would immediately close their ranks and march to the end.'[68] In his conversations with Ribbentrop in November 1938, Mussolini spoke of an impassable opposition between the Western powers and totalitarian states, one that would lead to conflict in three to four years.[69]

Following 1936, the concept of totalitarianism made its entrance into international politics. It turned up in diplomatic language, in the international press and political and sociological research—and this twice as often in the negative rather than the positive version. In this war of semantics, the positive self-portrayal of Fascism steadily lost ground.

An impressive documentation of this conceptual war can be found in the secret diaries of Piero Calamandrei, a professor of law at the University of Florence. Although an anti-Fascist, he was also a co-worker of the Justice Minister, Dino Grandi, on the new version of the Italian Civil Code of 1942. In Calamandrei's sketches of the years 1939, 1940 and afterwards, the negative concepts of 'totalitarian states' and 'totalitarianism' that had been coined to describe the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini are present. On 4 September 1939, Calamandrei wrote the following:

> Who will win? Will…the shining idea of freedom…suffice…to reorganize Europe after the bloody catastrophe? If Germany loses, Russia will spread the bacillus of Communism in Europe, and that means totalitarianism… Will totalitarianism arrive in western Europe with a victorious Germany?[70]

In face of an invasion of both the internal and the external barbarians, Calamandrei saw himself as one of the last representatives of European culture.

The semantic war that occurred in the years surrounding 1939 likewise emerges from another text: the two-volume diary of Giuseppe Bottai. As a cultural politician, Minister of Corporations and, later, Education Minister, Bottai belonged to Mussolini's innermost circle of advisors and co-workers. Bottai saw himself as a herald of a 'corporate, liberal Fascism that should be self-critical and open to spiritual and cultural debate'.[71] At the end of the war, Bottai wrote the following:

> All the diverse and organic contents that had originally been connected with the concepts of 'Fascist' and 'corporate' began to disintegrate with the introduction of the word, 'totalitarianism'—first in the language of propaganda and later in the language of political theory as well. We

became the province of a totalitarianism that lay beyond our original goals and ideals.[72]

<center>

V

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A final, brief glance ought yet to be thrown upon the history of the totalitarianism concept in Italian culture following 1943–45. This post-history is of considerable interest for shedding light upon the developments of the preceding decades as well.

As has been indicated, various sectors of the anti-Fascist emigration—Catholic intellectuals, radical democrats, federalists and social democrats—developed a relatively differentiated conception of totalitarianism in the years following 1925. In 1947, the liberal journalist and editor of the journal *Risorgimento liberale* published a first Italian monograph entitled *Lo stato totalitario*. In this comparative survey, he subjected the forms of rule, the exercise of power and the social controls of Fascism, National Socialism and Bolshevism to a comparative analysis.[73] His presentation found little reception and is now completely forgotten.

After 1944, the Italian market acquired the numerous contributions from the contexts of politics, politology, economics, theology and philosophy that had arisen in the other Western languages in the preceding decades. To be mentioned here are names like Lippmann, Hayek, Mises, Röpke, Rüstow, Ortega Y Gasset, Tillich and many others in whose work the concept of the totalitarian played, in part, an important role. These contributions reached a country characterized by a political constellation that was comprised of the following elements: first, under central participation by the Communists, a coalition of anti-Fascist Resistenza parties had contributed to the liberation of Italy and taken over the government in Rome following June 1944. Second, the Communists began to dominate the Italian Left. Third, liberal, democratic and lay Catholic groups did not succeed in forming a large party of the middle.

Under these circumstances, concepts of totalitarianism hardly had a great chance of being well received. Indeed, even more significant contributions to totalitarianism research (Arendt, Friedrich, Brzezinski, etc.) were translated very late, if at all.[74] By the end of the 1960s, the historian Renzo De Felice could group the totalitarianism concept into the miscellaneous category of 'minority interpretations'. In his work, *Le interpretazioni del fascismo,* he granted it only a few pages of treatment.[75]

Following 1945, Communist intellectuals vigorously combated all dissemination of the concept of totalitarianism in Italian culture. Thus wrote Delio Cantimori in 1946:

> It is not very respectable to use the new concepts of 'totalitarian' and 'totalitarianism'. This is a concept that one finds in Lippmann, Chamberlain and other famous US and English authors who concern themselves with politics. The purpose of the journalistic use of this concept is clear: it is a very clever propagandic means to accuse one's political opponent of being an 'enemy of freedom'. One thereby finds himself in the company of the Fascist and the National Socialist.[76]

Lucio Lombardo Radice castigated the totalitarianism conception as the worst form of anti-Communism,[77] and Palmiro Togliatti wrote scathing articles against this Anglo-American semantic invasion in his new monthly journal, *Rinascita*.[78]

The Left even attempted to turn this dangerous concept against the Christian Democrats. Thus did Adolfo Omodeo, a Church historian and member of the Action Party, write essays on 'Totalitarismo cattolico' in 1945. 'Many have noticed that the totalitarian danger does not issue solely from the Left, but is present on the Right as well, where it rests on old foundations.'[79] In 1951, the leftist socialist Lelio Basso wrote a work, *Due totalitarismi,* in which he accused De Gasperi's regime of being a direct continuation of Fascism.[80]

Politically, the concept of totalitarianism gained significance with the division of the Socialist Party in 1947. As early as 1939, the right-wing leader, Giuseppe Saragat, represented the idea that the chief conflict in world politics arose from the contrast, not between bourgeoisie and proletariat, but between democracy and totalitarianism.[81] In his speech in Florence in April 1946, he attacked the totalitarian and bureaucratic mentality of the Communist Party of Italy: 'all phenomena that we find in bourgeois totalitarianism we also find, in a remarkable parallel, in proletarian totalitarianism as well'.[82] We find a reflex of this debate in the 1948 decision of the Socialist International to exclude the Italian Socialists from the international unit. The party of Pietro Nennis was charged with not having grasped the fundamental irreconcilability between democratic socialism and totalitarian communism.[83]

Thus did the concept of the totalitarian remain widely banned up to the 1970s. This ban revealed itself in the reception of Solzhenitsyn, whose *Gulag Archipelago* found as good as no resonance, or of the person and work of Hannah Arendt, who first gained a wide influence in the 1980s. In 1989, *Unità,* the newspaper of the Communist Party, called the Stalinist dictatorship 'totalitarian' for the first time. And it was not until 1994 that a leader of the neo-Fascist movement, Movimento Sociale Italiano (now Alleanza nazionale), could mention that Mussolini's dictatorship had been 'totalitarian' in Parliament. His one-party rule was said to have marked a tragedy for Italy as well as an experience that no one would wish to repeat.[84]

Notes

1 Gerhard Leibholz, 'Das Phaenomen des totalen Staates', *Mensch und Staat in Recht und Geschichte* (Kitzingen, 1954). Reprinted in Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung* (Darmstadt, 1968), pp. 123–32; Karl Dietrich Bracher, 'Streit um Worte—Streit um Werte', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 12 July 1978.

2 Hermann Heller, *Europa und der Fascismus,* 2nd edn (Berlin, 1931). Cited in Hermann Heller, *Gesammelte Schriften,* Vol. II (Leiden: 1971), pp. 463–609, 524, 554.

3 Filippo Turati, 'Faschismus, Sozialismus und Demokratie', in Ernst Nolte (ed.), *Theorien über den Faschismus* (Cologne, 1967), pp. 150 ff.

4 Cited from Piero Gobetti, *Scritti politici,* ed. Paolo Spriano (Turin, 1969), p. 544.

5 Ibid.

6 Juan J.Linz, 'La democrazia italiana di fronte al futuro', in F.L.Cavazz and S.R.Graubard (eds), *Il caso italiano,* Vol. I (Milan, 1974), p. 140.

7 Ibid.

8 Renzo De Felice (ed.), *Il fascismo e i partiti politici italiani. Testimonianze del 1921–1923* (Bologna, 1966), p. 19.

9 Palmiro Togliatti, *Lektionen über den Faschismus* (Frankfurt, 1973), pp. 10 ff.

10 Palmiro Togliatti, *Lezioni sul fascismo* (Rome, 1970), p. 20.

11 Renzo De Felice, *Der Faschismus, ein Interview mit Michael A.Ledeen* (Stuttgart, 1977), p. 111.

12 Renzo De Felice, 'Le origini del fascismo', *Nuove questioni di storia contemporanea,* Vol. I (Milan, 1968), p. 734.

13 Reinhart Koselleck, 'Einleitung', *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe, Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland,* Vol. I (Stuttgart, 1972), pp. xiv, xv, xx.

14 Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen. Um Faschismus, Totalitarismus, Demokratie* (Munich, 1976), p. 15.

15 *Totalitarismus und Faschismus. Eine wissenschaftliche und politische Begriffskontroverse*. Colloquium at the Institute for Contemporary History on the 24th of November, 1978 (R.Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich and Vienna, 1980), p. 19.

16 Ibid., p. 65.

17 Jens Petersen, 'Die Entstehung des Totalitarismusbegriffs in Italien', in Manfred Funke (ed.), *Totalitarismus. Ein Studien-Reader zur Herrschaftsanalyse moderner Ditaturen* (Dusseldorf, 1978), pp. 105–28.

18 Citation from ibid., pp. 116 ff.

19 Ibid., p. 117.

20 Giovanni Amendola, 'Maggioranza e minoranza', *Il Mondo,* 12 May 1923. Reprinted in Giovanni Amendola, *La democrazia italiana contro il fascismo, 1922–1924* (Milan, Naples, 1960), pp. 102 ff.

21 Alfredo Misuri, 'Ad bestias!', *Memorie d'un perseguitato* (Rome, 1944), pp. 322, 331, 334.

22 Ibid., p. 366.

23 Giovanni Amendola, 'Un anno dopo', *Il Mondo,* 2 November 1923. Reprinted in Amendola, *La democrazia italiana,* p. 193.

24 Prometeo Filodemo (i.e. Lelio Basso), 'L'antistato', *La Rivoluzione Liberale,* 2 January 1925.

25 Giovanni Amendola, *La nuova democrazia* (Naples, 1951), p. 125.

26 Ibid., pp. 237, 240.

27 *Scritti e discorsi di Benito Mussolini,* Vol. V: *Scritti e discorsi dal 1925 al 1926* (Milan, 1934), p. 115.

28 Roberto Forges Davanzati, *Fascismo e cultura* (Florence, 1926), p. 39.

29 Thus the Italian formulation: see Luigi Sturzo, *Italia e fascismo* (Bologna, 1965), p. 198. This work could no longer appear in Italy and was first published in the edition of Sturzo's works.

30 Luigi Sturzo, *Italien und der Faschismus* (Cologne: Gilde Verlag, 1926), p. 207. The translation is by L. and A.Dempf.

31 Ibid., pp. 201 ff.

32 Hans-Erich Kaminski, *Fascismus in Italien. Grundlagen, Aufstieg, Niedergang* (Berlin, 1925), p. 105.

33 Michael Funk, 'Das faschistische Italien im Urteil der *Frankfurter Zeitung* (1920–1933)', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken,* 69 (1989), pp. 255–311, 283.

34 Sturzo, *Italien und der Faschismus,* p. 208.

35 Luigi Sturzo, *El estado Totalitario* (Madrid, 1935).

36 Astonishingly, there is no satisfying biography of De Gasperi to this day. Worth reading nonetheless is Maria Romana Catti De Gasperi, *De Gasperi, uomo solo* (Milan, 1964).

37 Alcide De Gasperi, *Scritti di politica internazionale 1933–1938,* 2 vols (Città del Vaticano, 1981), Vol. I, p. 7.

38 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 449.

39 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 199.

40 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 325.
41 Ibid., Vol. I, p. 163.
42 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 180.
43 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 213.
44 Gualtiero (Nicola Chiaromonte), 'Lettera di un giovane dall'Italia', *Quaderni di Giustizia e Libertà,* 5 (December 1932), pp. 31–7.
45 Sincero (Nicola Chiaromonte), 'La morte si chiama fascismo', *Quaderni di Giustizia e Libertà,* 12 (January 1935), pp. 20–60, 41 ff.
46 Carlo Rosselli, 'Contro lo Stato', *Giustizia e Libertà,* 21 September 1934. Reprinted in Carlo Rosselli, *Scritti dellèsilio,* Vol. II: *Dallo scioglimento della Concentrazione antifascista alla guerra di Spagna (1934–1937)* (Turin, 1992), pp. 42–5, 42.
47 Ibid., p. 45.
48 Cited in Aldo Garosci, *La vita di Carlo Rosselli,* 2 vols (Rome, 1945), Vol. II, p. 109.
49 Carlo Rosselli, *Scritti dell'esilio,* Vol. I: *Giustizia e Libertà e la Concentrazione antifascista (1929–1934)* (Turin, 1988), pp. 8 ff.
50 Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 512 ff.
51 Ignazio Silone, *Der Fascismus. Seine Entstehung und seine Entwicklung* (Zurich: Europa Verlag, 1934). Reprint with a postword by Christian Riechers (Frankfurt, 1978); first Italian edition, *Fascismo* (Milan, 1993).
52 Ignazio Silone, *Die Schule der Diktatoren* (Zurich, 1938). The last German edition bears the title *Die Kunst der Diktatur* (Cologne, 1965).
53 English text in Walter Lipgens (ed.), *Documents on the History of European Integration,* Vol. I: *Continental Plans for European Union 1939–1945* (Berlin, New York, 1985).
54 Walter Lipgens (ed.), *Europa. Föderationspläne der Widerstandsbewegungen 1940–1945* (Munich, 1968), pp. 37 ff.
55 Ibid., p. 39.
56 Roberto Farinacci, *Un periodo aureo del Partito Nazionale Fascista* (Foligno, 1927), p. 276.
57 *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini, 44 vols* (Florence, Rome, 1951–80), Vol. XXII, p. 379; Vol. XXVI, p. 399; Vol. XXVII, p. 11.
58 *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini,* Vol. XXXIV, p. 119.
59 On the biography of Gentile, see Jürgen Charnitzky, *Die Schulpolitik des faschistischen Regimes in Italien (1922–1943)* (Tubigen, 1994).
60 *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini,* Vol. XXI, p. 362; Vol. XXIV, p. 101.
61 *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini,* Vol. XXIII, p. 269.
62 On this differentiation, compare Martin Jänicke, *Totalitäre Herrschaft. Anatomie eines politischen Zugriffs* (Berlin, 1971).
63 Partito Nazionale Fascista (ed.), *Dizionario di politica,* 4 vols (Rome: Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana Treccani, 1940).
64 Giorgio Amendola, *Der Antifaschismus in Italien. Ein Interview* (Stuttgart, 1977), p. 95.
65 Carlo Rosselli, 'Italia e Europa', *Quaderni di Giustizia e Libertà, 7* (June 1933), pp. 1–8; reprinted in Rosselli, *Scritti dell'esilio,* Vol. I, p. 207.
66 Elizabeth Wiskemann, *The Rome-Berlin Axis* (London, 1966).
67 *Opera omnia di Benito Mussolini,* Vol. XXVIII, p. 78.
68 Ibid., Vol. XXIX, p. 102.
69 Rodolfo Mosca (ed.), *L'Europa verso la catastrofe,* 2 vols (Milan, 1964), Vol. I, p. 416.
70 Piero Calamandrei, *Diario 1939–1945* (Florence, 1982), 2 vols. See, for example, Vol. I, pp. 23, 44, 76, 114, 205, 222, citation on p. 76.
71 Giuseppe Bottai, *Diario 1935–1944* (Milan, 1982). Also *Diario 1944–1948* (Milan, 1988).
72 Giuseppe Bottai, *Ventianni e un giorno* (Milan, 1949), p. 56.
73 Vittorio Zincone, *Lo Stato totalitario* (Rome, 1947).
74 Characteristic in this context is the history of the reception of Hannah Arendt. Her principle work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), was first translated in 1967 (Milan: Comimità)

and remained without a larger resonance. Italian culture first received her *œuvre* after the end of the 1970s.

75 Renzo De Felice, *Le interpretazioni del fascismo* (Bari, 1969), pp. 82–91.

76 Delio Cantimori, 'Un'utopia conservatrice: la "terza via" di W.Röpke', *Risorgimento,* 1, 5 (August 1945). Reprinted in Delio Cantimori, *Studi di storia* (Turin, 1959), pp. 701–26, 706.

77 Lucio Lombardo Radice, *Fascismo e anticommunismo* (Rome, 1946).

78 Palmiro Togliatti, 'Totalitarismo?', *Rinascita,* 2 (November-December 1946), pp. 289–91.

79 Adolfo Omodeo, 'Totalitarismo cattolico', *L'Acropoli,* 1, 9 (1945), pp. 385–90. Reprinted in Adolfo Omodeo, *Libertà e storia. Scritti e discorsi politici* (Turin, 1960), pp. 332–8, 338.

80 Lelio Basso, *Due totalitarismi. Fascismo e Democrazia Cristiana* (Milan, 1951).

81 Giuseppe Saragat, *Quaranta anni di lotta per la democrazia. Scritti e discorsi* 1925–1965 (Milan, 1966).

82 Ibid., p. 305.

83 Pietro Sebastiani, *Laburisti inglesi e socialisti italiani* (Rome, 1983).

84 Gian Enrico Rusconi, *Resistenza e postfascismo* (Bologna, 1995).

2
Luigi Sturzo as a theorist of totalitarianism

Michael Schäfer

Of the extensive production of a scientific writer, the same few sentences are cited repeatedly whereas the overwhelming remainder remains more or less unknown. This is a well-known phenomenon. In some cases, it may serve as a just punishment for a lack of precision and long-winded style. Often, however, it is very regrettable that an author has not been captured in his entire complexity, but has only been noted in a few apparently handy formulations.

At first glance, Luigi Sturzo appears not to be such a case. His work, after all, is the object of vigorous research activity. There is a multi-volume edition of his collected works (unfortunately not a text-critical edition),[1] as well as the *Collana di studi sturziani*[2] in which Sturzo's letters and unpublished writings are also published. Both projects are led by the Istituto Luigi Sturzo in Rome. The secondary literature on the founder of the Partito Popolare Italiano is also of considerable breadth: aside from the two extensive biographies,[3] there are countless studies of the various aspects of his life and work. And although, as expected, the complex of themes surrounding politics and political theory occupies a large space here,[4] there is no study of Luigi Sturzo as a theorist of totalitarianism. It thus seems worth while to pursue the following questions: first, what role does Luigi Sturzo play in the history of the theory of totalitarianism? More specifically: what is his contribution to the various phases of the formation of the concept and theory?

Biographical context

Countless radical changes and departures marked the political situation of Italian Catholics at the turn of the century. The *Non expedit* of Pius IX was not repealed by his successor, Leo XII. That meant that Catholics were forbidden from participating in political elections. Yet this abstinence liberated forces in other areas: from it emerged not only an upswing of ecclesiastical and religious life that expressed itself in the founding of a whole series of Catholic associations, but a stronger activity of Catholics on the communal level and in the social sphere as well.

Luigi Sturzo, a priest born in Caltagirone, Sicily in 1871, stands in the midst of this movement of radical departure of Italian Catholicism. As the mayor of his home city from 1905 to 1920, he became one of the most important protagonists of Christian democracy in Italy. Motivated above all by the multiple economic and social problems of the southern Italian communities, he sought a way to incorporate Catholics into political life without closing the distance between the Church and the liberal state. This wish was attained following the progressive repeal of the *Non expedit* under Pius X and his

successors: the repeal made possible the founding of the Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI), a Christian party that was formally independent of the Catholic hierarchy.

Following the great success of the PPI in the elections of 1921, Sturzo became

one of the decisive figures of the political stage of Italy for the next few years. After the putsch of October 1922 had been legalized by the king, Mussolini's Church-friendly politics helped to ensure that the relationship between the people's party and the Holy See cooled markedly. Pius XI had never made a secret of his aversion to the political engagement of priests.[5] It merely corresponded to the Vatican's logic, therefore, when Sturzo was compelled to relinquish his office as party secretary in 1923. In October, he left Italy and went into exile in London, as a series of other democratic politicians did. The concept of totalitarianism arose in this time of crisis. It is a concept in whose history Sturzo has a solid place.

Creation of the concept

Jens Petersen[6] attributes the first use of the adjective '*totalitario*' to Giovanni Amendola, who used it concerning Italian Fascism on 12 May 1923.[7] Up to January 1924, the term served as a technical description for the Mussoliniists' procedure in the various elections.[8] In Fascism, Sturzo saw a 'prevalent tendency to the totalitarian transformation of all moral, cultural, political and religious forces'.[9] He demanded a renunciation of this 'totalitarian spirit' and 'recollection of the necessity and functions of the parties'.[10] This citation is from the final paragraph of 'Popolarismo e fascismo', which appeared in the journal, *La Rivoluzione Liberale,* in January 1924.[11] Here, Sturzo is shown to count among those Italian politicians who related the totalitarian concept to Fascism and its ruling technique in opposition to Mussolini's appropriation of the term.

It is even more astounding, then, that he was in no way aware of his formative role. In 'Nazionalismo e Internazionalismo', an essay that appeared in 1946, he wrote the following:

> Mussolini—in a fit of brilliant invention—has introduced the adjective, 'totalitarian' and used it for his system with the solemn formula: 'nothing outside or against the state, everything in and for the state'. From this, the substantive form of 'totalitarianism' has been derived. Thus, have both words gained entry into all languages.[12]

There can be only two explanations for this. Either the research has overlooked a statement by Mussolini or Sturzo is mistaken. The first possibility should probably be excluded. The second explanation is plausible—at any rate, 20 years lay between the aforementioned point in time and the writing of 'Nazionalismo e Internazionalismo'. These 20 years were both stirring and turbulent for Sturzo.

Italy and Fascism

Sturzo took the step toward systematic application of the totalitarian concept in *Italy and Fascism,* a book that he wrote in exile in London in 1926.[13] Here, 'totalitarian' is no longer a quality belonging solely to Italian Fascism, but is invoked for a comparison with the Bolshevist regime in Moscow. This comparison between the articulation of Russian Fascism on the Left and Italian Bolshevism on the Right is the only statement of Sturzo as a theorist of totalitarianism that has found widespread entry into the literature.[14] Because the Italian original text is not usually consulted, inconsistencies arising from the translations are uncritically taken over. For *'totalitarismo'* for example, the Dempfs' German translation uses the expression 'totalitarian system' whenever it mentions Fascism.

Of interest in this context is a comparison to *Bolschewismus, Faschismus und Demokratie,* a work by the former Italian Prime Minister, Francesco Nitti, which also appeared in 1926. The parallels of many statements can be explained by the fact that both authors took part in an international conference of the Comité National détudes sociales et politiques in Paris in March 1925.[15] Both Nitti and Sturzo see the commonality of Fascism and Bolshevism in a hostile stance toward the liberal, Christian concept of freedom. Agreement also prevails on the fact that both authors see no future for the totalitarian regimes in Europe. Whereas Sturzo forecasts a 'long and hard developmental process'[16] in overcoming Fascism and Bolshevism, the statements of the Italian liberal are much more concrete:

> I am convinced that Russian Bolshevism is explicable solely in terms of the peculiar economic and social relations of Russia, just as Italian Fascism should be understood solely in terms of the specific tradition and situation of Italy, and that both isolated phenomena are unthinkable for other peoples because these lack the supervening circumstances… After so many errors, we will undoubtedly find our way back to freedom and to a liberal constitution.[17]

Pencilled in beside these all-too-optimistic statements, the edition of this book to which I had access at the Bavarian State Library contains the following brief, but very concise, question: 'And now? 1933!'

In both authors' opinion, freedom will prevail only if the idea of an alliance of states is further developed. In the words of Sturzo, the chances lie in a 'unified and freely trading Europe'.[18]

Sturzo's systematic comparison of Fascism and Bolshevism in *Italy and Fascism* on the one hand, and his loyalty to the Vatican on the other have since been the object of certain attempts at explanation. The argumentation runs something like this: if Sturzo had directly claimed Christianity and Fascism to be irreconcilable, this would have constituted an attack on the Holy See in that it sought at this time to get along with Mussolini. For this reason, Sturzo is said to have taken 'the indirect path' of juxtaposing Fascism and Bolshevism as phenomenal forms that oppose the Christian principle of

freedom.[19] Interesting as the theory may appear at first, it has no basis in the sources. We have already seen that one can interpret the totalitarianism concept of *Italy and Fascismas* a logical continuation of the ideas of 'Popolarismo e fascismo' without problem. Moreover, we will now see that Sturzo moves further down this path with an equal degree of logical consistency. If one is not convinced of the infallibility of Ernst Nolte, one can confidently dismiss the theory of the 'birth of the concept of totalitarianism from the spirit of priestly loyalty'.

   Italy and Fascism had laid the founding stone for a comparative analysis of Fascism and Bolshevism. Here, Sturzo's writing is pervaded with a first attempt to develop the *concept* of totalitarianism further into a *theory* of totalitarianism.

Theory of totalitarianism

According to the popular periodization of Walter Schlangen,[20] the transition to a general theory of totalitarianism occurred sometime around the mid-1930s. In the foreground here stand the works of Max Lerner,[21] Hans Kohn[22] and Carlton J.H. Hayes.[23] According to Schlangen, this period was the 'decisive developmental phase in the process of reformulating the concept of totalitarianism: what began as a political conception of Fascist self-understanding became a scientific conception of the general analysis of political rule'.[24] The emphasis here lies upon the expression, 'scientific conception'. Formulated more precisely, talk of totalitarianism can be called scientific-theoretical talk only under the following conditions: not only must it abstract from the political events of the day, it must also know to insert itself into the historical development of political theory. If someone like Hayes explicitly confronts the question as to how to understand the relationship between the totalitarian forms of 1939 and the classical dictatorships, then the criterion for offering a totalitarianism *theory* has been fulfilled.

   The opposing thesis that merits consideration posits the following: not only is Luigi Sturzo a theorist of totalitarianism in this strict sense, but his conception should be included among the earliest theories of totalitarianism that are worthy of the name.

   The National Socialists' seizure of power, along with the nature of their system of rule (which soon began to reveal itself), contributed the final impulse in developing a general theory of totalitarianism. This emergence of yet another dictatorship in Europe made it clear that Fascism was not an exceptional phenomenon. Thus, it is understandable that scientific debate surrounding the new regimes first began to increase in the years following 1934. This tendency is upheld by the example of Sturzo: beginning in 1934, his use of the expression 'totalitarian' again increases in smaller articles and letters.[25] Beyond these contributions occasioned by current events, he produced two larger works in which he systematically examined totalitarianism: *La società: sua natura e leggi,* a sketch of his own sociology that appeared in 1935, and *Politica e Morale,* a comprehensive work that appeared in 1938.

   In *La società: sua natura e leggi,* Sturzo presented his own sociological—or, more precisely, social-philosophical—thought in systematic form. Here, the *'stato totalitario'* appears in several passages, but usually only as an example of certain abortive developments in the economic sphere or in the relationship of church and state. What should be noted here above all is that, for Sturzo, National Socialist Germany was already

a fully fledged member of the 'community of totalitarian states' when he wrote the study—thus, in 1934 and 1935. If one also considers his countless newspaper articles in those years, one cannot help but notice that Sturzo no longer speaks of Hitler and his Fascists after the purging action for which the misplaced expression of 'Röhmputsch' is used to this day. Instead, he conceptually acknowledges the independence of the German developments by no longer applying the term 'Fascist' to the National Socialists.

In *Politica e Morale,* written in 1938, Sturzo provides a complete theory of the totalitarian state. This work includes a chapter called 'Lo stato totalitario'. The reflections found there can be summarized as three essential theses that run something along the following lines: A) The contemporary totalitarian state is distinctive and should be distinguished from its predecessors—above all, from the ancient dictatorships. B) A general characterization of the Bolshevist, Fascist and National Socialist states as exemplars of the totalitarian state is justified. C) The totalitarian state has four essential characteristics: 1. an extreme centralization of the administration; 2. a militarization of the society; 3. a state monopoly on education; and 4. a subordination of the economy to the state.[26]

The similarity of this series of characteristics to corresponding series offered by later theorists of totalitarianism—by Sigmund Neumann[27] or C.J.Friedrich[28] for example—cannot escape our attention. Sturzo calls these characteristics 'substantive distinctions between the totalitarian states and the old national states'.[29] Each characteristic is discussed in detail and supplemented with examples taken from all three totalitarian regimes. Let us examine the characteristics more closely.

For Sturzo, centralization of the administration consists not only in a loss of autonomy for the hierarchy's subordinate levels. He also recognizes the subtle and highly sensitive common ground of administration and politics, the insidious undermining of which marks the end of human rights. Following the tracks of Kafka's dictum, 'the chains of tormented human beings are made from the paper of officialdom', H.G.Adler later made this connection the centre of his study, *Der verwaltete Mensch*. In the place of 'autonomy, freedom of citizens and *habeas corpus*',[30] according to Sturzo, steps the terror of police and secret service. Sturzo sees Germany to have moved the furthest along this path; this, however, might rest with the fact that information already flowed more sparsely from Russia by this time.

The militarization of the society marks a break with the traditions of the national states as well. In the totalitarian states, an independent military sphere no longer exists. Instead, all areas of political life are militarized: 'la vita collettiva è concepita come una vita militare'.[31]

The totalitarian claim upon the entire person becomes the clearest in the case of state monopoly on education.

> From elementary school through university, not merely emotional conformism is practised; no, a complete intellectual and moral subordination is sought, confident enthusiasm, the mystical devotion of a religion. Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism are religions and must be religions… In generating this 'state of the soul' [*Stato L'Animo*], the school alone no longer suffices. Instead, it requires further means: the state book, the statified and centralized newspaper, cinema, radio, sport.

> All these are not only controlled but directed toward a goal: the cult of the
> state under the sign of the nation, the race, the class.[32]

This pseudo-religion does not subside: 'For the sake of attaining a unified consciousness [*l'unanime consenso*] and of stimulating a collective emotion of exuberance and enthusiasm, the entire community life is permanently mobilized by parades, parties, processions, plebiscites and athletic events.' The entire state cult is directed toward the leader, who becomes a demigod. Based on examples, Sturzo demonstrates how Lenin, Hitler and Mussolini are elevated to the rank of prophet and saviour. These religious components of totalitarian ideology will be discussed later.

Sturzo's analysis of the steering of the economy in the totalitarian systems is the briefest of all. Here, a simple analogy obtains: 'just as all moral energy is subordinated to the structure of the state power, so are all economic powers as well'.[33] To this end, such classical aids and means of directing trade as protective tariffs no longer suffice. The totalitarian state demands complete control over all economic transactions. It is of no consequence here whether this occurs under the auspices of capitalism or of socialism: in both cases, the result is 'state socialism'.[34]

In Sturzo's view, the essential element of the totalitarian problem surrounds the separation of state and religion. Stated theologically, the problem is 'il gravissimo problema della supre mazia dello spirituale sul temporale'. To the end of presenting it, he covers a wide arc extending from Machiavelli and Luther to the totalitarianism of his day and reads modern political history as a process of the progressive deification of the state.

In this, he can appeal to corresponding statements of Pius XI. In 1931, the latter had written of 'subjective' and 'objective' totalitarianism in a letter to Cardinal Schuster on Mussolini's proceeding against Catholic Action.[35] The Church could accept the first— hence, the total claim of the state to all matters of government and administration. It would have to reject the second, however—thus, the claim upon the individual, domestic and, above all, the spiritual and super-natural spheres. However clumsy the descriptions of 'subjective' and 'objective' totalitarianism may be, they nonetheless clarify the Church's traditional understanding of the nature and goal of the state. Stated in terms of another phrase of Pius XI, which Sturzo also cites: 'Non è lo stato il fine del cittadino, ma è il cittadino il fine dello stato' ('The state does not determine the citizen, but rather the citizen determines the state').[36]

As our interim finding, we discover that the thesis posited earlier has been confirmed. In the years between 1934 and 1938, it would be difficult to find another thinker who produced an interpretation of the totalitarian phenomenon that is as comprehensive and subtle as this one. This observation will hold even more once it has been indicated that Sturzo did not overlook a further possible interpretation of the new dictatorships.

Political religions

Besides the theory of totalitarianism, there is a further significant attempt conceptually to capture the common features of Fascism, National Socialism and Bolshevism: the concept of political religions. The origins of this theory—if one were to call it that—have been researched far less extensively than those of totalitarianism. Here, one must

distinguish two positions very carefully: the insight that Fascism, National Socialism and Bolshevism display features of a doctrine of religious salvation on the one hand, and the use of the terms 'political religions' or 'secular religions' on the other.

The first insight was attained very early on—specifically, in reference to Communism. Documentary evidence can be found in the literature beginning in 1919 at the latest.[37] The Marxist theory stood too conspicuously in the tradition of chiliastic movements, the roots of which extend far back to the heresies of the early history of Christianity.[38]

The second, explicit application of the expression 'political religions' remains largely obscure to date. Setting aside earlier evidence of the use of the concept 'ersatz religion'[39]—by Franz Werfel in a lecture of 1932, for example—Raymond Aron and Eric Voegelin primarily share the credit for having created this concept.

Yet, it would not be surprising if an observer at the time, especially the theologian, had noticed that the totalitarian regimes borrowed from the religious sphere. Indeed, we find a whole series of corroborating contributions in Sturzo's writings beginning from about 1933. Above all, it was National Socialist Germany that drew Sturzo's attention to the problem.

In December 1933, an article entitled 'ldolatria collettiva' appeared in the Spanish *El Matì*.[40] Beginning with the idolatry of the Old Testament, Sturzo posits that 'our idols are called nation, state, freedom, authority, republic, monarchy, race, class… The modern idolatries are secularized religions [*religioni laicizzate*]'. As examples, Sturzo presents the cult surrounding the Lenin Mausoleum in Moscow, the Nazi's evangelism (in Sturzo's words) of race, and the deification of Mussolini in Italy.

A few days later, he again complained in *El Matì* that the National Socialists had replaced the Catholic greeting, 'Praise be to Jesus Christ', with 'Heil, Hitler.'[41] On 14 February 1935, he addressed the new, 1935 National Socialist calendar for farmers,[42] stating that 'references to the Christian liturgical festivals and the names of the Saint Days are gone; they have been replaced by the entries of mythical and pre-historic festivals'. In this case, his concept for such neo-pagan superstition was *'religione primordiale'*.[43]

In a letter to Rosselli of 23 June 1935, Sturzo again spoke of the attempt by Hitler and his followers to create a *'religione pagana di Stato'*.

These scattered statements were collected in *Politica e Morale,* the systematic analysis that was already cited. The totalitarian state wants more than the temporary consent of certain portions of the population. It attains it only if it penetrates into the one area of social life that is usually withheld from the grasp of politics, but which nonetheless provides the stability and permanence to which the regime strives.

Sturzo's conceptualization has not yet grown solid and it often appears groping, uncertain. Almost playfully, various expressions are tried on: *'religione primordiale', 'religione pagana' 'religione neo-pagana', 'religione laicizzata'*. The latter concept demonstrates the closest formal and material proximity to the later, more thoroughly developed theories. If one translates the expression as *'religion séculaire'* then one has already reached the terminology of Raymond Aron. Luigi Sturzo appears not to have been so content with any of his formulations as to adopt them in his systematic treatment of the *stato totalitario,* however. Here, he restricts himself to the general concept of religion: 'Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism are religions and must be religions.' If one considers how successful and fitting the expression *'religione*

laicizzata' appears from our perspective, though, then this is astonishing. Perhaps Sturzo's decision to use the general concept of religion can be explained by his opinion that a genuinely religious component is at work here: not on the part of the dictators, to be sure, but certainly on the part of the people. The totalitarian powers enlist this component in their ruling technique. The 'permanent mobilization of the population' can be attained only through a *'sfruttamento del sentimento religioso'* ('an abusive exploitation of the human religious sentiment')—a formulation that Sturzo had already used in 1925.[44]

Conclusion

Luigi Sturzo attentively observed the development of the tyrannical regimes of our century and attempted to interpret that development with great conceptual care. Certainly, his analyses have weak points as well. The ease with which he applies the concept of state is conspicuous in this respect. In all writings before 1945, 'totalitarian' usually emerges in the phrase, *'stato totalitario'*. Hannah Arendt's question as to whether the essence of totalitarianism does not in fact lie with the negation of the state—whether Italian Fascism can be subsumed to this concept at all, therefore—was beyond his horizon. Further, his concept of totalitarianism possesses a certain blurring around the edges. Thus do his systematic writings repeatedly count Franco's Spain or Pilsudsky's Poland among the totalitarian regimes. Nonetheless, his analyses of Fascism, Bolshevism and National Socialism represent an early and essential contribution to the adequate scientific systematization of the despotic regimes of the twentieth century.

Notes

1 *Opera omnia di Luigi Sturzo* (Bologna, 1954 ff.).
2 *Collana di studi sturziani,* ed. Gabriele De Rosa (Rome, 1972 ff.).
3 Francesco Piva and Francesco Malgeri, *Vita di Luigi Sturzo* (*Collana di studi sturziani,* Vol. I); Gabriele De Rosa, *Luigi Sturzo* (Turin, 1977).
4 For example: Gabriele De Rosa, *L'utopia politica di Luigi Sturzo* (Brescia, 1972); Alberto di Giovanni and Eugenio Guccione (eds), *Politica e sociologia in Luigi Sturzo* (Milan, 1981); Alberto di Giovanni, *Attualità di Luigi Sturzo: pensatore sociale e politico* (Milan, 1987).
5 Compare here Ludwig Volk, *Das Reichskonkordat vom 20. Juli 1933: Von den Ansätzen in der Weimarer Republik bis zur Ratifizierung am 10. September 1933* (a publication of the Kommission für Zeitgeschichte), ed. Konrad Repgen, Vol. B/5, p. 126.
6 Jens Petersen, 'Die Entstehung des Totalitarismusbegriffs in Italien', in Manfred Funke (ed.), *Totalitarismus: Ein Studien-Reader zur Herrschaftsanalyse moderner Diktaturen,* Vol. XIV of *Bonner Schriften zur Politik und Zeitgeschichte* (Dusseldorf, 1978), pp. 105–28.
7 Ibid., p. 117.
8 Ibid., pp. 117 ff.
9 Luigi Sturzo, 'Popolarismo e fascismo', *Opera omnia,* Vol. II/4, p. 235.
10 Ibid., p. 240.
11 'La Rivoluzione Liberale vom 15.1.1924', cited from Petersen, 'Entstehung', p. 118, footnote 77.
12 Luigi Sturzo, 'Nazionalismo e Internazionalismo', *Opera omnia,* Vol. I/10, p. 71.

13 Luigi Sturzo, *Italien und der Fascismus* (Cologne, 1926). The original Italian edition is now in *Opera Omnia,* Vol. I/1.

14 See, for example, Walter Schlangen, *Die Totalitarismustheorie: Entwicklung und Probleme* (Stuttgart, 1976), p. 26; also Wolfgang Wippermann, *Faschismustheorien. Zum Stand der gegenwärtigen Diskussion* (Darmstadt, 1989), p. 53.

15 The reference to this can be found in De Rosa, *Sturzo,* pp. 277–84.

16 Sturzo, *Italien und der Fascismus,* p. 224.

17 Francesco Nitti, *Bolschewismus, Faschismus und Demokratie* (Munich, 1926).

18 Sturzo, *Italien und der Fascismus,* p. 258. Worded almost identically in Nitti, *Bolschewismus, Faschismus und Demokratie,* p. 102.

19 Compare Ernst Nolte, 'Zeitgenössische Theorien über den Faschismus', *Marxismus—Faschismus—Kalter Krieg* (Stuttgart, 1977), pp. 125–74, 168.

20 Schlangen, *Totalitarismustheorie,* pp. 36, 38–40.

21 Max Lerner, 'The Pattern of Dictatorship', *Dictatorship in the Modern World* (Minnesota, 1935). Cited here from the German edition: Max Lerner, 'Das Grundmuster der Diktatur', in Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung* (*Wege der Forschung,* Vol. CXL) (Darmstadt, 1974), pp. 30–48.

22 Hans Kohn, 'Communist and Fascist Dictatorship', *Dictatorship in the Modern World* (Minnesota, 1935). Cited here from the German edition: Hans Kohn, 'Die kommunistische und die Faschistische Diktatur. Eine vergleichende Studie', in Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung* (*Wege der Forschung,* Volume CXL), pp. 49–63.

23 Carlton J.H.Hayes, 'The Novelty of Totalitarianism in the History of Western Civilization', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 82 (1940), pp. 102 ff. Cited here from the German translation: Carlton J.H.Hayes, 'Der Totalitarismus als etwas Neues in der Geschichte der westlichen Kultur', in Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung* (*Wege der Forschung,* Volume CXL), pp. 86–100.

24 Walter Schlangen, *Totalitarismustheorie,* p. 37.

25 Compare, for example, the article, 'L'Austria e L'Inghilterra', *New Britain,* 28 Feb. 1934, reprinted in *Opera omnia* Vol. II/6.3, pp. 24–28. Also 'Capo di stato e dittatori', *El Matì, 7* July 1934, in *Opera omnia,* Vol. II/6.3, pp. 57–60.

26 Luigi Sturzo, *Politica e Morale* (*Opera omnia,* Vol. I/4), pp. 30–4.

27 Compare Walter Schlangen, *Totalitarismustheorie,* p. 42.

28 Ibid., p. 50.

29 Sturzo, *Politica e Morale,* pp. 29 ff.

30 Sturzo, *Politica e Morale,* p. 31.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid., p. 33**.**

33 Sturzo, *Politica e Morale,* pp. 33 ff.

34 Sturzo, *Politica e Morale,* p. 34.

35 Pius XI, letter to Ildefons Cardinal Schuster, 26 April 1931, *AAS XXIII,* pp. 145–50.

36 Luigi Sturzo, 'L'Uomo e il Regime', *Opera omnia,* I/4, p. 259.

37 For example, Fritz Gerlich, *Der Kommunismus als Lehre vom Tausendjährigen Reich* (Munich, 1919).

38 Foundational then as now is Norman Cohn, *Das Ringen um das Tausendjährigen Reich. Revolutiondrer Messianismus im Mittelalter und sein Fortleben in den modernen totalitären Bewegungen* (Bern, Munich, 1961).

39 Franz Werfel, 'Können wir ohne Gottesglauben leben?', *Zwischen Oben und Unten* (Stockholm, 1946), pp. 85 ff.

40 Sturzo, *Opera omnia,* Vol. II/6.2, pp. 286–8.

41 Sturzo, *Opera omnia,* Vol. II/6.3, pp. 3–5.

42 Ibid., pp. 120–3.

43 Ibid., p. 121.
44 Compare the article, 'La Politica religiosa del fascismo', of 17 August 1925 in *Opera omnia,*
Vol II/6.1, p. 73.

Discussion of the papers of Petersen and Schäfer

Chair: Victor Conzemius

MÖLLER: I have a few remarks for both presenters, with questions attached to them. Mr Petersen, I found it very impressive how you portrayed the early history of Fascism and its differentiation in 1923, 1925, 1928.1 see a certain analogy to the underestimation of National Socialism in Germany, which Karl Dietrich Bracher rightly said was one of the essential prerequisites for the success of National Socialism.

Especially interesting for this comparison is what you said about the limited horizon of action of both Fascist and anti-Fascist politicians at this time. It seems to me that it was much clearer to the Nazi leadership—by the end of the 1920s, at any rate—as to what they sought to achieve and how their totalitarian state should look. Here, in my opinion, lies an essential difference from the attempts of both the Fascists and the anti-Fascists to get their bearings in Italy. This attempt was still uncertain, whereas in Germany, a lack of orientation similar to that of the Italian anti-Fascists appears to have existed only for the anti-National Socialists. One would then have to ask why. One reason, certainly, lies with the fact that the Fascist experience of rule in Italy was already on hand for the National Socialists: the time lag enabled a more precise setting of political objectives. If one begins with Ernst Nolte's well-justified assumption that both the Fascists and the National Socialists were students of the Bolshevists, then one also has to consider the role of the Bolshevist revolution and the Bolshevist Party as a treasure trove of political experience for the Italian Fascists. What was the relationship here, especially for Mussolini?

A second point of difference appears to me to be the one Mr Schäfer also very expressly mentioned at the very end. Obviously, Fascism and National Socialism both operate with the concept of the state, but the concept has an entirely different status that corresponds with a differing understanding of the state in Italy and Germany. The Fascists evidently spoke of an 'absolutism of the state'—you used this concept, Mr Petersen. Whereas for Germany, one might regard the pre-eminent position of the rational, state administration to characterize the National Socialist structure of rule. That means, therefore, that, in terms of the German tradition, National Socialist rule partially suspended the classical functions of the state. Whereby in Italy, evidently, one can see a heightening, an intensification of state action. What appears to me to be shared—and this is especially important in my opinion—is that both Fascists and National Socialists were convinced that they were revolutionary and had accomplished a revolution.

In light of these reflections, I now have a few questions that are directed in part to both presenters. Up to Sturzo, the concept of Fascism is apparently not very precise. Thus, it cannot be strictly differentiated according to the characteristics of totalitarianism as we have known them since the work of C.J.Friedrich. It would interest me to know

whether there was a discussion of the characteristics of Fascism in the earlier Italian discussions as well.

This question then leads to a material issue. Mr Schäfer, you spoke of Mussolini's Church-friendly politics. Both you and Mr Petersen mentioned the Christian politicians who perceived the contradiction between the Church and Fascism. Yet, how is it possible that an institution like the Church can have a relatively free place in a political system that is totalitarian in terms of its goals? For totalitarianism affects not only state organs, unions, parties and other social organizations, but the Church as well. Here would lie a difference from Germany, which is biconfessional. The Catholic Church, therefore, retains a role even in a totalitarian system: here is a contradiction that must be explained.

HÜRTEN: In all brevity, a word to that which Mr Möller stated regarding the different meanings of the state in Italy and Germany in the corresponding period. In 1934 and 1935, the National Socialists—and above all, Rosenberg-clearly rejected talk of the total state that was customary among the conservatives: not a total state, but a total movement. Mr Möller, you might then strengthen your theoretical reflections directly from the sources. As important as it is, the description 'political religion' is problematic in the application. There may indeed be various elements of a religious or pseudo-religious kind in this system, but Darrés' calendar for farmers, the cult of Wotan and others-to what extent were these representative? Goebbels expressly described such pseudo-religious undertakings, including Himmler's ancestral cult, as 'rubbish'. One must distinguish this from the National Socialist system as such. Of course a religious or quasi-religious element is present in the movement; National Socialism itself often claimed to arouse belief in the sense of religious faith. The belief in the Führer is ultimately not a rational or secular, but a religious belief. And finally, there are totalitarian systems—for which the Bolshevistic system may well be the clearest example—that have an eschatological element, that seek to bring history to its ultimate goal. One can find this with National Socialism as well, but it is not so clearly delineated. To this extent, I believe that one can indeed apply the concept 'political religion', but also that one should consider the justification very carefully in each case. One cannot simply conclude a political religion based on Darré and Co. alone, even if that may have been, so to speak, an important way-station historically.

JESSE: My question seeking further information goes out to both presenters. Mr Petersen, you have firmly dated it: 12 May 1923 was the first application of the concept 'totalitarian' to Italian Fascism by Giovanni Amendola. He also used the term 'totalitarian' in the second half of 1925, with reference to both Fascist Italy and the Communist Soviet Union. Mr Schäfer, you spoke of the Catholic politician, Sturzo, having applied the totalitarian concept as a common term for Fascism and Communism in the year 1926. Is there not a gap there? Was the concept not already in use before the middle of 1925, concerning Fascism and Communism equally? At least, the suspicion lurks that the comparison might in fact have been in the air.

I have, by the way, another impression that is more intuitive than rationally demonstrable: the impression that, in treating the question of concept-formation, developments in Russia have been underestimated to this point. Mr Möller's comments might also be so understood. Could it not be that the concept of the totalitarian had already been applied earlier: specifically, in view of the cataclysmic

events in Russia? For there can be no doubt that many contemporaries, especially those coming from the ranks of social democracy, saw a new type in the unprecedented, world-revolutionary process that was occurring in Russia: unlimited violence on the one hand, absolute justification of it on the other. As we know from Ernst Nolte's *European Civil War,* the correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* Alfons Paquet, already spoke of 'Lenin's revolutionary totalism' in 1919. With gaze trained on Russia, I believe that a *terra incognita* opens itself up here—one that may well hold surprises. For example, this would pertain to an investigation of anti-Bolshevist writing after 1917, whether arising within Russia or outside it. Perhaps the concept emerges already before 1923—with reference to Russia specifically. It is nonetheless a paradox: the concept of 'totalitarian' emerged in a system that probably did not even count as one. Conversely, the concept is supposed initially to have had no application to another system, Bolshevist Russia, although this system earned the title 'totalitarian', without any doubt at all.

One should therefore follow up both problems. The first: was the totalitarian concept not in fact already used before 1923, with gaze trained on Russia? And second: when was 'totalitarianism' mentioned for the first time in the context of a dictatorship of the Right and the Left? Scholars with a knowledge of the Italian and Russian languages, 'to the front!'

BACKES: I can add to this question and even provide a few elements of the answer. To some extent, the comparison of extreme movements that were opposed to the project of constitutionalism itself was a tradition that we can detect already in the liberal movements of the nineteenth century. One example: in the first edition of the *State Lexicon* of Rotteck and Welcker, Karl von Rotteck states something to the effect that many and diverse parallels exist between the extreme leftists, the Jacobins—these above all are before his eyes—and the monarchist Ultras or Ultra-royalists. Those are the two extreme poles of the political spectrum in the period of German history from 1815 until the revolution in March 1848. These are then compared in opposition to constitutionalism. Following the First World War, the comparison of the extreme movements that were opposed to liberal goals gels into the concept of political extremism. The earliest source of a rigorous, scientific concept of extremism that is accessible to me arose from the French legal scholar and journalist, Maxime Leroy, in *Les techniques nouvelles du synicalisme* (Paris, 1921). For him, the extreme Left is comprised of the Bolsheviks in Russia; the extreme Right is still composed of the monarchist Ultras. In 1921, Fascism is understandably not yet included as an extreme movement. This then provides a starting-point for coining the concept of totalitarianism, whose structural parallels to that of extremism cannot be missed.

LINZ: I wished only to draw everyone's attention to the fact that the difference between the state and its meaning for Italian Fascism and National Socialism can already be seen in *Mein Kampf. Mein Kampf* is an attack on the Germans' faith in the state. In the eyes of the National Socialists, the movement (the Party) is of much greater significance than the state. In the case of Hitler, I believe, this kind of hostility toward the state naturally follows from his pan-German, Austrian nature. To him, the Austrian state was not a legitimate one; this is why he served in the German rather than the Austrian army. And here arises the entire problem of nation, state and democracy,

which we have as a significant problem in many countries today: the state has no legitimacy to many nationalists, and they proclaim an irredenta.

SPIEKER: I raised my hand about Mr Möller's inquiry about the relationship between Fascism and the Catholic Church. You mentioned that Fascism was very friendly toward the Church. That might be accurate for the 1920s, but in 1931 Fascism attempted to push the Church back into the sacristy. It forbade both Youth Work and Catholic Action from having any social influence. In response, Pius XI wrote his encyclical against Fascism, *Non abbiamo bisogno,* which is substantially different from his two later encyclicals of March 1937 against National Socialism and Communism. *Non abbiamo bisogno*—one would have to check whether the concept 'totalitarianism' appears there—is not an analysis of Fascism, but more like a lament. The Church is a force for the common good of Italy: why does this state now dare to hinder and forbid it? The encyclicals against National Socialism and Communism are essentially more analytical, more penetrating: National Socialism is not only analysed as pagan religion here, it is criticized as a totalitarian political movement. The same obtains for the encyclical on Communism. This friendliness, therefore: if it did prevail in the 1920s, then it may have corresponded to an indistinct self-awareness and a lack of clarity about political goals. In 1931, however, a further stage had been reached in the struggle with a totalitarian movement.

LÜBBE: I have two questions. The first relates to your presentation, and my request would be that you say something about the origin of Fascism's self-characterization as Fascism. In the German cultural sphere, only one who has enjoyed both instruction in Latin and a basic education in Roman history in high school could understand it.

The question is whether the self-characterization was enabled in Italy by the iconic presence of Fascist elements in the traditional sense, in a sense that stood before the eyes of the uneducated as well.

In the German cultural sphere, only one single example occurs to me: the coat of arms of the canton St Gallen, which has existed from the foundation of this canton in the nineteenth century to the present day.

MAIER: May I be permitted to interrupt? In the nineteenth century already, there is *'fasci'* in the sense of a movement, even a *'fasci democratici cristiani'*. Thus *'fasci'* means simply 'alliance'.

LÜBBE: My second question also pertains to the Nolte thesis of which you reminded us earlier: the thesis that Fascism in the broader sense, as Nolte characterized it in his earliest book, would be characterized as anti-Bolshevism. Was a popular literature on Italian Fascism distributed? Did it exert influence down to the level of the schools and spread a general knowledge of Bolshevist conditions? Utterly without a doubt, such a literature on German National Socialism was distributed here. I am no historian, but I recall from my school days that we were supplied with such literature, which had no goal other than to instil in us a deterring opinion about Bolshevist conditions. There was a book by Albrecht—sometime at the end of the 1930s. Albrecht was a senior forestry official who was a Communist at first, but then later released into National Socialist Germany. He characterizes not only the lack of freedom, but also the ecological catastrophes of economic mismanagement wrought by deforestation of the woods.

Yet another, very minor comment on your theme: the search for theoretical pre-formulations of that which would later be thematized by history and political science under the term 'totalitarianism'. My suggestion would be to investigate sometime whether the history of the concept of fanaticism, a concept that belongs to the old study of morals stemming from about the turn from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, moved beyond this subject into political theory That might be the case wherever a political theory of the terror of 1792 to 1794 was attempted. Here, the concept of fanaticism suddenly becomes political. And yet another, very small, pointed suggestion: Heine's famous work in particular, the *Geschichte der Theologie und Philosophie in Deutschland* (1835), relates fanaticism—fanaticism that has become political—to his warning to the French about Fichte. Fichte is revealed here to have been just as much an early socialist as he was an ultra-nationalist.

GÜNTHER: I come from Dresden. I have two questions for Mr Petersen. The first concerns the relationship of party and state. You said at the beginning that, the party becomes totalitarian and, with that, in fact ceases to be a party. Then you said in your lecture that everything is found *within* the state and—if I understood you correctly—the state serves as a total instrument. In my opinion, the conceptual formula holding that the state had the actual power of disposal concerning public matters is not convincing. I also ask because, at the time of the transition in 1989, there was research done at the Humboldt University (Berlin) in the GDR. This research replaced the term 'state property' with the more precise, if somewhat absurd-sounding 'Party property'. The decisive questions, for example whatever concerned public opinion—thus, the discontinuation of the Soviet journal, *Sputnik*—was decided by the Party leadership, not by someone like the postmaster general. That is a brief example indicating that the state was merely the executing instrument: the Party, by contrast, had the actual power of disposal. One should think that through again.

The second question: you said that the dictatorship first came into being through real, economic pressure, among others. The totalitarian understanding, however—one that gained expression by its dualization of good and evil or master and slave, for example—was already present *beforehand*. I now ask whether this totalitarian understanding might also have been generated from without, thus, also by economic pressure. Thus, what precisely are the causes and motivations of this totalitarian understanding? Voegelin expressed an opinion on this; he stated that evil is not something ethical, so to speak, but something existential, something one cannot fight ethically, but only with entirely different instruments. Would you accept that? Or was the duality that leads to a totalitarian understanding also favoured by external pressure?

HUTTNER: I actually raised my hand about a reference that has already come into the discussion. Specifically, I wanted to mention *In Communist Russia: Letters from Moscow,* a book by the journalist, Alfons Paquet, that appeared in 1919. 'Lenin's revolutionary totalism' is already mentioned here. In this context, I also wanted with all due caution to pose the question as to whether perhaps the exclusive concentration on the Italian linguistic realm of research in conceptual history has unconsciously led to the overlooking of one or another piece of evidence of an earlier application of the totalitarianism concept to revolutionary Russia.

PETERSEN: Now, that is such a large number of questions that I certainly will not be able to satisfy all wishes. In part, some contributions have addressed the questions that preceded them. I begin simply with those that I have noted down myself. One of the central problems is just what I have called the blindness of the acting figures, which is in hindsight is so massively conspicuous if you looked at a figure like Turati. He appears to be a completely different man—and there are many comparable examples of that. That which seemed in retrospect to be disaster and necessity, a necessary consequence, was not at base. One must break down this phenomenon of Fascism's origin, seizure and claim of power into its genetic moments again.

The central element, I believe, is the will to claim power. That is the central element that created this dictatorship, and the one that appears in retrospect as the actual motor of the events. If we take Sturzo, he writes the following in his book of 1926 that was already presented here—I cite the translation of the Dempfs: 'the instinct of self-preservation drives Fascism to establish a despotic system that is to be the single, exclusive expression of the country. This leads to the suppression of its opponent at any price. The opponents were lumped together under the name of anti-Fascism'. He writes that, then, at the end of 1925. This word, 'anti-Fascism', has no actual meaning because it gathered people, parties, directions, ideas of greatest variety, even of a completely contradictory nature. Yet, it surely gains a particular   meaning if it is understood as the pole opposite the totalitarian and absolutist position of Fascism—namely, as the demand for and emphasis upon the principle of freedom. Translated from *Posizione totalitaria e assolutista dell Fascismo*—the Dempfs translated that at the end of 1925. That appears in fact to be the motor, and several observers of the Italian scene saw it very clearly at that time. Take Guilelmo Ferrero, the great journalist and liberal historian of antiquity who was then persecuted by Fascism and went to Geneva and took over a professorship there. He stated very clearly in articles of 1924 and 1925: 'You cannot imagine that Mussolini now wants to establish a dictatorship. Even Caesar—this is probably a great example—even Caesar crossed the Rubicon with greatest reluctance; he did not want to, he was forced. The situation forced him to do it' And concerning 1927, Briand then said afterwards, 'one does not cross a Rubicon twice—above all, not if blood is flowing in it'. This origination of the dictatorship against the will of those acting—this, I believe, is an entirely central element. In despair, Mussolini beseeched the Liberals and the Catholic, social democratic opponents in autumn 1924: 'now, finally, wipe the slate clean. If you beat us together so much from the outside, then Fascism will close into a block; then, it will no longer be prepared to co-operate. You must be open, so to speak, for what we are offering you'. Yet, I believe that the path could have been no other in the end, precisely because Fascism wanted to hold this monopoly of power in its hand. This, I believe, was the central motor that drove this entire development forward.

The reception of Bolshevism in Italy is a large topic from which, I believe, one could learn a great deal. There are not yet very many studies of it. There was virulent anti-Bolshevist propaganda in Italy after 1917. If you saw the Fironi exhibition—it is now in Rome and should have come to Darmstadt, but did not come—Fironi was a brilliant but extremely polemic and dangerous caricaturist and polemicist whose drawings of 1918, 1919 and 1920 offered a massive anti-Bolshevist propaganda in

the journals of the Italian industrial associations. The fear of Bolshevism was probably not much smaller in the Italian bourgeoisie than it was in the German bourgeoisie. And to analyse this anti-Bolshevist propaganda after it assumed its visual character, so to speak, would be a great task that has not yet been achieved. In many ways, Fascism was a counter-revolution against the feared Bolshevist revolution that then did not occur.

Church and state: this question has already been answered in part by Mr Spieker. I want here only to add something that is very interesting. In 1931, the conflict surrounding the Azione Cattolica, the Catholic Youth, was in fact a central point of the relationship of state and church, of Fascism and Church in Italy. The concept of totalitarianism emerges in the conversation of Pius XI and Mussolini. Both say in 1931, Pius XI says to Mussolini that one already knows that 'totalitarismo aqui nolfia totalitari'—something to that effect. This conflict then ended, therefore, not with a victory of Fascism, but with a clear stalemate: Catholic culture could reorganize itself. And that which came after 1945— namely, the rule of the Democrazia

Cristiana—cannot be understood at all if one does not also consider a) the Lateran Concordance of 1929 and b) the cease-fire of 1931.

Dual state: certainly, the relationship of state and party was completely different for National Socialism from its relationship for Fascism. In Italy, there was the state primate who was proclaimed by Mussolini in 1926 and 1927 under the pressure of the nationalists, liberal conservatives and industrialists. The primate of the prefects against the federal party in the province—the state representative has the ultimate say. This was the relation of state and party in Fascism. But there was also the radical wing of Fascism. It balked at this arrangement, but was tamed and then used the chance that was provided by the German leverage to revitalize the Fascist movement in 1933 and the years that followed. Those are the groups in Fascism that supported a pro-German alliance, people like Farinacci; that is the extreme wing of the party, which wanted to bring the stalled situation in Italy in motion again through an alliance with National Socialist Germany. Thus there emerged above all the salon Fascism of 1943 to 1945, which is again a kind of dynamized form of the Fascism of the early to mid–1920s.

Defining characteristics of totalitarianism: in a telephone conversation yesterday, I already drew Mr Schäfer's attention to the existence of 'El estado totalitario', an earlier essay by Sturzo which appeared in Spanish in 1935. This is an essay he wrote 80 pages long, in which that which you present as having arisen in 1938 is already all fully formulated in 1935. Thus, one must position Sturzo's emergence as a theorist of totalitarianism, so to speak, even earlier. Apparently, this was a writing that he reformulated based on the National Socialist seizure of power with his Italian experiences in the background. Strangely, this writing was not included in Sturzo's collected works. I do not know why.

Fascism as a political religion: there are new research contributions, very good and interesting contributions, by a student of De Felice who has now become his successor at the Roman University. Two years ago, Emilio Gentile published a book entitled *Le culto de liturdio* in which Gentile presents the thesis—which I hold to be very convincing—that Fascism was in fact a political religion. It began with the new calendar that Mussolini introduced in the expectation that Fascist Italy would be one

of the four great powers of the earth by the year 2000. This is not the place to present the thesis in more detail, but I regard it to be very, very substantial.

Mr Jesse, totalitarianism: when was this expression used? I have already referred to Amendola, who had already united both phenomena under one heading in the summer of 1925. But there are earlier voices—this begins in 1924 and then assumes further forms in the Anti-Fascist Delegation of 1925 and 1926.

Mr Lübbe: the question about the Fascism concept. In the nineteenth century, *'fasci'* was a concept used in Italian culture to refer to leftist political and social movements. In the year 1894, for example, the Fasci Siciliani was a large revolutionary mass movement of peasants against the central state.

This concept then moved over into the right end of the spectrum, just as nationalism also wandered from left to right beginning in the 1890s. And in 1914–in the winter of 1914 to 1915–Mussolini founded the Fasci di Revoluzionaria in order to press Italy into the war. The concept of *fasci* was popular at that time and generally known through the founding, in 1917, 1918, of a large, supra-parliamentary, supra-partisan collective movement in Parliament—namely, the Fasci Parlamentari, which is practically the party of the Italian Fatherland: a great collective movement of the right that seeks to hold Italy within the camp of the Entente and to win the war. And that, I believe, is the actual reason why Mussolini used this name in founding the Fascist movement in Milan on 23 March 1919: precisely because it was to be, not a party, but a movement.

INTERRUPTION: Did Mussolini use the word *'fanatismo'* in a positive sense?

PETERSEN: I do not know the answer to that, but, at first glance, I would say yes. However, one would have to compare the evidence here.

CONZEMIUS: May I very briefly add something? How did it happen that Don Sturzo welcomed the Lateran concordats—if that is correct? Here in Germany, these emerge repeatedly as a quasi-acknowledgement of Fascism. That would be the question that Mr Möller posed, only explicated in a particular direction.

SCHÄFER: I would like first to address the question of Mr Möller, which was also raised by Mr Spieker and now by Mr Conzemius. How can a totalitarian regime co-exist with the Church at all?

The ideal type of totalitarian regime cannot do this. Bolshevism attempted to push back the Church entirely, just as National Socialism did. During the period of the war, certainly, it placed certain restrictions upon itself. For the period that followed, however, we now know that it had radical plans. If one observes the relation of state and church, then one can very well understand Hannah Arendt's question as to whether Fascism was a totalitarian system at all.

Mr Spieker, I detect a quiet doubt in your contribution concerning the *rapprochement* of Fascism and the Church in the early 1920s. Here, one must recall that the Church had always hoped that the PPI could solve the problems that the Church had perceived as particularly pressing after the Italian state came into existence: the legal position of the Pope and the Vatican City, religious instruction, etc. But the hands of the PPI were always tied by coalitions. It was then Mussolini who brought things in motion shortly after his final seizure of power: the return of the crucifix in schools and public buildings, the possibility that priests could instruct from the catechism in the schools. In brief: Mussolini introduced an entire bundle of measures that were clearly

Church-friendly. That the voices with the Vatican calling for a closer collaboration with Mussolini soon multiplied was inevitable.

Don Sturzo's approval of the Lateran concordances, which was mentioned by Mr Conzemius, does not seem to me to be so surprising. Don Sturzo had also grown up in a tradition (keyword: the prisoner in the Vatican) for which it was generally assumed that a genuine relaxation of relations between the   Church and the liberal state would be possible only if the 'Roman Question' were clarified as well. Whether Sturzo also wrote something about the problem of an implicit acknowledgement of the Fascist regime, I do not know now.

Professor Hürten has correctly emphasized the fact that no one among the National Socialists really took the fiddling about with the farmer's calendar and such things seriously either. One knew that these things were not essential to National Socialism and its self-understanding. For many external observers, however, these examples made something clear. With Don Sturzo, one can chronologically follow his growing awareness, his heightening feeling that this was something new, that they want more than merely political influence.

The concept of 'political religions' is truly difficult. As one one can gather from his *Autobiographical Reflections,* Eric Voegelin himself consciously dropped the concept. We have taken it up in the research project as a concept by which to bundle all the religious, philosophical, ecclesiastical and sociological approaches to the theme into one. So one can certainly let it remain.

In answer to Mr Huttner's question on the concept of totalism and the concentration on Italy: if one regards the concept and theory of totalitarianism as a concept by which to compare the new dictatorships of the twentieth century, then it of course is clear that such comparison can begin only with the emergence of the second totalitarian system—of Fascism in Italy.

PETERSEN: May I supply one more piece of information here? There is a book about Fascist Italy by the journalist, Kaminsky, that appeared in 1925. The concept of totalism also emerges here already. In the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* I saw that totalitarianism is mentioned for the first time in September and October 1925, in an article by Lavaskan, the Italy correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Therefore, the concept is here already as well. One therefore sees how it spreads gradually among the European languages. Yet, I believe that Sturzo achieved one of the breakthroughs in many of his works. Sturzo's book, *Italy and Fascism,* was translated into all the great European languages—into French, English, German and Spanish—and it probably contributed very substantially to this breakthrough.

CONZEMIUS: May I ask where the German edition was published?

PETERSEN: By the Gilde-Verlag in Cologne in 1926.

CONZEMIUS: I believe, then, that we have addressed both lectures extensively and in a very animated discussion for which I once again thank the two presenters as well as the discussants.

3

Waldemar Gurian and the development of the concept of totalitarianism

Heinz Hürten

With justification, the name of Waldemar Gurian has been connected with the 'first of the critical theses of totalitarianism'.[1] Nonetheless, his part in the early formation of a terminology that attempted to capture the uniqueness of the new despotic regimes of the twentieth century arose, not from an intention to develop scientific concepts, but from an attempt to describe empirically. In Gurian's early, German years, this attempt did not yet have the political as its actual and exclusive object at all. Publicist that he was by talent and inclination, he sought to hear the 'music of the time', as he said, in the diversity of its voices,[2] not to promote the discourse of a political science that was still young. That he nonetheless succeeded—even if his success was originally only a by-product of investigations that lay elsewhere—lay with his peculiar capacity to link penetrating analysis to an eidetic reduction of phenomena to their essential, typical, form-endowing state. Not without reason did he revere Max Scheler as his teacher.[3]

In his extensive analyses of anything that allowed him to hear the 'music of the time', the early fragments and building blocks that would later allow him to become one of the spokespeople of the academic discussion surrounding totalitarian systems already accumulated. He became such a spokesperson after immigrating to the USA, where he became a university professor of political science at Notre Dame.

Thus did he already recognize early on certain parallels in the structures of Fascist Italy and the Soviet Union. In a way that was characteristic for him, he saw these parallels not only in the comparable elements of both regimes' ruling practice, but also in their efforts to endow a disoriented society with an artificial meaning. His great work on Bolshevism of 1931[4] was epochal for its scientific analysis of the Soviet Union. Of infinitely more importance, however, is the fact that the book marked an approach to his later model of totalitarianism, even if the 'total state, which brings all social life into its sway' had not yet been conceptually distinguished from an 'absolute state in the extreme sense of the word'. Even the state was still seen exclusively as a component and reference point of the political. Nonetheless, the recognition of a 'complete politicization and socialization of the human being', and an 'absolutization of the secular social world' was significant.[5] These formulas would later prove themselves fruitful in the formation of a totalitarianism concept. For Gurian recognized the same phenomenon, 'the development of the political and the social to powers that determine and bear everything', only a little later in his analysis of the 'new nationalism' of which National Socialism appeared to him only a part. To Gurian, this phenomenon was the hallmark of the 'total state' that was much discussed before Hitler's assumption of power in Germany.[6] Only later did Gurian make the parallelization to Soviet totalitarianism that was possible here. This did not yet occur through a new kind of marker that comprehended both systems in the same way, but through an extension of the term 'Bolshevism' to National Socialism—perhaps with polemic intent. For he first expressly equated National Socialism and Bolshevism—

and in doing so characterized National Socialism as Bolshevism—in 1935, in an article in *Deutsche Briefe,* a journal he published in Swiss exile. Although the actual content of this article pertained to the struggle against the rule of Hitler, the characterization of Bolshevism here can already be understood as an early definition of totalitarianism,[7] for it is characterized by a 'certain basic attitude toward all questions of society', as well as by an unrestricted, ideologically justified party rule. 'In both movements…is carried out a self-deification of the human being and his work.' Gurian still attempted to describe totalitarianism as Bolshevism in the period that followed—most emphatically in his book, *Bolshewismus als Weltgefahr.*[8] Here, he defined Bolshevism as a new type of rule that is founded upon a faith in the absolute pre-eminence of the society. The rule of a single party follows from the sway of a single, comprehensive interpretation of meaning, of a *Weltanschauung* that is also capable of supporting a stable organization of its adherents. Also new is the adaptation of the technique of rule to the conditions of the era of the masses. The existing ruler is interpreted as an expression of the will of the masses. The regime's monopoly on the public, the effect of which further heightens the unveiled terror practised against those who think differently, does not allow the political system's claim to validity ever to be publicly placed in question. 'The absolutist activity [of the "Bolshevist" regime thus understood], which is steered solely by considerations of expediency, entails a public simulation of the freedom of the people and the masses.'[9]Certainly, Gurian found Bolshevism's core 'in the belief in the central significance of the political-social order'.[10] Yet, such 'elevation of the political-social…to determinative vitality' was achieved not only in Russia, but also in Germany. In the latter, moreover, it had been achieved in express opposition to the Marxist-stamped Bolshevism of the Soviet Union.[11] On this basis, Gurian set up a far-reaching comparison of the two systems. Although the ruling techniques still stand in the foreground here, the ideologies that justify them, despite their assumed insignificance for practical politics, were nonetheless granted a correspondence to social needs and historically relevant trends. This correspondence, however, is not more closely described.

In *Marxism am Ende?,* a book that appeared one year later,[12] Gurian merely mentioned a possible parallel of 'Bolshevism' to Germany—probably in order to gain the support of the German chair of the publishing house. Yet, he made it clear that the consequences of the 'elevation of the political-social…to determinative vitality' were valid for Germany as well. Such elevation brings a 'total secularization', a 'total politicization', and it creates 'a public that seeks to place the individual, without remainder, into the service of social mechanism'. Consequently, the individual can protect his individuality solely as a residuum of 'pure inwardness'.[13]

All these works of Gurian before his emigration to the United States arose from his attempt to understand the existential danger that was posed by the totalitarian systems to Europe. To this extent, these works were reflections and warnings rather than conceptions arising from a genuinely scientific motivation. This is why Gurian did not regard himself as obliged to enter into discourse with other contemporary attempts to interpret either the National Socialist or the Bolshevist phenomenon. Possibly, he was unaware that the 'total state' had already been described in autumn 1934, at a conference offered by the Department of Research of the Ecumenical Council for Practical Christianity in Geneva. Here, the total state was described as an 'ideocracy, that is, the dictatorship of a world-view that has been rendered obligatory by the state'. 'Because it attempts to force all

spheres of life in its power and to mould the human being according to its image, it elevates itself to the status of a pseudo-church—a church that demands belief, yet has no gospel to offer.'[14] Nor did he notice Hans Peters' definition of the 'total state' as 'a state borne by a particular idea of the state, which makes the claim, in striving to identify state and society, to exercise its omnipotence in all areas of human life'.[15] Still more astonishing of course is that Gurian never considered what his friend, Jacques Maritain, had already expertly said about Fascist and Communist totalitarianism in the first edition of *Humanisme integral* in 1936.[16] Evidently, he regarded himself not as a partner in a scientific discourse, but as a lonely herald—one sometimes close to despair—of a disaster that seemed unavoidable.[17]

Nonetheless, Gurian gained insights during this time that later stood the scientific discourse in good stead.[18] Without referring directly to Gurian, the interpretation of totalitarian systems *per se* as 'total politicization'—an interpretation that had already been established in the Bolshevism book of 1931 and had moved to the fore after *Marxism am Ende?*—was later taken up in the research.[19]

Gurian, the publicist, always undertook his analyses of Bolshevism and National Socialism against the background of deeper questions concerning the state of European society. This is why he sought out the social origins and pre-conditions of the totalitarian system, as well as its possible relation to the deficiencies of the European social and state order as he perceived them. The results of Gurian's background researches can be succinctly captured in three theses:

1 The 'total politicization', or 'elevation of the political-social…to determinative vitality' corresponded to an 'absolutization of the mundane social world' among the European bourgeoisie. For this class, religion and the church have become mere external trappings of private inwardness and are neither politically nor socially binding.[20]

2 For their part, the totalitarian systems are reactions to the social development that allowed the masses to emerge under nineteenth-century conditions and successfully to gain political influence. The masses had freed themselves from the ties that had integrated them in the nineteenth century. Thus, 'the problem of the twentieth century' no longer lies in the 'incorporation of rootless masses into the state', but in the 'salvation of the state in general through an immediate connection of state leadership to the masses'. Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism solve this problem by abolishing the 'contradiction between state and masses' through their 'monopoly of the public'. 'The anarchy of a state that breaks up into various heaps of partisan parties…replaced by a despotism in which the will of the state and of the masses coincide.' This control of the masses by means of the new political system offers a solution that is only apparent, however. At that time, Gurian saw a way out only via a moral regeneration of the society, an integration of 'reason, morality and order in the socio-political world as well'.[21]

3 The cause of the success of the totalitarian systems lies in the moral powerlessness of liberal democracies. Like the bourgeois world, both liberalism and the parliamentary democracy that is based on it have no binding meaningful content—this was according to Gurian, who was schooled by Carl Schmitt. Thus, liberalism and parliamentary democracy are helpless when confronted with any political system that is represented out of inner conviction. The 'social and spiritual processes of dissolution' paralyse the energies of those who have to brace themselves again the totalitarian systems. 'The

belief' of the totalitarian ideologies, 'whose content is still so inaccessible', is nonetheless capable of arousing convictions and submission; it 'enjoys victory over a world without belief',[22]

Gurian left the path set down by the final two positions—that of connecting the totalitarian systems more closely either to the phenomenon of the masses or to the institution of political democracy—to others to follow. In later years, it was likely the influence of his friend, Maritain, that helped him successfully to overcome his earlier, integralist world-view that bound political order and stability to the pre-requisite of the public recognition of 'reason, morality and order'. Yet, his first lecture as university professor in the United States was still based entirely on the views of his early European years.

This work by Gurian, which was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association in December 1939, already differs markedly from his previous works in that it includes a conceptual clarification, at least at the beginning. The linguistic expressions of 'totalitarian' and 'totalitarian state' that Gurian still used at this time—albeit not entirely consistently—were to be tested for their suitability in describing various political regimes. Gurian then formulated four characteristics in order to lend his concept the required selectivity. The totalitarian state is characterized by a ruling group that is distinct from the aristocratic and liberal elites. Rather than being constituted by inherited position or material interests, this ruling group is hierarchically organized according to voluntary membership. Moreover, it is preserved following the attainment of state power—a power with which it uses the given administrative and political instruments for its own interests. Both the cohesiveness and the claim to rule of this elite are based on an ideology, now also called a 'political religion', which serves to justify both the existence and the power of this group.

The political religion is established by means of directing public opinion. Its content promotes the veneration, not of a power-holder or a dynasty, but of the masses, which themselves are embodied in the leader and the ruling elite. This new religion demands not only external observance, but internal assent as well.

The establishment and preservation of the political religion requires levels of the simultaneous concentration and expansion of power that are unknown to date. It also requires the elimination of the rights of independent groups and other social forces such as the family, as well as an unlimited propagandic influence on the populace.

But how did such systems become possible? In seeking an answer, the apocalyptic horizon of Gurian's European experience and the Catholic, integralist world-view of the years of his German youth still reveal themselves to be unbroken. Gurian sees the totalitarian systems primarily as phenomena of reaction to 'scepticism, relativism and historicism', characteristics that seem to him to be inseparably tied to modern democracy. The convictions that democracy had once created no longer have any force. At the same time, the totalitarian systems react to the dissolution of the unity of the state. Internally shattered by endless struggles of interest, the democratic state is no longer capable of guaranteeing such unity in crisis situations. The elimination of traditional and moral barriers makes it easier to enlist the latest technology into the service of political goals— of propaganda as well as armament. The relativistic scepticism of modern society renders it incapable of recognizing the true intentions of the totalitarian power-holders and meeting their attacks with the necessary firmness. The equality of the citizens in

democracy is called into question by the continued existence of social inequalities; and the more clearly those inequalities are revealed in periods of economic need, the more forcefully. Yet, the left-wing parties that are formed in order to overcome them remain restricted to one social group. They are thereby perceived as a threat to national unity. Overcoming these parties is believed to require a new political integration. Gurian saw a further causal factor in the failure of rational constructions of society: with their 'rationalistic, utilitarian psychology', such constructions misrepresent human reality. They thereby create a space for the desire for national community, a community that is supposed to overcome both the relativism of democracy and the utopian rationalism of social constructions.

Astonishingly inconspicuous compared both to his own earlier positions and to those of some of his contemporaries is the section in which Gurian describes the position of the Catholic Church on modern totalitarianism. Discussing only the inaugural encyclical of Pius XII, Gurian extracts the thesis that the Church accuses totalitarianism of being 'a product of modern secularization and the turn to immanentism'. To be sure, the opposite conclusion would be more farreaching. In the totalitarian systems, the right order of peace grounded on justice and love is replaced by an artificial order which reverses the order of God:

> the danger of modern democracies is in delivering God to the wishes of the individual. The totalitarian systems either replace God by the closed, self-sufficient immanentism of the society, or they misuse the famous sentence of the New Testament: 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.' The totalitarian Caesar decides what can be given to God. God is no longer the aim of the political unity, but its means.[23]

For Gurian, the outbreak of the Second World War undoubtedly signified a confirmation of his concerns about the future. By this time, he saw in the totalitarian systems—a term he used consistently from this point on, albeit without justifying this change of linguistic usage—the defining characteristic of his historical epoch.[24] Once he had accepted this adaptation of Hegel's thesis, he could regard it as no coincidence that the European democracies did not succeed in bringing the totalitarian systems to battle each other; on the contrary, the latter had united in order to make Hitler's war against Poland and the Western powers possible. Nonetheless, Trends in Modern Politics', an essay written in May 1940, is suffused with a mood entirely different from that of his speech of December 1939. In his analysis of the political situation, Gurian stays with his earlier thesis. The world's movement toward democracy has stalled; the possibility that totalitarian regimes can even exist proves that basic democratic convictions have lost their former general validity. The depiction of the totalitarian regime's ruling technique has been refined: influenced by Ernst Fraenkel's *Doppelstaat,* a manuscript that Gurian read before its publication, he now provides a more precise description of terror as an instrument of rule. Yet, his estimation of democracy as a possible adversary of the totalitarian systems has been transformed entirely. Owing both to the waning of the unquestioned belief in free discussion and political plurality and to the simultaneous recognition by power-conscious politicians and promotion-seeking youths of opportunities outside the existing democratic

system, democracies have retained their historic chance. Thus, democracy can and must defend itself. Because totalitarian systems are superior to authoritarian systems in terms of their hold on the masses, the latter have no chance against the former. Because totalitarian regimes destroy all stabilizing factors, their gradual transition in the direction of democratic freedom is impossible. Only the democracies, therefore, can ultimately oppose them. In this competition of systems, Gurian perceives both the weaknesses of the totalitarian regimes and the possibilities of democracy to resist. Yet an abstract comparison cannot answer the question as to which system will establish itself in the long term; even a superior culture can succumb if it lacks vitality or its leaders are neither capable nor prepared to fight. Thus, the decision concerning the future of democracy depends upon whether the belief in freedom, in political pluralism and the rights of the individual might once again gain strength.

Evidently, Gurian's confidence that the totalitarian regimes would not rule the future increased during the war, and this at a rate of approximately the same pace at which Gurian identified the totalitarian systems as political religions. His confidence in both respects became manifest in the short essay that Gurian contributed in 1942 to the *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*.[25] Supplementing Élie Halévy's articulation of the formal identity of totalitarian regimes of 1936, Gurian named certain elements that were almost universally agreed upon in interpretations of one-party rule: the all-encompassing nature of the claim to power, the hierarchical structure of the party, and the justification of the party's exercise of power by a 'political religion'. To this list of characteristics he added a description of the contrasts between totalitarian regimes and the rest: insofar as they do not compose their representative organs by means of elections and reject any restriction on their application of power through power-sharing or power-restricting forms, they are distinct from modern liberal democracies. They are also anti-traditional and anti-feudalistic. They are socially levelling systems. Of course, such structural characteristics do not abolish differences in terms either of material content of the respective 'political religions' or to the socio-historical environment; every totalitarian regime, therefore, can also be described as a historical individual. Following Halévy closely, Gurian now saw the factors conditioning their approximately simultaneous origin in a reaction to the experiences of the First World War and a fear of anarchy. Clarification concerning the 'political religions' appeared to him to be more important in this brief essay. These religions create an unlimited unity of religion and politics, with the latter thereby becoming the absolute, ultimate purpose of human existence. Dogmatic content is not of decisive importance for these new religions, however. Even if a residuum of trans-political elements still remains in Marxism, which presents socialism as an instrument of achieving universal justice, social and political activities are central to the new religions. The totalitarian religions are no more than a means to integrate the society Although they can generate astonishing successes by creating an external unity, they do not lead to renewal. Just as the military monarchies of the Hellenistic period were a sign of the exhaustion of the Greek polis, so are the totalitarianisms such a sign for a developed society. They are symptoms, not of strength and youth but of weakness and old age.

The affirmation of democracy gradually emerged increasingly clearly in Gurian's US works. This might have had a certain basis in his own political experience. Gurian's shedding of his prior scepticism through the years and gaining of a new, high estimation

of freedom as an expression of the dignity of the person might have had even deeper grounds, however. Jacques Maritain had undergone a similar transition, and there can probably be no doubt that the French philosopher—who, like Gurian, lived in the United States in these years—had prepared the way that helped him overcome his apocalyptic fears. In a short essay that appeared in 1943, Gurian traced his friend's political transitions and, in doing so, probably communicated at least a portion of the insights that had become his own from 1939 onward. Democracy should not be understood in terms of Rousseau alone, for human rights are based upon the natural law and thus upon the law of God.[26] Furthermore, his recognition of the violation of all 'reality' by totalitarian systems may have led Gurian to esteem the value of the natural orders that correspond to reason more highly than he had in the earlier years. Ultimately, only an order founded immediately upon the religious, super-natural sphere seemed to him to ensure sufficient justice and longevity.

In the entire decade that followed, Gurian no longer participated in the discussion surrounding totalitarian systems. It may be that the Russian patriotism that had been aroused in him after 1941 and had occasioned him to seek possibilities by which to judge the Soviet Union more favourably caused him to hesitate to place it alongside Hitler's Germany as a totalitarian system. Apparently, it became possible for him to participate in the debate surrounding totalitarianism once again only after he had conducted a series of studies on the Soviet Union in the years directly following the war and had left off all illusory hopes. The two short works on this theme that he delivered prior to his premature death in 1954 are concentrated on the problem of the 'totalitarian religions'[27]—religions whose actual 'religious' claim he now saw to be even stronger.

In the meantime, Gurian had tested out the concept of totalitarian religion in a new book, *Bolshevism: An Introduction to Soviet Communism*.[28] The concept enabled him to capture the nature of the Bolshevist system more deeply. That system entailed something more than the realization of a set of certain economic, social and political theories of development: the Soviet Union had assumed the role of the land that would save the world. Only through it could 'the earthly paradise be attained. Without it or against it, there is only the abyss of a meaningless existence that does not fit to the true developments of history.'[29] As the 'true instrument of the millennium', the Soviet Union can do nothing that would be false in a material sense. Likewise, nothing that might help it attain its final goal can be forbidden to it.[30]

In 'Totalitarian Religions', an essay that was probably published shortly before the appearance of this book, that which had already been recognized early is now described with finality: this unique feature of the Soviet Union is described as a type of modern regime.

> The totalitarian movements that have arisen since the First World War are religious movements at base. They strive not to change political and social institutions, but rather to transform the nature of the human being and society. They claim to possess the true and necessary knowledge about life and its meaning.[31]

From this arise the intolerance and the unlimited nature of their claim to mould the human being. For this same reason, the totalitarian movements cannot be interpreted as a

distinctive form of authoritarian rule; whereas the latter always stresses the power of the state and limits itself to this claim, the political religions strive for more than a strong state. A strong state is not the goal, but the instrument of totalitarian rule. The basic defining feature of all totalitarian movements is the belief in a doctrine that grants absolute rule to those who adhere to it. That which does not correspond to the ideology must be eliminated—if not in reality, then at least in the consciousness of human beings. Here, Gurian takes up the example that was introduced to the discussion by Hannah Arendt: the fact that one is not permitted to say in the Soviet Union that other countries have the metro as well. In order to reinforce the illusion that the world is as the ideology declares it to be, the Iron Curtain ultimately becomes indispensable. 'God's order is replaced by a man-made order, an artificial order required by the doctrine and created by the power that is exercised in its name.' This is why conflict of the totalitarian regime with the Church is unavoidable as well. The conflict does not involve power and influence, but rather the nature of the human being and society. In contradicting the content of the totalitarian religions, the Church presents an intolerable challenge. Themselves a product of a religious and spiritual crisis, the political religions are the totalitarian form of secularism. And because secularism cannot stand up to the current religious crisis, a different form of secularism cannot overcome the political religions.

One year before his death, Gurian made his final contribution to this theme with a lecture delivered to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in March 1953.[32] In this context, he treated the phenomenon of totalitarian religions once again, positing that the political function of religion well nigh reverses itself in the totalitarian regimes, which he now also describes as 'ideocracies'. Whereas, according to an observation of Montesquieu, religion usually prevents the possessor of power from exercising his power without restriction, it now becomes the driving force of the new despotism. The tensional relationship of religion and power is eliminated and replaced by a dynamic unity composed of both. The totalitarian religion lays claim to the place that traditional religion had formerly assumed in the life of the human being. If it occupies this place in fact, then it does not matter whether and in what form the traditional religion is still permitted to exist. The totalitarian leadership acts like a group of engineers that serves a social machine—a machine whose practical success only confirms to them the correctness of their world-view and the agreement of their practice with the laws of the world. Through such constant self-justification, the ideology becomes the deification of a power system that is flexible enough both to satisfy all wishes of its master and to compensate for present imperfections with assurances of a final, eschatological state. Insofar as the deficiencies of the present drive the faithful to work all the more zealously for the anticipated better future, such assurances serve further to establish the established system. Thus does the ideology aim to preserve the existing power structure: by acknowledging no meaning that transcends it.

According to this presentation, the question concerning Gurian's share in the development of the totalitarianism concept cannot be described with the brevity required for easy practical application. Although Gurian dressed his publications in the garb of academic treatments during his US years, those treatments were determined far less by the methods of research in political science than by his intention to interpret the new type of phenomena that threatened his own time.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Gurian did not formulate a 'concept of totalitarianism' in the sense of academic schools, but ultimately offered philosophical interpretations of his time. Some elements of his attempts to gain clarity regarding the totalitarian regime—total politicization as influence, mass society and democracy as prerequisites of the totalitarian regime—have played a role in the discussion of totalitarianism. Yet in each case, he carried these elements only for a short stretch and then let them fall without public justification. That the concept of 'political religion' finally predominated in their place might be attributed to Gurian's deeply religious character. None other than Richard Löwenthal drew attention to the fact that it was religious and conservative intellects—he expressly named Gurian among them—who recognized the unique nature of totalitarianism earlier than the rest.[33] Not only this: the 'totalitarian religions' that he perceived were, in a sense, described as counter-churches whose conceptual prerequisite was the existence and legitimacy of the true Church. One will be permitted to ask whether the actual problem of Gurian, the human being, journalist and scientist, was not in fact the Church's role in modern society and whether this was not the actual force driving his political investigations. His final work was an introduction to *The Catholic Church in World Affairs,* a collection of essays for which he was partly responsible and which was probably published soon after his death.[34] Here, he describes the Church as the adversary of totalitarianism:

> It is the mission of Catholics to defend the true values of secular civilisation and of its liberties against secularist pseudo-religions. The true faith, presupposing nature and reason, opposes the scientifically or vitalistically formulated myth, which would destroy the variety and complexity of human existence and force it into the harness of man-made totalitarian doctrine and its absolute domination.[35]

Of course, such allusions open a wide field and overstep the bounds of the theme that we have come together to discuss here.

Notes

1 Gerhard Schulz, 'Der Begriff des Totalitarismus und der Nationalsozialismus', in Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismusforschung* (Darmstadt, 1968), p. 456.

2 On Gurian's understanding of the publicist's occupation, see Waldemar Gurian, *Der katholische Publizist* (Augsburg, 1931).

3 On Gurian's personality and life achievement, compare Heinz Hürten, *Waldemar Gurian. Ein Zeuge der Krise unserer Welt in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Mainz, 1971).

4 Waldemar Gurian, *Der Bolshewismus. Einführung in Geschichte und Lehre* (Freiburg, 1931). The book was translated in the next two years into English, French, Italian and Dutch.

5 Ibid., p. 127.

6 Walter Gerhart (i.e. Waldemar Gurian), *Um des Reiches Zukunft. Nationale Wiedergeburt oder politische Reaktion?* (Freiburg, 1932), p. 120.

7 Heinz Hürten (ed.), *Deutsche Briefe. Ein Blatt der katholischen Emigration,* Vol. I (Mainz, 1969), pp. 305 ff. and 377–81.

8 Waldemar Gurian, *Bolshewismus als Weltgefahr* (Lucerne, 1935).

9 Ibid., p. 36.

10 Ibid., p. 41.

11 Ibid., p. 44.

12 Lorenz Brunner (i.e. Waldemar Gurian), *Marxismus am Ende? Schicksal einer Bewegung* (Einsiedeln, 1936).

13 Ibid., pp. 202 ff., 206 and 204.

14 *Die Kirche und das Staatsproblem in der Gegewart (Kirche und Welt. Studien und Dokumente,* ed. Research Department of the Ecumenical Council for Practical Christianity, Vol. III) (Geneva and Berlin, 1935), p. 160.

15 Hans Peters, 'Der totale Staat und die Kirche', in Erich Kleienidam und Otto Kuß (ed.), *Die Kirche in der Zeitenwende* (Paderborn, 1935), p. 316.

16 Jacques Maritain, *Humanisme intégral. Problèmes temporels et spirituels d'une nouvelle chrétienté* (Paris, 1936), especially pp. 294–300. Also the earlier work of Charles Journet, 'L'église et les communautés totalitaires', *Nova et Vetera* (1935), pp. 431–9, later in Charles Journet, *Exigences chrétiennes en politique* (Freiburg and Paris, 1945), pp. 13–24. On p. 295, Maritain refers expressly to this work that had escaped Gurian's attention and interest.

17 Informative here are the concluding chapters of Brunner (Gurian) *Marxismus am Ende?,* p. 212, and Gurian, *Bolschewismus als Weltgefahr,* p. 106.

18 Compare here Heinz Hürten, 'Modernitätskritik und Totalitarismustheorie im Frühwerk Waldemar Gurians', in Alfons Söllner (ed.), *Totalitarismustheorie* (Hamburg, 1995).

19 Peter Christian Ludz, 'Offene Fragen in der Totalitarismusforschung', *Politische Vierteljahrsschrift,* 2 (1961), pp. 319–48. Later in Seidel and Jenkner, *Wege der Totalitarismusforschung,* pp. 466–512, reference 496.

20 Waldemar Gurian, 'Der Bürger', *Germania,* 272, 14 June 1929, and 318, 12 July 1929.

21 Paul Müller, Köln (i.e. Waldemar Gurian), 'Zum Problem der Masse', *Schweizerische Rundschau,* 34 (1934/35), pp. 1033–41, citation from 1038–41.

22 Gurian, *Bolschewismus als Weltgefahr,* pp. 92, 95.

23 Waldemar Gurian, 'The Totalitarian State', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association,* 15 (1939), pp. 50–66, citation on p. 66.

24 Waldemar Gurian, 'Trends in Modern Politics', *Review of Politics,* 2 (1940), pp. 318–36, citation from p. 330. In this essay, it becomes clear that Gurian had begun to debate intensively with the specialist literature.

25 Waldemar Gurian, 'The Rise of Totalitarianism in Europe', *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for 1942,* Vol. III, pp. 297–304.

26 Waldemar Gurian, 'On Maritain's Political Thought', *Thomist,* 5 (1943), pp. 7–22. Reference here to p. 17.

27 Waldemar Gurian, 'Totalitarian Religions', *Review of Politics,* 14 (1952), pp. 3–14.

28 Waldemar Gurian, *Bolshevism: An Introduction to Soviet Communism* Notre Dame, IN, 1952.

29 Ibid., p. 21.

30 Ibid., p. 23.

31 Gurian, 'Totalitarian Religions', pp. 3 ff.

32 Waldemar Gurian, 'Totalitarianism as Political Religion', in Carl J.Friedrich (ed.), *Proceedings of the Conference held at the Academy of Arts and Sciences, March 1953* (Cambridge, MA, 1954), pp. 119–29.

33 Richard Löwenthal, 'Totalitäre und demokratische Revolution', *Der Monat,* 13 (1960/61), pp. 29–40; later in Seidel and Jenkner, *Wege der Totalitarismusforschung,* pp. 359–81. Reference here, p. 360.

34 Waldemar Gurian, 'Introduction', in Waldemar Gurian and Matthew A.Fitzsimons (eds), *The Catholic Church in World Affairs* (Notre Dame, IN, 1954), pp. 1–10.

35 Ibid., p. 10.

Discussion of Hürten's paper

Chair: Victor Conzemius

CONZEMIUS: I would like to thank Mr Hürten warmly for his penetrating analysis of an early theorist of totalitarianism who underwent an inner conversion to democracy in the process of his thought. I also thank him for that which he did not say and reserved to us for reading. Now we have numerous people who wish to speak; there is something like eight, but Mr Schwarz stands first here.

SCHWARZ: This time, I wanted to say something that generally relates to Mr Hürten's presentation. There are two concepts that we have not yet heard—either in the lectures or in the discussion to this point. The first concept is that of planning, and the second is that of collectivism. Both terms play a substantial role in the ideological debate surrounding the new movements. Of course, the bracketing of the two concepts to this point is linked to the fact that we proceed here genetically; we ask, therefore, how Italians explain this entirely new kind of political system, how it relates to the experiences of National Socialism, Communism and so on. Then at some point, of course, there comes the time when totalitarianism theorists receive professorships in the United States; and here they must begin to systematize and attempt to incorporate the whole thing into a systematic theory of state forms. That is an entirely natural process. But why no planning to this point? And why no collectivism? Now, I wanted to mention it only because you pointed to the US context. But precisely for the late 1930s, the 1940s and the early 1950s, one must keep the centres of discussion very clearly in mind. One centre was London—the London School of Economics. Laski, for one, can be found here, but von Hayek and Popper are already influential in London as well. Oppositions of an ideological nature arise, even within the West, but these are carried out with respect to the totalitarian systems of the time. It is similar in the United States: you have already named the Catholic universities, but one would also have to mention here the great significance of the New School of Social Research. My question now comes in this context: if I see things correctly, the concept of collectivism would indeed be suited to understanding these systems. The concept comes primarily from the liberal realm: Hayek applies it very early on; Walter Lippmann picks it up in *The Good Society*—his rather voluminous study of 1937. And although he speaks of National Socialism, of the Fascist movement and of Bolshevism, the interesting thing   is that he attempts to establish a connection to that which was called at that time 'planning tendencies' within capitalism, democratic socialism, etc. That is, in his critique of the New Deal, he attempted to incorporate the radicalism not only of Right and Left, but also of socialistic tendencies within the United States. I believe simply that one must also take into consideration these genuinely liberal contributions to the discussion. How did it happen that neither Don Sturzo, who must also have known of the US discussion, nor Waldemar Gurian took it up at all?

MÖLLER: I find three things particularly noteworthy: first, that Gurian focused much more strongly on Bolshevism—the majority of his works concern it—than he did on National Socialism. On the basis of his experiences of emigration, he could certainly have taken a different path as well. Second, I have a question for you, Mr Hürten:

Gurian indeed stressed that these totalitarian movements should be understood solely as religious movements or political religions, but then he emphasized much more strongly than others the fact that the difference from genuine religion lies precisely in the absolute this-worldliness. The transcendental reference that distinguishes the true religions from the political religions is missing. Beyond that, Gurian emphasized the instrumental character of the ruling technique: 'political religion' serves the purpose of reaching the masses. This contradiction seems to me to be of particular interest.

Although the third point is not central to our discussion, it nonetheless seems to me to be very interesting in terms of historiography. Apparently, Gurian is one of the first who at least mentions the change of elites. Whether he analyses it, I do not know. This point is important to the extent that certain historians—especially those like the ones at the University of Bielefeld, for example, who focused on the social sciences— claim over and again to this day that this change of elites did not occur. It is said instead that the old ruling elites remained in power after 1933 as well. I hold this to be false; the opposite has been empirically proved, even if too little has been said about it to this point. With Gurian, at any rate, one finds an attempt to analyse history appropriately.

LÜBBE: A minor question for Mr Hürten: you used in passing the word 'historicism' to characterize the civilizational conditions that make the reaction of the totalitarian movement plausible according to Gurian. Now, my question is whether Gurian actually used the word 'historicism'. That is of interest for the question that brings us together here as well. For, with Karl Popper (primarily, but not only with him) the word 'historicism' emerges precisely as a distinguishing feature of basis of legitimacy of totalitarianism within the history of theory itself. Thus, the word in question stands not for that which provoked it, but for that which constituted it. I also reaffirm the remarks on planning and totalitarianism. The claim that planning and free relations are compatible is a component of the ideological history of the Federal Republic of Germany. This claim emerges repeatedly: in the discussion surrounding the Godesberger programme, then in the fascination of our intellectual technocrats with French planification. There are further examples as well. That, of course, is the precise opposite of von Hayek and the lively discussion that was held in the Anglo-Saxon world.

HÜRTEN: Mr Schwarz: planning and collectivism. One does not find 'collectivism' as a word in Gurian's work, but materially to a certain extent: the total socialization of the human being. The absorption of the human being into society could perhaps be described as collectivism, but he never used this word as far as I can tell—at least not in central passages. Planning is something that did not interest Gurian. Gurian was an extreme historian of the spirit, an extreme intellectual; the practical and technical aspects did not interest him. You will have noticed that both the uniqueness and weakness of his entire analysis lie precisely in the fact that he argues in terms of intellectual history. Occasionally, he investigates social origins, but he sees these in turn to be based in intellectual history. I find your comment that one must ask, so to speak, about the locations of the discussion to be highly interesting. Notre Dame was not very important to Gurian; he earned his money there but, largely, he held it to be dreadfully boring. (That was Notre Dame before the famous President Hesburgh. With Hesburgh, Notre Dame made its tremendous upswing.) But he had contact with the

New School of Social Research, which at that time, as planned, was a meeting ground for European emigrants. Thus, he had contact with Maritain and many others here and also occasionally with a few liberals. For Gurian himself, however, such contact was no longer influential. This is a new task that you have set—one that goes beyond the one that I set myself.

The image of Gurian that you gained from my lecture is somewhat erroneous to the extent that I did not enter into Gurian's intensive discussions and analyses of National Socialism. One finds these already in the *Deutsche Briefe* as well as in the very important piece, 'Der Kampf um die Kirche im Dritten Reich'. Up to the end, or at least the turn of the war, a certain balance probably obtained here—albeit one that, for certain reasons, did not thicken into large books. Of interest is his position before 1933, which can be found in the book, *Unseres Reiches Zukunft,* written under a pseudonym. Here one finds an expertise in both systems resting on a relatively broad foundation, even if this expertise is not equally represented in terms of literary output.

In terms of his inclinations, Gurian is not a scientist, but a publicist. And he is a person who undergoes changes, who also at times stands strongly under the influence of certain works he has read. Such variability can be explained in these terms as well.

4
Reflections on Russian totalitarianism

Kamaludin Gadshiiev

One of the most conspicuous aspects of totalitarianism is the intellectual mediocrity of Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, Rosenberg and other fathers of this phenomenon. Their speeches and works convey a sense of primitivity, one-dimensionality and dogmatism, and their arguments, justifications, concepts and principles do not hold up to serious scientific critique. If this is the case, then how is the conduct of millions upon millions of human beings to be explained? And not only ordinary men and women, but representatives of intellectual institutions followed them as well; how was it that these also assumed their ideas, images and ideals as a standard for the decisive questions of their own plans of life? How might we understand the tragicomic scene in which Knut Hamsun, one of the best-known writers of the twentieth century, turned over his Nobel Prize medallion to Goebbels, because he thought that Goebbels was more worthy than he himself of such an honour?

I have not yet found a satisfying answer to these questions, but I believe that something is not quite right with the human being of the twentieth century—with his mentality, inner life, etc.

The latter years of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century were marked by new, great and fundamental discoveries in important areas of scientific knowledge. These discoveries turned upon their heads—in the fullest sense of the word—views about matter, space and time that had been generally acknowledged up to that time. These turned out to be only the initial manifestations of a fundamental transformation of the metaphysical and ontological basis of human existence. Later symptoms of this transformation included the emergence and spread of a series of (in part, downright strange) ideas, movements and schools in culture, art and literature. These became known by the general expression, 'dehumanization of art'. Here one might add the transformation of daily life as well: the loss of stability, growing uncertainty and mounting general feeling of discontent. These were both the causes and the effects of the worldwide revolutions of the twentieth century.

In the sphere of intellectual life, precursors and protagonists of this revolution became representatives of the so-called twilight of the gods, the death of God and the de-divinization of the world. As Albert Camus once said, 'contrary to the opinion of his Christian critics, Nietzsche did not want to kill God but found Him already dead in the soul of his epoch'. In this context, one must also mention the developments and processes that emerged at that time: depersonalization, derationalization, ruptures in the consciousness of humanity, humanity's entrance into a fluctuating, dispersed condition in which the human being loses his certainty, stability and predictability. The validity of this thesis can easily be demonstrated by the literature of the first years of the twentieth

century; one could mention here the works of Berdjajev, Frank, Polanyi, Jaspers, Tillich and many other thinkers of this time.

This complex problem requires an investigation of its own. Here, we wish to restrict ourselves to the fact that, in the view of many nations, the twentieth century appears as an era of increasing oppression that affected all aspects and spheres of human life. At such times, humans with a special need for security tended to gather even more closely around the old gods, to erect new idols or surrender themselves to the transformed, chaotic course of events. At the same time, this temporal circumstance forms a good cultural medium for the emergence of the most varied concepts, ideas and utopias of a perfect social order. This situational context appears to have been what made it possible for the totalitarian leaders to grasp hold of the history of the twentieth century.

Now for Russian totalitarianism: Russia has a very peculiar political and cultural 'genotype'. This type has been handed down from generation to generation and has determined Russia's political reality—its relations on individual, social and state levels. A substantial portion of Russia's contemporary problems can be explained by the fact that many politicians and political forces do not sense the entire scope of this 'genotype'. Within the spectrum of all the possible political programmes and actions, political traditions, moral norms and ideas of value form a particular mixture that sets narrow restrictions upon the actions of both citizens and political leaders. This political culture is the foundation upon which actual politics must build. For, if plans and intentions collide with a nation's political culture, they are either unhesitatingly refused or radically changed in the phase of realization. One might call this configuration 'environmental resistance'.

Russia's political culture should be described as more authoritarian-collectivist than liberal-democratic. Many experts emphasize the extreme heterogeneity of Russia's political and cultural spectrum, the existence of a whole series of different sub-cultures having disparate value-ideas. In the past three centuries, Russia has been the scene of confrontation of a variety of such sub-cultures: occidentophiles and patriots, radicals and patriarchalist-conservatives, anarchists and dirigists. The constant lack of a fundamental national consensus can be explained in terms of this disparity.

A further peculiar paradox of Russia's political culture consists in that which one might describe as a conflictedness and contradictoriness of the 'soul of the people'. Berdjajev characterized the dualism and irrationalism of this 'Russian soul' as an impressive symbiosis of the following pairs of qualities: anarchism and planned economy, the preparedness to give one's life for freedom and extreme servility, chauvinism and internationalism, humanism and cruelty, asceticism and hedonism. The totalitarian regime often intensified these negative qualities of Russia's political culture. It is well known that one of the essential prerequisites of organizing a totalitarian system is to eliminate traditional social estates and achieve a cultural, religious and even ethnic-national unity. To this end is required the liquidation of all independent institutions, associations, unions and alliances—in short, of all institutions that could offer support to the individual. The goal of the totalitarian system is to fragmentize and atomize the society; to eliminate all social attachments and inherited ties that root the human being in traditional structures. What remains is an isolated individual who faces the omnipotent state and thereby becomes a slave of this very state.

The success of Bolshevism and Fascism, therefore, can be understood as a result of the mentality and state of consciousness that have just been portrayed. All complex, irrational and intuitive aspects of human existence were subordinated to a rational utopia; and on this basis, the non-integrated fragments could be assembled according to the respective representation of the *homo totalitarius*.

Berdyajev already perceived this 'cubistic dissolution of human existence' in the writings of Gogol and their analytical dissection of an organic, integral image of the human being. This is why there is no actual human character in Gogol's work, but only ugly faces and disgusting monsters that resemble the monsters that were created by cubism. In other words, the great Gogol was forced to discover the Russian's dark soul, the negative side of his human being. As a result, his characters are not human beings, but merely fragments, human caricatures. In this sense, one can also describe Gogol as an artist of the inferno, of an infernality that is revealed completely only in the totalitarian human being—in the *homo totalitarius* that has and can have no respect for the dignity and rights of his fellow human beings.

Totalitarianism is unthinkable without support from the masses and without the phenomenon of the masses as such. The totality of a regime consists not only in party and leader assuming complete control of all areas of life; it also requires a large majority of the population to assume, in a way that is practically faith-based, the basic views and opinions that the party or leader has declared. In order to achieve the supreme goal, both prerequisites must be fulfilled. A totalitarian regime not only rules 'from the outside' through violence, it also seeks the full and unconditional loyalty of the individual citizen. Its unique ideology revealed to totalitarianism a phenomenon that one might call 'horizontal terrorism'—new and inward paths to rule and terrorize. Dostoevsky had already warned of the possibility that the human being takes pleasure in the murder and destruction of his fellow citizen. With totalitarianism, this warning becomes bitter reality. In reading Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat* or Dudinzev's *White Clothes,* one feels the subterranean enjoyment and macabre pleasure—one would almost like to say, the aesthetic savouring—taken by the protagonists and characters in betraying the neighbours to the KGB. Such betrayal, they know, means inevitable death. In view of this fact, one must reach the conclusion that executioner and victim can be united in a single human existence. On this, Baudelaire says: 'I should be happy not only to be an executioner's victim, but also not refuse this executioner's role in order to get acquainted with the revolution from both sides.' With their so-called 'aesthetic of shock', the Russian Imaginists professed to have the same views. Mariengoff, for example, successfully combined blasphemy and Red Terror in his work. Perhaps this belief became an integral component of the consciousness of millions of Soviet citizens as well, of those who became the so-called 'spectators'.

One might say that Russian totalitarianism was the quintessence of the so-called 'mobilization type of development'. Naturo-geographical and national-historical conditions of the formation and development of the Russian state were the causes behind this particular mobilization type of development: one aimed at achieving extraordinary goals with the help both of extraordinary means and of organizational forms that were equally extraordinary. The so-called 'catch-up development' to which Russia had been condemned since the period of the Tatars and Mongols influenced the necessity for constant adaptation to the natural flow of events. The formations of a branched system of

state control and of corresponding forms of political conduct were the products of these prerequisites. As a result, Russia fluctuated between periods of catastrophic efficiency (Peter the Great, Stalin) and equally disastrous periods of inefficiency (Nicolas I and Brezhnev).

Totalitarianism lives from and in a situation of constant movement. The maintenance of the revolution, its constant reproduction and the provocation of a continual competition with the developed nations formed a positively optimal breeding ground for totalitarianism. Joseph Stalin formulated this claim as follows: 'we lag approximately 100 years behind the developed nations. We will make up for their lead in ten years'. From this standpoint, the entire history of the Soviet Union appears as a succession of various campaigns of electrification, collectivization and industrialization, as well as the cultivation of untouched landscapes. 'Perestroika', by the way, was originally planned as the next such campaign of the party-state.

In terms of its civilizational context, Arnold Toynbee once described Russia as a 'daughter-culture' of the Byzantine culture. The Byzantine tradition became one of the basic factors that formed the tradition of the Russian national culture. One could speak of a cultural relay race into which Russia was drawn by its baptism. This political and cultural continuity can first be detected in the assumption of the original, Byzantine state idea. Beyond this, Russia also inherited the functions both of serving as a buffer between West and East and of attempting to synthesize European and Asian elements. Finally, as a mixture of these elements, it inherited a characteristic cosmopolitan, international and inter-ethnic understanding of power and statehood that it likewise took over from the Eastern Roman Kingdom. This was connected to an attempt to form international political and intellectual elites.

These three elements became a radically united reality for the first time with Russian totalitarianism and the movements that sympathized with it. Viewed from this standpoint, the interesting question as to the position of internationalism and nationalism in Bolshevism and National Socialism presents itself. Of course, it is well known that the idea of internationalism was a central component of Marxist-Leninism and thus clearly opposed to all forms of nationalism. The latter was regarded as the most significant barrier on the path to the international unification of all human beings based on proletarian solidarity and the class struggle. In Russia, which was multinational in any case, this idea fell on fertile ground.

Nonetheless, the leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet state attempted to realize a programme that sought coercively to change the original ethnic and national elements of the various countries. This goal was the product of the basic orientation toward unification, universalization, Bolshevization and Sovietization of all spheres of life in this multinational, multicultural and multi-confessional country—including the spheres of the state apparatus, the culture and the society. As a result, all citizens of the Soviet Union became members of an international, 'a-national' nation (a paradoxical and implausible word-creation); they became the 'new historical community' of the Soviet people. This new 'Soviet man' was a new kind of human being, divested of his ethno-cultural or ethno-national roots and characteristics.

More paradoxical still is the fact that the internationalist ideology made use of the nationalist ideology—as, for example, the so-called National Bolshevism of the 1920s and 1930s did. This movement, as well as the official levels of party and state, used the

internationalist ideology to justify the imperial interests of the Russian state. Communistic internationalism and imperialistic nationalism thus allied into an ideology of Russian state-imperialism. Differently put, internationalism assumed functions that were analogous to those that nationalism served in Nazi Germany.

In Fascism and National Socialism, socialism and nationalism meant the same thing from the beginning. Hitler, therefore, spoke correctly of his movement when he described it as 'National Socialism'. In the centre of his ideology was of course nationalism, though, and it became the ideology of German state-imperialism. In both cases, however, internationalism and nationalism served the same purpose: namely, to justify and defend a totalitarian imperium, whether under the sign of Communism or of Fascism.

At this point, one ought to seek an answer to the following: how could the Euro-Asiatic movement of the 1920s and 1930s connect imperialistic ideas to internationalism and Pravo-slavism? More interesting still is the phenomenon of National Bolshevism, whose representatives constantly affirmed their solidarity with the goals of the Communist regime. The leaders of National Bolshevism never tired of indicating that Russian Bolshevism and Italian Fascism were related phenomena, even if a 'brotherly hate' existed between them. In his assumption that Bolshevism gave birth to Fascism, one of the National Bolshevist leaders could say that, 'in overcoming formal democracy, Moscow pointed the way to Rome'.

Another phenomenon that merits further investigation is the paradoxical bond between Communists, Nationalists and Fascists in their common struggle against democratic reforms in Russia following the collapse of Communism.

5

Natural science in the Soviet Union under totalitarian conditions at the beginning of the 1930s

P.V.Alexeiev

Totalitarianism is not merely a political system. In keeping with its nature, it penetrates into all areas of society, culture and occupational activity—into the natural sciences as well. According to Raymond Aron's criteria that define totalitarianism, one might say that, in both the social and the natural sciences, totalitarianism had already established itself in the Soviet Union by the 1930s. Stated more precisely, the politicization of the natural sciences occurred in the years between 1930 and 1932. During this time, it became clear that the Bolshevist government intended to make the natural sciences, a part of the entire intellectual culture, into an appendage of politics. Political ideas of socialism—of Stalin's socialism, that is—and of the official philosophy that had already adapted to the regime by that point were actively distributed among the scientists.

The smear campaign was carried out under the motto of the struggle against the 'damage of science'. If, in his investigations, a scientist dared to demonstrate solidarity with ideas of the philosophy of a person like Mach, then he was declared to be a 'damage' of this kind. At that time, anything pertaining to the methodology of knowledge that bore reductionist characteristics was described as politically 'right-leaning'. Anything connected with integrativism was described as Menschevistic idealism or Trotskyism. In the *Short Philosophical Dictionary* published in 1931, one finds the following statement:

> In the class society, every science and philosophy defends the interests of one class or another. Thus, philosophy is class-based. By its very nature, the struggle among scientific movements is the struggle of the parties that express and defend the interests and world-views of the classes supporting them.

At first, the natural scientists were only morally censured by the press and at conferences and assemblies. Later, however, concrete disciplinary measures ensued. The scientists were not promoted, but dismissed; sometimes they were imprisoned or deported. The execution of a number of scientists also took place in those years. With that, general fear—a hallmark of totalitarianism—spread. In 1931, *Bolshevik,* the journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, published an article by Kolman entitled 'The Damage of Science'. Listed among the 'pests' here were such prominent scientists as the physicist Frenkel, the biologists Gurvitzh and Kolzov, the mathematicians Yegorov und Bogomolov, the great Russian scientist Vernadsky and

many others. The scientists Prianizhnikov, Vladimirov, Raikov and others were subjected to reprisals. Yet, there were also scientists who resisted these political tactics and defended their colleagues. As proof of this, there are the letters of Academy member I.P.Pavlov to his government in these years—especially his personal letters to the chairman of the Soviet of the People's Commissar, Molotov.

By contrast to Pavlov, a series of scientists supported these ideological smear campaigns. The biochemist Sbarsky, for example, presented the following solution during a conference: 'on the matter of investigating the damage of science, the KGB must be summoned to the contest'. During these years, WARNITSO—a special political organization of scientists under the leadership of Professor A.N.Bach—also arose. At first, this organization exerted no direct, negative influence on science. By the mid-1930s, however, it began actively to enforce the politics of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The journal of this organization charged departments in the universities and scientific research institutes with the following tasks: 'pseudo-scientific theories and the scientific significance of their apologists must be exposed', and 'the fight against the damage must be activated'. It was explained that it did not suffice to denounce the damage that had already been discovered; it was critical, rather, to 'prevent' this and 'to erect a new defence against any future damage'.

Not only individual scientists, but also entire theories were now declared to be damaging and hostile. Among these were the theories of chromosomal inheritance and eugenics, psychoanalytical theory, agro-chemistry and countless theories in physics, mathematics and pedagogy. Thus, for example, genetics was assessed in a specialist journal as follows:

> the gene theory leads to the acknowledgement of a 'creator' of the organic world—that is, to God. It corresponds exactly to that modern direction of Western, bourgeois science that strives to reconcile science and religion. In this aim, it stands in glaring contradiction to Bolshevism. Thus, it cannot be seen how Marxism could be reconciled with genetic theory. It is equally false to describe genetic theory as 'fruit-fly science'. The name 'fiddling about with drosophilia' rather than 'science' would be more correct. The theory has arisen via the elite of the US bourgeoisie, which gets a new kind of kick out of breeding fruit flies. If the money aristocracy formerly built palaces for lovers and love-games, then the aforementioned US elite now builds palaces for the breeding of fruit flies. If true science recognizes this playing about as science, then it only proves how decadent its condition is.
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> (Professor S.N.Kovalevski, 1930)

One of the negative consequences of the ideological smear campaigns, both in these and in later years, was the increasing backwardness of Russian science. Thus was it realized in the 1960s—along with the exposure of the pseudo-scientific authority of Lyssenko—that Soviet genetic science was about 20 years behind.

Despite this, it must be seen that, even during the years of extreme totalitarianism, unquestionably significant scientific discoveries were made in the Soviet Union. For example, gene-splicing was discovered at the beginning of the 1930s. Yet, how could

science develop under such conditions? In answering this question, it is usually said that totalitarianism's influence on science does not traverse certain boundaries because totalitarianism uses science—in particular the applied sciences—for its economic and military purposes. This fact cannot be doubted, but there are probably other grounds as well. Essential in this context is the specific relationship between the natural sciences and philosophy. This relationship is not simple; there is no single philosophical system with which natural scientists might identify themselves. Primarily, they are pragmatists. Beginning with the situation that arises around their so-called private scientific problems, they search for philosophical ideas and images that might help them. In many cases, these images can be found in materialistic philosophical concepts; in some cases, they are found in the philosophy of Plato or Mach. Yet, ideas might also be combined from various concepts. In my opinion, the reason for this can be found in the problematic, mosaic-like character of the content of philosophical knowledge and general world-views. This knowledge is structured into multiple, relatively autonomous parts whose mutual relations are not clear, but ambiguous. Theoretically, different ideas as to the reciprocal relationship between dynamic and static regularities are entirely reconcilable, as are entirely different ideas as to the relation of the whole and its parts. To a certain extent, therefore, natural scientists have the possibility of choice. Yet, they also have along with it the possibility of successfully working out their problems without reference to any philosophy.

Owing to the unique character of scientific creation and the peculiarity of the relation of scientific investigation to philosophical ideas, totalitarianism can never completely subordinate science to its ideological doctrine. Totalitarianism strives to establish a simple relation between politics, philosophy and science. The internal foundations of science, by contrast, entail a strong tendency either not to admit this simplicity or to violate it. To that extent, the relation of science and totalitarianism is extremely problematic. That relation is completed—generally in the favour of science—by a social-psychological chain of personal rivalries within the individual scientific branches themselves.

After investigating the events at the beginning of the 1930s, the next question—the question as to the degree to which philosophers and philosophy participated in the process of ideologizing the natural sciences—arises. Although the opinion that such participation was decisive is widespread, I believe that this opinion is not entirely correct. The majority of the philosophers did not participate in the smear campaign. Beyond this, they were subjected to reprisals themselves during this time—as, for example, such leading representatives as Karev, Sten, Bammel, Lossev, Florensky and others. Although it may sound paradoxical, the most important executors of the politics of totalitarianism in the natural sciences were the natural scientists themselves: the physicists Timirasev, Maksimov, Jegorzhin, for example, or the biologists Tokin, Nemilov, Viliams, Present and others. The fact remains that a considerable number of the natural scientists actively contributed to the totalitarianism of their science. One reason for this was the contest of the scientific movements and schools: the biology of the schools of Vavilov and Lyssenko, for example, the physiology of Pavlov and Bekterev, or the psychology of Tzhelpanov and Kornilov. Although such contest is necessary in itself, only a few scientists remained on the level of scientific rigour and morality in the struggle to assert themselves and their own ideas. Many—not the best—used all available means to

denounce and destroy their opponents morally or physically. To this end, the totalitarian regime had not only created favourable conditions, but had even attempted to inspire several of the scientists to stage such scenarios and to draw them to its side. Not infrequently, these scientists also made use of philosophy and spoke out in part in its name.

As for philosophy itself, it was primarily occupied at that time with problems of the class struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat and the international revolution. It also concerned itself with the ideas of Hegel and other philosophers, of course; but in practice, it was a politicized phenomenon and could only indirectly provide the scientists with material—with methods of cognition that were far removed from actual politics. As for providing postulates of a world-view, philosophy was ultimately weak. This was because each philosophy represented a different complex of knowledge: scientific, ideological, humanitarian, artistic, etc. At the centre of each philosophy of this kind can always be found the problem of the human being, the problem of the meaning of life. Stalin's interpretation of Marxism, by contrast, recognized no problem that concerned the human being as an individual. Philosophy had been replaced by totalitarian politics and pre-selected knowledge. Such 'philosophy' could offer no help to scientific development in terms of providing a world-view. Yet, in offering scientists no answers to existential questions, it demonstrated its weaknesses. Historically, it was destined to die in that it had become a mere instrument in the hands of politics.

When speaking of the general character of science in the 1930s and 1940s, several of my colleagues now apply the terms 'ideologized' or 'repressed' science. One can perhaps accept this assessment, but these concepts touch only upon the external sources of the deformation of scientific development. They represent the scientists as 'suffering persons'—often with justification, of course, but without considering the fact that each scientific community entails both objective and subjective factors that are themselves capable of actively favouring the totalitarization of science. This is why I hold the term 'totalitarian' or 'totalitarianized' science to be more suitable; this term admits a larger dimension of content. The totalitarianism of Stalin's type did not only involve the personality cult of Stalin; on the contrary, a process of forming personality cults of smaller dimensions began in the 1930s—particularly in the second half of the 1930s and in the later decades. There were personality cults within the scientific disciplines— 'totalitarianism from below', the personality cult of Lyssenko, Pavlov, Marr, etc.—for which these scientists were worshipped. Where no critique of their conceptions existed, scientific conflicts acquired a scholastic character. The natural sciences were dogmatized; indeed, they dogmatized themselves, and blind faith gained an increasingly greater place in them. In the process, the political religion of totalitarianism methodically nourished itself without developing any internal scientific impulses.

But herein lay the defeat of the totalitarian system as well: it 'functioned' only so long as such important areas as the natural sciences had not yet been completely totalitarianized by their own dynamic. Both science and society lost the kind of effectiveness that only pluralism can preserve. Tragically, the fate of the natural sciences in the Soviet Union illustrates both of these aspects of totalitarianism: on the one hand, there is acceptance and internalization of totalitarian thought and actions on the various levels of society and the human being. On the other, as a logical conclusion in this case, there are the limits of every totalitarian system, and these are linked directly to its

success. Compared to Germany and Japan, totalitarianism in the Soviet Union was the most successful, so to speak. Consequently, overcoming and even reappraising the past is the most difficult here as well.

(Translated from Russian into German by L.Traut)

Discussion of the papers of Gadshiiev and Alexeiev

Chair: Brigitte Gess

BALLESTREM: I have a question for Mr Gadshiiev. During the time of Perestroika, I was astonished to see that the concept of totalitarianism was used in the Soviet Union to characterize the Soviet Union itself. I was astonished, of course, because this was a very controversial concept. And this not only in the West, where it divided (let us simply say it) socialists from non-socialists for a long time; it was also controversial in the East itself, where many books and articles were written which rejected this concept. Now my question is this: was there a debate at that time as to whether this concept should be used, or do we have here another case for which something that had served for a long time was discarded from one day to the next like an old jacket? There would be enough examples of this in Marxism, for which philosophical ideas that were no longer required were placed *ad acta* from one day to the next without great debate.

GADSHIIEV: I understand your question. This is all a long story. The concept of 'totalitarianism' in general has a long history. First it was used by Mussolini in 1928, then in 1931 in London in the *German Contemporary Review* and finally in 1965 in the *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*. Neither Fascists nor National Socialists liked the concept, and in the end they both assumed the name of German and Italian Fascists. At first, Western researchers described German and Italian Fascism using this concept, then Communism, the Soviet Union and the Soviet system as well. But at the beginning of the Second World War, they ceased describing the Soviet Union as a totalitarian state. After the end of the war, they of course began to use this description again. We Soviet researchers naturally called the Fascist regimes by this concept. Yet, I believe that even many Soviet researchers began in time to see that our system and that of German National Socialism were similar in some respects. There arose the so-called 'secret literature' and, at the beginning of Perestroika, the totalitarianism concept again gained the right officially to exist in our literature. We began to structure our arguments by use of this concept and to understand our realities and system with its help. The first works on these aspects of the Soviet Union appeared in the late 1980s. Yet most of these works were not of a professional scientific nature, but were usually written by journalists. At present, the genuine research on the phenomenon of totalitarianism in the Soviet Union has only just begun. And even today, many researchers refuse to apply the concept 'totalitarianism' to the Soviet Union, even though Soviet totalitarianism, I believe, was in some respects more cruel and less human than German National Socialism itself.

LÜBBE: I would like to make a comment to underscore the significance of Mr Alexeiev's lecture and then to direct a question to Mr Alexeiev as well. Among the opponents of the totalitarianism concept, there are still several who make a concession to it, but this only after the collapse of a socialism that truly existed. And the

concession looks like this: they say that Stalin and the Stalinist regime could be subsumed under the totalitarianism concept as well, but not Leninism. The function of this differentiation is clear and is not at all easy to challenge—for one indeed knows that the totalitarian power increased from Lenin to Stalin. But we have just heard from you that the Soviet regime's totalitarian self-organization extended far back in the politics of science alone. And that of course also correlates entirely with the theoretical elements of the work of Lenin itself—from *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (1908) to *The State and Revolution* (1917), writings filled with specifically totalitarian elements. I will name only two such elements: in *The State and Revolution,* Lenin emancipates politics from its connection with law—a typically totalitarian element. Moreover, in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* he declares it unnecessary to discuss scientific theories—as, in this case, those of the physicist Mach—in terms of their arguments. Lenin claims that it suffices to expose the theories' function in supporting enemy positions, in this case the position of the Menshevik portion of Russian social democracy Now for my question. When I studied mathematical logic, at the beginning of my studies my teacher, Heinrich Scholz, regretfully explained to me over and again that Russia, which had made so many large contributions to the history of logic, no longer plays a role in that history. That was sometime between 1946 and 1950, 1951. To this corresponded the granting of a pariah status to mathematical logic and the privileging of so—called dialectical logic in philosophy If I see it correctly, then this too is a remarkable piece of self-damage that was committed by science via its totalitarian tie: the privileging of dialectic over mathematical logic. To the best of my knowledge, this privilege was loosened only after the Twentieth Party Congress. Can you confirm this?

ALEXEIEV: You have also correctly underscored the fact that the beginnings or preconditions of totalitarianism already have roots in the influence of Lenin. Of interest is a citation from Valentino—he was a former friend and party comrade of Lenin, actually a social revolutionary. In a book published in Paris, Valentino wrote that a path leads from Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* up to the Gulag Archipelago. Thus, there are no limits at all. These preconditions are really evident in the book itself: first, because Lenin regarded politics and philosophy as one and, second, because all means were indeed just according to his philosophy or politics. He called all materialistic methods progressive; all idealistic ones were reactionary. This might be explained by referring to the example of the philosopher,   Juzhkevitzh. Juzhkevitzh wrote a review of Lenin's book, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.* The review was entitled, 'lf there is a command, I too will become a midwife'. That means: if politics, if the Party wishes it, I will do anything. All of Lenin's enemies, even Juzhkevitzh—who was no idealist-were counted among the idealists. Juzhkevitzh pursued this idea after the revolution, but to an even more aggressive extent and in real-life politics. This is the direct path to terror, the result of which was that the most important Russian philosophers were sent into exile in foreign countries in August to October 1922. In the political sphere, totalitarianism already existed in Russia in 1917–in Trotsky's ideas about concentration camps, etc.

GÜNTHER: Mr Alexeiev, you ask in your presentation how science could have developed under Stalinist conditions. Might that also lie with the conflicting role of the Marxist world-view, which was on the one hand subjectivist but on the other

deterministic-economic as well? In the GDR, an attempt to construct socialism on the foundation of a modern economy was indeed made. One sought to create socialist relations of production that corresponded to the metabolic process of nature and the development of productive forces bound up with it. That is typically Marxist. The development of medicinal and natural sciences was supposed to serve this understanding as well. In this area, a participation in the achievements of the West was sought. And this is why a schizophrenic situation was created: on the one hand, there was the primacy of politics (Lenin) and, on the other, the primacy of the economy and the promotion of the corresponding sciences. There was no genuine communication between the two positions, so that they were entirely arbitrarily and subjectively established. My question, therefore: should the high estimation of these sciences not also be regarded in the context of the conflicted character of the Marxist world-view?

QUESTION: The high estimation of science?

GÜNTHER: Yes, because in a certain sense, many in the GDR allowed the natural scientists to work in peace. If an actual or suspected danger to the formation of the society was not foreseen, scientists were even promoted. The development of natural sciences was thus enabled—this was hardly the case with the social sciences, barring a few exceptions.

GADSHIIEV: That conflict of which you spoke—the primacy of politics on the one hand and of the economy on the other—you mentioned it using the example of the GDR. But Mr Alexeiev used the example of science in the 1930s in the Soviet Union. That is an enormous difference. At that time, in the 1930s, a scientist—even one on the level of a Donatzky or Baldinov, for example—was worthless if he did not support the party line in politics. That is the difference. That later changed.

JUROS: My question concerns the comparability of the totalitarian systems of Soviet Socialism and National Socialism. To what extent are the systems comparable? Here, the old problem of singularity emerges again. We know that the conflict among historians was in fact only politically dissolved or brought to an end, by Weizsaecker. This is why I would like to ask to what extent does an ideology of the Holocaust inform this thesis of the incomparability of the systems? There is an ideology of the Holocaust, according not to the fact, but to the ideology. I think that researchers of totalitarianism cannot avoid this question without further examination.

HUTTNER: I have a question that I can link to the one Professor Ballestrem asked about the use of the totalitarianism concept in the end-phase of the Soviet Union. Remarkably, the official TASS commentary that was distributed following the failed putsch against Mikhail Gorbachev in August 1991 spoke expressly of the 'most serious attempt to restore totalitarianism' to that point. Further, on 22 August, Gorbachev himself submitted an explanation to the press according to which he wished it to be said to those who had forced him to the Crimea 'that only suicidals could still demand a totalitarian regime'. These, in any case, were his words in the translation of the Western news agency. In this context, I would like to ask Professor Gadshiiev the following: can you say whether this was the first time that the concept not only played a role in the intellectual discussion of the Perestroika phase, but also found entry *expressis verbis* into the official language of the Soviet media? Was this the first time, for example, that it was used in the Party's internal confrontation with the nomenclature?

TRAUT: I would like only very briefly to pick up on a cue that I heard this morning: namely, that totalitarianism was said to have developed independently, or at least not in complete relation to Russia. Emotional questions then immediately arose in this context. I will refer to them only very briefly. In 1871, for example, a book by Bakunin called *God and the State* offers a reckoning with the Marxism of the future. Bakunin does not of course use the substantive term 'totalitarianism' here, but he does speak very clearly of 'total suppression'—thus, the state's total suppression of the masses with an ersatz religion. He also accuses Marx of Judaic messianism. The book would be of interest for the investigation. This book was also translated into Italian and appeared in several editions, primarily after the 1920s. That means, therefore, that the corresponding theorists may well have known the book. The same holds for Trotsky in the great discussion at the beginning of the Soviet Union in which Trotsky asserted himself and stated that 'we do not need the socialization of the military; we need the militarization of the entire society and, indeed, totally'. He did not use the substantive for the word 'totalitarian militarization' of the society either. In terms of the idea, however, it is exactly this concept of totalitarianism. This pamphlet called 'The Militarization of Work' was also translated into Italian and distributed in mass editions in Italy.

SPIEKER: I have two questions for both gentlemen. Which role does Andrei Sakharov play in your reflections on totalitarianism? Andrei Sakharov as victim and critic of the totalitarian system? And the second question: in the brief exchange between Mr Alexeiev and Mr Lübbe, totalitarianism was traced back as far as Lenin was. Should one now stop with Lenin, or should one not perhaps go back to the *Communist Manifesto?* There, Karl Marx says that, compared to the other proletarians—and here I would add, then certainly   against all other human beings—the Communists would have had superior insight into the conditions, path and general results of history in advance. These are the roots of Communist totalitarianism. And please permit a final question of a biographical nature for Mr Alexeiev. You were introduced as an advisor of the Duma. I can imagine what an advisor of a political party might be, but not an advisor of the Parliament: might you then be a lawyer who interprets the order of business? Could you tell us, then, what an advisor of the Duma is?

ALEXEIEV: In the state Duma, there is a department in which predominantly scientists work. The department is called 'International Cultural and Scientific Relationships of Russia to Foreign Countries'. I am advisor in this department. This department handles cultural problems and questions. For example, an educational reform is currently being enacted in Russia; the authority for universities and schools is being to some extent reformed, unified and compared with other Western university systems; the best is then selected for Russia. The second aspect for which I am personally responsible is the Russian exile of the 1920s. In the 1920s, many scientists, natural scientists and philosophers were sent into exile—to Prague, Berlin, Germany, France, etc. I had worked a great deal in archives and knew these people in some cases personally, had read their letters and books and also written a few essays on them. This is why I was taken in to serve as advisor on this work; my activity as advisor consists in this. I am now also designing a programme about Russia's cultural relationships to foreign countries. At this point, it has just got started.

I mean, of course we could proceed back, as you said, more or less to the source of Communist totalitarianism—specifically, to Marx. But Marx is known primarily for his economic theory If we then take the famous book by Dodeiev, *The Sources of Russian Communism,* then we can begin with Marx and move back further in search of his sources—in social democracy, in ecclesiastical liberalism and others. I have mentioned the totalitarianism of the Stalinist stamp only because it is a particularly striking example. Here, one could draw a parallel between Stalinism and Hitler. Scientists also took an oath with Hitler, for example, and such things also occurred with us in Russia. Stalin called upon the proletariat, the working class; in his view, it has special characteristics and is particularly suited to a dictatorship. I mean, that is also a kind of racism or nationalism. Hitler called solely upon the German race and that is almost the same thing. Up to the 1940s, scientists—no matter what scientist, even one of the rank of Bernatzki—were subjected to reprisals. For example, the regime issued instructions to expose Bernatzki, and other such things. Only in the 1940s did they understand the role of the atomic concept in physics, but this was only concerning the atom bomb. Only then did they begin truly to esteem a scientist's personality. Otherwise, a scientist was nothing at all to the totalitarian regime.

Concerning Andrei Sakharov: he did enjoy a relative freedom to express his opinions freely. He was not sent immediately to a prison or camp.

INTERRUPTION: But after Gorki?

ALEXEIEV: Yes, there was the exile in Gorki. However, he was not subjected to any kind of physical reprisals, and thus he had a certain space for his activity. That was of course hard and difficult: as you correctly stated, he was on the one hand a victim and on the other a critic of the totalitarian regime.

GADSHIIEV: What I would like to emphasize in particular is the fact that Sakharov became a banner in the struggle against totalitarianism in Russia—our banner in the struggle for the rule of law, for democracy, etc. Yet, before we are truly aware of what we actually did in history and of what stands before us, before we have truly coped with this experience of totalitarianism, we cannot accurately assess the role of Sakharov either. What he said in all political discussions, for example, in the discussion about the constitution as well—this is now being thoroughly researched and investigated. Sakharov had written his own constitution, which was considered in many other drafts as well.

Concerning the putsch: as you have correctly recognized, the Soviet scientists did not already use this term publicly in their personal conversations and debates in the 1970s and 1980s. Only after Gorbachev and the putsch at that time was this concept used for the first time officially in politics and the media. That is correct.

Concerning the crimes of National Socialism and Communism: as I said in my lecture, there are certain parallels and similarities between both systems. In Poland, Communism is characterized by internationalism and, in Germany, Nazism is characterized by nationalism. The criminals of Nazism murdered millions of Jews, and the criminals of Communism also committed crimes in world-historical proportions. That was hundreds of millions of human beings. At least the Nazis had an enemy in the form of the Jews. For the Communists, there was no enemy in that sense, but enemies like the wife, the husband, the Party member, etc. I mean, the

German people were fortunate with the de-Nazification. It is a great question, however, whether we will now succeed in de-Communizing our people in Russia. Even now, former members of the Academy or secretaries of the Party—members of the Academy who were not scientists, but civil servants—seek to impose their will upon us and to assert their own line. Despite this, however, I am in a very optimistic mood. For at this point, Russia still has a bit of luck in the sense that we have no great thinkers, no great persons and no great programmes in our great era. If we had these, then perhaps yet another experiment would be carried out in Russia.

ALEXEIEV: By contrast to my colleague, my mood is pessimistic. I mean that Russia needs a kind of Nuremberg Trial for the people who are responsible for the millions of dead—for the famine in the Ukraine, for example, where 8 million peasants died because they supposedly had nothing to eat, etc. If Russia does not undertake this kind of Nuremberg Trial now, then the path to democracy is not clear. The people responsible are often dead, of course, but they must be named in order that the society can somehow make a clean breast of things. This is necessary in order to achieve a new beginning.

6
The other side of totalitarianism

The state of the debate in Hungary
Miklós Tomka

It is always risky to try to draw conclusions from a debate. It is riskier still where the participants and levels of discussion are as diverse as they are in the case of totalitarianism. It is perhaps much more appropriate to content oneself with a record of the most striking characteristics rather than with a conclusion. These characteristics will be introduced here in the form of a thesis.

The first noticeable peculiarity is the tension between Hungary's totalitarian past and its sparse treatment of totalitarianism in political science or theoretical history—indeed, such treatment is almost completely absent. The past itself is evoked in an ever-broadening stream of publications. The diaries and memoirs, the volumes of interviews with former top politicians, the documentary films and the collections of the oral history archives multiply. The show trials are recalled,[1] as is life in the concentration camps,[2] torments in the deportation camps[3] and villages,[4] the internment of those belonging to religious orders, the prohibition of religious orders,[5] persecution of religion,[6] the nationalization and standardization of the educational authority,[7] the crushing of the land-owning peasantry,[8] etc. It is revealed that the amnesty law of 26 July 1953 set 115, 761 prisoners free and repealed the sentences of 630,000 more persons—and this with a total Hungarian population of 10 million. (Of course, this number does not include the interned and deported, because these were transported and interned without legal trials or sentencing.[9]) In addition, beyond the memoirs of former Communist[10] and non-Communist[11] politicians, the reports that were sent to the Soviet leadership have also been revealed.[12] The facts, therefore, become increasingly accessible and their literary treatment is likewise considerable.

Yet, here is a second peculiarity: almost exclusively, the testimonies and documents arise from and concern the 1940s and the 1950s. This was the time of the direct occupation, of the Stalinism that followed and its subsequent loosening, of the revolution of 1956 (including pre-history and post-history) and finally, of the appointment of the Kadar regime and the ensuing terror. Later experiences are recorded only sporadically. Subjects such as the persecution of the churches and the historiography of that persecution are exceptions—as though there were nothing more to report in the past decades, or as though no one were left to do the reporting. This silence requires an explanation.

The silence surrounding totalitarianism is especially oppressive in political sociology and political science. Works that are pregnant with history, works by a Pasternak[13] or a Solzhenitsyn,[14] became best-sellers in Hungarian as well. Works written in the United States by the students of Lukács, Ágnes Heller and Ferenc Fehér, were also published in Hungary, albeit later on.[15] Earlier, there were also individual books treating National

Socialist totalitarianism in Hungary.[16] And not long ago, Hannah Arendt's large work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* was published in Hungarian translation.[17] In the 1970s and 1980s, several significant works by the Hungarian underground literature had already appeared on this theme abroad.[18] Yet, this list is also short. For the most part, moreover, these works reflected discussions that were occurring in other places; they were not reflections of Hungarian debates. Indeed, the word 'totalitarianism' can hardly ever be found in the latter. In recent introductory texts in political science[19] or in the past few issues of Hungarian specialist journals and yearbooks,[20] it cannot be found at all.

Perhaps not as a cause, but as a condition of the milieu, it should now be mentioned that Hungarian culture possesses scarcely any tradition of systematic thought and analysis. An indigenous philosophy has not grown up here. The confrontation between ideological bigotry and the self-assertion and autonomy of the sciences steers in a similar direction. Here, the social sciences were emancipated most successfully by way of a strictly concrete positivism and a restriction to individual facts. Ethnography, psychology, social psychology and empirical sociology, in that order, were able to break away from the dialectical and historical materialism that had formerly been regarded as *the* theory of social reality. Only after 1989 could political science establish itself as an independent discipline, and only now is it in the process of consolidating itself. Thus, a methodological tunnel vision might also be responsible for the weak illumination of the totalitarianism concept. Yet the actual reason may well lie deeper: both in the type of the power structure and of its transition and in the society and its self-understanding.

Following the defeat of the revolution, the phase of Hungarian Communism that was clearly totalitarian produced an exodus, particularly of the non-conforming intelligentsia and middle classes. The production of independent social and political thought was stopped with all the means the state power had at its disposal. The society—above all, the portion that was most strongly affected by totalitarianism—lost its capacity to reflect and articulate. Beginning in the early and mid-1960s, it progressively regained that capacity, albeit through members of the Communist establishment at first. Some functionaries were deemed trustworthy and were relatively highly esteemed in their relationships within the Nomenclature. These and their offspring were the first to begin investigating and critiquing the system; but this, however, was without being able to put themselves in the position of the persecuted. In this context, György Konrád and Iván Szelényi wrote of a merging of the intelligentsia—an intelligentsia selected through admission to study and indoctrinated both during and after the education—with the Communist bureaucracy.[21] Owing precisely to its toleration and integration of a limited critique, Konrád granted the system a considerable capacity to survive.[22] The 'Hungarian way' consisted in the compromise of avoiding political confrontation by domesticating critical potential. On the one hand, this squaring of the circle brought about the 'liberalization' of the past three decades and, ultimately, a seamless transition into the post-Communist phase following the Communist Party's self-imposed relinquishment of a monopoly in early 1989. On the other hand, however, the Communist ruling class could also transform its political power into economic and symbolic, cultural power in the process.

Many witnesses speak of how the victims of the Stalinist era experienced their persecution as humiliation and sought to silence, suppress and forget it. On the other side, this veiling of totalitarian practice was a means for the ruling class to retain its good conscience. The centrally steered education and state-controlled politics of information

could manage a lie. It could manage it, for example, that the younger generation would take the feigned class-transcending brotherhood literally enough simply to declare the persecution of religion, which was massively present up to 1989, a fable.[23] Certainly, such one-sidedness required a particular life experience in addition to the political manipulations. We cannot avoid reconstructing that life experience here. Historical situations can be read in different ways. Between 1948 and 1953–or between 1945 and 1956, if one adds to that prelude and postlude, the mounting and fading out of the tension—Hungary experienced a demonstration of totalitarianism. With some effort, however, even this period can be trivialized. Both historians as well as the people affected themselves have made this effort in various ways.

A first 'solution' consists in shifting the problem. In describing the post-war years, one might invoke the occupied status and pressure from the Soviets. The decision of the Allied powers was frequently used to justify the forced expulsion of approximately 200,000 Hungarian Germans.[24] (New data establish the contrary: that the Hungarian Communist Party itself forced the resettlement and had demanded it from the Soviets.[25]) Apparently, direct Soviet intervention in political life both before and after the peace treaty of 1945 were good enough grounds to be used as alibis by the Hungarian collaborationists and their historiographers. The double nature of the argumentation used is important. The responsibility is shifted upon a *deus ex machina,* upon an invisible—and with that, all the more dreadful—foreign power. One's own implied guiltlessness then becomes a means to let the strength of totalitarianism in general fall into oblivion.

Second, historiography attempted to portray 1945 and the period that followed as a double liberation: from the German occupation on the one hand and the supposed yoke of a feudal system that is said to have persisted up to 1945 on the other. The echo of this interpretation reverberates to this day. For Hungarians of Israelite belief or Jewish heritage, 1944 and 1945 were truly terrifying years and the end of the war was a genuine liberation. As for the rest, Hungarians experienced the last phase of the war as robbery, murder and rape by Soviet soldiers. It was simply grotesque to describe this experience as a liberation. With the hastily executed agrarian reform, things stood somewhat differently. Each possession of more than 60 hectares of land was parcelled up, expropriated without compensation and distributed among those who had no property. Yet those who were given the gifts took only brief pleasure in them; a few years later, these new property owners were forcibly collectivized into production co-operatives.

Third, later analyses in particular sought to understand the entire Communist period in terms of its economic politics. Owing not only to forced industrialization, policies hostile to agriculture and migration to the towns, but also to the restructuring of the society and spread of school education that were thereby attained, this period is characterized as one of modernization.[26] This ensures a fundamentally positive judgement. Tensions and conflicts, by contrast, are dismissed as 'normal' consequences of modernization as though the character of the political system were of no importance.

The interpretation that draws exclusively from the perspective of modernization may find adherents among younger generations, but those who bore the miseries of that period assess matters from another standpoint. Yet for the latter, the system's totalitarianism is not usually the essential category to understanding the past, either. It is instead their own strength: specifically, the capacity of the society to offer resistance to the attempt at total monopolization. At that time, deportation[27] and even imprisonment[28] conveyed not only a

sense of humiliation, but an experience of solidarity as well. One felt oneself more united with others in face of the totalitarian system than one did either before or afterwards. At that time, this feeling often ensured survival. At present, it is a means to get beyond the inhumanity of the period.

At that time, the Hungarian Rebellion, the revolution of 1956, was a proof and confirmation of one's own strength.[29] It has remained so to this day. Certainly, the Soviet army was able to put down the rebellion, but the people had made it unambiguously clear that it did not want Communism; and, so long as no foreign power intervened, it was also in the position to shrug off arbitrary rule. This reading is reassuring and in some sense correct. Yet, it still leads to error in that the foreign power had in fact interfered.

In 1956, an historical epoch ended—the period of unity, of resolute opposition, of the society's superiority over totalitarianism. Not a proud power remained, but rather disappointment, disillusionment, the end of both the belief in the ideology and the myth of the people's own strength. A paralysis of mourning and hopelessness characterized the land for years. The Communist administrative apparatus gained time to stabilize. In emerging from its inner paralysis, the only path that remained to the society was to continue with Communist praxis, including its renewed crushing of agriculture, unrestricted industrialization and migration to urban centres. In coping with this second thrust of modernization, however, the society no longer possessed an inner unity; it was no longer supported by its traditions and was prevented from creating new structures through collective action. Nor had the acts of post-revolutionary revenge yet subsided: police, informant and supervision by the Party were omnipresent. The society was fearful and each had to endure this fear alone, because an equally fearful party-state held no crime to be worse than the forming of an 'illegal' community. Such activity was recorded, pursued and punished as the 'attempted formation of illegal organizations' or even as 'conspiracy'. The Communist system institutionalized the atomizing effect of modernization into a systematic isolation of people from one another. With that, the anomie was fully accomplished.[30]

In the 1960s and early 1970s, 'anomie' was the essential concept in Hungary. Old spheres of life and strategies, individual rationalities and calculations of costeffectiveness disintegrated with mobility, the apparent failure of these models, and the rapid transformation of the spatial conditions of personal and social life. The aids of orientation that were offered by the formal order of the party-state continued to be emphatically rejected. Of course, the restriction of a new structuring of society and its culture of daily life also prevented the new habits, routines and consensus that might have preserved stability and security from originating. One had the opportunity to engage in partisan individual actions for which one could hope for no support from others. Left to one's own devices, each individual conducted his own little war against the system. Less striking perhaps was the emergence of a general competition for the acquisition of goods and position—a competition that no rules held in check.[31] The complete uncertainty ended in a struggle of all against all. This struggle might have taken the form of an increase in achievement and self-exploitation, which then provided a basis for the bitter materialism and pressure to consume of 'Goulash Communism'. Certainly, this development also produced a sudden increase in stress-related diseases and every kind of social problem, as well as a decrease in life expectancy. The lawlessness and disorder of the anomie had

been unleashed, increased to a power that was both hostile to the human being and destructive of the society.[32]

The period of 'Goulash Communism' established an individualism that had not previously existed. International comparisons yield remarkable results. In this respect, studies of modernity have discovered that Hungary stands on a par with the United States. With essential supplementation, this apparently mistaken statement can in fact be proved. One can find total valuations according to which Hungarian society is as thoroughly modern as the US one; the trick lies with the criteria. Hungarian society is just as (or even more) achievement-oriented, conscious of free time and pragmatic as the US one. In Hungary, however, sociability or religious culture is less highly valued. By juxtaposing these values, one can find a more modern orientation in Hungary than in the society of the United States. Hungarian sociologists speak of a 'negative modernity' because the deficiencies are more responsible for the orientation than the benefits. This correlates with the anomie as well with as the social renewal that followed.

The post-revolutionary Kadar government attempted to break the total rejection that had been demonstrated towards it by enlarging the supply of goods and making economic promises. Following the periods of ideology and terror, an economic pragmatism was established. With that, of course, the genie of independent economic regularities slipped from the bottle of totalitarianism. The label describing the late 1970s and 1980s is 'second society'.[33] The formerly totalitarian power had become an empty husk. Behind this façade, the society developed without asking permission: the meagre products of a domestic economy that was not controlled by the state joined with black-market labour, independently hand-made goods and, to some extent, agriculture, to blossom into a 'second economy'. By the beginning of the 1970s, this 'second economy' had already brought in the majority of agricultural produce. This economy was private, based upon achievement and market-economy principles. It was capable of competing with the state sphere, of influencing labour relationships and of determining the labour market.

Parallel to the mounting independence of the economy, a church of small groups or 'basis church' arose in the underground in the ecclesiastical sphere.[34] Totalitarianism forced a division of labour within the church. Some things—the cult within the confines of the church and clergy—were permitted and were openly tended by the official church. Many things—religious education of children and communal activities, for example— were persecuted, but could nonetheless be dared on one's own initiative. In the tug of war between the state power and the Christians, the latter remained the stronger. After having endured many disadvantages, perhaps even imprisonment, they had nothing further to lose. The state power, by contrast, paternalistically sought to curry favour at home and to create a liberal image for itself abroad. Thus, it had its hands tied.

Following the 'second economy' and the 'church from below', a 'second public' of unauthorized samizdat writings made its presence felt. By the mid-1980s, four regular journals and numerous books—as well as the 'Democratic Opposition' shortly afterward—could already be written, printed and distributed within the country itself.[35] As long as the independent sphere of society was weak, the social sciences studied the dual or polarized character of the structure of leadership and power. One lamented the missing middle structure, the insufficient communication between 'those above' and the 'society below'. To be sure, 'above' no longer possessed total power, but something more like vassaldom and nepotism. The growth of the society's autonomy and the decay of the

leadership apparatus went hand in hand. One soon could not help but become aware of the functional poverty of the party-state. At first, this poverty was compensated by 'hand steering'—that is, by *ad hoc* commands of individual functionaries that were usually circumvented.[36] Of course, the fact that 'hand steering' became the rule already signalled a basic retreat from totalitarian praxis and a push toward the constitutional state that was not yet at hand. The increasing significance of the 'second society' then shifted the accent from the system of leadership to the society's self-determination and the formation of a civil society.[37] With that, the last shadows of totalitarianism were eliminated.

A first result consists in the reality that totalitarianism is hardly mentioned in Hungary. With this, however, its opposite is mentioned all the more: namely, how the society attempted to become master of the ruler that was imposed upon it. This finding provoked further questions: questions as to the appropriateness of the term, 'totalitarianism', for example, or those concerning the psychological and power-political consequences of suppressing it in particular.

The first series of questions arises from the difference between assertion and reality. Many well-known definitions and descriptions of totalitarianism apply this concept in a way that is more ideal-typical than analytical.[38] In fact, there are hardly any problems so long as the ideologies, party programmes, composition and aims of a political power structure are the focus. Yet constitution and constitutional reality are not necessarily congruent; if one begins with the society's structure, manner of acting and cultural products, then difficulties with the concept of totalitarianism arise. From the standpoint of constitutional reality, one could pedantically insist that totalitarianism in the strict sense could not be realized so long as the human being remains a human being. Such an absolutizing declaration is of course fallacious, but it nonetheless suggests the difficulty of drawing the borders of totalitarianism. Is the difference between totalitarianism and non-totalitarianism a purely quantitative one? If so, then how many 'white roses'[39] can render a totalitarian claim hollow, ineffectual—ultimately, no longer totalitarian? Further, if totalitarianism does not appear in a chemically pure form and is constantly challenged by an onslaught of mitigating factors, then how long can it resist the immanent laws of economy, technology and their social organizations? Are there criteria by which to distinguish the totalitarian from post-totalitarian and no-longer-totalitarian orders?

In central Europe, yet another aspect must be mentioned. The theory of society usually assumes a certain unit of a society that can accordingly be treated as a single system.[40] This silent assumption holds for the use of the totalitarian concept as well. Yet one might ask whether the so-called unity of a social system can be said to exist in an uncompromised sense for states or systems of rule. There are numerous counter-examples.[41] In colonial societies, at least two social systems appear to have existed beside one another; and the Jewish ghettos of European history were systems of their own, ones that existed beside the system of societies that describe themselves as Christian. In central Europe, the administrative systems of the Habsburgs, Prussians and Russians stood beside, and often against, the cultural systems of social praxis. Noble and base, ruling and minority nations could peacefully co-exist so long as independent spheres were respected. National and class resistance thereby became a fixed component of the cultures of this region. This component was handed down, both in the interpretation of national identity and in the romanticism of the poacher and irregular a la Robin Hood. Power, rule and state were automatically suspect; opposition, protest, tricking of authorities became

virtues whose exercise rested upon methods and routines that were centuries old. Under such conditions, a rule of terror or despotism is not possible. Yet what kind of totalitarianism is it if it cannot enforce the wearing of the yellow star or, conversely, if everyone were to wear one? What kind of totalitarianism is it where previous criminal convictions are prized on political grounds as heroism, where deported persons are supported with unstinting solidarity? One should dare, therefore, the hypothesis that traditions of long oppression and resistance against totalitarianism can immunize against or even prevent the actual development of totalitarianism—regardless of ideological or political directives. A society's self-assertion might also consist in appearing to accept the imposed order in an external or formal sense, but in acting according to one's own discretion. Like with traffic: one knows the regulations, but drives at 50 kilometres per hour in the city only where one expects particular difficulties or checkpoints. The regulation of traffic is more commonly a symbol of self-adjustment than of totalitarian rule.

A widespread joke of the former Eastern bloc asked whether one would rather go to socialist or to capitalistic hell after death. To the socialist one, naturally, the answer stated. For there, the coal is missing, the fire has just gone out or the devils are napping. The joke mirrors relations and manners of conduct that deem socialism to perform poorly and to be incapable of keeping its promises. Its prisoners, therefore, can position themselves within socialism in a bearable way. Of course, it remains an open question whether jokes correctly capture the reality of hell.

According to another joke, the dead person must choose between heaven and hell. Both are presented to him. He finds heaven boring and chooses hell, where he sees old friends and dancing and entertainment. Having scarcely arrived, he is of course barbarously tortured. He protests that he had expected something different. The mocking answer returns, 'You probably believed our PR specialists?' This aspect might be of relevance in our context as well.

Hungarian totalitarianism killed many and forced many others into exile—they could not step into the witness box from there. Many of the persecuted wished only to forget their suffering and humiliation and by no means to conjure up the difficult memories any further. The white-collar functionaries and the henchmen of the totalitarian era seek to interpret their rule of that time—despite 'some slips'—as basically just and a service to the people; they do this so that neither the property they expropriated nor their consciences are placed in question. Many, finally, found niches where they could hibernate in the system, evade the measures of totalitarianism. Yet another motive might accrue to these various motives aiming at the avoidance of memory and of the totalitarianism concept. The political culture of 'truly existent socialism' has not yet entirely disappeared; both the creation of a myth of 'socialism with a human face' and the suppression of the totalitarian experience are components of its efforts to survive. The description of the state that emphasizes its fundamental neutrality might serve this same purpose. Particularly suited to this purpose is the almost sympathetic analysis of the weaknesses of the Communist system and the valorization of the slyness and strength of the society and its initiatives.

What, then, is reality and what is propaganda? Is totalitarianism always and necessarily brutal and violent? Alternatively, can it establish itself in silence? Perhaps in the silence of the graveyard, where no opposition was tolerated. The history of Soviet

totalitarianism is a series of power struggles, of waves of purges and relatively tranquil times. At least temporarily, then, there can be soundless, dully tolerated totalitarianism. Such totalitarianism must not necessarily have transformed all human beings into marionettes with no identity; it suffices if the regimes are safely insulated from individual and group autonomies and if the insulated area is firmly under the control of the total power. It suffices if vents are installed in order to remove 'incurable' non-conformists. A pacified totalitarianism must not kill such individuals; it suffices to force them into emigration. Presumably, the GDR tended toward and perfected this kind of totalitarianism. And Hungary? In Hungary, the transition of 1989 appears to have been the fruit of an internal fermentation process, whereby the international and, above all, the Soviet power relations were more conditions than causes of the milieu. In spite of this, one must ask oneself whether 'Goulash Communism' was not also an attempt to create a peaceful totalitarianism after the horrible haemorrhaging of the revolution and the murder of justice that ended it. Perhaps, then, not only the niches became part of the system, but the myth about the power of factors that were in fact sterile as well. If this is the case, then the intelligentsia or economic growth, among others, ultimately became system-stabilizing factors.[42] Alternatively, does a co-operation of totalitarian and anti-totalitarian measures applied by the same institutions characterize a post-totalitarian period instead?

In the final three decades, which might also be described as the Kadar era or a Communist consumer society, Hungary ought perhaps no longer to be called totalitarian in the full sense. Yet, it did not rid itself entirely of totalitarianism either. Cloaked initially in authoritarian ideas, this continued existence of totalitarian elements of totalitarianism is today hidden in ideas that obscure the problems and essential features of totalitarianism itself. The body in the basement should not be exhumed; the power of silence lives on. We can expect a debate about totalitarianism in Hungary only in the future.

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Discussion of Tomka's paper

Chair: Brigitte Gess

WEINACHT: In part, Mr Tomka, your lecture seemed like a variation on the theme of constitution and constitutional reality. You have very vividly demonstrated this difference with the Hungarian example and have thereby confirmed a statement that was offered this morning: namely, that totalitarianism is a symptom of weakness. In retrospect of course, once the opponents have been shot and the bearskins hang on the wall, this can be heard without shock. As long as they are still living, however, that is a great provocation indeed. In addition, we have heard that the totalitarian bear could not come so fully to life in Hungary and have learned why this was the case. Manifestly, certain contexts shoot down the totalitarian more quickly and others strengthen it. All manner of explanatory grounds have been sought for it in the German situation.

Thus, I think that we find here a series of national variations upon this theme, and your lecture stimulates one to take up this theme very actively again for the German scene as well.

MAIER: Mr Tomka's very refreshing presentation makes it clear how difficult it is to apprehend totalitarianism as a condition. In each society—even the most tightly organized one—there are niches. In each ruling system—even the most unscrupulous one—there are antagonisms, contrasts and competitive relations. Hitler sometimes proved himself to be a 'weak dictator'. If one begins with the actual condition of the society, then the concept of totalitarianism is in fact always problematic. It promises more than it can keep. This is why I claim that one must apply the old statement, 'one should know them by their fruits', to the theory of totalitarianism as well. By this, I mean that two conditions must be present in order that one can speak of a totalitarian regime. First, an 'objective' enemy must exist. By an objective enemy, I understand with Daniel Suter one who has already been politically established as an enemy— personally, he can commit or omit what he likes, he is always an enemy. I cite the Latvian Tscheka boss, Lacis: 'We do not conduct war against individual persons, we exterminate the bourgeoisie as a class; the first thing the accused should be asked is to which class he belongs, what his origins, his occupation are. These questions should decide his fate'.[1] And there were similar things in the Third Reich as well. Here, one need only replace the word 'class' with 'race'. Thus, the objective political enemy— the one who *must* be the enemy, who is defined as an enemy, who cannot become guilty but is simply a pest. Second, there appears to me to be another condition necessary for a regime to be described as totalitarian: it must be in a country in which there has been mass destruction of such political enemies by the state power. Thus Auschwitz, but also the Gulag, the extermination of the Ukrainian kulaks, etc. Our Russian colleagues have cited the alarming numbers with which historians calculate today. The Soviet crimes have been infinitely less researched; by and large, they live in the public consciousness in literary form, through Solzhenitsyn and others, or through the documentation of those who escaped from the Ukraine that lies in the

Hoover Institute. Whereas with us, all dimensions of the Holocaust were minutely researched: the sources were open, the archives were accessible and the crimes, fortunately, could not be shoved under the table.

With all due caution, one might say that there has been mass extermination of political enemies on this level, in the millions, only in the Soviet Union and National Socialist Germany. In Germany, such extermination was factory-like and technically perfected; in Russia, it was more the old method of letting one perish from hunger, cold and work. In this, I would absolutely include Leninist Russia. Although the executions under Lenin were not of Stalinist dimensions in a quantitative sense, the unscrupulousness as well as the concept of the political enemy was there from the beginning with Lenin. Thus, there was this in Russia and in Germany. After the Second World War, one must add to these Cambodia and possibly China as well.

The pre-defined political enemy, a concept that transforms the human being from one who is capable of guilt into a pest, transposes him into the animal realm. Then comes the cold-blooded and unscrupulous mass annihilation of these 'enemies' and 'pests'. These seem to me to be the new elements of horror through which the tyrannical regimes of the twentieth century can be differentiated from the older despotisms. Whether the word 'totalitarianism' is suited to characterizing states in which such mass exterminations of political enemies have occurred is a different question again. But even the classical despotisms and the horrible cruelty of war, the human pyramids of Timur Lenk and everything that one can cite from history—these lack, I believe, this concept of the objective enemy and the annihilation within one's own state and ruling area. The latter I must still add—extermination within one's own ruling area. Thus, the German Jews who were exterminated were indeed Germans, and the Ukrainian kulaks were Soviet people at the time. I believe that one must move from the conditions to the effects of such systems in order to gain a full concept of them.

MÖLLER: I would add directly to what Mr Maier has said. There is no totalitarian regime, no dictatorship in which there are not forms of opposition, resistance and resistance movements, also niches. It must be emphasized that, ultimately, totalitarianism is not a projection of the party that legitimates itself ideologically and demands to achieve its objectives in a totalitarian way by excluding certain social groups that it declares to be enemies. When the opponent becomes an enemy, he is not fought, but annihilated. As Mr Maier very aptly put it, this model is absolutely crucial. Thus, one can and must assess the objectives that have been set as well and not only the degree of realization.

In light of this, no other description of forms of rule that seem to be analogous—absolutism, for example—would be accurate. Even absolutism was not absolute; thus, one cannot take this alone as one's criterion. Certainly, the question that Mr Tomka has posed—namely, how many niches can there be for the concept still to apply?—cannot be answered in terms of this criterion. Mr Tomka, you say that a whole series of social systems were beyond totalitarian intervention or should not at all be understood as totalitarian. If this were the case, then one would certainly not be able to speak of totalitarianism, because these sub-systems remained untouched from beginning to end. Characteristic of the totalitarian regimes is that they leave no social groups or institutions untouched *in principle*. Even if they achieve a co-existence

with the churches, as occurs at times, then it is only because they are not immediately and comprehensively in the position to achieve their objectives concerning these institutions. Yet, these objectives nonetheless remain the goal.

Besides this, one must consider the length of time. The Soviet system lasted about 70 years, the National Socialist system 12—from this fact alone results a different degree of realization of totalitarian goals. Although one can scarcely imagine it, 70 years of National Socialist dictatorship would have looked different at the end as well. The totalitarian understanding of the society, its levelling influence, would have penetrated even deeper. Evidently, it is a fundamental problem—the problem whether social systems truly remain insulated from totalitarian interference.

Whether mass extermination must really be a criterion of totalitarian systems appears to me to be questionable. Here I diverge somewhat from Mr Maier. The criteria for defining totalitarian systems demonstrate, in my opinion, that the ruling structure can be totalitarian without inevitably having to set the goal of mass annihilation of greater parts of the population. One would have to discuss that. It is characteristic for Bolshevist totalitarianism and certainly for National Socialist totalitarianism, but not for most of the other totalitarian systems in Europe—not for the GDR, for example.

What Mr Tomka said about derivative dictatorships, about occupational rule, or foreign rule also remains an open question. To what extent should these forms of dictatorship be described as totalitarian? In my opinion, the question whether a dictatorship involves an occupational ruler or not changes nothing about its totalitarian character. As many historical examples demonstrate, an occupational rule can also evince totalitarian structures. You yourself have affirmed this for the Hungary of 1948 to 1953. One can probably ask only if a nation suffers the occupation as an imposed fate. To what extent is the nation itself involved in the shaping of a totalitarian system? Many   totalitarian systems also form their own instruments of national terror under occupation or satellite conditions.

This holds for some of the other dictatorships in the Soviet ruling sphere as well. They formed their own party and functional elites; they formed groups within the population that were composed of fellow-travellers or, in any case, that profited from the system. Dictatorships function not only through repression, but through temptation as well. To this extent, the question as to who is responsible for such systems should be posed. Some began with an occupational rule and later existed as satellites with directives in certain political areas. From a certain point on, the Soviet Union was not much interested in the details of the satellites' internal formation, so long as the system remained stable and dependent. It intervened in cases where the system was destabilized, where there were rebellions: 1953 in East Germany, 1956 in Hungary and 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Yet barring such escalations, the mechanism of oppression was, simply put, a national affair.

Thus, this is the reason why the question as to the totalitarian character of these regimes in the East European zone following 1945 must be posed twice. One question asks about the share of the occupying power and the other asks about the share—possibly differing in each epoch—of the respective nations.

The problem of perception has rubbed off on science, by the way. For example, one can also offer the opposite interpretation of the Hungarian uprising of 1956. One might see it (and 17 June 1953 as well) as an uprising against a strong, unbearably

oppressive totalitarian regime; one need not necessarily conclude that it was a weak regime. On the other hand, the fact that Soviet power alone made it possible to maintain the system in Czechoslovakia, Berlin and Hungary speaks for a characterization of weakness. In each case, however, the uprisings were actions against an existing totalitarian regime: later perception changes nothing about this fact, even if we often tend to construct national myths for our own countries. One should always immunize oneself against these somewhat.

LINZ: I believe that the presentation on Hungary is very significant for our discussion. I believe that one must see with complete clarity that totalitarianism is perhaps, as Michael Walzer said, a certain exception among political systems, that it is not a permanent and—God be thanked, perhaps—not a stable form. We then encounter the problem of post-totalitarianism. Precisely because totalitarianism did not and could not assert itself, or because it underwent an evolution that stripped it of all its main characteristics, of its belief in dialectic and perception that a new society, a new human is being created: this is why something different, something new arose. I believe that what Mr Tomka has told us is very helpful for us; we see that the construction of totalitarianism did not progress so quickly. Here, in Hungary, there was at first a kind of semi-free period in which there were still elections; then there was the construction of the totalitarian Rakóski period, a period that was brief on account of the uprising. Then there was the Kadar era, which was probably post-totalitarian from the beginning due to the weakness that the crisis carried with it—or, at least, it   became post-totalitarian very quickly. The question that some Hungarian friends pose to me is this: was it not already even a kind of authoritarian system at the end? To a certain extent, that question is the opposite of the one I posed to my Polish friends: namely, whether one could already apply my concept of the authoritarian regime to Poland beginning in Gomulka's time. They believed that, no, that was false: this regime was totalitarian to the end. The Poles want to have been totalitarian; the Hungarians want perhaps to have been authoritarian. But the fact is, in my opinion, that the *modus vivendi* which developed between the Church and the Communist regime so that the latter could remain in power at all as well as the social pluralism and the Solidarnosz movement—these all led to Poland becoming a genuinely authoritarian system, not a post-totalitarian one, by the end of 1989. Whereas Hungary, in my view—despite all the liberalization of the final era, the development of a parallel economy, etc.—was still a post-totalitarian system, perhaps the most progressive post-totalitarian system in the entire Communist world.

The concept of post-totalitarianism, by contrast to the difference between authoritarianism and totalitarianism, is not a qualitative difference. It is, rather, a dimensional difference, so to speak. To what extent has post-totalitarianism retreated from totalitarianism, or to what extent has it progressed? A continuum of development, therefore. Nevertheless, we must also be entirely clear about the fact that, in 1989, probably none of these systems was purely totalitarian any longer; we would have to go then to lands like China or Cuba.

To sum up—we must reflect further on the concepts, we must develop differentiations, variations. Indian democracy and Swedish democracy are both democracies, but they are nonetheless two entirely different realities. So is it with the various totalitarianisms as well, and with the phases within these totalitarian systems. In the

case of the Soviet Union, the possibility of a temporal classification presents itself: from Lenin to Stalin, from Khrushchev to the Brezhnev era, which was in many respects post-totalitarian. Khrushchev marked, I believe, an attempt to revive totalitarianism according to the Stalinist elements of despotism, which were perhaps not purely totalitarian. Then, finally, the Gorbachev period—one must regard that as a cycle. With National Socialism, God be thanked, we did not have to experience the entire cycle over so many years. And that makes the comparison so difficult in many respects.

HÜRTEN: I would like to come back again to the niches. Ultimately, I hold the number of niches not to be decisive, but rather the question as to whether interaction between the niches exists—thus, the problem of the public. That appears to me to be the difference between the situation in Hungary and the niche society of the GDR. Here, we would reach a point that could be theoretically clarified: to be totalitarian, a system must be in a position to maintain a monopoly of publicity. This, in turn, has a consequence: only in a developed industrial society can there be a monopoly of publicity. As a result, the *Communist Manifesto* could not have produced totalitarianism on its own, nor could the   Jacobeans have yet created a totalitarian state. My question to Mr Tomka would be this: would not this second society, the shadow society, have required interaction in order to function at all?

PETERSEN: I found what you have presented here very stimulating as well, Mr Tomka. I have one question. You asked, 'Was the Hungarian society, the Hungarian state, totalitarian?' And in the end, you answered this question in the negative. With this self-interpretation continually in mind, it seems to me that a second question has not resonated with you and I would like to ask you about it. Specifically, the question: how did the Hungarians regard the National Socialist dictatorship, how did they regard the Soviet dictatorship? Just from what you have said: rule of foreigners, *Homo sovieticus,* etc.

TOMKA: I sought primarily to indicate the ambivalence of the Hungarian assessment of totalitarianism. By no means did I seek to claim that totalitarianism did not exist in Hungary in the past 40 years (or in a portion of this time). My own experiences as well as my scientific convictions speak entirely for the totalitarian nature of the political order in Hungary in the late 1940s and the 1950s. However, I was not interested in presenting evidence from my own experience here. Much more, I sought to portray both the mechanisms of trivialization and suppression and the strategies of self-assertion and myth formation. This was in order to illuminate distortions in the portrayal of relations that were perhaps totalitarian.

One variable, the foreign rule, I could not work in sufficiently. The Soviet army deported people up to the end of the 1940s—thus, after the peace treaty of 1947 as well. In 1956, they defeated the revolution. After that, they were manifestly present in both the cities and the countryside as a sign of political dependence that was visible to everyone. It is exceedingly difficult to determine to what extent the Soviets were directly responsible for arbitrary rule and to what extent they gave their native vassals a free hand. For this reason, I remain with the observation that those who were responsible are happy to extract themselves from the affair by depicting the Soviets in retrospect as omnipresent, as deciding matters directly. The tracing of actual responsibilities still awaits clarification.

Mr Linz referred to the instability of totalitarianism in the Hungarian context as well. By way of supplementation, attention should perhaps be drawn to a particularly drastic structural turn in the late 1950s. The period of the late 1940s and 1950s—or more generally, the phase between the Communist seizure of power and the revolution— would have to bear the tension between the totalitarian claim of those who had power and the steadfastness and opposition of the society and its culture. This tension culminated in the revolution, which destroyed the hopes from below and the self-certainty from above in equal measure. The post-revolutionary period knows only a sobered, disillusioned apparatchik and the disillusioned, pragmatically acquisitive individuals of an atomized society. With that began the dismantling of the totalitarian claim as well.

Mr Hürten addressed an essential question when he asked about the interactions among non-conformist activities and groups, about the niches.   Some discussants have already established that, in determining the existence or non-existence of totalitarianism, the number of niches is secondary. To this, I can only agree. What might well be of significance would be the admission of the system, basically, that it cannot touch the independence of the niches. That occurred in Hungary with the 'second economy'. When it became known that the domestic and shadow economy puts out almost half the value of agricultural production, a government geared toward economic success would have to acknowledge—perhaps grudgingly, but nonetheless acknowledge in the end—the freedom of this sphere. Further, when groups of Christians decided that they would rather accept jail than give up their communities, the strongest means of pressure expired for a state that was able to practise no mass persecution of Christians because it strove to retain its liberal image. Did totalitarianism succumb from the choice to pursue economic success and liberal image? Conversely, did the acknowledgement of the independence of certain niches become deadly to it?

The niches were not isolated islands of escape, of course, but a web of roots, networks of independent regeneration for the society. The 'second' or shadow economy was a powerful system in itself; it shaped ordinary culture, ideas of value, social status, public conduct, etc. It shaped the state to a greater extent than some regulation or other issued by the—still totalitarian, or authoritarian?—state order. Equally powerful, albeit restricted to smaller groups, were the religious underground groups and cultures like the opposing 'second public'. In the second half of the 1980s, the relationships between the various autonomous spheres began to grow. Not only individual areas, but the society as a whole began to assert its independence in the face of the possessors of political power. Despite all harassment of which the state was still capable in the 1980s, it could no longer muster the power to bear a totalitarian demeanour. Following the will to totalitarianism, which had died long before, the structures and habits of totalitarianism gradually died as well.

As was mentioned already, the post-war history of Hungary can be divided into two segments where totalitarianism is concerned. Terror, ideological fanaticism and— judged according to the intentions of the possessors of power—totalitarianism reigned in the late 1940s and the 1950s. At the same time, however, there was a silent, perhaps only passive, but nonetheless predominant resistance against tyranny. The revolution of 1956 won out in the sense that it destroyed the innocent naivety of

Communist utopias. Despite the reinforcement of Communist and Soviet rule, naïve acceptance of the totalitarian vision became impossible. To be sure, the spirit of resistance fed by the traditional culture had been bled just as dry. Yet the will to assert oneself, to live life according to one's own faculties and determine one's own contexts of life had not diminished; it was only that direct confrontation with the state power seemed to be an unsuitable means to attain this. Much more instinctively than consciously, one began to discover the holes and weak points of the system and to act according to one's own needs and discretion beginning here. Thus began the attempt to secure one's own autonomy and   withdraw individual spheres from the control of the state. In the 1970s and 1980s, one might have spoken of a resistance in Hungary in this sense.

Mr Petersen referred to the fact that my presentation of the Hungarian debate over totalitarianism lacked any discussion of the Bolshevist and the National Socialist dictatorships. On this point, the finding that was emphasized in the lecture holds here as well: countless factual reports, memoirs and descriptions of situations of totalitarian countries and systems were published in Hungary. Analyses of systems and systemic portrayals of totalitarianism, by contrast—with the exception of the individual cases cited—are lacking. Before 1990, one was not permitted to speak of Soviet totalitarianism. For their part, National Socialism and Fascism were lumped together into one and the two designations were used as synonyms. Neither before nor after 1990 has genuine scientific reflection occurred. This remains a task for the future.

Note

1 Cited in Peter Scheibert, *Lenin an der Macht. Das russische Volk in der Revolution 1918–1922* (Weinheim, 1984), p. 76.

7
A glance at the history and present of the Bohemian countries

Hugo Rokyta

By contrast to scientists in my home country, the scientists of the Western world have had the great advantage of a free exchange of information in the last 50 years. For half a century, the Iron Curtain and linguistic barriers have made open contact impossible and have allowed scientific and cultural life to wither for two generations. Even today, in the post-Communist era, we still suffer the consequences. For example, the Communist regime suppressed the acquisition of foreign languages—above all, the bilingualism that was common in our country and had linked us to the history of Austria. This is why the young scientists now have impeded access to the information that was barred to them for so long.

In order to clarify the current situation in the Bohemian countries, the actual identity of this people should first be described.

Bohemian identity

In every geography textbook, one learns that the Bohemian countries lie in the heart of Europe. Through them led all roads of the continent and all the folk-paths of the early period: the Amber Road, the Route of St James, the Loreto Road. The continent's first railway—the Ferdinand North Line—also passed through the countries of the present-day Czech Republic.

Our country was ruthlessly sentenced to destruction—to the loss of its identity—by two totalitarian regimes. The first kingdom of Bohemia was a member, not a vassal, of the supra-national Holy Roman Empire and its ruler was the first on the seat of the worldly electors. According to the plans of two totalitarian regimes, this country—which existed as a state for exactly 20 years following 300 years of lost sovereignty—was to be obliterated from the family of free nations. A protectorate replaced the state. In both Bohemian countries, the totalitarian regimes were occupational regimes. This led to the loss of both the Czech intelligentsia and all the Czech universities. An existence solely as working slaves in the northern most regions of the continent was publicly forecasted for this country: Hitler, Heydrich and Karl Hermann Frank stated openly and bluntly that the Czech people had no business being in the heart of Europe and had nothing further to expect here. Preparations had already been made: the concentration camps of National Socialism were filled with the Czechs' intelligentsia. Tellingly, only 10 per cent had originally been workers—the workers themselves were consciously reserved for building the new society in the National Socialist image in the post-war era. For a people of just

over 10 million, 360,000 dead marks a significant and harsh loss of blood. Almost all the Jewish Czech citizens were exterminated in Auschwitz or Theresienstadt.

At the end of the Second World War, the other totalitarian regime was granted privileges by its Communist allies for including the Bohemian countries within it. This was expressed again with all harshness in 1968. With this action, the land became a border colony and military training ground that existed on the border to the free world.

The divided continent has a long history: Christianity came to Bohemia from two diametrically opposed starting-points. From the one side, it came to us from Byzantium via Cyril and Methodius. From the other, Prince Wenceslas incorporated the country and its people into Western civilization by his free decision to belong to the Latin world. The native dynasty did not shut itself off from this civilization, but incorporated it through its colonization of the Bohemian valley and the neighbouring regions of Moravia and Silesia. With that, the country was exposed to the future conflicts of the continent on all sensitive fronts, for this territory on the edge of central and eastern Europe possessed rich natural endowments. Since then, the people of this country have not ceased thinking about the meaning of its history. Probably no other neighbouring people discovers its identity through reflection on its history in this way, nor is any other tied so strongly to historicism and myth. The historical result of this is that both messianism and self-pity can be found in Bohemia. These are the epochs of Hussitism, the Reformation, the defeat on the White Mountain, the Enlightenment, the Josephinism of an Austrian orientation and nationalism. In the motherland of Bohemia, the Latin faith wins out and assumes, despite all Slavic artistic resources, the specific form of a liberal coolness. Its livelier expression is preserved in the musically gifted Moravia and the Silesian border regions; there, a greater symbiosis of belief and folk-tradition composes the identity of its religious faith. 'Bohemian Catholicism' was and is lightly mocked outside the country. Masaryk, for example, consciously rejected it because the Bohemian Catholics of the Habsburg monarchy submitted themselves to throne and altar. He admired German Catholicism, which he called 'neo-Catholicism', by contrast, because it emerged as a free state from the cultural struggle of the Bismarck era. Certainly, Masaryk extended his rejection to late pan-Slavism and Eastern orthodoxy, as well as to the Russian imperialism of tsars like Lenin. For this rejection, he and his supporters became mortal enemies of Communism, which was prepared to liquidate both the country and people of the Bohemian lands in its alliance with Hitler's totalitarianism.

Guarantors of historical continuity

Had, then, the original European consciousness and its membership in Latin civilization disappeared in the past centuries? By no means. For there was the Przemyslidian kingdom with Pryzemysl Ottokar II, one of the grandsons of Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa: his was a kingdom of the middle. There was the empire of Charles IV, the Luxemburger. In this context, one must also recall the statesman-like strategy of King George of Podybrad, who produced a European peace plan and alliance of princes that was admired by Goethe, as well as the earlier acumen of the pedagogue and international lawyer, Jan Amos Komensky. In the work of the latter as well, the Bohemian people had both a place and a task. The old Czech legend of Saint Catherine, who was given on contract by

Charles IV to be his teacher, marks a peak of the development of Western education and language. The doctrine of Master John Hus—who had been nourished by the earlier themes of Anglo-Saxon emancipation—not only takes on the expected hue of social revolution, but also contributes to the formation of earlier forms of nationalism. The forced membership in the centralist Habsburg monarchy from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries was disbanded by the striving of the people for independence. Inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution, they wanted to liberate themselves from the grip of an Austrian idea of the state that had become foreign to them.

The relation of church and state

After the First World War, state and church faced a new beginning. The linguistic (German) minority was so large that it could not familiarize itself with the position of being a minority. Certainly, the minority itself had lost the feeling of belonging to the idea of a Bohemian state. Following the experience of unsuccessful attempts at emancipation, it sought out new, foreign ideologies. In the old Austria of the Habsburg monarchy, this minority staffed the bureaucracy, the media, the army, the rising industry and further parts of science. Church and politics sought new paths. It was a Moravian political leader of Czech political Catholicism who bridged the gap that had arisen between the old situation and the new, secular state. For 20 years, Jan Sramek, the founder of sociology within theology as a scientific discipline,[1] a Czech Seipel,[2] represented the type of the politician in priest's habit and served his country as a minister. Sramek could participate in a government that was not exactly positively disposed toward the Church because his actions conformed to the motto of Czech Catholicism: 'We must always be involved!' In a critical hour, he was prime minister of the government in exile under President Benes in London. At that time—this was before the fatal alliance with Stalin—there was hardly a Western government in the state of war who would have acknowledged a prime minister other than Sramek. In their hour of need, united beyond all limits of their world-views, the people struck up the chorus of Saint Wenceslas. Later, following the Communist putsch of 1948, Sramek was interned and allowed to die following disgraceful treatment.

During the first republic, two men of the ecclesiastical hierarchy ensured a bearable and even acceptable consensus of church and state. This consensus then gained clear expression in 1935, on the Day of Catholics, in which all states and nationalities participated in Prague. Antonin Cyril Stojan, Archbishop of Olmutz and Metropolitan of Moravia was, as Pope John XXIII said, a guiding intellectual force and harbinger of the Second Vatican Council. At the same time, he was a protagonist of the unification movement of Slavic Christian confessions and of the entire European ecumene—a movement that had originated in Velehrad. His Bohemian contemporary, Archbishop Frantisek Kordac, primate of Bohemia, was both a protector of religious and political tolerance in the young secular state and the representative of the new social programme of the Church. Alongside these two important men stood, for half a century, the Franciscan monk, Professor Jan Evangelist Urban—a scholar who was influenced by the work and person of Romano Guardini—as well as Pius Parsch and Clemens Neumann. All three knew of the social work of Carl Sonnenschein and of the significance of

Friedrich Muckermann and Karl Adam to the Church in the neighbouring country. Yet here, the status of the Church in public life must not be overlooked. In old Austria, the interplay of Church and throne was supposed to have been overcome, but the personality of Ignaz Seipel exerted an exemplary influence on the Catholics of all the nationalities that were represented in the state. The Church of the Bohemian countries never wished to be a 'sacristy Church'. After the Church had been forced to suffer persecutions during the Second World War, Communist totalitarianism attempted to destroy it. The brilliant personality of the Archbishop Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek could mature through this confrontation.

The German minority

In the 1930s, Hitler and his adherents crushed the first promising political activism of the German minority in the former Czechoslovakia. This was because it would have produced a satisfaction of the minority that would have stood in the path of his rule over the subjugated peoples of the centre of the continent. One name from this epoch deserves to be mentioned with honour: Franz Spina, a bilingual Moravian and one of the most significant Slavicists of the century. Together with Antonin Svehla, the most important intellect of the Czech scene, Spina strove for a co-existence of Czechs and Germans that would be free of both conflict and violence, a symbiosis in the Bohemian lands. Hans Schuetz too, an outstanding second-generation personality of this political activism, in no way regretted having belonging to this initiative—even after the failure that was caused by Hitler's aggression. If one were to seek to rouse a feeling that the two neighbouring lands belong together in Germany today, then one should not forget that this path had already been traced once before; one had been willing to walk down it in earlier times as well. Through the failure at that time, however, Hitler's totalitarianism ultimately paved the way for Stalin's totalitarianism in central Europe—this time, the totalitarianism would endure for a half-century.

The double betrayal of the Western allies unleashed rage and revenge following the Second World War. This led to the violent expulsion of the Germans, who had once been fellow citizens living primarily in the Bohemian lands. The media—above all, that of the United States—sought to place the entire blame for the expulsion on Edward Benes. Up to the end, however, he himself wished to keep more than 1 million German fellow citizens in the country. His intention was—and this is regarded today as a proven fact—destroyed by Moscow. Moscow did not believe it possible to submit the German citizens of the Bohemian lands to a re-education process like that which was deemed possible for the former GDR. Besides that, a state composed of multiple nationalities would have been able to resist the Soviet monopoly more strongly.

The Communist era and its overcoming

After the Second World War, the nation stepped into the darkness of the Iron Curtain and fell into a panic. At the last truly free elections following the Second World War, the Communist Party managed by Moscow won about 40 per cent of the votes—by contrast

to the result in Slovakia. Paradoxically, the rural voters contributed to this phenomenon. They probably intended it as an act of revenge against Benes, who, at the advice of his Communist advisor, had allowed the rural peasantry no independent party. In terms of registered members, therefore, and despite periodic purging actions, the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia was numerically the strongest party within the so-called Eastern bloc.

The Bohemian lands of what was at that time the Czechoslovakian Socialist Republic (later, the Czechoslovakian Socialist Federation) did not step into the mounting darkness of the shadow of the Iron Curtain without earning a portion of the guilt. The Bohemians experienced a despair surrounding their fate that extended throughout the society and deep into their petit bourgeois class. Together with an extended movement of the political centre—which had no ideological home—toward the left, this despair led to a flight forward. To this day, the consequences can be seen in a more or less anonymous movement on the political scene. The drift toward the left finds its articulation through the world seen from the perspective of the 'little man'—the non-participant, the one exposed to all possibilities. Here, the experiences of older parties are consciously ignored. The so-called collaboration was the lip service of those who attached themselves to a naïve belief in the state power in order to serve the state that had arisen again. 1968 did not move the Western states to support the status quo either. The fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 was not a conceptual revolution of the people. Dubcek and Havel steered much more toward achieving a consensus between the belated Reform Communists and the dissidents. Of course, they were also impressed by the peaceful demonstrations that occurred in Dresden and Chemnitz, which was at that time called Karl-Marx-Stadt.

Slovakia, which for six years had been an independent buffer state that existed by the grace of Hitler, now found its occasion to withdraw peacefully from the previous state alliance. The withdrawal occurred without violence. Although Slovakia is also on the way to becoming a part of the much-longed-for Europe, it is still afflicted by a political civilization that it has not yet overcome—a situation whose dimensions differ from those in the case of the Bohemian lands. Here too, the observer is affirmed in his sense that questions of nationality and linguistic barriers alone cannot decide the future formation of relationships between the states; of decisive significance are civilizational considerations in general.

One need recall here only the negative example of Bosnia-Herzegovina and its neighbours.

After 1989, the Czechs' initial euphoria was followed by a period of mutual attribution of guilt in domestic politics. Beyond this, 'greenhorns' took over the people's representative organs. Old prejudices against the Church returned energetically and have not been overcome to this day. A belated anti-clericalism is at work here, one that by no means has arisen solely from the vocabulary of the left. Feelings run high when the return of Church possessions stolen by the Communists is involved. In times of need, one saw in the Church a sanctuary of tradition. In light of upcoming elections, self-serving opportunism takes up rear-guard action with its eye cast upon the 'little man'.

Questioning stance

Thus does the youngest political generation, which is largely free of the inheritance and guilt of its predecessors, pose the following questions:

1 Is the current parliamentary democracy of Western provenance in a position to prevent new totalitarian systems from arising? Are the inheritors of a totalitarian system that has not yet been fully surmounted permitted, with the help of political domestication, to participate further in political life?

2 Is the increasing standard of living of a Western, liberal variety alone capable of maintaining a tolerable balance in the social gap between rich and poor?

3 Is the longing gaze toward the 'new Europe'—a gaze of those who claimed the opposite only yesterday—honest and free of ulterior motives?

4 What kind of dowry do the Bohemian lands bring to this new Europe? Provisionally, they provide cheap labour for investors and an economy that is practically intact. But will the desire to work and the culture and morality of work catch up with the new exemplars in the near future? Or should we introduce a cultivated bilingualism in the future as well?

5 In the end, will the Czech intelligentsia be able to overcome the petit bourgeois nationalism that has taken deep root in the consciousness in the past 150 years? Will the intelligentsia, therefore, again be able to assume a stronger share in public life?

6 Will the former German citizens of the Bohemian lands surmount the feelings of deep injury that resulted from the consequences of the Second World War? Will they make way for a new awareness of mutual understanding on the ground of genuine co-existence? Will the discussion hold a balance between the phenomenon of the expulsion and those of Auschwitz, Munich, the Protectorate and Hitler's threat to expel all Czechs from Europe after his war?

7 Will the shape of the East—primarily of Russia and its vassal peoples—be a matter of common concern for Czechs and Germans?

8 Is a people that is one of the numerically smaller peoples of Europe nonetheless permitted consciously to declare its faith in a myth that has existed for a millennium—its faith in its spiritual Valhalla, its Arc de Triomphe, its earlier decision made by one ruler to belong to the Church of the Latin world? Is a land in which one modern ruler led a plough over a field as a sign of the abolition of serfdom in central Europe permitted to doubt its identity?

9 Is a people that offered the world the great figures of music—one need recall only Smetana, Dvorak or Janacek here—permitted to feel connected to the musical riches of its neighbours?

I may remind my German readers that two of the greatest poets and writers of the German linguistic community were born and worked in Bohemia; we make no claim, of course, to their nationality. I mean here the greatest lyricist of this century, Rainer Mária Rilke, and the greatest prose author of German literature, Franz Kafka. They were our countrymen and, together with the Germans, we tend their inheritance.

Notes

1 Tellingly, Masaryk had also intervened on behalf of the scientific acknowledgement of sociology in his discipline.
2 Ignaz Seipel (1876–1932) was the leader of Austrian political Catholicism.

Discussion of Rokyta's paper

Chair: Hans Maier

INTRODUCTION BY PROF. HANS MAIER: You have seen already from his curriculum that his home is in Brno and that he studied Czech and German philology and art history in Prague. Originally, therefore, he was a historian of religion as well as an art historian and preserver of historical monuments. Yet, he pursued a political course of life. At 25, he was the youngest parliamentary secretary in the Czech Parliament and connected especially with the so-called 'Activism'. Activism was comprised of the German language parties. By contrast to the Henlein Party, it actively worked based on the constitution—hence, the expression 'Activism'. Those who live in Bavaria perhaps knew old Hans Schütz, one of the first social ministers after the war; he came from this area. Hugo Rokyta, born a Czech but perfectly bilingual, therefore had contact with these German groups. He was politically active and experienced the entire period of Benes before the war. When Prague was occupied in 1939, the Nazis imprisoned him and transported him to Dachau—later to Buchenwald. Beginning in 1939, he spent the entire duration of the war in German concentration camps. He then returned to Prague. He married a German, the niece of Klemens Neumann—perhaps that says something to those who know the German Youth Movement and Silesia and Spielmann and the early history of Quickborn. I want to content myself with these allusions, but would also add that the Communists of course prevented this upstanding man from entering either political office or a scientific career after the war. He then became a preserver of historical monuments. In this modest and hidden position, he has done very much to ensure that—in the current Czech Republic at any rate—almost all German monuments of poets and scientists have been preserved. His greatest deed was to preserve the birthplace of Adalbert Stifter in Oberplan. For that, he received the Goethe medal and the Bundesdienst Kreuz. I am very happy that he is here with us and that he could crown this evening with his lecture.

MAIER: In the name of all listeners, many thanks, dear Mr Rokyta, for this moving lecture. It provided not only an analysis of your country, a scientific contribution, but also a piece of life history and a justification of a life. Moreover, it brings us to a theme that is central to our conference: namely, what does post-Communist Europe look like in the East and the West? What will remain   of national traditions? In Germany, we had a passionate debate about the nation—after the reunification of course, but before it as well. The nation-state returns like a thief in the night: this was how Hans-Peter Schwarz formulated it. It was in fact an unbidden guest; now it has returned, what do we do with it? Are we permitted to have a history, memories and monuments? This is a typically German problem that does not exist at all for central, south and eastern Europe; there, the return to nation and history was an aspect of defence, an aspect of preservation of the identity that was required to survive in face of the claim of Communist universalism. I do not want to jump ahead of the discussion. Mr Rokyta is such an animated and inspiring speaker that he is certainly

still prepared for a discussion. But of course, we do not want to extend the conversation too far toward midnight. Please, who has a question? Mr Lübbe?

LÜBBE: Yes. If it is all right, then I would be happy to seek to answer the three questions you just formulated with my possibilities. How probable is it that the liberal democracy that has now been established throughout Europe is capable of preventing the return of totalitarian conditions? That, of course, is a large question, and it certainly belongs to your project in the broader sense. One might even pose the question thus: if the next century, even the one that follows, will be as interested in aspects of the past as our own century has been, then it will certainly present totalitarianism as the unique characteristic of our century. How probable is it, therefore, that the democracies will prevent the return of this totalitarianism once they have been established? I would hold the probability to be very great, but would not trace its cause to a stability of democratic orientation that extends to the depth of our souls. The social, even the technical, structures of modern civilization make the return of totalitarianism continually less probable. Now, to explicate this would take up a semester. Perhaps a single reference suffices; one might point here to a place where one perhaps would expect it the least. In mirror opposition to the prognosis of Orwell, who declared technology as such to be a medium that promotes totalitarian conditions, one could risk the following thesis: the high degree of technologization of our civilization alone makes the return of totalitarianism less and less probable. If one reflects on information technology, one sees this more precisely. Primitive information technology in fact worked in favour of the totalitarian leaders. Yet, we have a highly modern information system, in particular the electronic one. This makes the degree of informational pollution—if I may state it from the perspective of totalitarian systems—so high that the closed quality that characterizes totalitarian formations decomposes.

Professor Maier has already answered the next question, the one about nationalism, with unsurpassable brevity. Primarily, the ones who must think differently here are probably the Germans. This of course is connected to their national history. The Germans would have to learn that the new national orientation—undamaged by all military developments in the Caucasus region and the Balkans—has counted among the strongest powers that had to be   mobilized in order to resist totalitarianism. The powers of nationalism reach to the emotional level of citizens and their souls. In western Europe as well, resistance would nonetheless have been unthinkable without the national supports. One is probably of the opinion that the Germans will learn that very soon as well. Then, the great question arises: is the orientation toward Europe honest? I would probably answer this: the majority of the European nations that belong to the European Union have their particular, entirely different national interest as well. This would cause them to regard the formation of European institutions as overwhelmingly advantageous. That also holds for the Germans, even if the Germans are perhaps the only ones in Europe who cultivate an enthusiasm for Europe. In the meantime, it is not so strong either; but there is nonetheless a certain official enthusiasm for Europe, which is of course explained by the Germans' hope that it will heal their wounds. The German difficulties with nationalism that have been demonstrated by their national history cause them to press for Europe in a way that is not otherwise present in Europe. And that too will probably subside again,

will normalize and will accept the membership of the European institutions—as would be correct and proper—based on particular interest. Perhaps one final point. In the past years, I have had occasion—more than is probably customary for professors—to participate in all kinds of European debates, some of a high-ranking nature. Concerning the transformation of the former socialist societies into market economies, I have become familiar with a standard speech referring to the Czech Republic. More than all the others, the Czech Republic is the only country in Europe that now has an unemployment quota nearing zero. This fact is impressive. Where does one find this otherwise? In addition, the new province of Thuringia has perhaps attained the best rate of growth in industrial production in Germany. Thus, here is a unique example of what one would seek for all states in eastern central and eastern Europe as an aid to social consolidation.

ROKYTA: I fear that you have yet more praise for my country remaining. Here, we are more careful than you are. Of course, we have entirely different reasons prompting our internal critique of the team presently governing the political scene, although we do not doubt their success in terms of economic politics.

Then as now, there are things that the little man in the Czech Republic and Slovakia admires about the Germans: the German lexicons, medications like aspirin, to name only a few. Then of course there is the German economy. Yes, one says, they knew how to work. We were never as crushed as they were after the Second World War; we did not starve, not even after the Second World War.

My father was an architect in Brno who worked with Adolf Loos. In my parents' house, there were many newspapers and many guests; my father had mastered five languages. Here, one always said that the evil of the generation in which I grew up as a child was the traditional enmity between the Germans and the French. And all those with good intentions said that, once it is overcome, things will be better again. I believe that your people and your country   have now rid themselves of this care. I spoke for a long time about it with Mr Töpfer in Hamburg. He said to me: 'Yes, you are right. It has been eliminated. It did cost us something.' But you have even helped other people on to their feet. Of course, a people that must consider its own identity as realistically as the Czech people honours that.

The question is, can we be certain of the future? Can we sleep soundly in bed at night? In two and a half hours on the fast train, you see, one used to arrive at the border of the former Yugoslavia. Czech citizens of the middle class—there was no other class with us—used to prefer to go to Istria, where no one shot and the Croatians understood all our Slavic idioms. I understand the Croatians; I understand the Slovenians. The Serbs I understand somewhat less, but for that I understand the Montenegrins well. Put briefly, the concern certainly has to be suppressed. We take you seriously; do you take us seriously enough that we no longer have to become a Bosnia? Thus the little, apolitical man says, why does no one put an end to what is happening there? Is it solely the consideration that one does not want to anger the Serbs at a later time, that Serbia will someday be an economic partner? That a house from which foreign countries can earn a good income goes up in each bullet-riddled country? The concern of the little man, not of the politician or the scientist, is the following: are we going to be taken seriously enough that we will not again enter into the fringes of interest and be betrayed? That is the standard pitch, the heart thump of the fears of a

small people that has been prepared to undergo and bear enough mishaps in its history.

Today it has become fashionable to wallow in friendship. I was recently in the Bohemian Forest at a summer camp held by the small University of Budweis and had to converse with Germanists. There is a weekend there; nowadays, one drives to Austria for a choral festival or a pig slaughtering practically as though one were driving to the neighbouring communities. People invite each other and wallow in fraternity. That is one thing, a nice thing; it is nourishing and friendly. The prettiest teachers of both nations sing, as one says at home, 'so beautifully that the mountains grow green'.

That is on level ground, to speak with old Vienna. On the first floor, by contrast, one has to cultivate other manners: those of mutual forgiveness and apology. Here, we old crows are naturally very sceptical. That is a well-loved theme today. Yes, it made an impression: how Willy Brandt sank to his knees before the monument in Warsaw, which still looked so pitiful at that time. I believe that he meant it honestly. But it then became a slogan, a component of the protocol for a modern, Spanish ceremony of the state-head and ambassadors: instead of laying wreaths, one dispenses apologies. Please excuse us if we, the old former inmates of concentration camps who were beaten up, are rather shocked by such apologetic scenes. If you want to know, it is 55 years to the day and hour today that I was transported in a cattle-truck from the camp of Dachau to the camp at Buchenwald. I always say something like this to my young listeners from several nations who find themselves at such summer, scientific camps: as I and perhaps my generation see it, coping with the past will have to occur differently. I believe that each nation must fulfil this task on its own. If we begin to exchange mutual calculations of guilt, we will never reach a peaceful end. Each must have the courage to take a close look at his own past and to analyse it mercilessly. As soon as one makes another a representative of the former opponent and present partner, it again produces conflict, reminiscences. There remains nothing left to do, therefore, but to finish with this past. I believe that we all agree on that. However, each must do it on his own ground. Then, I believe, the path into a new century, which is also a new millennium, will be cleared.

SUTOR: I actually wanted to make a small remark on a comment of Mr Lübbe, but it also refers to your question about Europe. Mr Lübbe, when you speak of official enthusiasm for Europe, I think that your choice of words is not entirely adequate to the problem. For the mass of the German population, the idea of Europe probably served as a certain substitute after the Second World War because we no longer had a nation. That is correct. Yet, the so-called official Europe enthusiasm, if you ask who represented it politically: in the early days of the Federal Republic, it was the sober Adenauer, and today it is a man like Helmut Kohl. With both, that which you call Europe enthusiasm arose from a thoroughly sober political calculus, as it is sought here as well. Specifically, it is the recognition that we can preserve the German nation, can reasonably hold the others only in a European alliance, no matter how it looks in the individual cases. That is what I understand by the official Europe politics, as you would call it. That is not false pathos; that is political necessity. Or do you see it otherwise?

LÜBBE: I see it otherwise. But that would be a debate about Europe that would occur here, if one were to explain that.

ROKYTA: I would like to answer with Rilke: does the answer not already lie in the question? Yes, I tell you, the young generation is convinced of the necessity of this Europe. Yet, it has not rid itself of the undertone asking whether we will be left in the lurch once again. That is our question. We had our opinion about Adenauer. Understandably, we admired him for having got the prisoners of war back. No defeated people achieved that as he did. For all the criticism, on this we are always very honest. Thus, we are not simply enthusiastically interested in Europe: in one heart-chamber, we still perhaps have the concern to which we say that we await an answer in the course of time. That is it. I admit that you are entirely correct to say that there are many reservations in Europe, etc. We are aware of it; we read the newspapers.

SPIEKER: Another statement of Mr Lübbe provoked me to query him, but I can imagine that there are many thirsty throats here and thus I will make it very short. He said that he holds it to be entirely possible to return to totalitarianism in terms of political or ideological development, but he holds it to be impossible in terms of technical development. I do not know, perhaps there were people who already believed centuries ago that war has now become impossible due to the invention of artillery. Why should a high level of technology suddenly be used only to secure freedom and not for an even stronger   control? In a word, I state that technology is instrumental. It can be used for entertainment and enjoyment, but just as easily for the securing of a dictatorship—and this on an even higher level in the next century than in 1933 or 1917.

MAIER: I understood Mr Lübbe to have said that the old national state also requires images of the enemy, and the totalitarian state naturally requires them two and three times as much. And these images of the enemy, with their geographically delimited areas, have in fact become impossible due to the electronic media. Indeed, among other reasons, the revolutions in eastern Europe also succeeded because they were visible from the beginning. Totalitarian systems thrive by sweeping state business into the darkness; they make the opposition invisible and let even the martyrs die alone. Here, I believe that Mr Gatter of the ZDF[1] earned great credit from the fact that, in 1980, the demonstrations at the Danzig shipyard suddenly became known throughout the whole world. Once the media gate has opened, the reality no longer stands still.

ROKYTA: Precisely. You see, our 1989 came at the moment one went with candles to the market in Leipzig and saw it on the television screen. Our dissidents and Reform Communism, which was already very fearful, had only just made their decision. And an incident occurred only because the 10 per cent fraction of integral Communists had caused difficulties with Mr Stepán—one of the very few Communists who now has a prison term of two and a half years behind him but has still returned to politics, with little success. It was perhaps one of the great satisfactions that the final impetus for the fall of the curtain in Prague came from Leipzig—a city for which we had great sympathy. Thus, one also went with candles into the streets and the new era broke in.

MAIER: Now, after speaking of St Wenceslas, it would in fact be time to speak of St Nepomuk as well and of the little light on the water about which Goethe wrote a wonderful poem in his old age.

ROKYTA: In Karlsbad.

MAIER: In Karlsbad. But I forgo the occasion and wish only to thank Mr Roytka very warmly once again. It was a tremendously enriching evening. Many thanks.

Note

1 'Second German Television Station'—translator.

Part II
Political religions

8
The religious use of politics and/or the political use of religion

Ersatz ideology versus ersatz religion
Juan J.Linz

Introductory note

This is not strictly speaking a paper, but notes for a paper. It is not a paper for lack of time to write it but because it intends to be the basis of an essay on the margins of the topic of the conference—on the margins focusing on the political use of religion and the religious use of politics in an authoritarian regime.[1] The analysis of these processes I hope would contribute to delimiting the boundaries of our discussion of political religions.

As a 10-year-old I was invited in Berlin to dinner in a home where the hosts said grace, thanking our Führer. I witnessed a Fascist rally at night—during the Spanish Civil War—and have visited as a respectful tourist Lenin's tomb, like other sacred places in the sense of Durkheim. I have also studied closely the relation between religion and politics in Franco Spain, where I spent many years of my life.[2]

Some conceptual problems

There is no generally accepted definition of political religion, although the reading of some of the writings to be discussed at this conference suggests some common basic defining elements. There is a wealth of descriptive material on political, social and cultural phenomena that fit under the concept. It is probably easier to define the political use of religion to legitimize authority and obtain support for a regime, and to describe how religious leaders, the hierarchy and clerics use the support of political authorities to pursue their own ideal, moral and material interests. What is not so easy is to distinguish when politics uses religion and when religion uses politics. The ambiguities in reality suggest that both might happen simultaneously, that one or the other side deceives itself about what it is doing and ultimately it is a matter of intentions which are hard to discover.

In the case of political religion, we are dealing with a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon, a system of beliefs about authority, society and history, providing a comprehensive world vision, a *Weltanschauung* that claims a truth-value incompatible with other views including the existing religious traditions. That belief system is

supported and linked with the sacralization of persons, places, symbols, dates, and the elaboration of rituals connected with them. To the extent that the world-view provides a meaning for human action and a sense of purpose to a political community, we move in the realm of the Weberian conception of religion. To the extent that we focus on the sacralization and rituals, we come closer to a Durkheimian view.

What is distinctive about political religion in my view is that the elaboration of the 'religious' manifestations is initiated in the political sphere, and that it is innerworldly rather than making reference to transcendental realities like a god or gods and prophets of that god. The initiators of a political religion are political leaders, generally leaders in power who use the resources of the state and the state party, and the development is carried out by political activists, functionaries and a particular kind of intellectual, enlisting in the process academics, teachers, writers, journalists and artists.

Political religions attempt to compete with the existing religions, take their place and if possible destroy them. They are from the point of view of existing religious traditions profoundly anti-religious and, to the extent that they reject any reference to transcendence and to religious, cultural traditions from the point of view of the existing religions, they are not just another religion but non-religion and part of a process of secularization.

The writings on political religion agree to a considerable extent, although not all the authors link the rise of political religions with secularization. Congruent with a secular conception of the world, they present themselves as based on science, be it scientific materialism and Marxist theory or racial theories as part of modern biology. They share the hostility to traditional religion derived from a rationalist or scientifistic tradition, sometimes invoking the most vulgar anti-religious formulations that identify religion with superstition.[3] They claim, therefore, a modernity, although in some versions or as in the case of Nazism in some of the elements they claim a linkage with a pre-Christian cultural religions tradition.[4] It is that later dimension that allowed the religious opponents to characterize them as pagan. They are also part of the process of secularization in the sense that they seem to succeed in societies which have undergone a process of secularization, of loss of religious faith. In the case of Communism, the building of the political religion and the secularization went hand in hand: the diffusion of scientific atheism and the sacralization of the party and the ideology. Although even there, one could argue that the destruction of the churches, the persecution of religion, preceded the process of building a political religion.

Political religion implies the destruction of the dualism between religion and politics, the fusion of political and spiritual meaning defining authority. That is why sometimes the writers on political religion talk about the similiarity with theocracy. However, I feel that this is misleading since in the case of theocracy the authority is claimed in the name of a god, a religious belief system, and not as a result of the political process: the conquest of power by political rather than religious leaders. There is also an affinity with Caesaro-papism where the basileus, the emperor, claims authority in the religious realm, subordinates the clerics to his authority but again he does so within the context of a religious tradition that he has not created, although he attempts to control it.

The affinities between modern political religions, theocracy and Caesaro-papism present many interesting problems that would deserve further discussion. They are in a sense points on a circle, points that are relatively close, although the stimuli for those cultural and political developments emerge from opposite starting points.
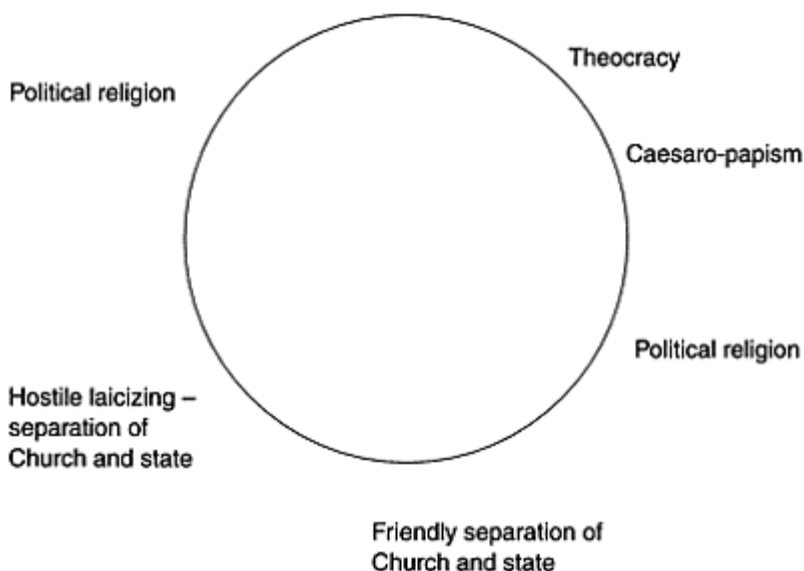
Political religion from a functionalist perspective is an instrument of legitimation of power and in this it is close to the political use of religion for the purpose of political legitimation that has been recurrent in the course of history. The question to discuss is whether the ersatz religion as a substitution of religion by a secularized ideology really serves the purpose of legitimation as well as or better than the political use of religion—a complex issue to which we shall return later.

Religions used for political purposes exist before they are so used, and they continue to exist after the fall of the regimes that use them, although perhaps paying a price for being so used. Political religions, by contrast, emerge with a political movement and system and until now have disappeared with the collapse of those systems. To illustrate the point, I would note that the systems of beliefs that were proclaimed by Communism and Nazism, the sacred places they attempted to create, the symbolic rituals they fostered, have not survived the totalitarian regimes they created and that created them.[5] In contrast, state Shintoism in Japan after the Meiji restoration, a clear case of political use of religion bordering on political religion, was based on a long cultural, religious tradition of Shintoism; and the renunciation by the emperor of his divinity forced by the Allies has not led to the eradication of traditional shrine Shintoism.

Political religions are powerful and have shaped the life of people in the twentieth century in unique ways, but only because they could rely on the power resources of a totalitarian state including its coercive resources and therefore they do not seem to have generated sufficient strength of belief to survive the loss of political power. They have shown their weakness compared to traditional religions. The extension of the concept of political religion to some of the religions in the historical past—as it is done by Voegelin—raises the question if that is true for those past political religions.[6] From that point of view, the imperial cult in ancient Rome would be a relevant case.

Political religion is conceived by the rulers as a means of legitimation of a movement and a political system. It is seen as being more reliable as a basis of legitimation than

politicized religion, and in this context it is significant how the Nazis moved away from the *Glaubensbewegung deutscher Christen* and the political manipulation of the Protestant church toward political religion. However, there are several reasons to argue that it is weaker than politicized religion in achieving its goals, except in societies without a strong religious tradition, or at least tradition of transcendentally oriented or ethical prophecy religion.[7] Above all, it generates a serious conflict with religions and religious institutions, an open or continuous silent struggle alienating in the process some potential supporters of the regime and mobilizing a network of anti-regime active or passive opponents. That conflict can be won, but at the cost of large-scale repression which contributes to the terror component of totalitarian regimes. Much depends upon the characteristics of the previous religious climate in the society and the structural position of the religious institutions. In this context, a comparative analysis of how political religions confronted Catholicism, different types of Protestant religiosity, the Orthodox churches, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism in the case of China would be most revealing. The struggle with religion, particularly organized religion, and a trans-national church raises the costs of repression far beyond that involved in using a politicized religion, which sometimes also links with repressive policies.

The incorporation into the political religion of a cult of personality implies danger for other leaders and in the case of crisis in that cult can lead to the questioning of the political religion. In that context, de-Stalinization exemplifies some of the difficulties of a political religion which relies on the cult of personality, since the criticism of a sacralized leader indirectly questions the political religion of the regime.

The comparison between the political costs of the crisis of political religion compared to the political cost of the crisis of a politicized religion is one of the themes that we will have to discuss.

Friendly separation of Church and state as the counter-pole to political religion

On the other extreme of the spectrum of the relationships between religion and politics, we find the liberal model of friendly separation of Church and state. This pattern of relationships reduces the interference of the religious authorities, the clergy in the political realm, but also of the state in the religious sphere.

It assures a certain equilibrium and, to the extent that it is based on some form of co-operation, it also guarantees respect for religion and in the case of a multi-religious society for religious pluralism without imposing a secularized model of society which reserves the definition of moral meanings, ultimate goals and values to the state. Obviously, the boundaries are never well defined—they are diffuse and potentially conflictual—and there will always be a tension between religion and politics, between the Church and the state.

We have insisted on the term 'friendly separation' of Church and state to distinguish the pattern from the hostile separation in which the state attempts to reduce religion to the intimate private sphere of the family and the church buildings without allowing a variety of public manifestations, without giving the citizens the possibility to choose religious education, limiting the freedom to sacralize the *rites de passage,* imposing secular

patterns in spheres of life that religion claims, and substituting religion by public ceremonies rather than considering them as an alternative or supplementary. The hostile model of separation of Church and state is ultimately based on a rejection of cultural pluralism, that is, on the respect for different meaning-systems and patterns of social behaviour. It starts from the idea that a real political community requires a shared system of values, beliefs and even civic or patriotic rituals to replace those of religion in a secularized society or to displace religion that is considered a source of division in society.

This model, which was first articulated by the French revolutionaries, the Jacobins, and which took more or less militant or moderate forms in the French Third Republic, the Portuguese revolution and republic, the Mexican revolution and constitution and in the Spanish 1931 constitution, can be seen as a step in the direction of political religion.[8] In some of the writings of Durkheim during the Dreyfus Affair,[9] and the practices of the Ecole Normale, we find examples of this effort to create a democratic, liberal-nationalist modelled civic religion which is one step in the direction toward the excesses of political religions. The militant secularists at the turn of the century in the process of rejecting clericalism, even democratic clericalism, as well as any form of alliance of throne and altar were moving in this direction.

The distinction between a friendly separation of Church and state like the one we find in the constitution of the Federal Republic or in the 1978 Spanish constitution and the anti-clerical constitutions and laws of the Third Republic, the Mexican Republic and the Spanish Republic in 1931, in my view, justifies the consideration of only the friendly separation as the polar opposite of political religion.

Politicized religion

We finally have come to the main theme of my argument today: the intimate relationship between politics and religion in which religion serves to legitimize not just the social order and authority but a particular political regime—particular conception of the state—and the political community. In the extreme case to which I will refer, it presents an ersatz ideology in contrast to the political religion that to some extent serves as an ersatz religion.

The initiative for this fusion between religion and politics of a traditional religion, transcendental religion and its beliefs, institutions and rituals, with those of the polity can be the result of two very different sources. On the one side, it can be based on a desire of religious institutions and authorities, leaders and even believers in finding a support in the state against secularizing forces or even the proponents of a political religion. In that case, it has religious roots and is conceived as putting politics, political power and the political community at the service of the faith and its representatives. On the other hand, we have political rulers, the institutions of the state, political movements turning to instrumentalize religion to gain legitimacy and support, politicizing the religious sphere.

The distinction we have just made is probably more analytical than descriptive since in reality there is likely to be a convergence between both goals, a tacit quid pro quo in which both parts think that they are serving their own goals, religion and the religious clerical institutions on the one side and politics and the political institutions of the regime

on the other in a process of convergence. This accounts for a fundamental ambiguity and probably an ultimate instability of the politicization of religion or the 'religiosicization' of politics. Although this model is based on the conception of co-operation, it is not unlikely to end in being conflictual with either the political regime paying a cost owing to the heteronomy of religion or the Church paying a cost for its implication in a regime whose loss of legitimacy might drag it along. As we shall see, in one or another stage the Church or the regime are the beneficiaries and those which pay the cost of politicized religion.

There are two situations which tend toward this fusion of religion and politics. On the one side, there are some authoritarian regimes that reject individualism and the values of liberal society and, on the other, there are certain manifestations of cultural nationalism in the process of nation-building or the assertion of national identity. Again, in the real world, sometimes these two processes converge, as we know from the cases of Slovakia, Croatia and even Spain.

The politicization of religion in the service of nationalism or nationalism in the service of religion is a central theme in nineteenth- and twentieth-century history and leads to phenomena that sometimes border on political religion.

The two expressions of politicized religion in their extreme form would lead to theocracy, where the political power would be exercised by religious leaders in the name of religion and of god imposing the religious values on the community.[10] There is a certain homology between theocracy and political religion, as we already noted, and therefore it is no accident that Barrington Moore should have written about Calvin's Geneva as a totalitarian system.[11] Theocracies are a rare type of polity and perhaps the instability is parallel to that of systems based on or linked with a political religion. In the loop by which I tried to show the range of relationships between religion and politics (see page 109), theocracy ends being close in the circle to political religion. In a sense, extremes converge, but there is also a fundamental chasm separating modern secular political religion from theocracy whose ultimate referent is a god, his prophet, his church.

The other form of extreme politicized religion is Caesaro-papism as we might have found it in Byzantium and even in Tsarist Russia. In this case, the religion takes forms that are quite distinct, and loses some of its capacity to provide a moral counterpoint and even more a challenge to power, but which in turning to other dimensions of the religious sentiment might lead to intimate forms like pietism or exuberant expression in the liturgy. The consequences of Lutheran Caesaro-papism and of Orthodox, and particularly Russian Orthodox, Caesaro-papism would respectively lead to those two forms of religiosity. These two references to forms of religious expression within a religious tradition reveal the fundamental difference between the use of religion by political power in Caesaro-papism and the modern secular pseudo-scientific political religion as ersatz religion at the service of totalitarian systems: a difference that might also account for the lack of cultural, intellectual, artistic and aesthetic creativity associated with political religions, and the cultural flowering within a religions tradition under Caesaro-papism.

Let us, however, return to the contemporary variety of politicized religion that does not turn into theocracy or a Caesaro-papist domination of the church, to politicized religion in which some degree of autonomy and heteronomy is maintained in the religious realm.

Churches, religious leaders, the hierarchy, but also clergymen and devoted laymen may support an authoritarian regime politicizing religion to legitimize such a regime, with the regime responding by granting to religion a privileged status in the society supporting it institutionally and even financially. This fusion may not be initiated by those in power but by the Church and the faithful in the hope of achieving religious values and goals, destroying anti-religious forces and providing the opportunity for real religionizing of the society with the help of the state. The politicization of religion in such a context derives from sincere religious motivations and expectations, although, as in all human affairs, there are less noble motives as well. Let us not forget that clerics are humans and therefore enjoy power, recognition and control.

How does this pattern emerge in the modern world without continuity with a historical past, although very often invoking a historical golden age of co-operation between throne and altar in the defence of a religious community and sometimes its missionary or crusading efforts? A religious establishment threatened by a secularizing state, by a state pursuing a policy of hostile separation of Church and state, a society in which anti-clericalism and even anti-religious movements enjoy ample opportunities to spread their message almost inevitably generates a reaction of the hierarchy and the faithful. A Church that is deprived suddenly of many of its privileges, of its respected status in society, of its educational institutions, cannot but respond and that response can take the form of a religious defence party, a clerical conservative party or a democratic religiously oriented party. The failure of such a party or the impossibility of acting because of a secularizing authoritarian regime—as in the case of the liberation movement of Iran and under the Shah—might well generate more radical responses invoking the right to just rebellion.[12] The religious tradition provides for intellectual justifications of such a right. If we consider a period of violent persecution with the burning of churches, the arrest or killing of priests and nuns, the closing of religious centres and fear among the religious laity identified with religious organizations or the religious party, it is not so unreasonable that the Church will welcome those who fight against the opponents, bless their armies and the leaders of the rebellion against the existing political system, be it democratic or authoritarian.[13]

The reading of the personal memoirs of bishops and clerics who in the late Franco years would be in the forefront of a liberalization and distancing between the Church and the Franco regime, who would welcome and support the new democratic Spain, conveys very well the feeling of despair and fear before the military *pronunciamiento* in 1935 against the republican Popular Front government and the hopeful enthusiasm for those fighting the anti-clerical and anti-religious revolutionary forces.[14] This enthusiasm could not be eroded by the misgivings about some of the terrible deeds of those forces that clergymen inevitably witnessed, deplored and sometimes criticized in private, but not too often—if at all—in public. That experience cemented both for the hierarchy and common clergymen and many lay faithful an identification with one of the sides as waging a crusade and the politicization of religion that would crystallize what has been called in Spain *'nacional-catolicismo'*. I have discussed this process elsewhere and there is an extensive literature about the content, policies and practices of Spanish *nacional-catolicismo*. There were some clerics and a few members of the hierarchy who did not share those enthusiasms and expressed their misgivings and worries about the future for religion of such a process of politicization.

In the case of Spain, the reservations against politicized religion were expressed by Cardinal Vidal I Barraquer from a 'liberal' ecclesiastical view emphasizing the 'neutrality' of the church whose only goal should be the salvation of souls and by Cardinal Segura from a fundamentalist, almost theocratic rigorist anti-liberal position that resented any political use of the Church, particularly by the Falange.[15]

This response of the Church and the faithful inevitably was welcomed by those struggling for power and intending to establish a new regime. It became for them one of the basic sources of legitimation, particularly when after World War II they faced international ostracism.[16]

The identification with an authoritarian regime and its legitimation by politicized religion has many roots, but one of them is a lack of understanding of the processes of secularization in the modern world, of the complex roots of anticlericalism and the linkages between the class conflict, Marxists and anarchists, anti-religious feelings and the relation established between the Church and the bourgeoisie, the owing peasantry, and conservative political forces. Until recently, very elementary interpretations were dominant conspiracy theories about the Masons, sometimes even the Jews, the role of a secularizing intelligentsia, the labour agitators who manipulated the ignorant masses who were basically good and could be brought back to the Church. The authoritarian rulers who for other reasons also opposed those enemies of the Church and religion only had to enact laws limiting the freedoms of those opponents and false prophets, re-establish a religious climate in the society, and all those threats would disappear. In the new context, thanks to the support of a Catholic state, the Church would be able to carry out its salvation programme, reach the people and bring them back to religion. This simplistic kind of thinking, particularly in the case of a poorly educated clergy, served as a basis for a politicized religion.

In addition, in many societies with a glorious past which excelled in their cultural creativity, in their role in the world when they were religiously homogeneous, when they were fighting the infidels, uprooting heresy and engaged in a world expansion with a missionary justification, the identification between religion and the nation, religion and the revival of the nation, was a tempting response to the failure of the country in the modern world. Intellectuals would develop those ideas and provide an ideological support to the politizised religion and the authoritarian regime.[17] Some of those intellectuals did not even need to be religious themselves. Integrist nationalism, anti-Western religious cultural revivalism was the response to the plight of many societies—not only in the Christian, specifically Catholic, world, but also today in Islamic societies.

This fusion between religion and nationalism which in many cases involves the politicization of religion to pursue the national goals and tradition has been tempting to important segments of the clergy in a number of societies. It is not always easy to know the extent to which those intellectuals elaborating a politicized religion are doing so out of their religious feelings or as a result of their commitment to the nation, its past glory and its culture. My guess is that in some cases like some of the ideologues of national Catholicism in Spain, the root was in a sincere religious conviction but there are clear cases where religion became instrumentalized for another political agenda. The most famous case was that of Charles Maurras and Action Française. Bishops, clergymen, Catholic laymen were attracted by the fusion between the defence of Catholicism and of France, symbolized by the celebrations of Jeanne d'Arc, the saint and the defender of

France. There were others, however, who were disturbed by his positivist a-religious ideas and who ultimately prevailed in calling attention to the manipulation of religion and the danger for the Church and the faith of the political commitment. The integral nationalism has in itself the seeds of conflict with the Church. It rejects its trans-national identity and loyalties to the Vatican and its questioning of nationalism as a supreme value. The fact that ultimately this leads to a conflict between religion and politicized religion at the service of the state or the nation rather than religion can be suppressed for some time, but will sooner or later lead to a crisis within the religious establishment.

Fascism, even in its non-Nazi varieties, even when it is respectful of religion, by placing the national community, the nation and the state above the Church and rejecting the instrumentalization of the state by the Church, attempting to incorporate even the non-believers in the national community, can turn to the politicization of religion from a very different perspective.[18]

Nationalism and religion

One of the most important sources of politicization of religion, in both authoritarian and democratic regimes, is the fusion between religion and nationalism in Christian and non-Christian societies. It is not easy to separate the fundamentally political character and initiative of the use of religious identities, symbols and the support of the clergy by nationalist movements from the religious roots of that identification. It would be a mistake to think that the motivation of deeply religious nationalist leaders and of clergymen getting involved in the nationalist movement does not have religious motivations and does not attempt to put nationalism in the service of religion. This phenomenon of religious political nationalism has not been systematically and comparatively studied, although many of the works on nationalism make reference to it. It is in many ways paradoxical that religion which appears—with some exceptions—to all mankind irrespective of language, ethnic identity and culture should become so often implicated in nationalist movements including their most extreme formulations. It is significant that quite often those movements enjoy the support of the clergy and religious laymen even when they encounter hostility and condemnation by the hierarchy.

Nationalist clergymen, particularly of minority nationalities within a larger state, identify the pursuit of religious salvation with the liberation of a nation: only a free nation can assure the pursuit of religious salvation. The nationalist politics is for them politics in the service of religion. It would be interesting to discuss in more detail how such a fusion and, you might say, confusion comes about. It is probably the case in societies with distinctive national, cultural and linguistic traditions which have maintained a more intense religious loyalty, which are part of a state in which liberal anti-clerical secularizing tendencies identified with modernity have become prevalent. Those clergymen are likely to feel that by asserting the cultural and linguistic distinctiveness they will protect their flock from the dangerous ideas coming from the metropolitan centres and other parts of the state. It is from that perspective that the founder of Basque nationalism, Sabino Arana, and clergymen like the Capuchin Evangelista de Ibero formulated at the turn of the century a religious-political Basque nationalism. It is probably the same reaction against Prague and the Czechs, with their secular nationalism

identification with Hus, whose monument stands on the main square of the city, that accounts for Slovak nationalism that led, under the leadership of Monsignor Tisso, to the rule of what has been called 'parish Fascism'.[19] The idea of resurrection of the nation as a religious task symbolized in the celebration of the national holiday on Easter Sunday in the Basque country—the *Aberri Eguna*—and in Ireland is part of that symbolism. The slogan of Flemish nationalists of Christ for Flanders and Flanders for Christ is another example. In some cases, this pattern is reinforced by the impact of internal migrations when industrial workers, likely to be less religious and under the leadership of socialists or anarchists, migrate to the industrial centres of such a communal religious society. A sociological contributing factor is that the clergy very often is recruited from traditional families in rural or small town settings who are more likely than other people to be familiar with the vernacular language. In addition, they are the only educated elite who in their professional activity, preaching and confessing, are making use of the language of the common people and naturally resist the attempt to impose the use of the state language.

The intensity of that fusion leads to extreme formulations where the martyrs in the struggle for independence of the nation, even if they are non-religious, are exalted in a religious language, using such strange analogies as that of 'Christ as a victim of a military occupying power'.[20] The symbolism of Israel under the Egyptian oppression and of the exodus is put into the service of nationalism in a form of politicization of religion that is conceived not as partisan politics, but as service to the people and its salvation.

Religion politicized by nationalism is likely to be in the case of small nations that are part of larger multinational states or surrounded by nations of a different religion one of the most powerful supports of a political movement. It is probably the one which penetrates most deeply into the society and its culture. However, there are strains of politicization of religion on the basis of the historical mission of the pre-national modern monarchies in the Counter-Reformation which have been revived by modern nationalists.[21] Religious leaders are receptive to the formulations of intellectual nationalists linking the greatness of the nation with its religious heritage and are ready to invoke that heritage to justify their claims on the state to support religion. Secular political leaders are also ready to use religious nationalism for their purposes. That convergence between intellectual ideological formulations attractive to both religious and political leaders has been one of the components of the politicized religion that flourished during the Spanish Civil War and in the Franco regime, particularly after the defeat of the Axis had weakened the Fascist ideological component in the legitimation of the regime. It was one of the contributing factors in the development of *nacional-catolicismo,* the politicized religious culture and its multiple manifestations in political and cultural life legitimizing the authoritarian regime. It is never clear to what extent the sense of religious mission attributed to the nation is born of genuine religious sentiments or the result of a nationalist commitment in search of a universal justification. There are certainly examples of both types of intellectual and ideological development.

The cases of Poland, the Basque country, Lithuania and probably Armenia, Georgia and the western Ukraine show the political strength of politicized religion when fused with national sentiments, and in this context the comparison of the role of the Church in Poland, Hungary and the Czech lands would be particularly interesting.

This fusion between religion and nationalism naturally is reinforced in the struggle against godless authoritarian and particularly totalitarian regimes. To the extent that religion and religious life and institutions are islands of separateness, to use the expression of Alex Inkeles, their *Gleichschaltung* is difficult, they provide an arena in which a 'second culture' and dissidence from the regime can be articulated. Religious events, pilgrimages and visits by the Pope provide an opportunity for the manifestation of the religious rejection of an anti-religious government, for the assertion of the national identity and for political opposition even of non-believers. Highly politicized religion becomes the basis for challenging a regime. Poland provides probably the most striking example of this process of politicization of religion. It also shows, after democracy has come, the strains that generate from this position of power of the Church when it loses this function of prophetic opposition and returns to its more strictly religious functions and conceptions which many of those who supported it in the past do not share. There can be no doubt about the deep religious motivation, but there is also an element of 'living lie' in the association between opponents of the regime and religion.

The case of the politicization of religion by the Left or the 'religiosicization' of politics in the opposition to the late Franco regime, when churches and convents were used as meeting places for trade unions, the peripheral nationalist political movements and the parties of the opposition, presents the same problem. Again priests attracted to the social radicalism of the liberation theology sincerely saw in such activities an opportunity to reach those who had been alienated from the Church, those who had identified the Church with the authoritarian regime and therefore could be expected to be hostile to religion, and to atone for the guilt of their elders in supporting a repressive regime. An unexplored aspect of this process is how many of those who went to the churches or joined church-sponsored organizations retained their attachment to religion after new opportunities for strictly political and trade union action became possible and how many of the priests were drawn away from their religious mission to political and trade union action. There is, however, one gain in that process, which is the respect for religion and religious institutions among those benefited by that Church umbrella in the past, which has made possible the friendly separation of Church and state in the 1979 constitution and politics of the new democracy, in contrast with the religious political polarization in the 1931 constitution and the Republic.[22]

The hostility of the churches and particularly of the Catholic Church to totalitarianism was for a long time a major factor in the politicization of religion and the manipulation by political forces of religion. Even in the case of Spain, the constant worry about the potential 'of foreign influences', a code word for Nazi and to some extent Fascist influences on the future of the Spanish state already expressed in the 1937 Collective Letter of Spanish bishops and in many other occasions by the hierarchy, indirectly contributed to the fusion between religion and politics.[23] The threat of Fascism and its commitment to a separation of the religious and the political sphere, the supremacy of the state and its interests, the latent anti-Vaticanism, made the construction of the Catholic state even more urgent. In view of the weakness of Spanish Fascism, it was not difficult for the Church to reach compromises with Fascism in which the presence of Church advisors and the presence of religion in Fascist organizations (women, youth, labour) were to compensate for the potential threat, a process that contributed to the politicization of religion and the visibility of its identification with the regime. Had it not been for the

commitment to a political religion based on racism, the cult of the Führer, the absolute pre-eminence of the party, the anti-clericalism of the Nazi leadership, even the anti-religious sentiments of many of its leaders, there can be little question that some clergymen, particularly Protestants in the Glaubensbewegung deutscher Christen, would have been ready for the early 'religiosicization' of Nazism. It was the commitment to political religion that prevented the development of politicized nationalist authoritarian Protestantism at the service of the Third Reich. It was that development that later allowed the Protestant Church to escape the onus of its initial enthusiasm for the *Nationale Erweckung,* the *Nationale Revolution* against Weimar (with its presumed secularism and its opportunity for political Catholicism to exercise a share in power).

The costs and benefits of the fusion of religion and politics for the Church

In the processes of politicization of religion or religiosicization of politics, both those representing the religious sentiment and institution and those holding power expect to make gains and they often, at least initially, are unaware of or unwilling to recognize the potential costs of such a process.

Since in our discussion of political religions, the focus is on the political benefits for the totalitarian control by the state and the movement that takes over its control in a totalitarian system, I shall start with a discussion of the benefits that authoritarian rulers can derive from politicized religion. In this context, it is important to keep in mind the distinction formulated by Robert K.Merton between manifest and latent functions, to avoid the idea that those functions are necessarily in the consciousness and the plans of the rulers, the manifest goal of the political leaders rather than observable consequences which are not consciously in the forefront and to some extent not even desired. Incidentally, the dysfunctions of politicized religion to which we will turn later are generally latent, unrecognized and unacknowledged by both sides in the process, although occasionally some more clairvoyant religious leaders express them generally in private.

It can be argued that politicized religion has many more advantages for the rulers, religious or non-religious, than the invention of political religion. I have already referred to some of them, but it seems useful to analyse them in some more detail.

To start, in every society there is a large segment identified with a religion, socialized in it, loyal to the clergy and the hierarchy, susceptible to their influence and messages, which will welcome a state that is ready to support religion even at the cost of the politicization of religion. The more sincere the religious motivation, the more the basis for this legitimizing function will be effective. There is no need to articulate a secular ideology with religious emotional undertones, to invent new symbols, to stage new ceremonies with little meaning except for the true believers of the political movement, to train agents for the diffusion of the ideology. Politicized religion as an ersatz ideology is much more available and easy to develop.

Even those not identified with the political regime, if they are religious, cannot escape from the pervasive influence of politicized religion if they retain their attachment to religion. They will have to face the unpleasant dilemma of challenging the religious

leaders or abandoning their religious faith in protest at the politicization of religion. Their opposition unless truly militant will be neutralized to the extent that they want their children to be socialized in the religious tradition. They will be unable to transmit, in competition with the school and the parishes, their opposition without creating a conflict of conscience. In contrast, as long as the churches are not destroyed or *gleichgeschaltet* in a totalitarian system, parents still would have the support of the religious atmosphere in their resistance to the encroachment of political religion. The assimilation to politicized religion, the external religious conformity, which in some cases will lead to religious identification, works for politicized religion. It is that hope of assimilation with the support of a state giving religion a hegemonic position that motivates many religious leaders. It is dramatic to read in the pastoral letter of the Spanish bishops in 1937 this statement:

> This hatred of religion and the traditions of the Fatherland, which were expression and demonstration of so many things for ever lost, 'came from Russia, exported by Orientals of perverse spirit'. In favour of so many victims, hallucinated by the 'doctrines of the devils', we shall say that when dying punished by the law, our Communists have reconciled themselves in the immense majority with the God of their fathers. In Mallorca, only 2 per cent have died 'impenitent'. In the regions of the south, not more than 20 per cent and in the north they don't get probably to 10 per cent. This is a proof of the deception of which our people has been a victim.[24]

No one asked how much these last-hour conversions were hypocritical, the result of fear or hope of a last-minute reprieve, and how much hatred they might have generated, although we know that those involved on the side of the clergy were motivated by truly religious sentiments and generally hoped to help the victims of repression to achieve at last salvation. Nor do we know to what extent the families of the victims were impressed by that return to religion and themselves returned to the faith, externally and perhaps even intimately contributing to a neutralization of the opposition to the new political religious hegemony.

There can be no question that politicized religion supported by the state and supporting the regime has many subtle and not-so-subtle coercive dimensions. Attendance at collective masses, at retreats by members of the bureaucracy, the attendance at mass of the prisoners in the jails, relied on spiritual and physical coercion, but for the mass of the lukewarm religious population their participation was not seen as a result of political pressure, but of a collective wave of religious revival, of a climate of opinion, supported very often by family and the larger community.[25] It certainly involved less tension than participation in the activities of a political religion, its rituals and ceremonies, because it came embedded in the traditional religious community.

The support of the regime by a politicized religion, particularly when there are strong religious motivations for that politicization, is less costly for the rulers and requires less coercion and repression than the imposition of a political religion. That support is also likely to be more superficial in its initial manifestations but perhaps more pervasive and lasting both in its positive and its negative effects, as we shall see.

Politicized religion is less reliable as a basis for legitimation of an authoritarian regime in the long run than political religion. It cannot escape the fundamental heteronomy in the dualism between religion and politics, the fact that support is not unconditional, and that the values of the religion may sooner or later come into conflict with those pursued by politicians. In addition, developments in a trans-national church can ultimately lead to questioning of a national 'gallican' church and its ties with the state. That ultimate heteronomy implies that in the politicized religion there are the seeds for an anti-regime politicization of religion. Religious leaders might realize that the benefits from a politicization of religion are sometimes more apparent than real and that they involve costs for the strictly salvation function of religion. If that moment comes, the authority structure of the Church, the religious community, will not be able to control those who invoke religions motives to question the regime and the politicized religion and its supporters. Conflict within the religious community sometimes initiated by religious intellectuals and clergymen in charge of lay movements will ultimately de-legitimize politicized religion and indirectly the political system that relied on it. It will even challenge the authority of the religious leaders, the hierarchy itself. This process involves also a politicization of religion only of opposite ideological sign. While those not unsympathetic to the Franco regime welcomed practices like *misa de campaña,* masses in open fields at gatherings of veterans, those opposed to the regime were ready to support the use of religious buildings for sit-ins of strikers and protestors.[26]

Politicized religion as we have argued is a result of a particular religious, political constellation of specific historical circumstances, but the Church undergoes a constant renewal of its ministers. New generations enter the clergy without sharing the experiences of their elders, and some of them have quite different ones in the ministry, in the parishes, with lay organizations and in their education, particularly in a trans-national church which trains some of the clergy in foreign theological scholarly centres where they are likely to become critical of the politicized religion in which they grew up which they even feel betrays the true mission of religion. These clergymen enjoy some of the same leadership positions and protected status that the state once granted the supporting clergy, and therefore become a thorn in the flesh of both the conformists and loyal hierarchy and the authorities of the regime. After Vatican II, when the Church recognized the pluralistic options of the faithful in social and political matters and abandoned some of the conservative ideological formulations of Catholic social doctrine, the strong institutionalized position of the Church became a problem for the authoritarian regimes. If the rulers had not been practising Catholics, respectful although unhappy with the positions taken by the Vatican and party of the hierarchy, a bitter conflict between state and Church would have ensued. Certainly, manifestations of such a conflict became more and more important in the late years of the Franco regime. The genuine faith or the pragmatic considerations derived from the cost of attacking overtly the Church when it had been one of its main legitimizing supporters created conditions for an ultimately unequal confrontation. This became apparent in the Añoveros affair when the prime minister was ready to put the bishop of Bilbao on a plane to a foreign country only to find himself confronted with an excommunication *latae sententia*. Only the pragmatism of Franco or his genuine respect for the Church avoided the open confrontation in the making.[27] It would be interesting to compare this confrontation with the one between Perón and the Church, where a leader who was more political than religious in his

alliance with the politicized Church was ready to opt for confrontation and the Church to excommunicate him.

Politicized religion, therefore, is a latent element of political pluralism in an authoritarian setting. It is not a reliable instrument of legitimation over the vicissitudes of time of a regime.

As a detailed analysis of the *avatares,* the dramatic unfolding of the history of the Church in Spain shows, it is relatively easy to analyse the political implications for an authoritarian regime of politicized religion. It is much more difficult to analyse the implications for religion, the religious experience of the faithful, the realization or failure of the salvation project of the religious community, the gains and losses in faith accompanying the process. The Church Triumphant of the heyday of politicized national Catholicism could point to the growth of religious vocations, the number of people receiving the sacraments (some of them hypocrites, but many true believers), the defence of religiously inspired public morality preventing human sinfulness, while the critics could point to the superficial and hypocritical aspects of that religiosity, the alienation from the Church of those opposing the regime and the long-term secularizing tendencies that emerged from that opposition, blaming the Church for its alliance with power. We do not have the necessary data to evaluate the relative benefits and costs from a strictly religious point of view of politicized religion.

The implications of the experiment of national Catholicism are analysed from a religious perspective by Alfonso Alvarez Bolado, a Jesuit trained in Innsbruck under Karl Rahner. In his essay on the Catholic compromise and the crisis of faith, inspired by the theology of Bonhoeffer, he not only focuses on the compromise with the regime but also on its legacies for the political religious confusions in the opposition and the collaboration with the non-Christians.[28] He squarely places the problems of religion and politics in Spain in the context of the debate about political theology, a perspective that enriches the more descriptive historical accounts of the realities of the politicized religion and their impact on the daily life of people we find in other works. However, this more intellectual and theological perspective does not answer the questions we might have about the impact of politicized religion, state-supported and imposed religion and morality on the socialization of citizens and their religious experiences. The study of politicized religion presents some of the same problems as the empirical study of the impact of political religion. Perhaps a cohort analysis of the religious and anti-religious sentiments of those having made different political options after the disintegration of the political religions and the crisis of politicized religion could provide insights into such complex processes.

(Original English text by Juan J.Linz)

Notes

1 For the distinction of different types of non-democratic regimes, see Juan J.Linz, 'Totalitarianism and Authoritarian Regimes', in Fred Greenstein and Nelson W.Polsby (eds), *Handbook of Political Science,* Vol. III (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975), pp. 175–411.

2 Juan J.Linz, 'Religion y politica en España', in Rafael Díaz-Salazar and Salvador Giner, (eds), *Religion y sociedad en España* (Madrid: Centro de Investigaiones Sociológicas, 1993), pp. 1–50. This volume includes a number of excellent essays on the Church in Spanish society

under Franco and today. Among the many studies of the Spanish Church, the reader is referred to the following: Victor M.Pérez-Diaz, 'The Church and Religion in Contemporary Spain: An Institutional Metamorphosis', *The Return of Civil Society: The Emergence of Democratic Spain* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), pp. 108–83; Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy: The Catholic Church in Spain* 1875–1975; Guy Hermet, *Les catholiques dans l'Espagne franquiste,* 2 vols (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1980–81).

3 A good example is a document by Bormann, 'The Relation between National Socialism and Christianity', cited in Joachim Remak (ed.), *The Nazi Years: A Documentary History* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1969), pp. 103–4. 'More and more, the people must be wrested from the churches and their ministers. It is obvious from their point of view that the churches shall and must resist this loss of power. But never again are the churches to receive any measure of influence over the leadership of the nation. That influence must be broken, completely and for ever. Only the nation's government and, by its order, the party, its organizations and subsidiaries, have a right to lead the people. Just as the harmful influences of astrologers, fortune-tellers and other swindlers are being eliminated and suppressed by the state, so all possibility of ecclesiastical influence must be totally removed. Only when that has happened will the nation's leadership exercise its full influence over the individual citizen. Only then will state and nation be secure in their existence for all future times…'

4 It would be interesting to trace the use of the term 'paganism' or 'neo-paganism' to refer to the Nazi (and some other Fascist) ideological formulations and practice we are discussing here and to compare it with the—probably more academic—use of the term 'political religion'.

5 There may, however, be some interesting 'survivals' like the Communist *Jungendweihe* in the former GDR.

6 Eric Voegelin, *Die politischen Religionen* (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer, 1939).

7 The People's Republic of China, with the absence of a 'prophetic' religion and the Confucian and Taoist traditions, would be particularly interesting in understanding the success of Maoist political religion.

8 On the conflict between the Church and the Second Republic, see José M.Sánchez, *Reform and Reaction: The Politico Religious Background of the Spanish Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1964). For the constitutional debate in 1931, see the excellent study by Victor Manuel Arbeloa, *La semana trágica de la iglesia en España (1931)* (Barcelona: Galba, 1976). Incidentally, Arbeloa is a priest, now leader of the PSOE in Navarra and member of parliament. Miguel Larazony de la Rosa *et al.* (eds), *Legislación Española: Leyes religiosas seqún los textos oficiales* (Madrid: J.M.Yagües, 1935).

9 Emile Durkheim, 'L'Individualisme et les intellectuels', *Revue bleue X* (1898), pp. 7–13. See Melvin Richter, 'Durkheim's Politics and Political Theory', in Kurt H. Wolff (ed.), E.Durkheim *et al.*, *Essays on Sociology and Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), pp. 170–210.

10 Houchang E.Chehabi, 'Religion and Politics in Iran: How Theocratic is the Islamic Republic?', *Daedalus* (Summer 1991), pp. 69–91.

11 Barrington Moore, Jr, 'Totalitarian Elements in Pre-Industrial Societies', in B.Moore, *Political Power and Social Theory* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), pp. 30–88, see pp. 59–74.

12 Anieto Castro, *Albarrán, El derecho a la rebeldía* (Madrid, 1934), articulated theological arguments for resistance to the laicist republic in a pamphlet. Vidal I Barraquer withdrew ecclesiastical *nihil obstat* from it but Gomá, archbishop of Toledo, found nothing objectionable in it from a theological point of view.

13 On the persecution of the Church in the civil war, see Antonio Montero Moreno, *Historia de la perseución religiosa en España 1936–1939* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1961). The persecution in the civil war cost the lives of 4,184 members of the secular clergy,

including seminarians, 2,365 male members of religious orders and 283 female members—a total of 6,832 religious persons. This means 13 per cent of the priests and 23 per cent of the members of the orders of the Spanish total, even though only part of the country was controlled by the revolutionaries. In some dioceses, the proportion of regular clergy killed reached over 80 per cent.

14 Jesús Iribarren, *Papeles y Memorias: Medio Siglo de Relaciones Iglesia—Estado en España: 1936–1986* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1992), pp. 22–66. Also Vicente Enrique y Tarancón, *Recuerdos de Juventud* (Barcelona: Grijalbo, 1984), Chapters 5 to 7, pp. 187–301. The memoirs of Cardinal Tarancón, archbishop of Madrid and secretary of the Spanish Episcopal Conference that led the Church in the last years of the Franco regime and into democracy in the transition.

15 See Ramón Comas, *Isidro Gomá Francesc Vidal I Barraquer. Dos visiones antagónicas de la Iglesia española de 1939* and R.Garriga, *El cardenal Segura y el Nacional-catolicismo* (Barcelona, 1977).

16 Javier Tusell, *Franco y los católicos: La politica interior española entre 1945 y 1957* (Madrid: Alianza, 1984) is the best historical monograph on this crucial period based on published and private archival sources. Guy Hermet, *Les catholiques dans I'Espagne franquiste,* 2 vols (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1980–81) is the best and most documented monograph on the subject.

17 M.de Iriarte, SJ, *El profesor García Morente, Sacerdote. Escritos íntimos y comentario biográfico* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1956).

18 In the party programme of the Falange, point 25 stated: 'Our movement incorporates the Catholic sense of glorious tradition and dominant in Spain to the national reconstruction. The Church and the state shall concordate their respective competences, without accepting any intrusion or activity that would diminish the dignity of the state or national integrity.' On the incorporation of Catholicism into Spanish Fascism and its reservations toward 'foreign movements of a similar type', see Payne, *The Franco Regime,* 203–6.

19 Jelinek Yeshayahu, 'Clergy and Fascism: The Hlinka Party in Slovakia and the Croatian Ustasha Movement', in Stein Ugelvik Larsen, Bernt Hagtvet and Jan Petter Myklebust (eds), *Who were the Fascists?* (Bergen: Universitets forlaget, 1980), pp. 367–78 (with bibliographic references).

20 Fernando García de Cortázar, 'Iglesia vasca, religion y nacionalismo en el Siglo XX**',** in F.García de Cortázar and Juan Pablo, *Fusi, Politica, Nacionalidad e Iglesia en el País Vasco* (San Sebastián: Txertoa, 1988), pp. 59–114, see p. 113.

21 Paradoxically, Manuel Azaña, prime minister of the Republic at the time of the debate of the constitution, from a laicist and anti-clerical perspective, shared that national-catholic view of Spanish history. Let us quote from one of his most famous speeches: 'I formulate the premise of this problem, not [a] political [one], in this way: Spain has stopped being Catholic: the political problem derived from it is to organize the state in such a manner that it becomes adequate to this new and historical phase of the Spanish people.' A paragraph later he said: 'To state that Spain has stopped being Catholic we have the same reasons, I want to say (reasons) of the same character, as to affirm that Spain was Catholic in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries… Spain, in the moment of the high point of its genius, when it was a creative and inventive people, created a Catholicism to its image and likeness, in which, above all, shine the traits of its character, very different certainly from the Catholicism of the other countries… But now… the situation is exactly the reverse. In the course of many centuries, the speculative activity of European thought was made within Christianity…but also for centuries the thought and speculative activity of Europe has stopped, at least, being Catholic; all the higher movement of civilization is made against it, and, in Spain, despite our limited mental activity, for the past century Catholicism has stopped being the expression and guide of Spanish thought. That there should be in Spain millions of believers I do not question; but what defines the religious being of a country, of a people, of a society,

is not the numerical addition of beliefs or of believers, but the creative effort of its mind, the course followed by its culture.' For Azaña, therefore, secularization is a question of culture—echoes of the *Kulturkampf*—and, paradoxically, the argument could be turned around, as we will see, by the national-catholics: if Spain was great when it was Catholic, let us make Spain and above all its culture Catholic and Spain will again be great, and the lack of faith of large numbers of Spaniards would not count.

22 The works on the late Franco regime and the studies already mentioned describe in detail the different politico-ideological climate in the transition to democracy in 1931 and 1976–78. See Richard Gunther and Roger Blough, 'Religious Conflict and Consensus in Spain: A Tale of Two Constitutions', *World Affairs* (Spring 1981).

23 Episcopada Español a los Obispos de Todo el Mundo, 'Sobre la Guerra de España', 1 July 1937, in Jesús Iribarren (ed.), *Documentos Colectivos del Episcopado Español 1879–1974* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1974), pp. 219–43.

24 Ibid., p. 235.

25 Giuliana Di Febo, *La santa de la raza. Un culto barroco en la España Franquista (1937–1962)* (Barcelona: ICARIA, Editorial, 1988).

26 See Juan J.Linz, 'Religion and Politics in Spain: From Conflict to Consensus above Cleavage', *Social Compass,* 27 (1980), pp. 2–3, 255–77, see p. 268.

27 On the Añoveros crisis see José L.Martin Descalzo, *Tarancón el cardenal del ambio* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1982), Chapter 13, pp. 203–17.

28 Alfonso Alvarez Bolado, *El experimento del nacional—catolicismo, 1939–1975* (Madrid: Editorial Cuadernos para el Diálogo, 1976).

Discussion of Linz's paper

Chair: Henning Ottman

OTTMAN: Many thanks for this very thorough presentation. My suggestion would be that we do not discuss Spain immediately, but take up the very valuable conceptual differentiations that you made in your lecture instead. Summarily stated: you have said that political religion is a modern phenomenon. Political religions have their own liturgy. Political religions are an aspect of secular society. One could not classify political religions as theocracy or Caesaro-papism, you said. They are 'neo-pagan'; the hour of their birth was the French Revolution. In terms of function, one could describe them as a phenomenon of legitimation—of the legitimation of power. The political religions were predicted to have no lasting success. They will leave nothing enduring behind and, to this point, they have emerged only in Christian societies.

LINZ: One could also count Maoism among them.

OTTMAN: With the relevant differences that you yourself have named. Maoism lacks, as you said, the reference to transcendence. According to your portrayal, the opposite of the political religions is a 'friendly co-operation' between Church and state. Political religions, by contrast—and this was your main thesis—represent either a use of religion for political purposes or a use of politics by religious interests.

It seems to me that there is a tension between these two parts of the thesis. Would one not have to capture the second case, the use of politics by religious interests, through use of a different terminology? For example, would the Iran of today not better be classified as a theocracy rather than as a political religion? Would one not have to insist upon the modernity of the political religions, which can no longer be equated as phenomena of secularization with the *theologia civilis* of old?

MAIER: I too wished to follow up on Mr Linz' structural and typological analyses. We are of course accustomed to tracing the distinction between religion and politics, their heteronomy, back to the lasting influence of Christianity as opposed to that which we perceive to be the ancient monism of religion, cult and politics. Yet here I would like to add to the discussion just a few distinctions within the history of Christianity. Early Christianity, which persists for us most strongly in the Eastern churches to this day, does not yet have the later tendency to heteronomy. Quite to the contrary, it is defined by the   Justinian image of a *symphonia* of state and Church, of cult and politics. And to the present day, the concept of *symphonia* defines that which one might call the theory of the relationship of politics and religion in Orthodox Christianity. This is the reason for the great susceptibility of the Orthodox, autocephalous churches to national identifications. One can trace this right up to the position taken by the Serbian bishops on the war that is occurring at the moment.

The Catholic form of Christianity of course incorporates much from Roman institutions. At the same time, however, it also moves in the opposite direction after Augustine: it turns away from the Roman unit, offers a critic of the Eusebian melding of kingdom and Christianity, and favours the small state as opposed to the empire. In place of the Justinian 'symphony', there develops in the West a doctrine of two powers. The

decisive historical threshold is the investiture controversy. To this day, Orthodoxy is a Christianity prior to the investiture controversy, whereas the Catholic Church steps over the threshold in the eleventh and twelfth centuries into a genuine heteronomy. Protestantism exists in two different forms again. Whereas the Wittenberg Reformation is essentially linked to the Catholic development and Luther's doctrine of two kingdoms marks a return to Augustine, the reformed churches make a detour through images of the Kingdom of God, Christocratic images, only to arrive at new identifications with secular societies. For example, the US civil religion: if one hears US speeches on Thanksgiving Day and then compares them, they sometimes remind one of the statements of German Christians—please forgive the comparison. One need only replace Germany with the United States. This is why I have always been very sceptical and critical about this civil religious tradition—a tradition that was even very highly praised by my colleague, Eric Voegelin. But this is perhaps a side issue.

PETERSEN: Mr Linz has extensively described both the co-existence and the opposition of state and religion based on the Spanish example. The case of Italy comes to my mind—a case for which identification of Catholic religion and state is so massively present as well. In the constitution of Piemont in 1848 is already written, '*religione cattolica, religione di stato*—Catholic religion, state religion'. This then came into Fascism too via the Lateran concordats. Only recently has it been removed, in the last concordat of 1984. As for the interplay between Fascism and Catholicism, that was always one of the main points that was presented as one of the advantages by Fascism, and by the Catholic Church as well: Italy's religious homogeneity, so to speak. I now ask myself whether one would not have to introduce yet another distinction into the model that you have developed here. From the side of the state, it seems to me that there are religiously homogeneous societies like Italy, Spain, France, religiously divided societies like Germany and religiously differentiated societies like the United States, for example. In Germany, the religious division was always perceived by the national movement as a burden. Not without reason was it said, 'the German discord is in the middle of its heart!' To the Catholic side, Luther appeared as the great villain who had divided the nation religiously. According to the Protestant side, the Counter-Reformation was the great abortive development that led to the nation remaining religiously divided. Among other things, National Socialism was also an attempt to recreate a united pagan society as the foundation for a strong national sentiment.

TOMKA: I would like to follow up on the question of Mr Maier. It seems to me that these questions are very strongly tied up with the confessional background. It seems to me, for example, that the idea that religion is a private matter is very strongly rooted in the Calvinist Reformed tradition. Now, the confessional component was lacking for me in the lecture. I do not know whether one can omit it; I would be interested to see whether or not these differences that you have made here could or should be traced back in part to confessional distinctions.

A second question would be the following: whether or not a country or culture enjoys a confessionally homogeneous continuity in its history seems to me to be significant. In western Europe, there seems to prevail the conviction that the Peace of Westphalia established a *cuius regio* principle, a certain agreement between political and confessional arrangement that is binding for the entire world. I believe that this is not

the case. In eastern central Europe, in the Hungarian kingdom as well as the Poland of that time, this did not occur. That is, there are historical examples of kingdoms and cultures of mixed confession. I believe that this is also a conditioning variable that would have to be brought into play here—one that would have implications for the contemporary connection or non-connection of politics and religion as well.

LINZ: Of course the various Christian churches, communities and sects have different perspectives concerning politics. It would be important to work that through in a more complete way. Mr Maier has underscored the main point: that the development of the Western Christian Church as compared to the Orthodox one is important and perhaps decisive to the developments within the Communist countries that were formerly Orthodox. No one knows precisely how that will develop in the future. The fact that the Catholic Church has a Pope and council and an authority determined by Rome—one that does not coincide with the borders of a state—has of course enormous implications for the independence of religion from politics, even if the two were fused for a time as in Spain. The development of the Spanish Church was determined by the co-operation of the nuncios with the Pope in order to appoint another hierarchy; this would not have been conceivable at the outset of the Franco regime under the influence of the civil war. Of course, the international character of the Catholic Church provokes rejection by nationalists of all kinds. Point 25 of the Spanish party programme of the Falange (it was no longer cited in the Franco regime!) is informative. Here is stated that 'our movement makes accessible to all the Catholic meaning of the glorious Spanish tradition. Church and state should settle their respective competencies by contract, whereby all interference of the Church, all activities that   could endanger national integrity or the dignity of the state, would be rejected.' This is the fear of a Church that has the potential to intervene, predominantly in the field of the politics of language, in the regional nationalisms. This nationalist hostility in the face of a universal Church is a latent problem that emerges in all these authoritarian states—in the conflicts between Pinochet and the Church, for example. As one can see, this is a fundamental difference from the national churches, with their 'Caesaro-papal' elements, which arose after Luther's Reformation; and of course, it also differs from the Orthodox churches, which became autocephalous national churches. To what extent the ecumenical movement might lead again to a Church having a common authority that extends beyond the borders of the national churches would of course be an interesting question.

Even more interesting than the Spanish case is the Italian one. I believe that, beginning with Mussolini, the Fascists had an ambivalent attitude toward the Church. For the Fascists, it was a power which had to be reckoned with, which had to be treated carefully; in part, it was also a power that one could use. That is, I believe, a case where political use proceeded from a political motivation rather than a religious one—at least at times. This is how the Lateran concordats came into existence. In this respect, the Italian case is situated differently from the Spanish one, and differently from the Austrian one as well.

Another point of access: religion as a private versus religion as a public matter. In no religion is religion a purely private matter. There is always a public expression of religious phenomena, and this is why the problems with state and politics emerge. I also believe that the concept of a direct sovereignty of God—which became

influential in the theology of Karl Barth, for example, and in part in the Confessional Church—is of Calvinistic origin. More than in the Lutheran tradition, there was always resistance here to an amoral or immoral authority of the state. In this respect, I would say that Calvinism is not compatible with the privatization of religion.

I find Mr Tomka's comment about the difference between western and eastern Europe following the Peace of Westphalia to be very important. Also of interest here is the role of the Calvinistic elites in Hungary, for example.

Then Islam—in this context, I can only allude to this problem area. Certain authors are now of the opinion that everything, religion and politics, is one with Islam and that Islam is incompatible with democracy. My colleague Huntington sometimes makes statements of this kind. But is it so simple? In my view, a separation of Church and state, of religion and politics, of religion and society in the form in which those in the United States conceive it (or the French Revolution, or Atatürk in the twentieth century) is in fact not possible in an Islamic culture. Religion and secular society do not form a balanced opposition. That is of course the great problem in Algeria and in other countries dominated by Islam: how can the relationship between state and religion be constitutionally anchored so that it produces a stable relationship? That is all very problematic. Strict laicism is not realizable in certain societies. Yet we must discuss the concrete sphere of problems of each religion, each country. There are many conceivable paths leading between the extremes of a completely 'religionized' state and a political religion.

Finally, the political religion. You are completely correct that a politicization of Protestantism occurred in the German Empire. The empire had a strong, Protestant majority within the population and the state was strongly influenced by Protestantism. On the other hand, there was the Weimar Republic. Here, the Catholics possessed considerable influence, the political centre—although they were always in the minority. With a certain malice, Max Weber called this 'curateocracy'. He was very Protestant and had a very limited understanding of the Catholic Church as a social and cultural phenomenon. The centre, the curateocracy, was to him a political intervention in this secularized Protestant state of the empire. I believe that this was something that explained the drawing power of the Nazis in large parts of northern Germany: a kind of anti-centrist component. For the Weimar Republic was a creation, not of the socialists alone, but also of the centre; and for certain Protestant circles, combating political Catholicism was an attractive theme. If Hitler had been more pragmatic and cynical, if he had had—but this is difficult to judge—a better understanding of religion, then a politicized Protestant Church like that of the imperial bishop and the German Christians would probably have been of great use to him. He would have politicized the existing religion; he would not have been compelled to move in the direction of a political religion. I do not believe, by the way, that there was only one political religion in National Socialism; various political religions were in play here.

GADSHIIEV: I would like to pose a question: do you see differences between political religion, state religion and civil religion? In totalitarian states, we must speak not only of political or civil religions, but also of state religions. There, political religions turn into state religions on their own. One could say that the old unity of state and religion—of state and Church as well—is re-established here. Marxism-Leninism was

both state religion and state church in the Soviet Union, complete with saints, holy books, liturgies, churches of ideology and propaganda. If this is the case, then political religion quickly becomes a state religion and state religion becomes civil religion. For the majority of people in the Soviet Union, Marxism-Leninism was the faith with which they grew up; thus, it must necessarily have become their civil religion.

I believe that the 'total' aspect of the totalitarian state in the Soviet Union consisted in the melding of these three religious forms: political, state and civil religions. What do you think: can we clarify the difference between these three types according to whether they emerge in totalitarian or in liberal-democratic states?

LINZ: Your question meets the problem squarely. The political religion of the Soviet Union is based upon a foundation that was created by the militant, atheistic politics of the revolutionary period. I do not know—this would have to be analysed historically—under which conditions the political religion developed following the secularization, atheistic repression and destruction   of the Church. You state quite correctly that it was a state religion; of course it was, because state and party, movement and culture were fused in this totalitarian system. To what extent it was also a civil religion in Bellah's sense—this is a problem in my view. Today, this political religion—Marxism-Leninism and its preachers, the entire agitprop elite of the Party, everything that this 'religion' founded and its missionaries developed—has disappeared. What element of this lives on in the society as a civil religion in Bellah's sense? Or can the civil religion no longer function if the political religion upon which it was based has disappeared? Can certain *rites de passage*—weddings, funerals and initiations—exist without the foundation of the political religion? And conversely: to what extent can the secular citizens' ceremonies that must be present for non-religious people dispense with all emotional, symbolic elements? This, I believe, is a big problem in the case of the former Soviet Union.

Another problem is the future role of the Orthodox Church. Following an initial phase of resistance, it co-existed and often even made deals with the regime. Solzhenitsyn called it a betrayal of religion. In many respects, it has weakened the Church in the post-Communist era. To what extent can the Church free itself today from this dependence on the Communist state and start afresh in another form? What does it do with its old weaknesses: with the non-existence of caritas, social work and social doctrine, with the pre-dominance of liturgy and the cult over the other dimensions of religious life? The former Soviet Union, the various religions within the Soviet Union and the various Orthodox churches—in particular, the Armenian and Georgian churches, the mixtures of nationalism and religion—all this is an enormous field in which can be studied how these relationships developed under a totalitarian system. The contrast to Lithuania, the Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union is of utmost interest in this respect. In Germany, the Nazis achieved their secularization, of course, but the Nazi era was also brief. With the collapse of Nazism came a religious restoration. This is not the case, I believe, in the former Soviet Union—at least not in the same form. The length of time that totalitarian regimes were in power does play a role; we must always take that into consideration.

HÜRTEN: I would like to underscore something that already resonated in the previous discussion. In the model of 'political religion', one ought probably to introduce a distinction between 'political religions' and 'political Church'. It seems to me to make

a difference whether a religion is a pre-existing social form of organization with its own personnel, as it is with the Christian churches. These, to be sure, can be politicized; but they can never be completely identical with the regime. Although the Russian tsar could do a great deal, he could never say a mass. Although the German emperor could read the Gospel in the Christmas mass, it went no further than that.

During the Directoire, there was a director of a kind who otherwise emerges seldom in history, one who presented himself as a religious founder: La Revellierè-Lépeaux. He would have gladly made his 'theo-philanthropism' the public state religion. Even if such attempts amuse us (as his contemporaries were already amused), they nonetheless enable us to recognize the difference between a political regime that establishes itself as a religion with cult and clergy, and a pre-existing religion which is adapted by a regime for its own purposes.

LINZ: I am in complete agreement; this was the starting-point of my remarks. The problem, however, is that the political religions—except in the era of the French Revolution—were never entirely conclusive as to the extent to which they wanted to develop a cult. The Nazis, for example, played with the idea, but they never decided what form they wanted to give the matter. And the political religions in general were tremendously weak; they were not able to institutionalize themselves or to create a community of belief. If the Nazis had been in power for 70 years, of course, then we would probably have had something else to study; but this case did not emerge, God be thanked.

One could discuss China at length. China is the only country where one might ask: prior to the totalitarian power structure, was there a religion that could somehow have set up a spiritual, moral, principled or organizational resistance to the state and state ideology? This is a fascinating case, and one that I believe is not included in our perspective on political religions at all. This all plays out in the Christian world.

REPGEN: I have a question seeking information. You have placed great emphasis on the Spanish pastoral letter of 1 July 1937. This pastoral letter was preceded by three critical papal encyclicals in March. The first took a position against National Socialism, as well as against the religiosity or pseudo-religiosity that was present in National Socialism. Because much of this pseudo-religiosity was expressed in imprecise concepts, the encyclical could not work in terms that were as conceptual as those of the encyclical against Communism eight days later; it was forced to abide by circumlocutions instead. And then there was the third encyclical referring to Mexico. Here, the formula was very heavily qualified, certainly, but nonetheless remarkable— even though it had no guiding influence on action. (As far as I can tell, by the way, it was scarcely—if at all—noticed in Germany at that time.) With a qualifying clause, the encyclical spoke about the circumstances and possibilities in which the Christian is also justified in engaging in revolution. But my question is the following: did these official statements of early 1937 have any influence on the pastoral letter? For our general theme of totalitarianism, it would also be important to note that the Pope had already made an official statement about the concept, 'totalitarianism'. Strangely, this fact has hardly been noticed by the research. In 1931, he wrote a letter to Cardinal Schuster about the struggle with Mussolini over the implications of the Lateran Concordat for the education of youth in Italy. Here, Pius XI stated the following: totalitarianism is permitted to the extent that the 'totalitarian system' lays claim only

to those jurisdictions which properly belong to the state ('dunque una totalitarietà, che diremo suggesttiva'). It would be absurd, however, if the system were to get hold of Church, family, etc. too owing to the   new state goals ('una totalitarietà oggettiva, nel senso cioè che…[dallo Stato debbe]…dipendere tutto la loro vita anche individuale, domestica, spirituale, sproanaturale'). This, then, means that he said 'yes' to totalitarianism to the extent that the old state with its old state goals is concerned, and 'no' to the extent that it involved further-reaching state goals. A compromise about the education of the young was then concluded; in the long run, this compromise was relatively favourable for the Church in that it retained its independence—its influence on education of the young and its vocational independence. Now, therefore, my question asks: were the encyclicals of 1937 and the papal letter of 1931 consulted by the Spaniards when they formulated the pastoral letter of 1 July?

LINZ: The problem for the Spanish Church was that the Nazi Germans fought on the side of the Franco powers. For this reason, care had to be taken with reference to Germany. The encyclical on the Church and the German Reich, 'Mit brennender Sorge', was neither published nor attended to in Spain. There was a wish here to hush things up. Anti-Communism did not have to be derived from the encyclicals; and there was, I believe, no reference to the papal encyclicals in the pastoral letter of the Spanish bishops. The theme is present, to be sure, but is always a bit veiled due precisely to this alliance with the Fascist powers and with National Socialist Germany.

SPIEKER: Mr Linz, you have not made special mention of liberation theology, although you briefly touched on it with your example of the Basque village priest who buried the ETA leader. Where would you classify it, with politicized religion or with a political religion? I have studied it intensively and tend toward the latter designation. There are unbelievable statements by Gutierrez: that God passed through Nicaragua with the liberation of Nicaragua by the Sandinistas, for example; or by Leonardo Boff, who says that only one man in this century succeeded in uplifting an entire people and leading it out of slavery through faith: namely, Ayatollah Khomeini. Many adherents of liberation theology here are completely incredulous when I present Boff's reference to Khomeini to them, but now there is yet another. Your distinction states that religions which have compromised themselves politically remain intact after the system to which they have offered their services disappears, whereas political religions disappear with the disappearance of the system to which they have offered themselves or by which they were used. But if the system disappears, this prompts me to ask: what now happens with liberation theology, if socialism has been discredited?

LINZ: If one compares specific texts of liberation theology with texts of the religious movement of the German Christians, then a lot sounds similar. There are many analogies here. With many of these peoples—perhaps not with all of them—I would say that the motivating ground of this movement is of course a deeply religious one. They politicize the religion from a religious perspective. They believe that the religion can make contact again with the modern world, with the third world, with the poor, with the proletariat, and that this better corresponds with the Gospel. The foundation is a religious   and not a political one, as with the political religions about which we spoke at the beginning—Nazism and Communism. This is why I believe that liberation theology will probably undergo a crisis, or is already undergoing one in part,

and that some of these people—not all—will again find normal religious formulations, perhaps less politically oriented ones.

SUTOR: Mr Linz, my question follows up directly on the last one. Just as they occurred to Mr Spieker, the parallels to the political theology of the base communities in Latin America also occurred to me. And the first thing I wanted to ask, you answered when you answered Mr Spieker's question. But one could press that further. When you stated that the official Spain of Franco attempted to politicize religion while its opponents also made use of religion, the following questions—which would have to be considered a hypothesis—occurred to me. Before the background of your typological differentiations: is it not to a certain extent probable that an established system, whether a state or a church, uses religion politically to the point that you call politicized religion? But it becomes political religion when oppositional movements attempt this? If the oppositional movement comes to power, then it becomes an ideology prescribed by the state. This distinction seems to me interesting, if we examine the whole matter using this framework. What then happens if such a movement gains power and establishes its ideology in an authoritarian way—truly establishes its political religion right up to 'liturgical' forms—is another question. But, in any case, this distinction and arrangement of established authorities and oppositional movements according to the two types that you have mentioned seems to me to be interesting.

LINZ: Yes, one could emphasize that. If religion is used by clergy and laypeople and base communities in order to press forward a socio-political programme, then it nonetheless remains religion. Of course, where do the boundaries lie? Every Church-oriented politicization comes up against controls in the end: against normative restrictions in the Vatican, in the papacy and the churches in the area, in the council, the synods, etc. Schismatics in the Catholic Church have few opportunities to develop. I remember a provost I visited in a cathedral in Spain—he had seen me on television and wanted to speak to me. He said to me: 'You know, I agree with everything that Monsignor Lefebvre says. He is correct in what he says about the Church and the world and I agree very much with him, but of course I cannot be for him because he does not acknowledge the authority of the Pope.' This border is of course a barrier for such a position. That is different with Protestantism. But the interesting thing is that, although liberation theology has had some influence in Protestant circles, the Protestantism that has now become widespread in the United States is a radically fundamentalist, traditional Protestantism and not one that builds upon liberation theology.

CONZEMIUS: I would like to follow up on two expressions that you have brought into the discussion: on the idea of election on the one hand, and on your assessment that there was some kind of preliminary stages of a political religion in the Wilhelmian Kingdom on the other.

LINZ: A politicized religion, not political religion!

CONZEMIUS: What would you say to the understanding that this political religion, as it has developed primarily in the Christian sphere, can be traced back to a *translatio* of the idea of the election of the Jewish people? This idea emerged around the end of the eighteenth century. It borrowed Christian concepts and contents that then were detached—primarily in German Protestantism during the Seven Years War—from

their biblical features entirely. Here, a new dynamic was introduced into the concepts of martyrdom, sacrifice and death for the Fatherland.

LINZ: Now, without a doubt, one of the greatest powers in our culture and society and in the world is nationalism. It is based upon the existence of a cultural, political and linguistic community, which endows the human being with a sense that his life has meaning. This phenomenon is a modern phenomenon. It arises after the French Revolution out of the revolt against the Napoleonic domination of Europe. Here, for the first time, there emerges a sense of community that does not have a primarily religious motivation—a consciousness that issues, not from the state, crown or authority, but from below. Emotional tones develop here and a symbolism that absorbs that which had previously been native to the religious realm. The well-known book by George Mosse has set before our eyes the cultic elements in the nationalism of the nineteenth century: the memorials, the monuments, the holidays and commemorations, the eternal flame for the fallen soldiers and other such things. It is interesting that this never became so strong in the Catholic countries. Spain has nothing of the kind. I have visited the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials in Washington with Spaniards and have read (in a perspective borrowing more from the German cultural sphere) the inscriptions with a certain devotion and seriousness. The Spaniards reacted differently: it looked like a church but was not a church; it left them simply cold. This secular civic culture and civic religion is counter to the baroque Catholic world-perspective. Observation of it triggers an allergic reaction.

SCHWARZ: I have a question for Mr Linz. In response to Mr Maier and Mr Petersen in a very early phase of the discussion, you indicated that there are differences between countries with a homogeneous religious tradition and religiously divided countries or countries of pluralistic religiosity like the United States. Yet the presentations that were just made—you also referred to them very briefly in your lecture—reveal a further difference as well. There are also traditions of paganism, whereby one would probably have to distinguish between Roman societies and Germanic societies—I ignore the Slavic societies completely, for that would be more complicated still. Here one would have to mention Maurras. I mean, although the Action Française never made the transition to a political religion, with a liturgy and all that belongs to it, one would undoubtedly still have to say that it is a political ideology accompanied by a non-ecclesiastical religiosity. And this would apply no matter how confused Maurras's development was from the Dreyfus years up to prison after 1945. Central, nonetheless, was the attempt to revive antique paganism in the sense of a *religion civile* that was construed as a nationalistic religion. With Mussolini and Fascism, the transition to a political religion is now made in fact. Here is presented a political religion with all the bells and whistles and all the forms—including the liturgy. Yet this was also intended to move back before Christianity—if not to antiquity, then at least to Machiavelli, who had striven for this himself. The German tradition—this you said yourself—had an influence from Klopstock and Heinrich von Kleist through the aestheticizing Germanism of the Wagner opera up to the popular movements of the 1920s and then everything that originated in the orbit of the SS. At base, of course, that also marks an attempt to fall back on the pagan pre-history. To this extent, one must take this seriously—although you have also said (if I am still permitted to add this footnote) that these political religions do not last. That is correct. But then you said that the

restoration of Christianity came after 1945. But that too did not endure. In general, there is very little that endures in these secularized societies.

LINZ: The thing is this: certainly, Italian Fascism participated in the general secularization. Mussolini himself was an anti-cleric socialist; he had written anti-clerical writings; he was no believer. But on the other hand, Mussolini and the Fascists—aside from a few intelligentsia types—saw very early on that a compromise with the Church was necessary in order to govern Italy. And this is why the Fascist political religion, with its rites and liturgies, was not pressed further.

In Nazism, things are different again. The German Christians marked, I believe, an attempt on the part of the Nazis to politicize the Church. To grant the Protestant religion a place in German society again, to prove that religion and nationalism were compatible and that religion was not an enemy of National Socialism, but could be an ally—many Protestant pastors fell for this. Hitler had clearly dissociated himself and said, 'This doesn't serve me; that doesn't work; we are not getting any further'— owing more to the intact church than the Confessional Church, I believe. But then there is the other problem: Hitler did not declare himself for these other neo-pagan experiments, either. Whenever he held his talks, he always played with a deistic belief in God and raised the impression that his success was somehow protected and supported by God. This is why the political religion of Nazism was incomplete— pluralistic and incomplete.

The political religion of Communism, Bolshevism, Leninism, Marxism was, I think, much more intellectual. On the other hand, however, it developed the emotional symbolic elements of religion to a lesser extent; it was more an intellectual, dogmatically articulated interpretation of the world. The Lenin cult, Stalin cult, Mao cult also worked only to a limited extent. One could say that Marxism-Leninism paid a high price for having identified itself to such a great extent with the Stalin cult; for the Stalin cult was the beginning of the end of the faith. If Stalin was not right, then the whole system could not be right. In part, the crisis of faith in Marxism-Leninism was a crisis of faith in Stalin.

One cannot invent political religions. It is not so simple and, for this reason, it is of course more comfortable to build up an authoritarian system having some kind of alliance between Church and state. Admittedly, this system also has its weaknesses. Power itself has weaknesses. The spirit cannot be governed fully by power, and power cannot be governed fully by the spirit. Religion is an aspect of freedom, but it can also be an aspect of unfreedom. Following the era of the civil war in Spain, the collaboration between religion and the Franco state was an element of unfreedom in many respects; for many people, it was difficult to remain in the Church because that meant a political burden. There is always ambivalence in the relationships of religion and politics—this we should keep in mind for our discussion.

LÜBBE: I would like to make a small comment on the formation of the concept. To this end, I would combine the rich information of yesterday, the view of the reality of totalitarianism and the work on the concept of totalitarianism applied to that reality, as well as the rich phenomenology that was presented to us this morning—a phenomenology that has provided us insight with regard to political religion. When I combine all this, then it would appear to me that we must dispense with the concept of political religion in order more closely to characterize totalitarianism in the narrower

sense. These are two things that have hardly anything to do with one another. This, of course, is an ambitious thesis; I want to justify it very briefly. In the first, impressive part of Mr Linz' lecture, he spoke of the most conspicuous component of totalitarian systems—a component that many are happy to interpret as religion: namely, those different rites of which we all know. To this also belong the rites equivalent to religious rites: with regard to the reality of the GDR, let us say, the presentation of the book, *Erde, Weltall, Mensch* at an initiation ceremony of youth that is equivalent to confirmation. Or further, there was the cult of the dead of the Nazi era. I still know that from my own childhood: we stepped up to the war memorials, then cited from the *Edda:* 'Possessions die, clans die, you yourself die like them; but I know one thing that lives for ever: the glory of the deeds of the dead.' To put it nicely, one could say that that was the Nazi promise of eternal life, so to speak. One could go on for ever about equivalent forms. But if one now takes a look at the political and spirituo-political intent of these equivalent formations, then I wonder: why is this called 'political religion'? But the intention was to force, through these equivalent formations, religion as we knew it out of the political system as completely as possible. One could then characterize the totalitarian regime as a regime with the claim to legitimatory self-sufficiency. And as a regime with the claim to ideological legitimatory self-sufficiency, totalitarianism would have to view religion as unbearable competition. This is why religion would have to be suppressed. I repeat: it is merely associative to let oneself be tempted to call this 'political religion' on the basis of the ritual aspect of religious life—an aspect which can be recognized in totalitarian regimes too. Yet this is inadequate, because rites are obviously not originally and exclusively religious. In all possible contexts of life, from academic through political life   and even in our private daily lives, we need ritualization of time, structuring of the course of time. This is a universal anthropological element—an anthropological universal, and not something specifically religious. And because it is an anthropological universal, then it also of course occurs in the religious sphere of life. One could see it thus, realizing at the same time that the goal of the high degree of ritualization of daily and yearly life by totalitarianism was precisely to suppress religion. One would then find that it is much too large a concession to call the totalitarian regime 'religion' as well—or, more precisely, 'political religion'. If, according to this description, one were to replace 'political religion' with a better-suited concept, then it should perhaps be said that political anti-religions are involved here. You all know this formulation of 'anti'—there are anti-fairytales, anti-myths; one might then also say that there are political anti-religions. This would be a suggestion by which to replace the concept of political religion—a concept that is obviously unsuitable to characterizing totalitarian regimes.

I have yet another, a very small, comment on civil religion, Mr Maier. The association of what has been said in the USA for a quarter-century—the declaration to be the 'nation chosen by God'—and what we know of the history of the German Christians appears to me to be historically inadequate. Recently, it again became clear to me, during a long visit to Mennonite conventicles in both Canada and the United States, that their actual historical origin emerged from a radical reformist impulse. As citizens of the USA, they glorify, not a state that makes totalitarian demands upon them, but, on the contrary, one that has left them free. This means: the affection of

this religious community for the USA is a kind of civil religion that can be understood historically correctly only if it is set before the background of the USA's radical separation of state and Church. This separation of state and Church is not laicistic at all, but a separation of state and Church in the interest of the free life of the faithful. And here I would say that this has nothing whatsoever to do with the tradition of the German Christians and its glorification of the empire that you mentioned.

One final, small comment on this theme: there is a wealth of civil religious elements present in our own current German state system. The preambles in the constitutions, for example: these, we might say, are legal elements neither of religion nor of the state Church, but of the religious state. In terms of constitutional history, by the way, they owe their existence primarily to the majorities in the Christian Socialist Union and Christian Democratic Union parties at the time of the founding of the German provinces. But what would that, as a civil religion, have to do with totalitarianism?

INTERRUPTION: Lower Saxony is the exception!

LÜBBE: There may be exceptions. Now, of course, the recent developments in Lower Saxony are something different again. But this too, Mr Maier, would contravene your connection of civil religion and German Christians.

MAIER: Perhaps I am simply a baroque Catholic here, like those Spaniards of whom Mr Linz has spoken who reacted allergically to the US monuments. But many thanks, Mr Lübbe, for your distinction.

LINZ: I believe that it is a good distinction. Your contribution is very significant, I think. 'Legitimatory self-sufficiency' is a wonderful expression for these political religions. I have nothing against defining them as political anti-religions. The interesting thing is that this concept of 'political religion' was never used by anti-totalitarian religious groups. They speak of neo-paganism, of pagan, neo-pagan tendencies. For religious people, the word 'religion' does not apply to these political religions. This is why it would be interesting to clarify the intellectual history of this formulation by Voegelin and others: to what extent have they been developed on a non-religious foundation, so to speak?

I have no commitment to defending political religion as a scientific concept. I believe that critique of it is important and valuable. On the other hand: can we avoid the fact that the concept exists? I do not think so. Can we replace it with anti-religion? That would perhaps be correct in a certain respect, and even intellectually justified. But do we not underscore here only the negative of this process and not what is being attempted? It attempts to replace and suppress religion, but it also attempts to provide the people in these societies with meaning in their lives, their society, their form of community, etc. And in this respect, the 'anti' is a tad too negative. It is the same thing with Fascism, about which I have written and worked a great deal: one can define Fascism as anti-liberalism, anti-Communism, anti-clericalism, anti-internationalism—it is the quintessence of an 'anti' movement. The success of Fascism, however, is based not solely upon its 'anti' character, but also upon the fact that it sought to sell certain positive elements, and it did in part sell them very successfully to young people and intellectuals in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s. With the 'anti', one loses something. In this respect, your suggestion to say 'political anti-religions' rather than political religions leads us to overlook and forget one

aspect of the phenomenon even as it captures another fundamental one. I always recall my childhood: how I was in Berlin as a refugee from the Spanish Civil War and invited to dinner by people who would have been the typical PTA members—nice, good people who wished to be friendly to a refugee like myself. We were invited to lunch, and the prayer before the meal was spoken: 'We thank our Führer for our daily bread.' At this, my mother said to me: 'Listen to this and do not forget it!' I have not forgotten it either. But what was interesting when I heard this from these people: for us, it had a pseudo-religious significance, but to them it had a religious significance. It was a thanks given to something beyond their own life, to the something that gave them this bread. This something, of course, was built upon religious imitation. We must discuss this further. But the solution—I do not yet know where the solution lies.

OTTMAN: Mr Lübbe has just thrown a little bomb into our discussion, and it would perhaps be interesting to turn at this point to Voegelin, the creator of the concept of 'political religion'. Here might be asked, what was originally intended by this concept? Mr Maier has offered to report on the presentation by Mr Herz, who cannot be here himself. Would you be prepared to hold your questions? Thank you very much.

9
Terror and salvation

Experience of political events in the work of Romano Guardini
Winfrid Hover

In 1939, the National Socialists abolished Guardini's Berlin Chair in the Philosophy of Religion and Catholic *Weltanschauung*—with the telling justification that the state itself represents a *Weltanschauung* beside which others are inadmissible. In this same year, Guardini was forcibly pensioned and not made an Emeritus professor with full salary. In the same year, he also published a short essay entitled, 'What Jesus Understands by Providence'. Not coincidentally, Guardini was preoccupied at this time with the concept of Providence. This same concept had cropped up over and again in Hitler's speeches; indeed, it was to be found with more frequency in Hitler's speeches than in many catechisms and theological works.[1] It is astonishing how many details Hitler ascribes to Providence: it had destined him to go his specific way; through its will, the German people had not been spared their struggle; despite a cruel testing, Providence would stand by the German people in the future and, ultimately, award it the prize of victory. To the courage of heroes on the front would accrue, thus Hitler, 'an immortal reward'.[2] He prevailed upon Providence to 'guard and bless the path of our soldiers, as it has up to now'.[3] Hitler appears to have had a well-developed sense of mission. Comparison with the Johannine Christ, the sovereign shepherd who goes ahead of the herd and at the same time prepares the way (compare John 10:4), is unavoidable when confronted by certain words of Hitler. According to Wagener, a close friend of Hitler in the years 1929–33, he said, with brightly lit eyes and gazing into the distance:

> I too am perhaps destined only to march with the torch of knowledge before you. You must finish the work behind me. I must follow my inspiration and my mission. But you can see the things behind me and recognize how they are. Only sometimes does the torch throw its flickering light on the path that lies before me. But those who go behind me march in the light. This is why we belong together, you and I! I, who lead through the darkness and you, who, seeing it, should finish.[4]

Evidently, Hitler understood himself both as one within whom his entire people was gathered and as the lonely one who had to reconnoitre the way.[5] He felt himself to have been guided by an 'inner voice'. If he spoke—by his own boast—then it was no longer he himself who spoke, but something speaking through him. He was of the conviction that the great decisions of world history and the power of human invention should be traced back to such intuitions of the 'inner voice'. Hitler's maxim was that, the more a person

heeds the intuitive inspirations of the Providence that leads him, the more he is its instrument.[6]

This religious, anti-Christian ideology of Providence was propagated, not only by Hitler himself, but also by the entire National Socialist movement. The reactions to it did not fail to materialize. In an encyclical of 14 March 1937, 'Mit brennender Sorge', Pope Pius XI stated his clearly worded position against the 'arbitrary "revelations" that certain contemporary spokesmen derive from the so-called myth of blood and race'.[7] The Pope stated:

> Whoever, according to a supposedly old Gertnan, pre-Christian idea, sets dark, impersonal destiny in the place of the personal God denies God's wisdom and providence, which reigns powerfully and benevolently from one end of the world to the other […] and brings everything to a good end. Such a person cannot claim to be counted among those who believe in God.[8]

Besides the Pope, Guardini too attacks National Socialism—albeit without calling it by name—in the essay that was mentioned at the outset, 'What Jesus Understands by Providence'. According to Guardini, strong, daring and creative human beings have a feeling that theirs is a special story. Such a person is convinced that he is here for a certain purpose and that the powers of existence support him in his deeds.

> The greater the human being, the clearer and more certain this feeling can become—to such an extent that he perceives himself as the centre of the events surrounding him; sent by a mysterious mission, led by a wisdom that never fails, guarded by special protection.[9]

This connection is then called 'destiny', 'star', 'fortune'—or also 'Providence'. Yet such an understanding is diametrically opposed to that which Jesus understands by Providence.

> Jesus does not seek to make a further contribution to that which the great men thought about their mission. What he proclaimed is not a philosophy or historical religion, but the revelation of that which the living God 'intended for those who love him'. His message speaks not of the great, but of the believing person, whether he be great or small; not of active or creative people, but of the one who loves God, whether he accomplishes great deeds or leads a totally unspectacular life, is a creative, talented person or simply does his daily duty.[10]

Besides this, Guardini states, this interpretation also threatens to equate 'Providence' with 'success'. Yet this completely contradicts Jesus' teaching; in his message, as in his life, there is the Cross. The order of Providence comes from the world neither of things nor of the soul, according to Guardini, but from God. It is the work of his grace. Therefore, only he himself can speak about it in a correct way. If we were to want to learn what Providence means, then we would not be permitted to begin with our personal thoughts and feelings, but would have to consult God's word.[11] Guardini's closing remark on the

National Socialist ideology is characterized by clear words: 'It does not work that way, then. By Providence, Jesus understands something different.'[12] Ten years later, Guardini struck exactly these passages concerning the sense of mission of great personalities from a publication of the same essay. This shows once again that he understood this sense of mission to be temporally limited—and with that, related to Hitler.[13]

In 1939, a further critical publication by Guardini appeared: the collection of essays entitled *Welt und Person,* Guardini's Christian anthropology. That which he can differentiate in 1950 in *Das Ende der Neuzeit* finds its first form here: in his critique of the structure of modern existence, which is characterized by the three concepts of nature, culture and subject. The structure of these three aspects forms an ultimate entity behind which one can no longer go: 'It is autonomous, requires no justification and tolerates no norm above itself.'[14] It thereby stands in fundamental contradiction to Christian thought, particularly to the principle illustrated by the entire Holy Scripture—namely, that the world was created. 'World', according to Guardini, is not 'nature'. Nor is it 'absolute nature', but Creation. It does not have to be, but simply is, and this precisely because it was created. For its part, the act by which it was created did not have to occur; it occurred because it was willed. It 'could also not have been willed'. But it was willed—because it was wanted. World, therefore, is not a necessity in Guardini's view, but a 'deed-thing *(Tat-Sachey)*'.[15] Without naming National Socialism by name here, Guardini opposes its numinous understanding of nature, fate and Providence. The mysterious, omni-creative God-Nature of the thought of Giordano Bruno, Spinoza, Goethe, Hölderlin or Schelling is perpetuated in the ideology of the totalitarian systems—in this case of National Socialism. It is no longer the personal God who calls the world into existence out of a free decision of love, but a numinous power of fate that steers the world's events.

In *Freiheit, Gnade, Schicksal,* published in 1948, Guardini again picks up the theme of destiny and refers to the 'unprecedented way' in which 'the German leadership of twelve years' had made use of the idea of destiny. In terms of theory, the German conviction of destiny was followed on the one hand and the tragic finitism defined by Nietzsche on the other.[16] Pedagogy sought to educate the youth to be prepared for destiny. Poetry depicted the heroic human being filled with a sense of mission. Public speeches, newspapers and instruction in *Weltanschauung* could not do enough to 'oppose the Germanic consciousness animated by the power and consolation of destiny to Jewish calculation and Christian faintheartedness'.[17] The new human being was to feel himself called by the greatness of the Reich into danger and proximity to death; in preparation for the destiny that emerges from these, he was to ascend to a higher existence. But whoever wished to, according to Guardini, could see that the entire 'belief in destiny' was no more than the instrument of a cynical will to power that intended nothing more than to drive its own people to self-destruction.[18] On the part of the people, certainly—this Guardini presents for reflection—this process presupposes a 'destruction of judgement and of the capacity of decision—in the final events, practically a collective psychosis'.[19] The development of a 'growing number of those lacking judgement' did not end in 1945 for Guardini, but progressed steadily further and willingly absorbed pagan 'values', whether those of a Germanic or an ancient origin. The superficial, primitive critique of Christianity is easily made; the seducers' theories seem profound and the programmes great. But the more penetrating gaze sees the ultimate motives, which are neither profound nor great, and the progress of history shows what kind of destruction has been wrought.[20]

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, Guardini lived in exile in Swabian Mooshausen. Here he completed his essay entitled *Der Heilbringer*. The essay bears two subtitles: *In Mythos, Offenbarung und Politik* and *Eine theologischpolitische Besinnung*. Appearing in 1946, this work analyses the Redeemer myth of history; it compares it to the Christian understanding of redemption and salvation and speaks in the end of the 'Redeemer of twelve years'—Hitler. Following van der Leeuw's *Phänomenologie der Religion* (1933), Guardini outlines a few characteristic features of the Redeemer using the figures of Osiris, Apollo, Dionysus and Baldur. The appearance of the Redeemer is deeply distressing. Once he is here, he is perceived and known as the powerful one, one grounded in being, dispensing blessing, streaming salvation. The miraculous character of his birth already evinces his miraculous nature. Often, he is the son of an earthly mother and a divine father. Sometimes, he issues directly from the elements—from the sea, for example, or the cliffs. He comes from the unknown and the inaccessible. Even though he touches one's innermost being, he remains aloof from the human being. He always emerges from the mystery into the present.[21] The life of the Redeemer culminates in the redemptive deed. He is often a fighter. His opponent is the bringer of disaster, of evil; he is usually depicted in the form of a snake or a dragon. The redemptive deed is then a victory. Yet this victory is often bought with death; in this case, the redemption is at once a downfall. Here is revealed, according to Guardini, the awareness that the culmination of life borders on death; indeed, life and death break upon one another and merge.[22] Thus does the life that reaches the highest arise from a stirring that moves the depths; the redemption arises from the destruction of the Redeemer.[23] But the Redeemer will return 'one day' in the 'eschatological' future. Yet this ultimate event occurs within the cosmic whole and thus means so much as 'eternally again' in the rhythm of life: in the next spring, the next turn of the sun, the next son, the next overcoming of danger, the stilling of a scourge, attainment of a victory, etc.[24]

Henceforth, Guardini's great philosophical achievement is to indicate the essential difference between the impersonal salvation myths, figures and ideas of religion and the personal salvation event in Jesus Christ. The Redeemers and their myths, as Guardini carefully demonstrates using religious phenomenology, are expressions of the constant rhythm coursing through the existence of the world itself. They are not capable of breaking through this rhythm. They seal the world-rhythm and are therefore ultimately 'figures preparing the way'.[25] This status finds expression in that mood that besets them all: melancholy. In them occur the climaxes of life, but also the fear of decline, the horror of negation, of being devoured by death. According to Guardini, it is Christ who saves us from this deterioration of the world.

> He liberates the human being from the inescapability of the alternation of life and death, of light and darkness, of ascent and descent. He breaks through the enchanting monotony of nature, which is apparently saturated with the entire meaning of existence, but in truth strips of all personal dignity.[26]

Christ saves us from the spell of nature in general—both its bonds and its liberations, its decline and its ascent—to a freedom that, as Guardini states it, 'comes, not from nature, but from the sovereignty of God'.[27]

There is no place for the person in the realm of the Redeemer myth. The piety it requires, in Guardini's view, consists precisely in a person surrendering his claim to individuality and wishing to be no more than a tree in the forest or a wild beast in the mountains: 'a wave in the stream of life, a fleeting form in the great flux'.[28] This, according to Guardini, obtains on all levels of this piety of salvation, even when it is elevated from the realm of instinct to the highest cultural form. In this context, there is neither the person with its irrevocable uniqueness and dignity nor the spiritual Absolute to which it is related; everything is relative and dissolves into the rhythm of the All, of the whole of nature. Nor is there good and evil in the true sense—one separated by the either-or of moral decision and defining the meaning of the person; the two alternate like day and night and life consists in both the one and the other. 'There is no irretrievable hour having an eternal meaning; rather, everything flows together. Indeed, everything recurs. Whenever spring comes, the unending chain of past springs lies behind and of future springs lies before it.'[29]

Christ alone saves us from this world, which catches everything in its spell of passing away and recurrence, of forgetting and the non-foreseeable, because nothing is truly itself, but only a wave in the current. Christ saves us, according to Guardini,

> in that he appeals to the person and sets it in its eternal responsibility. He establishes the absolute differences. He makes clear the significance—a significance that does not endlessly continue, but is rather eternally valid—of the personal decision. If the human being heeds him, then he will be freed from the spell of nature, both with its figures of chaos and also, even especially, with its Redeemers.[30]

Yet how does Christ save? In Guardini's words, 'above all, by his coming "from above"'.[31] The Redeemers come from the womb of the world and of nature. Christ, by contrast, comes from the triune God, who is in no way caught up in the law of the transition of life and death, of light and darkness—just as little as in the spiritual principle of the unfolding of self-awareness, of the purification of the ethical, the emergence of the higher personality, etc. Christ comes, according to Guardini, from the independent, self-empowering freedom of God. Through this alone, he frees from the law of the world. He reveals that the Other exists—the true and absolute Other, which is no longer a dimension of the world. 'He him-self is this other, and this in such a way that one can come to him. He is the holy God, turned to us in love; and out of love, he became a human being.'[32] In his freedom from the curse of the world, Christ experiences the condition of the world—sin. In so doing, he atones for its guilt and turns the fallen back to God. This is how he saves them. And because Christ, according to Guardini, is of such a nature that the believer can join him in achieving his relation to God, the individual partakes in salvation precisely in this, and he can himself draw the world back to its authenticity in a co-redemptive way.[33] 'Christ reveals who God really is: neither the unending numinous stream, nor the ground of the world, nor the secret of life nor the highest idea, but the self-sufficient Creator and Lord of the world. He whom we of the world know only confusedly, even though he expresses himself within it, because our eyes are blind and our hearts stubborn.'[34] Yet if the will for the advent is snuffed out in the human being or if the human being falls from him again once the Saviour has already come and, if he

closes himself within the inner-worldly solutions that were previously outlined, then the Redeemers become a negation of Christ in Guardini's view. 'They then move into a dreadful new advent: they become precursors of the anti-Christ.'[35]

Guardini includes the person of Adolf Hitler among such 'precursors of the anti-Christ'. The ideology of blood and race did not suffice to gain explosive political influence and win over the masses; the person's religious core had to be addressed, and this occurred most easily through the creation of a myth. There was talk of the 'mystery of the blood', of the 'eternal blood', 'holy blood', of 'faith in the blood'. All feelings of devotion, awe, love, submission and sacrifice were to be oriented upon this mysterious something called 'blood'. At the same time, Guardini submitted, all those values, virtues and attitudes that stood in the way had to be exterminated: spiritual judgement, personal conviction, responsibility for one's own conscience, awareness of the eternal value of the person, etc. All this was made out to be foreign to human nature, Judaeo-Christian corruption, deterrence of the holy forces of nature, as enmity against life, etc.[36]

Now, this myth and the redemption that it promised—together with the order of life based upon it and the future that was supposed to issue from it—required a messenger and an embodiment. This it found in Adolf Hitler, a figure upon which were heaped all values and glories. He was capable of judging all things, whether political or military, scientific or artistic. He knew everything and could do anything. He was called simply 'the Führer'—that is, according to Guardini, 'the one to whose instructions one could and would have to submit oneself with absolute trust, and who would guide everything to the best result'.[37] Guardini now makes a series of observations in support of his thesis of the immanent Redeemer, Hitler. At the very outset of the 'movement' he was already called the 'messenger of God'. This was supposed to express the plainness of the simple soldier who has none of the brilliance of high rank on the one hand, but also the fact that he had been sent and brought divine promise upon the other. Here resonated the motif of origin from the unknown and mediation between the earth and the divine mystery.[38] Yet it did stop with that, according to Guardini. Early on, inscriptions at construction sites already proclaimed, 'We have our Führer to thank for all this!' He was the one, states Guardini, who gave everyone strength—who served as a conduit of the saving power of numinous (not Christian!) blessing into everything. 'Like that of the mythic heroes, his person was filled with the power of "fortune". He was the master of success.'[39] The kind of especially nice, radiant weather that would have lent a particular event momentum and brilliance was even called 'Hitler weather'.

Nor did it end here, in Guardini's view. Hitler made statements and attitudes were directed toward him that befit Christ alone. Photographs could be seen in which the despot inclined his head to children in a friendly way; children turned to him with the faith and trust that were reminiscent of portrayals of the divine friend of children.[40] In the place where the *Herrgotteswinkel,* with its image of the crucifix, had otherwise been in the home, there was erected a *'Gotteswinkel'* complete with a portrait of Hitler and swastika (also a cross, but a distorted form!). In the Christian schools, Hitler's portrait was introduced where the cross—the sign of Christian belief—had previously hung. In one of the chapels left to the 'German Christians', the portrait of the Führer stands on the altar itself.[41] Guardini's interpretation of the so-called 'German greeting' is particularly insightful. Regarded in terms of the history of religion, the greeting is one of the simplest forms of piety. In relation to Hitler, however, it had a double meaning: one wished Hitler

Heil on the one hand, and that Hitler's *Heil* should descend upon one on the other. In Guardini's view, one could not devise a clearer counter-image to the traditional Christian greeting, 'praise be to Jesus Christ'.[42] According to Guardini, the fact children were taught to pray to Hitler constituted the height of shamelessness. The notion that Adolf Hitler would 'let himself be crucified for his people' was also openly proclaimed. Nor was it impossible, Guardini states, that some people would have expected—in some kind of veiling or transformation of the idea—that Hitler would come again.[43]

Guardini's work of the 1950s treats selected questions of ethics and cultural philosophy. The well-known works *Das Ende der Neuzeit* (1950) and *Die Macht* (1951) appear, as do several articles on related questions. The work *Das Ende der Neuzeit* might contribute to a theory of 'political religions' to the extent that it brings to light the connection between the modern striving for power and demonic rule. According to Guardini, the modern human being believes that each acquisition of power is itself 'progress'—a heightening of security, use, life force and saturation with value. The modern human is not educated to use power correctly. 'This means that the possibility that the human being will use power wrongly constantly grows.'[44] Because a real and effective ethos of the use of power does not yet exist, the tendency to regard such use as a natural process—one for which there exist no norms of freedom, but only supposed necessities of use and security—increases more and more. Further still: the development makes the impression that power itself is an object, 'as though, at base, it were no longer possessed and used by humans at all, but developed independently from the logic of scientific questions, from technical problems, from political tensions and in order to determine actions'.[45] Yet this now means, according to Guardini, that power 'demonizes' itself. The demons take possession of that kind of human power which cannot be justified by the conscience: in the sense of the revelation of those spiritual beings that were created by God as good, but fell away from him; that decided for evil and were henceforth determined to destroy God's creation.[46]

It is these demons, according to Guardini, which then govern the power of the human being. This occurs 'through his instincts, which are apparently natural, but in truth so contradictory; through his logic that is apparently consistent, but in truth so easily influenced; through his self-interest, which is so helpless in the face of all violence'.[47] If one 'observes the events of recent years' without nationalistic and naturalistic prejudices, Guardini states—the work was published in 1950—'then his manner of conduct and his spirituo-psychic mood speak clearly enough'.[48]

Beginning in the winter semester of 1950/51, Guardini taught almost every semester on questions of ethics up to the end of his lecturing activity in Munich (which ended in the winter semester of 1962/63). These lectures, which previously lay unpublished in the archives, appeared in 1993. In this work, we learn critical things about the phenomenon of totalitarianism, particularly about the relationship of the person and totalitarian ideology. (With Guardini too, the concept 'totalitarian' emerges with frequency and determinacy only now.) According to Guardini, the totalitarian state denies the personhood of the human being. In this 'state'—which actually should no longer be described as such—the human has no unconditional dignity stemming from his being human as such; he is merely a biophysical individual, and the standards determining how he must be treated are those of political, social, economic and cultural achievement.[49] The result of such a view is that the totalitarian state kills the mentally handicapped and

incurably ill. This is murder justified by a theory in Guardini's view: the theory of the 'life not worth living'. Such a state declares it possible, and declares itself capable of judging whether a human has the right to be.[50] Yet the personality of the human being is independent of such standards. 'It is the being human as such; and with that, it possesses something categorical, something that withdraws from it any right to be an instance of power.'[51]

Every totalitarian system snuffs out active and creative individual initiative, for these are entailed by the person. A totalitarian system has use only for instruments: steered science, art working according to regulations, a pre-determined world-view that has no sense of truth, but solely of conduct; a universal surveillance that can turn at any moment into coercion.[52] 'Service of other people must also be handed over to the administrative authority. An initiative of love is not permitted',[53] and this is because no person is permitted. If the choice were given, according to Guardini, to help those suffering from need through personal initiative, or to let them starve so long as the state holds the reins in its hands, a totalitarian system would choose the latter.[54]

Of further interest is Guardini's thesis that the modern concept of the autonomous individual and the image (and realization) of the absolute state are two sides of the same coin: on the one hand, the individual seeking to assert himself and wanting 'neither God nor master' above him and, on the other hand, the state power that is no longer capable of morally binding individuals and does not want to do so at base. 'They continually generate one another. A new revolution must constantly issue from the absolute state because it is impossible, in the long run, for the human being to bear the degradation and destruction of a dictatorship.'[55] Yet according to Guardini, a state order is necessary. And because it does not wish to exist in relation to God, it must assert itself and stake its claim after its establishment with ever intensifying force. There is no more escape from this murderous dialectic.[56]

Romano Guardini—a representative of spiritual resistance, a twentieth-century witness of the truth.[57] He stood for the rights of the person opposite every initiative that sought to exclude freedom and love. His analyses and reflections are significant, not only for reappraising the past but also for the right formation of the present and the future.

Notes

1 Compare Richard Kocher, *Herausgeforderter Vorsehungsglaube. Die Lehre von der Vorsehung im Horizont der gegenwärtigen Theologie* (St Ottilien, 1993), p. 65.
2 Cited from P.Bouhler (ed.), *Der Großdeutsche Freiheitskampf. Reden Adolf Hitlers vom 16. März 1941 bis 15. März 1942,* Vol. III (Munich, 1942), p. 107.
3 Ibid., p. 17.
4 Cited from H.A.Turner (ed.), *Hitler aus nächster Nähe. Aufzeichnungen eines Vertrauten 1929–1932* (Frankfurt, 1978), p. 272.
5 Compare Kocher, *Herausgeforderter Vorsehungsglaube,* p. 66.
6 Compare Turner, *Hitler aus nächster Nähe,* p. 272.
7 Pope Pius XI, 'Mit brennender Sorge', in AAS 29 (1937), p. 157.
8 Ibid., p. 148.
9 Romano Guardini, *Was Jesus unter der Vorsehung versteht* (Würzburg, 1939), p. 5.
10 Ibid., p. 6.
11 Ibid., p. 7.
12 Ibid., p. 6.

13 Compare Kocher, *Herausgeforderter Vorsehungsglaube,* footnote 87.

14 Romano Guardini, *Welt und Person. Versuche zur christlichen Lehre vom Menschen* (Mainz-Paderborn, 1988), p. 23.

15 Compare ibid., p. 28.

16 Compare Romano Guardini, *Freiheit, Gnade, Schicksal. Drei Kapitel zur Deutung des Daseins* (Munich, 1979), p. 211, footnote 1.

17 Ibid.

18 Compare ibid.

19 Compare ibid.

20 Compare ibid.

21 Compare Romano Guardini, *Der Heilbringer in Mythos, Offenbarung und Politik. Eine theologisch-politische Besinnung* (Zurich, 1946), p. 17.

22 Compare ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Compare ibid.

25 Ibid., p. 22.

26 Ibid., p. 23.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., p. 24.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid., p. 25.

32 Ibid.

33 Compare ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., p. 26.

36 Ibid., p. 40.

37 Ibid., p. 41.

38 Compare ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Compare ibid., p. 42.

41 Compare ibid.

42 Compare ibid.

43 Compare ibid., p. 43.

44 Romano Guardini, *Das Ende der Neuzeit. Ein Versuch zur Orientierung* (Würzburg, 1950), p. 87.

45 Ibid., p. 88.

46 Compare ibid., p. 89.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Compare Romano Guardini, *Ethik. Vorlesungen an der Universität München.* Edited from the unpublished works by Hans Mercker, 2 vols (Mainz-Paderborn, 1993), p. 209.

50 Compare ibid., p. 208.

51 Ibid., p. 209.

52 Compare ibid., p. 206.

53 Ibid.

54 Compare ibid.

55 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 1065.

56 Compare ibid.

57 Compare Lina Börsig-Hover, 'Ein Vertreter des geistigen Widerstandes: Romano Guardini', *Jahrbuch für Philosophie, Kultur und Gesellschaft,* I (1994), pp. 25–31.

Discussion of Hover's paper

Chair: Hans-Peter Schwarz

SCHWARZ: We thank you very much for this lecture, Dr Hover—a lecture which has summed up Guardini's reflections on the theme of 'political religions' on the one hand and has introduced us to a theological assessment on the other. To this point, we have not yet discussed this kind of theological analysis of the phenomenon of totalitarian rule. There will be little to say but perhaps several things to ask about the former, whereas the latter might become the object of a discussion that moves things forward.

LÜBBE: The most surprising thing to me about your multi-faceted and impressive lecture was your suggestion that Guardini did not count the Christian belief among the religions. More prominently than Guardini, this element of the German self-understanding was conveyed by Karl Barth. Now, my question is this: was there a reception between the two? Did the one read the other, or vice versa? However it may have occurred, this notion—if I might put it thus—not to include Christianity, the Christian faith, among the religions, has experienced a boom, so to speak, in the German cultural sphere. Certainly, or so it seems to me, it was not a very expedient idea. I do not want to justify this in a conceptual-analytical or cultural-historical sense right now, but only in a single reference to a great event in recent Church history: namely, the assembly of representatives of the world religions, of those whom the current Pope invited to Assisi. One can readily understand why such an invitation would not have been conceivable under Pius XII, but now it has occurred. Yet one might now ask about the tie that bound all these representatives of the world religions together. What provided the criterion, so to speak, for who was and was not to be invited? How were the representatives of religion and religious usurpers (political religion) able to be distinguished? We are referred back to the conventional and traditional concept of religion as a criterion after all. Thus, perhaps this event of ecclesiastical history has made the attempt to take the concept of 'religion' out of circulation obsolete.

One weakness of Guardini's rich phenomenology is his idea that the totalitarian state is characterized by bureaucratic coercion: everything comes from administrative authorities and nothing from personal initiative. This is the only point that I would doubt about the phenomenology. For, on the bases of both the literature on the Nazi Reich and, in my case, of memory, it would   seem to have been characteristic of Nazism to emancipate itself from the administrative authorities as it saw fit. This was in order to free up the field for the movement—or for spontaneous initiative, so long as this was understood in the Nazi sense. Right up to the 'winter-help work', the organized equivalent of charity, everything was free of bureaucracy, everything was the 'movement'. The bureaucracy played only the smallest role: this fits, by the way, with Hitler's constant and repeatedly expressed disdain for the legal profession.

HOVER: Regarding Barth, I do not know whether there were ties here; I do not know whether they knew each other. Theologically, they stood rather distant from one another. Guardini did not agree with dialectic theology. For him, there was no impassable breach between God and the human being. The connection is present in the saving event of Christ; the human is not completely lost, but can be rescued through

Christ. Indeed, Guardini also attempts to connect human ability and the reality of God in his ethics. It is an event of encounter; they are not radically separate. Concerning religion: Guardini incorporated the work of Rudolf Otto here, his book called *Das Heilige*. The religious is understood here as the numinous. Yet the numinous is a concept without limits: one can also feel numinous dread before the state, before the race, before the powerful. Indeed, horror is also an aspect of the numinous. And here, in turn, are revealed ties to the totalitarian systems. Hannah Arendt has made this terror, this horror, the focus of her analysis. To this numinous element, Guardini opposes the reality of revelation for which a personal event prevails. Christianity is, therefore, not simply religion.

SUTOR: I must confess that I heard this interesting presentation with mixed feelings as to the convincingness of Guardini's arguments.

On the one hand, Mr Lübbe, a central matter appears to me to have been addressed. We see that there is a Christian critique of religion, a Christian-theological critique of religion. This is a basic idea not only of Protestant theology, but of Catholic theology as well—to the extent that we can understand by religion something that remains under the influence of the here and now. If religion culminates in the numinous, if religious practicians flirt with magic, if religion is instrumentalized, then it can also be politically exploited. Here, it seems to me that the concept of political religion—a concept you called into question this morning—is entirely justified. The question of a distinction between religion and Christianity arises only in the context of the Judaeo-Christian theology of revelation, a revelation that has de-divinized the world and represents God as transcendent. Of course, the religious practice of a believing Jew or Christian then becomes religious to a certain extent again, in the sense of a concept of worldly religion. Yet it is also endangered thereby; it is also exposed to political instrumentalization. To this extent, I believe that this distinction yields much for our reflections on political religion.

But now, the other side. Mr Hover, there nonetheless lies in Guardini's thought a very questionable, deep-seated prejudice against modernity. He almost demonizes it; he does not see that modernity is in many ways even a Christian inheritance. One need think only of the institutional safeguard of individual human rights by the state, which is characterized by a separation of powers. These are things that one does not see in his work at all, but they are nonetheless very important to our reflections. For, if we wish to discuss political religions, we must confront secularization processes and ask ourselves to what extent they are a genuinely Christian inheritance. We cannot simply assume the judgement of damnation that we repeatedly find with Guardini.

DIRSCH: It is noteworthy that Guardini also uses the concept 'totalism' in his *Ethik*—probably taken over from his friend, Felix Messerschmidt. This concept is also very important in the contemporary research on the totalitarian. A second thing: mass democracy, which Guardini views too negatively in your opinion, Mr Sutor, is nonetheless a fact that recurs in the political science literature as well. With Talmon, for example, the democratization of the masses since the French Revolution is a necessary—if not also a sufficient—cause of the origin of totalitarianism, which always operates on the basis of democratization of the masses, even if this is in a perverted sense.

SÖLLNER: I do not know whether I correctly understood the situation of this morning, but there seemed to me to be a kind of stalemate situation at the end of this morning's discussion as far as the use of the concept of 'political religion' was concerned. In the presentation of Mr Linz, we had something like a functional use of the concept in order to determine very loosely the relationship between religion and politics in one situation or another. The presentation about Eric Voegelin, had it been held, would perhaps have shown that Voegelin applies the concept of political religion ontologically, in terms of the philosophy of history. This is why he seems also to tend toward an over-extension in which everything—from the ancient Egyptian sun king to National Socialism—is brought under one and the same concept of political religion. Whereas Mr Lübbe, with his strongly sceptical remark, actually rejected the concept of political religion, if I understood correctly. Whereby I believe that this strong expression could be turned primarily against the ontological over-extension of the concept.

Now, the interesting thing about Guardini seems to me to be that he shows that it is also possible to introduce the concept in an entirely different way: namely, as part of a relatively autonomous theology, as a discipline of its own. If I have correctly understood what I have heard of Guardini's reflections on totalitarianism, the actual analogical formations were developed from a personalistic, Christian theology, with critical conclusions about National Socialism that could probably be applied in a similar way to other totalitarian regimes. This seems to me to be a third point of origin of the concept of political religion—one issuing from a theology that is understood as being autonomous. This is neither a social-scientific nor an ontological characterization. I do not know whether the problem can be structured in this way based upon your knowledge of Guardini.

HOVER: Perhaps I can answer this question precisely: it is ontological. The opinions diverge here, but I represent the opinion that one must understand Guardini as a philosopher. He does not exclude revelation, but practically says, why would I exclude that from my knowledge? He incorporates it in order to be able better to understand the world and the human being. This is why it is not primarily theology. I would describe it as Christian philosophy, which is something different from the modern concept of the subject precisely because it involves the person. The former does not represent the human being in its full grandeur, diversity and dignity; the concept of the individual does not express it either. And this would have to be said to Professor Sutor: for Guardini, nature, culture, subject are the characteristics of modernity behind which one is no longer permitted to go. Because these require no justification, they stand there as ultimate, self-sufficient entities. For Guardini, it is uncritical not to want to get to the base of the causes. Instead of worldformation, culture becomes sheer doing in modernity—or at least it is in danger of becoming it. Nature is no longer Creation, but I can do whatever I want with it. To this extent, Guardini's philosophy contains no unjustified prejudice against modernity in my opinion. It contains, rather, justified analyses whose truth is increasingly demonstrated today—as, for example, the things that were said in the *Briefe vom Comer See* (1927). Guardini is not hostile toward technology, for example—not at all. There must be more technology, more economy, but of a different kind. It must be suffused with spirit; it must be suffused by the person.

LINZ: I find a certain individualistic stamp in Guardini's formulations. The neighbour is seen only as an individual or a person, but he enters into no closer relation to a community of some kind or another. Guardini's book about power could also be read as a critique of the welfare state: a state for which the society transfers certain things, including state organization, from the individual to the community. In the texts that you have read of the *Ethik,* there are also elements that relate not only to totalitarianism, but to other material contents as well. This is all intelligent; it is also correctly felt, is also deeply religious, but something is nonetheless not entirely proportionate—chiefly in the things written after the war. In itself, it does not offer us very much concerning what this phenomenon was in human history.

HÜRTEN: I have the impression that presentations like that of Mr Hover are tempted—structurally, as it were—to 'prove' as much as possible in portraying the 'hero'. Through this, the decisive things sometimes slip into the background.

From what I know of Guardini, he formulates his counter-position to National Socialism in a way that does not mention National Socialism at all—namely, in his concept of the person. If one reads *Welt und Person* in the context of National Socialism, everything becomes clear: this is the decisive counter-position in that whoever makes Guardini's position his own can never become a National Socialist. I hold this to be Guardini's actual significance. As the Otto-Suhr Institut celebrated its ten-year anniversary in 1960,

Otto Stammer edited an anthology of reports on various countries called *Politische Forschung*. Otto Heinrich von der Gablentz wrote about political research in Germany. Here, he said that recent political science is indebted to the decisive perspectives of Guardini and Piper, both of whom taught that the person is the criterion of the political.

The other things that Guardini wrote about National Socialism should, from a distance at least, be punctuated with a series of question marks based on a greater knowledge. Here, it seems to me, the danger of an overly hasty systematization cannot be ruled out. That a German Christian priest placed Hitler's portrait on the altar is not in itself significant. The problem with handling National Socialism, both politically and scientifically, is precisely that it was not 'a cleverly devised book'. Instead, it manifested itself in a diversity of strivings and tendencies. This not only disoriented many contemporaries; it still confuses some historians today, and this is why we have so much material to write and discuss.

MAIER: A few clarificatory remarks beforehand: Guardini's home was the Youth Movement. Now, politics was the Youth Movement's blind spot. Guardini held his lectures on ethics in Munich almost out of a feeling that he had a duty to make things good again. He thought that the Youth Movement—as well as the liturgical movement and the Church!—had failed dangerously in keeping itself aloof from politics. This is why it was necessary to catch up, to make good of something. When one reads the result today, however, one still perceives great deficiencies. These are linked to the simple fact that Guardini could never imagine society; he could imagine only Person, something that emerges from I and Thou together. He could imagine community, I and Thou, that is: from many I's and Thou's comes something like a community. Yet he could not imagine several 'he's' and 'she's' living beside one another. He could not imagine concrete structures, the differentiation of the modern world into autonomous

fields. Here, he always becomes almost fussily timid and defensive. This is where the statements about bureaucracies and their distance from the verifiable, empathizable, experienceable enter in. On the other side, there again emerge such identificatory statements as 'we are the state'—and these simplify the problem almost unbearably. I wished to draw attention to this blind spot of the Youth Movement—politics.

Christianity is not a religion: Guardini had no contact with Protestant theology, not even with the Protestant Church. The ecumenical in him is downright under-developed. This is connected with his Italian origins, among other things. I do not think that one has to interpret this one sentence—which, by the way, is not documented in writing; he said it only repeatedly in lectures—as more than *obiter dictum*. I do not think that one must immediately interpret it as Barthian or Bonhoefferian. Guardini does not mean a Christianity without religion, but he probably means that religion cannot exhaust the content of Christianity—I would formulate it thus. I could also imagine connections with his interpretations of Dostoevsky here: the horrible spectre of the Grand Inquisitor looms in the background and Christianity   has become the religion of terror through the Inquisition. For him, as a personalistically inclined human being—again, Youth Movement—this was of course a dreadful perversion of Christianity. And with a certain affection for the fundamental, he then says: Christianity is not a religion. The Grand Inquisitor speaks for a religion, but not for a religion that has the right to call itself Christianity. I mean, in order to do justice to him, we would have to work through these connections. Every significant mind has its holes and weaknesses. With Guardini, these were the social and the political. Indeed, this is why he—to mention this too—quarrelled with Carl Sonnenschein. Sonnenschein had certainly been able to imagine community of a political nature; he understood modern democracy, not as a curateocracy in Max Weber's sense, but as a community of wills. That was too direct for the sensitive aesthete, Guardini. At this, he preferred to withdraw to his rooms built by Rudolf Schwarz and devote himself to interpreting and reflecting upon literature.

REPGEN: I need not add much at all to that which Mr Hürten and Mr Maier have said. Guardini had very great strengths; he was a significant man, but his strength was not the analysis of contemporary politics. One sees that in all of his texts.

It is typical that Guardini does not use the concept of the totalitarian in the things he wrote in the 1950s. When he says 'absolute state', we do not even know exactly what he means by 'absolute'. If we understand him correctly, he does not in fact mean the pre-totalitarian 'absolutist state'. On the other hand, his suspicion is already roused against the 'absolutism' of early modernity, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. To this, he had a great aversion. I think we must ask, did Guardini perhaps err on this point? And that he erred here—this is probably evident.

HOVER: In response to Professor Repgen, the word 'Providence' appears in the encyclical, 'The Word in God's Wisdom and Providence'. You say that Guardini's strength was not the analysis of contemporary politics. Certainly, not in the sense in which it is understood today. Yet I still do not think, Professor Maier, that one can dismiss him as an aesthete, although he is often regarded as such. He was an eminently political person and he did possess a sense of community; indeed, his concept of society was a concept of community, of personal community. Of course, this contradicts the modern, contemporary concept of society—which is not a community,

but is based instead upon material connections. Yet here Guardini would say: this is why there is a crisis in society, precisely because it is not a personal community. The other is not a 'Thou' for me; I merely use him in order to achieve the goals that I have set for myself.

MAIER: But a great deal lies between these two poles!

HOVER: Then concerning what Professor Maier said: that the concept of religion cannot fill out the space of Christianity. Together with Rudolf Otto and Heinrich Schloz, Guardini clearly saw the opposition between religious experience and faith. Faith is something personal: trust in a person, trust in a promise. It exists in tension with religion as an experience of the numinous. If one were to summarize Guardini's many statements on this theme, it might be formulated thus: Christianity and religion are mutually exclusive.

Then to Professor Hürten: you said that Guardini systematizes too strongly, that one could draw many counter-arguments from the empirical material. At base, however, one cannot deny the observations about which I have presented today; they are simply facts, things that happened.

INTERRUPTION BY HÜRTEN: That is an epistemological problem. What conclusions can one draw from the fact that a portrait of Hitler stands on the altar at Point X and Time Y—what conclusions for a large society of 60 million?

HOVER: Yes, but how about when everyone says 'Heil Hitler' on the street?

HÜRTEN: Not everyone did say 'Heil Hitler'.

INTERRUPTION: The Drückeberger-Gäßchen[1] in Munich!

HÜRTEN: The problem involves the development of a system from such findings. But we can hardly clarify that here.

HOVER: But the whole can also be displayed in individuals. The whole and the part are connected, after all.

Now, in response to Professor Linz: you said that Guardini lost the meaning of community. But he wrote about community, *Vom Sinn der Gemeinschaft* (1950). And he also understood the Church as a community, as a mystical body. He had a very well-developed sense of community, otherwise he would not have been at Rothenfels Castle. Yet the prerequisite of this community is precisely the 'Thou'—the Other as Thou'.

LINZ: No, I was thinking specifically of this text. Here, the 'Thou' means a direct relation to the neighbour. And I believe that Mr Maier brought it out very well, how this originates from the way of life of the Youth Movement. The political community in which one lives, however, is not worked out in this text. As for how it looks from a Christian perspective and from a totalitarian perspective, I would say that this does not emerge clearly.

GÜNTHER: I have a brief comment on Voegelin. Mr Hover, the general sense of what you have said is that Spinoza's pantheism ultimately produces totalitarian results. This appears to me to be very worthy of discussion—and also incorrect. The negation of transcendence in Spinoza's pantheism cannot be understood as a source of totalitarian conceptions. This assumes a continuity between the two conceptions in terms of their content, whereas this continuity does not exist, in my opinion. Pantheism can also produce entirely different results. A second comment: I gather from your presentation that, in Guardini's view, all non-soteriological transcendence bears the seed of

totalitarianism within it. With reference to this, Alfred Schütz writes to Voegelin that he too is convinced of the importance of transcendence, but that such transcendence must not be expressed as soteriological—as a type, therefore, that entails divine salvation. Put differently: we must probably live with the spirit of an age for which soteriological transcendence is declining. I have come directly from a conference of the Ernst Troeltsch Society, where I heard a lecture about the confessional cultures in France. There, as everywhere in   western Europe, a continual loss of religious faith has been confirmed. For this reason, normative ties must also be able to be attached to *worldly* transcendence. And this must then be formed in such a way that totalitarian systems are rendered no longer possible.

SPIEKER: I raised my hand because, in my view, Mr Sutor criticized Guardini's *Ende der Neuzeit* somewhat too strongly. It has been 15 years since I analysed the work, but I do not believe that Guardini makes a bid in it for a return to the Middle Ages. He demonstrates that the human who breaks away from God, who blends away transcendence, debases himself with an almost herostratic pleasure. Now, this could be recognized at the end of National Socialism. He believes he has seen the possibility that such herostratic debasement of the human being has come to an end. The book is not a political analysis. I do not want to rescue this work as such, but I nonetheless do not believe that Guardini could be counted among those who dream of the Middle Ages and therefore reject modernity. For Mr Hover, I have only the following request: why do you want to withhold a prayer from us?

HOVER: 'Fold the hands, think inwardly of the Führer…'

MAIER: It said, 'Fold the hands, sink the head and think of Adolf Hitler, who gives to us our daily bread and saves us from all need.' I had that in my memory even as a child.

INTERRUPTION: I don't know it from the so-called Third Reich; I know it from the post-war era.

INTERRUPTION: I don't know it either.

HOVER: Here, then, is the objection of Mr Günther. You say, 'create normative ties, but with a transcendence that does not incorporate the salvation event', and this is of course the great problem. To what does this then lead? The significance of Guardini's contribution is that he—and this no philosopher has done in this way—has set up totalitarianism and the theory of the person as opposites. This is truly something that no one else has done, and this clearly emerges in the *Ethik* again and again. According to Guardini, the salvation event is always connected to the Mediator; it cannot be left out. Otherwise, freedom and love would truly be excluded, and this cannot be the sense of a political reality that is also formed by Christians.

Note

1 Translator's note: by the 'Drückeberger-Gäßchen' is meant Viscardistraße, a street near the Field Marshals' Hall in Munich. One who took this street could avoid making the special Hitler greeting, which was obligatory to all who passed the guards before the main entrance of the Field Marshals' Hall.

10

The concept of 'political religions' in the thought of Eric Voegelin

Dietmar Herz

> 'In their service, by contrast', Naphta declared, 'worked the machinery with which the convent purified the world of poor citizens. All ecclesiastical penalties, including burning at the stake, including excommunication, were imposed for the sake of saving the soul from eternal damnation—something one cannot say of the joy the Jacobins took in killing. I might note that every torment and blood-justice that does not arise from faith in a beyond is brutish nonsense. And as far as the degradation of the human being is concerned, its history coincides precisely with that of the bourgeois spirit. Renaissance, Enlightenment and nineteenth-century natural sciences and economics have nothing to teach, but they have also not refrained from teaching anything that seemed somehow suited to promoting this degradation, beginning with the new astronomy that transformed the centre of the All, the illustrious stage upon which God and Devil struggled to possess the Creation that both so hotly desired, into a small, indifferent wandering star. This put, for the time being, an end to the magnificent cosmic place of the human being—a place upon which, by the way, astrology was based.'[1]

The following remarks seek to explicate the concept of 'political religions' as Eric Voegelin uses it in some of his texts. That said, this investigation does not entail primarily a definition of this concept, but rather a (rough) depiction of the accompanying attempt to justify a new theory of politics arguing in terms of intellectual history.

Voegelin's theory is based upon a series of studies in intellectual history. Three of these will be subjected to closer scrutiny: first, *Die Politischen Religionen*[2] a text in which Voegelin defines his understanding of the concept and subjects the 'political religions' just identified to comprehensive investigation. In addition to this will be analysed *Das Volk Gottes*,[3] a study that arose from the 'History of Political Ideas' and describes the dissolution of the ecclesiastical, transcendentally oriented order. And finally, we will examine the 'History of Political Ideas',[4] a text in which Voegelin presents humanism as the catalyst that was supposedly the most important to this process of disintegration.

The culmination of Voegelin's efforts was his analysis of 'Gnosticism'. In a certain sense, this analysis characterizes the works following the *Political Religions*.

By no means did it meet with the approval of his contemporaries. Thus does Thomas Mann note the following in his diary after reading Eric Voegelin's essay, 'Gnostische Politik',[5] on 25 May, 1952:

> An essay about political gnosis, beginning with the Puritans, banishes to the realm of Gnostic insanity all things utopian and thus probably all things progressive along with it—for where would this be without utopia and without the urge of the earthly to approach the divine? The concept of 'destruction' implemented vaguely and without a sense of the word. As though there were not much worth destroying.[6]

The determination that 'Gnosticism' is the essence of modernity is the central point of Voegelin's analysis of modern intellectual history and the result of his studies after the middle of the 1930s. Thomas Mann, who had already critically confronted Voegelin's *Die Politischen Religionen* in a letter of 18 December, 1938, rejected this schema that Voegelin applied. In 1938, he had singled out not so much Voegelin's interpretation of intellectual history as his supposed 'objectivity' and merely lukewarm damnation of National Socialism. Yet both aspects addressed by Mann are closely related. To sum up: in 1938, as in 1952, the objects of Voegelin's analysis were streams of intellectual history that he characterized as 'political' or 'inner-worldly' religions, later as 'Gnosticism'. And these same streams seemed to him to be responsible for the crimes of the 'political religions' of the twentieth century—namely, of National Socialism and Bolshevism.

For this reason, the following remarks are intended less as an interpretation of Voegelin's work, *Die Politischen Religionen,* than as an attempt to demonstrate the significance of the concept of 'political religion' to Voegelin's thought. In addition to an analysis of the text with the same name, this also requires a careful reading of the studies in intellectual history that followed: of the largely unpublished 'History of Political Ideas' and the *New Science of Politics*.

Die Politischen Religionen begins with an outline of the problem in which Voegelin first broadens the concept of 'religion' beyond its traditional meaning in order to establish a mutual relation of the concepts of 'religion' and 'state':

> In order to understand the political religions properly, therefore, we must expand the concept of the religious in such a way that it includes not only the soteriological religions, but also those other phenomena in the development of the state that we believe to be religious; and as a result, we must also examine whether the concept of the state really entails no more than mundane, human organizational relations having no relation to the religious sphere.[7]

This understanding of religion lends the state another character, attributes new significance and tasks to it:

> That the state power is original or absolute is no longer a judgement of one who acknowledges the state, but rather the dogma of a believer. The existence of the human being loses reality in its experience; the state

> draws it to itself and becomes the truly real. A stream of reality flows
> from it back to the human being and, transforming it, gives it new life as
> part of the supra-human reality. We have moved into the innermost sphere
> of a religious experience and our words describe a mystical process.[8]

Implicitly, *Die Politischen Religionen* primarily analyses National Socialism, the 'inner-worldly religiosity' that the author seeks to investigate. In doing so, Voegelin interprets the relationships between religion and state and their symbolism in a broad sweep spanning from the sun cult of Akhenaton up to the modern 'fall from God'. Voegelin is concerned, therefore, with the 'inner-worldly' religions for which a definition must be found:

> This is why we must make a linguistic decision: we shall call the spiritual
> religions that find their *realissimum* in the ground of the world super-
> worldly religions; all others discovering the divine in partial contents of
> the world shall be called inner-worldly religions.[9]

From the definition of the concept arises the question as to the reservations and implications of this conception in formulating the religious. Voegelin takes on this further problem area in *Das Volk Gottes*. In this text written in the second half of the 1940s, he analyses the sectarian movements of late antiquity, the Middle Ages and modernity. He approaches these movements by first distinguishing two 'levels' of Western civilization: 'church and sect', a 'higher' level of public institutions and a 'lower' level of anti-institutional forces that find themselves in permanent revolt against all established institutions. This lower level of sectarian movements that continually regenerate themselves is understood, not as the product of single, historically isolated events or as a component of intellectual history, but as a movement that should ultimately be understood as coherent. This movement finally makes its breakthrough as the spirit of modernity and becomes a culturally dominant force. This has drastic consequences: in modernity, the 'Church' loses its claim to spiritual leadership to the (later secular) 'sects' while the old order loses its binding force and disintegrates.

By contrast to the Christian power, which contributed to the disintegration of Graeco-Roman civilization, the movement that triggered the downfall of the Christian order marks no advance of the spirit, but is 'spiritually retrogressive'. This trend of intellectual history empties the old civilization, which had been formative up to the end of the Middle Ages, of its transcendent content, so to speak. Henceforth, it interprets its symbols as 'experiences' that are to be realized existentially in the life of the human being and in the society. By contrast to the Christian civilization of the Middle Ages, these movements therefore require an immediate transformation of the world—the kingdom of God must be attained here and now. Voegelin investigates this development in chronological order, whereby the connection between the medieval and early modern sectarian movements and the modern mass movements is constantly sensed in the background.

In his view, the development is consistent and runs in a straight line. Whereas the medieval heresies already prepare the way for the movements of the twentieth century, the modern Enlightenment completes the cycle: the 'spiritual religions' become 'inner-worldly religions', and out of the sectarian movements arise the modern political

religions of Communism and National Socialism. The intellectual history of modernity is therefore the history of a collapse, for it ultimately negates the spirit from which it once issued.

In *Die Politischen Religionen,* Voegelin had already sketched the broad outlines of this process:

> Since the seventeenth century, nothing essential has changed about the basic features of the European politico-religious symbolism. Hierarchy and order, universal and particular ecclesia, kingdom of God and kingdom of the Devil, leadership and apocalypse remain to this day the formal language of the communal religion. The contents, by contrast, are slowly transformed in the direction prefigured by the *Leviathan*. The ecclesia progressively breaks away from the unit of the universal kingdom with the peak of its hierarchy in God; this occurs to the point where it becomes independent in individual cases, with its peak now within the world. No longer suffused by the sacral supreme source, it has instead become original sacral substance itself. Remnants of the old structure remain preserved in such inconsequential formulas as the following: the sacrally closed community acts 'at the command of God' when it expands itself in the earthly realm. But the 'command of God' is synonymous with inner-worldly formulas such as 'command of history', 'historical destiny', 'command of blood', etc. Thus, we have only to add lines that were drawn earlier and to point out symptoms of the new fulfilment of content that are known to everyone as facts, but are seldom understood as expressions of political religiosity.[10]

The carriers of such significant movements are the 'People of God', holy men and women who have made it their goal to realize the kingdom of God 'on earth'. Voegelin does not deny here that the early sects are manifestations of Christianity, but he does categorize them on the 'lower' level directed against the institutions of the Church. The 'People of God' reject the compromises of 'institutionalized spirit', i.e., of the Church. They admit neither the compromise with the nature of the human being through the institutionalization of grace in the sacraments, nor the ordination of the state power by God as demanded by Paul in Romans 13. Nor are they prepared to postpone the salvation that is expected immediately for the here and now. Voegelin carefully analyses the individual ideas of the sects and thereby exposes the theoretical core of these movements. This same core forms the basis of his further investigations. The studies proceed archaeologically, as it were, exposing ever-deeper layers of the modern consciousness. In *Die Politischen Religionen,* Voegelin pursues this stream in a broader milieu: there, the span extends from the religious reform of Amenhotep IV up to the contemporary era.[11] In his later studies, he devotes himself to the genesis of these streams.

Yet the interpretation goes beyond a purely archaeological knowledge to attempt a survey. For these movements themselves—interpreted as anti-institutional—are subject to a history of spiritual decay, in the course of which the connection to transcendence interpreted in a Christian way goes further and further back. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries already experienced the 'People of God' as political activists who

wanted to shape the entire political order anew; modernity ultimately abolishes the rootedness in Christianity. Alienation from the final origin, from the ground, is now unbridgeable. The sectarian movements have become 'different' forms of religion. In his introduction to *Die Politischen Religionen,* Voegelin speaks of a 'religiously evil, Satanic substance'.[12] An analysis of these movements must carefully uncover its religious character in order to reach an understanding of it.

Both the 'political religions' and the 'People of God' who represent them are enemies of order. Two phases of their historical course can be distinguished: first, the rejection of the compromises of historical Christianity and, finally, the total rejection of historical Christianity itself. If the 'spirit' was an antipode of order in the first phase, it now loses the character of being a 'spiritual religion' entirely. He interprets the essence of modernity as a growth of 'Gnosticism', a process he understands as a self-divination of the human being.

Voegelin sees the origin of this process of decline to be clarified in an exemplary way by humanism—above all, in Machiavelli and More, two thinkers who founded forms of political philosophy that persist into the following centuries in European political thought.

The emphasis on 'transcending' Christian thought with modern philosophy has a pejorative intention. The parallel 'rediscovery'[13] of antiquity does not balance this step backwards in terms of spiritual development. With this realization, Voegelin relativizes the humanists' reference to antiquity. According to his interpretation, humanism is by no means a 'rebirth' of ancient thought, but the mere assumption of some ancient topoi combined with a radical rejection of the Christian interpretations of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy offered by Augustine and, above all, by scholasticism. To this extent, Voegelin's studies of humanism in terms of intellectual history also anticipate a basic thesis of his later political philosophy: the thesis that the differentiation of human reality occurred in the classical philosophy of antiquity and reached its culmination in the soteriological expansion of this philosophy by Christianity. Yet humanism turns from this experience; it restricts consciousness to immanence.[14] Voegelin speaks of a 'closing of the soul'[15]—an idea that was thoroughly familiar in the first half of this century, above all to Christian philosophers. To this extent, Voegelin's general interpretation of humanism relies upon the philosophy of the Renouveau Catholique, and its interpretation follows the Christian, primarily French, critique of the idea of modernity. By this reading, the humanism of a Machiavelli becomes one of the starting-points of a political 'realism' that is ultimately—above all for Jacques Maritain, one of the most important representatives of this philosophy—a 'reduction'. Voegelin's analysis of 'inner-worldly religiosity' gains clearer outlines if we compare it to the Christian philosophy of the early twentieth century, thereby revealing its most important source. Thus writes Maritain:

> The pseudo-realism of which I speak here is Machiavellian realism. Because Machiavellianism is pure empiricism in a science—namely, of politics—that guides the life of the human creature, it introduces a kind of atheism into temporal existence. It practically denies that the human being has issued from the hands of God and that it retains, despite everything, the greatness and dignity of these origins. Its pessimism invokes undeniable empirical truths and twists these truths into ontological lies

because, for it, the fact that the human being comes from God does not count. It then doubts in the benefit of the human being to the state. In the place of God, the state now creates the human being. Through its coercive means, it causes the human being to free himself from the nothingness of the anarchy of his passions and to lead an upright, even heroic, life.[16]

Voegelin's studies appear as a variant of the thought of Jacques Maritain as cited here.[17] The similarities in the critique of humanism that one finds with both thinkers clarifies Voegelin's interpretation and enables an incorporation of his understanding of humanism into intellectual history This critique of the philosophy of modernity was by no means a peculiarity at the time of the appearance of Maritain's lectures. Many authors picked up on this theme.[18] Its judgement corresponded to that of Maritain and, later, to that of Voegelin. In the texts presented here, therefore, Voegelin is still thoroughly hesitant in his assessment; his portrayal remains close to the text in question, even though it repeatedly evinces the fundamental attitude of a critique of humanism from a Christian viewpoint. He criticizes humanism as a whole; this is why his anathema extends to Thomas More as well—one whom Maritain revered as a saint of the Catholic Church. The originality of his interpretation reveals itself precisely in its radicality; yet repeatedly, his reliance on the basic ideas of Maritain can be recognized. The latter also states that the self-destruction of medieval philosophy produces an anthropocentric turn. Reference to the Christian idea of salvation is abandoned or at least dismissed:

> Thus does the catastrophe of the Middle Ages open the era of modern humanism. The extensive dissolution of the Middle Ages and its sacral forms is the birth of a profane civilization—not only a profane one, but one of the sort that progressively divorces itself from the incarnation. To be sure, it is this even now, the era of the son of man, if you will: yet one for which the human being passes from the worship of the god man, of the Word become flesh, to the worship of humanity, of the merely human.[19]

According to Maritain, the collapse that is inherent in humanism lies with its anthropocentrism, which contradicts the 'idea' of genuine humanism. 'True' humanism—as the human's self-understanding—requires the reference to God:

> The fateful step was taken when the realm of the creative intellect in science and art was established as the kingdom of divine grace; the realm of culture was consecrated as a realm of spiritual perfection. With Dante himself, this new immanentism of perfection is still restrained by the transcendentalism of Christianity; its perfection of the pure, theoretical intellect is no more than a quasi-perfection. Future generations are less restrained; so too is the quasiperfection of the intellect, of reason, which can be attained little by little through human striving. The intellectual *perfecti* of the Enlightenment and of progress assume the role of God when they grant themselves grace; and because they are in God's presence in their own presence, the distinction between perfection and quasi-perfection disappears.[20]

Here is evinced the similarity to Voegelin's later philosophy and his understanding of the 'Gnostic' turn of political philosophy. For Maritain and Voegelin both, humanistic philosophy marks the confrontation with and rejection of the Christian understanding of classical philosophy. Following Maritain, by the way, humanism is not an epoch in intellectual history, but a fundamental attitude: the great reform theologies of Luther, Calvin and Jansen, the philosophy of Spinoza and Rousseau, and finally, the socialist and Communist humanism of the twentieth century also fall within this category. This is already hinted at in *Die Politischen Religionen:*

> The Christian apocalypse of the kingdom and the symbolism of the late Middle Ages form the historical underground of the apocalyptic dynamic in modern political religions. The movement of Christian orders since Benedict and, above all, the movement of the mendicant orders, the foundation of new religions within Christianity, generated the psychic attitude that renewal of the spirit and co-operation in perfecting the Christian ideal of existence are this-worldly ideals. Since the Renaissance, the ascending line of perfection of spiritual being has become one of the strongest elements of the innerworldly dynamic: the belief in the *perfectibilitas* of human reason, in the infinitely progressing development of humanity to the ideal final state in the Enlightenment, in the deistic founding of Maçonnerie orders in order to perfect the structure of the world, and in the belief in progress as the popular religion of the nineteenth century. The symbolism of the imperial apocalypse lives on in the symbolism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the three realms of the philosophy of history of Marx and Engels, in the Third Reich of National Socialism, in the Fascist Third Rome following the ancient and the Christian ones. The determinants of the third realm in terms of content have also been retained. Specifically, the belief in the dissolution of the earthly Church through the spiritualization toward orders of the perfected life in the holy spirit has been preserved in the belief in the withering away of the state and the free, fraternal association of human beings in the Communist third realm; the belief in the bringer of the kingdom, Dante's five hundred, five and ten (DVX), in the figures and myths of the *Führer* of our time; the orders of the new kingdom in the Communist, Fascist and National Socialist alliances and elites as the centre of the new organizations of the kingdom.[21]

For both thinkers, humanism is the end of the beginning of modern political philosophy, which culminates in the 'political religion' or 'atheistic theocratism' of the twentieth century. Thus does Voegelin pick up themes of Christian philosophy and attempt to make it bear fruit for a new understanding of humanistic thought—for the time being, in a series of individual studies rather than as an attempt at a comprehensive intellectual history. He is a long way from Catholic orthodoxy, however. This is why his critique extends to Thomas More as well, a figure in whom he can no longer see the saint, but only the humanistic scholar. To be sure, More still knows of the deeper possibilities of knowledge that are held by the spirit, but he already seeks the solution in immanence.

Voegelin's understanding of humanism takes from him the protection of sainthood, a protection that still causes Maritain to shrink back from critique.

In his search for a spiritual counter-balance to National Socialism, Voegelin stumbles upon the Christian interpretations of intellectual history. He testifies as much in his *Autobiographical Reflections:*

> A further broad range of materials that had hitherto escaped my notice was again imposed by a political stimulus. After 1933 Austrian resistance to National Socialism led to the civil war situation of 1934 and to the establishment of the so-called authoritarian state. Since the conception of the authoritarian constitution was closely related to the ideas of the *Quadragesimo Anno,* as well as of earlier papal encyclicals on social questions, I had to go into these materials; and I could not get very deeply into them without acquiring some understanding of their background in Thomistic philosophy. In the years 1933–36, my interest in neo-Thomism began to develop. I read the works of A.D.Sertillanges, Jacques Maritain, Étienne Gilson, then got even more fascinated by the not-so-Thomistic but rather Augustinian Jesuits like Hans Urs von Balthasar and Henri de Lubac. To this study, extending over many years, I owe my knowledge of medieval philosophy and its problems.[22]

The list of the Christian philosophers shows how intensively Voegelin studied their interpretation of intellectual history and how much the historical pessimism of the Catholic movement of renewal influenced his ideas about the collapse of political philosophy. Here, the prize for the spiritual counter-weight that he sought appeared to have been given to Christianity. The statement is clear and simple: in its turn away from 'soteriological truth', modern philosophy succumbed to a fundamental error. This idea is fixed by Maritain's characterization of this 'error':

> This error is judged by the word of the Gospel: the human being does not live by bread alone, but by each word that issues from the mouth of God, *non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbo quod procedit ex ore Dei.* In addition to this, it is an error in consistency, for it has an abstract and fictive goal. It belongs among the utopias in the true sense—the utopias incapable of any realization, if I might express myself thus, for there are in a certain sense utopias that are capable of being realized. Thus, it would have to be absorbed in the historical ideal that is erroneous but somehow capable of realization (for it refers, not to a fiction, but to power) of which we spoke in the second place—namely, in the error of atheistic theocratism.[23]

Maritain offered no explanations of this thesis taken from intellectual history: he does not concentrate on one epoch, but concerns himself with all history instead. This distinguishes his method of proceeding from that of Voegelin. Voegelin seeks the origin and catalyst of this modern understanding; thus, with reference to humanism, he seeks its phenomenal image in the political thought of the epoch. The key witness here suddenly

becomes the same Thomas More whose sainthood was praised by Maritain.[24] According to Voegelin's interpretation, More no longer searches for spiritual 'reformation', but for a means to overcome the human tendency to *pleonexia* and the rule of the *superbia* instead. More is already radically rooted in the mundane world and seeks a solution of its problems. Certainly, More's rootedness in Christian thought would have made him capable of recognizing the mistaken turn taken in spiritual progress. He does not pursue the path of return, however, but searches for his salvation in (future-oriented) quasi-scientific methods: both *pleonexia* and the *superbia* that causes it are brought into check through institutional means. His solution, therefore, is an immanent one. Because this solution has lost its reference to God, human beings become a mere series of individuals who can also serve as objects for experimentation. The history of the spirit becomes an institute for the required presentation of the evidence.

Voegelin's studies of both Machiavelli and More do not end with the interpretative points that have just been explained. In order to understand the anthropocentric thought of humanism and, thus, its mistaken development, this thought is now freshly interpreted in the context of the history of political events. The turn away from transcendence is understood as a reaction to the political events of the day. Humanists regarded the era that we call the Renaissance as a traumatic collapse of an ordered world, as a raging torrent that destroys everything that had hitherto preserved order and security. Yet the experience of disorder strives toward its own transcendence and creates the desire for order.

If a new order is to be created, then the means to it must be obtained, beginning with an analysis of the given. Nowhere is this view of things expressed better than in the description of what Machiavelli calls *la verità effetuale della cosa* and what Thomas More prosecutes in the first book of his *Utopia*. This factual destruction of prior foundations strengthened intellectual developments in the world of philosophy: the external order was destroyed by political upheavals, but this factual experience had been preceded by the self-destruction of scholastic philosophy by nominalism.[25] Humanism, therefore, marked the conclusion of a process as well as a new beginning. That which the Renaissance developed and condensed into a political philosophy by incorporation of empirical experience had already been prepared by medieval philosophy. This process finally culminates in humanism. Because metaphysical certainty had been lost, security was now sought in this world and the human being was defined anew.

Yet it was all too apparent that this conception of the human being had been overdrawn. The empirical materials presented a different picture: Machiavelli painted the human being in dark colours, as a being without reason and driven by *ambizione*. More emphasized human wickedness and the rule of *superbia*. Both thinkers could imagine overcoming the disorder and curbing the human being, but could no longer do so using Christian categories. Both thinkers sought new ways out.

Although More and Machiavelli create such an order in different ways, both are nonetheless characteristic for their epochs. More playfully 'invents' a new order in his state system on the island of Utopia. Machiavelli seeks it in the past; the hope for a renewed immanent order is reflected in the desire for the stability of the Roman republic. No wonder, then, that the ancient historiographers were read anew and imitated in diction, style and conception. The orientation toward salvation history was divorced from images of a cyclical historical course, as we find with Polybius and as Machiavelli takes

over. Even the pagan religious ideas of the Romans attain significance as components of the old stability. Similar things can be found in More's portrayal of the religion of the Utopians. Here, Christianity is replaced by a religion that is determined by the necessity of the state, not of the soul. Thoroughly similar is the Roman religion as outlined by Machiavelli in the *Discorsi*. Yet this thought, which is celebrated as a 'rebirth' of antiquity, pays no attention to classical philosophy—the genuine achievement of the epoch. Greek and Roman historiography move into the foreground in its place. The desire for the attainment of fame described in these works supplants the desire to gain perfection in discipleship of Christ. Voegelin establishes this, interpreting and understanding it as a reaction both to the events of the time and to the prior developments in philosophy. Here, Voegelin's interpretation goes beyond the neo-Thomistic philosophy of Maritain, in that he connects the various strands of the development he has just analysed. Voegelin diagnoses the political instability, the desire for order and the loss of the expectations created by salvation history as the *causae* of the defection.[26]

Many works of humanism are also pervaded by the attempt to revive the greatness of ancient heroism. For Voegelin, this became a further important aspect in understanding these works. Earthly fame supplants the Christian striving for saintliness; it seeks confirmation in an active political life and in posthumous fame in history. Alongside the great figures of antiquity, there now emerge 'modern' examples too. The shadow of the Mongolian conqueror falls upon the idea of the revival of Roman virtues.[27]

The possibility of acquiring unlimited power through personal achievement and of shaping the world fascinated the humanists and interested Voegelin. But he was even more preoccupied with the interest that humanistic scholars took in persons like the Mongolian ruler, Tamerlane. Seeking the foundations of these explanations, Voegelin found them in the accounts and tales about the rise and rule of the Mongolian usurper. In these reports, he sought a model for the course of (modern) political processes:

> At that time, I worked through the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale on French publications on the history and politics of the sixteenth century. So far as I remember, I had every single item in the catalogue in hand at least once, and on this occasion I became aware of the enormous influence that the Mongol invasions and the events of the fifteenth century, especially the temporary victory of Tamerlane over Bayezid, had as a model of the political process in the sixteenth century. Practically every author of importance dealt with these events, which were completely outside the normal experience of politics in the West and introduced an inexplicable rise to power, which affected the very existence of Western civilization, as a factor into world history. This experience of the Turkish Ottoman threat and its temporary interruption through the victory of Tamerlane were observed by the humanists and entered into the conception in Machiavelli's *Prince* of the man who can rise to power by his own virtue. Some of the voluminous materials gathered at that time I published in an article on 'Das Timurbild der Humanisten' in 1937, which I later had reprinted in my *Anamnesis* of 1966. The influence of these events on Machiavelli, and especially on his fictitious biography of Castruccio Castracani, I published in my article on

Machiavelli's background in the *Review of Politics* in 1951. But considerable piles of materials and the connection with the work of Bodin have never been published.[28]

Above all, however, the 'power' of historiography showed itself in the descriptions of the life of Tamerlane. For the intellectuals, the task of describing the life of these men turns out to be parallel to the deeds of the heroes who become heroes only through such description. The writing of history thereby attains—in terms of its own self-understanding too—power over history.

The 'spiritual regression' and 'problems of the era' detected by critics like Maritain or Voegelin led to the attempt to depict political reality as an immanent process. Under such conditions, a solution of the problem of order can be solved only through such institutions as Machiavelli offers in the *Discorsi* or More in his *Utopia*. On an individual level, this leads to the search for posthumous fame in or through history or the inner-worldly *virtù* of great individuals. For Voegelin, this results in a political order that is truncated because it is alienated from reality. This too was formulated already in *Die Politischen Religionen:*

> We have attempted to come to know the political religions. The first facet of knowledge to be drawn about them is this: the life of the human being in political community cannot be set apart as a profane area that involves strictly questions of the organization of law and powers. The community is also a sphere of religious order, and our knowledge of a political condition is in a decisive point incomplete if it does not also capture the religious forces of the community and the symbols in which these are expressed—or if it captures them, but does not recognize them as such and translates them into a-religious categories instead. The human lives in political community with all elements of his being, from the bodily through to the intellectual and religious elements.[29]

For the history of political ideas, this means the following: alongside the contemplation of political events, one must also contemplate the understanding of these processes. Fame—consequence of the deed in the ancient understanding—is now embodied in the writing of history itself. History becomes malleable, is subject to permanent changes. These changes—imagined as an interpretative possibility—ultimately surround the political order itself. Order is no longer discovered and interpreted as already existing in the world, but seems malleable instead. An element of 'playful' formation emerges. There are two types of playful variations: only if it gains expression in historiography is fame conceivable and enduring. Even great conquerors like Tamerlane would succumb to oblivion if they were not the heroes of biographies. History is experienceable solely through its portrayal by the historiographer. At the same time, however, Tamerlane becomes a symbol for an individual who acts without restriction because he claims absolute and unrestricted power for his person. Timur subjects the world to himself and forms it anew: he builds Samarkand, creates a mythology of his own and thereby reintroduces the order that had been destroyed after the defeat of Delhi Sultanate.[30] 'Playfully', the humanists sketched similar possibilities: Machiavelli in his biography of

Castruccio Castracani and More in his state of the Utopians. 'Playfully', therefore, one can imagine political and social orders to be malleable according to one's own will. Yet the 'game' can take a dangerous turn: we stand here at the outset of an epoch of social experiments. What is realized here is the concept of order of a 'political religion', but it is a false concept. It is possible that all inhibitions be lost: 'The cruelties of Western colonial imperialism, National Socialism and Communism that were in fact committed mark the culmination of a development whose beginning is characterized by the playful cruelty of the humanist intellectuals.'[31] Thus concludes Voegelin's argument concerning the political thought of the humanists. From here, the path leads to the religious experiments of the Puritans:

> The Puritan literature is full of such rapturous images of the new world that will soon replace the old one. Yet let us examine this world that will soon replace the old one. Here let us examine some passages that treat the problem of the new world in particular—a problem that must have been rather serious for a member of a Christian sect in whose ears rang the words of Christ: 'My kingdom is not of this world!' How can this kingdom, which is not of this world, nonetheless be in this world of history?

In 'A Discovery of the New Creation', a sermon preached on 29 September 1647, in the headquarters in Putney, Thomas Collier reflects on this question. Collier preached on a text from Isaiah 65:17. 'For already, I create a new heaven and a new earth.' With that he contemptuously shoved aside the idea that 'Christ will come and personally reign, throw down his enemies and raise up his disciples, and that this is the new heaven and the new earth.' This did not correspond to his understanding. He was more of the belief 'that Christ will appear in the Spirit and will possess a magnificent kingdom in the spirit of his disciples, and that these will govern the world through the power of Christ that is in them, and that this is the new heaven and the new earth'. Collier's idea that heaven is the kingdom of God and that 'this kingdom is within the saints' is very similar to Eriugenas' conception of paradise. 'This is the new creation, the new heaven: the heavenly kingdom that is in the saints.' Although it is Eriugenas' idea, it has been 'activated' by the notion of a new kingdom in history. This 'activation', moreover, is now supported by a rather unexpected argument. Collier ascertains the following:

> It is true that we had and still have extremely low and this-worldly ideas of heaven, that we gaze up to it as to a magnificent place outside the firmament, beyond our sight and to be enjoyed only in the afterlife. Yet God himself manifests it: his and the holy kingdom is here, and it is in the saints. This is the great and hidden mystery of creation—the saints.

The idea of a supra-worldly kingdom of God becomes a 'materialistic' idea, while the 'spiritual' idea requires a mundane world that 'is transformed by the spirit of God'.[32]

According to Voegelin, we find this understanding once again in the sociology of Comte and, ultimately, in the 'political religions' of our century.[33] Maritain had already anticipated this as well:

> The third error developed in modernity, following the Renaissance. It
> consists in regarding the world and the earthly community as purely and
> simply under the rule of the human being and mere nature. There is no
> kind of reference here to the holy or to a supernatural destiny, neither to
> God nor to the devil. One can describe this as uprooted or anthropocentric
> humanism, perhaps even as liberalism. (I understand this word in its
> theological sense, one describing the theory for which human freedom
> knows only itself as standard and rule.) Since then, world history has been
> oriented upon a realm of pure humanity, which, as can easily be
> recognized in Auguste Comte, represents a secularization of the kingdom
> of God.[34]

Voegelin follows this reading in his explanation of the course of history. The playful
cruelty of the humanists marks the beginning of the experiments. A path can be traced
from Thomas More to Saint-Just:

> Pierre Unik donne la formule de la situation en citant Saint-Just: 'Un
> patriote est celui qui soutient la République en masse; qui conque le
> combat en detail est un traître.' Ou cela ne veut rien dire, ou cela signifie
> que, en période de tension révolutionnaire ou de danger extérieur, il n'y a
> pas de frontière precise entre divergences politiques et trahison objective,
> l'humanisme est en suspens, le gouvernment est terreur.[35]

The last historical variation of this thought has been the political mass movements of our
time.

A summary characterization of Voegelin's position is not easy. Influenced on the one
hand by the philosophy of the Renouveau Catholique, it is marked on the other by the
results of an intellectual history that argues philosophically. Similarities can be found in
the assessments of humanistic philosophy of Leo Strauss and Eric Voegelin.[36] According
to Strauss, Machiavelli strides a new path of political philosophy. He stresses that
Machiavelli's statement of the problem indeed breaks with old traditions, but also that it
offers no acceptable and lasting alternative. Although Machiavelli's critical analysis in
the *Discorsi* and the *Prince* attempts to offer such a possible alternative, it fails. His work
is one of destruction; it is, in Strauss's words, a teaching of evil. Although Strauss shares
several of Machiavelli's conceptions, he takes their simplification wrongly. In the
relation between Machiavelli and Strauss, the latter is the cynic who no longer accepts
the truth of Christianity but demands its retention as a means to discipline the masses.
Here, Voegelin has a different point of departure.[37] For him, humanism is part of a
history of prolonged spiritual collapse. Strauss, by contrast, eschews such a
comprehensive valuation. Although he does not doubt the 'truth' of humanistic
philosophy, he very much doubts its 'prudence'. In his opinion, some things are better
left unsaid.[38] Voegelin, on the other hand, doubts the truth of the humanist position. The
prophecy of the Grand Inquisitor in Fyodor M.Dostoevsky's story reflects Voegelin's
position very nicely. Without the salutary restraining power of the Church, Christianity's
radicality leads to its self-destruction:

> Oh certainly, centuries of the abuse of human spiritual power are still to
> come, centuries of science and cannibalism—for if they want to finish
> building their Babylonian tower without us, they will end with
> cannibalism.[39]

In the discussion between Settembrini and Naphta, Voegelin approaches the position of
the 'Jesuit'. He holds the position that turns away from the 'realissimum' responsible for
the dangers of the 'political religions'.

Voegelin's interpretation evinces a quality of considerable closedness. Like all
interpretations of its kind, it bears a resemblance to the proverbial Procrustean bed. First,
his analysis of humanistic thought leaves some areas out: although the texts establish the
political and social changes of the humanistic epoch, they do not set these in relation to
the actual task of philosophy—reflection on the *conditio humana*. Certainly, Voegelin
shows to what extent the political upheavals could become the starting-point for a
changed understanding of politics. Paradoxically, however, he does not see the effect to
be a direct consequence of the events. Much more does the historical reference serve only
as an additional argument for his thesis of the spiritual decay of modernity. His
supplements taken from intellectual history are not connected with the philosophical
statements. Suddenly, the study of intellectual history is transformed into a search for
proofs of the decay as almost all thinkers are arranged within its broad sweep. If history
is a process of the continual differentiation of human possibilities of experience, then we
must assume here a thesis that is not explicitly stated in these studies: the thesis that this
process comes to a temporary end with modernity. Voegelin fails to justify why the
modern experience would not also mark a further continuation of this process. With this
would be opened up the possibility of a more differentiated view. Thus does Voegelin
force himself into a Procrustean bed of simplification: modern history is a history of
decay. In the philosophical realm, Voegelin's ideas remain here merely a variant of the
Renouveau Catholique.

In addition to this, it must also be mentioned that the immense growth of knowledge in
several sciences—above all, in geography and medicine—not only changes the human
being's attitude toward himself, but also makes such change necessary. The certainty of
an order whose negation Voegelin regretted so much was destroyed because the order
was no longer experienced as valid. And an order that is perceived as disorder is a
contradictio in adjecto: it negates itself on its own. If Voegelin charges More with
betraying this existential order in favour of an immanent one, then he fails to recognize
that the world More found before him and eloquently lamented in the first book of the
Utopia was already a world without order. The way back, the return, was blocked to the
humanists. It was blocked by a variety of experiences that could no longer be negated
once they had been transformed into knowledge: thus had the crusades confronted
Christianity with a religious theoretical construct that was not only politically successful,
but could also yield a match for its theology.[40] Variations of life plans that no longer
corresponded to the medieval order had already arisen a long time before. Life in a pre-
determined order was no longer immediately accepted as given. Both the Church and the
world of trade and finance that had arisen since the fifteenth century had made new forms
of life possible.[41] Medicine and astronomy had likewise instructed the human being. The
old structures, the fixed places each was supposed to assume, had been destroyed. Life

was also seen as something to be designed. Careers were planned.[42] The religious new beginning that was brewing during this epoch—Reformation and Counter-Reformation or the revival of the idea of mission accompanying the new geographical discoveries—gains little attention in Voegelin's study. Voegelin's interpretation of More might stand *pars pro toto* for his efforts concerning the humanists. Voegelin complains that More, although still bound to the Christian world and faith of the Middle Ages, sought an immanent solution to the problems of the spiritual and mundane orders. That a different order might no longer have been possible, Voegelin does not admit. His analysis in *Das Volk Gottes* is persuasive in its demonstration of the substantive connections among the various sectarian movements; and one will hardly be able to avoid seeing parallels in the modern mass movements of this century. As an archaeological investigation of modernity, one that also reveals what has been suppressed and is not always gladly seen, this analysis is probably almost unsurpassable. Voegelin is radical in his interpretation: he sees the development of the political religions out of the self-destructive power of Christianity as realized in radical sects to be established and sufficiently supported. The course of history is clear, the explanation monocausal. The significance of the dissident movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the development of modern republicanism and the ideas of human rights and tolerance is ignored. Certainly, Voegelin exposes the roots of many phenomena of intellectual history, but his account of their development is often a simplification.

The concept of 'political religion' is hardly suited to characterizing the political mass movements of the twentieth century adequately. As a preliminary stage of the idea of 'Gnosticism', however, this concept is useful for the discussion of the limits of modern ideologies. As such, it is a suitable archaeological instrument for exposing the roots of those movements that became so decisive in our century.

Notes

1 Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg* (Berlin, 1928), p. 518.
2 A precise interpretation of the concept of 'political religion' already exists: Peter J.Opitz, 'Nachwort' to Eric Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen* (Munich, 1993), p. 69.
3 Eric Voegelin, *Das Volk Gottes* (Munich, 1993), p. 69.
4 These excerpts will appear in the near future under the title, *Die spielerische Grausamkeit der Humanisten* (Munich: Fink Verlag), as a further part of the Periagoge series edited by the Eric-Voegelin-Institut.
5 Eric Voegelin, 'Gnostische Politik', *Merkur,* 4 April, 1952.
6 Thomas Mann, *Tagebücher 1951–1952* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), p. 219.
7 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* p. 12.
8 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* p. 14.
9 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* p. 17.
10 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* p. 49.
11 The reforms of Amenhotep IV will preoccupy Voegelin later as well. In the Pharaoh's theories, he saw the influence of one of the first great religious individuals of history. Compare here also the portrayal of this theological speculation in Thomas Mann's Joseph tetralogy and Jan Assman's *Ma'at. Gerechtigkeit und Unsterblichkeit im Alten Ägypten* (Munich, 1990), pp. 231 ff.
12 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* p. 16.

13 On the concept and content of the Renaissance, compare the following: Peter Burke, *Die Renaissance in Italien. Sozialgeschichte einer Kultur zwischen Tradition und Erfindung* (Berlin, 1992); Graf Gobineau, *Die Renaissance* (Berlin, 1866); Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (Berlin). The three interpretations of the 'idea' of the Renaissance are named *pars pro toto;* yet they all agree in their emphasis on the new and the rediscovery of antiquity, as well as on the connection of the elements.

14 Eric Voegelin, *Die Neue Wissenschaft der Politik: Eine Einführung,* 4th edn (Munich, 1991), pp. 116–22.

15 Voegelin, *Die Neue Wissenschaft der Politik,* p. 233.

16 Jacques Maritain, *Christlicher Humanismus. Politische und geistige Fragen einer neuen Christenheit* (Heidelberg, 1950), pp. 178–9.

17 At the summer university, the University of Santander, Maritain had already held a series of lectures, 'Problemas espirituales y tempora les de una nueva cristianiad'. These lectures surrounded the problem of his understanding of Christianity and humanism. In 1936, a French translation of these lectures appeared, and it should be assumed that Voegelin, who spent time in Paris in the 1930s for study purposes, also knew this text of Maritain.

18 Compare here for example Thomas Mann, *Tagebücher 1933–1934* (Frankfurt am Main, 1977). Thomas Mann refers to Hugo von Hofmannsthal's 'Das Schrifttum als geistiger Raum der Nation'. 'Yesterday night in bed, I read through Hofmannsthal's pamphlet. At base, to present this writing today is the same misuse that is now exercised on Nietzsche, Wagner and every seemingly useful mind. The "conservative revolution" meant by H. is supposed to begin as a counter-movement against Renaissance and Reformation and to include the era of the Enlightenment. Because it is a movement of belief and "ties", the Reformation, therefore, which it is supposed to oppose, should be understood as a pure movement of freedom—which is not correct. How is it at all possible to see the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a unified "conservative" movement against the "freedom" of the sixteenth century, with the German goal of the "form", of the unit in which the "entire nation can take part"? H.'s perspective is very arbitrary, apparently determined by his love for the baroque. Yet it is suited to providing the contemporary encouragement only through certain words—mainly, the key word of "tie".' This citation shows to what extent the idea of a 'disintegration history of modernity' had taken root, after the 1920s, in Germany too. Compare here generally, Armin Mohler, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918–1932* (Darmstadt, 1994).

19 Maritain, *Christlicher Humanismus,* p. 13.

20 Voegelin, *Das Volk Gottes,* p. 121.

21 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* pp. 40–1.

22 Eric Voegelin, *Autobiographische Reflexionen,* ed. Peter J.Opitz (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1989), p. 43.

23 Maritain, *Christlicher Humanismus,* p. 83.

24 Maritain, *Christlicher Humanismus,* p. 3. 'Love strives for another heroism. The example of the humanist saints, as with that of Thomas More—who is worthy of admiration—is particularly characteristic in this respect'

25 Compare here Alois Dempf, *Sacrum Imperium* (Darmstadt, 1962), p. 343. Eric Voegelin represented a related position in 'Siger de Brabant', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* IV, 4 (June 1944).

26 Maritain, *Christlicher Humanismus,* p. 1. 'There is nothing the human being desires so much as a heroic life.'

27 Compare Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer und die islamische Welt des späten Mittelalters* (Munich, 1983).

28 Voegelin, *Autobiographische Reflexionen,* pp. 54–5.

29 Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* p. 63.

30 Compare Nagel, *Timur der Eroberer und die islamische Welt des späten Mittelalters.*

31 Eric Voegelin, 'Morus' Utopia', *Freibeuter,* 55 (1993), p. 107.
32 Voegelin, *Das Volk Gottes,* pp. 63–4.
33 Compare Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen.*
34 Maritain, *Christlicher Humanismus,* p. 83.
35 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Humanisme et Terreur* (Paris, 1947), p. 121. About this, Voegelin writes in his *Autobiographical Reflections:* 'A further reason for my hatred of National Socialism and other ideologies is quite a primitive one. I have an aversion to killing people for the fun of it. What the fun is, I did not quite understand at the time, but in the intervening years the ample exploration of revolutionary consciousness has cast some light on this matter. The fun consists in gaining a pseudo-identity through asserting one's power, optimally by killing somebody—a pseudo-identity that serves as a substitute for the human self that has been lost. Some of these problems I touched upon in my study on the "Eclipse of Reality", published in 1970. A good example of the type of self that has to kill other people in order to regain in an *Ersatzform* what it has lost is the famous Saint-Just, who says that Brutus either has to kill other people or to kill himself. The matter has been explored by Albert Camus, and the murderous equanimity of the intellectuals who have lost their self and try to regain it by becoming pimps for this or that murderous totalitarian power is excellently exemplified by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Humanisme et Terreur* (1947). I have no sympathy whatsoever with such characters and have never hesitated to characterize them as "murderous swine".' Voegelin, *Autobiographische Reflexionen,* p. 66.
36 Alan Udoff (ed.), *Leo Strauss 's Thought: Toward a Critical Engagement* (Boulder, CO and London, 1991).
37 Stephen Holmes, *The Anatomy of Antiliberalism* (London, 1993), pp. 61–87.
38 Compare here Dietmar Herz, 'Der Philosoph als Verführer—Überlegungen zur Philosophie des Leo Strauss', *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie,* 4/4, Vol. 79 (1993), pp. 544–9; Thomas L.Pangle (ed.), *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism: An Introduction to the Thought of Leo Strauss. Essays and Lectures by Leo Strauss* (Chicago and London, 1989); Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Chicago and London, 1958), pp. 10 ff.; Peter J.Opitz, *Eric Voegelin, Alfred Schütz, Leo Strauss, Aaron Gurwitsch, Briefwechsel über die Neue Wissenschaft der Politik* (Freiburg, Munich, 1993).
39 F.M.Dostoevsky, 'Der Großinquisitor', (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), p. 34. Voegelin explains his position in a letter to Alfred Schütz. 'lf Christianity were about nothing more than this radical, eschatological expectation, then it would never have become a historical force; the communities would have remained obscure sectarians that could at best be struck dead if they seriously disturbed the state order with their foolishness. But precisely because this estimation is correct, I hold it to be fantastic to see the essence of Christianity in this component and to trivialize as inessential the actual development of the Church into a historical force.' Peter J.Opitz, *Eric Voegelin, Alfred Schütz, Leo Strauss, Aaron Gurwitsch,* p. 112.
40 Compare here Stevan Runiciman, *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge* (Munich, 1989).
41 Fernand Braudel, *Sozialgeschichte des 15–18. Jahrhunderts. Aufbruch zur Weltwirtschaft* (Munich, 1986). Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World Systems,* Vol. I: *Capitalist Agriculture and the Origin of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century;* Vol. II: *Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World Economy 1600–1750* (New York, 1980).
42 Eugenio Garin, *Der Mensch der Renaissance* (Frankfurt and New York, 1990).

11
The modern despotic regime and literature

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The theme to be considered here permits various approaches. Certainly, it would make sense first to define what is understood by a despotism, in order then to establish what types of violence can be observed in a despotism. In conclusion, it would be asked how literature has understood and handled it—of course not forgetting the question as to the aesthetic attraction or appeal and the cognitive influence of the respective depiction.

Here, however, the procedure will be different. From the great selection of relevant German language texts of this century will be selected, in historical sequence, some that are particularly symptomatic. This will serve to make visible in this series of texts or works how literature has been formed and has conducted itself toward the modern despotic regimes—whereby the concept 'despotic regime' is used synonymously with 'totalitarian regime' (including the kind of thought that lies at base) if power plays a constitutive role in them. With concentration on literature in the German language, the focus will be trained on the National Socialist regime; but there will also be points at which Stalinism, for example, moves on to the horizon.

In the context of this study, it is impossible properly to consider the research literature. The reader is emphatically urged to consult the studies of Wolfgang Rothe and Klaus Briegleb,[1] authors who trace the literary reflection of totalitarianism in a very circumspect way. The reader is also referred to Saul Friedländer's work, *Kitsch und Tod,* which discusses the problem of artistic reflection of the modern despotic regime in a particularly perceptive way.[2]

Franz Kafka's 'Strafkolonie', or the totalitarian temptation

Kafka's short story 'In the Penal Colony' was written in 1914 and published in 1919. Thus, it predates the establishment of totalitarian systems and the concept of totalitarianism by several years. Evoked by the diagnosis of the time, it is an exceedingly perceptive imaginative exercise concerning the totalitarian temptation that was approaching in Europe and is extremely subtle in its method.

It was two and a half months after the beginning of the Great War, a war that first granted the European nations an overpowering feeling of unity, and then plunged them into bloody battles. Kafka leads an educated European traveller, one who thinks in terms of rights and humanism, somewhere overseas to the site of an execution that, according to this traveller's ideas, is actually not acceptable. The convicted has failed to execute a completely nonsensical order, has been caught at it, sentenced to death without a trial of any kind, and is now to be executed with the help of a complicated machine in a 12-hour-long torture session.[3]

This will confront the traveller (and the reader) with an execution officer who is a high priest of both totalitarianism and of violence—of totalitarianism to the extent that he lives in a world and is consumed by an idea for which clear norms are valid and must be

accepted in an unquestioning way. He is a high priest of violence to the extent that he sees in it not only a means of domestication, but also a means by which to transfigure the individual and to purify the society. While he prepares the machine, the execution officer describes earlier executions to the traveller in detail. He stresses that the delinquents are transfigured at the end of the torture and that it is clearly revealed on their faces. Further, for the people present, the entire process signifies a kind of purification and elevation.

This is presented in a way that attempts to have an interesting and even fascinating effect on the traveller—as well as the reader. And here it succeeds, as critics have testified. Kafka achieves this effect through a subtle shaping of the narrative situation. The perspective shifts between the persons involved and the impersonal narrative instance, which has an objectifying effect. It is of particular significance here that glorification of the totalitarian regime and of the torture machine first issues from the execution officer; it is then to a certain extent reconstructed or condoned by the traveller and is finally confirmed in a way that has an objectifying, thus a highly seductive, effect.

This can be seen in many passages. It will be exemplified here in two. The dreadful execution apparatus is either described by the officer or perceived through the eyes of the traveller. In a passage that is exceedingly important for the ethical assessment, however, this subjective portrayal or perception is suspended. Specifically: as the apparatus is set in motion in order to demonstrate its elegance and functional capabilities, it is described in a perspective that can be ascribed neither to the officer nor to the traveller. The perspective has an objectifying character instead: 'lf the wheel had not creaked, it would have been magnificent.'[4] The creaking of the wheel is a meaningful sign. Leaving this aside here, the fact remains that this short story describes a barbaric killing machine in an apparently objectivizing way—as 'magnificent', at least in terms of its possibilities.

The other passage, which is even more significant, can be found towards the end of the narrative. As is well known, it becomes clear to the execution officer as he prepares the execution that the era of violence and of the totalitarian administration of justice has come to an end. And so, he places himself in the machine so that he might be the last to be transfigured by it. Contrary to all expectations, however, the machine kills him, not through a 12-hour-long process of artificial ascription of guilt and punishment, but with a stab through the forehead; seen in the context of the officer's promises, this action could be called less brutal than banal. Afterwards, the traveller steps toward him. It is then stated, 'hereby, he saw the face of the body almost against his will. It was just as it had been in life; there was no trace of the promised salvation to be found; whatever all the others had found in the machine, the officer did not find it'.[5] Here too, can be observed a highly questionable—and this in the double sense of the word—shift of the situation of perception or narration. Strictly speaking, 'what all others *had* found in the machine' could not be stated in this passage. Because all information about the earlier executions arose from the officer alone, it should instead be stated: what all others *are supposed to have* found in the machine according to the boasts of the officer. The subjectivity of this view, which would have required a report in indirect speech if it were understood in strict terms, is abolished by means of direct speech. The statement that all others 'had' found salvation in the machine has an objectivizing effect and is added in order to make us believe that there is such a thing.

This is at first the traveller's situation. Very early, it is said of him that he in fact knows how he should act in face of the sadistic execution of one who has been sentenced

without a trial: negatively and in as discouraging a way as possible. Yet he then lets himself be tempted by the officer's raptures into watching the procedure—clearly animated by the suspicion, perhaps even the wish, that, beyond his always scrupulous, humanistic and liberal idea of order and right, there is a realm or a possibility for which order and right are always 'indubitable', as the officer says.[6] Here, violence is not squeamishly avoided but is seized and used as an instrument of purification, salvation and transfiguration.

This was an idea that spread in the next decade and took many literary forms, whether with critical or affirmative intent. In a certain sense, Thomas Mann's sensual terrorist, Naphta, in the *Zauberberg* of 1924 is a literary successor of Kafka's officer. Ernst Jünger, author of *Das Abenteuerliche Herz,* still pleaded in 1929 for 'executions under the greatest publicity'.[7] At that time, Jünger was a genuine and prominent representative of a similar style of thought.[8] Beyond these, however, the totalitarian temptation staged by Kafka in his 'Strafkolonie' had an even more lasting influence: Heiner Müller's Mauser figure from the 1970 piece with the same name should also be regarded as a successor to Kafka's officer.[9]

The intensity of the totalitarian temptation reproduced in the 'Strafkolonie' is reflected in a surprisingly strong way in one scientific work of the period following the Second World War. In his outstanding and influential book of 1964, *Franz Kafka: Tragik und Ironie,* the renowned Kafka exegete, Walter H.Sokel, drew out the traveller's ambivalence toward the penal colony system in a very perceptive way. Sokel interpreted it as an expression of the discontent with liberalism and humanism of Europeans at that time. Certainly, the old, totalitarian system of the penal colony irritated and scared the traveller; but it nonetheless also fascinated him, whereby the social-reformist and humanitarian system that was instated after it bored him completely. Following this accurate realization, Sokel casts a gaze on his own time around 1964 and writes:

> already, the analogy to a Europe without ideals and ideas, one emerged from the ruins of two world wars, reveals itself to us. Without condoning the tyranny of the penal system that has fallen into ashes, the cultivated conservative can nonetheless follow this only with regret and reluctance. Despite the atrocity of the last ideal, he cannot rejoice over its demise in view of the banality that has taken its place. Thus with the traveller too: he can warm to the colony in its liberated, humanized form even less than to the old 'terrible vision'.[10]

To sum up: as a diagnosis of the era, Kafka's short story demonstrates the totalitarian temptation that is approaching Europe. It also shows the danger inherent in the fact that humanism and liberalism have become insipid and questionable in the eyes of the European intelligentsia: this causes the totalitarian promises and terrorist fantasies to become fascinating. Yet it does not only document this for the time preceding the totalitarian epochs; it also makes it experienceable through its sophisticated narrative technique. The work thereby becomes a text in which it is revealed that the totalitarian temptation had by no means ceased after 1945.

Beyond this, Kafka's short story thematizes the complex relationship of power and metaphysics. Beginning with Kant, this relationship had entered into a crisis. The

destruction of classical metaphysics and of the Christian religion in its wake led to a problem with the legitimation of power. With the secularization process and intensification of the crisis of metaphysics by Nietzsche, this problem was completely manifest at the beginning of the twentieth century and provoked the search for new legitimations. This is why the literary reflections of totalitarian despotisms being considered here must also be set in the general context of a crisis of metaphysics and bourgeois religion.[11] This means that Kafka's 'Strafkolonie' should be interpreted only by incorporating this complex relationship of power, metaphysics and religion. As the Judaist, Karl Erich Grötzinger, has demonstrated, it is less instructive to bring Kafka's short story into close connection with the beginning of the First World War of 1914 than to place this text's origin at the time of certain high Jewish holidays in October. As with *The Trial,* this time produced in Kafka a demonstrable impulse to write. Seen in these terms, the thematic circle of law, judge, force and power reveals itself almost on its own.[12] Ulf Abraham has demonstrated how implicated the speech of power and powerlessness is in the 'Strafkolonie' in particular.[13] First, a new, transformed power is made to face an old, extinct one. In the successful efforts to gain a greater efficiency of the execution machine, the danger of a technocratic monopoly of power is revealed; such a monopoly retains its terror even after the death of the old power, of the former leader of the camp—indeed, it expands even further. Connected with this is the admission of two prerequisites that are highly useful in preserving totalitarian despotic regimes: the simultaneous anonymization and socialization of power and violence. Finally, it seems crucial that Kafka enlisted himself into the effort to gain more efficient strategies by which to assert power and violence. For, he believed he had demonstrated on the topos of betrothal that preparedness for such a deed supports the subtle internalization of a coercion that is tantamount to inner torture.[14]

The essays of Gottfried Benn and Ernst Jünger at the beginning of the 1930s, or totalitarian mobilization for progress

At the beginning of the 1930s, preachers of totalitarianism and violence as Kafka had imagined them in the 'Strafkolonie' increasingly emerge in reality and use literature as a medium of their sermons. The two most eloquent were probably Gottfried Benn and Ernst Jünger, who, between 1930 and 1934, produced a series of essays that undoubtedly promoted totalitarian thought—if not necessarily National Socialist ideology directly Worth mentioning here are Benn's essays, 'Der neue Staat und die Intellektuellen' (1933) and 'Dorische Welt' (1934), as well as Jünger's essays, 'Die totale Mobilmachung' (1930), 'Der Arbeiter' (1932) and 'Über den Schmerz' (1934).

In terms of their thought, these extensive essays are complex. As such, their entire significance to the situation at the end of the Weimar Republic and the beginning of the Third Reich cannot be discussed. Very briefly, however, it seems possible to clarify several basic ideas in which these essays agree and from which results their—even if differing—affinity to thought that is totalitarian and prepared to resort to force.[15] First, there is the conviction shared by Benn and Jünger that the point has been reached at which the nihilism established by Nietzsche and the disenchantment of the world established by Max Weber—together with the levelling and depraving symptomatic

phenomena of relativism, humanism, liberalism, democratism accompanying them—could transform into a mode of existence characterized by new and dominant values. Such change would put an end to the earlier arbitrariness and stagnation. History is about to make a great step; and it will do so in a way that does not consider liberal and humanistic ideas (including the Christian ones, of course), but is instead totalitarian and violent. This is necessary in order to transcend the emptied state of nihilism and disenchantment; and this is why it must be not only accepted, but welcomed. Benn and Jünger admit no doubt that the approaching movements of history will be accompanied by violence committed against human beings and will cost countless victims; and this is why they counsel the replacement of humanism with heroism and pity with coldness, as well as the acknowledgement of suffering as a mode of existence and a criterion of value. Benn viewed art as an important instrument of the corresponding psychic formation and sympathized with the National Socialist movement until 1934. Jünger regarded technology as the decisive medium of evolution and regarded both the expansion of workshops and the development of a new, heroic type of human being as global processes that would subdue political formations like nationalism or socialism or both and would ultimately render them insignificant.

Vietta's definition of the transformed relations between metaphysics and power also understands it as an essential characteristic of modernity. Jünger attempts to make the power possessed by religious speech and reality bear fruit for his own thought. In this, he goes well beyond the level of a purely pictorial comparison of Christian symbolism; for him, the re-enchantment of the world must be accompanied by a 'revaluation of all values'.

Jünger's 'Arbeiter' has been assigned such labels as the 'Magna Carta of National Socialism' or the 'Constitution of National Socialism'. For a variety of reasons, this is doubtful. If one were to seek to ascribe it such great significance, it is the Magna Carta of a modernization that proceeds brutally and has a totalitarian outcome—a modernization for which National Socialist Germany and the Stalinist Soviet Union provide equally criminal examples. It remains to be asked what significance writings like Jünger's 'Arbeiter' or 'Die totale Mobilmachung' had here. Here are a few viewpoints on this question.

In 1930, Walter Benjamin reviewed *Krieg und Krieger,* an anthology edited by Ernst Jünger that includes Jünger's essay 'Die Totale Mobilmachung' as its very first contribution. The review appeared under the title, 'Theorien des deutschen Faschismus'.[16] Sharply criticizing both the invocation of war as a school of life and the hopeful expectation of a new, catastrophic outbreak of violence, it condemns the book as an articulation of Fascist ways of thinking. At the same time, Benjamin admits that 'reality' has been 'met'—one could probably add: correctly met—in having been 'addressed' by Jünger as 'totally mobilized'. Thus, the diagnostic value of 'Die totale Mobilmachung' is by no means disputed; the book as a whole is merely criticized for drawing false conclusions and profiling and affirming the 'Fascist class-fighters'.

This reproach is serious enough and can in no way be described as unjustified. Indeed, Jünger later pointed out that he had not invented 'Die totale Mobilmachung', but merely asserted it as an epochal principle in extension of the experiences of the First World War.[17] In his view, it corresponds to the fallacious thinking of primitives to rain blows upon the registering seismographs that follow the earthquake.[18] Yet he also repeatedly

admitted that he had gone too far with some of his formulations and had played a part in unleashing the destructive forces of the time.[19] It remains difficult, however, to determine how large this share was and how compelling its power. Benjamin saw the path to Fascism—in the German context, to National Socialism—prefigured in the volume edited by Jünger. But it is a fact that the editor, Ernst Jünger, almost demonstratively distanced himself from National Socialism.[20] In 1934, moreover, one of the contributors to the anthology—Ernst Jünger's brother, Friedrich Georg—published a poem.[21] Upon reading it, Thomas Mann wrote in his diary that it is 'of fantastic aggression directed at the possessors of power'[22]—at the Nazis, then. Thus, there is no absolutely compelling connection between literature and a totalitarian attitude and National Socialist practice or partisanship. It was just as little inevitable that readers of the Jünger brothers would land in the NSDAP as it was inevitable that they themselves would. Beyond this, it must be asked how great, in general, the mobilizing power of literature truly can be. If it were possible for those authors who sympathized with National Socialism to bring Hitler to power with their writings, then it would have also have had to be possible for the left and left-liberal authors—who were much more powerful in terms of publications—to prevent it. Ultimately, however, literature could achieve neither the one nor the other.

Finally, it must be noted that in neither case were Benn's and Jünger's totalitarian-leaning essays transformed into poetic work. One finds neither poems by Benn nor short stories or dream fantasies by Jünger in which Fascism, let alone National Socialism, are glorified or even merely affirmed. This might have several grounds. One of them may have been the perception of the baseness of the Nazis—a baseness that was shocking to both of them. Another, perhaps, might have been the sensitivizing influence of the aesthetic perspective. By this is meant the sensitization accompanying the transition from an essay intended as philosophy of history—which overlooks the supposedly necessary victim of the historical process—to the poem or short story, which depicts the concrete human being in his suffering and thereby produces a protest against totalitarian violence. Jünger's first new work following the essays in the philosophy of history was the short story, 'Auf den Marmorklippen' (1939). This work contains a decisive rejection of the pitiless field-commander perspective of the essays in the history of philosophy and departs from the heroic tone of the essays in a way that seems almost old-fashioned.

It should not be overlooked or denied here that the short story 'Auf den Marmorklippen' also aestheticizes and celebrates violence and even the collapse of the cultural landscape in a voyeuristic way. This no longer occurs in the mode of pitiless coldness or even the desire for destruction, however, but in the elegiac tone of mourning and the (perhaps mistaken) intent to endow the appearance with meaning and generate consolation through aestheticization.[23] This includes the fact that Jünger retained a historical-philosophical mode of observation after 1945 too—one that was prepared to justify totalitarian structures in historical terms in the future as well.

Disregarding the question as to how Jünger's historico-philosophical search for a new, secular totality of meaning should ultimately be evaluated, the following problem is thrust into the foreground: with reference to Jünger's essays, how can the ascription of victims of violence and war to a 'higher' goal be legitimated? A similar question is raised by the historico-philosophical vision of Hermann Broch, who adopted a political position that was unquestionably *against* the National Socialist despotic regime. In 1932, in his *Essays zum Faschismus,* Broch had already pessimistically interpreted history as a series

of 'plague epidemics'.[24] Besides this, however, he had stressed that totalitarian regimes are solely 'preliminary experiments of history'.[25] At this, the horrors of the time attain a quality of absolute necessity for Broch; for him, too, the victims are ultimately subsumed to a higher goal—albeit to that of establishing a democratic, humanistic society.[26] This problem also pervades Broch's novel *Die Verzauberung*.

Hermann Broch's novel *Die Verzauberung*

The origins of Broch's novel *Die Verzauberung,* which is sometimes also called *Bergroman* or *Versucher,* has a complicated history. With the writing extended over a span of almost 20 years, the book was still not finished when Hermann Broch died in May 1951. What lies before us today in the collected works edition of Paul Michael Lützeler is a version that was ultimately not sanctioned by the author. This is important to note because it indicates reservations that Broch himself had had about the novel.[27] One must read this book, therefore, not as a binding articulation of a message (which one should never do anyway), but merely as an extended literary reflection on the problem of political religion at the beginning of the National Socialist era.

In order to make this clear, it is necessary briefly to recapitulate the events described in the novel. In a mountain village beside a mine for precious metal, there appears one day a rather daring-looking foreigner named Marius Ratti. He installs himself at the home of a farmer and, little by little, declares several ideas aimed at de-modernizing life again—at training it back into forms that are as archaic as possible and equipping it with mythic rituals. Radio and electric threshing machines should be abolished; the handlers who deal with them should leave the village; one should work again with muscle power alone; the human being should be reconciled to nature again through a reactivation of old rites. This leads to a hystericization of the entire population, one which intensifies to a mass frenzy at a fair celebrating the consecration of a church and reaches its climax when a young woman is stabbed—not by Marius Ratti, but by the village butcher—on a sacrificing stone as an atonement sacrifice to Mother Earth. The butcher flees, but Marius Ratti can stay and becomes the local councillor. In brief: we face here the history of a mass seduction by a politico-religious redeemer and, although he resembles Hitler in some respects, he is placed in the proximity of Christ.

Two questions must now be posed. First: how can such a thoroughly dubious redeemer—according to the information of the novel—gain such power over a community? And second: how is this process experienced and evaluated by the co-experiencing reader? Both these questions and their answers should of course be transposed on to a larger landscape: Broch's mountain village could also be called Austria or Germany.

Broch's novel offers a succinct answer to the question as to the foreign redeemer's fascinating or enchanting power: it is because the old religion and the old Church—in this case, the Catholic one—have become powerless. No longer rooted in the totality of being, they no longer have the power to ascribe and decisively to communicate to the human being his place and meaning within the whole. In Broch's novel, this decadence of the traditional religion is illustrated in an almost jarring way. Although there is a priest in this mountain village, he lives inconspicuously in his parish as a sickly and chlorotic

'shadow-man' who breeds roses and always almost collapses when he is to lead the seasonal processions and blessings.[28] He has nothing to say and nobody notices him; he is not a shepherd, but a breeder of roses; parish and church are not the formative centre of the community, but the refugium of a 'gardener priest'[29] who is no longer capable of vitalizing preaching.

This was not always the case: it is said of his predecessor that he governed the hearts of the people through his powerful and assured appearance and fulfilled their need for leadership and meaning.[30] Yet the new priest has long since not fulfilled this function and this is the prerequisite for the appearance of a dubious redeemer who can set the community into a religio-political frenzy.

This foreign redeemer is not the only figure who attains religious significance in the priest's place, however. There is also an old mountain farm woman here called Mother Gisson—a name that is probably an anagram for gnosis and is supposed to mean that this woman, compared to the religious orthodoxy and also of course to science, has a deeper, more original insight into the connection of the world and existence.[31] A religious dimension—one that must be viewed in the context of Broch's historico-philosophical reflections—is placed into this novelistic figure. This dimension is even stronger than the Demeter myth or general matriarchal ideas.[32] About the approaching sacrifice of Irmgard, Broch has Mother Gisson say: 'The true saviour always sends the false ones before him to wipe the slate clean for him…first must come hate with its fear, then love.'[33] Mother Gisson is also a potential redeemer, and the novel aims to suggest that this woman—and this woman alone—possesses a deep and uniquely female knowledge of the 'whole' through which the world might be renewed. The novel ends with Mother Gisson dying deep in the woods, or—more precisely—returning to the totality of the world. She bestows a kind of confirmation in natural religion upon her granddaughter, Agathe, beforehand: placing her hand on top of her granddaughter's head, she seeks to breathe that life-knowledge into her in an almost lyrically recited life-story.[34]

Now, with respect to the second of the questions mentioned above, it is interesting to see how this is experienced and evaluated by the perspectival figure of the novel. The perspectival character of this novel is an older doctor who has withdrawn from the city because the rationalization and technologization of life in the city did not suit him. This country doctor regards the events just described with a certain detachment, but one that is sometimes reduced to the point of disappearing entirely at the climaxes of the events. Succumbing at times to the mass hysteria set off by Ratti, he still turns to the natural mysticism of Mother Gisson in the long run. This corresponds to the novel's reflective intention. What this novel—which, again, was never finished by the author—seeks to make clear is obvious: that retreat from rationalistic or disenchanted modernity is justified, or at least understandable. A new religious founding is necessary and, because the old churches are no longer capable of providing it, it is sought—we avoid saying *must* be sought—in a new attention to nature.[35]

The novel does not justify Marius Ratti, who combines his coarse orientation toward nature with a hate against machines and technicians and who purges the village of them. Ratti's orientation toward nature seems superficial and mistaken in terms of its political implementation. He wants something that is right and good, but he takes a false and evil path because he lacks the deeper insight and female composure, patience and love of Mother Gisson. Mother Gisson, empowered for the future by her granddaughter, Agathe,

is the true redeemer.[36] Marius Ratti is her male counterpart; although he governs politics for the moment, he can ultimately have only a destructive effect. Expressed in terms of salvation history, he is the anti-Christ or, at least, one of his prophesied predecessors.[37] He has the task of creating that chaos which undeniably desires purification and ultimately makes such purification possible. This is his evil contribution.

To transpose this experimentally into the situation at the beginning of National Socialist rule: Ratti would then stand for Hitler, whom Broch described in a letter to Friedrich Torberg in 1943 as an 'instrument' of that 'great cleansing' that would necessarily precede an ethico-religious reorientation. But to whom would Mother Gisson correspond? Presumably, to a literature which has left the rational orientation behind too, which proclaims the necessity of a religious renewal and seeks to prepare the ground for it—as Broch himself probably sought to do with *Die Verzauberung* and again with *Tod des Vergils*.

But here, literature itself, if it says only one word too much or chooses a metaphor that has not been precisely monitored, moves into the danger of seeming to attempt a dubious religious founding. Broch appears to have sensed this himself; this is why he revised *Die Verzauberung* so many times and withheld it from print up to his death. It should be regarded as an experiment that moved further than Broch wished into the desire of the time that soon became practice: the desire for religious renewal through a return to extra-Christian traditions. Broch withheld this experiment and attempted to correct it. He held fast to the idea that a religious renewal with comprehensive social consequences would be necessary, as well as to the conviction that this is possible, not through a return to the old religions and churches, but only through a creation of a new religion into which something of older testament might flow.

Thomas Mann's novella *Das Gesetz,* or Old Testament and new humanity?

Thomas Mann's novella *Das Gesetz* shows how problematic it can be—in the effort to overcome a totalitarian power presenting itself as a religious one—if one lets the opponent appear in religious vestments that are ultimately identical. Not only does the new humanity clothe itself in religious metaphors; Mann inserts it into the Bible itself. As Mann began developing his 'Moses novella' in January 1943, almost two decades of study of the Old Testament—in particular, of the Joseph story—already lay behind him. But in a way different from his *Joseph* tetralogy, the relation between biblical narrative and a world that has become disenchanted is obvious. The deeds of God and Moses are consistently subjected to a critical, nihilistic standpoint that seeks to subject them to Mann's customary ironic demythologization. Like his contemporaries, Mann asks himself how such nihilism can be overcome. In the long term, he sees the only possibility of checking popular barbarism and establishing a new humanity as a form of life to be the development of a moral autonomy in every individual human being. In the strict antithesis existing between Moses and the grumbling people of Israel, Mann causes his Moses to serve as a paradigmatic educator of the people. As soon as the good in the human being has been aroused, it is communicated in the educative realization between

the spiritual principle that is striven for and undesired relapses into the instinctual.[38] This is the novella's actual theme.

At this point, two questions must be raised. First: can the relapse into instinctual-totalitarian forms of rule and force be explained by Mann's progressivist model? And second: what 'price' must be paid in the establishment of a 'total' humanity, as Mann presents it here? Both of these questions are closely connected. For Mann, a further one seeks to demonstrate how an existing despotism can be overcome—yet his strategy is explained only in terms of his analysis of the National Socialist terror regime as a collective relapse into the instinctual.[39]

The assertion of a new humanity using all available means attains exemplary clarity in the figure of Joshua, Moses' general. It is only his violent influence in Egypt that creates the possibility for the people of Israel of an exodus into the desert. Yet the methods used by him and his 'throttling angel' for the attainment of this goal can be regarded as verging on fascistoid terror. Informative in this passage is a comparison with Leo Naphta, the dark counterpart of the humanist, Settembrini, in Mann's 1924 novel, *Der Zauberberg*. Whereas Naphta desires and does evil, he fails. Joshua is prepared to live with the evil, but seeks to promote the good—and does not fail. The narrator's distance from the biblical myth is not permitted to mislead one from seeing that Mann was strongly attached to the goals of an ethical 'New Deal'—so strongly that he had also moved into a greater proximity to the figures of his novella. Such proximity is greater, in any case, than it had been with *Der Zauberberg,* where the (presumable) demise of the humanist, Hans Castorp, had still been recorded with the composure of a republican.[40]

Werner Bergengruen's novel *Der Großtyrann und das Gericht,* or the insecurity of life in a tyranny

Bergengruen's novel *Der Großtyrann und das Gericht* appeared in Germany in 1935. At first, Nazi newspapers positively received it as a 'Führer novel' meriting recognition, even if it assumed Renaissance garb. This is completely understandable: the tyrant appears in this novel as an outstanding figure and the tyranny as a form of rule that has one great advantage compared to oligarchy or democracy: tasks that are of great significance to the well-being of the community are not simply discussed at length, but executed—and speedily.

Despite this, it cannot be said that this novel affirms tyranny without question or reservation. It is made clear beyond a doubt that the tyrant's claim to power and obedience is restricted by certain legal reservations. Among these is ecclesiastical law, to offer one example; this prohibits the confessor from revealing anything that has been communicated in confession. In this novel, the tyrant wants to break through these legal restrictions as well. This he does by bringing a cleric into a most precarious situation. A politically explosive murder has occurred. One of the suspects has confessed to the cleric after the murder and then died. The tyrant threatens to confiscate this man's fortune, thus leaving his surviving dependents without means. He informs the cleric that he can avert this hard fate for the family if he declares that the suspect did *not* confess to the murder in his final confession. This is indeed the case: the suspect did not confess to the murder because he was not the murderer. The tyrant knows this very well, by the way, for he

himself is the murderer; all his inquiries serve only to render his subjects uncertain, fearful and demoralized.

How does Bergengruen's priest now conduct himself when confronted with this perfidious temptation? Slipping at first into a state of utmost psychic angst, he despairingly considers during the three days of reflection that the tyrant has granted him whether it would not be better, even imperative in this case, to follow the tyrant's illegal request. But then he manages to say a definitive 'no' to the command of the tyrant—who wants to pick up his declaration of preparedness after three days. For this he assumes the fate of martyrdom. Although it does not come to this, this is not the significant thing. The statement of this episode is also clear: even in the case for which a tyranny is positively assessed, the tyrant's claim to obedience is limited. And, for their part, the subjects are not obliged to give way to the demands of the tyrant any more than they are legally required to do so.

Bergengruen's novel is one of the great works of the so-called 'inner emigration'. And even if it has been somewhat little esteemed and ideologically discredited by the German Studies research of the last decades, it provides an impressive portrayal of the all-pervasive undermining of life security in a totalitarian regime—a regime that allows violent encroachments by the power-holder and his apparatus. In this respect, the novel has parallels to Brecht's scene-sequence, *Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches*. Written in exile, this work could of course portray the perversion of life in National Socialist Germany very directly and much more blatantly than Bergengruen's novel. The cognitive value of Bergengruen's novel is no smaller than that of Brecht's scene-sequence, however. The aim to describe the perversion of life in the tyranny in a way that could still be published in a tyranny was achieved through a portrayal for which the cognitive or experiential value does not lie in the direct naming of these relations; it lies, rather, in a manner of portrayal that represents these relations within the reader, as it were, and renders them re-experienceable to this day.

The novel describes life in a dictatorship in a way that allows the peculiar character of life in a tyranny to emerge. The power-holder can interfere without warning in all areas of life and can suspend all customs and rights, even the very right to life. The result, as is made clear on the first pages, is a complete undermining of the security of the human being. The first page of the novel states that 'it was prohibited to announce the great tyrant'. Then it describes how the great tyrant turns up unexpectedly before his police chief. This contributes to the latter slipping into—as it is expressly called—a 'shameful' and at once embittering 'uncertainty'.

In particular, this undermining of security comes into being through the tyrant's early access to information. His presence is almost god-like.[41] He strives to know everything (even in violation of the seal of confession[42] and with the threat of torture[43]). In each case, he knows more than his subjects and conversation partners, but he leaves them in well-calculated uncertainty as to his actual knowledge.[44] Thus is an asymmetrical information situation conjoined with an asymmetrical situation of power and law. From this emerges a kind of life that is marked on the whole by an undermining of security and spreading of fear[45] that becomes increasingly palpable; this then becomes a state of mutual siege, surveillance and threat.[46]

Bergengruen's novel is supposed to reproduce this character of life in a dictatorship in as perfect a way as possible. This is why it is narrated in an entirely neutral, third person

form seeking to evoke the appearance of total objectivity. There is only one passage in which the narrative instance—which otherwise remains completely a-personal and without opinion—admits a commentary on the narrative goal and process. This passage only emphasizes that any further expansion and discussion of details and aspects of the event would only continually prove the 'intransparency of this (specific) life' and the 'questionability of every human assertion in general'.[47]

At the same time, however, the novel's description of the situation is in fact not objective and neutral. Although the reader gains sufficiently precise and complete insight into the plans and motives of those living within the tyranny, insight into the knowledge, plans and motives of the tyrant are kept from him—or at least not shared in the same degree. Although the reader knows a little more than each individual subject, he by no means knows as much as the tyrant. Above all, he does not know the decisive thing: that the tyrant knows who the murderer is, because the murderer is he himself. For the reader too, then, the life of the inhabitants of Cassano remains intransparent and threatened in many ways. He experiences their unsettling as a suspense that is transformed by empathy into a re-experiencing of the unsettling. The great aesthetic achievement of this novel lies in its narrative reproduction of life in a tyranny—a reproduction that is enjoyable on the one hand and has an experience-broadening influence on the other.

From Ernst Jünger's 'Marmorklippen' to Peter Weiss's *Ästhetik des Widerstands,* or the problem of the portrayal of terror or violence

In a noteworthy essay of 1980, Dolf Sternberg praised Jünger's short story, 'Auf den Marmorklippen', for having opened his eyes in 1939—in a 'scenic overview having a great intensity and power of its own'—to 'the world of the concentration camps, the sphere of the secret terror'. It was said to have 'found word', to have incorporated the 'knowledge' and 'precise perception' and, besides that, 'a horror that could in fact have been prevented'.[48] Coming from such a reflective witness of the times as Dolf Sternberger, this should be recognized as describing a literary achievement of rank. Despite this, however, a later statement by Ernst Jünger himself declares that the description of the slave huts of Köppelsbleek, so highly praised by Sternberger, was decidedly 'too rosy' compared to the reality of the camps of torture and annihilation of the Third Reich.[49] Here a problem is touched upon that had already subverted writers shortly after the National Socialist assumption of power and the beginning of the Nazi Terror. And it preoccupied them more intensively still following the exposure of what had happened in the concentration camps: the question as to whether and how literature might portray the violence practised there.

Some answers rejected the possibility. We refer here not only to Adorno's discussions concerning the problems of legitimation of art after Auschwitz;[50] in his *Doktor Faustus,* Thomas Mann had already touched upon the theme in the conversation with the devil. Here there is reference to certain events in the 'thick-walled torture chambers'—events that are later clarified.

> It is done, it occurs, and without anyone being called to account, in the sound-proof cellar deep beneath God's hearing and this for eternity. No, it

> is wrong to speak of it, it lies remote from and beyond language—this has
> nothing to do with it, has no relation to it…[51]

Yet we know that this did not become *communis opinio*. Much more did literature—like art in general—seek, in order both to remember and to warn, possibilities of portraying the horrors of war and the concentration camps without succumbing to the danger of moderating aestheticization or veiling mythisization.

Here would have to be mentioned many texts that attempted it in a coarsely realistic, grotesquely distorting or some other way. This in itself would be a contribution, but would have nonetheless to remain fragmentary. For this reason, we will move directly to the work that was devoted to portraying Fascist violence as no other was: Peter Weiss's *Ästhetik des Widerstands,* a work that arose between 1970 and 1980 on the basis of extended reflections and studies on the problem of portraying violence. The work concludes with the shocking description of the infernal execution of the members of the so-called *Rote Kapelle* in Plötzensee. This conclusion has a power—one would almost like to say, a violence—of impression that takes the breath of even an experienced or hardened reader and no longer gives him the chance to take voyeuristic enjoyment in the portrayal of violence. In *Peter Weiss und die Deutschen,* Alfons Söllner's precise analysis of this portrayal of the execution, the author clarifies its specific achievement at the end of the book:

> The killing acts are presented with ruthless hardness, attaining almost a
> machine-like precision and naked cruelty; they demonstrate the technical
> rationality of torture… It involves an aesthetic that does not merely
> recognize the psychological ambivalence of each staging of terror; beyond
> this, it explicitly elevates the intertwinement of the rationality and
> irrationality of modern rule to its genuine theme.[52]

If anywhere, it is here that the violence of that era has been portrayed in a way that at least approaches the appropriate. As was already indicated, though, the portrayal is based upon many other attempts that Weiss made during a long 'period of study'. Furthermore, it is likely based upon the peculiar sensibility of a person who is known to have lived with the consciousness that the site of his actual destiny was Auschwitz.[53] Here arose a work—following a good 30 years of approach and a ten-year period of labour—that overcame the aestheticizing portrayal of violence. In this respect, it has set standards that have not been seriously challenged by literary criticism to this day.

Thomas Mann again: *Doktor Faustus,* or the prohibition of levity in art

Under the impression of the violent deeds of the totalitarian era, literature tended, as one might say using a formulation of Ernst Jünger, to become a 'history of modern brutality'.[54] Yet this did not only affect its thematic, it was even threatened in its essence. In literature appearing after the beginning of the Third Reich—but even more intensely after the beginning of the Second World War and the gradual revelation of the events in

the concentration camps—one finds laments about the loss of levity. This affects the personal state and social communication, for one, but it also has an influence on art. Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* does not provide the only example of this process and the reflection upon it, but probably the most informative one.[55]

As is well known, this novel was written under the immediate impression of the destruction of Germany and of the exposure of procedures in the concentration camps. It recapitulates the pre-history of this barbarism and reflects it in an artistic work. This work consists in the compositions of the composer Adrian Leverkühn. At once implicated in and reflecting this process, his work becomes increasingly that of mourning and lament. It culminates in the 'Lament of Dr Fausti', which, as is stated, is 'a terrible variation on the lament',[56] one arising from the deepest 'hopelessness' that 'achieves most extreme accents of mourning' and brings 'the ultimate despair to expression'. The work is interpreted as a cancellation of the Ninth Symphony.[57] And because the Ninth Symphony also includes the Ode to Joy, it can therefore also be understood as a revocation of Weimar classicism, with its substantive and formal postulate of levity. 'Life is serious, art is cheerful'—these programmatic theses stand at the end of the prologue to *Wallensteins Lager*. Seeing the essence of art to lie in a liberating distancing from the otherwise oppressive or even overwhelming fatalities of life, these theses appear to have been suspended by Leverkühn's work, which both served and lamented the 'intentional re-barbarization' of its era.[58] The levity of art, which is supposed to arise less from its completely oppressive contents than from its distancing form, no longer appeared legitimate. In the conversation with the devil cited above, one that was central to the theory of art, it is also stated:

> work, time and appearance, they are one; together they fall victim to criticism. It [art] can no longer sustain appearance and play, fiction, the high-handedness of a form that censures the passions, assigns them roles, that transcribes the song of humanity into images. Admissible now is only the non-fictive, the non-playful, the unfeigned and untransfigured expression of suffering in its real aspect. Its powerlessness and need have grown to such an extent that a play of appearances with it is no longer permitted.[59]

Thomas Mann has not followed this maxim himself with his *Doktor Faustus;* he lets the history of the depressing 're-barbarization' and self-destruction of Germany be narrated by a chronicler whose first name, tellingly, is Serenus. The narrator is only the most prominent exponent of a whole series of 'measures' with which Thomas Mann sought to attain a 'certain merrification' of this oppressive tale.[60] Further, this Serenus tells the story in well-proportioned chapters and in a style that has by no means been broken by the 'atrocity' of the events described or that has slid into the drastic or formless. If the last work of the composer, Leverkühn, is a revocation of Weimar classicism with its substantive and formal postulate of levity, so is the novel of its inventor—who also imagines this work—a revocation of this work in turn. It thereby becomes a reclaiming of precisely this postulate of levity.

Yet this remains long concealed in favour of the thesis represented primarily by Adorno: the thesis that only with difficulty can art, after Auschwitz, be cheerful any

more.[61] Yet here was not demanded, as may already have become clear, the eschewal of comic content or form—this would have been no matter of concern for Adorno in any case. Much more there was demanded a relentless reconnection of art to the 'history of modern brutality' (Ernst Jünger), so to speak.[62] Such brutality was to be depicted in a way that was by no means distanced, mitigating or even reconciling, but always insurmountably horrible and inconsolable. Yet this implies a new definition of art, which would have to relinquish the essential characteristic of 'levity' and remain obliged to depict the horrors of the history of the totalitarian epoch. In the eyes of several younger authors, in fact, this characterizes the post-war literature: a literature from whose spell they seek gradually to free themselves. In complete awareness of the inescapable burden of history, they do so by proclaiming and creating a literature that no longer predominantly treats war, violence, destruction and suffering,[63] but rather 'normal' life in the post-totalitarian era.

Conclusion

With the end of the era of Communist rule in eastern Europe in the autumn of 1989, a political model of the ideological creation of meaning and totality of meaning was dismissed—probably irrevocably. This has generated a deep-seated mood of undermined security. There is talk of the demise of modernity and the rise of a post-modernity that no longer laments the loss of an ultimately valid—in other words, politically propagated—unity, but consciously celebrates itself as a possibility of newly forming pluralisms. Such talk tries to follow up on the ultimate failure of all totalitarian despotisms in this century. Wolfgang Welsch has rightly corrected anyone who regards every crisis of modernity to have issued from modernity itself; for the questions from which both this crisis and modernity as a whole have grown have neither been solved nor appear to have been surpassed.[64] Thus will the danger of totalitarian currents probably be posed in the future as well—of course, in a subtle way.

Literature, however, strives for more than the simple retelling of stories. But does it not then fall into the dilemma either of becoming mired, in view of the approaching threat, in the pathos of politically discredited circles or of succumbing to an apolitical banality? Not necessarily—for the writer's confrontation with given political circumstances must include the memory of a past that is filled with suffering; it would necessarily sharpen the gaze for the continued existence of totalitarian temptations and their—often almost inconspicuous—realization in political and daily life.[65] Literature can probably (or in any case better) afford the latter if it becomes the organ of a memory that is at once collectively effective and located in individuals.

In a fragmentary addition to 'In der Strafkolonie', the short story analysed at the beginning, Kafka rewrote the end in a diary entry of August 1917.[66] The original version of the text had still ended with the traveller's hasty departure—before the eyes of the sentenced, who barely escaped with his life, and of the officer, who has voluntarily (but still following an inner coercion) subjected himself to an ultimately banal-seeming death by the execution machine.

In the diary sketch, the departure desired by the traveller becomes the starting-point of a fantasy:

> if his [that is, the traveller's] ship had pushed through this aimless sand to him in order to pick him up—that would have been the best. He would have stepped in; only, from the steps, he would then have reproached the officer for cruelly executing the sentenced.[67]

Now, one believes oneself to have been placed back into the original oppressive situation in which the sentenced was in fact brought up for execution. But does this view of the execution not belong to a higher reality? Is the sparing of the one who was sentenced unjustly and the death of the thief not ultimately a greater illusion?

'No', the officer said, 'a mistake on your part, I am executed as you have commanded.'[68] The dead who suddenly speaks again becomes a delusion of the traveller and the final totalitarian temptation—the erasure of memory. According to Kafka, the task of literature is to counteract this temptation to erase memory. In this sense the officer's demand (in his sense) of the traveller to 'make noise with the truth' holds for literature.[69]

Notes

1 Wolfgang Rothe, *Schriftsteller und totalitäre Welt* (Bern and Munich: Francke, 1966); Klaus Briegleb and Sigrid Weigel (eds), *Hansers Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur,* Vol. XII: *Gegenwartsliteratur seit 1968* (Munich and Vienna: Hanswer und Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1992), see the instructive introductory chapter by Briegleb. Compare also Helmuth Kiesel, '"So ist unser Gedächtnis jetzt angefüllt mit Furchtbarem" [Martin Walser]: Literaturgeschichtliche Anmerkungen zum "Historikerstreit" und zu der von Martin Broszat beklagten, "Beziehungslosigkeit zwischen Literatur und Geschichte bei der Verarbeitung der Nazizeit"', in Klaus Oesterle and Siegfried Schiele (eds), *Historikerstreit und politische Bildung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989), pp. 42–94.

2 Saul Friedländer, *Kitsch und Tod: Der Widerschein des Nazismus* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1986).

3 Compare Ulrich Schmidt, 'Von der "Peinlichkeit" der Zeit: Kafkas Erzählung "In der Strafkolonie"', *Schiller-Jahrbuch,* 28 (1984), pp. 407–45; Carsten Zelle, 'Strafen und Schrecken: Einführende Bermerkungen zur Parallele zwischen dem Schauspiel der Tragödie und der Tragödie der Hinrichtung', *Schiller-Jahrbuch,* 28 (1984), pp. 76–103; Walter Müller-Seidel, *Kafkas Erzählung, 'In der Strafkolonie' im europäischen Kontext* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986).

4 Franz Kafka, 'In der Strafkolonie. Eine Geschichte aus dem Jahre 1914'. With sources, illustrations and material from the *Arbeiter-Unfall-Versicherungsanstalt,* Chronicle and Commentary by Klaus Wagenback (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1982), p. 35.

5 Ibid., p. 55.

6 Ibid., p. 31.

7 Compare Ernst Jünger, *Das Abenteuerliche Herz. Erste Fassung* (Stuttgart: Kletto-Cotta, 1987), pp. 145 ff.

8 Standing behind Jünger's work is a great trust in the moral force of a *polis,* which, entirely in the discipleship of Hegel, strives to reach a higher goal. Compare Eric Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen* (Munich: Fink, 1993), pp. 36 ff.

9 On Mauser, compare Richard Herzinger, 'Die *unio mystica* der revolutionären Dynamik. Revolution als Lebensproduktion in Heiner Müller's Mauser', *Text & Kritik,* 108 (1990), pp. 60 ff. For further background, see Richard Herzinger, *Masken der Lebensrevolution.*

Vitalistische Zivilisations- und Humanismuskritik in Texten Heinrich Müllers (Munich: Fink, 1992).

10 Walter H.Sokel, *Franz Kafka. Tragik und Ironie* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1983), pp. 150 ff.

11 Compare Silvio Vietta, *Die literarische Moderne. Eine problemgeschichtliche Darstellung der deutschsprachigen Literatur von Hölderlin bis Thomas Bernhard* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992), pp. 130 and 148 ff.

12 Karl Erich Grötzinger, *Kafka und die Kabbala* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1994), pp. 188 ff. Hans Helmut Hiebel simplifies things too much in *Die Zeichen des Gesetzes. Recht und Macht bei Kafka* (Munich: Fink, 1983), pp. 150 ff. Although Hiebel's critique of an over-hasty theological decoding of the Kafkan symbolic world is justified, it remains too undifferentiated in relation to Kafka's Judaism.

13 Ulf Abraham, *Der verhörte Held: Recht und Schuld im Werk Franz Kafkas* (Munich: Fink, 1985), pp. 126 ff.

14 Compare Abraham, *Der verhörte Held,* p. 224.

15 On Jünger, compare Helmuth Kiesel, *Wissenschaftliche Diagnose und dichterische Vision der Moderne. Max Weber und Ernst Jünger* (Heidelberg: Manutius, 1994). On Benn, compare Jürgen Schröder, *Gottfried Benn. Poesie und Sozialisation* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1978); Jürgen Schröder, *Gottfried Benn und die Deutschen. Studien zu Werk, Person und Zeitgeschichte* (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1986).

16 *In Die Gesellschaft,* 7 (1930), Vol. 2, pp. 32 ff; cited here from Hella Tiedemann-Bartel (ed.), *Walter Benjamin: Gesammelte Schriften III* (Collected Works Edition, Vol. IX), (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972), pp. 238 ff.

17 Compare *Ernst Jünger: Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1978), Vol. III, p. 647 and Vol. V, p. 316.

18 Compare *Ernst Jünger: Sämtliche Werke,* Vol. II, p. 13.

19 Compare here Kiesel, *Wissenschaftliche Diagnose,* pp. 142 ff.

20 Compare ibid., p. 146.

21 Meant here is the poem, 'Der Mohn', which appeared in 1934 in F.G.Jünger's *Gedichten*.

22 Thomas Mann, *Tagebücher 1933–1934,* ed. Peter de Mendelssohn (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1977), p. 578 (30 November 1934).

23 Compare Helmuth Kiesel, 'Ernst Jüngers "Marmorklippen"', *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur,* 14 (1989), pp. 126 ff.

24 Compare Hermann Broch, *Kritische Werkausgabe,* Vol. XIII/2, p. 38.

25 Broch, *Kritische Werkausgabe,* Vol. XII, p. 92.

26 Compare Norbert Mecklenburg, *Erzählte Provinz: Regionalismus und Moderne im Roman* (Königstein: Athenäum, 1982), p. 264.

27 Compare Paul Michael Lützeler, 'Hermann Brochs Roman, *Die Verzauberung:* Darstellung der Forschung, Kritik, Ergänzendes', in Paul Michael Lützeler (ed.), *Brochs Verzauberung* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp. 239–90.

28 Broch, *Kritische Werkausgabe,* Vol. III, pp. 92 ff.

29 Ibid., p. 106.

30 Ibid., pp. 92, 107.

31 Ibid., pp. 368 ff.

32 Compare Axel Dunker, *'Den Pessimismus organisieren': eschatologische Kategorien in der Literatur zum Dritten Reich* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 1994), p. 64. Norbert Mecklenburg, *Erzählte Provinz,* pp. 129, 179, has shown that Mother Gisson's thought carries deterministic and explicitly eschatological features.

33 Broch, *Kritische Werkausgabe,* Vol. III, p. 175.

34 Ibid., pp. 363 ff.

35 Ibid., p. 369.

36 Ibid., pp. 96 ff., 261 ff.

37 Compare Matthew 24:23 ff. and Revelations 13:1–10. Broch's attempt to claim eschatological ideas of the Bible for the interpretation and overcoming of National Socialism (compare *Kritische Werkausgabe,* Vol. III, pp. 240, 311, as well as Dunker, *'Den Pessimismus organisieren',* p. 68) ultimately fails. This is because the determinism of Mother Gisson leaves no place for the biblical warning for conversion and watchfulness in face of the nearing end, as can be found in Matthew 24:24, for example.

38 Compare Mann's essays, 'Das Problem der Freiheit', *Gesammelte Werke,* Vol. XI (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1974), pp. 952 ff. and 'Vom kommenden Sieg der Demokratie', *Gesammelte Werke,* Vol. XI, pp. 910 if. The deadly relapse into the instinctual is also described in the chapter 'Urgeblök', in the first part of the *Joseph* tetralogy, *Gesammelte Werke,* Vol. IV, pp. 185 ff.

39 Compare Borge Kristiansen, 'Freiheit und Macht. Totalitäre Strukturen im Werk Thomas Manns. Überlegungen zum "Gesetz" im Umkreis seiner politischen Schriften', *Thomas Mann-Studien,* VII (1987), pp. 53–72, particularly footnote 14.

40 An interesting comparison can be made here to Broch's essay, 'Trotzdem: Humane Politik. Verwirklichung einer Utopie'. Here, Broch attempts to show that the modern human, in his uncertainty, almost needs the totalitarian. Yet because the totalitarian endangers human rights, democracy must protect itself with totalitarian means. Broch, *Kritische Werkausgabe,* Vol. XI, pp. 364–96.

41 Werner Bergengruen, *Der Großtyrann und das Gericht* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987), p. 130.

42 Ibid., pp. 147 ff.

43 Ibid., p. 155.

44 Exemplary here is the conversation with Diomede, ibid., p. 186.

45 Ibid., pp. 29, 42, 78, 150, 153, 189, 248.

46 Ibid., pp. 243, 247.

47 Ibid., p. 34.

48 Compare Dolf Sternberger, 'Eine Muse konnte nicht schweigen', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 128 (4 June, 1980), p. 25; also in Dolf Sternberger, *Gang zwischen Meistern* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), pp. 306 ff.

49 Compare *Sämtliche Werke,* Vol. XII, p. 470.

50 Compare Petra Kiedaisch (ed.), *Lyrik nach Auschwitz? Adorno und die Dichter* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995).

51 Thomas Mann, *Doktor Faustus/Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1981), pp. 327, 637 ff.

52 Compare Alfons Söllner, *Peter Weiss und die Deutschen: Die Entstehung einer politischen Ästhetik wider die Verdrängung* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1988), pp. 223–4.

53 Compare Peter Weiss, *Rapporte* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1968), Vol. I, p. 114.

54 *Sämtliche Werke,* Vol. II, p. 412.

55 Compare here Helmuth Kiesel, 'Thomas Manns *Doktor Faustus:* Reklamation der Heiterkeit', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte,* 64 (1990), pp. 726–43; Dieter Borchmeyer, 'Musik im Zeichen Saturns: Melancholie und Heiterkeit in Thomas Manns *Doktor Faustus',* *Thomas Mann Jahrbuch,* 7 (1994), pp. 123–67.

56 Mann, *Doktor Faustus,* pp. 644 ff. (Chapter XLVI).

57 Ibid., pp. 634, 644.

58 Ibid., p. 491.

59 Ibid., p. 321.

60 Ibid., p. 700.

61 Compare Theodore W.Adorno, 'Ist die Kunst heiter?', *Noten zur Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981), pp. 599–601. See also Peter Eichhorn, *Kritik der Heiterkeit* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1973).

62 See *Sämtliche Werke,* Vol. II, p. 412.
63 As examples should be named Peter Handke, *Über die Dörfer. Dramatisches Gedicht* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981), pp. 96 ff.; Botho Strauβ, *Der junge Mann. Roman* (Munich and Vienna: Hanser, 1984), pp. 11, 179 ff.; Thorsten Becker, *Die Nase. Eine Erzählung* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1987), p. 204; Hanns-Josef Ortheil, *Abschied von den Kriegsteilnehmern. Roman* (Munich and Zurich: Piper, 1992), pp. 346 ff.; Peter Handke, *Mein Jahr in der Niemandsbucht. Ein Märchen aus den neuen Zeiten* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), pp. 700, 1063 ff.
64 Compare Wolfgang Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne,* 4th edn (Weinheim: VCH, Acta Humaniora, 1993), pp. 53 ff.
65 Compare Herta Müller, *Der Fuchs war damals schon der Jäger* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1992); see also Wolfgang Hilbig, *Ich* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1993).
66 Franz Kafka, *Tagebücher 1914–1923* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1994), pp. 154 ff. See also Klaus Mladek, '"Ein eigentümlicher Apparat". Kafka's "In der Strafkolonie"', *Franz Kafka: Text und Kritik. Zeitschrift für Literatur. Sonderband* (Munich: edition text+kritik, 1994), pp. 115–142.
67 Kafka, *Tagebücher 1914–1923,* p. 154.
68 Ibid., p. 155.
69 Kafka, 'In der Strafkolomé', p. 47.

Part III
General discussion

Totalitarianism and political religions two
concepts for the comparison of dictatorships

12
Concepts for the comparison of dictatorships

'Totalitarianism' and 'political religions'
Hans Maier

We have learned to distinguish precisely the despotic regimes of the twentieth century—Communism, Fascism and National Socialism—according to their place and time, origin and influence, political and social profile. But what should we call that which they have in common?[1] On this, there is no consensus; indeed, for a long time the question seemed not even to be permitted—or not, at least, in Germany.[2] That this is unsatisfying is obvious.

The debate has been revived in recent years. Since the collapse of the Communist systems in central, eastern and southern Europe, a formidable amount of archival research material has become accessible. Following the 'historicization' of Fascism and National Socialism, such historicization has now extended to the Communist and socialist regimes as well. Much that had been treated to this point predominantly in works of poetry or according to methods of 'oral history' owing to a lack of written sources now comes, with all its details, into the focus of quantifying history, sociology, statistics. The gulf between the detailed knowledge of the Fascist and National Socialist regimes—a result of a half-century of minute historical research!—and the relatively broad and coarse picture of Communist and socialist regimes that we had had to this point becomes increasingly narrowed. The different pasts become surveyable and comparable. This leads to the reopening of old questions. What place do the modern despotisms assume in the history of our century? In what relation do they stand to one another? Should they be grasped using traditional concepts—autocracy, tyranny, despotism, dictatorship—or does their appearance overstep the bounds of traditional political theory?

In what follows, I wish to select from this wide field a particular problem of a central nature: namely, the question as to how theoretically interested and linguistically talented[3] people reacted to Communism, Fascism and National Socialism in the 1920s and 1930s (and in part also later still).[4] What words did they use to characterize the aspect peculiar to these regimes and the things they had in common? Where did one content oneself with old characterizations? Where did a new semantic develop, which descriptions were established, which again disappeared? Using primarily the examples of 'totalitarianism' and 'political religions', it will be demonstrated as to how the experience of modern despotisms promoted the origination of new concepts that went over and beyond the classical, school concepts. These new concepts accompany the 'century of violence' as an

attempt, if not to conceive the inconceivable, then to define it—however provisional and inadequate this attempt might seem.

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I

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Regimes like the Bolshevist one in Russia after 1917, the Fascist one in Italy after 1922 and the National Socialist one in Germany after 1933 were perceived early on as something new, something that breaks the traditional standards. This is why the attempt to find adequate concepts for the newly experienced reality was connected from the beginning with an attempt to provide an empirical description in reports, diaries and memoirs. Thus were classical terms of despotism, autocracy, dictatorship and tyranny revived in the 1920s and 1930s. These had been replaced in the nineteenth century—at least on the continent—by positive state law; their philosophical and moral connotations seemed to suit them to the description of earlier conditions at best, but not of contemporary state constitutions.[5]

It is scarcely a simplification to seek the heart of the renewed theories of tyranny in the Anglo-Saxon countries, whereby the renaissance of the concept of dictatorship became a specificum of continental political theory after the 1920s. In the Anglo-Saxon world, the old moral-political concept of tyranny had never waned; twentieth-century historians could still openly assume it—as well as other classical topoi.[6] Of course, systematic reconstruction of the ancient theories of tyranny first got under way in the context of the 'modern tyrannies' following the Second World War—too late to have a decisive influence on the theoretical discussion surrounding Communism, Fascism and National Socialism. Following Xenophon's *Hieron,* Leo Strauss's masterpiece *On Tyranny* (1948) keeps its distance from contemporary historical positions. Not without good reason did Eric Voegelin and Alexandre Kojève accuse it of treating its object all too academically and applying the classical frame of reference of tyranny all too unquestioningly.[7]

Even if it remained with reminiscences of a classical didactic play of political philosophy here, the rebirth of the concept of dictatorship had a very real background in the countries of continental Europe and arose in close contact with political events. This holds above all for the German discussion, one for which Carl Schmitt is the most representative, but by no means the only figure.[8] The authoritarian transformation of numerous European monarchies and republics after 1918 seemed to turn the continent into a 'Europe of dictators'. The spectrum extended from Mussolini's Italy[9] to Pilsudski's Poland,[10] from Kemal Pascha's early military and developmental dictatorship to the 'late' dictatorships of Salazar and Franco—not to mention the leadership of the revolutionary Russia, which, following Lenin and Trotsky, officially strove for a dictatorship of the proletariat.[11] All the same, the concept of dictatorship is suited to characterizing the new regimes and the European landscape formed by them in only a very limited way. Owing to its ancient Roman origins, it could never break free entirely from the sphere of law and state. It was too static for the temporally and spatially unlimited dynamic of a 'movement', too connected with official power and commission, too clearly fixed on the re-establishment of a political order that is to be preserved in principle and disturbed only temporarily. The unique character of the 'new dictatorships' can hardly be thought

through the elements of the old concept of dictatorship. For this reason, the empirical method and conceptual formation of political science had to beat new paths.

What struck observers in the 1920s and 1930s in the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy and, later, National Socialist Germany? Primarily, it was the enlargement, intensification and dynamization of political power. Not coincidentally, the descriptions of Anglo-Saxon authors are informative here.[12] These note a new quality of the political: political power that is no longer bound within balanced systems, no longer exposed to the competition of social powers, power as public power that cannot be avoided, that is omnipresent and seems obligatory, that sounds from loudspeakers, speaks from images and symbols, impresses in parades, threatens in march-pasts and chants—in brief, power that has broken loose from administrative and parliamentary enclosures and has seized hold of the entire society. Such political power—a mobilized potential of forces[13]—emerges with a claim different from that of traditional politics in 'normal countries', where the latter withdraws discretely into constitution and habit, division of powers and social pluralism. This seeks to mould the *entire* human life and extends to the lowest level, to the conduct and even the thinking of each individual. It was this characteristic of the total, the 'totalitarian', that pre-determined and fascinated in the early formation of the theory: the rulers' challenging declarations of belief in coercion and force,[14] their rejection of constitutional state orders, the militarization and 'theatralization' of public life, the threatening presence of leader and party and the use of the street as a 'mass medium'.

II

Thus do the concepts 'total', 'totalitarian', 'totalitarianism,' become crystallizing points in the attempt to provide an 'original' analysis of the new regimes and systems. The era of Italian Fascism marks the beginning.[15] Of course, it was not Mussolini and his adherents who introduced the concept to the discussion, but rather opponents of the Fascists in the liberal-democratic, socialist and Catholic camps. The characterization of Fascism (and later of National Socialism and Communism) as 'totalitarian' arose from the foreign perception of the opponent, not from the original self-understanding of the parties in question. And by no means did it arise, as has been claimed, 'from a diffuse, Fascist self-understanding'.[16] (The same also holds later, by the way, for characterization of the new systems as 'political religions'. This too is a characterization coming from outside, for neither Lenin nor Hitler nor Mussolini regarded their movements as 'religions'.[17])

Schlangen still believed that Mussolini himself had coined the concept of totalitarianism in a speech on 22 June 1925, when he spoke of the *'force volontà totalitaria'* of his movement.[18] However, the studies of Jens Petersen have proved that liberal and democratic anti-Fascists like Salvatorelli, Amendola and Basso stood at the beginning of twentieth-century totalitarian theory.[19]

A phase of linguistic attempting and groping about preceded any agreement on the concepts of 'total' and 'totalitarian' in characterizing Fascism. At this time, there was talk of the absolutist state (Luigi Salvatorelli) or the absolutist autocracy (Giustino Fortunato). Yet this was merely a historical reference and did not adequately capture the novelty of the Fascist understanding of the state. It was Giovanni Amendola who first contrasted the

sistema totalitario to the *sistema maggioritario* and the *sistema minoritario* in a newspaper article of 12 May 1923.[20] In the years that followed, the concept of the 'totalitarian'—which had more of a technical meaning at first—expanded in his articles. He now used it in a more general sense, which also included the spiritual goals of Fascism. This linguistic usage established itself up to the middle of 1924 on a broad front within the Italian opposition. Now socialists like Lelio Basso—who introduced the substantive 'totalitarianism' for the first time in a newspaper article of 2 January 1925- also used it.[21]

It was once again Amendola who realized the agreement of Communism and Fascism in their totalitarian character shortly before his violent death.[22] Here, he could rely on (among others) a work of Luigi Sturzo, leader of the Catholic Popolari. In 1926, Sturzo had mentioned that the commonalities between Fascism and Bolshevism thoroughly justify a comparison of the two systems. Sturzo placed the revolutionary-absolutist character of the Fascist seizure and retention of power at the centre of his analysis.[23] In doing so, he touched upon the sensitive point of a discussion that was to occupy political theorists and politicians in the following decades.

Summing up, it can be established that the concept of 'totalitarianism' arose within the ranks of the Italian opposition to Fascism as a characterization of a system of political rule. Only later was it picked up as a self-description by the Fascists themselves, and this only partially.

In Germany, Hermann Heller studied the phenomenon of totalitarianism at the end of the 1920s. Restricted at first to Italian Fascism,[24] his analysis later incorporated National Socialism as well.[25] Heller spoke of Fascism's 'programmatic lack of a programme'[26] and its 'ideology of power'.[27] He represented the thesis that it involved an entirely new kind of dictatorship.

A little later, Carl Schmitt developed the new concept of the 'total state' from his analysis of the liberal tradition. It was supposed to issue 'dialectically' from the liberal state, just as the latter had issued from the absolute state.[28] In Schmitt's work, the word took on shifting colours: if the state was at first 'total out of weakness', helplessly taking upon itself competencies that were no longer perceived in economy and society,[29] then it soon assumed the familiar form of a power-state that expands to a totality. Of course, the National Socialists never accepted the Schmittian 'state' version of totality. Whereas Goebbels played in 1933 with the concept of 'total state', Rosenberg rejected this conception vigorously and often in the *Völkischen Beobachter* in 1934.[30] The reason is obvious: total or totalitarian could never be only the state in National Socialism—this would have been a 'Fascist' conception. The decisive share accrued here much more to the Party, to the 'movement'. To limit the totality of the National Socialist claim to the state was a waste of effort in a regime for which the principle, 'the Party commands the state', was a basic rule.

At the end of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, it became clear that Mussolini's Fascism strove for pax with the traditional powers of Italian society—Church, economy, literature and arts. The 'totality' of the Fascist system seemed to shrink continually—whereby a new, more radical totality that was exempted from all rules of law and state arose with the National Socialist movement. It is telling that Waldemar Gurian, originator of the German theory of totalitarianism,[31] not only characterized the commonality of Bolshevism and Fascism as 'totalitarianism' for the first time—thereby giving a common

name to the systemic relationship that had been realized by Nitti, Sturzo and Amendola[32]—but also strove for a distinction. 'The Fascist state is by far not so total as the Bolshevistic', he stated. 'For the Concordat proves that, at least theoretically, it acknowledges a religious realm—the content of which it does not attempt to determine.'[33] In its guarantee of a free, autonomous space to the Church, Gurian found a limitation that contradicted the total claim of totalitarian systems. In a 1932 study published under the pseudonym W.Gerhart, he applied the category of total state to National Socialism as well.[34] And with that, the comparative dimension of the concept—its application to Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism alike—had been as good as achieved.

Beginning in 1933, the totalitarianism concept served the critics of National Socialism as a characterization of the German political system. Among others should be named Franz Borkenau,[35] Gerhard Leibholz,[36] Paul Tillich,[37] Herbert Marcuse[38] and Richard Löwenthal.[39] The later history of totalitarianism theory is well known. Cue words might suffice: systematizing and comparative studies that helped to popularize the concept arose in the years 1935–44 with the writings of Max Lerner, Hans Kohn, Carlton J.H.Hayes, Ernst Fraenkel and Franz Neumann.[40] With the post-war works of Hannah Arendt, Friedrich and Brzezinski and Raymond Aron,[41] the theory of totalitarianism gained international currency and a validity that was almost canonical—one extending to literature as well.[42] Here too, Waldemar Gurian—now as founder of *The Review of Politics* and initiator of congresses on international politics—was one of the decisive, key figures in the exchange of concepts and theories. At the height of the Cold War, empirical interest increasingly shifted from Fascism and National Socialism (which were now both dead) to the Soviet system, to concrete Stalinism; this now became the main object of interest, the chief resource for the theory of totalitarian systems. Yet this constriction and functionalization took its revenge on the theory at the end of the Cold War: now, totalitarianism theory moved into the critical crossfire. This resulted in a surprising revival of theories of Fascism, which were thought to be already dead. Especially in Germany during the 1960s, the evaluative comparison of Eastern and Western systems increasingly became a value-free interest in the governing systems of East and West: in place of totalitarianism research arose that which now began to be called 'GDR and Communism research'. Only after 1989 did the tide turn again. The end of Communism (1989) altered the horizon of contemporary history; earlier interpretative concepts were regarded with greater distance, and a 'critical historicization' (Alfred Söllner) of the totalitarianism concept got under way.[43]

III

Whereas the chequered history of the totalitarianism thesis has been relatively well researched, investigation of the concept of political religions is only beginning. This holds for the broad and diffuse pre-history of the comparison of modern political movements with religions,[44] for the modalities of the emergence of the concepts of 'political religion' and 'secular religion' in the 1930s and 1940s, as well as for the religio-historical and phenomenological background of the comparisons and concept-formations cited—a background extending back to the era of the First World War. The

efforts to reveal specific features of the modern despotic regime with the aid of categories of the sociology of Church and religion have also not yet been examined and analysed in context; similarly, the historico philosophical and theological interpretations of this regime ('re-divinization', 'political theology', 'theopolity') have not yet been appreciated.

In his book of the same name, Eric Voegelin first developed the concept 'political religions' in 1938.[45] One year later, Raymond Aron also applied the expression *'religion politique'* (later, *'religion séculière'*).[46] In Voegelin's *Political Religions,* Communism, Fascism and National Socialism are brought into the context of universal history—probably for the first time. They are for him products of secularization processes in the typical 'late nations' of Europe: nations that no longer stand within the Christian tradition, like the Anglo-Saxon ones do, but seek to attain political cohesion through mass ideologies of class or race, of economy or blood. The effort to gain a quasi-religious dimension of political order—in no matter what perverted form—links the modern despotic regime to models of a common politico-religious culture that are traced back historically by Voegelin to ancient Greece and Egypt. According to his thesis, the modern dictatorships are based on an inner-worldly religiosity that elevates the collectivity of race, class or state to the 'realissimum' and thereby 'divinizes' them. The divine is sought and found in the 'partial contents of the world' and is closely tied to a 'myth of salvation' peculiar to each.

Whereas Voegelin's position is rooted in a Christian anthropology that is further developed and systematized by later works,[47] Raymond Aron's concept stands within the tradition of the liberal critique of totalitarianism. By contrast to Voegelin, Aron uses the concept of religion in terms of a predominantly Enlightenment standpoint that is critical of religion: totalitarian systems are 'religious' to the extent that they strive to reverse the modern (and Christian!) separation of the two powers of religion and politics. In a way similar to the one in which religion was universally practised in earlier societies, ideologies in modern, 'totalitarian' societies now become 'omnipresent'. Now, political action is no longer determined by laws of the constitutional state, but is justified by an invocation of 'absolute values'.

That modern political movements can be described and analysed by utilizing religious categories is a result of the religio-philosophical and phenomenological research that began during the First World War: summarily, the works of Rudolf Otto, Heinrich Scholz, Gerardus van der Leeuw, Mircea Eliade, Friedrich Heiler, Romano Guardini and Roger Caillois should be recalled here.[48] In these investigations, a new, comprehensive concept of religion emerges—one that overcomes the individualistic restrictions of the nineteenth century. With the social dimension, religion also regains features of the numinous, of a provocation—at once fascinating and frightening—that had been lost in a view of religion that remained 'within the limits of pure reason'. The dreadful and uncanny, the *tremendum et fascinosum,* are rediscovered as elements of religious experience.

In fact, totalitarian movements operate in their words and deeds with elements that find their place in the religious realm. For one, terror should be named here. According to both Raymond Aron and Hannah Arendt, total rule is essentially determined by the element of terror. 'The iron shackle of terror constitutes the totalitarian political body and makes it an incomparable instrument in expediting the movement of the process of nature

or history.'[49] Terror replaces the 'fence of the law' with an iron band that stabilizes human beings in such a way that all free, unforeseeable acting is excluded. 'Terror in this sense is at the same time the "law" that can no longer be transgressed.'[50] This terroristic stabilization is supposed to help liberate a history or nature that is on the move. Raymond Aron interprets both the police terror and the ideological terror of totalitarian movements as being a result of the fact that each activity has become a state activity and is determined by the state ideology. Thus does a transgression in the economic or career sphere also become an ideological transgression.[51]

A totalitarian system attempts to make its influence felt in the human being's private sphere as well. No niche, however small, in which the political ideology is not in some way present is permitted.[52] Religions also tend to make detailed regulations for people, to give them instructions as to how to act in every possible situation. They are present with special rites at all turning points of life—birth, wedding and death. Here, the religio-phenomenological analyses touch upon a further commonality of religion and totalitarianism. The latter loves ritual. Examples are provided by the parades in Red Square in Moscow or the pompous staging of the Nuremberg party conventions. According to Hannah Arendt, it is this role of ritual that demonstrates the affinity of totalitarian movements with secret societies. The National Socialist ritual of the 'blood flag', for example, is 'the experience of a mysterious action, which evidently binds a people better and more securely than the sober awareness of sharing a secret with one another'.[53]

According to Arendt, total movements are emphatically esoteric. In transferring the esoteric principle, 'whoever is not expressly included is excluded'. At the level of mass organization, the National Socialists went beyond a simple exclusion of Jews to erect a complicated bureaucracy, 'the sole task of which was to help 80 million Germans in the task of investigating their ancestors for Jewish blood'. As the said 80 million made their searches for the feared Jewish grandfather, a kind of initiation ritual was achieved: everyone emerged from the affair with the feeling of belonging to a group of 'the included' opposite which stood an imaginary mass of 'excluded'. According to Arendt, the Bolshevist movement achieves the same thing with its periodic purges, which freshly confirm to everyone who has not just been excluded that he belongs to the group of the 'included'.[54]

Both Hannah Arendt and Eric Voegelin have made clear that totalitarian movements are supported by fictions. They are oriented, not on reality, but upon a self-invented illusory order. According to Arendt, totalitarian leaders display an unwavering certainty 'with which they seek from existing ideologies those elements that are suited to establishing a world that is counter to the facts, wholly and completely fictive'.[55] From the experienceable world are extracted those elements that are suitable for the fiction; these are then applied in such a way that they henceforth remain divorced from all verifiable experience. According to Arendt, the 'global conspiracy' is one such fiction. Certainly, such imaginary worlds are only of limited duration; after a certain amount of time, the house of cards of lies must collapse in face of reality.

> The constitution of being remains what it is, beyond the reach of the
> thinker's desire for power; it is not changed by the fact that a thinker has
> drafted a programme for its alteration and flatters himself that he might

> realize it. The outcome, therefore, is not rule over being, but satisfaction of a fantasy.[56]

A further parallel between religion and totalitarian movement is presented by the promise of redemption and the figure of the redeemer. Romano Guardini developed this connection in his 1946 essay, *Der Heilbringer*.[51] The way in which National Socialism speaks of blood, race and earth reveals that a religious dimension is in play here. 'Secret of the blood', 'eternal blood', 'holy blood'—words of this kind are found everywhere. The myth needs a proclaimer and an embodiment: it is found in Adolf Hitler. The 'messenger of God', as he is called at the beginning of the 'movement', is capable of giving strength to all. Where previously a house had possessed a *Herrgottswinkel* with the picture of the crucified, there was now instituted a 'Gotteswinkel' complete with a picture of Hitler and the swastika.[58] In one of the chapels granted to the 'German Christians', the picture of the 'Führer' appears on the altar itself. According to Guardini, the greeting 'Heil Hitler!' can be interpreted in two ways: in such a way as to wish well-being for Hitler, but also in such a way as to wish that Hitler's saving power might descend upon the person who has just been encountered.

Eric Voegelin later develops his religio-phenomenological interpretation of the modern despotic regime into the well-known and disputed thesis that the political mass movements of the twentieth century—Communism, Fascism, National Socialism—evinced a 'Gnostic' character.[59] They were based upon the assumption that the human being can eliminate the evils of this world through his own actions. With their doctrine of inner-worldly fulfilment of meaning, the Gnostic systems are said to provide the human the certainty that he, by nature, seeks. The person who succumbs to this temptation sinks further and further into the trap of immanentization: into a 'demonically obstinate insistence upon the conduct to which the passions lead'.[60]

Last in the investigation of parallel phenomena in religion and politics, we remind of the revolutionary festivals (plays, march-pasts, parades) and new calendars as they emerge in the context of the history of Communism as well as in Fascism and National Socialism.[61] These too belong among the formative elements of modern totalitarian movements, and it is no coincidence that the modern phenomenology of religion (Josef Pieper, Roger Caillois, Mircea Eliade) has rediscovered the festival—with all its ambivalence as affirmation and as excess.

To be distinguished from the religio-phenomenological parallels just described are the *ecclesiastico-sociological* ones in the narrower sense (although there is a zone of overlapping). A key theme is the question of membership. By contrast to the pluralistic system of association and party of the democratic era—with its loose, constantly amendable forms of membership—'totalitarian' parties create 'existentially risky' memberships: these are memberships whose structures point in many ways to those within the churches, with their conditions of entry and exit, sanctions, etc. Although most are applied 'unconsciously', the corresponding descriptions speak a clear language: there are 'pure doctrines' in modern despotic regimes, 'holy' (or at least canonically valid) books and testaments; there are heretics and 'inquisitions', care for 'faith' and 'morals' guarded by punishment; there are heresies, dissidents and renegades, apostates and proselytes, etc. The systematic treatment of these phenomena is in its first stages—a first

attempt at analysis now present in Michael Rohrwasser's investigation of 'renegade literature' (by Orwell, Koestler, Kantorowicz, Sperber, Sahl, Krebs, Glaser, etc.).[62]

Connected with the ecclesiastical-sociological standpoint is, finally (and again with many overlaps), a view of the modern despotic regime from the standpoints of Church and universal history. This sees in these movements a negation of the division of spiritual and earthly power that is foundational for European history, a deterioration of the Christian 'exorcism of the state', a retreat to the ancient indivisibility of polis and religion, cult and politics. Hermann Heller has offered a classical formulation of this connection: 'the state can become totalitarian only if it becomes state and Church in one again, yet this return to antiquity is possible only through a radical rejection of Christianity'.[63] This research perspective leads to the rediscovery of ancient 'political theology' and its application as an instrument by which to analyse the modern ideologies. The key figure here is the theologian Erik Peterson,[64] whose investigations—originally conceived as a rebuttal of Carl Schmitt's *Political Theology* (1922, 1924)[65]—have exerted influence upon Jacques Maritain, Jacob L.Talmon and John C.Murray

IV

In light of such a broad and, in many ways, new selection of enlightening semantics, it might be asked whether it truly makes sense no longer to describe the despotisms of the twentieth century using the old, school concepts, but to admit new conceptual forms and names instead. Are neologisms better suited in every case to grasping a new reality? Can old names and concepts not sometimes shed light on new phenomena? Is there not a danger of the historian allowing himself to be all too quickly and easily carried away by the new if he dispenses with definitions introduced long ago, with grammatical certainties, in favour of a new, nebulous notation? And even if some of the old concepts might now seem bound to a school, even dusty, can their potential not still be actualized and developed in light of contemporary experiences—as the masters of the 'new science of politics' in our century have demonstrated?[66]

The objection is not easy to manage, and should not be dismissed with the argument that the interpretative traditions of 'totalitarianism' and 'political religions' are themselves an aspect of the historical experiences of our century—something that cannot be disputed. For this reason, a few concluding remarks on the hermeneutical 'suitability' of the described concepts—on their possible scientific use compared to other concepts and patterns of interpretation—are in order.

It might well be the easiest to reach agreement on the concept of the 'dictatorship'. If one takes it seriously and regards it in light of its tradition, one can hardly draw from it a final remainder of legal, formal, procedural substance.[67] As with Lenin and Trotsky's interpretation of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', its core would have to be removed altogether.[68] As a description for the arbitrary rule of Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, or even of Mussolini, 'dictatorship' is a term that glosses things over and renders them all too harmless in any case. To present Bolshevism, Fascism and National Socialism under the heading, 'dictatorships of the twentieth century', would end in an attempt to conceive of something that was in truth an over-dimensional breach of the peace, an excess in

violence and irrationality, as something pertaining solely to the state and predictable in its extent.

The concept of tyranny seems closer to the political reality of the twentieth century. It captures just that arbitrary quality that characterizes the modern despotic regimes—that unpredictable element that cannot be captured by rules. Disregarding the fact that the venerable concept does have something 'schoolish' (and something of modern dramatic pathos) about it, the word 'tyranny', shifts the accent too far into the personal, subjective realm—as though the logic of evil that is at work in the despotisms were a logic merely of evil human beings. If the dictatorship concept is too concretely objective, then the tyranny concept is too personalistic. Neither of the two satisfactorily expresses the indivisible connection of objective and subjective elements, the interrelation of violence and justifying ideology—to say nothing of the difficulty of differentiating the tyrant by virtue of usurpation from *tyrannus velatus et tacitus,* one who becomes a tyrant during his reign; the latter is a problem that has preoccupied both jurist and theologian since the fourteenth century.[69] Just how laborious it is to transform the classical *'In tyrannos!'* into a programme of active resistance under modern conditions has been demonstrated by the intensive yet often helpless discussions of tyranny and tyrannicide in circles of the German opposition to Hitler in 1938–44.[70]

History and historical science have torn the ground from under another comparative and universalizing concept: from the expanded concept of Fascism. After 1960, when the world-political antagonism began to loosen and the politics of relaxation gained ground, this concept was on the way to replacing the concept of totalitarianism, which had prevailed up to that point. From the beginning, however, its radius was limited to the sphere of Italian Fascism and German National Socialism—despite some attempts to broaden it.[71] To this extent, it was not suited to characterizing the despotisms of the twentieth century *in toto.* Since then, historical science has intensively worked out the distinctions between Italian Fascism and German National Socialism.[72] The type of the Italian *fascismo,* which is historically clearly outlined, is hardly suited to generalizations and universalizations. It is already debated whether the Fascism concept can be applied to the south-eastern and central European or Spanish and Portuguese autocracies and dictatorships of the period between 1918 and 1975.[73] Yet only with difficulty can it serve *both* for Mussolini's Italy and for Hitler's Germany: whoever uses it thus demonizes Fascism (which did not have a procedure of mass annihilation) and renders National Socialism more harmless than it in fact was. (Among militant party members, after all, the word 'Fascistic' might once have been used polemically!)

One might consider all this and charge that the scientific research since the 1970s has turned increasingly to the great crimes of the century—to Auschwitz and the Gulag— which are justly regarded today as the keys to understanding both National Socialist and Bolshevistic despotic rule.[74] One then understands why the totalitarian thesis, as well as the concept of 'political religion', is still an indispensable help in 'conceiving the inconceivable'. Only in this way do certain dimensions of National Socialism and Bolshevism come to light: the absolute unleashing of violence and its equally absolute justification; the existence of 'political enemies' who might be eliminated as pests— without guilt and on the basis solely of their membership of a particular race or class. The concept also captures the preparedness of many people to do anything, even the most repugnant acts, in service of the 'new era' or the dissolution of the consciousness of right

and wrong through initiation into the purpose of history. On top of all this, it captures the unflinching belief in a revolutionary necessity that grants the unleashed violence its frighteningly good conscience.

Certainly, both conceptions—that of 'totalitarianism' and that of 'political religions'— also have their limits. The totalitarianism concept, for example: certainly, it is comprehensive and 'fits' all regimes that overstep the bounds of authoritarian rule (or of a temporally limited emergency dictatorship) in the direction of a continual, irrevocable assertion of power. At the same time, however, the concept is to a large extent formal and requires supplementation. Concretizations and variants continually arise—up to C.J.Friedrich's elaborately precise checklist of the elements of totalitarian rule. Conversely, the concept of 'political religions' directly addresses the logic justifying modern despotisms and, with the help of categories from sociology and the psychology of religion, can help us understand it better. Necessarily, though, 'technical' aspects of the bid for and assertion of power diminish in face of the mental and psychological elements—so that actual history threatens at times to dissolve into intellectual and religious history.

In the analysis of modern despotisms, however, both need to be explained and interpreted: both the machinery of terror and the psychology of the actor, the logic of power and the logic of the justification that cloaks it and renders it intransparent! To date, this has occurred only as first attempts—probably most successfully in the works of Raymond Aron, Hannah Arendt and Eric Voegelin. Despite these, however, a comprehensive theory of twentieth-century despotic regimes has failed to materialize.

Notes

1 A draft of these comments was presented at a colloquium, 'Tyrannis, Autokratie, Diktatur: Wie bennent man die Gewaltregime des 20. Jahrhunderts?', which took place on 20 July 1994 at the *Institut für Zeitgeschichte* in Munich. I thank Klaus Hildebrand, Hermann Lübbe, Gilbert Merlio and Horst Möller for stimulation and supplementation, contradiction and critique. Objections by Hans Buchheim and Gilbert Merlio have prompted me to use the term *'Despotie'* which is understandable in all languages rather than *'Gewalt Regime'* which is difficult to translate into other languages.

2 Symptomatic here is 'the tabooing of the concept of totalitarianism and the inflating of the Fascism formula' (Karl Dietrich Bracher) in the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the rejection of *any* comparison between National Socialist and Communist violent crimes on the part of a substantial group in the so-called 'Historian Fight (*Historikerstreity* of 1986 and 1987. Certainly, the mutually apologetic calculation—and with that, relativization—of Communist and National Socialist crime is a danger that must be taken seriously. Nonetheless, that which Immanuel Geiss has stated in a remark on the Historian Fight still holds: 'Historical comparison of National Socialist and Communist crime must, if the theme requires it, be permitted. This is if only because comparison is not identical to equation—a frequent mistake of those who do not think clearly. The National Socialist crimes are a unique height of cruelty, but they are nonetheless still comparable to Communist misdeeds'. Immanuel Geiss, 'Zum Historiker-Streit', *Historikerstreit* (Munich and Zurich, 1987), pp. 373–80, 379. On the necessity of comparison, see now also François Furet, *Le passé d'une illusion* (Paris, 1915), *passim*.

3 From the beginning, not only scientists, but poets too were involved in perceiving modern despotisms and their violent crimes—it suffices to remind of Franz Kafka, Hermann Broch,

Georges Bernanos, Aldous Huxley, George Orwell, Manès Sperber and Alexander Solzhenitsyn. This circumstance has not yet been sufficiently considered in the research.

4 This problem is being researched in a project promoted by the Volkswagen Foundation at the Institute for Philosophy of the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich—a project in which philosophers, historians and specialists in literature collaborate under my leadership.

5 Both famous and oft-cited is Georg Jellinek's condescending characterization of despotism as 'a pure school type to which no real state completely corresponds in the long term'. *Allgemeine Staatslehre* (1900, reprint of the 3rd edn, 1960), p. 667. Hella Mandt portrays the end of the classical theory of tyranny in the nineteenth century in *Tyrannislehre und Widerstandsrecht* (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1974), pp. 3 ff., 247 ff., 293 ff.

6 Thus, for example, Alan Bullock, whose monumental biography of Hitler of 1952 bears the sub-title, 'A Study in Tyranny'. In 1993, the same author presented the 'parallel lives'—a title of Plutarch!—of Hitler and Stalin. See Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* (New York, 1992).

7 The controversy is documented in the German translation of Leo Strauss, *Über Tyrannis* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1963), pp. 145 ff., 195 ff.

8 Carl Schmitt, *Die Diktatur von den Anfängen des modernen Souveränitätsgedankens bis zum proletarischen Klassenkampf* (Munich, 1921). The dictatorship theme can be found in other authors as well: Oswald Spengler, Karl Kautsky, Hermann Heller, Rudolf Smend. On the spread of the dictatorship concept throughout Europe, see Ernst Nolte, 'Diktatur', in Brunner, Conze and Koselleck (eds), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe,* Vol. I (Stuttgart, 1972), pp. 900–24, 922 ff., including footnote 45.

9 Mussolini's opponents branded Fascist Italy as a prototypical dictatorship. See Gaetano Salvemini, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy* (New York, 1927); Ignazio Silone, *Die Schule der Diktatoren* (Zurich, 1938).

10 On Pilsudski's dictatorship, see Gotthold Rhode, *Kleine Geschichte Polens* (Darmstadt, 1965), pp. 484 ff.; Hans Roos, *Geschichte der polnischen Nation 1918–1985* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 115 ff.

11 Informative on the controversy between Lenin and Trotsky on the one hand and on Communism, revolutionary terror and the dictatorship of the proletariat of 1919–20 on the other is Karl Kautsky, *Terrorismus und Kommunismus. Ein Beitrag zur Naturgeschichte der Revolution* (Berlin, 1919); Leo Trotsky, 'Terrorismus und Kommunismus' (Anti-Kautsky), *Trotzki Schriften* (Dortmund, 1978). There, one finds the following concise thesis on page 11: 'whoever rejects terrorism—that is, the measures of suppression and fear with regard to the bitter and armed counter-revolution must forgo the political rule of the working class and its revolutionary dictatorship. Whoever forgoes the dictatorship of the proletariat forgoes the social revolution and carries socialism to the grave'.

12 Telling testimonies can be found in Harold Nicolson, *Tagebücher und Briefe 1930–1941* (Frankfurt, 1969) and William L.Shirer, *Das Jahrzehnt des Unheils* (Munich, 1989). A nuanced picture mixing admiration with repugnance emerges in Angela Schwarz, *Die Reise ins Dritte Reich. Britische Augenzeugen in nationalsozialistischen Deutschland (1933–1939)* (Göttingen and Zurich, 1993).

13 Ernst Jünger, 'Die totale Mobilmachung' (1930), saw the task of modern politics to be to develop the 'potentiel de guerre' of technology and to make it accessible to the state. See here Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Der konservative Anarchist. Politik und Zeitkritik Ernst Jüngers* (Freiburg, 1962), pp. 83 ff.

14 Thus Lenin on 29 March 1920 before the Ninth Party Congress of the Communist Party of Russia: 'What happens through coercion evokes shrieks and wails from the citizens' democracy, which throws about the words "freedom" and "equality" without comprehending that freedom for capital is a crime against the workers. In the struggle against the lie, we have assumed the standpoint that we must carry out the duty of commuity service and the amalgamation of the workers. Yet we do this without shrinking even in the least from using

force; for nowhere has a revolution proceeded without force, and the proletariat has the right to apply force in order to establish itself at any price.' In the definition of dictatorship Lenin provides, the legal limitation and temporal time limit is expressly given up. The dictatorship of the proletariat is thus expressly described as 'a power that is bound to no laws'. 'Die proletarische Revolution und der Renegat Kautsky (1918)', *Werke,* Vol. XXVIII (1959), p. 324. And in the essay, 'Geschichtliches zur Frage der Diktatur (1920)', *Werke,* Vol. XXXI (1959), p. 345 is stated: 'The scientific concept of the dictatorship means none other than power that is restricted by nothing, by no laws, hemmed in by absolutely no rules, gaining support directly from violence.' Compare Nolte, 'Diktatur', pp. 919 ff., including footnote 37. On Lenin's praxis, see Peter Scheibert, *Lenin an der Macht. Das russische Volk in der Revolution 1918–1922* (Weinheim, 1984), pp. 1 ff., 48 ff., 75 ff. Thus states the Tscheka chief, Lacis: 'We do not conduct a war against individual persons; we exterminate the bourgeoisie as a class. The first thing the accused is to be asked is what class he belongs to, what are his origins, his occupation. These questions should determine his fate' (p. 76).

15 On the following, Paolo Alatri (ed.), *L'antifascismo italiano* (Rome, 1961); Costanzo Casucci (ed.), *Il fascismo. Antologia di scritti critici* (Bologna, 1961); Ernst Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche* (Munich, 1963); Ernst Nolte, *Die faschistischen Bewegungen. Die Krise des liberalen Systems und die Entwicklung der Faschismen* (Munich, 1966); Klaus Hildebrand, 'Stufen der Totalitarismusforschung', *Politische Vierteljahrsschrift, 9* (1968), pp. 397–422; Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismus-Forschung* (Darmstadt, 1968); Leonard Shapiro, *Totalitarianism* (London, 1972); Wilhelm Alff, *Der Begriff Faschismus und andere Aufsätze zur Zeitgeschichte* (Frankfurt, 1973); Walter Schlangen, *Die Totalitarismus-Theorie. Entwicklung und Probleme* (Stuttgart, 1976); Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen. Um Faschismus, Totalitarismus, Demokratie* (Munich, 1976); Wolfgang Wippermann, *Faschismustheorien* (Darmstadt, 1972). I thank Mr Michael Schäfer, MA for important help in examining and classifying this extensive material.

16 Thus Volker Gransow, *Konzeptionelle Wandlungen der Kommunismusforschung. Vom Totalitarianismus zur Immanenz* (Frankfurt, 1980), p. 200.

17 Recall here the following: Lenin's struggle against 'god-seekers' and religiously inspired socialists at the beginning of the Russian Revolution, Hitler's distanced relationship toward a quasi-religious hardening of the National Socialist *Weltanschauung* (Alfred Rosenberg), and Mussolini's purely positivistic ideas with regard to religion.

18 Schlangen, *Die Totalitarismus-Theorie,* p. 147.

19 Jens Petersen, 'Die Entstehung des Totalitarismusbegriffs in Italien', in Manfred Funke (ed.), *Totalitarismus: Ein Studien-Reader zur Herrschaftsanalyse moderner Diktaturen* (Dusseldorf, 1978), pp. 105–28 (also concerning what follows).

20 Giovanni Amendola, 'Maggioranza e minoranza', *Il Mondo,* 12 May 1923, reprinted in Giovanni Amendola, *La democrazia italiana contro il fascismo, 1922–1924* (Milan and Naples, 1960), pp. 102 ff.

21 Lelio Basso, 'L'antistato', *La Rivoluzione Liberale,* 2 January 1925. The article appeared under the pseudonym, Prometeo Filodemo.

22 Giovanni Amendola, *La nuova democrazia* (Naples, 1951), p. 235.

23 Luigi Sturzo, *Italien und der Faschismus* (Cologne, 1926), p. 215. Similar is the earlier Prime Minister Francesco Nitti, who was likewise driven out of Italy, *Bolschewismus, Faschismus und Democratie* (Munich, 1926), p. 53: 'Fascism and Boshevism are not based upon opposed basic principles. They signify the denial of the same basic principles of freedom and order'. Cited in Wolfgang Wippermann, *Faschismustheorien* (Darmstadt, 1989), p. 52.

24 Hermann Heller, *Europa und der Fascismus* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929).

25 Thus in the second edition of the same book, 1931.

26 Ibid., p. 42.

27 Ibid., p. 38.
28 Carl Schmitt, *Der Hüter der Verfassung* (Tübingen, 1931); Carl Schmitt, *Der Begriff des Politischen* (Munich, 1932). On this, see Hasso Hofmann, *Legitimität gegen Legalität. Der Weg der politischen Philosophie Carl Schmitts* (Berlin, 1992); Heinrich Meier, *Die Lehre Carl Schmitts. Vier Kapitel zur Unterscheidung Politischer Theologie und Politischer Philosophie* (Stuttgart, 1994); Oliver Lepsius, *Die gegensatzaufhebende Begriffsbildung. Methodenentwicklungen in der Weimarer Republik und ihr Verhältnis zur Ideologisierung der Rechtswissenschaft unter dem Nationalsozialismus* (Munich, 1994), pp. 208–11.
29 On the economic origin of the Schmittian conception of the 'total state' compare LutzArwed Bentin, *Johannes Popitz und Carl Schmitt* (Munich, 1972), pp. 78 ff., 114 ff.
30 Evidence in Martin Jänicke, *Totalitäre Herrschaft. Anatomie eines politischen Begriffs* (Berlin, 1971), pp. 41 ff. See also Bentin, *Johannes Popitz und Carl Schmitt,* p. 115, including footnote 201; Bernd Rüthers, *Carl Schmitt im Dritten Reich* (Munich, 1989), pp. 58 ff.
31 See Heinz Hürten, *Waldemar Gurian* (Mainz, 1972). Further literature can be found there.
32 The following publications should be mentioned here: Waldemar Gurian, 'Faschismus und Bolschevismus', *Heiliges Feuer,* 15 (1927/28), pp. 197–203; Waldemar Gurian, 'Der Faschismus', *Heiliges Feuer,* 16 (1928/29), pp. 507–18; and above all, Waldemar Gurian, *Der Bolschewismus. Einführung in Geschichte und Lehre* (Freiburg, 1931).
33 Gurian, *Der Bolshewismus,* pp. vi ff.
34 W.Gerhart (Waldemar Gurian), *Um des Reiches Zukunft. Nationale Wiedergeburt oder politische Reaktion?* (Freiburg, 1932).
35 Franz Borkenau, 'Zur Soziologie des Faschismus', *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik,* 68 (1933), pp. 513–47.
36 Gerhard Leibholz, 'Die Auflösung der liberalen Demokratie', *Deutschland und das autoritäre Staatsbild* (Munich and Leipzig, 1933).
37 Paul Tillich, 'The Totalitarian State and the Claims of the Church', *Social Research I* (1934), pp. 405–33.
38 Herbert Marcuse, 'Der Kampf gegen den Liberalismus in der totalitären Staatsauffassung', *Zeitschrift für Sozialfoschung* III (1934), pp. 161–95.
39 Paul Sering (Richard Löwenthal), 'Der Faschismus', *Zeitschrift für Sozialismus,* 24–7 (1934/35).
40 Max Lerner, 'The Pattern of Dictatorship', in G.Stanton (ed.), *Dictatorship in the Modern World* (Minnesota, 1935), pp. 3–25; Hans Kohn, 'Communist and Fascist Dictatorship: A Comparative Study', in G.Stanton (ed.), *Dictatorship in the Modern World* (Minnesota, 1935), pp. 3–25; Carlton J.H.Hayes, The Novelty of Totalitarianism in the History of Western Civilisation', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 82 (1940), pp. 102 ff.; Ernst Fraenkel, *The Dual State: A Contribution to the Theory of Dictatorship* (New York, London and Toronto, 1941); Franz L.Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism 1933–1944* (New York, London and Toronto, 1942).
41 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951); Carl Joachim Friedrich and Zbigniew K.Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, 1956); Raymond Aron, *Démocratie et totalitarisme* (Paris, 1966).
42 It was primarily George Orwell who contributed to the popularization of the theory of totalitarianism—one need think only of the stereotypical formula, 'German Nazis and Russian Communists', in his novels and essays. Orwell, by the way, was an attentive reader of Hayek!
43 Compare Uwe Backes and Jesse Eckhard, *Totalitarismus-Extremismus-Terrorismus. Ein LiteraturFührer* (Opladen, 1985); Bernhard Marquardt, *Der Totalitarismus—ein gescheitertes Herrschaftssystem* (Bochum, 1991); Karl Graf Ballestrem, 'Aporien der Totalitarismusforschung', *Politisches Denken Jahrbuch 1991* (Stuttgart, 1992), pp. 50 ff.; Konrad Löw (ed.), *Totalitarismus* (Berlin, 1993); Giovanni Sartori, 'Totalitarianism: Model,

Mania and Learning from Error', *Journal of Theoretical Politics,* 5 (1993), pp. 5–22; Thomas Moetzel, 'Die angelsächsische Totalitarismus-diskussion', *Mittehveg,* 36 (June/July 1994), pp. 66–71.

44 Individual examples can already be found in the classical literature. Thus does Christoph Martin Wieland already apply the term 'political religion' with respect to the Jacobins and the armies of the French revolution in 1793: 'As it seems to me, it could not be more evident than that this is a kind of *new political religion,* that which is preached to us by Custine, Dumourier, Anselm, etc. at the forefront of their armies.' Christoph Martin Wieland, 'Betrachtungen über die gegenwärtige Lage des Vaterlandes', in Jan Philipp Reemtsma *et al* (eds), *Politische Schriften,* Vol. III (Nördlingen, 1988), pp. 37–71.

45 Eric Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen* (Vienna, 1938; Stockholm and Berlin, 1939), newly edited by Peter J.Opitz (Munich, 1993).

46 Raymond Aron, 'L'Ère des tyrannies d'Élie Halévy', *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* (May 1939). Aron's essay referred to the writing by Elie Halévy, L'ère des Tyrannies. Etudes sur le socialisme et la guerre (Paris, 1938); see also David Bosshart, *Politische Intellektualität und totalitäre Erfahrung. Hauptströmungen der Französischen Totalitarismuskritik* (Berlin: Duncker & Humbolt, 1992), pp. 103 ff., 112, 118 ff.

47 See, in particular, Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago, 1952); Eric Voegelin, *Order and History,* Vol. I (Baton Rouge, 1956), II and III (1957), IV (1974), V (1987). The volume edited by Peter J.Opitz, *Ordnung, Bewußtsein, Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1988) includes a complete bibliography of the writings of Eric Voegelin on pages 226–44.

48 Rudolf Otto, *Das Heilige* (Breslau, 1917), reprint Munich 1987; Heinrich Scholz, *Religionsphilosophie* (Berlin, 1922); Gerardus van der Leeuw, *Phänomenologie der Religion* (Tübingen, 1933, 1977); Mircea Eliade, *Images et symboles* (Paris, 1952); Mircea Eliade, *Mythes, rèves et mystères* (Paris, 1956); Romano Guardini, *Religion und Offenbarung* (Würzburg, 1958); Friedrich Heiler, *Erscheinungsformen und Wesen der Religion* (Stuttgart, 1961); Roger Caillois, *Der Mensch und das Heilige* (Paris, 1939). I thank Dr Winfrid Hover, MA for numerous stimuli in the interpretation of this literature.

49 Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism.* Cited here from the German version: *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft* (Munich, 1955), p. 714.

50 Ibid., p. 711.

51 Aron, *Démocratie et totalitarisme.* Referred to here is the German edition, *Demokratie und Totalitarismus* (Hamburg, 1970), p. 206.

52 Such uniform presence and 'unavoidability' is the central thought of George Orwell's *1984*!

53 Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft,* p. 594.

54 Ibid., p. 594.

55 Ibid., p. 572.

56 Eric Voegelin, 'Religionsersatz. Die gnostische Massenbewegung unserer Zeit', *Wort und Wahrheit,* 15 (1960), p. 15.

57 Romano Guardini, *Der Heilbringer* (Zurich, 1946), p. 43.

58 Ibid., p. 30.

59 Eric Voegelin, *Wissenschaft, Politik, Gnosis* (Munich, 1959).

60 Voegelin, 'Religionsersatz', p. 18.

61 Klaus Vondung, *Magie und Manipulation. Ideologischer Kult und politische Religion des Nationalsozialismus* (Göttingen, 1971); Ludwig Rohner, *Kalendergeschichte und Kalender* (Wiesbaden, 1978), pp. 476 ff.; Gerharde Hay, 'Religiöser Pseudokult in der NS-Lyrik am Beispiel Baldur v. Schirach', in Hansjakob Becker and Reiner Kaczynski (eds), *Liturgie und Dichtung I* (St Ottilien, 1983), pp. 855–63; Scheibert, *Lenin an der Macht,* p. 335; Heinz Zemanek, *Kalender und Chronologie* (Munich, 1987), p. 102; Claude Langlois, 'La Religion révolutionnaire (Rapport)', *Pratiques religieuses, mentalités et spiritualités dans l'Europe révolutionnaire (1770–1820), Actes du Colloque Chantilly 27–29 novembre 1986, réunis par Paule Lerou et Raymond Dartevelle sous la direction de Bernard Plongeron* (Turnhout,

1988), pp. 369–78; Hans Maier, 'Über revolutionäre Feste und Zeitrechnungen', *Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift,* 17 (1988), pp. 99 ff.; Hans Günter Hockerts, 'Mythos, Kult und Feste. München im nationalsozialistischen "Feierjahr"', *München—Hauptstadt der Bewegung'* (Munich, 1993); Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien* (Munich, 1994), pp. 327–30.

62 Michael Rohrwasser, *Der Stalinismus und die Renegaten. Die Literatur der Exkommunisten* (Stuttgart, 1991).

63 Heller, *Europa und der Faschismus,* p. 56; see also Heller, *Staatslehre* (1934), p. 209.

64 Erik Peterson, *Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem* (Leipzig, 1935); reprinted in Peterson's collection of essays, *Theologische Traktate* (Munich, 1951), pp. 45 ff. For biographical material compare Franco Bolgiani, 'Dalla teologia liberale all' escatologia apocalittica: il pensiero e l'opera di Erik Peterson', *Rivista di Storia e Letteratura Religiosa,* 1 (1965), pp. 1 ff. See also Barbara Nichtweiß, *Eric Peterson. Neue Sicht auf Leben und Werk* (Freiburg, 1992).

65 Hans Maier, 'Erik Peterson und das Problem der politischen Theologie', *Zeitschrift für Politik,* 1991. Now in Hans Maier, *Nachdenken über das Christentum* (Munich, 1992), pp. 189 ff.

66 Thus primarily Leo Strauss, Alexandre Kojeve, Michael Oakeshott, Eric Voegelin.

67 See explanation of the dictatorship concept above.

68 As Kautsky remarked in his essay, *Terrorismus und Kommunismus,* the Russian dictatorship is of course practised neither by the state nor by the proletariat; it is strictly the dictatorship of the leader of the Communist Party.

69 Bartlous a Saxoferrato, *Tractatus de tyrannia* (Basel, 1588).

70 Klemens von Klemperer, 'Reflections and Reconsiderations on the German Resistance', and Heinz Hürten, 'Zehn Thesen eines profanen Historikers zur Diskussion um den Widerstand der Kirchen in der nationalsozialistischen Zeit', both in *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte,* 1 (1988), pp. 13 ff., 116 ff.

71 Thus did Kurt Schumacher already speak capriciously of Communists in East Germany as 'red-lacquered Nazis'. Terms coined later such as 'left Fascism'—probably going back to Jürgen Habermas—point in the same direction. This linguistic usage did not become generally used, however.

72 It suffices to recall Renzo de Felice, Rudolf Lill, Jens Petersen and Leo Valiani. See *Totalitarismus und Faschismus. Kolloquium im Institut für Zeitgeschichte am 24. Nov. 1978* (Munich and Vienna, 1980); Karl Dietrich Bracher and Leo Valiani (eds), *Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus,* Vol. I of *Schriften des Italienisch-Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Trient* (Berlin, 1991).

73 On this, Erwin Oberländer *et al.* (eds), *Autoritäre Regime in Ostmitteleuropa 1919–1944* (1995).

74 Hans Günter Adler, *Der verwaltete Mensch. Studien zur Deportation der Juden aus Deutschland* (Tübingen, 1974); Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Der Archipel Gulag,* 3 vols (Reinbek, 1978); Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York, 1983); Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivisation and the Terror-Famine* (London, 1986); Wolfgang Benz (ed.), *Dimension des Völkermords. Die Zahl der jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich, 1991); Zygmunt Bauman, *Dialektik der Ordnung. Die Moderne und der Holocaust* (Hamburg, 1992); Wolfgang Sofsky, *Die Ordnung des Terrors: Das Konzentrationslager* (Frankfurt, 1993).

13
Totalitarianism in eastern Europe and its consequences

A theoretical perspective
Karl Graf Ballestrem

The revolution of 1989 also shook the ideological fronts. Many (Beck, Fest, Ruffin) assert and lament the new uncertainty that has broken out in Western democracies with the disappearance of the common enemy to the east. Yet perhaps such uncertainty also entails a chance to eliminate old prejudices and discuss new themes that had previously been closed up firmly in ideological drawers. In this hope, I wrote an article entitled 'Aprioren der Totalitarismustheorie'[1] in 1991, an article considering whether this theory or approach might contribute to the explanation of the collapse and further development of the states that had been governed by Communists in central and eastern Europe. I would like to pick up on these ideas again today and to continue with a glance at the events of the past three years.

At first glance, this attempt must appear implausible. The theory of totalitarianism, with its accent upon the monopolization of power and the harmonization of social and private life, emphasizes the strength of dictatorships, not their weaknesses—their smooth functioning, not their shaking and collapsing, their suppression of all kinds of opposition and not the possible resistance to them. In the novels too—which have marked our imaginations more than any theory: Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's *1984,* for example—totalitarian systems appear as a closed circulatory system from which there is no escape. But from where, then, are the powers that might overcome them to come in a totalitarian dictatorship?

It is remarkable that those who were forced to live under such regimes continually apply the concept of totalitarianism to articulate their experiences (specifically, their experiences until shortly before 1989 and by no means only those of the Stalin era). They do so, moreover, with complete awareness. Whoever emphasized earlier how important it is to begin with the regime's official self-understanding and to measure it in terms of its own goals should, in his assessment today, at least incorporate the self-understanding of those who had to suffer under these regimes; he should not decide the question concerning the relevance of the totalitarianism approach before he has examined the degree of reflected experience that is expressed in the essays and speeches of someone like Vaclav Havel. The totalitarianism concept, then, is used by former dissidents—but by no means only by them. And it is not used in order to take sides in a dispute among political scientists, but in order to bring to light the historically new and unique element of some dictatorships of the twentieth century. The claim and instruments of power in these dictatorships were apparently unlimited and excluded no sphere of life. Over and again, they stressed how comprehensive and penetrating—how totalitarian—these systems were. Of this, we find two examples. 'Totalitarianism', Karl Jaspers writes, still under the immediate impression of Nazi rule,

is neither Communism, nor Fascism, nor National Socialism, but has emerged in all these forms… To see through it is not easy. It is like an apparatus that sets itself in motion, in that the actors themselves often do not know it even as they are realizing it… Totalitarianism is like a ghoul that drinks the blood of the living and becomes real through it, while the victims continue their existence as a mass of living corpses.[2]

Less dramatic is Vaclav Havel, who, as president of Czechoslovakia, made a New Year's Address in 1990 in which he identified a 'depraved moral atmosphere' as the worst inheritance of totalitarianism. He excepted no one from it:

I speak of all of us. All of us have grown accustomed to the totalitarian system, have accepted it as an inalterable fact and thus have actually retained it in life. In other words: we are all—even if each in a different measure, of course—responsible for the course of the totalitarian machinery; no one is solely its victim; we are all at once its co-creators.[3]

These sentences must seem almost paradoxical, precisely because those expressing them were not unconscious wheels in the totalitarian machinery, not living corpses or adapted co-actors. On the contrary: they were incorruptible, and developed virtues that immunized them against totalitarian temptations. Similar paradoxes often turn up in conversations with eastern Europeans. When their past is mentioned, they lament in subtle analyses everything that totalitarianism has done to their souls and the character of their people; yet, with each word and each insight and much that they do, they refute the premises from which they begin.

Thus, our first result is ambiguous. Those who would have known it the best emphasize the totalitarian character of the dictatorships under which they were forced to live and suffer; yet these nonetheless prove through their existence and manner of being that this power was not unlimited. In interpreting the transition in eastern Europe, the question as to the fruitfulness of the totalitarianism approach must therefore be posed more concretely. To what extent are the categories and distinctions that were developed for understanding the *manner of functioning* of totalitarian dictatorships also suited to illuminating the *collapse* and future *developmental opportunities* of this system? In answering this question, I remain with the well-known characteristics that C.J.Friedrich and Z.Brzezinski worked out in the 1950s. I will consider to what extent these *categories of rule* are at the same time capable of indicating *causes of the collapse* and *burdens for the future.* Or, in other words: to what extent can the characteristics of totalitarian suppression themselves render it conceivable how excessive power is transformed into powerlessness? But also, why are not only signs of the new freedom but also traces of the old rule still to be found in post-totalitarian societies? Here, the headings that I have collected in the following—one-party rule, planned economy, terror, ideology, information monopoly (I have omitted the weapons monopoly)—will be viewed in a broader context that later theoreticians of totalitarianism (Löwenthal, for example) have worked out. Hereby: (1) the five hallmarks are not parallel, but are interrelated. In the centre stands the party, which interprets and legitimates itself and its claim to power with help of the ideology. From this results a primacy of politics, the great task of which—to

build up socialism and Communism—requires a strict subordination of social life and justifies the use of all instruments of power. (2) The model should be understood as dynamic in a radical sense. It is the task of the party to mobilize the society toward a goal that has already been given by the ideology. For this reason, totalitarianism is revolutionary in its approach (by contrast to authoritarianism, which is, as a rule, conservative). In time, such a movement can of course paralyse and ossify the system.

One-party rule

Among the characteristics of totalitarian rule is a party that possesses the state monopoly of power. All the opportunism of a population concentrates itself upon it, for it exerts an enormous drawing power upon all who want to make something of themselves. Undoubtedly, this intake mechanism has a power-enhancing influence—if, for example, the party has a large portion of the jurisdictions that are present in the society at its disposal. In the long term, however, it also has a power-destroying influence. One result is that the party and state bureaucracy become a cumbersome hydrocephalus of the society. Certainly, remedies are continually prescribed to it in the form of mobilizing campaigns and purges; in the long term, however, inefficiency and corruption invariably spread. Another consequence is less apparent: moral counter-elites arise, elites whose reputation is based precisely upon their withdrawal from the suction of the central power. Typically, artists, scientists and intellectuals belong to such elites.

Now with the attempt at a final, decisive, radical remedy called 'Perestroika', the great hydrocephalus at the centre of the empire decapitated itself. And the small hydrocephaluses on the periphery wobbled for a long time, and then fell along with it. The 'power of the powerless', which Vaclav Havel described in 1978 in his essay of the same name, emerged to the light of day. The moral counterelites took part in politics. A multiplicity of new parties took the place of the old monopoly party. Nonetheless, traces of the totalitarian past can be seen everywhere in the new party landscape. Among these traces is the way in which the parties are formed. Drawing on David Hume's distinction, they are often not 'parties from interest', but 'parties from principles' or 'from affection'. They are not parties that mirror the pluralism of interests in a 'civil society', then—and little wonder, because they were totalitarian societies. Rather, they were parties that cohered around common convictions or around the force of attraction of individuals whose fleeting charisma often was by no means positively related to their competence. Typical too is how their party leaders act. Unprepared for bartering and compromise as representatives of interest groups who must get along, they are dogmatic and unwilling to compromise, acting like the sole possessors of truth and the common good.

Another of the consequences of one-party rule is the esteem that the successor parties of the old Communist parties continue to enjoy with the voters. In some countries, such as Kazakhstan or Romania, they were never forced out of power. In others—Slovakia, Poland, Hungary and, most recently, Belarus and Ukraine—they have been returned to power after a period in opposition. Although they have remained in opposition in Russia, they are still a power factor that cannot be overlooked—as was demonstrated by the amnesty law of 23 February 1996, which was passed with a great majority and pardoned all participants of the putsch attempts of 1991 and 1993.

Planned economy

That the party and state leadership itself conducts the national economy, either as a centrally planned economy or as a decidedly regulated one, is one of the hallmarks of totalitarian rule. In retrospect, it might be primarily the cumbersome inefficiency of this economic regime that remains in the memory; ultimately, even the absurdity of a 'commando economy' whose workers evidently could not be forced to work more than three or four hours per day. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that a system of suppression of colossal proportions was involved, one that wrung from its slave labourers enormous achievements in industrializing the land and did not shrink from mass murder (collectivization of the economy, the Gulag) in the process.

The revolution of 1989 that had been initiated by the Polish workers ten years before was also an 'expropriation of the expropriator'—the expropriation of the state capitalists by workers who had learned to see through the lie of 'socialist property' and to fight in solidarity for their interests. Five years later, however, it remained in many places questionable whether and to what extent this expropriation had succeeded. A country like Russia provides the example of a reform politics that is conceived in a contradictory way and half-heartedly implemented.[4] The preconditions and preparedness to assume economic responsibility and risks are lacking everywhere. Those who can and do so are usually the leading economic functionaries of the old system. Added to this is the widespread desire for a 'return to the good life'. Of course, the swing of the pendulum back to Reform Communists that can be seen almost everywhere in central and eastern Europe has economic grounds as well. At that time, one had one's secure livelihood; today, this security has been lost. A further factor is the new wealth, which is perceived as a scandal. Glancing back at history, one might ask the following: an era of original accumulation together with the universal right to vote—when has this ever existed in Europe? There can be no wonder why many for whom things are going badly offer their vote to those who promise the old security and want to slow down the reforms.

Terror and legal insecurity

According to Montesquieu, the principle of the despotic regime is terror and the motive of its citizens' obedience is fear. This holds *a fortiori* for the totalitarian dictatorship. Its terror is partly systematic, in accordance with the theory (the annihilation of the race or class enemy) and partly intentionally arbitrary, unpredictable (it can befall anyone, even the most faithful adherent of the regime).

In time, totalitarian dictatorships lost part of their terror. Arbitrary imprisonments, nightly interrogations, torture, work camps largely disappeared and the average citizen could live peacefully. Some commentators have interpreted this development as liberalization. Theorists of totalitarianism have drawn attention to the two sides of this process: the resolution to open terror diminishes in the leaders of the movement, especially the second and third generations, the less it bears fruit. They are forced to consider traditional motives and interests; they tend to make compromises. On the other hand, the subjects adapt, internalize the rules of the system, lose their old traditions and convictions, and allow themselves to be tempted by a lack of courage and slackness of

thought. Open terror makes itself unnecessary once the drive to freedom has disappeared.[5]

In retrospect, not only the mode of functioning but also the failure of Communist terror regimes can be better understood. Systematic terror can hinder effective opposition and secure the privileges of the possessors of power. But terror can neither legitimate rule nor motivate achievement, and it can certainly not inspire a population with revolutionary *élan* in the long term. On the part of the population, paralysis and standstill are the long-term consequences of terror. When the leaders grant more freedom, they risk opposition. The apparatus of the secret police must remain in place in order to watch over everyone, to control the negative consequences of the new freedom and, in case of emergency, to carry out terror against individuals and make an example of them. Yet this apparatus slowly loses its terror, especially if it threatens to suffocate through its numerous, mainly trivial promotions and if the quality of surveillance diminishes. Although the citizens still live in an atmosphere of mistrust and legal uncertainty, contempt increasingly replaces fear; and, in time, the preparedness to show this contempt and to demonstrate solidarity with others increases as well. Here, the example of the few who have courage and integrity, of those capable of pity and philanthropy despite their persecution, plays a great role. The examples of Adam Michnik and Lech Walesa, of Vaclav Benda and Vaclav Havel, of Jelena Bonner and Andrei Sakharov, have contributed a great deal to the overcoming of paralysis by entire peoples.[6]

In the meantime, institutions of the constitutional state have replaced terror and arbitrariness. New constitutions have established basic rights for the citizens and procedures that secure them. The disappearance of the terror regime was often accompanied by a loss of state authority. Intransparent power-centres exist where the constitution does not provide for them. The citizens are terrorized—not by the state, to be sure, but by those like it (businesspeople by extortionists, for example). To what extent the old followers of the secret police have a hand in this can only be suspected; many believe it. Excessive mistrust, caution and apathy of the population as well can suddenly become open aggression (in waiting in line for hours in front of businesses and administrative authorities, for exampe); longterm observers reckon these among the later consequences of terror.[7]

Ideology

Without a doubt, it was totalitarian to attempt to prescribe Marxism-Leninism as a state ideology that is obligatory for all citizens. And the party leadership, which had to justify its monopoly on power and truth ideologically, took great pains to assert this claim. This resulted not only from the enormous means that were implemented in order to propagate Marxism-Leninism, but also from the persecution of dissidents.

The long-term consequences of this attempt to make thought uniform are well known. On the one hand, it is clear that the prescribed thought was not believed; but on the other hand, it is also clear that ideological language was retained and that corresponding declarations were regularly submitted. From this results the 'life in lies' (Havel) on the one hand and the involuntary assumption of habits of thought (the need for a collective orientation in thinking, for example) on the other.

Since the middle of the 1980s, we can observe how not only Marxism-Leninism in its old, textbook form, but the Marxist approach in general was thrown over-board with lightning speed. There can be no wonder at this on the one hand, because it had already not been convincing. On the other hand, however, it is disquieting because it happened largely without confrontation or dispute. The attempt to orient oneself upon Western habits of thought and languages must often produce frustration—in light of the pluralism that is present there. What persists is the flight into other ideologies, which—like nationalism—also demand a subordination of the individual to the collectivity. Or one returns to the old ideology in a slightly modified form. Thus do surveys in formerly totalitarian states indicate that many (71 per cent in Germany) still hold the basic idea of socialism and Communism to be true and good; it has only been abused or betrayed by individual persons like Stalin.[8] In brief, the consequences of totalitarianism will be felt for a long time still in the area of ideology as well.

Information and propaganda

The opposition between claim and reality, between goals and outcomes that can be observed in the attempt at ideological uniformization can also be found in the information politics of the states governed by Communism. The Party lays claim to a monopoly on information and establishes itself largely through a propagandistic public media that is centrally controlled. One consequence is that, for those who have retained a remnant of critical awareness, the credibility of the censored media sinks toward zero and the interest in alternative sources of information increases. Foreign news is gladly received. Another consequence of this politics of information is an atmosphere of irrationality. Because news cannot be freely discussed and objectively tested, a breeding ground for all kinds of rumours and prejudices, wish fantasies and conspiracy theories is created.

In this area too, despite extensive abolition of the censor and a new variety of printed media, the traces of totalitarianism have not disappeared in central and eastern Europe to this day. As a rule, the direct influence of the regimes upon television is great. Attempts to reintroduce the censor in a roundabout way (something like via the taxation of unwanted newspapers) have been reported from several states (most recently, Bulgaria and Croatia). And the population still often seems to trust privately disseminated rumours more than public news.

To sum up, then, the following might be said: in all areas of the political, economic and intellectual life of the peoples that had previously been governed by Communist parties, a unique dialectic can be observed. Uncontrolled power becomes powerless; central planning has no plan; prescribed creed is discredited. That which seems paradoxical at first proves to be a series of mutual causal relationships. Total power generates powerlessness—at first in the subjects, but indirectly in the rulers as well. Attempts to overcome this powerlessness lead to further losses of power—whether the population's fear and lethargy become more marked or the necessary infusion of freedom produces phenomena of dissolution and summons up counter-powers. Under favourable circumstances, such counterpowers can disrupt the system and get beyond it. Nevertheless, everything that comes afterwards bears the traces of totalitarianism for a long time to come.

This dialectic of total rule corresponds entirely to the premises of the theory of totalitarianism. Although this can be recognized clearly only in retrospect, some researchers of totalitarianism already saw it at an astonishingly early date. Through references to the indestructibility of human nature,[9] to the 'paradoxes of totalitarianism'[10] or the 'islands of isolation', they have thematized the counter-forces that persist or arise wherever total rule does not lead to the point of physical destruction.

Admittedly, that which has been said to this point about this dialectic is highly abstract and is by no means suited to deriving some kind of social scientific explanations or prognoses. It is simply a conceptual framework, which, taking concrete circumstances into consideration, might help to interpret events and developments in certain countries. The number of factors that should be considered here—especially in order to assess the chances for the development of civil societies in individual countries of central and eastern Europe—is potentially infinite. From the perspective of totalitarianism theory, perhaps two factors should be noted above all.

First is to be considered that which Friedrich and Brzezinski have called 'islands of isolation'. These are the institutions and traditions, the social groups and spheres of life that have proved themselves more or less resistant to massive attempt at uniformization. Here should be investigated the social, economic and cultural initial situation of the countries in which totalitarian regimes came to power. Comparative analysis of the conduct of parties, churches, universities, etc. in totalitarian systems belongs here. From this would result, for example, an explanation for the fact that hardly any institution or group resisted the uniformization in the Soviet Union, whereas—by way of comparison—the Church and the majority of intellectuals in Poland did.

Second, the time factor would certainly require attention. It is often said that whether a society was subject to totalitarian rule for 40 or for 70 years makes a great difference. I would not doubt that. Whether memories of pre-totalitarian times are still present with the living and whether possibilities of following old traditions exist is important for the future chances of post-totalitarian societies. From the reflections that have been presented here, however, the time factor turns out to have a possible positive significance as well. To have experienced not only what a totalitarian dictatorship was, but how it came to its end, how the power of the powerless grew and how a peaceful revolution is possible: despite all the scepticism that has been expressed here, these are all experiences that must also be valued as prerequisites for the citizens of central and eastern Europe retaining the freedom gained.

If we now describe the societies and states in central and eastern Europe as *post-totalitarian,* then I assume by this that it is more than a thoughtless habit of speech. On the contrary, we could mean by it three things: (1) that they were once ruled by totalitarian dictatorships; (2) that they have freed themselves from these dictatorships; (3) that both the positive and the negative traces of this era are still present and influence their chances for the future. Here it is assumed that the totalitarianism approach can contribute something to the interpretation of the past, of the revolutionary upheaval and of these countries' future possibilities of development.

Notes

1 Appeared in *Politisches Denken. Jahrbuch* (1991).
2 Karl Jaspers, *Philosophie und Welt. Reden und Aufsätze* (Munich: Piper Verlag, 1958), p. 77.

3 Vaclav Havel, *Angst vor der Freiheit* (Rowohlt, 1991), pp. 9–10.

4 Compare BIOST Analysis No. 6 (1994), or BIOST Report No. 8 (1994) by R.Götz.

5 The best analyses of this connection known to me are Vaclav Havel's 'Offener Brief an Husak' and his 'Versuch in der Wahrheit zu leben' of 1975 and 1978, both published by Rowohlt in 1989 and 1990.

6 Compare on this theme the impressive books of T.G.Ash, *The Uses of Adversity* (New York, 1989) and G.Weigel, *The Final Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

7 Compare on this entire complex the fascinating book by R.Kapuscinski, *Imperium. Sowjetische Streifzüge* (Frankfurt, 1993).

8 According to *Der Spiegel,* 33 (1994).

9 Compare H.Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951) and H.Buchheim, *Totalitäre Herrschaft. Wesen und Merkmale* (Munich, 1962).

10 Thus K.W.Deutsch at the Totalitarianism Conference at Harvard in 1952. In C.J.Friedrich (ed.), *Totalitarianism. Proceedings of a Conference Held at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Cambridge, MA, 1953).

14
Despotism, ersatz religion, religious ersatz

Hans Buchheim

I

In describing the totalitarian regime, I recommend using the concept of 'despotism'.

Aristotle[1] distinguishes 'despotic' rule (over minors and dependents) from 'political' rule (among free and equals). The latter has remained the hallmark of the free state: appearing sometimes under the heading 'political' (e.g. Hobbes[2]), it occurs more often under the term 'republic' (e.g. Rousseau[3]). Wilhelm Hasenclever (Reichstag member of the Social Democratic Party from 1874 to 1888) still poeticized:

> Yes, if the full power of the people
> ventures bright and cheerfully,
> fearlessly and undaunted,
> to create its own peace and happiness:
> Then a people makes its masterpiece,
> Its masterpiece—the republic.

According to Aristotle's distinction, it is important to note that the totalitarian claim to rule—one that suffuses all 'fibres' of the society—is not a 'total *politicization'* of the society; for it ends with *de-politicization* instead. As Hannah Arendt correctly states:

> This is why I also believe that we misunderstand the phenomenon of total rule completely if we believe that a total politicization of life occurs with it, and that this is what destroys freedom. The precise opposite is the case: as with all dictatorships and despotisms, the phenomenon of de-politicization is involved here—only the de-politicization appears so radically that it destroys the element of political freedom in all activities.[4]

In this context, Arendt refers to Montesquieu, who contrasts despotism—as a fundamentally unique kind of rule—to the triad of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. (The latter three, as is well known, could all be 'republican' according to the European tradition of political theory.) Because only the oriental despotisms stood at Montesquieu's disposal as examples of despotism, many of the characteristics named by him do not fit totalitarianism. Nonetheless, there are some important ones:

• The principle of despotism is fear[5] (which is total rule for Arendt).

• The despot knows no limitation by law.[6]
• The nature of despotism demands the strictest obedience.[7]
• Domitian's rule was military; 'this kind of rule represents a sub-type of despotic rule'.[8]

In *Social Contract,* Rousseau characterizes the de-politicization brought about by despotism with remarkable clarity. The dissolution of the state—which, after the social contract, includes all members of the society without exception—is accomplished in two ways. For our purposes, we are concerned here solely with the first one:

> Premièrement quand le prince [the government as executing power] usurpe le pouvoir souverain. Alors ils se fait un changement remarquable; c'est que, non pas le gouvernement mais l'Etat se resserre; je veux dire que le grand État se dissout et qu'il s'en forme un autre dans celui-la, compose seulement des membres du gouvernement et qui n'est plus rien au reste du people que son maître et son tyran.[9]

To capture the phenomenon without prejudice, one could now leave aside the concept, 'de-politicization', and confine oneself to observing the actual process. There are two possibilities for the ordered co-existence of a population's entire society: (1) either its members are subject to a hierarchy of command and obedience; or (2) they can all participate in forming the order of public life, in the production of decisions and the influencing of power relations. If they are subject to the hierarchy of command and obedience, then the requirement to form public life and produce decisions is not eliminated. Nor are the power relations that might be influenced extinguished. All this still occurs, but only within the despot's narrow circle of servants and advisors. To formulate it with Rousseau, the life of the state—and, with that, its politics too!—'contracts itself' to this. And that which is decided in this narrow circle, in power struggles of varying degrees of heatedness, is then commanded to the population in a despotic way.

Rousseau's analyses help render the de-politicization brought about by totalitarian despotism conceivable, insofar as it shows that it is the people of the state that is de-politicized, not the ruler. State and politics do not disappear, but they contract around the *'gouvernement'*. Rousseau's comment, 'et l'État dissoû tombe dans le despotisme ou dans l'anarchie',[10] might be supplemented by two citations from our own time. In his work *Behemoth,* Franz Neumann writes the following: 'The basic inclination of the National Socialists was to eliminate, without remainder, the relics of the rational administrative state…and thereby to transform the little bit of the state that was left over into a kind of organized anarchy.'[11] And in *Führerstaat und Verwaltung im zweiten Weltkrieg* by Dieter Rebentisch, we read the following: 'The National Socialist dictatorship was, accordingly, no mere continuation of the authoritarian state or a particularly brutal variation of the authoritarian constitutional state; much more was it an atavistic association of persons centred upon Hitler's arbitrary rule.'[12]

II

I confess to considering whether we would not more accurately describe the totalitarian ideologies and cult practices by calling them 'religious ersatz' rather than 'ersatz religions'. An ersatz religion is still a religion, just as an ersatz army is still an army. Religious ersatz, by contrast, is just as little a religion as chicory a substitute for coffee—is coffee. (This comparison, by the way, has a philosophical pedigree: 'the healthy human mind, which does not concern itself with education, is taken for genuine philosophizing…it is taken as a good surrogate, just as something like chicory is rumoured to be a surrogate for coffee'.[13])

Now, the answer as to whether totalitarianism involves ersatz religion or merely a religious ersatz depends not only on its peculiar character, but also upon how one defines 'religion'. Voegelin is not convincing here when he writes: 'in order appropriately to understand the political religions, therefore, we must expand the concept of the religious in such a way that not only the soteriological religions, but these other phenomena also fall within it'.[14] If both communication with the paranormal ('devout awe' and conscientious observance) and the 'worship of transcendental powers'[15] are to belong within the concept of religion, then 'belief in Germany', for example, is merely a religious substitute. Here, 'chicory' is administered to the desire for belief—in other words, religious energies are mobilized for the sake of achieving political goals.

III

I wonder whether the only true Fascism—namely, Italian Fascism—should not be fundamentally distinguished from Marxism-Leninism and National Socialism for the following reason: with both of the latter, certain ideas as to how the collective life of the entire society should be ordered are part of the ideology's substance. I avoid the term, 'state order' here because both ideologies negate the state. For Marxism-Leninism, it 'withers away'. And as for the National Socialists, Ernst Rudolf Huber correctly writes: 'we must speak, not of state power, but of power of the leader if we wish accurately to describe political power in the people's Reich'.[16] In this sentence too, by the way, the despotic character of the National Socialist rule is expressed. With Fascism, by contrast, more of an 'attitude' is involved. I cite here from Mussolini: 'Fascism requires the actor, the human being loaded with all the powers of the will: powerful and mindful of all difficulties and prepared to face them. For him, life is a struggle; for it is the lot of the human being to conquer life, which truly possesses value for him.'[17] Or, '"fighting alliance"—in this hard and metallic word lay the entire programme of Fascism as

I envisaged it, as I wanted it, as I created it'.[18] Or, 'when a Finnish philosopher recently requested me to render the essence of Fascism to him in one sentence, I wrote to him in the German language: "We are against the comfortable life." '[19] Or, 'on countless posters and banners was to be read in Italy: "Credere, obbedire, combattare"'.[20]

One can collect these citations and reach the conclusion that Fascism conceived of vitality as an ethical category. This corresponded in a detailed way, by the way, to the

understanding of *'virtù'* of Machiavelli's *Discorsi,* which contains more a theory of political virtue than a political theory. Thus did Mussolini also write: 'I claim that the doctrine of Machiavelli is more vital today than it was four centuries ago.'[21] By this he meant, not the cold and insensitive power calculus of the *Principe,* but the glorification of republican (!) Rome in the *Discorsi.* As

Hermann Heller remarks: 'Fascism sets great store in being a "moral" revolution.'[22]

Notes

1 *Anstotle, Politics,* 1255b.
2 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan,* Ch. XVII at the end.
3 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Social Contract,* I, 6.
4 Hannah Arendt, *Die Neue Rundschau,* 4 (1958), p. 673.
5 Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois,* III, 9.
6 Ibid., III, 8, *passim.*
7 Ibid., III, 10.
8 Ibid., III, 9.
9 Rousseau, *Social Contract,* III, 10. According to Rousseau's own definition in the last paragraph of III, 10 ('Pour donner différents noms a différentes choses, j' appelle "tyran" l' usurpateur de l' autorité royale, et "despote" l' usurpateur du pouvoir souverain') it would of course indeed have to be called 'despot' instead of 'tyran'.
10 Ibid., III, 1.
11 Franz Neumann, *Behemoth* (1977), pp. 21 ff.
12 Dieter Rebentisch, *Führerstaat und Verwaltung im zweiten Weltkrieg* (Wiesbaden, 1989), p. 553.
13 Georg Wilhelm Hegel, 'Einleitung', *Phänomenologie des Geistes.*
14 Eric Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen* (Stockholm, 1939), p. 12.
15 *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (Basel/Stuttgart: Schwabe).
16 Ernst Rudolf Huber, *Verfassungsrecht des Groâdeutschen Reiches* (1939), p. 213.
17 Benito Mussolini, *Der Faschismus: Vom Verfasser autorisierte deutsche Ausgabe,* 1 st edn (Munich, 1933), p. 3.
18 Benito Mussolini, *Der Faschismus: Vom Verfasser autorisierte deutsche Ausgabe,* 4th edn (Munich, 1940), p. 30.
19 Mussolini, *Der Faschismus,* 1st edn, p. 32.
20 Mussolini, *Der Faschismus* (V.Biloni, Brescia, 1938).
21 Mussolini, *Der Faschismus,* 4th edn, p. 76.
22 Hermann Heller, *Europa und der Faschismus,* 2nd edn (Berlin and Leipzig, 1931), p. 54.

15
The conceptions of totalitarianism of Raymond Aron and Hannah Arendt

Brigitte Gess

Part of the nature of such a brief commentary is to select—from the kaleidoscope of elements of this multi-layered theme that are worth discussing—only a few elements that focus in the end on the central, constitutive elements of both terms and conceptions. Here, it is necessary critically to scrutinize the respective origins of these conceptions, their explanatory potential, argumentative correlations and, finally, their indisputable theoretical deficits.

The political symbol peculiar to the twentieth century is manifest in the dictatorship type of government. The totalitarian variety of despotism used legitimating ideological patterns that implied both a total unleashing and an instrumentalization of political power, both the absolutization and the ultimate validity of certain doctrines of race, society or history. The two analytical concepts being debated developed as variants of serious scientific interpretation—variants of the intellectual confrontation by contemporary historians with the formation of different types of dictatorial regimes in Europe. In terms of their ideological and political radicality, these regimes clearly surpassed everything that had been known in history to that point.

Despite the oft-cited renaissance of totalitarianism theory following the collapse of real socialism, the controversy surrounding the significance, actuality and breadth of the totalitarianism (or Fascism) concept in analysing dictatorships continues within the discourses of political science and history.[1]

The concept of 'political religions' was coined by Eric Voegelin to characterize the universal ideologies of the twentieth century.[2] In connection with this, Raymond Aron developed the term 'secular religion'.[3] Both terms encountered little resonance within the specialist disciplines. Happily, reconsideration is occurring here.

At base of the observations that follow lies the conviction that it is by no means obsolete to speak of both totalitarian regimes and totalitarian ideologies. Accordingly, I argue for retaining the totalitarianism concept as an instrument of historico-political analysis. To be sure, it is at the same time necessary to reflect critically here on the use—which has been virulent and inflammatory throughout Germany since 1990—of theories of totalitarianism that are supposedly valid and self-contained in appraising the past of the GDR.

In this context one should be reminded of two significant contributions to the interpretation of total rule and ideology: those of the liberal-conservative French scholar, Raymond Aron, and of the German-Jewish philosopher and political theorist, Hannah Arendt.

In the 1930s, Aron adopted the term of 'political religion' in order to criticize totalitarian ideologies.[4] Following the mid-1940s, he narrowed the term to 'secular religion'[5] and thereby attained eminent significance to the developing literature on liberal totalitarianism in France. Arendt's interpretation of totalitarianism, by contrast, was often falsely subsumed to the hyper-systematized, static theories of totalitarianism in the 1950s. Primarily during the 1960s and 1970s, her interpretation was regarded as antiquated and undifferentiated and forced, as potentially Communist, into the scientific background.[6]

Yet neither Aron nor Arendt intended the formulation of a universal theory of totalitarianism to gain the character of a concept that should be enlisted in the political struggle. On the contrary: their analytical constructs, which had very different accents, correspond in their respective inter-disciplinary orientation, in their differentiated argumentation and their fundamental scrutiny of political systems on the basis of such elementary criteria as the guarantee of human dignity, tolerance and freedom as well as an acknowledgement of the plurality of human existence. In this way, they are capable of communicating important stimuli in the further search for an integrative theory of the despotisms of our century.

A detailed investigation of the totalitarianism concept using Aron's term of *'religion séculière'* would go beyond the boundaries that were set for my remarks on our general theme. For this reason, I will restrict myself in the following to a few basic comments on his critique of ideology and totalitarianism.

As a critical witness of the triumphant progress of totalitarian regimes, Raymond Aron sought and found their main impulse and actual character in their peculiar legitimating ideology—one for which he coined the term *'religions séculières'* or 'secular religions'.[7] As I have already demonstrated in detail elsewhere,[8] this interpretative approach is accessible only on the basis of historico-philosophical and anthropological reflections that he had developed at the end of the 1930s. His conception of a 'free—because undetermined—history that is open toward the future'[9] recognizes the human as an autonomous, historical being—as one who finds himself placed throughout his life in a field of existential tensions of personal choice, decision and action. From this basic insight arises his critique of those universal philosophies of history (Marx, Toynbee, Spengler) that have made a lasting mark on our century: philosophies which all claim to have discovered the ultimate meaning of history, both the basic principle of historical structures and the causal force behind historical development.[10] To him, these philosophies show themselves to be a 'secularization of theologies'.[11] In the act of the 'idolization of history',[12] such theologies obey the personal philosophical possibilities of their creators in a secularized civilization. By contrast to other political ideologies, the secular religions absorb metaphysical, spiritual components; in Aron's view, they are nourished by the substantive core of the universal philosophy of history, for they adapt to the above-cited elements in order to establish a historical truth.

In its character of promising inner-worldly salvation, the secularized religion, eschatological promise and proclamation of an absolute, dogmatic truth instrumentalize history as an instance of legitimation of their respective world-views—world-views that are fixed in stone as true. Accompanying the substitution of Christian belief in a secularized mass society, one finds here both a simplification and a banalization of transcendent belief—even a caricature of it.[13]The secular religions, which therefore have pejorative connotations, transpose the individual human being's formerly transcendent

expectation of benefit and salvation into collective, inner-worldly promises of liberation. These are supposed to provide an 'equivalent of the lost eternity' in the form of new kinds of homogeneous social structures.[14] The enthronement of secular religion as a 'state truth' establishes sacrosanct moral standards and values as supra-individual norms of conduct. The separation of state and society, of state and party, is abolished.[15]

In its categorization of government systems into ideal types, Aron's totalitarianism conception agrees with essential points of the catalogue of characteristics of C.J.Friedrich.[16] This is why its original insight should be emphasized: the insight that ideology mutates into a secular religion with the assumption of central theorems of universal philosophies of history. Only a secular religion has at its disposal the human-mobilizing energy that is required to bring the totalitarian political system into being. For all their differences on the details, both the hyper-rational variant of totalitarianism (Marxism-Leninism) and its irrational version (National Socialism) evince a basic commonality in their respective potential to execute the terror ordered by the ideology, and thus by the state, in a bureaucratically rational way.[17]

The German-Jewish theorist Hannah Arendt reaches a different conclusion. In the context of her studies in the 1920s, the existential-philosophical sketches of Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers were her formative and directive intellectual discoveries.[18] The experience of an unleashing of hitherto unimaginable intolerance, fanaticism and violence in the wake of the triumphant progress of National Socialism aroused her interest and understanding of politics.[19] Her magnum opus, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*—which counts today among the 'modern classics of political science'[20]—can be properly understood against the foil of this personal experience and the psychic upheaval that accompanied her certain knowledge of the consequences of the crimes in the concentration camps of the totalitarian systems.[21] In the three sections of this monumental investigation—anti-Semitism, imperialism and total rule—she expressly does not seek the causal connections of historical development; instead, she intends to provide a phenomenological, existential-philosophical inquiry into the pre-histories and an understanding of possible influencing factors and their interdependence.[22]

In her reflections on anti-Semitism, Arendt becomes convinced that it is not a specifically German phenomenon, but should be construed as a universally European standard instead. This is because it is closely tied to the internal decomposition of the nation-state and the development of imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century.[23] The essence of her analysis of both continental and transatlantic imperialism is the following: in tracing, throughout the process of the decay of the nation-states, the spread of a pre-totalitarian, racist expansionism combined with an unlimited striving for power, she finds that it is carried by the mob—the disadvantaged of all layers of the industrial society under the leadership of a bourgeois, capitalist elite.[24]

The centrepiece of her study of totalitarianism is entitled 'Total Rule'. Here, Arendt undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the structure and function of National Socialism, as well as—incorporated afterwards—the era of Stalinism (1929–41, 1945–53) in the Soviet Union. In this analysis, she attempts to prove the existence of an essential similarity between both totalitarian systems—albeit one solely from the standpoint of a political criterion of judgement.[25] With this, Arendt joins the camp of those interpreters who understand totalitarianism as a novum in the genealogy of types of human rule. Yet beyond this, her interpretative attempt should be counted as a philosophical sketch of

individual existence in twentieth-century technical society. Total rule can take root only in the soil of a tremendously fast expansion of modern mass society, complete with its characteristic uprooting of the individual.[26] The First World War, as Arendt emphasizes, created a social sphere in Europe for which the individual increasingly experienced himself as exchangeable, abandoned and isolated. An atomized society with a disappearing public spirit becomes easy prey for totalitarian movements: *en masse,* the individuals seek refuge in a pseudo-scientific, integrated ideology of history and race.[27]

In her analysis of the mechanisms of the structure and function of total organizations, Arendt emphasizes their dynamic total character: the ruling apparatus is said to be based on a rigid differentiation of organizations of fronts, on a distinction between sympathizers, party members and elite groups and on the appointment of all functionaries by the leader.[28] The incontestable omnipotence of a radical leader is guaranteed by the party organization, which has the structure of an onion.[29] For the political regime, which thereby reveals itself to have no structure, this ensures fluctuating hierarchies and the duplication, multiplication and competition of state jurisdictions or parties. Beyond this, it ensures a perennial shifting of the power-centre as a function of the leader's will—a will that is as variable as it is unpredictable.[30] In Arendt's opinion, the terroristic secret police as executor of the higher logic of an ultimately valid ideology, as charged with eliminating human groups that are branded as 'objective enemies'—comprises the totalitarian 'cement', as it were, of the fully developed system complete with its discouraged, sympathizing population.[31]

The fusion of terror and ideology reaches its inhuman climax in the institution of camps whose purpose is an assembly-line type of mass annihilation. It is these camps that transform totalitarianism into a phenomenon *sui generis.*[32] According to Arendt's argument, these concentration camps also serve a much more ominous experiment: namely, the project 'to abolish spontaneity as a human mode of conduct and transform the human being into a thing'.[33] It is an ideological goal, therefore, to transform human nature, its being, as well as to prove that the human being as such can become superfluous.[34] For Arendt, a caesura in Western civilization has been reached here: there comes to light a 'radical evil'[35] that eludes both forgiveness and punishment by the human being. Terror, therefore, is the actual nature of total rule.

At this point, it would seem appropriate to illuminate Arendt's concept of ideology somewhat more closely. Throughout her entire work, one searches in vain for such terms as 'political religions' or 'secular religions'. For her, totalitarian ideologies show themselves to be a 'kind of supra-sense' that claims 'to have found the key to history, or the solution to all problems'.[36] In order not to have to expose themselves to the continually growing complexity of reality, human beings flee into the logically absolute consistency of an image of the world that renders the future predictable. By contrast to the theorists who see a substitute for transcendental belief in the sense of a political religion in totalitarian ideologies, Arendt sees the 'motor of inevitable consequences' in the sense of the 'logic of deduction'. This motor keeps the realization of the supernatural being—or laws of history—that is regarded as sacrosanct in motion.[37] Parallel to this, the traditional framework by which human society is stabilized develops in the form of statutes of positive law. And terror, as the highest law of movement toward the goal either of fulfilling the meaning of history or of determining nature, completely

extinguishes both social and moral frames of reference—the guaranteed areas of human freedom, action and communication.[38]

Why does Arendt reject the terminology of 'secularized' or 'inner-worldly religion' in determining the nature of the concept of totalitarian ideology?

In her 1953 essay, 'Religion and Politics', she offers a detailed critique of the discussion of 'secular religions', which posits that religion has again entered into the public-political space from which it had been excluded since the separation of Church and state.[39] She regards this development with great scepticism, for she sees it as an 'undeserved compliment'[40] that totalitarian ideology be placed on the same level as religion. Totalitarian ideologies are said to have renounced the Western philosophical tradition of doubt and secularity long ago. On this matter, she notes the following:

> theology treats the human being as a reasonable being who poses questions and whose reason needs appeasement, even if he is expected to believe in something that lies beyond reason. An ideology treats the human being as though he were a falling stone who possesses the gift of consciousness and thus is capable of observing, in the case of Newton, laws of gravity.[41]

On the basis of a double doubt, Arendt rejects the interpretative approach of secular religion—an approach that regards totalitarian ideology as an extreme manifestation of inner-worldly heresy. First, she regards it as questionable that the demise of all authority in our world is the expression of a religious crisis. And second, the concept of freedom is by no means an achievement of religion; Christianity, for example, has brought with it solely freedom *from* politics.[42] Neither is Arendt convinced by the social-scientific approach, which sees ideology as performing a function analogous to that of religious communities for its adherents: she holds this approach to be solely functional and sees in it the danger, as 'religion without God' in a world for which religion no longer affects public life, of making the blasphemous statement that the world has 'driven God from religion'.[43] Arendt is convinced that twentieth-century human beings have fallen from both transcendent and immanent worlds and have been left to themselves in complete desolation. Accordingly, she regards it as fatal to bring 'religious passion' back into political, public life, or to enlist religion as a criterion of political distinction; the result might be 'the transformation and perversion of religion into an ideology'.[44]

Let us now turn to some concluding observations. The explanations offered above have undoubtedly made it clear that the contributions of Raymond Aron and Hannah Arendt to the critique of ideology and totalitarianism both possess a high degree of interpretative originality stamped by an inter-disciplinary orientation. Consequently, they can be thoroughly regarded as milestones of research—both in the history of philosophy and in political science—on despotic regimes of our century. Furthermore, owing to the history of their reception—which has not been unproblematic in either case—they have at their disposal an explanatory potential that has not yet been exhausted.

As an engaged advocate of political liberalism in the tradition of Montesquieu, Tocqueville and Max Weber, Aron argues—not least based on intensive anthropological-historical, socio-economic and political analyses—in defence of the 'constitutional-pluralistic regime'. He saw this regime to have been developed most fully in the

democratic-liberal systems of Western provenance.[45] Directed by Max Weber's concepts of politics and rule—with their basic question as to the legitimacy and authority of political systems—he traced the authentic roots of the denaturing of political rule by the doctrines of universal history that are inherent in totalitarian ideologies.[46] Critical in this context is the discovery of a transcendent, religious momentum of secular religions resulting from the decay of the religious vitality and authority of the Christian churches: the amalgamation of prophetism and mythicization, of the consciousness of messianic mission and promises of immanent salvation.

As Aron's contribution illustrates, theoretical approaches in the analysis of totalitarianism—approaches arising in the context of the classical totalitarianism theory of the 1950s—must not end with generalizing, systematizing attempts that ignore the complexity of the historical event.

In contemporary discussions in both political science and history—and above all in the one surrounding the reappraisal of the GDR regime and its legitimating ideology—it would be desirable to see more attention paid to the concept of secular religion in particular. To this point, reception of this contribution (and the German reception above all), as of the Aronian work in general, has been very limited.[47]

Now, as ever, Arendt's contribution to the interpretation of the phenomenon of totalitarianism in the twentieth century is surrounded with controversy. It, too, has not to date been scientifically investigated in all its facets and dimensions.[48] Certainly, this should be attributed not only to the circumstance that Hannah Arendt was devoted to 'thinking without boundaries'.[49] As a consequence, her self-imposed lack of location in the political topography prevented her from being incorporated into the pattern of political traditions and directions with which we are familiar. Yet this also results from the fact that *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is probably accessible to comprehensive interpretation only with difficulty—owing to such compositional peculiarities as associative thought, essayistic elements and methodological imprecision.

In conclusion, three points of Arendt's study of totalitarianism will be mentioned. These reflect both the special intellectual attraction of her reflections and their innovative potential.

The first point concerns Arendt's description of totalitarianism as a novum in the history of political forms of rule—and one that should be classified as a degenerative form of political power. Yet, for her, this organizational form of power, which is in itself unstable, also marks a basic 'calling into question of the political'[50] as such; the denaturing variants of terror in the concentration camps attained a quality that gave rise to the suspicion of 'radical evil'[51] in the world. Arendt's attendant conviction that totalitarianism seeks to transform human nature itself was heavily criticized—by Eric Voegelin, for example.[52] In my opinion, however, this thesis of hers has not yet been sufficiently considered.

The second point concerns the potential of her philosophy of the individual existing in modern mass society. In my opinion this philosophy located in the totalitarianism study has not yet been exhausted. In this respect, her diagnosis is that the individual is left to himself through his isolation, desolation and loss of contact with the public world of public matters; in privacy, he indulges solely his subjective claims to security and well-being.[53] This explains the disappearance of community spirit, the successive abstention from forming one's own opinions, and an accompanying incapacity to gain authentic

experiences in a reality that becomes increasingly fragmentary. If one takes into account the basic existential state of the individual in this century thus characterized, the potential breeding ground of totalitarian movements is impressively illuminated.

A third and final point results from Arendt's specific characterization of totalitarian rule as a degenerate form, a denaturing of the political. This simultaneously raises the question as to the sense of politics and the real significance of power.

She fundamentally rejects the classical metaphysical theory of political action, which recognizes the concept of rule as the dominant point of reference and thereby implies a monopoly of power, however it may be construed.

Returning to the Aristotelian foundation of political action, she is intensely critical of an idea that has been commonly acknowledged since Thomas Hobbes: the idea that politics is conducted in the mode of making.[54] Only in the spontaneous process of acting and speaking with one another in the public space can freedom—which Arendt recognizes as the meaning of politics—manifest itself.[55] Political power is established through a web of relations of individuals acting, for all their existential variety, as a community of equals. In the community, in the direct exchange of ideas with other capacities of thought, in the pleasure of reaching a decision and in the power of reflective judgement, the human being is formed—a being who is by no means equipped with political substance by nature.[56] Wherever the community is lost, wherever plurality and spontaneity are betrayed and the political is transformed into sheer power, the ravages of totalitarianism threaten. Recent historical experience seem to prove her correct when she remarks:

> The conditions under which we live in the political field today are threatened by this ravaging sandstorm. Their danger is not that they could establish something enduring. Totalitarian rule, like tyranny, carries the seed of its corruption within itself. Just as fear, and the powerlessness from which it originates, represent an anti-political principle and a situation contrary to political action, so are desolation and the strictest logico-ideological deduction that arises from it an anti-social situation and a principle that destroys all human co-existence.[57]

Notes

1 Compare here Eckhard Jesse, 'Der Totalitarismus-Ansatz nach dem Zusammenbruch des real-existierenden Socialismus', *Die Neue Gesellschaft/Frankfurter Hefte,* 38, 11 (1991), pp. 983 ff.; also Andreas Schworck, 'Der nächste Historikerstreit kommt bestimmt', *Die Neue Gesellschaft/Frankfurter Hefte,* 39, 8 (1992), pp. 1103 ff. and above all 1105 ff.

2 See Eric Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen,* ed. Peter J.Opitz (Munich, 1993). The treatment appeared for the first time in Vienna in early 1938.

3 Raymond Aron used this term for the first time in the year 1944, in a two-part essay in the journal *La France libre.* See Aron, 'L'avenir des religions séculières', *Commentaire,* 8, 28–29 (February 1985). Also Raymond Aron, *Raymond Aron. 1905–1983. Histoire et politique* (Paris, 1985), pp. 369–83.

4 Raymond Aron used this concept in 1939, in his essay, 'Élie Halévy et 1'ère des tyrannies', in clear reliance on the content of Eric Voegelin's definition. Compare the first German translation, 'Das Zeitalter der Tyranneien', in Joachim Stark (ed.), *Raymond Aron: Über*

Deutschland und den Nationalsozialismus. Frühe politische Schriften 1930–1939 (Opladen, 1993), pp. 186–208, where he speaks on p. 207 of 'political religions'.

5 See note 3. Raymond Aron regards himself as the 'father of this concept'. Compare Raymond Aron, *Fortschritt ohne Ende? Über die Zukunft der Industriegesellschaft* (Munich, 1970), footnote 7 on p. 277.

6 See here Klaus Schroeder and Jochen Staadt, *Der diskrete Charme des Status Quo. DDR-Forschung in der Ära der Entspannungspolitik* (Berlin, 1992), pp. 3 ff., 15 ff., 36 ff. and especially 28–35.

7 Compare Aron, 'L'avenir des religions séculières', and Aron, 'Les intellectuels français et l'utopie', *Preuves, cahiers mensuels du Congrés pour la liberté de la Culture,* published under the direction of F.Bondy, No. 50 (Paris, April 1955), pp. 5–14. Aron undertakes perhaps his most intensive interpretation of the concept of 'secular religion' in the work, *Opium für Intellektuelle oder die Sucht nacht Weltanschauung* (Cologne and Berlin, 1957).

8 Compare Brigitte Gess, *Liberales Denken und intellektuelles Engagement. Die Grundzüge der philosophisch-politischen Reflexionen Raymond Arons* (Munich, 1988), pp. 15–87. Compare in addition the source texts of Aron, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History: An Essay on the Limits of Historical Objectivity* (Westport, CT, 1979).

9 Gess, *Liberales Denken und intellektuelles Engagement,* p. 195.

10 Compare Aron, *Opium für Intellektuelle,* pp. 144 ff., 180 ff. and 240; Raymond Aron, *Dimensions de la conscience historique* (Paris, 1961), pp. 83, 91; Raymond Aron, *L'Histoire et ses interprétations. Entretiens autour de Arnold J.Toynbee sous la direction de Raymond Aron* (Paris, 1961), pp. 42 ff., 114; Raymond Aron, *Hauptströmungen des klassischen soziologischen Denkens. Montesquieu—Comte—Marx—Tocqueville* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1979), pp. 135 ff., 143 ff., 167 ff., 176.

11 Aron, *Opium für Intellektuelle, p. 187.*

12 Ibid., p. 237.

13 Compare Raymond Aron, *Erkenntnis und Verantwortung. Lebenserinnerungen* (Munich and Zurich, 1985), pp. 485 ff., and Aron, 'Das Zeitalter der Tyranneien', p. 207.

14 Aron, *Opium für Intellektuelle,* p. 377.

15 Raymond Aron, *Die letzten Jahre des Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1986), p. 139.

16 Compare to this the six criteria of totalitarian rule of Carl Joachim Friedrich (with Z.Brzezinski), *Totalitäre Diktatur* (Stuttgart, 1957), pp. 19 ff.; on the catalogue of characteristics of totalitarian rule in Raymond Aron's work, see Gess, *Liberales Denken und intellektuelles Engagement,* pp. 106 ff.

17 Compare Raymond Aron, 'L'avenir des religions séculières', pp. 373 ff., 375 ff. On the distinction between National Socialist and Soviet totalitarianism, see Gess, *Liberales Denken und intellektuelles Engagement,* p. 108. On the relevance of totalitarianism theory, see Raymond Aron, 'Noch einmal: Hitler. Wie haltbar ist die Totalitarismus-Theorie?', *Der Monat,* 1, 278 (Weinheim und Basel, 1981), pp. 42–55.

18 Compare here Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Hannah Arendt. Leben und Werk* (Frankfurt, 1986), pp. 83–127.

19 Compare Hannah Arendt in Melvyn A.Hill (ed.), *Hannah Arendt: The Recovery of the Public World* (New York, 1979), p. 336. See here also Hannah Arendt in conversation with Günter Gaus, in Günter Gaus, 'Zur Person: Hannah Arendt', *Schriftenreihe des ZDF* (January 1965), pp. 21, 29.

20 Alfons Söllner, 'Totalitarismus. Eine notwendige Denkfigur des 20. Jahrhunderts', *Mittelweg,* 36, 2nd Jahrgang (April/May 1993), p. 87. Compare Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1951)—in German translation, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft* (Frankfurt, 1955; German TB-Ausgabe, Munich, 1986).

21 See Hannah Arendt in conversation with Günter Gaus, in Gaus, 'Zur Person', p. 24, and compare Young-Bruehl, *Hannah Arendt,* pp. 285, 294.

22 Compare Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* pp. 289 (Arendt's statements about the 'nature of total rule' in a lecture at the New School of Social Research, 1954) and 300. Compare also Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft,* p. 705.

23 Compare Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft,* pp. 27 ff. and see the entire section on 'anti-Semitism,' pp. 15–206.

24 Compare ibid., pp. 209–470 on the theme of 'imperialism' and see especially pp. 211 ff., 218 ff., 252 ff. and 358 ff. on the aspects mentioned. On the concept of the 'mob', see primarily pp. 188 ff.

25 Compare ibid., pp. 13 ff. and above all, p. 705.

26 Compare ibid., pp. 499 and 502 on the definition of the concept of 'mass', and on 'rootlessness', pp. 513 ff.

27 Compare ibid., pp. 523 ff. and 546 ff.

28 Compare ibid., pp. 575 ff. on 'total organization' and pp. 609–702 on 'total rule'.

29 Compare ibid., pp. 575 ff., 588 ff. and 628 ff.

30 Compare ibid., pp. 609 ff. and especially pp. 621 ff. and 639 ff.

31 Compare ibid., 647 ff. and especially 654 ff.

32 Compare ibid., pp. 676–702 and 703–30.

33 Compare ibid., p. 677.

34 Compare ibid., pp. 675 ff., 683 ff., 701 ff.

35 Compare ibid., pp. 701 ff. and 683.

36 Compare ibid., p. 699.

37 Ibid., pp. 700 (first citation), 722 (second citation), and see, on this theme, pp. 699–724.

38 Compare ibid., pp. 703–20, especially 705–16.

39 Compare Hannah Arendt, 'Religion and Politics', in Ursula Ludz (ed.), *Hannah Arendt: Zwischen Vergangenheit und Zukunft. Übungen im politischen Denken I* (Munich, 1994), pp. 305–26.

40 Ibid., p. 308.

41 Ibid.

42 Compare ibid., pp. 309 ff. In this context, Arendt refers primarily to the argumentation of Eric Voegelin.

43 Arendt fears a 'de-substantialized functionalization of our categories' by the perspective of social science. See ibid., p. 317 (also the two citations in the text).

44 Ibid., pp. 323 ff. On the concept of 'desolation', see Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft,* pp. 727–30.

45 Raymond Aron, *Demokratie und Totalitarismus* (Hamburg, 1970), pp. 77 ff.; compare Aron, *Erkenntnis und Verantwortung,* pp. 275 ff., and compare, on Aron's concept of liberalism, Gess, *Liberales Denken und intellektuelles Engagement,* pp. 222–8.

46 Compare on the anthropological and historical-philosophical conception of Aron, Gess, *Liberales Denken und intellektuelles Engagement,* pp. 15–69.

47 Whereas a veritable 'Aron renaissance' (preparation of collected works, editions from writings of the archives, etc.) can be observed in France since the mid-1980s, an intensive scientific discussion of his *œuvre* has not yet got under way.

48 On the current state of the discussion, see Helmut Dubiel, 'Das nicht angetretene Erbe. Anmerkungen zu Hannah Arendt's politische Theorie', *Ungewißheit und Politik* (Frankfurt, 1994), pp. 29–66. Peter Kemper, *Die Zukunft des Politischen. Ausblicke auf Hannah Arendt* (Frankfurt, 1993). Gert Schäfer, *Macht und öffentliche Freiheit. Studien zu Hannah Arendt* (Frankfurt, 1993).

49 Hannah Arendt, in Melvyn A.Hill (ed.), *Hannah Arendt: The Recovery of the Public* World (NewYork, 1979), p. 336.

50 Hannah Arendt, 'Was ist Politik?', in Ursula Ludz (ed.), *Fragmente aus dem Nachlaß* (Munich and Zurich, 1993), p. 30.

51 Compare L.Köhler and H.Saner (eds), *Hannah Arendt/Karl Jaspers Briefwechsel 1926–1969* (Munich, 1985), footnote 35, letter from Arendt to Jaspers of 4 March 1951, pp. 202 ff. on the concept of 'radical evil'.
52 Compare Eric Voegelin, 'The Origins of Totalitarianism', *Review of Politics,* 15, 1 (1953), pp. 68–85.
53 Compare in this context Arendt's definition of the *'Spießer'* in *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft,* p. 543.
54 Compare Hannah Arendt, *Vita activa oder Vom tätigen Leben* (Munich, 1981), pp. 290 ff.
55 Compare Arendt, 'Was ist Politik?', p. 28.
56 Compare ibid., p. 11.
57 Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft.,* pp. 729 ff.

16
Reflections on future totalitarianism research

Eckhard Jesse

My brief contribution seeks to present, in thesis form, a few considerations concerning the research strategy for the concept of totalitarianism. Preceding these is an analysis concerning the change of the concept in the past. There is probably scarcely any other scientific theory that evinces so many twists and turns in its history. Through the collapse of 'real existing socialism', a caesura has been reached in the totalitarianism research. This is why a few remarks on a discussion that is as relevant as it is explosive will open my contribution.

The relevance and explosiveness of the discussion on totalitarianism

Following the almost worldwide collapse of Communism, the theme lost its political explosiveness on the one hand. On the other, however, it might be misused anew in an attempt to gain political hegemony—this time from the conservative side, which might 'impale' the conceptions of former critics of the concept. Even those who had been strong critics of the totalitarianism concept to this point find themselves required to confirm the scientific integrity of the conception and do not dispute the earlier tabooing of it by a great portion of the Left.[1] There is surprising testimony indicating that even former critics are revaluating the totalitarianism concept, in light of the disastrous inheritance of 'real existing socialism'. Thus does someone like Jürgen Habermas state:

> We are…contemporaries of a totalitarianism that emerges in many shapes, one that has posed potential for violence in the state bureaucracies themselves. In the GDR, for example, the powerful state-security apparatus has dissolved right before our eyes; this reminds us of the criminal energies of a state terrorism on German soil that had intensified to the point of calculated mass annihilation of arbitrarily defined inner enemies.[2]

It remains to be added only that the 'dissolution of the powerful apparatus of state security' was not required in order to become aware of 'totalitarianism emerging in many forms'. What in fact occurred was the 'silent victory of a concept'.[3] The term 'silent' seems appropriate because most critics of the concept now assume it without making much fuss about it. The objections of those—like Wolfgang Harich, the founder of the alternative *Enquete-Kommission Deutsche Zeitgeschichte,* who died in March 1995—

who describe the totalitarianism concept as 'completely useless and unscientific' represent the mainstream neither of research nor of journalism. Harich writes: 'A fighting concept. No one thinks to compare the dictatorship of the Arabian caliphs with that of the Roman Church or of Old Fritz. This is assessed according to purely formal criteria.'[4] In a remarkable contrast to the acceptance of totalitarianism research in principle—which had occurred, at least in the former Federal Republic of Germany—there is a reserved attitude concerning the research on extremism. In the intellectual circles that form opinion, extreme tendencies of the Right and the Left are judged according to different standards to this day. One distances oneself decisively from the first, whereas one warns that the second should not be excluded from the social consensus. As the 'totalitarian experience'[5] of the twentieth century makes clear, an understanding of democracy that is solely anti-Fascist or solely anti-Communist has tidally disastrous consequences. The basis of the discrepancy is obvious: in the former case is involved a phenomenon that is basically past, whereas the latter involves a highly contemporary one. To this extent, one should not overestimate the general receptiveness toward totalitarianism research. Perhaps it is in part merely a fleeting reflex surrounding the collapse of the Communist system. And assumption of the vocabulary does not yet permit a compelling conclusion that the concept has been accepted.

As has been demonstrated, the contemporary renaissance of the totalitarianism concept is by no means accompanied by a reappraisal of right-extremist thought. In light of this circumstance, the sarcastic idea of Heinrich Senfft is completely erroneous: 'Presumably, we will succeed in comparing really existing socialism with the National Socialist era to the point that a total equation becomes generally accepted. And, concerning the crime of the SED regime, the 50 million dead of the Nazi war will have disappeared.'[6] The concern of many—and the hope of a few appears to be unjustified. The memory of the National Socialist era has not fallen from the public consciousness; on the contrary, the proximate comparison provides a fresh, indirect reminder of National Socialism. Moreover, many East Germans only now find themselves confronted with certain aspects of National Socialism. Owing to the analogy with its own system (like the discrimination against dissidents) or to fact that they were not instrumentalizable (like the murder of Jews), these aspects were not—or not sufficiently—discussed in the GDR.

At the same time, one should not fail to appreciate the circumstance that, compared to the extreme left, it is overwhelmingly difficult for the extreme right to warm to the totalitarianism concept. (The latter, to be sure, has been isolated even after the collapse of Communism in the intellectual milieu.) A dictum like that of Armin Mohler comes to mind:

> Third Reich and GDR have…little to do with one another. That both were 'dictatorships' is very general as a shared designation. Even the word 'totalitarian' does not capture the Third Reich and the GDR in the same way. One should not overlook the fact that it is a fighting concept created by the liberals: the dual warning against 'extremists of Left and Right' is to obliterate from memory the shared origins of liberalism and Marxism-Leninism in the Enlightenment and the subterranean relationships that resulted from it.[7]

A treasonous formulation is involved here, insofar as the anti-liberal and anti-leftist Mohler doe not attribute the totalitarian elements enough significance to the life of the people living in such systems. To the individual in a dictatorship no matter what his ideological inclination—the motivation behind the respective promise of happiness does not play the slightest role. It is not so much the finding that both the GDR and National Socialism emerge as totalitarian as the justification that requires criticism.

The totalitarianism concept through the decades

Between the two world wars, there arose political forms that were described as totalitarian by virtue of their comprehensive claim to rule—Italian Fascism, German National Socialism and Soviet Communism. Certainly, the concept was first formed, not during the Russian Revolution, but in Italy.[8] This concept coined by Giovanni Amendola—a liberal opponent of Italian Fascism at the beginning of the 1920s—was new, just as the phenomenon that he described was perceived to be of a new kind. The resulting conceptions claimed to be able to classify different and even opposite political forms as totalitarian in terms of their ruling technique. The *differentia specifica* of the totalitarianism concepts became obvious through the distinctness of the totalitarian state—first, from the democratic constitutional state, second, from an authoritarian dictatorship and third, from all earlier forms of autocracy. Thus, totalitarianism is at once anti-democratic, pseudo-democratic and post-democratic. Those systems that seek to form citizens through an ideology, which attempt at once to capture and to mobilize them by means of control and force, are regarded as totalitarian.[9]

The first scientific symposium on the 'totalitarian state' occurred in November 1939. It concerned both the Soviet Union and the Third Reich: 'totalitarian' had become a common expression for Germany and the Soviet Union even before the formation of the concept. Soon after the attack by the National Socialist regime on the Soviet Union, the totalitarianism concept lost its earlier significance. This 'dependence upon the international constellation'[10] was palpable. After 1945, as the utilitarian alliance between the Soviet Union and the Western allies shattered during the Cold War, totalitarianism research fairly blossomed. The names of Hannah Arendt and Carl Joachim Friedrich might serve as representative for many others. It was predominantly German emigrants who rendered the outstanding service of developing and analysing the concept of totalitarianism. Alongside Arendt and Friedrich should be named, among others, Franz Borkenau, Ernst Fraenkel, Waldemar Gurian, Franz Neuman, Sigmund Neumann— researchers who in part sympathized with and even issued from the democratic worker movement. The names themselves refute the view that the totalitarianism conception was spawned by the Cold War. To these authors, it was absolutely clear that one could not be anti-Fascist without also being anti-Communist—to recall the famous words of George Orwell.

The multiple stages of totalitarianism research, with its countless 'twists' and 'turns',[11] are partly a reaction to the transition of those ruling orders that had been classified as totalitarian. In part, these stages also reflect shifts in the Western democratic system of political coordinates. When the politics of conciliation began to set in at the end of the 1960s, the cultural-revolutionary movement of the students developed liberality on the

one hand, but indirectly undermined it on the other; and experiences of an Arthur Koestler or of a Manés Sperber, experiences as bitter as they were immediate, often fell into oblivion.[12] Peace was regarded as the sole value, as it were, but without asking sufficiently about its costs—and this precisely for the citizens of eastern European dictatorships, or of Germany, in any case.[13] In the 1970s, the opinion that the totalitarianism concept lived on prevailed. It was often attempted not to place Communism alongside National Socialism and Fascism. Characteristic of this view is a statement by the Soviet historian, Sergei Slutsch. (And does it not shed light upon the intellectual milieu of the Federal Republic at the time?)

> A few years ago, I travelled through the Federal Republic of Germany together with a group of members of the 'Memorial' society. For the first time, I heard in several discussions the following words—words which were not expressed without a certain irritation: 'Why do you place such emphasis on the extent of Stalin's crimes, crimes that cloak the misdeeds of Hitler and his regime? Do you not understand that, in doing so, you pour water on the mill of our rights?'[14]

Nonetheless, the totalitarianism concept underwent a renaissance in the 1980s. This was due to various factors—not the least of them dissidents from the Eastern bloc. The Eastern bloc began to crumble; and belief in the reformability of Communism ebbed even for those who had betted upon its capacities for change in principle. And, as Gorbachev came to the helm, news that confronted a broad public with the burdens of the past was soon revealed. This circumstance also favoured the revival of reflections on the theory of totalitarianism.

Theses for future totalitarianism research

First: the history of totalitarianism research in Germany is—*cum grano salis*—a history of its dependence upon political constellations. This is essentially a reaction to the dual nature of an approach that is normatively anchored on the one hand, and empirical-analytical on the other. With the almost complete disappearance of totalitarian systems, discussion of the meaning and analytical limits of the approach can be more casual; for considerations of political opportunism scarcely play a role any more. To this extent, there is still hope that the swings of the pendulum in assessing concepts in the theory of totalitarianism prove to be less extreme than they have been in the past. It is, in any case, a dubious sign that the estimation of a theory is subject—even in an open society—to tendencies bound so strongly to the spirit of the times.

Second: the totalitarianism concept may have experienced a revaluation following the almost worldwide demise of Communism. This circumstance is not necessarily a sufficient indication of its plausibility, however; and conversely, the approach has not become useless simply because it can no longer be used as a political instrument. Indeed, the following paradox applies: the explanatory capacity of the approach has risen with the almost complete disappearance of totalitarian systems. Following the demise of the totalitarian regimes, astounding structural analogies between right and left dictatorships

have become apparent even to those who did not previously wish to know especially much about it. The following theoretical postulate has become as treacherous as it is popular: that critical reflection 'from the contemporary viewpoint' is required, as though the totalitarian features had not previously been recognizable. Criticism of theories of totalitarianism also (if not solely) served to de-legitimize the constitutional democracy. Conversely, defence of the totalitarianism concept can now not be allowed to lead to an idealization of constitutional democracies. Self-impressed triumphalism is not a good advisor in the scientific contemplation of failed political systems.

Third: even those who regard the Third Reich and the Soviet Union (particularly under Stalin) as totalitarian at base do not escape realizing that these dictatorships developed mechanisms of integration that made it possible for citizens—or, at least, for some of them; I except the party members entirely for now—to come to terms with the political system. The pseudo-democratic character of the dictatorships seeks to monopolize the population in order to realize the noble ends of the regime. Totalitarian states are based not only upon suppression, but also on seduction, mobilization and integration of the people. This is why the research must make people aware, not only of the repressive, but also of the attractive sides of such systems. At any rate, the people predominantly believed for a time in a truth-claim that offered beatifying ideologies, the promise of happiness and explanation of the world alike. Whoever reduces totalitarian systems to terror and violence cannot explain the nostalgia that arises in part following the demise of these systems. The situation after 1989 did not differ from the one after 1945.

Fourth: in light of the rapid decay of totalitarian dictatorships at the end of the 1980s (excepting Romania, without much resistance), totalitarianism research must attempt to work out, not only those elements that emphasize the strength of the dictatorial order, but also those factors that contributed to the collapse of totalitarianism. It is a peculiarity that requires clarification: representatives of the totalitarian order made the impression that they were secure. Many totalitarianism researchers took this reading literally. Had the dissidents been too little heeded? Was it possible, even without secret knowledge, to expose the reports of the rulers as ideological?[15] Did the totalitarianism concept not permit the exposing of large fissures and fault-lines in the Communist system?

Fifth: following the demise of most Communist states, the opening of the archives—as with after 1945—grants a chance to decipher the *arcanum imperii.*

To this point, the internal life of Fascist states was better known by far than that of the Communist ones. The totalitarianism approach might prove useful in revealing elements—the perspective of the victim or the role of the individual, for example—that other conceptions have neglected. The plausibility of theses that were won through analysis of a system like the National Socialist one—the theory of the 'double state',[16] for example, of the polycratic system[17] or of its self-induced end—could also be tested.[18]

Sixth: investigation of the mutual influence of the totalitarian systems, movements and ideologies of the Right and the Left should be more intensively attempted. On the one hand, this would involve a scrutiny of the questions as to whether and to what extent the origins of different totalitarianisms were connected. On the other hand, it would investigate the interaction of totalitarian systems. It was Ernst Nolte who triggered a heated 'historian fight' with his thesis of 'global civil war'. To date, this fight has been thoroughly plumbed in terms of its political dimensions, but not in its scientific ones.[19] Was National Socialism more or less a direct, even if delayed, reaction to the

Communism of Lenin and Stalin, as the genetic interpretation of Nolte would have it?[20] Free as it is of moral connotations, this question should be considered *sine ira et studio.* Concerning the mutual influence, the following should also be asked: to what extent have democratic constitutional states increased the stock of Communist dictatorships, whether through an excessively careful manner of dealing with them or through an absolutization of the peace idea?

Seventh: comparison of the two German dictatorships might undergo a renaissance in the German research in particular. Such investigation is of course legitimate, although one would have to take account here of one fundamental difference: whereas the Third Reich was *supported from within and toppled from without,* the GDR was the exact opposite—supported from without and toppled from within. To be sure, this simplification is in need of some differentiation. Self-destructive forces inhabited National Socialism as well, and the GDR collapsed only when the pressure from without subsided.[21] To this extent, the doublesidedness of both stabilizing and destabilizing elements from without and within must be worked out. But the following is what counts: National Socialism was of genuinely German origin, whereas the Soviet Union in fact expanded its sphere of influence to include a part of Germany after 1945. It would be appropriate, therefore, to compare the two 'great totalitarianisms' (Imanuel Geiss)—the Germany of Hitler and the Soviet Union of Stalin. Illuminating commonalities can be brought to light. A comparison of the collaborative regimes during the Second World War to the satellite states after the Second World War has also provided informative material. Did the Soviet Union stand more or less in the same relation to its 'brother countries' as the Third Reich had to the collaborative regimes?

Eighth: the research can attain more penetrating insights only if it investigates totalitarian dictatorships impartially, without pedagogical intentions, regardless of the unspeakable suffering that has been caused by them. 'Historicization' of the Third Reich along the lines demanded by the contemporary Munich historian, Martin Broszat,[22] has advanced only slowly because many critics sense that a downplaying lurks behind it. Regardless of the outcome it yields, the intention behind such historicization is an indispensable dictate of research. 'The Nazi period is and above all should remain the following: an arsenal for politicopedagogical practical application and legitimation in the present, in particular, a model example for the totalitarianism concept.'[23] Broszat sought primarily to gain a realistic picture of the Nazi past—one that does not stop short at taboo zones of any kind. An apology for the Third Reich, however covert, is not entailed here. In the interest of obtaining scientific results, a similar historicization of the world of Communist states—which, for its part, cannot end up becoming an indirect justification of this ruling order—should proceed as soon as possible. Indeed, such historicization has basically already begun, insofar as resistance to a sober taking of stock can be more easily overcome here.

Ninth: to the same extent to which the totalitarian past has become history and the archives stand at the disposal of research in the former Communist states, the question as to the uniqueness of the totalitarian systems can be freshly considered. If it is correct 'that the National Socialist system, regarded as a whole, has been better investigated scientifically' (and there can be no doubt of this), then the claim that one will 'be able to or seek to dispute the uniqueness of the National Socialist crime…only with difficulty' will now appear as a dogma that requires reconsideration. This obtains even if 'almost all discussants have acknowledged it'.[24] Specifically, it is telling that some Soviet historians

now claim, either directly or indirectly, that Stalinism was a singular phenomenon. Apart from this, it is telling that the singularity thesis enjoys a broad consensus in relation to the Third Reich, but also that the various justifications are in part mutually exclusive. The comparison of the various justifications claiming that the National Socialist crimes were unique and the connection of these to the crimes of the Stalinist era is a *terra incognita* of research. That no score keeping should be involved here is clear. But that this must even be emphasized indicates the precarious terrain upon which such research always moves.

Tenth: last but not least, the research should impartially test the question as to whether the political systems that have arisen in the twentieth century indeed justify the creation of a new concept like 'totalitarian'. In what way are the regimes called totalitarian distinct from despotisms in earlier eras? After all that we know, are we justified in regarding totalitarianism as a phenomenon of the twentieth century?[25] Was it, then, solely a product of this century? Or in retrospect, did these dictatorships differ from earlier tyrannical systems only in degree? And finally, might there not arise future dictatorships that make those of the twentieth century seem an anticipatory form of totalitarianism?

Notes

1 Compare, for example, the important contribution of Wolfgang Kraushaar, 'Sich aufs Eis wagen. Pläyoder für eine Auseinandersetzung mit der Totalitarismustheorie', *Mittelweg,* 36, 2 (1993), Heft 2, pp. 6–29. See, more critically still, Wolfgang Kraushaar, 'Die auf dem linken Auge blinde Linke', *Die Zeit,* 11 March 1994. Even with a 'chief ideologue' of the GDR system like Gerhard Lozek, who spoke earlier of the 'totalitarianism doctrine' only in order to establish the—claimed—propagandistic content, the totalitarianism conception nowadays gains positive features as well. Compare Gerhard Lozek, 'Vergleichen, nicht gleichsetzen. Fallbeispiel: Totalitäre Diktaturen', in Eberhard Fromm and Hans-Jürgen Mende (eds), *Vom Beitritt zur Vereinigung. Schwierigkeiten beim Umgang mit deutsch-deutscher Geschichte,* (Berlin, 1994), pp. 84–9.

2 Jürgen Habermas, *Nachholende Revolution. Kleine politische Schriften VII* (Frankfurt, 1990), p. 173.

3 Jürgen Braun, 'Stiller Sieg eines Begriffes', *Das Parlament,* 11 and 18 (November 1994).

4 Wolfgang Harich, 'Der Totalitarismus-Begriff ist völlig unbrauchbar', *Neues Deutschland,* 21 June 1994. Similar in tenor but more nuanced is Peter Reichel, 'Bitte keine neue Totalitarismus-Debatte!', *Die Tageszeitung,* 4 March 1992.

5 Compare Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die totalitäre Erfahrung* (Munich, 1987). In the 1970s and 1980s, this Bonn political scientist and historian spoke out vigorously and unflinchingly against the tabooing of the totalitarianism concept.

6 Thus Heinrich Senfft, 'Einführung: Der Kampf geht weiter', in Helmut Donat and Lothar Wieland (eds), *'Auschwitz erst möglich gemacht?' Überlegungen zur jüngsten konservativen Geschichtsbewältigung* (Bremen, 1991), p. 22. The SED was the Socialist Unity Party of Germany.

7 Thus Armin Mohler, *Der Nasenring. Die Vergangenheitsbewältigung vor und nach dem Fall der Mauer* (Munich, 1991), p. 322.

8 For details see Jens Petersen, 'Die Entstehung des Totalitarismusbegriffs in Italien', in Manfred Funke (ed.), *Totalitarismus. Ein Studien-Reader zur Herrschaftsanalyse moderner Diktaturen* (Dusseldorf, 1978), pp. 105–28.

9 For a summary, see Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse, 'Totalitarismus und Totalitarismusforschung. Zur Renaissance einer lange tabuisierten Konzeption', in Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse (eds), *Jahrbuch Extremismus & Demokratie,* Vol. IV (Bonn, 1992), pp. 7–27.

10 Compare Martin Jänicke, *Totalitäre Herrschaft. Anatomie eines politischen Begriffs* (Berlin, 1971), p. 78.

11 Compare Siegfried Jenkner, 'Entwicklung und Stand der Totalitarismusforschung', *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Beilage zur Wochenzeitung, 'Das Parlament',* Vols 31/84, pp. 16–26; also Klaus Hildebrand, 'Stufen der Totalitarismusforschung', *Politische Vierteljahresschrift,* 9 (1968), pp. 397–422.

12 Of course, this thesis always holds only for the mainstream. There was always a group of researchers who contested the spirit of the time (besides Bracher, Peter Graf Kielmansegg, for example).

13 In France, the development proceeded differently. There, Raymond Aron—who retained the totalitarianism conception in the 1950s—was an outsider in an intellectual milieu that was influenced strongly by Marxism. See Raymond Aron, *Opium für Intellektuelle oder Die Sucht nach Weltanschauung* (Cologne, Opladen, 1957) compared, for example, to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Humanismus und Terror* (1947) (Frankfurt, 1990). On the other hand, Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* was more positively received by far in France in the 1970s than it was in Germany. For details, Pierre Hassner, 'Le totalitarisme vu de l'ouest', in Guy Hermet, Pierre Hassner and Jacques Rupnik (eds), *Totalitarismes* (Paris, 1984), pp. 15–39. See also David Bosshart, *Politische Intellektualität und totalitäre Erfahrung. Hauptströmungen der französischen Totalitarismuskritik* (Berlin, 1991); David Bosshart, 'Die französische Totalitarismusdiskussion', Beilage 'Bulletin 1995' (No. 10) to the journal, *Mittelweg,* 36, 2 (1993), 5, pp. 72–80.

14 Sergei Slutsch, 'Voraussetzungen des "Hitler-Stalin-Pakts": zur Kontinuität totalitärer Außenpolitik', in Bernd Faulenbach and Martin Stadelmaier (eds), *Diktatur und Emanzipation. Zur russischen und deutschen Entwicklung 1971–1991* (Essen, 1993), p.144.

15 Even today, many still fall for this. Thus it is said that, on the basis of results of publicopinion research, the GDR '[was] all in all held to be "worthy of recognition", for having, in terms of perspective, promised the realization of its constitutive ideas'. The statement says more about the author than about the GDR system. Can one then count on authentic answers in a dictatorial society? Compare Heinz Niemann, *Meinungsforschung in der DDR. Die geheimen Berichte des Instituts für Meinungsforschung an das Politbüro der SED* (Cologne, 1993), p. 67.

16 Compare the development of the National Socialist 'deterrent states' and 'norm states' in Ernst Fraenkel, *Der Doppelstaat* (1941) (Frankfurt, 1974).

17 Compare on this controversy, Enrico Syring, 'Intentionalisten und Strukturalisten', in Uwe Backes, Eckhard Jesse and Rainer Zitelmann (eds), *Die Schatten der Vergangenheit. Impulse zur Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus,* 2nd edn (Frankfurt, Berlin, 1992), pp. 169–94.

18 This thesis upholds Hans Mommsen, for example. Compare, among others, Hans Mommsen, *Der Nationalsozialismus und die deutsche Gesellschaft* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1991).

19 Compare Ernst Nolte, *Der europaïsche Bürgerkrieg 1917–1945. Nationalsozialismus und Bolschewismus* (Frankfurt, Berlin, 1987); Ernst Nolte, *Lehrstück oder Tragödie? Beiträge zur Interpretation der Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne, 1991). On this, see Eckhard Jesse, 'Ernst Noltes Totalitarismusverständnis zwischen Kontinuität und Wandel', in Thomas Nipperdey, Anselm Doering-Manteuffel and Hans-Ulrich Wehler (eds), *Weltbürgerkrieg der Ideologien. Antworten an Ernst Nolte* (Berlin, 1993), pp. 216–32.

20 On the well-founded critique of Nolte, compare Leonid Luks, 'Boschewismus, Faschismus, Nationalsozialismus—verwandte Gegner?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft,* 14 (1988), pp. 96–115.

21 Compare Andrzej Szczypiorski, 'Mein Irrtum. Weshalb die Opposition in der DDR nicht mit der polnischen gleichgesetzt werden darf', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 4 March 1995. This work is accurate at its core and destroys some of the myths of the few GDR dissidents.

22 Compare Martin Broszat, *Nach Hitler. Der schwierige Umgang mit unserer Geschichte* (Munich, 1988).

23 Ibid., p. 116.
24 Thus Bernd Faulenbach, 'Neuinterpretation der Vergangenheit', in Faulenbach and *Stadelmaier, DiktaturandEmanzipation,* pp. 13, 12.
25 Compare the consideration of this problem in Uwe Backes, 'Totalitarismus—ein Phänomen des 20. Jahrhunderts?', in Thomas Nipperdey, Anselm Doering-Manteuffel and Hans-Ulrich Thamer (eds), *Weltbürgerkrieg der Ideologien. Antworten an Ernst Nolte* (Berlin, 1993), pp. 216–32.

17
The historicity of totalitarianism

George Orwell's evidence
Hermann Lübbe

First, I would like to make two comments on the methodology of the formation of concepts. First: as products of the practice of research and, specifically, as schemata for differentiation and classification developed by the practice of research, concepts are neither true nor false. They are much more either useful or not useful in achieving their purpose.

For usefulness in achieving its purpose—indeed, for the indispensability of the totalitarianism concept to the practice of research—there exists very strong indirect evidence. Specifically, this evidence is the heatedness of the political resistance to it that was inspired by Marxism-Leninism; this doctrine of course prohibited operative use of the concept of totalitarianism within the ruling sphere of Marxism-Leninism.

The efforts that were made to remove a concept that outlines the commonalities of National Socialist rule on the one hand and international-socialist rule on the other from circulation is an emphatic reminder of the existence of phenomenal evidence for these commonalities.

Second, whoever wishes to form concepts must compare collections of evidence that are manifestly similar. Such comparison of similar stocks with the intention of forming a concept is by no means *eo ipso* out to claim a specific identity of the collections being compared.

The opposite might also be the case—as, for example, with Ernst Nolte. Nolte has characterized the singularity of the National Socialist totalitarian terror in the following words: 'the violent deeds of the Third Reich'—namely, the 'annihilation of several millions of European Jews and also many Slaves, gypsies and the mentally ill'—are 'singular'. These violent deeds are said to be unparalleled 'in terms of motivation and execution'. Through 'the cold, inhuman, technical precision of the quasi-industrial machinery of the gas-chambers in particular, they aroused a horror that has no equal'.

Remarkably, this emphasis upon the singularity of National Socialist terror can be found in precisely the same essay that has been regarded as the occasion which set off the 'historian fight'. This is where, seemingly, Ernst Nolte risked denying the singularity of National Socialist terror by making a comparison.

I refrain from commenting on this oddity of recent German intellectual history. I would like to draw attention to a historic fact instead: one that demonstrates to us the usefulness of the totalitarianism concept with particular clarity through the decisiveness of political resistance against it. I mean by this a fact that extends far beyond the realm of the sciences and into public life: namely, the prohibition of George Orwell's famous novel, *1984*. Although this best-seller, which numbers among those having the most editions this century, was prohibited in the ruling sphere of Marxism-Leninism, it

remained locked in poison cupboards or circulated in very limited editions as underground literature.

There are many reasons, which require no explanation here, why George Orwell's successful book was kept inaccessible to subjects of the former real existing socialism. We are concerned in our context with only one of those reasons: notwithstanding the specific singularity of National Socialism—which had long been defeated by 1948, the year in which the novel originated—the system is generically identical to the governing system of Marxism-Leninism. And the concept of totalitarianism is a concept that indicates this generic identity.

Several years after 1984, one need only read Orwell's novel one more time to recognize that the stilted thesis stating that the totalitarianism concept is unscientific presupposes a blatant loss of reality.

Quickly, I will list a few qualities of totalitarian systems that Orwell developed in a narrative way. It can by no means be meaningfully said of these that they are either left-leaning or right-leaning:

1 the infringement upon daily life of the deficit caused by planning—the sudden shortage of shoe-laces and the rationing of razor blades, the Victory Gin of rot-gut quality and the necessity of distinguishing between coffee and real coffee;
2 the politicization of all areas of life—in other words, the liquidation of all liberties of the citizen in their traditional sense because they do not stand at the disposal of the will of the ruling political community;
3 the complementarity of leader-cult and legitimation by populist, plebiscitary rule;
4 the privileged status granted to ordinary criminals in the totalitarian prisons compared to political criminals;
5 the public duty to demonstrate enthusiasm, confidence and strength of conviction;
6 the propagandistic omnipresence of the enemy and the role of hate as the collectivizing glue of the polity;
7 the institutionalized efforts to gain maximal political control of a past that is held present;
8 the liquidation of opposition in the form of assigning subjects the status of non-persons.

The listing of totalitarian characteristics could be continued much further. Without exception, the literary presence of these characteristics in Orwell's work can be supported by historical facts taken from totalitarianisms of both the Left and the Right—from the retouched removal of Trotsky on photos that show him together with Lenin in years of common struggle, through the Capo-type role of criminals in German concentration camps to the presentation of Mao's portrait in football-stadium size by pallet-carrying young pioneers in Peking. Some features of Orwell's narrative remind one more of National Socialism or Fascism—the black uniforms, for example; others are more characteristic of phases of the cultural construction of socialism—the public pariahization of the erotic for example, with its privatizing, de-Communizing influence in the case of fulfilment. An analysis of details would probably yield the result that Orwell profited as a novelist more from Hitler than from Stalin; and with a glance at Orwell's biography, this would also be plausible. One way or another: the oppressive character of the Orwellian 'Ingsoc' world is based entirely on the fact that it is impossible to locate it as extreme left or extreme right according to left-right preferences. The insignificance of this left-right

distinction when faced with the phenomenon of totalitarianism is practically the joke of the novel. As Orwell states, whoever believes oneself capable of including only Fascism within the concept would ultimately have to be deemed Fascistic himself.

I hold one further quality of totalitarian systems that plays a central role with Orwell to be particularly significant, and this is why I would like to mention it specifically. It involves the finesse of liquidating the moral subjectivity of the inner enemy. By no means does it suffice in totalitarian systems to finish with the inner enemy physically! Totalitarian systems are defined by their demand, not only for obedience but, beyond that, of moral agreement. Propaganda and education are usually the means to anchor rule in the inner being of the subordinate subjects. Now, the unsurpassable means by which to bring this praxis, rule and subjectivity into alienation-free agreement is this: to bring the victims of political repression, through precisely the same repression, to acknowledge in the end that they were justly repressed and thus must be grateful for it. In Orwell's work, it ends in precisely this way for Winston Smith, who loves Big Brother at the end. The novel ends at this point. One sees, however, that this ruling technique remained completely unfulfilled in the person of Roland Freisler. In the People's Court, the moral annihilation of the victims preceded their physical liquidation. Thus it was the finesse of the Stalin show-trials that the victims, prior to their physical liquidation, confessed to the moral and political inevitability of it. Complete totalitarianism is a system of the moral *apokatastasis panton*. That is: it is complete in that the inner enemy is morally regenerated *ad integrum* before it is liquidated.

The general point is this: totalitarian systems are either fortified within the inner being of their subjects, or they collapse. At the same time, this means that no totalitarian system can support itself in the long run through sheer opportunism of the subject—a subject who reacts instrumentally to threats with a preparedness to obey or who would seek to rake in career premiums through zealousness. Mere supporters are not enough. The moral mechanism of totalitarian rule consists precisely in not being satisfied with mere support. Indeed, the opportunistic supporter lives beneath his political and moral dignity; this is a condition that cannot be endured by everyone in the long run. Yet one can escape from the dilemma of a condition for which one would have to seem despicable to oneself. A moral escape route is constantly open: namely, that of ultimately believing that which one had at first merely followed. This is the moral mechanism by which religious faith can develop from a threat, and Orwell proves his insight into this most extreme point by his description of totalitarian rule's goal of moral transformation.

Orwell's description of the totalitarian control of the past in particular has always made a lasting impression on the reader. Winston Smith's task in the Truth Ministry, after all, is continually to update the past in the way that the political present at that time would have wanted to have it. Of course, the perfection of control over the past that has been attained in Ingsoc is the most fictive aspect of the Orwellian utopia of disaster. That it nonetheless has always made such an extremely strong impression on the reader can be explained by the evidence brought by the thesis holding that our identity is guaranteed in the last instance solely by the irreversibility—and hence, irrevocability—of our past. Who we are is told to us by our history. 'History stands for the man': thus states the phenomenologist of history, Wilhelm Schapp. The consistency of both individual and collective institutional subjects through time is based upon the fact that all are capable of re-narrating themselves in the continuity of a history that is still in progress. The

disruption of this continuity is, as a result, identical to the disruption of the consistency of the subject; and it is no longer certain who one is. There thus develops a necessity to be told who one is. And precisely this necessity is taken care of by politically motivated historiography in its perfect partisanship and its relation solely to what is relevant at the present.

The presentation of modern technology as a suitable instrument for the perfecting of totalitarian rule is one of Orwell's specialities. This holds for information technology in particular—thus, for example, for the electronic omnipresence of Big Brother, whose gaze one can avoid almost as little as that of the omnipresent God. (To be sure, this was still to be chalked up entirely to technological fantasy in Orwell's time.) Further elements that belong to this in Orwell's work are the technically practised news monopoly and, of course, military technologies in the context of continual war—technologies that aim to promote domestic political stability through the constant presence of an enemy.

Since that time, we indeed know that industrial society has developed in precisely the opposite direction; contrary to Orwell's dismal prognosis, it in fact does not work to the advantage of the totality of totalitarian systems. Much more does technology have a subversive effect and hence one that favours freedom.

Three arguments might make this plausible. First, totalitarian systems can be sealed off from the undesired defection of persons infinitely better than from the electronic waves that circulate freely in the atmosphere—through walls, barbedwire fences and other mechanical devices. The technologically achieved medial integration of the globe into an informational world-system proceeds inexorably. Some time ago, all kinds of suggestions for the so-called reform of the global order of information were aimed against precisely this process. Of course, as can be seen, such suggestions were primarily of interest to the social systems constituted as one-party dictatorships.

In brief: technical progress makes the claim of a totalitarian monopoly on information not easier, but more difficult. In retrospect, it is no exaggeration to state the following: that, in the former GDR as in the former USSR, in Hungary and Romania besides, the progressive loss of credibility of the parties that still ruled up to a few years ago in these countries was brought about not the least by experiences of the contrast between native propaganda and reports of the Western media. An analogous phenomenon holds for processes of the manifest disintegration of single-party dictatorships. The media also brought about the domino effects that accelerated this disintegration.

Second, on the modern technical level, the technically perfected instruments of totalitarian power require—in quickly growing number—islands of the free creation and relatively free transfer of knowledge. This is why the number of individuals—and above all, of scientists, engineers and managers to whom one must allow a relatively free access to the sources of knowledge—grows constantly in modern industrial societies and even under totalitarian conditions. These, therefore, can lay claim to the privileges of longer stays in foreign countries, can have occasion to experience the modes of life in other systems and, consequently, once they have returned home, to possess information that repudiates the ruling ideology. Thus does technical and scientific progress lessen rather than heighten the chances for a total control of consciousness as Orwell presented it in his utopia.

Third, technical progress as such is a means to accelerate the diffusion of information and thereby to deconstruct the chances for that same perfect control of the past that

comprises the most impressive detail of the Orwellian utopia of terror. For purposes of ideological indoctrination, one can increase the number of educational pamphlets that show the aforementioned picture of Lenin with the retouched Trotsky—thus, without Trotsky—from 100,000 to 10 million. It happened thus in Stalin's era. Yet the more one increases the distribution of ideologically desirable information ('propaganda'), the more difficult it becomes—and indeed, on principle—completely to recall yesterday's propaganda when the need arises; for this had also been correspondingly increased. In terms of our example, this would mean that, despite all control of the past, the original picture depicting Lenin together with Trotsky nonetheless unexpectedly turns up in some Siberian hut. Thus do tears in the credibility of reigning pictures of the past open up— tears that can no longer be plastered over.

In Fascist Italy, by the way, a similar story occurred. Older people still like to think back on that pompous picture depicting Mussolini on a white steed with highly raised sword—the 'protector of Islam'. In the original, the photo also depicted the stable boy who held the steed by the reins at all times—not exactly a scene of heroic grace. Accordingly, the stable boy was retouched away; and the photo that had thereby been rendered imperial was distributed as propaganda in millions of copies. Elimination of the infinitely less imperial original was not completely successful, though: the picture of the Duce cared for by the stable boy was still distributed surreptitiously, and the Romans had to laugh. As a result, the following can be stated: in totalitarian systems too, the transformation of the society into a so-called information society is a process that ultimately depends upon technology. This process, in turn, renders the control of the past—as an essential prerequisite for maintaining the pretension of a historically inviolable constancy of ideological truth—continually less feasible. Totalitarian systems are subject to a process of informational pollution.

To the extent that this is true, we would now be able to look back on totalitarianism as a political form of the past—as one that has become historical. At very least, the following might be stated: it may be true that totalitarianism should still be construed as a danger that has not yet been dealt with, as one for which we would still have to remain prepared in order to prevent it. But even if this were true, it would still not be correct to say that technical evolution as such heightens the probability of the return of totalitarianism. In this respect, the exact opposite is the case. Orwell's famous novel also makes this evident to us today, even against its intentions.

18

Accomplishments and limitations of the totalitarianism theory

Applicability to the National Socialism dictatorship

Hans Mommsen

Originally, the concept of the totalitarian dictatorship was gauged by the Stalinist system in the phase of the purges, with isolated preparatory stages in the description of the Fascist system in Italy. The later application to National Socialism lent the theory a specific touch, in that an equation of Bolshevistic and National Socialist dictatorships was now undertaken. With that, it was clear that such comparison drew primarily from the form of unlimited exercise of power, not from ideological justifications of the ruling systems compared—justifications that are most extremely different.

Application of the totalitarianism theorem to National Socialism implied an on-going process of differentiation. The main strand, which follows upon the presentation of Carl Joachim Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski,[1] pertains to the fully formed dictatorship system and does not investigate the conditions of its origination. A side strand, by contrast—one following Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*[2]—is oriented on the phase of the NSDAP movement and accentuates the significance of anti-Semitism and imperialistic nationalism to the rise of total rule.[3]

The totalitarianism theorem proved itself useful in interpreting National Socialism to the extent that it revealed its rule to be the fundamental opposite of the modern constitutional state and, with its emphasis on the strategic application of terror, took the ground from under legalistic interpretations from the very beginning. It also entailed a starting-point from which to conceive the function of the ideology as tactically communicated, as well as to be freed from deriving the National Socialist dictatorship solely from the history of ideas—as had predominated in the early 1950s. On the other hand, the theorem entailed a tendency to conceive National Socialist rule as a structure that pushed the nation forward and was 'historically foreign', so to speak. It also tended to isolate it from the entire context of the German and European post-war development. This tendency could then be linked with apologetic attitudes on both extremes of the political spectrum.

Above all, transposition of the totalitarianism theorem to National Socialism invoked a long-persisting tendency to overemphasize the inner cohesion of the regime: a regime that was conceived—in an analogy with Stalinism—as monolithic. Here, elements of self-stylization were taken for reality. Even in the specialist literature, there arose a prevalent tendency to erect Hitler as a decisive end-cause of events—even if the interactions lying at base found no support in the sources. From this resulted an image of a high degree of inner rationality and systemic cohesion; this proved itself useful in the sense of 'educating the people', but had very little to do with the actual inner constitution.

To be sure, the picture of National Socialist rule drawn by Friedrich and Brzezinski required correction even prior to access to the official files—precisely because, in many respects, National Socialism could not be equated with the Soviet Union (upon which both authors had predominantly been oriented). Among these corrections was the observation that a rivalry of the possessors of power on all levels of state and party was significant for the National Socialist. Peter Hüttenberger has coined the concept of the 'polycraty' to designate it. Yet this is somewhat misleading to the extent that one element—namely, the constant struggle surrounding the claim or expansion of respectively assumed positions entailed—is not expressed by it. This struggle, arising both from the regime's incapacity to achieve workable divisions of jurisdictions and from the social Darwinist self-understanding of the NSDAP, triggered a 'cumulative radicalization'. This is why the traditional concept of the rivalry of offices is entirely appropriate.[4]

The inner antagonisms, which did not correspond to the assumptions of monolithic concentration of power, had to be brought into line with the totalitarianism model; in order to accomplish this, the idea that the rivalry among offices originated from a specific strategy of securing the power of the dictator and had been based upon a politics of divide and conquer asserted itself early on.[5] Yet what is involved here is an over-rationalization of the dictator's tendency to encourage rivalling carriers of power and of his sovereignty to undertake initiatives without bringing about a division of jurisdictions. As the Röver memorandum[6] of the beginning of 1942 indicates, this was not a conscious playing off of one another—even if the principle of 'letting go' to the point that the strongest asserts himself was indeed a fundamental maxim of Hitler and of the regime in general.

Besides positing the unrestricted power of the dictator, the theorem of totalitarian dictatorship assumes that the state party occupies the central position of the political system. Here too, it became necessary substantially to modify the Stalinist model in transposing it to the National Socialist regime. To be sure, the NSDAP's claim to possess unconditional leadership of the state organs was never directly disputed. In practice, however, the NSDAP's control over the apparatus of state power proved itself to be by no means unlimited.[7]

Under the influence of the totalitarianism theorem, early interpreters tended to regard the NSDAP as a closed transmission-belt for implementing the Führer's decisions. This might have been the reason why, for the regime phase, the inner structure of the Party and its inner fault-lines became the object of systematic research only at a late time.[8] In fact, after March 1933, the Party moved to the fringes as an instrument of plebiscitary integration in the political decision process and, up to 1938, the resentment of numerous party functionaries toward the unreduced self-consciousness of the state bureaucracy increased. With the exception of the communal-political level, this bureaucracy had succeeded in largely fending off the influx of Party interests in the phase of uniformization.

The representation of the Party and SA leadership in the Reichskabinett had already lost influence following 30 June 1934—and solely for the mid-1930s, insofar as the Cabinet no longer convened after 1938.[9] After 1941, the Department of the Führer's Representative was expanded into the Party Office—and thus to a kind of umbrella and control ministry—under Martin Bormann's energetic leadership. Only secondarily, through the activity of the liaison staff of the new office, did the NSDAP succeed in

partially re-conquering the terrain that it had lost in early 1933. After the secondary collection of files of the Party Office became accessible,[10] it became possible to describe more precisely Bormann's efforts to co-ordinate the shattered party apparatus and to 're-partify' the political system—that is, to bolster the influence of the NSDAP in the executive sphere.[11]

By contrast to the basic assumptions of the totalitarianism theory as characterized by Friedrich and Brzezinski, the NSDAP as such—and with that the political organization (the term was finally prohibited)—did not assume the actual position of power in the regime. Its control function was for a good part limited to making political decisions in the case of official orders and to serving as a go-between for lower orders for the Gestapo.[12] The actual power lay with the Gauleiters and the Reichsleiters—with the local and national administrators—and this only to the extent that they succeeded in usurping state offices. The leadership of the Party did not act as a self-contained power; as a rule, the function of the Reichsleiter remained a mere title. Committees in which they could collaborate in a closed formation of the will did not exist. Owing to disinterest on the part of the Führer, neither the senate for imperial legislation nor the senate for selection of the leader—both of which Frick and Rosenberg had striven for—came into being.[13]

This is why Richard Löwenthal has argued that, in a structure analogous to that of the Stalinist regime, the SS apparatus performed the role of the totalitarian state-party in the National Socialist case.[14] This was for a good part accurate, and a usurpation of state rule—in particular, the taking over of the police apparatus by the Reichs-Führer SS—clearly emerged. In this context, the Reichs-Führer SS answered to the Reichsminister of the Interior, until it itself assumed this office in 1943. The Reichs-Führer SS was a sub-group of the general SS, as opposed to the reserve SS troops and the armed division of the SS. It competed with the NSDAP. Yet by the advanced stages of the war at the latest, the general SS represented not much more than a dried-up association of veterans. Even if it was a carrier of the extreme SS ideology, it can be described as a totalitarian power only with difficulty. The decisive positions of power, by contrast, rested with the bureaucratically organized SS main offices.[15] Beyond this, the SS apparatus also displayed the inner fault-lines that were characteristic of the regime as a whole, and these too could be masked only by constant movement.

Under the influence of both totalitarianism theory and the example of Stalinism, the tendency to 'total bureaucratization' of rule has also been attributed to National Socialism.[16] This, however, was certainly no specificum of the National Socialist system. Certainly, the 'secondary bureaucracies' arising from their own roots—SS, NSV, DAF, RAD among them[17]—bore bureaucratic features of varying strength; these in turn depended upon both the perception of public tasks usurped by them and the influence of state financing.[18] Yet the efficiency of these apparatuses was also strongly handicapped by the tendency toward personalistic leadership and the characteristic National Socialist rejection of formal jurisdictional rules.

National Socialism fundamentally fractured bureaucratic organizational patterns, then. This was another reason why Martin Bormann's efforts to reform the swollen and unsightly party apparatus—one that was completely fragmented on the lower levels—and turn it into a powerful political instrument failed across the board. As leader of the Party Office, Bormann found himself forced to enter into a silent alliance with the Gauleiters in order to ensure control of the technical apparatus of the NSDAP. Although he succeeded

in gaining a certain degree of influence on the level of this circle, he was at no point capable of subordinating the Gauleiters who reported directly to the Führer and of actually subsuming their activities to the instructions of the Party Office.[19]

It was characteristic that the NSDAP, as opposed to the public administrations, invoked the supposedly superior and more effective principle of the 'leadership of people'. This principle was based upon an extensively personal tie of the subordinate leaders, and, when needed, was accompanied by uniformization of the mediating instances.[20] It openly opposed the hierarchical ranking of the respective carriers of functions as was customary in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and in other Communist parties. Further, it also openly opposed the principle of 'legality'—thus, of the self-obligation to established rules that forms the basic assumption of orderly administrative conduct.[21]

What was involved here was a conscious transposition of the political structure that had been built up by the NSDAP during the movement phase to the political system. It consisted in most extensive freedom of action of the respective sub-leaders in ensuring unconditional loyalty toward Hitler, in the conscious eschewing of written regulatory and organizational rules and programmatic statements. This political structure, which was primarily personalistic and held together by the cult of the Führer, loosed an untold quantity of individual energies and formative powers by eschewing any kind of systematic political co-ordination. The activity that was characteristic of the NSDAP before 1933 was limited to mere electoral advertisements. Under these conditions, this relation of leader and disciple—which seemed almost atavistic in some respects—proved itself an uncommonly effective instrument of mobilization. Following the conquest of power, by contrast, this relation necessarily ended in a constantly growing, mutually blocking morass of initiatives and in fully overdrawn financial and economic resources.[22]

The National Socialist system, which produced the self-dissolution of partified institutions, had little to do with Stalinism's praxis of pushing through bureaucratic instructions without considering the various local and social conditions. It tended more to leave the relations that existed at the time untouched, so long as they did not prove to be in opposition. In terms of its approach, but also owing to its lack of institutional techniques, the National Socialist regime contented itself with uniformizing existing social and economic institutions. It did not infringe upon property, for example; nor did it interfere at first with the leadership relations in industry. As the example of the munitions industry demonstrates,[23] the total commissioning that was sought was never attained in practice. Even the meagre economic efficiency of Stalinism, which emerged in particular in the long term, was never attained by National Socialism; for it lacked the capacity to develop its own resources in the long term.

As with the mere uniformization rather than full transformation of existing social and state institutions—as is regularly the case in Communist systems—the ideological penetration of the society should not be overestimated either. Roland Freisler, president of the People's Court, stated that the regime demands 'the entire human being'.[24] Yet this statement directed against Helmuth James Graf von Moltke should not obscure the fact that the regime's long-term strategy consisted, not in incessant indoctrination, but in a conscious de-politicization of the population. By contrast to Communism, National Socialism never developed a stringent ideological system that went beyond the merely eclectic transmission of widespread social and popular resentments.[25] This could not be

said of Marxism-Leninism, despite the unmistakable undermining of it in the past decades.

Part of the nature of National Socialism was to conceive of itself as a countermovement against liberalism and socialism[26] and to restrict itself to a programme subordinated to merely derivative, tactical standpoints. Characterized by utmost flexibility in its immediate goals, such a programme is bound together by its fixation on remote, purely visionary goals.[27] In place of a content-rich programme, there is mobilization marked by voluntarism; not the goal, but the movement, 'is everything'. Consistently, the National Socialist movement is marked by a reversal of the relation between ends and means, as David Schoenbaum has formulated it.[28] The typical replacement of political content with agitatory slogans—in brief, the replacement of politics with propaganda—appears as a specificum of a Fascist movement like National Socialism, which is clearly distinct through this from the Communist parties.

In describing the structure of the National Socialist movement, it has often been sought to attribute to it the character of a 'people's party'. This is true to such an extent that it was conceived from the beginning as a movement that transcends classes and estates; and, indeed, it even approached this ideal after the September elections of 1930.[29] This was possible because the party consciously dispensed with a clear, programmatic profile and stylized itself both as vanguard fighter for the interests of labour and saviour of the bourgeoisie from the Communist coup. Following the seizure of power, Hitler—and the National Socialist elite leadership after him—also perceptibly avoided choosing between politically antagonistic goals within and without the movement; and he avoided entering into political or programmatic alliances.

In the context of excluding Gregor Straßer from his party offices and still in the fear of having to avert a split in the Party, Hitler wrote a memorandum in which the formalization and aestheticization of the contents of politics clearly comes across. In this memorandum, he justified the abolition of Straßer's reform of the Party—a reform for which there would be no replacement.[30] No content was supplied for the 'National Socialist idea' as supreme concept of political conduct; the memorandum ended strictly with the idea of total submission to the Führer, who embodied the visionary end-goal. Straßer had expressly rejected just this idea as the politics of catastrophe, of 'all or nothing'.[31] That it was fundamentally distinct from the Communist understanding of politics, which did not abstract from material interests, is obvious.

Application of the totalitarianism theorem has alleviated the error holding that National Socialism had at its disposal a distinct world-image that was to be instilled in the people through total indoctrination. But, as Martin Broszat has shown, even the most stable component of the conspiratorial 'world-view'—its racist anti-Semitism—functioned in some respects largely as a propagandistic metaphor that ultimately, fatally, 'took itself at its word'.[32]

Beyond this, the new world-view entailed, not ideological insularity, but faithful conduct and political fanaticism: a worship of the Führer driven to the extreme, in face of which political platforms were shoved aside completely. In the final months of the war, when the mood of the population had reached a nadir despite the concerted efforts of the Party leadership, Hitler was characteristically confident in an 'attitude' that underlay interests and emotions—an attitude that would support the struggle to the end. The 'cult of the will' of which Peter Stern spoke was now reduced to the cult of the mere attitude.

Political rationality was just as little in demand as comprehension of the world-view was.[33]

All the same, it seems problematic to describe the National Socialist 'worldview' as a particular case of 'political religion'. Hitler especially emphatically and consciously deflected all attempts by his followers to endow National Socialism with a cultic-religious character; for he avoided providing content just as much in religious questions. When he nonetheless did this with regard to the constitution of the Imperial Church, he immediately withdrew his support of the German Christians. Compared to the emphatically anti-clerical strivings of Bormann, Hitler assumed a more appeasing attitude—an attitude influenced by his respect for the institution of the Catholic Church. He demonstrated extreme scepticism toward Himmler's Germanic, mythological rituals as well. In principle, therefore, the dictator consciously kept open the possibility of compatibility between National Socialism and the Christian confessions.

It would go too far in our context systematically to explicate the specific differences of National Socialism from the various phenomenal forms of Communism. It is indisputable: for all the great differences between the personal dictatorships in terms of the basis of their legitimacy and political underpinnings, surprising agreements can be ascertained in the conduct and modes of reaction of the two dictators. These agreements concern the treatment of subordinates, the refusal to face reality, the disregard of institutional and legal norms, the erratic nature of decisions and the Byzantinism of the environment.

Nevertheless, the comparability ends in large part with the accidental circumstances of the dictator's unrestricted personal power. Compared to the Soviet system, the National Socialist regime is conspicuous for its high degree of inability to adapt to changing resources and to cancel over-extended goals when necessary, as was the case with Stalin's return to the great Russian tradition and his invocation of the 'Great War of the Fatherland'. With National Socialism, there was solely a careering down the path of the collapse, the self-destruction of the regime; this, to be sure, was also due to a criminal underestimation of the political and military power of the opponent.

Even if the Soviet Union also collapsed at the end of an infinitely longer period, and even if its inner weaknesses come to light much more strongly than was the case before 1989, the comparative instability of the National Socialist system must still be emphasized. National Socialist politics was incapable of constructive new creations; it was forced by its very structure to reject all compromise because each peaceful situation would have called the simulated inner unity into question. The simulative character of National Socialism also explains why its ideology collapsed like a house of cards with its fall, and why the Hitler myth, which had been so dominant, disintegrated overnight. Compared to the various stages of Soviet Communist rule, the National Socialist regime appears as a crazed, breath-taking rampage.

To be sure, the totalitarianism theorem has a certain heuristic value by which to incorporate National Socialism into the comparative theory of regimes. Yet it automatically leads to an overestimation of the long-term inner stability of the National Socialist regime and to a mistaken ascription of a political substance and inner rationality that it lacked utterly. To this extent, the research—since the official files have become accessible in particular—has extensively freed itself from the totalitarianism theorem. In

light of the highly developed state of research, the analyses developed in the 1950s seem clumsy and in many ways confusing.

A comparative theory of twentieth-century dictatorships should be applied in a way that does not implicitly tend to overvalue the systemic stability, reproductive power and political creativity of both the National Socialist regime and Hitler himself. Likewise, it should avoid taking a purely static approach which, as a rule, accompanies the theory of totalitarian dictatorship and which more obscures than highlights the questions as to both the genesis of National Socialist rule and the changing relationship between traditional and Fascist elites. Ultimately, such a theory would have to pay particular attention to the dialectical connection between popular consensus and forced co-operation—a connection that is not simply the result of 'totalitarian' terror or 'totalitarian' indoctrination.

Notes

1 C.J.Friedrich (with Z.Brzezinski), *Totalitäre Diktatur* (Stuttgart, 1957).

2 Hannah Arendt, *Elemente und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft* (Munich, 1991), 2nd German edn.

3 On the classification, compare Manfred Funke (ed.), *Totalitarismus. Ein Studien-Reader zur Herrschaftsanalyse moderner Diktaturen* (Dusseldorf, 1978); Siegfried Jenker, 'Entwicklung und Stand der Totalitarismusforschung', *Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Beilage zum 'Parlament',* B 31/84, pp. 16–26; Bruno Seidel and Siegfried Jenkner (eds), *Wege der Totalitarismusforschung* (Darmstadt, 1974), 3rd edn; Ernest A.Menze (ed.), *Totalitarianism Reconsidered* (London, 1981).

4 Compare Peter Hüttenberger, 'Nationalsozialistische Polykratie', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft,* 2 (1976), pp. 417–42; compare Franz Neumann, *Behemoth,* German edn (Cologne, 1977).

5 Most emphatically expressed by Karl Dietrich Bracher, 'Probleme und Perspektiven der Hitler-Interpretation', *Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen. Um Faschismus, Totalitarismus, Demokratie* (Munich, 1976), pp. 79 ff. Compare Hans Mommsen, 'Hitlers Stellung im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem', in Gerhard Hirschfeld and Lothar Kettenacker (eds), *Der 'Führerstaat': Mythos und Realität. Studien zur Struktur und Politik des Dritten Reiches* (Stuttgart, 1981), pp. 56 ff.

6 IfZ Fa 204 or BAK NS 6/805. Compare Dietrich Orlow, *History of the Nazi Party, 1933–1945,* Vol. II (Pittsburgh, PA, 1973), p. 352—for internal reasons, the authorship of Röver is clear.

7 Compare Peter Longerich, *Hitlers Stellvertreter. Führung der Partei und Kontrolle des Staatsapparats durch den Stab Heß und die Partei-Kanzlei Bormann* (Munich, 1992), pp. 257 ff. The relevant literature is listed on pp. 275 ff.

8 The first portrayal originates with Orlow, *History of the Nazi Party.*

9 Compare Lothar Gruchmann, 'Die Reichsregierung im Führerstaat. Stellung und Funktion des Kabinetts im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem', in Günter Doeker and Winfried Steffani (eds), *Klassenjustiz und Pluralismus. Festgabe für Ernst Fraenkel* (Hamburg, 1973), pp. 197–223.

10 *Akten der Partei-Kanzlei der NSDAP Rekonstruction eines vorlorengegangenen Bestandes…,* ed. Institut für Zeitgeschichte, 6 Regesten- and Register vols, 4th vol. microfiches (Munich, 1991).

11 Compare Dieter Rebentisch, 'Reichskanzlei und Partei-Kanzlei im Staat Hitlers. Anmerkungen zu zwei Editionsprojekten und zur Quellenkunde der nationalsozialistischen Epoche', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte,* 25 (1985), pp. 601–33; also Longerich, *Hitlers Stellvertreter,* pp. 3 ff.

12 Compare Dieter Rebentisch, 'Die "politische Beurteilung" als Herrschaftsinstrument der NSDAP', in Detlev Peukert and Jürgen Reuleckke (eds), *Die Reihen fast geschlossen. Beträge zur Geschichte des Alltags unterm Nationalsozialismus* (Wuppertal, 1981), pp. 107–25.

13 Compare Martin Broszat, *Der Staat Hitlers. Grundlegung und Entwicklung seiner inneren Verfassung* (Munich, 1969), pp. 360 ff.

14 Richard Löwenthal, 'Totalitäre und demokratische Revolution', in Seidel and Jenkner, *Wege der Totalitarismusforschung,* pp. 359–81.

15 S.Robert Lewis Koehl, *The Black Corps. The Structure and Power Struggle of the Nazi SS* (Madison, WI, 1983), pp. 11 ff. and 161 ff.; Walter Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren in der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft* (Boppard, 1994), pp. 223 ff.

16 Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitäre Diktatur,* pp. 67 ff., 168 ff.

17 NSV (Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt) was an organization that developed social activities. DAF (Deutsche Arbeitsfront) was an organization to which employers and employees had to belong from 1933. RAD (Reichsarbeitsdienst) was six months' compulsory service for young men or voluntary service for women.

18 See Hans Mommsen, 'Ausnahmezustand als Herrschaftstechnik des NS-Regimes', in Manfred Funke (ed.), *Hitler, Deutschland und die Mächte* (Dusseldorf, 1976), pp. 35 ff.

19 Compare Longerich, *Hitlers Stellvertreter,* pp. 177 ff. Dieter Rebentisch, *Führerstaat und Verwaltung im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Verfassungsentwicklung und Verfassungspolitik 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1989), pp. 441 ff.; Orlow, *History of the Nazi Party,* Vol. II, pp. 334 ff.

20 Compare Hans Mommsen, 'Ein Erlaß Himmlers zur Bekämpfung der Korruption in der inneren Verwaltung vom Dezember 1944', *VfZ,* 16 (1968), pp. 295–339.

21 Compare Karl Teppe and Dieter Rebentisch, 'Einleitung', Karl Teppe and Dieter Rebentisch (eds), *Verwaltung kontra Menschenführung im Staat Hitlers. Studien zum politisch-administrativen System* (Göttingen, 1986), pp. 19 ff. Also Jane Caplan, *Government without Administration. State and Civil Service in Weimar and Nazi Germany* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 223 ff.

22 See Hans Mommsen, 'Die NSDAP als faschistische Partei', *Festscrift für Walter Euchner* (Göttingen, 1995).

23 See Fritz Blaich, *Wirtschaft und Rüstung im 'Dritten Reich'* (Dusseldorf, 1987), pp. 47 ff.; Alan S.Milward, *Die deutsche Kriegswirtschaft 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1996), pp. 109 ff.; Abraham Barkai, *Das Wirtschaftssystem des Nationalsozialismus. Der historische und ideologische Hintergrund 1933–1936* (Cologne, 1977), pp. 106 ff.

24 Helmuth James von Moltke to his wife on 11 January 1945. Cited from Freya von Moltke, Michael Balfour and Julian Frisby, *Helmuth James von Moltke 1907–1945. Anwalt der Zukunft* (Stuttgart, 1955), p. 311.

25 The opposite position can be found with Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitlers Weltanschauung. Entwurf einer Herrschaft,* new edn (Stuttgart, 1981), in particular pp. 134 ff. Compare, by contrast, Martin Broszat, 'Soziale Motivation und Führerbindung des National-sozialismus', *Nach Hitler. Der schwierige Umgang mit unserer Geschichte* (Munich, 1988), pp. 19 ff.

26 Juan Linz, 'Some Notes toward a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective', in Walter Laqueuer (ed.), *Fascism: A Reader's Guide. Analyses, Interpretations, Bibliography* (Berkeley, CA, 1976), pp. 15 ff. Linz spoke of the '"anti" character of Fascism'.

27 Compare Gerhard Paul, *Aufstand der Bilder. Die NS-Propaganda vor 1933* (Bonn, 1990), pp. 259 ff.

28 David Schoenbaum, *Die braune Revolution. Eine Sozialgeschichte des Dritten Reiches,* 2nd edn (Cologne, 1980), pp. 26, 348 ff.

29 Compare Jürgen Falter, *Hitlers Wähler* (Munich, 1991), pp. 364 ff.

30 Reprinted in Hans Mommsen, *Adolf Hitler als Führer der Nation,* Deutsches Institut für Fernstudien (Tübingen, 1984), pp. 162 ff.

31 Compare Gregor Straßer to Hitler on 8 December 1932 in Udo Kissenkoeter, *Gregor Straßer und die NSDAP* (Stuttgart, 1978), pp. 202 ff.
32 Broszat, *Nach Hitler,* pp. 28 ff., 33, as well as Broszat, 'Zur Erklämng des national-sozialistischen Massenmords an den Juden', *Nach Hitler,* pp. 250 ff.
33 J.P.Stern, *Hitler: Der Führer und das Volk* (Munich, 1978), pp. 55–63.

Concluding discussion

Chair: Manfred Spieker

KARPEN: I would like to make two comments: to follow up on the question of Graf Ballestrem and to make a general remark on Mr Lübbe's final comment and give it a positive turn. Mr Ballestrem asked why the totalitarian systems collapsed. Mr Mommsen said that there probably could be no universally valid answer. With the Third Reich, both the war and the circumstance that Germany had taken on too much are certainly reasons why the Fascist and National Socialist systems could not develop further. But the main reason for the collapse of Bolshevism is certain: this system could not handle the complexity of the modern world, could not comprehend the thrust toward modernization and its demands. I would like to follow up on that which we discussed yesterday. I believe that totalitarian systems simply lack an understanding of society—of the society, namely, which guarantees flexibility, which produces a high degree of adaptation, which promotes individual and group creativity and makes 'trial and error' possible. This absolutely includes the economic aspect—market and competition, supply and demand. With respect to the constitutional state, Böckenförde once said that the prerequisite of the freedom of the constitutional state is the distinction between state and society. This serves not only to limit the state in terms of its fundamental laws; it also liberates it—or better put, keeps modern society free. Yesterday, we discussed Guardini's understanding of the state with Dr Hover; and my impression was that Guardini had no understanding of society at base. Certainly, he had the warming 'I—Thou' relationship, but he saw the masses he feared on the other side. In a spirited interruption, Mr Maier said that a great deal lies between the two. I believe that the pluralistic constitution of society was the main cause of their collapse.

SCHWARZ: I too wished to intervene in the controversy that cropped up between Mr Ballestrem and Mr Jesse. Ballestrem's thesis was this: 'whatever one understands by totalitarianism theory, one can also apply it in order to understand the collapse of the totalitarian systems—if one would like to call them totalitarian'. Mr Jesse, on the other hand, disputes this at base. Two points in this context: as has become once again clear in the past two days, the entire theory of totalitarianism follows from an attempt, first, to interpret Italian Fascism, then to interpret National Socialism and, finally, to expand this to the Stalinism that could be observed at that time. Once these two systems disappeared, only the Communist systems—including the Chinese—remained. The one system, as Mr Mommsen has again made impressively clear, is a system that lasts 12 years; with six years of peace, six years of war and great experiments on all sides, it is then decapitated. Italian Fascism endures about 20 years. The Communist systems last longer. In their heyday from the 1950s through to the 1970s, they have no more (Fascist, National Socialist) competition.

No one will seek to dispute that there are similarities in the manner of seizing power, in the execution, the ideology—this has all become clear. Yet we wish also to understand how these systems developed further, from the mid-1940s to the end of the 1980s, and how they then collapsed. It is here that problems arise with the

totalitarianism discussion or theory as we have developed it to date. This, then, is the first point. The fine book by Bullock, the comparison of Hitler with Stalin, has been mentioned. The most interesting thing about this book is actually the years between 1945 and 1953—this is where the book runs dry, because late Stalinism no longer falls within the comparison.

But now for my second point. I would make a bid for a concept of late totalitarianism in order to capture the consolidated Communist systems, knowing very well that they collapsed from within. The truly interesting historical question is this: why did they collapse from within? Mr Buchheim mentioned Montesquieu. I have a citation in my memory: 'there are tribes in the South Sea that chop down the tree in order to reach the fruit'. At base, then, approximately what has been said—incapacity to modernize, etc. These are systems that over-exploited both an idea and the society. I am entirely of the opinion of Mr Ballestrem here: the problems of late totalitarianism can in fact be understood if one understands the negative consequences of totalitarianism, those that have always been criticized—expulsion, annihilation of elites, liquidation of private property, militarization of the society (with the corresponding costs to which Mr Mommsen has referred), etc. This would then allow us to explain why the late totalitarian systems collapsed. As for the post-totalitarian systems which were referred to briefly, these must work through the after-effects of highly developed totalitarianism with which the late totalitarian systems could not cope.

HÜRTEN: Ladies and gentlemen, it is of course somewhat difficult—given the quality of the listeners—to utter something clever at the heights of the podium. I would like instead to attempt to draw something like a balance for myself personally, because points I made myself certainly correspond completely with certain things that we were told today by Mr Maier and others at the podium. First, I must confess that I often have the impression that the totalitarianism theory is simply overtaxed. The demands placed upon it are too high. As an argument against the theory, I have repeatedly heard in the discussion that it is not capable of explaining the fall of the Iron Curtain. Well and good, but we also have concepts and models—I do not want to say theories—of the absolutist state. This too no longer exists in Europe, but none of the concepts I know also describes why the absolutist states collapsed at some point and under specific historical conditions. There seems to me to exist an overtaxing here. And as a historian, I probably have the right and duty to point out that, for all the discovery of structural identities that allow the various regimes to be subsumed to one model, these are still historical individualities. As such, they are necessarily distinct as concretely existing entities.

Following these general comments, a few details. The attempt to replace the designation 'totalitarian regime' with something else seems to me to be entirely worth considering. Yet the neologisms presented here—if I may be so impertinent—are by no means satisfying in my eyes. 'Modern dictatorships', by contrast to 'ancient dictatorships', seems possible; yet, at the same time, such a designation requires clarification as to what is meant by modern. What is meant here is not merely contemporary dictatorships, but dictatorships that are aimed in a very specific way at the masses, which gain from the masses at least an apparent approval. Of classical dictatorship, a well-established dictator could say like a Roman emperor: *oderint*

dum metuant. This is the basic difference between classical dictatorship and totalitarian regimes.

Now, as far as 'political religions' are concerned, we have debated about these the most heatedly of all in the course of this conference. Yesterday, Mr Lübbe rejected this concept in principle. I must confess that I also have my doubts here. On the other side, however, it nonetheless seems to me obvious that a religious element exists here—at least with respect to National Socialism. And by that, I am not thinking of Himmler and the Wotan cult that Hitler rejected early on, but of what played a role in Mr Hover's presentation yesterday—although the element of belief would need to be clarified in a different way. This, therefore, is not a religion complete with dogmas in which one must believe, but a religion that motivates inwardly and requires fidelity toward the regime. With respect to the dogmatic content of National Socialism as religion, we would probably have to incorporate the conversation of Bormann and Hitler on the eve of the Ardenne offensive into the picture, but I do not want to go too far afield here. Yet it is perhaps of a certain value as evidence that, around the end of 1937, two prominent posts stated unequivocally that National Socialism is not merely religious, but a religion. This was said both in the 'Black Corps' and in a mollifying speech of the Minister of the Imperial Church, Kerrlwas—whereby of course one must always ask which system represented the whole of National Socialism.

(Interruption by MOMMSEN.)

HÜRTEN: Yes, Mr Mommsen, it indeed depends upon what one describes as religion. But the word was unquestionably used in the propaganda conducted by the regime about itself for a time, and that there was a religious or a religious type of motivation probably cannot be denied. A problem in the comparative study of regimes is based not only upon the varying length of the regime, but upon the fact that the National Socialist regime—or stated more precisely, Hitler personally—turned resolutely away from interior politics in the course   of 1937 and 1938 in order to be able to press forward with the external politics. The Hoßbach memorandum and some other things refer to this. Certainly, I do not believe that the description 'political religions' is ultimately satisfying for National Socialism either. For political religions can also remain entirely within the sphere of personal inwardness; the concept of religion, in my opinion, lacks the institutional element. There can also be a religion without priests and dogmas in the sense of a more or less pious religiosity. As a result, I wonder: if we want to think further along this line of substitute for religion, could we not then draw in the model of the Church as a religion that has been transformed into an organizational form? And further to this, I would still like to present for reflection the concept of ideocraty. Could this concept that surfaced in 1934, that was then long forgotten and that was later taken up casually by Gurian, not be helpful here?

ZAHN: I have come into this circle only today, and of course a philosophical question occurs to me. The question asks: on what level and in what manner and way does one speak most appropriately of the phenomenon of totalitarianism? One could attempt—it has been done many times here—to restrict the concept to the realm of the political. Yet, in this case, a philosophical question nonetheless arises: what is politics, and how does one delimit thezconcept of the political? But one could also—and this too has often resonated—turn the general totalitarianism phenomenon into a historical

question and thereby into a historical-philosophical one. Then the problem appears as follows: why does this particular phenomenon appear in the twentieth century, even if in various differentiated forms, after the First World War?

In his lecture, Professor Maier has presented a topology of the relevant concepts—dictatorship, tyranny, despotism, for example. But all these concepts and the statements about them depend upon definitions and preconceptions in the first place. Second, if one poses the question Mr Maier posed, the following problem is raised: namely, how can one rationally speak of something which, by one's own admission, cannot fully be captured rationally because it also bears irrational features? In any case, any theory—whether it seeks to limit the question of totalitarianism to the political or whether it expands it to encompass the philosophy of history—must always pose this fundamental question.

And now, as a final remark, I would like to say something further about Mr Lübbe's very concrete theses. I believe that you have not quite captured what Orwell meant. On the problem of Winston, for example—I cite from *1984:* 'To him, it was as though he had strayed into a totally foreign world. The past was dead and the future unimaginable.' This is a problem that is much more fundamental than you have described it as being: the problem that past and future are equally dead, have become unimaginable, that only an infinite and exchangeable present therefore remains. And this is also the picture of history—the totalitarian picture of history—that Orwell seeks to sketch: how he experiences it in the Ministry of Truth. 'From moment to moment, the entire history is falsely transformed into the image that appears opportune at the moment' This is a different totalitarianism from the one that is listed in your five points.

BAEYER-KATTE: I do not come from the discipline of history, although I studied history with your father [directed at Professor Mommsen] in Marburg. I come from the discipline of political psychology—a different approach. And here it is always asked, on the one hand, about the self-image of a human being, a group, a mass (if one emerges), a movement, an ideology. On the other hand, we ask about the reality to the participating observers; the reality can be completely different. What then remains and cannot be explained is the 'irrationalism'. But first, one should say that both these sides are comprehensible. The self-image of National Socialism has been outstandingly described. Apparently, it had no—I heard this myself, Goebbels said it himself at a lecture in Nuremberg: 'it is not allowed to be canonized'. And there was the National Socialist term for its own structure: National Socialism was said to move like a ship with 'water-tight doors and windows'. Individual organizations are not allowed to know anything of one another. This, then, was the organizational principle according to the self-image of National Socialism at that time: it was not set out in written form, perhaps, but very often orally. It was supposed to remain diffuse; it was supposed not to restrict the power of the lower, various smaller organizations as long as they could be legitimated by belief and trust in Adolf Hitler. Yet National Socialism was by no means a faith—despite the 'faith' in Adolf Hitler. What the observers saw—I count myself among them here—was the terror of opinion. And the terror of opinion contradicts the self-image of National Socialism. National Socialism required that everyone believe in Adolf Hitler. But the terror of opinion was necessary because nobody believed in Adolf Hitler. Now, this is stated in a very simplified way; there

were of course also disciples, the notorious 'Nazi families'. But it was just like later with the end-phase of Communism: no one *believed* in Communism any more in the GDR, but everyone still talked as though they did. This discrepancy between that which a system believes it is—and that which its representatives also usually in all seriousness believe they are, by the way!—and the reality, this discrepancy leads to the collapse of the system. At some point, reality asserts itself. The people saw that things were not as Hitler said; the people saw that it was not as Ulbricht or Honecker said. They saw this every day. The women above all saw it; they still had a little bit more to do with reality; they had to procure the food.

This is why 'terror research' is an important point of entry into the problem as to how a system breaks apart. Not only brutal terror, but the terror of opinion—how does it function? How did the functionaries actually do it? This is truly a very interesting question and the central question of political psychology at the moment. But: who, now, were the enemies of the terror of opinion? In the first place, they were the believers and the enthusiasts: those who were of no use at all. In the second place, they were those who had emotionally internalized National Socialism. The good National Socialist   was one who believed that there is a *scientific* foundation for racism; the good Communist was one who believed that there is a *scientific* foundation for socialism (a foundation which also does not exist!). The persecutions and oppressions by the terror of opinion also drove out the religious elements. And this too is something that goes against the nature of the human being, just as the suppression of reality in the economy and daily life did. The human being has a religious need, and must attempt to satisfy it somewhere. The religiously revived, however, the so-called 'noble Nazis', were not the ones National Socialism wanted. The type that it wanted was the other type, precisely the same type of reasonable person that Communism wants. Here, there is a great similarity. This is why I too would say that which was already said earlier—that a programme for the future is lacking. Precisely this is the consequence of this ideology—one that, I would say, intellectually clings to the pseudoscientific realization of certain demands to be realized by the state system in the near future. For this reason, I recommend reading *Scientific Socialism,* which has proven for decades that socialism is identical in theory and practice. It understood itself in terms of 'science' and National Socialism understood itself in terms of 'race science'—to the extent that this very vague ideology can be described as such.

Summing up: I request urgently that the reality of the experience of the victims of these entire organizations be taken seriously, and not only that which the leaders said about themselves.

KARPEN: Mr Maier, you said that tyranny, as a description of the ruling form, is too strongly oriented upon the personal and that it has particular difficulties with clearly designating an authoritarian system. You also mentioned the Kreisau Circle in this context. Now, I would like to contribute a short piece of information from my own experience. At the moment five dissertations—on Hans Peters, Lukashek, van Husen, Trott zu Solz and Moltke, thus, the essential thinkers of the Kreisau Circle—are being written under my supervision. These thinkers wrote constitutional political theory. And in fact, in continually testing the question as to what the emergence of the resistance situation actually was, three points played a role with all the Kreisau people:

1) human rights; 2) ruling form; and 3) structured state system. With Delp or others, of course, humanism and natural law have pushed human rights into the foreground. By democracy, they all did not have so terribly much in mind—let us say, they were simply a little bit lax. Repeatedly, we discover an astonishing degree of return to ideas of the corporate state. Very important, however, was the postulate of the structured state system in the work both of Hans Peters and of Lukashek. With van Husen, later president of the supreme administrative court of Münster, decentralization, self-administration, federal state and what we would now describe as subsidiarity plays an important role. Specifically, it does so not only as an element of the distribution of powers—a horizontal layering of powers in the society, so to speak—but also as an element of that which we earlier found in the analysis of society—creativity, emancipative diversity. All of this left its mark on the thought of the Kreisau Circle, in clear contrast to the concentration of powers with the totalitarian state. For many, it has given occasion to say in many languages that the situation of resistance is in fact already at hand. But then, for the well-known reasons, the possibility to realize it cannot be found after all.

MAIER: On tyranny: I only grazed this issue. In the older resistance groups, which had already started up in the Freiberg circles after 1934, there was in fact a discussion about tyranny, the tyrant and tyrannicide. In the Freiberg circles, for example—we have the book by Mrs Lampe-Blumenberg about it—there were moral theologians who asked how it stands with tyrannicide. This discussion already began in 1934 and 1935. On the Catholic side, the entire late Middle Ages and the tyranny discussion is mobilized, then. On the Protestant side, it proceeds with more difficulty and derives support from the Lutheran concept of *anomia.* Occasionally, however, another note comes in. The Norwegian bishop, Berggrav, for example, is cited. He made his famous remark in an interpretation of a Luther passage: 'lf the coachman is drunk, then he must be pushed from the coach-box.' (The Germans had already occupied Norway by this point). This was the discussion surrounding tyranny: about the tyrant by virtue of usurpation (this Hitler was not, for he had come to power with at least the appearance of legality!) and the *tyrannus velatus et tacitus,* who becomes it only gradually. And this entire discussion moves a) through the Freiberg circle and b) through critical discussions of the conspirators of 20 July. In Kreisau it is less present: here, the theme of human rights comes much more visibly to the fore. As for my remark that the tyranny concept is perhaps too personalistic, I sought merely to indicate that there are of course concretely established, structured and differentiated institutions in modern despotisms as well. Or, there are at least the beginnings of such institutions—and these cannot be captured with the tyranny concept alone. If one reads Allan Bullock's most recent book on Hitler and Stalin, the limits of this approach appear very clearly. This is then even treated in Plutarchian terms, as a history of great, evil men; but such treatment leaves much of what we know from our research unaccounted for.

But now, I want to take the occasion to say something to Mr Hürten and, more generally, to the question of the suitability of both concepts that we have investigated. As Mr Zahn has correctly stated, I presented them more topologically, as a collection of analytical instruments. With complete awareness, I wanted to leave the question of suitability—and with that, of course, also the question of philosophical and historical

relevance—over to the discussion. I agree with those who say that the totalitarianism concept is accompanied by a danger of overtaxing history. That something thoroughly pervades the society like an oil stain—this was a very general insight about Fascism and Bolshevism, later about National Socialism, first attained, as I have mentioned, by Anglo-Saxon authors. Anglo-Saxons were accustomed to seeing the political less directly, in a way that was more hidden and distributed among parliamentary and administrative procedures. When one now suddenly encountered this political symbolism of mass parades of banners, of *Blutfahnen*—something new was in the   world here; and, the history of the origins of the totalitarianism concept is essentially the processing of this experience. Politics is no longer bound by society, but to a certain extent streams infinitely into the public realm. It becomes unavoidable; this is what Orwell portrayed, the unavoidability of the political, the eye of Big Brother everywhere. But in the past two days, we have clearly seen that such textbook images of totalitarianism are seldom matched by reality. And as Mr Mommsen very correctly indicated earlier, forms of institutional structuralization were entirely lacking with Fascism and National Socialism. This also had to do of course with the shorter life span: Bolshevism simply had a longer time to develop such structures. And if I follow Mommsen, if the SS had become established, it would have reigned 70 years, would have supplied such institutional structures later; indeed, it already had such bureaucratic tendencies. A few weeks ago, I heard an interesting lecture on the SS by Herfried Münkler. He investigated the letters, key witnesses, literary exemplars and favourite songs of the SS. In face of the Siegfried enthusiasm of National Socialism comes, for example, the taking of sides for Hagen—this is an element of statehood; for with revenge, with blood-revenge, Hagen upheld a piece of the state in the sense of that time against this mythology-believing Siegfried—an endless theme.

Political religion: compared to totalitarianism, I believe that this concept has the advantage of greater breadth. It both includes and explains more phenomena. And that which Mr Hürten presented earlier—I have only hinted at it, to be sure, but it also leads me in our investigations. We must distinguish between a broader area of the phenomenology of religion—in Germany, located between Kant and liberal Protestantism—and an ecclesiastical sociology or even ecclesiastical law in the narrower sense. *Religious faith* has something to do with National Socialism. With Communism, one would have to place *right religious faith* in the foreground; this plays a role here, there is truly catechetical knowledge—and also catechetical methods of instruction. Very roughly it could be said that, with National Socialism, it was more pedagogical methods of instruction that produced belief in the leader. With Communism (and that also holds for the GDR), one was questioned in terms of catechism and interrogated on the basis of a detailed outline of the world; it was a binding theory, then. And wherever there is a binding theory, there is also the instruction of teachers and control of the instruction of teachers and sanctions against deviants, against renegades. And there are party conventions, which I would go so far as to say uphold the prevailing state of the doctrine in a way similar to councils. Briefly put: we do better here to rely on the vocabulary of a sociology of the institutionalized Church, whereas, with National Socialism, we can work very extensively—and Guardini did this too—with the old concepts of the

phenomenology of religion. To me, therefore, it is not now a matter of bringing totalitarianism and political religions—as Mr Zahn has suggested—into the form of a philosophical concept; I want to leave these words entirely in their everyday understanding. But to me, political religion is an indispensable supplement to the theory of totalitarianism   insofar as it unlocks a larger sphere of phenomena. Besides this, I agree of course with all who have reminded that it is necessary to differentiate here between Fascist religious faith, National Socialist belief in the Führer and Communist right belief—to point out this difference somewhat more directly.

MOMMSEN: The essence of National Socialism lies in the fact that it is not capable of generating constitutive politics; it can create no institutions. And this is why the problem of the system's self-dissolution must be posed differently from how it is with Communist regimes—without entering into their distinctions at present. The religious faith that you mention—I would be somewhat careful, because this is primarily a phenomenon of nationalism and not specific to the forms we analyse here. Such dispositions of the population are probably consciously instrumentalized—here, then, lies the Fascist element. Third point: it is of course very interesting that a minister of the Imperial Church describes National Socialism as a religion, evidently for the revaluation of his self-consciousness. But if one looks at Wewelsburg, the farthestreaching attempt to develop a pseudo-religion, then nothing whatsoever can be said as to why these ritual cities were built. And this seems to be symptomatic for the non-applicability of the concept of political religion to National Socialism. The initial mass mobilization ended in 1939 at the latest. The stylized idea of the great, believing masses that bore Hitler up should be restricted to the early phase.

As far as historians are concerned, Mr Lübbe, I still stand on this front, yet look toward the future despite this. And I do believe that we should not merely interpret the National Socialist and Communist regimes from the perspective of these earlier explanatory attempts. Rather, we should interpret in terms of the central question: 'What kind of transitional situations are here, what are the transitional mechanisms?' Mr Zahn, it should be precisely stated here why the 1920s brought the upheaval and that a unique new structure was involved with National Socialism. Mr Linz was one of the first to portray this impressively.

LÜBBE: Perhaps I might make a methodological remark as to why the question concerning the future of totalitarianism is still significant. The more precisely you cite the peculiar evolutionary circumstances of modern civilization in attempting to explain why totalitarianism emerged in this century and not earlier—which can also be explained according to the demands of Mr Zahn—the more precisely you can predict what will become of it in the future. According to my hypothesis, nothing. We can expect all kinds of demons, but no longer the return of this totalitarian demon. If one refers to those who held red banners high or banners with the swastika, then this is a completely different phenomenon; this is nothing more than the maximal gaining of attention by groups of wayward youths through a maximal breach of taboo. It is an instrumental use of the past that has not the least thing to do with original Marxism or Bolshevism.

One more minor remark. Mr Zahn has reminded of the meaning of the future in Orwell's concept—to him, the exclusion of free future relationships is a central feature of totalitarian rule. Yes, it is true that I did not speak of it,   but I am freed of the burden

of doing so by the fact that I did not wish to speak about Orwell. The relationship to the future—namely, the increasingly unknown quality of a future that rushes more and more quickly toward us is indeed one of the very large problems of future society. It is peculiar to modern societies, not to old ones, that they know so little about the future less than any society before. The socio-psychological significance of this fact can be seen immediately in the old maxim: 'the proximity of the unknown frightens'. The proximity of the unknown is not a spatial proximity here, but one of a temporal dimension. Now, it might be said: what great chances there then are for the return of totalitarian ideologies in the future! For these ideologies arose under the specifically modern conditions of a progressive disappearance of certainty regarding the future; and they related to this disappearance of certainty in the future, which is an objective fact, in a compensatory way. Do the totalitarianisms, therefore, not have even better chances for the future? My thesis is this: the securing of the future too, the compensation for the progressive uncertainty of the future is pluralistically splintered in modern civilization. With reference to existence in the modern world, this means that there are neo-Mennonites in Silicon Valley who are certain of their future; either old or new forms of sectarian belief provide the entire stability of their daily life. And it is precisely through this that they are capable of delivering their high-tech achievements fully and unrestrictedly. The more modern the world becomes, the less becomes its need for cultural homogeneity.

JESSE: I would like to say something on the points raised by Mr Schwarz and Mr Hürten. In my opinion, the totalitarianism approach is not an all-purpose scientific weapon, not a scientific apparatus by which to decode the social transitions—both the origins and the decay—of certain systems. I plead for disarmament of the concept—it seems to me to be very important not to overtax it. Yet we should ask ourselves why many GDR researchers, for example, speak and write about state security now, at a time when state security belongs to the past. When it existed, as good as no one except the 'amateur', Karl Wilhelm Fricke, came up with these ideas. A great deal of opportunism was in play here. Now, there is suddenly a wealth of theories that seek to explain the different elements, but do not necessarily conflict. Your Fascism theory, too, Mr Mommsen: ultimately, it can be conceived in terms of a perspective other than the totalitarianism concept. It depends upon the formulation of the question. If one asks about the role of the individual, then the totalitarianism approach is truly illuminating.

I perceive the existence of a contrast, not between totalitarian and polycratic, but between totalitarian and authoritarian on the one hand and monolithic and polycratic on the other. These are the antipodes. I admit that the monolithic character was a fixation in the 1950s, but the totalitarianism concept has also developed further. We should not necessarily criticize its weakest points, but test its strengths instead; and conversely, we should also attempt to test the other theories in terms of their most fruitful elements. Besides this, we ought   not to construct bogeys: there is a wealth of competing approaches and I do not see here why one approach has to exclude another. Competition animates the scientific business.

ROHRWASSER: If one examines the role of literature in totalitarianism, then it is primarily the differences that stand out. I wish to emphasize two points. It is astounding to what extent Bolshevism succeeded in transforming literature and writers

into priests. The fascination that emerged for writers was not merely a natural process, but was staged by the movement. I will recall one important caesura: the Moscow Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934; a powerful euphoria radiated from it. Many German authors were invited as observers. Here too, the writer Shdanov uttered the famous words about Stalin: he was the 'engineer of human souls'. The fascination was tremendous, then. And the enormous Stalin that hung on the convention wall as a larger-than-life poster beside Gorki was in no way regarded, as might be expected, as a cliché. (This same room, by the way, was the one in which the show-trials then occurred three years later.) The fascination exuded from the authors in communion with their readers; and then, of course, the writer was allotted the role as bearer of the hope of history, etc. And even sceptical observers like Oskar Maria Graf from Munich or Klaus Mann were swept into this euphoria; the others already had been anyway.

The second point concerns the kind of literature to which Orwell belongs: the literature of those who came from the movement itself and served as literary witnesses about the Stalinist system. This literature was of course equally bad, and it was not correctly received. One of the first to appreciate this renegade literature in a comprehensive sense was Hannah Arendt. In the third part of her study *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Hannah Arendt refers to the ostracized, denounced renegade literature—not merely to the scientists (Borkenau, among others), but to the writers themselves, spanning from Koestler to Buber-Neumann. This literature has its literary qualities. In other words, it cannot be reduced to a politically functional character and has in fact not been properly appreciated to this day for its role in setting off the entire totalitarianism debate. Here was provided the material and forcefulness of the images—and I speak now again of Stalinism, because the renegade literature shaped Stalinism in literary terms before any theoretical foundations for the description of Stalinism were provided. Here is where I see the stark and clear difference between National Socialism and Stalinism. National Socialism was surrounded by theoretical attempts from the beginning, whereas this by no means occurred with Stalinism. The Frankfurt School, for example: in the *Zeitschrift der Sozialforschung,* there is not a single notice about Stalinism. It is literature, therefore, that assumes the large role of describing a historical or political phenomenon. This then becomes material for the research on totalitarianism.

BACKES: I would like to bring the discussion, which has at times been carried off into philosophical heights, down to the lowly strata of political reality and to argue for the totalitarianism concept against those who have attacked it from   the podium. For one thing, I am—for many reasons—not capable of sharing the optimism expressed by Mr Lübbe that there would be no more new totalitarian temptations in the future. However that may be for the future, though, if we observe only the present then there are still more dictatorial regimes than democratic ones. And among these dictatorial regimes, many restrict the freedom of the individual in extreme ways. For such extreme restriction of individual freedom by political regimes, we need a classificatory concept of the theory of state forms. Political science, after all, must have concepts with which to capture the multiplicity of regimes. Under the conditions of the democratic age, I believe that the concept of totalitarianism is a thoroughly operationalizable and nicely applicable concept by which to conceive precisely this extreme form of the restriction of individual freedom by political regimes. In the works of Juan Linz, who is present

here, the concept of the totalitarian has also been applied in this mode—as a general classificatory concept of the theory of state forms. And I would like again to recall what Juan Linz presented as criteria in his definitions of authoritarianism and totalitarianism. These are the following: first, the existence of a comprehensive ideology that purports to explain all social areas with a claim to absolute validity. Second, there is mobilization of the population by the regime. And third, there is an extreme monopolization of political power, which excludes all attempts at a political pluralism. Juan Linz then distinguishes between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes in a typology. The authoritarian regimes are characterized by the fact that they develop no comprehensive ideology, but more or less build upon a traditionalist spiritual attitude. Second, they do not go so far as completely to monopolize the political system, but preserve a 'limited pluralism' instead. Further, they are not aimed at a mass mobilization of the population, but promote more of an apolitical mentality— apolitical not understood here as a normative concept, but in the sense simply of demanding that the citizen retreat from politics. The citizen is to keep a distance from all political areas and the possessors of power can freely manage things as they please. In this sense, I find that we cannot dispense with a concept like totalitarianism in classifying state forms under the conditions of the era of mass democracy. Whether the formula itself should be regarded as particularly suitable—this must be discussed. Whether the concept of despotism is more suitable than that of totalitarianism, however, I venture to doubt.

REPGEN: I find it very regrettable that Mr Mommsen has left us so early, because a part of what I would like to say is directed at what he said to us in his lecture. First, I share Mr Backes' opinion—I am not a political scientist, but a historian—that the totalitarianism concept is suitable for very many questions that we historians of the twentieth century must pose. In particular, it is suitable for the history of the Soviet Union, of Germany or of the National Socialist sphere of rule and, to a limited extent, the history of Stalin as well. I would like to explain or illustrate this on a fact that has occupied us through these days to the extent that the catchword 'political religion' was one of the central catchwords. Mr Lübbe raised several objections to this catchword yesterday—objections that I, in any case, found very convincing. Unfortunately, this was very much toward the end, so that we could not discuss it further. He said that we are not permitted to speak of political 'religions', but must speak instead of a political 'counter-religion'. And this, indeed, might be harmonized with the concepts that Mr Linz introduced to us earlier: political religions on the one hand, politicization of Church and religion, 'religionization', on the other. But Mr Mommsen has now opined that all this did not exist with National Socialism. (To my knowledge, he has never concerned himself with this question in more detail.) But the 'counter-Church' as a distant goal in fact existed with National Socialism; with Bolshevism, this is not at all difficult to prove. I now present you three citations.

At the beginning of August 1933, Hitler held a lecture about tasks and goals in narrow circles of his National Socialist leadership group of perhaps 30 people. Goebbels made an entry in his diary about this lecture—and this in the sections of the diary that might be held as genuine even after the discoveries of the past years. Here, the Führer is said to have expressed strong words against the Church: 'we ourselves will be the Church'. This is not the German Christians; this is National Socialism, this

'we ourselves will be the Church'! And by Church, by the way, was intended the Catholic Church. A few years later, also in a similar situation, Goebbels noted that 'we are not yet a Church'. And at the beginning of the war, the catchword 'final solution'—with reference to the destruction of the existing Church—goes straight across Germany But Hitler then says that it will be postponed until after the final victory. This means, therefore, that the end-goal was proclaimed at a point in time when—with certainty—the leading group did not think that this war would end badly for Germany. As could be proved from very many sources that I do not want to mention here, it is also understood as such by the propaganda and by those within the country itself. This we can assume.

Now, the question raises itself—and here, I return again to totalitarianism and its usefulness: why the resistance, the opposition, indeed the enmity of the National Socialist regime toward the churches? One can provide the answer very nicely in terms of the totalitarianism approach: because no social forms lay claim here to publicity and statements about the meaning of life. And as long as these are available, they are a foreign body that cannot be tolerated in a totalitarian system. This also explains why these institutions are so intensely fought. For this reason, I believe that we should not speak of 'religion'. The institutional element is not necessarily included in the concept of religion, whereas I believe that concepts must be sought that immediately point those who hear them in the right direction. The concept of 'ideocraty', Mr Hürten—this I hold to be too complicated to be useful. The world consists not only of political scientists who can handle words of Greek origin that come from US English.

I believe, therefore, that the suggestion of *anti-Church*—or better yet, *counter-Church*—would be better than Mr Lübbe's suggestion of anti-religion.

This reveals a tendency that was present. Of course totalitarianism is not a concept with which all historical questions can be clarified; but it ought never to achieve this anyway. I know of no other historical concept that can capture everything. But totalitarianism is a concept with which very many very important things can be captured. And Mr Jesse, you have referred to that which Ranke described 150 years ago as an 'impulse of the present'. The entire discussion, even the stabilization of the totalitarianism concept, was bound up very closely to political developments in Germany. This is so obvious that it requires no further great proofs whatsoever.

My suggestion: yes, retain the totalitarianism concept for all important formulations of the questions to which it is suited. There are also historical questions for which it is probably not suited at all, and it does not have to be applied here either. And rather than the concept of political religion, we would do better to take the concept of counter-Church as our idea of the goal, our concept of the tendency. Here, certainly, one can speak easily of a politicization of the Church, of the churchification of politics only with difficulty (clericalization of politics does not fit either). If this conceptualization could be agreed upon, I believe some of the speaking past one another could be avoided—or at least minimized. And we should make sure that, whenever possible, we should attempt to see whether we can find words and forms of expression in which we say the same thing with the same words when we would like to speak about the same thing.

TOMKA: For my part, I found Mr Mommsen's comment somewhat surprising when he described the NSDAP—or perhaps the Nazi system more generally—as non-

bureaucratic compared to a bureaucratic Communism. I can only say simply that it was precisely the opposite in my view. As a sociologist and not a historian, I grant, to be sure, that comparisons of systems of such varying life spans and social structures are very problematic. But despite this, as far as I can survey the literature about Communist states and social systems, irrationality is emphasized here to a much greater extent than it has been in Mr Mommsen's statement. Seen thus, I can express only my lack of comprehension here.

Second: the same line as Mr Repgen previously, albeit a little differently, developed. Mr Mommsen referred to the meagre binding power of the National Socialist political religion, and, on account of its meagre binding power, he recommended that we do not insist so much that it is a political religion. I do not necessarily want to say something about how things looked in this respect with National Socialism, but I would definitely like to say how it looked in the Communist systems. In terms of content, the attachment was truly meagre—but this is only the one aspect. Another aspect is the intensity. Observed from outside, we can entirely say that a weak bond was present, but this has very little to do with how the involved parties experienced it themselves. Following the collapse of Communism, there are now relatively large groups of people who lost their religion with the loss of Communism—this can be proved empirically. And we see how these people suffer and react in completely different ways owing to the loss of their religion: some seek refuge in existing churches and religions,   some react differently, but a loss of religion is clearly at hand. I, in any case, believe that something *similar to religion* has been lost here. By this I mean simply that an empirical fact is present here—one that certainly requires explanation. It should not simply be regarded as being non-existent.

And a third, brief question for Mr Lübbe. His five arguments have a persuasive effect and seem at first all well and good. Yet I would ask: how does that fit with a Mormon state today, how does it fit with Iran? I would ask whether it is not precisely modernity that brings a new fragmentation; and this fragmentation leads to the founding or strengthening of moral majorities, to the strengthening of charismatic movements of all shades, or to fundamentalism. Does this development not lead to the delegation of political responsibility to supreme organs of some kind—whether state or worldviews—by increasingly large groups of people? Does this fragmentation, therefore, not lead relatively large groups to withdraw from the world? If this is true, then I believe that all five arguments of Mr Lübbe are very weak.

PETERSEN: I wanted to inquire as to the relationship between totalitarianism and Fascism. This morning, Mr Maier stated very firmly that a comprehensive concept of Fascism is no longer tenable. From his explanation, I actually gained the impression that he regards the two constructions to be antithetical: totalitarianism and Fascism are antithetical conceptions. I would argue for regarding them as complementary. Today, we are in a situation where the Fascism concept—it appears to me—is burdened by two developments. It is burdened for one by the German situation. In the Federal Republic of Germany, the discussion of totalitarianism was set off in the late 1960s by an anti-Fascism discussion that had been very strongly influenced by the revolts of 1968. And this discussion was primarily carried on by the Left, but also by Ernst Nolte. It has largely remained a theoretical discussion of the Left; and, to the extent

that they use this concept, it was with certainty 90 per cent a National Socialist discussion and thus had a certain exculpatory character. When one spoke of German Fascism, this included to a certain extent the apology that National Socialism could be incorporated into a larger epochal phenomenon. Here, so to speak, it had companions who shared this fate. Exactly the opposite development occurred in Italy. In Italy too, there was a broad discussion surrounding Fascism in the 1960s. But later, under the impression of the ever-widening discussion about the Holocaust and about the violent crimes of National Socialism, the Italian research has distanced itself further and further from a comprehensive Fascism concept. The book by Renzo de Felice, *La interpretazione del fascismo,* is characteristic; it first appeared in 1968 and was translated into German and into all the world languages. Not long ago, Felice published the tenth edition of this book with a foreword in which he says: at base, I would no longer be able to publish this book at all, for I no longer stand by these theses. I would have to rewrite the book completely. That which I said about a concept of Fascism—also a typology in the comprehensive sense—I no longer hold to be acceptable; I am no longer convinced of it. In interviews, he said that Italian Fascism is 'outside the scope of the Holocaust'. This, I believe, is the central phenomenon at base. The Italians now shrink from a comprehensive concept of Fascism because it would expose them to the reproach that they were involved in the most violent crime of the century.

Now, despite this opinion, it would be a great shame if we were to do away with a comprehensive and truly comparative Fascism discussion. Let us take the 1920s and 1930s and the discussion at that time, one that we have in part repeated in the last two days. Let us assume that the concept of totalitarianism was demonstrated on the Italian experience and first arose here. If we then look at the experience of Europe in the 1920s and 1930s—at the reactions of the middle class, at the reactions of the elite groups, at the reactions of the political social climbers, at figures with charismatic rule who had a strong say in this phenomenon—then I wonder whether similar social, political, socio-psychological developments could not occur again today in a similar crisis situation of capitalism. I would argue very strongly (and, with Mr Linz, we have here among us one of the best and best-known representatives of a theory of comparative Fascism) that these concepts should be used in a complementary way, not antithetically.

INTERRUPTION BY REPGEN: I have a question for Mr Petersen. If you understand Fascism as a way out of the social crises of capitalism, then how do you want to 'decline' it without applying it to all capitalistic societies? There has been relatively little Fascism in Great Britain and the United States, but these societies were rather capitalistic.

PETERSEN: I would not say that every capitalistic society in a certain crisis situation must become Fascist, but it stands in danger of becoming it. This danger, I believe, still exists.

LINZ: I believe that the discussion has led to a certain either-or situation, and this is wrong. What we must be very clear on is, first, that a series of concepts illuminates various aspects of this great phenomenon of the twentieth century and that *no single one* illuminates *everything.* For this reason, we must not discuss whether this or that concept is the one we want to use or whether it is true or false. Instead, we must ask:

what does each of these concepts explain, and what do we learn from it? Second, we would perhaps have to proceed like Max Weber when he rejects Toennies' concepts of community and society and speaks of socialization and communalization—thus, of tendencies, of possibilities of development rather than substantive unities. I believe that, in reality, no single totalitarian system was as the ideal type defined itself—God be thanked. And, here, we arrive at the entire problem of the islands of separateness, the niches as Mr Tomka described them using the example of Hungary. This leads to the question: how far could these utopias of totalitarianism really be implemented? And here, of course, there are enormous possibilities for research and differentiation.

Then, I would like to underscore the fact that the totalitarianism concept is only a first approximation. We would have to begin studying the extent of the differences among the individual totalitarianisms. Mr Mommsen made   observations that are important in comparing Communist and National Socialist totalitarianism. Here, however, we must try to develop types and sub-types and differences, and we must then also build in the temporal dimension. The problem here is that the temporal dimension of National Socialism was set by a seizure of power in a society that had not been completely de-structured—as the Russian society had been after the war, the fall of Tsarism, the civil war, etc. In the latter were present all possible conditions for building up a quick dictatorship. Compared to this, it had to proceed a little bit more slowly in Germany—although it still went unbelievably fast at the end. Then came the war. And if we want to compare the war years of National Socialism, then we must perhaps say that it was in a certain respect similar to the 'patriotic war' in the Soviet Union; certain totalitarian tendencies were reversed for a time—the relation to the Church, for example—in order to win the population over to the war. But that too means another limitation. I believe that Graf Ballestrem presented very interesting ideas that agree very much with my own; they concern the meaning of the crisis of 'post-totalitarianism'—a concept that I have developed further in other unpublished texts. Here, I explain how the collapse, breakdown and transition in the various cases occurred toward the end of Communism in eastern Europe. Here, it must be emphasized that Poland was not a totalitarian system—and indeed, not even a posttotalitarian one. In Romania, elements of a Sultanistic system—I apply the concept of Max Weber—existed, and in Hungary post-totalitarianism was very advanced. It could be doubted whether the country was still posttotalitarian. What must be emphasized is that these were satellite states; the presence of the Soviet Union played a decisive role here.

I believe that the main argument for retaining the concept of totalitarianism is that, otherwise, we would place all non-democratic systems in the same category, and that makes no sense. We must differentiate here, and I have attempted to formulate such differentiations: authoritarianism vs totalitarianism, totalitarianism vs post-totalitarianism. Further, the Sultanistic regimes must be bracketed out of the authoritarian systems as an entirely distinct phenomenon. A Duvalier and a Somoza are no Franco and no Salazar; they are different creatures. The concept of despotism could be applied here to several totalitarian systems as well as several Sultanistic systems.

Without the concept of totalitarianism, the inheritance that these regimes have left to their countries and societies can also not be understood. These societies were

chloroformed; the social network, structures, institutions, concepts, intellectual life, legal order, etc. were diminished by this totalitarian phase. This phase creates many difficulties for the construction of modern democratic societies, but all this we could not understand if we did not have the totalitarianism concept, which distinguishes this from that which happens in Spain, Portugal or Chile.

Then, I would like to stress that the Fascism concept captures a dimension that is not entirely covered by the totalitarianism concept. Fascism is a distinct phenomenon; Fascism has a reality of its own. De Felice distinguishes   between regime and movement. One can study Fascistic movements comparatively, but, with regimes, the question arises: totalitarian or not? For Italian Fascism, I use the concept of 'arrested totalitarianism'—it was a regime that had totalitarian ambitions, but got stuck and did not come as far. It wanted to come further, but could not. But the Fascist movements have fundamental elements in common, and National Socialism and Italian Fascism cannot be distinguished as far as our Italian friends would like, or as others in Germany perhaps would like. This is a very complex matter. To make use of an image: a populist, racist branch of the German ideological tradition is grafted on to the common tree of Fascism, and the tree of course now bears a different kind of fruit and develops differently. This branch then becomes so heavy that the tree falls down with it. Otherwise, Fascism would perhaps still be a political, ideological alternative today. After National Socialism, this is no longer possible.

Then to the concept of the political religions: I do not identify myself with it; I have written a paper because that was the theme of our meeting, but the title states 'ersatz religions'. We cannot give up the theme as such; it has very much to do with totalitarianism, but perhaps not with totalitarianism alone. Besides this, it provides another point of view. I believe that it is suited to explaining only regimes. It is a useful concept for explaining certain spiritual attitudes and certain attempts to legitimate power in these regimes. The concept of 'ersatz religions' sounds very good to me; there remains only the problem that it is almost impossible to translate 'ersatz' into other languages. My generation still knows what ersatz is: Plexiglas and similar such things, but today's generation no longer knows what ersatz is. This is why it is not a good concept. Anti-Church, then? This is too institutional in my view. Anti-religion? That is only the 'anti', whereas what resonates along with it here, as a subjective, emotional stirring—this is not captured by it. Thus, we must reflect still further on it: what kind of concept is suitable, what is perhaps understandable to all people and translatable? The phenomenon, in any case, exists. We can of course save ourselves by saying that the concept of political religions has already been used very often; and, in the large textbook about the French Revolution, there is a chapter about political religion. The concept has, therefore, a more extensive meaning; and here is spoken of things like the cult of reason, the cult of the Supreme Being. If we keep with this usage and realize in doing so that we do not speak of genuine religion, then we can speak of political religions. That the catechisms, as it was called, of Communism and National Socialism differ on both intellectual and faith levels does not mean that the vulgar version and perceptions that were manipulated do not bear certain similarities. I do not believe that Lenin's grave in Red Square has a place in a Marxist-Leninist theory; this has more analogies with what happened here in Germany than with Marxism-Leninism; but it was part of this phenomenon. This is

why we must work on it further. I have the feeling that the theoretical literature on political religions (Guardini, Voegelin and others) does not say much to us. We must study the empirical phenomenon further.

As in the case of totalitarianism, progress came with the empirical studies about the reality of totalitarian systems, the party, the ideology, the control of the system, etc. We cannot relinquish the concept, but nor can we be satisfied with the current state of it.

Then, I would also emphasize that we should not forget that totalitarian systems still exist. It sounds here as though they were done with entirely. Totalitarian is not finished with in Cuba; it is not finished in China. Some people of course believe that China will automatically become a democracy with capitalistic development. This would have to be discussed.

The media and the things that Mr Lübbe has said are very interesting—in this case, totalitarianism would have to break down soon in China. I do not see how this is supposed to occur so soon, mainly in light of the experience of the Soviet Union. The leadership elite in China has learned from the Russian example. I agree with Mr Lübbe that new totalitarian systems will hardly appear again in the Western societies (including east and central Europe and probably Latin America). The reasons that Mr Lübbe offers are rather worth discussing in my opinion, but this would be a theme for a new conference.

How the non-democratic systems that continue to exist in many lands—in Indonesia or Pakistan or North Africa—will develop, this is a different question. Perhaps they will assume elements of totalitarian systems, but certainly not in the form of Communism or National Socialism. We must wait and see what new thing emerges here. The concept of Fascism probably no longer applies to any of these countries either. I believe just as little as Mr Lübbe does that Fascism will return. Some of the 'anti' elements will perhaps re-emerge, but the style of Fascism—one that was so attractive to youth and intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s—seems laughable today. The formation of paramilitary *squadristi,* of the SA and similar phenomena—this, the modern state no longer allows. It has learned that such things must not be allowed and they go to jail, God be thanked. The modern constitutional state can protect itself—if it wants to, of course.

If democrats are disillusioned by democracy and begin to say that it is no good after all, then anything becomes possible. This is why future analysis must attempt to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of democracy. It must also criticize the plans for a utopian democracy that does not and cannot exist. They must see to it that politics be restricted for the whole society. It is a pipe dream to think that politics can found a good society, that democracy can found a good, just society. It can found a *better* and *more just* one, but not a good and just society.

And with that, we arrive at the following problem: what are the crisis elements in our democracy? And how can we, as intellectuals, analyse these elements? A critique of democracy as it really exists (and there is no other kind) cannot arrive at the conclusion that democracy *as such* is bad and we must invent something else. We have already experimented twice with this in this century, and I do not believe that new experiments are worth it. In this respect, I am in agreement with Mr Lübbe.

I do believe, however, that the problem is not communication, but the following: what will the intellectual world produce in this atmosphere of doubt with regard to our societies? Will it stick with the facts? Will it—by contrast to the Nazis and the Communists in part—refrain from sketching castles in the sky? Will it contribute to democracies becoming worse or better (and not bad or good) in our societies?

I also contest the thesis that Fascism was the necessary result of the economic and social crisis of capitalism. This is at best a partial truth. In Holland or Norway, after all, the economic crisis had produced the same unemployment as it had in Germany; but there, it led to great coalitions and the institutionalization of a much more capable democracy. I believe that the crisis elements of Italy, Germany and Austria are historically specific, and that they must be analysed in their historic specificity. In this respect, I believe that Marxism's Fascism theory cannot be brought into harmony with the facts. The Marxist theoreticians who were read so much in Germany never took seriously and studied the comparative empirical research on Fascist movements. They wrote the same thing over and again—about the lower middle classes and about this and about that; primarily, they make the erroneous assumption that the social levels are the same in each country. Within the individual countries, however, the Fascist movements attracted entirely different social classes. Thus, we must really take seriously and use the existing research and then we can look further. Perhaps the prognoses will be more positive and hopeful if we do not use generalizing concepts and attend better to the fundamental difference between abstract, ideal-typical concepts and concrete historical reality. Historians and social scientists must work together; both can learn from each other. Yes, historians can also learn a great deal from social scientists—perhaps not as much as we would like, but they still could learn something.

WEINACHT: I would like to draw our attention to a contradiction between the formulation that Mr Maier chose this morning and the remarks of Mr Buchheim on despotism. The contradiction is the following: to what extent must politics or politicization occur for one to be able to speak of totalitarianism in a reasonable way? Does this phenomenon mean the same as an overflowing of the political, a total politicization of the society? Or is it the opposite—as Mr Buchheim has lectured to us—a de-politicization of the society? Is totalitarianism politicization or is it a reduction of politics?

It seems to me that we must attend here to the inner structures of the concept of the political. Here, it would be helpful—something that Mr Linz has also suggested—to recall the limits of the political in society. What are the limits, then? Basically, they are those that were drawn by liberalism and that were then polemically challenged— by Carl Schmitt, for example. That politics excludes the churches, this would be such a limit; that politics excludes science or freedom of science would also be such a limit; that politics excludes the private sphere is part of it too. Wilhelm Hennis has expressly treated the latter in his discussion of the democratization of all spheres of life during the 1970s. Those, therefore, are internal differentiations that are absolutely critical to a—now, I would say—'legitimate' understanding of the political. And if these limits fail, politics can assume a totalitarian character. There are tendencies toward this development in democracies too, even in those organized as a constitutional state. The society can feel itself released from its duties by the

state, so to speak, can grow tired of the delimitations. At this point, an understanding of the political that is totalitarian in this respect can in fact take root in a constitutional democracy.

SUTOR: I wanted to mention an interesting empirical fact which might be of use to future investigations—also to questions like 'ersatz religion', 'religious ersatz' and 'anti-Church'. Years ago, I procured an entire set of textbooks on citizenship from the GDR—which at that time still existed. The set included the 7th to the 10th class, as well as the accompanying textbooks for the teachers. This morning, Mr Hürten stated, 'here is a doctrine, here is catechized, here is tested'. That which he referred to becomes palpable here—less in the books for the schoolchildren (but there too) than in the teaching guides. According to the concept of these guides, instruction was supposed to consist in a proper indoctrination. Not only the contents were pre-determined, but the results were as well, the insights—to the extent that they could be called insights. In each case, the instruction ended with pre-determined tables and propositions. This is indoctrination in its worst form. One could of course now discuss this under the following question: to what extent was this effective? To what extent was the demand, the intention, implemented? During the GDR era, there were clever investigations by empiricists who believed that not only youth, but the family too, had been completely infiltrated and forced into line by the GDR regime in this way. This is not tenable, but I return again here to the problem of the consequences of concepts. Fortunately, Mr Linz has clarified the fact that concepts can always be applied in only a proximate way—in the distinction of the ideal typus from real types as well. In terms of this distinction, we must ask the following: to what extent was there a totalitarian claim? This was undoubtedly present in both National Socialism and Communism, as was that which we attempted experimentally to capture using concepts from the sphere of religion. But to what extent did they capture the social reality? This is a different question entirely. This morning, Mr Jesse, I had the impression that these two questions were conflated a little bit in the exchange between you and Mr Mommsen. Mr Mommsen spoke of the reality of rule and of the system transposed into structures, and you spoke in terms of the totalitarian claim.

BAEYER-KATTE: This follows up directly on your point, for I had taken a look at the schooling material for the Stasi in Berlin. It is very similar, even less differentiated than what was taught in the schools. All distinctions are seen as critical and are suppressed. What is involved here is the conflation of all concepts; the enemy is described synonymously as 'Fascism', 'militarism', 'imperialism' and 'capitalism'. In the end, the psychologist would say, we are in a paranoid system; all enemies are one enemy at base; all enemy concepts are *one* enemy concept. And when one now imagines these unhappy people in the Stasi, these   people who took part in this schooling and then reproduced it in their dissertations and diploma work—that these people now had to change their orientation would have been almost humanly impossible. They had sacrificed their whole individuality to the system. That is scarcely possible. But now, a trick is attempted; it already surfaces during the era of the former GDR and in the West as well: the enemy concept is subsumed to Fascism. All enemies are Fascists. And this Fascism concept includes the highest levels of the system. Honecker was a Fascist, Ulbricht was a Fascist, Stalin was a Fascist, Lenin was a Fascist, and all his functionaries along with him. That which had called itself

Communism was Fascism—true Communism was yet to come. This was the anchor upon which these systems of thought specializing in simplification were now fixed. The trick of thought is this: everything that was bad about Communism was Fascism. But there were also some good things in Communism—and this we will save. It is important that we are clear about these structures of thought; the image of the human being here is the exact opposite of our own. Not individualization, not differentiation, but simplification, unification and uniformization are where it ends. And this kind of thinking does not subside so quickly; it merely receives other names.

SCHWARZ: I seize upon the word once again because I still have problems with the concept of 'post-totalitarian'. Mr Linz, I always listen attentively to you and am taught and richly rewarded; yet I still have the impression that a differing application of the concept is at hand here. If I understood you correctly, you use this concept to characterize the last great phase of the Soviet system, also of the GDR—let us say, then, from Brezhnev up to the end. This has occurred many times, not the least in the *Bundesrepublik* itself: here, Mr von Beyme spoke of consultative authoritarianism with reference to the GDR and so on. On the one hand, this is justified, for these systems evince structures and mentalities that differ in part; the ideology had become weaker, larger niches were formed—all this we know. On the other hand, this great late phase presents itself differently in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and this in two ways. First: since 1990, we have in fact had genuinely post-totalitarian societies in the Soviet satellite states, the new German Bundesländer, the Baltic states. But this has been only since 1990; and certain totalitarian elements, not the least of which are the former elites, exert a greater or lesser degree of influence. This is the one new thing. The second new thing is this: if you look at the information that Mrs Baeyer-Katte has offered, if you look at this frightening information about the Stasi system of the really existing GDR as well as everything that came out about the Soviet system during the Glasnost period of 1986 to 1990, then the concept of 'post-totalitarian' seems all too harmless and objectively inappropriate as a characterization of the post-Stalinist Communist systems. For understandable reasons, the concept of 'post-totalitarian' might have been used for the end-phase prior to 1989, in order to distinguish it from the height of totalitarianism and from the early period. Yet we must now consider that *the entire phase* of Communism, at least provisionally, has come to an end. Since 1990, we have lived in a   post-totalitarian age. And then, of course, the question arises: what concept do we use for the final phase of Communism? Can one say 'late totalitarian', as has become customary in English? I believe that it is very important for research and for academia to distinguish clearly between the preparation in terms of ideas and the epochal historical turning points.

LINZ: I would say that I am more comfortable with the concept 'post-totalitarian' than with all these concepts that I summarize in my chapter of the book: 'consultative authoritarianism' and others. These were all prettifying terms. Besides this, 'post-totalitarian' expresses the fact that these systems developed on the foundation of totalitarianism. A continuum exists here. Whereas the other concepts have distinct, typological limits, this concept traces the development of a totalitarian system into a post-totalitarian system—there are various grades of post-totalitarianism here. If we take the GDR as an example: I do not know whether I would have perhaps called the GDR 'totalitarian' rather than 'post-totalitarian' right at the end. If we compare it to

Hungary, then we see just how far a country can go 'post-totalitarian'. I believe that the textbooks that were mentioned would have been left in the closet in Hungary; if they even existed, probably no one would have taken them seriously. A further difference, then—and perhaps this too is a difference between Germany and other countries: how seriously should one take everything? This is the question of thoroughness. I do not know whether the Stasi and the KGB were equally efficient or equally inefficient—at the end, they were all inefficient. But I do not know—we would have to study these post-totalitarian systems more intensively.

Your critique, Mr Schwarz, is correct. It is indeed a vague concept, but it reflects many of the things that Mr Ballestrem said—how, as a result of the various developments that he described so well, this totalitarian system could not hold up internally, how it then came to a crisis. In this respect, I would say that we must study this further. What I suggest is that concepts like pluralism or authoritarianism should not be applied to these cases.

Another problem of the new democracies is that the society—the so-called civil society—can produce no political structures that would be able to compete with the old apparatus. This is not the case with central and eastern Europe; it is somewhat more the case with Russia, and holds above all for many successor states of the former Soviet Union (Asiatic republics, Belaru, Ukraine, etc.). There, democratic forms were introduced, but both incumbents and candidates—those possessing the power—are the same party secretaries of the earlier era, only they now have a formal, democratic legitimation. Do we call these democracies or not? I have not yet decided on this—and here, thank God, I am not working alone. But here, too, a change has occurred: these people are no longer legitimated by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, but are now suddenly nationalists. And it might be said: if the old structures remain, if the party and the old cadre continue to win the elections and everything mingles with nationalist streams, then we can expect a new form of Fascism or National Socialism to arise. But this would not get to the heart of the matter. The fact that they are now legitimated as nationalists means above all that the old legitimation is dead. And this is a decisive factor.

Now, as far as the post-Communist democracies of the non-pluralistic societies in the former Soviet Union are concerned, I do not know what these should be called. We would need something between 'democratic' and 'post-totalitarian' here. I would not call them 'post-totalitarian', because I believe that totalitarian status ends at the moment when the formal institutions of democracy are introduced and democratic methods of legitimation have been established. This would hold even if those who are legitimated by them are not democrats and do not understand what democracy is. But the society does not understand either; otherwise, they would no longer be in power!

BALLESTREM: I would like to chime in because I believe, Mr Linz, that the suggestion Mr Schwarz made earlier is very helpful in your sense as well. If a distinction is made between late totalitarianism and post-totalitarianism, then certain things can be established. On the one hand: for the late phase until 1989, despite a comparatively milder regime, these other prettifying concepts are not fitting. Here, I would present as an additional standpoint, one that Vaclav Havel describes better than any other in his speeches and essays, namely the daily involvement in the life of a totalitarian system

produces an apparatus that is still present, as such, with its claim and its power; only, it is no longer required to show its teeth so much because citizen and subject are prepared to compromise and have got used to giving up much freedom anyway. But all this is still totalitarian in terms of its entire structure. So much for late totalitarianism. On the other hand, the concept of 'post-totalitarianism' makes it clear that that which is here today, after the revolution, still bears decisive traces of the totalitarian. This can be traced through many examples: in the manner and mode of thinking, in the sympathies for the Reform Communists, in the swinging back of the pendulum, in the lack of structures and forms of civil society, etc. And, as I intimated, it is precisely when one attempts to explain the collapse of the totalitarian regime from the standpoint of the totalitarianism theory itself that it becomes important to recall the fact that democracy does not arise from one day to the next like a phoenix from the ashes. There are still traces of the past. And this, I believe, is appropriately expressed by the concept 'post-totalitarian'.

I refrain from making a second remark, which I had actually planned in connection with Mr Hürten's question, 'Is the theory of totalitarianism overtaxed?' And I also want to explain why: as Mr Linz was speaking earlier, a story I once read came to me, an article on piano instruction with Franz Liszt. The work in the master class proceeded in such a way that different students played the same piece, one after the other. Then at the end, Liszt sat down and played it. One day, a new US student came to the group and she did not know the ritual. The students played and then Liszt, and all were transfigured and enlightened—and then she sat down and played the piece again, poorly of course. This is how I would have seemed to myself if I were to have asked yet again about the totalitarianism theory in general. This is why I let it rest.

BUCHHEIM: When it was said here that totalitarian regimes bear the seed of their destruction within themselves and must collapse sooner or later, I remembered an old prognosis. It came from Karl W.Deutsch. In the 1960s, he presented the thesis that the Soviet regime would have to break down about 60 years after its establishment. What his arguments were, I no longer know; but I still wanted to draw attention to this remarkable prediction. Its accuracy is surprising: about 60 years after the October Revolution.

A second thing: I wanted to say something about bureaucracy in the Third Reich. National Socialism was bureaucratic in its manner of execution, but it was non-bureaucratic in terms of its relationship to the law—its execution of the law, the conformity of the administration to the law. In many ways, bureaucracy in the Third Reich was simply execution of the Führer's commands—of commands, therefore, that had been issued without any kind of legality. There is a difference, after all, whether bureaucracy is merely a technique of implementation or whether it is the execution of the law and pursuit of state goals.

Third, on the theme 'ersatz religion—religion ersatz'. You say, Mr Linz, that the word is not translatable. But it can indeed be translated: with the word 'surrogate'. And to Mr Weinacht: in Aristotle, the talk is of *ruling forms.* There are ruling forms that are not political, like the despotic rule over minors; and there are ruling forms that are political—namely, rule among free and equals. An entirely different question, Mr Weinacht, is the one as to *what politics is* and what the political bond is. Its task is to establish and maintain the internal peace of the society. This is possible under the

condition of freedom—but also without freedom. The concept of politics is divided accordingly. The Aristotelian understanding holds that freedom belongs together with the task of the state to keep the peace. Understood very generally, politics can also be unfree. There is a difference, therefore: when I ask what rule is, there are the two Aristotelian possibilities; but when I ask what politics and what political rule in particular is, this necessarily includes the element of freedom.

WEINACHT: Correct, but the starting-point was total politicization. And you have qualified this concept as being a contradiction in itself.

BUCHHEIM: In the sense of what was just said, this also applies. Certainly, one could also seek to define politics differently. One could define it as follows: the state, which creates and preserves the internal peace of a society, is thereby the solution of the political problem. The political problem arises from the fact that the human being is a person. Thus, *every* state is political because every state solves the political problem in its own way, even if it does not do justice to the personal quality of the human being. This, then, is 'political' in the entirely general sense. In the sense of Aristotle, by contrast, it is only political if it solves the political problem in a way that accords with the nature of the human being as a person. All politics must assume this nature as a person, even if it more or less misses or even injures it at first. It must work its way, in the course of human history, up to a consideration of the person and an incorporation of freedom into the maintenance of peace.

JESSE: I would like to combine my final statement on behalf of the concept of totalitarianism with a question for Hans Maier. The totalitarianism concept seems to me to be irreplaceable because the totalitarian state is in principle distinct from the authoritarian state. Mr Maier, if we differentiate the concept of the dictatorship—a concept that you have described as trivializing—by distinguishing between totalitarian and authoritarian dictatorships, then I do not see any trivializing connotation. Indeed, in somewhat polemical terms, I would like to return the accusation of trivialization. Your characterization of totalitarianism has two main elements: the absolutization of violence and the absolute justification of violence. But does this not lead you, whether you want it or not, indirectly to ban totalitarianism from the theory of regimes? Your concept of totalitarianism, after all, can be applied in practice only to socialism in the era of Stalin and to National Socialism. But how should the other states be described—those that have contempt for humanity? Should they really all be placed in the category of 'authoritarian'? Mr Linz has discovered many illuminating things through just this attempt to find criteria by which to differentiate totalitarian and authoritarian regimes more precisely. Aside from this, there are not only totalitarian and authoritarian states, but—for example—'semi-totalitarian' ones as well. It would interest me to know whether it truly makes sense to define the totalitarianism concept so narrowly that only these two systems in fact remain. What, for example, about China at the time of the Cultural Revolution?

MAIER: Yes. Now I of course enter the situation of Liszt's US piano student, because I still must speak again about some fundamental things. But first, Mr Jesse's question. It is clear, a certain result of emphasis, that I have suggested that the totalitarianism label sticks only to Bolshevist Russia and to National Socialist Germany. Other states—such as Italy, which has already been exonerated by Renzo de Felice from the terrible glare of the Holocaust and the Gulag—slip away from it. And then, of course, there

are the classical dictatorships or authoritarian systems with their various degrees of admixture of elements of violence. This is entirely correct; I do not yet have a conclusive answer to this either.

Mr Schäfer has indicated to me that connection to the extreme case—namely, to programmes of mass destruction—in fact forces us radically to restrict the concept of totalitarianism to these two historical greats and processes. One could also add Cambodia to the list, and possibly also the China of the Cultural Revolution. In that case, totalitarianism would be a more exclusive, a narrower, concept. Whether this is sensible I do not know—not yet. I confess here simply that my reflections on it are not yet concluded. For the time being, I also leave the assumptions, which you have correctly described, standing.

But entirely subjectively, let me make a few comments as to how the discussion and results of this conference played out in my mind, in my reflections. I begin with a story.

When I was in Auschwitz with Munich students for the first time, a young Polish historian took us through the camp. I naturally thought, my God, we are all Germans, what will she say? And I expected a whole litany of attacks and accusations. But nothing of the sort; she was extraordinarily restrained   and cautious, of an almost supra-human sobriety and matter-of-factness. And at the end, after we had been there for several hours and she had informed us of everything, one of our students broke into tears and said, 'but they must have been sadists, to have let such a thing happen to them'. The Polish historian paused a moment and then made a statement that has remained deeply imprinted in my memory: 'If Auschwitz was the work of sadists, then it would not be a question for humanity.' This comes into my mind. Like all programmes of mass destruction, Auschwitz makes such a terrible impression upon us because it occurred in a factory-like, machine-like way; here—in the opinion of those doing the destroying—the guilty were not punished, but pests were exterminated. Yet this happened subjectively—I assume here the perspective that was correctly reminded of by Mrs von Baeyer-Katte; it occurred with a repulsively good conscience on the part of the agents, even with the consciousness of performing a historical duty. You all know Himmler's Posener speech of 4 October 1943, which was as horrible as it was illuminating: 'To have come through this and, in doing so— apart from exceptions of human weaknesses—to have remained decent, this has made us hard. This is a glory of our history that has never been written and should never be written.' A dreadful sentence, but one that Dolf Sternberg has correctly demanded must be analysed. If we seek to understand something like mass destruction, then we have to follow the consciousness that stands behind this sentence down into its abysses. With this, I come to my second point.

In the sense of historical research, it seems to me noteworthy that the perspectives of the Holocaust and the Gulag have for many years interpenetrated with the old perspectives of the Fascism, National Socialism and Communism research; and the theory of totalitarianism is what joins and fastens them together. Certainly, there are also theories that extend the historical field back as far as the Enlightenment. Here come into view the crimes on the one hand: such mass state crimes committed as the firing squads and guillotines of the French Revolution, the extermination campaign against the Vendee through to the genocides of our century. And on the other hand,

there are the ideologies that legitimate these crimes and the technical rationality that makes them practically possible. This can be discerned in the work of Raul Hilberg and even more strongly in that of Zygmunt Baumann, where modern mass destruction is described as a 'test of modernity' and individual rationality appears as an instrument of collective destruction. Similar things can be discerned in the work of Hermann Lübbe.

This has opened up a new front of research, one extending far into philosophy. Its central question is the following: what enables—not causes!—processes like the Holocaust? In Baumann, programmes of destruction appear as a kind of social engineering—genocide as a result of the hierarchical and functional division of labour. Central here is the dehumanization of the objects that are destined for annihilation and the planned division of procedures of annihilation into individual steps with partial responsibilities: one   person compiles lists, another interns, another organizes the transport plans, another deports, another installs the destruction camps, etc. No one oversees everything. The creation of social distance is the prerequisite for the bureaucratic 'administrating away' of destructive actions against the 'objective enemy'—this we know both from the National Socialist camps and from the Gulag Archipelago. Nothing but partial rationalities, all of them perfected by technology and progress, the final result as terrible as never before in history.

Now, I ask myself—and that is my third observation—how can the expansion of our horizon of questions by the Holocaust research be combined with the history of semantics and theory (totalitarianism, political religion), a history that has now become surveyable? And I come here repeatedly to a pair of total opposites: namely, the absolute unleashing of political power on the one hand and its equally absolute justification on the other. Nothing is forbidden—all is permitted. By this I mean the executive power of state, with political power understood in the post-Bodinian sense; I do not now get involved with Aristotelian and other older political concepts. I assume the modern constitutional state. The modern constitutional state is a curbing of the political powers of nature—a curbing by a constitution, by balances of power, by the party system, by administration, by many means. And one might conceive of modern despotisms as attempts to expose this political power in its old naturalness once again. The forerunners of this thought were Nietzsche and others, who saw it already in the nineteenth century.

Unleashing: a textbook example is the formal change of the party concept in totalitarian systems. In the nineteenth century, parties remained within the context of a constitutional state; in Bolshevism and in National Socialism, they became a part of the movement and formed a phenomenon that was entirely extra-constitutional.

The unleashing of political power corresponds, on the other hand, to that which I describe as justification—as 'absolution', using a concept taken from the practice of confession in the Church. Absolute unleashing of power—all is permitted—and at the same time, total absolution of this unleashed power—all is permitted to *us.* There are many examples of this, spanning from Lenin to Hitler. And if, on the one hand, the centre of unleashed power is the party—party in the new sense of the word, as a potentially radical movement that develops dynamically—then justification of the unleashed power is based upon that which is commonly called ideology. In ideology, there lies a truthclaim, a postulate of insight into history—whether this now is

understood as a history of class struggles or as one of race struggles. Those who do not possess this insight land, according to Trotsky's famous formulation, in the 'dustbin of history'. And one is permitted to help this along so that it happens even more quickly and effectively

This is the absolution of unleashed violence, and the political concepts by which to describe it are fundamentally lacking. This is why I think that, here, in a cautious and controlled way, we can and perhaps must use a vocabulary of religious theology. As I have already indicated in a comment of an earlier   discussion, I see the differences completely here. With the National Socialists, there was more a diffuse religious belief corresponding to the German atmosphere, to the explosion of organized religions by neo-Protestantism. With the Communists, astonishingly, concretely delineated aspects of ecclesiastical sociology again surface: holy doctrines, catechumenate, levels of entry into the Party. Of course, I have here the same feeling of inadequacy that Mr Linz announced concerning his own concepts earlier. Above all, we must still reflect more intensively on the central concept of 'political religions'—just as much more empirical data must be collected. Besides the addition and interpretation of empirical facts, however, work of the theoretization and generalization must of course proceed ever further as well. And here we must, I repeat, incorporate the entire area of the Holocaust and Holocaust research. This is what I meant by this little biblical saying, 'by their fruits ye shall know them'.

To sum up: on the one hand, there is the genetic approach to the great three which actually developed in history—(chronologically) Bolshevism, Fascism, National Socialism. This is a closed history and it now lies behind us. Yet the question of the Polish historian remains: what does this mean for humanity? And this question is directed at the future, at the question of repetition. Unfortunately, the devil is inventive and does not always enter through the same keyhole.

In conclusion, I would like to offer my thanks—also on behalf of my collaborators and of all those involved with the Munich research project. We have all learned a great deal in the past three days. We must process all this. We would also like to document this conference as quickly as possible—if possible, next year. It is important to take this conversation among historians, social scientists and philosophers further. Thank you very much.

Part IV
Further perspectives

19
Totalitarianism as a twentieth-century phenomenon

Kamaludin Gadshiiev

Totalitarianism: the one holds it to be a constant companion of the history of humanity, the other a hallmark of the industrial era, and a third describes it as a phenomenon that is unique to the twentieth century. The main foci of the present article are the conceptual and typological aspects of this phenomenon. The portrayal is based upon a comparative analysis of the main components and qualities of totalitarianism in its—relatively understood—left (Marxist-Leninist) and right (Fascist) varieties. There are of course many differences between these two variants; and these differences became critical in the conventional typology arranging them as two opposite poles of the ideological spectrum. It suffices to refer to such dichotomies as internationalism and nationalism, for example, or the theory of class struggle and the nationalistic-racist idea, materialism and idealism, etc. At this, the antagonism between Marxism-Leninism and Fascism is demonstrated and defined. Whereas Marxism-Leninism represented a reaction to bourgeoisliberal democracy, Fascism arose as a reaction toward both the latter and Marxist-Leninist internationalism. There are countless differences of this type. Yet I nonetheless assume the premise that, despite these and other conspicuous distinctions, both represent one and the same social-historical phenomenon with respect to the methodology and the fundamental essential characteristics of the phenomenal image—namely, of totalitarianism. And, in this characteristic, they have much in common.

The view has been established that the existence of the Soviet Communist empire in the East and of the Nazi Third Reich in the West can be traced back to the national, historical traditions of Russia and Germany. Both essentially marked a continuation of the history of these countries under the new conditions. In the following essay, I will attempt to prove that this opinion is only partly correct; in several important points, an interruption of historical continuity and, to some extent, a separation from central elements of the national-historical tradition lay at the base of these regimes. The spokesmen of the two varieties of totalitarianism did not lack in affirmations of their loyalty to the historical, however. They selected a random principle from history; and further, they very subjectively forced everything into the Procrustean bed of alternative speculative models which contrasted the existing system to all kinds of socio-political streams and projects of future social transformation. Every socio-political system can undergo changes in some areas while remaining constant in others. In a certain sense, history and the socio-historical process can be spoken of only if development and creation of the new on the one hand and preservation of the continuity of the past on the other co-exist.

As far as totalitarianism is concerned, for all due restrictions, the following must be emphasized: neither of its variants was concentrated upon only one of these maxims. Both, rather, strove to realize this basic principle in their move toward a total destruction of the present world and the construction upon its ruins of a new world that satisfied their artificial models.

Analysis of the real content and formative characteristics of totalitarianism must include a further element still. One characteristic of a more or less viable historicopolitical system is its substantive internal unity; that is, the system must be not only a totality of elements, people, social groups, relationships and orientations that are of the same type and similar, but also a unity of their differences, of diversity, of pluralism, etc. This substantive unity presupposes the co-existence of different kinds of socio-political powers as well as the values reflecting their interests and needs, moral and ethical norms, goals and orientations, socio-philosophical and spirituo-political streams in the content of an integrated organism. Because they not only co-exist, but also combine and mutually interpenetrate, they represent in the end a whole bundle of possible alternatives for social development.

It would be erroneous to represent these mutually dependent and interwoven branches of the bundles as isolated straight lines, as being separate and able to move independently on their own path—such as, for example, liberalism, conservatism, social democracy and Marxism. In this case, the organizational principle must apply; thus, various directions and lines of development supplement and mutually stimulate each other (according, roughly, to the schema stating that there would be no materialism without idealism, etc.).

The socio-political system presently existing in the West does not owe its origins to the victory of the ideals and orientations of one single politico-ideological stream or the establishment of one single model that suppressed or coerced all other models. I share the opinion that, visible or not, this system represents elements of all important alternatives in one combination or constellation or another: liberalism, conservatism and Marxism (including their derivations taking the form of social democracy or of forms standing even further to the left). For example, not only liberals, but conservatives and social democrats too have contributed to the formulation and realization of the welfare state—a concept without which the modern Western social-political system is inconceivable. In other words: every social-political system—with its institutions, values, ideals, etc.— does not arise from a socio-political theory, from a principle or an 'ism'. Nor does it embody the triumph of interests of some class, stratum, grouping or another. It is the result, rather, of a synthesis of all preceding movements in economy, politics, religion, philosophy, etc. It results from the conflict of interests and oppositions, from the solution of intersections and problems that arise within the course of social life. Absolutely, one politico-ideological stream or another can assume priority in the formulation and bringing forth of a certain idea or complex of ideas.

Nonetheless, its relativity and receptiveness prove themselves to be absolutely necessary in the face of transitions of varying significance in the historical context.

In unfavourable cases, disruptions and distortions arise in the natural course of things; the historical development of a society slips on to tracks that lead to unforeseen and catastrophic consequences. The experiences with totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century—experiences in the form of 'Marxism-Leninism' in the East and Fascism in the West—bear eloquent witness to this. They negated the essential unity of the socio-

political system entirely and postulated the possibility of developing or realizing only one element of this system: an element that is taken for itself, that is liberated from the other components or even rebels against them.

The essential unity of the totalitarian system is present in its orientation toward the melding and total unification of all areas in the life of a society. This orientation gained expression in (among others) the negation of the central element of modern, Western civilization—of bourgeois society and the institutions that comprise the foundation of its existence. Seen from a standpoint of ideal types, bourgeois society is a kind of social space in which people enter into mutual relationships as individuals who are independent both from one another and from the state. Bourgeois society is supported by a civilized, self-interested individual of the age of majority who is also responsible for the society. If this is true, then all those institutions, organizations and groups that are said to contribute to the multi-faceted development of a personality belong to the central constructions of the society. It must be considered here that, aside from the political power exercised primarily by the state, there are also various other forms and sources of power, influence and authority in the socio-political system: these are the areas of economy and spiritual life, the spheres of morality and ethics and the various extra-economic institutions, organizations and groups.

As is well known, the main function of a social structure is to create the conditions for the satisfaction of the fundamental needs for food, clothing and shelter. For this reason, the most important condition of the genesis and establishment of a genuinely bourgeois society is the delimitation of political and economic power. At the base of this delimitation lies the economic freedom of the individual, which of course must be linked to personal economic responsibility. Individualism, which is based upon the identification of personal freedom and private property, became a powerful developmental stimulus for the means of production, social development and formation of political democracy. As the history of the democratic and totalitarian systems has proven: there can be no freedom of the individual where there is no diversity and multiplicity of the sources of the preservation of life and no freedom of economic choice presides.

It is obvious that those who have the economic power concentrated in their hands control the society's most important resources—both material and non-material ones. These people determine the society's goals and the means by which to attain them. In this context, F.A.Hayek emphasizes that 'the idea of centralized planning consists in the society's assumption of solving economic problems in place of the human being; but this assumes that the society (or, stated more precisely, its representatives) determines the relative significance of one set of goals or another'.[1] Wherever economic freedom does not exist and the state is the sole employer (in National Socialism, private companies were absolutely surrendered to the regime or subject to its total control), the human being is also eventually no longer free to express his will. The property that belongs to or is strictly controlled by the state inevitably becomes a political issue; for from it arises the power monopoly that snatches all leverage in politics and economy for itself and causes these to become one. Property itself becomes anonymous, devoid of all individuality, and alienates itself. Even more: property and economy slide into the political sphere, accompanied by a simultaneous and drastic militarization of their most important components and characteristics.

If the human being is stripped of such attributes as race, gender, age, nationality, culture, religious belief, etc., then it degenerates into a mere abstraction. Aware of this, the adepts of the totalitarian apply the power of the state—coercion inclusive of terror—in order thereby to transform the human being's economic, social, socio-cultural and spiritual relationships, convictions, ideas and orientations concerning value. Beyond this, they attempt consciously and purposely to turn human nature 'on its head'. In this respect, totalitarianism is distinct from all other forms of traditional despotism, absolutism and authoritarianism and is thereby truly a phenomenon of the twentieth century

It is entirely symptomatic that one of the most important prerequisites of a totalitarian system is the watering-down, even the elimination, of the traditional stratification of social estates and class. Its goal is the cultural, religious and even ethnic-national—although the latter, to be sure, has remained merely a devout hope—homogeneity through the elimination of all clubs, organizations and associations that might provide a reference group—even in the slightest measure. The state became the only 'reference group' for the individual. The principle, 'divide and rule', probably gained its most graphic and comprehensive realization here. Eric Fromm wrote that religion, nationalism and other prejudices—even the most senseless and shameful, if they only bind him to other human beings—are capable of protecting a human being from that which oppresses him the most: isolation.[2] Ideologues and totalitarian possessors of power recognized this and did everything to divide and atomize the society in order to rob people of their traditional social ties and so to isolate them.

As paradoxical as it may seem, individualism favoured the fulfilment of this task; it became the main prerequisite of the atomization of society. Of course, Berdyaev exaggerated somewhat when he claimed that individualism is not ontological and is not rooted in being because it is not beneficial to the consolidation of the human personality and its 'image'. But one has scarcely any choice but to agree with him when he states that socialism represents 'only the flipside of atomic decay, a mechanical connection of atoms'.[3] Using Berdyaev's terminology, one could say that Fascism and Communism were predestined to overcome the individualism of liberal democracy. This was achieved through a most extreme atomization of social ties, so that one finally faced the all-powerful state alone and, at base, became its slave.

One of the most important traditional supports upon which the human personality is built, a mirror in which the individual recognizes itself as a member of society and gains a sense of its identity, is the nation. It is typical that the totalitarianisms of Right and Left—each in its own way—were able to use the nation to attain a totalitarian rule of the state.

Under certain restrictions, Marxism can be confirmed to be of the same age as the national idea and nationalism broadly understood (not understood exclusively negatively). Although the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars are held to be the beginning of the expansion of nationalism, it is of symbolic significance that the appearance of the *Communist Manifesto* in 1848 coincided with the outbreak of the bourgeois revolutions—revolutions in which the ideas of national unity and national sovereignty played an important role. The period of turbulent expansion of Marxism in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century as well as the activity of the First and Second Internationals coincides with the unification of Germany and Italy into

nation-states. The collapse of the Habsburg monarchy and the formation of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria following the First World War, as well as of Finland, Poland and the Baltic republics following the October Revolution in Russia, coincided with the foundation of the Third International; the latter set itself the goal of unifying all nations and peoples on the foundation of the class struggle and the proletarian international. This is why it was only natural that the founders of Marxism approached the national question from the standpoint of the proletarian class struggle and retained the idea that each society is based upon horizontal class differences that transcend national borders and memberships. According to this logic, class differences have a more fundamental significance than all others, including national and ethnic differences. The founders of Marxism-Leninism assumed that the proletariat has no Fatherland, nor can it have one. 'The nation stands between the individual and humanity', wrote the well-known German political economist of the first half of the nineteenth century, List, in 1841. Each nation has its language and literature, its history and customs. It is through the nation that the single individual acquires the culture of ideas, productive power, security and welfare. Human civilization is said to be conceivable and possible only through civilization and the development of individual nations.[4]

The workers have no Fatherland, Karl Marx countered in 1848. The nationality of the worker, he wrote in his comments on List's book,

> the national system of political economy is not French, not English, not German; its nationality is work, voluntary slavery, the selling of oneself. Its government is neither French, nor English, nor German; its government is capital. The air it breathes is neither French, nor German, nor English; its air is factory air. Its native soil is neither French, nor English, nor German; it lies several feet beneath the earth's surface.[5]

It was said that Marxism had found an ideal means for a complete and final solution of the national question. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party,* the idea according to which nationalism is a by-product of capitalist development and is supposed to disappear with the demise of capitalism was already formulated. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels claimed that the liberation of the proletariat from the capitalist yoke would hasten the end of national differences and antagonisms. The *Manifesto* proclaimed: 'the separation of the nations and conflicts of the peoples already increasingly disappear with the development of the bourgeoisie, with the freedom of trade, the world-market, the uniformity of industrial production and the life-relations corresponding to it'.[6] With the establishment of government by the proletariat and the progressive assertion of the principles of socialism, it was thought that the distinction of human beings according to nationality would lose all meaning and would be entirely replaced by a distinction according to class membership. It was especially emphasized here that only the proletariat could attain a power that is equal to the historical task of uniting the peoples into a whole. It should be noted that, among the Marxists—among Russian ones as well—the future of the nations and of national relationships in the transition to socialism and the course of the construction of socialism was a hotly contested theme. Nevertheless, despite all arguments about federalism, autonomization, attainment of the nations' right to self-determination to the point of dissolution, Lenin and his co-fighters generally retained the

conviction that socio-economic and national-cultural differences among regions and national state forms would gradually disappear and would ultimately be overcome in the process of constructing socialism. This would prepare the ground for the victory of internationalism over nationalism.

The idea of internationalism, which lies at the root of the Communist eschatology, was uncompromisingly opposed to the idea of nationalism. The former subdued and conquered the latter completely. By its very nature, Marxism-Leninism could not accept the national idea and principle, to say nothing of nationalism itself; for it regarded these as the most important obstacle—which they in fact were—on the path to the international unification of the peoples on the principles of class solidarity.

Thus understood, all nations and peoples prove themselves as equal. In mockery, as it were, of the laws of social-historic development that had allotted to each people a separate path and its own place in the community called humanity, the task had been set: that of making happy the many peoples who remained in feudalism or even in the clan societies, to lead them to the advantages of socialism by bypassing feudalism and capitalism. From the large-scale reprisals and evacuation of the peasant classes in the villages to the solution of eliminating the kulaks as a class, the forced resettlement of people into different, often remote, regions of the country undermined the roots, the centuries-old foundations, of the national way of life. The weakening of the morale to work, of ties to the homeland and the national-historical identity were the consequences. Ultimately, the Soviet people became members of a nonsensical, even paradoxical, community—an international people, a nationless nation, the 'new historical community' in the form of the Soviet people.

More paradoxical still seems the fact that, in a unique reversal, the ideology of internationalism took over the functions of the nationalist ideology. It was predominantly the interests and needs of Russia that contributed to this development. Faced with the separatist strivings of individual national regions within the country and a constant threat from outside—one that created the atmosphere of a besieged fortress—Russia sought to preserve its state integrity. The development of the phenomenon of so-called National Bolshevism in the 1920s brought this about-face, among others, to expression. In a 1922 article published under the telling title 'Secularization', one of the ideologues of National Bolshevism, Ustrialov, wrote the following:

> the original impulses of the revolution are clearly transformed, in the process of their materialization, into their opposite. The more the spirit of the Communist revolution of Russia seizes power, the more Communism is compelled to assume a bourgeois character. The idea of the negation of property was the source of the redistribution of wealth and, as a result, the origin of a new property… The negation of the existing socio-political world order on the one hand equally determined its claim on the other hand. With the negation of militarism, the Communist power built up a strong regular army; with its principled rejection of patriotism, it used it in the struggle against intervention and desire for foreign lands… The tragic contradiction of the great Russian Revolution consisted in this inner dissolution of the international Communist idea. The revolutionary spirit of Bolshevism attempted to strip away the nationalist and bourgeois

influences, and its attempt proved itself to be a source of subordination to these same influences.[7]

Here, Ustrialov saw the omen of 'a genuine Russian renaissance'. However this may be, the fact remains indisputable: the ideology of internationalism was placed *de facto* into the service of imperial state interests. There arose a kind of 'concordance', if not even a complete harmony, between Communism and imperial nationalism. In other words, the ideology of internationalism began to play that role which, in terms of its meaning, had been intended for nationalism in the context of the ideology of German Nazism. Not coincidentally, the concepts of 'anti-Communism' and 'anti-Sovietism' were used synonymously, and support of Soviet politics was held to be a central component of proletarian internationalism.

As far as Fascism is concerned, an organic merging of socialism and nationalism occurred here. This gave Hitler the possibility of speaking of National Socialism. Interesting in this context is the definition of 'the socialist' in a speech by Hitler in 1922:

> whoever is prepared to regard the goals of the nation as his own, to the extent that there is for him no higher ideal than the happiness of the nation; whoever understands our state hymn, 'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles', in the sense that nothing in the world is higher for him than Germany, people and soil—he is a socialist.[8]

On this point, the positions of Marxism-Leninism and Fascism are diametrically opposed. The militant racism and nationalism of the latter are legendary.

All that remains to be indicated is that, in establishing the totalitarian structures and mentality, these played a role similar to the one played in Marxism-Leninism by the theory of the class struggle and the idea of internationalism. Likewise, racism and nationalism were transformed into universal, system-forming standards of value that shaped the thoughts and actions of all members of the society. From the beginning, Fascism regarded the nation as the highest synthesis of all material and spiritual values and, in this capacity, granted it priority above individual, groups, estates and classes. In 1932, Hitler claimed that assertion of the will of the nation is of decisive significance; for this will alone could form the starting-point of political activities. More clear and unmistakable yet was the position he took on it at the Nuremberg party convention of 1938. In order to reinforce that which had been begun in the 1920s, he proclaimed, the NSDAP must declare a merciless war on the prejudices of class and estate. It must take care to ensure that a strong-willed and talented German could attain the highest rung of the social ladder, regardless of birth or origins.

On this question, the philosophy and ideology of Fascism is permeated with the idea of national superiority and an incorrigible racism. By contrast to the 'bourgeois and Marxist-Jewish world-view', Hitler blustered, the idea of the National Socialist 'people's state' rejects racial equality and acknowledges the existence of higher and lower races. Hitler lets there be no doubt here as to which nation represents the higher race.

> What we see before us in human culture today, in the results of art, science and technology, is almost exclusively a creative product of

Aryans. And it is precisely this fact that admits a not-unjustified conclusion—the conclusion that the Aryan race alone was the founder of higher humanity in general.[9]

Retention of the purity of the Aryan race was proclaimed as the foundation of a Third Reich that would last one thousand years; the rule of the Aryan race would occupy the centre of the 'new order' for the rest of the world. The actions of the most important social institutions were totally subordinated to this global task. According to Hitler's understanding, the family was not a goal in itself; it fulfilled the higher task of multiplying and preserving the human race and species. This would be the family's meaning and task.[10] Which 'human species' and which 'race' were intended here does not need to be discussed in greater detail at this point. The equation and organic merging of the concepts of nation and national state became an important characteristic of the Fascist political-ideological construction. The state serves as a legal embodiment of the nation; the goals and interests of the nation in the respective historical period are its responsibility.

Thus seen, the Fascist conception of the state goes back to the sociological tradition of Gumplowicz, Mosca, Pareto and Michels—thinkers who represented various forms and versions of the organic theory of society. According to the opinion of the Fascist ideologues, the interests of single individuals, groups and classes can be regarded as legitimate to the extent that they agree with the supreme interests of the nation. As sovereign, the state is responsible for a normative order outside of which individual existence lacks all meaning. The society, which represents a historical community, is the content and the state is the form of political life. As a result, the state, as supreme sovereign, assumed an outstanding position for both the individual and the organizations in which national community consists. Fascism thereby equated society with nation, nation with state, economic activity with political activity.[11]

In this, Hitler and his followers reached a conclusion that approached the Bolshevist position in a functional sense. For all the restrictions that should be made here, both movements were instrumentalized in the service of identical goals: the ideological justification and support of totalitarian empires.

The anthropological components of totalitarianism entail the aim to transform the human being completely in accordance with ideological goals. In the complex of ideas and mechanisms by which to alter human nature, strict control over the consciousness of the human being—over his thoughts, intentions and inner life—assumes a significant place. Totalitarianism, George Orwell wrote in 1941, interfered with freedom of thought in a way and to an extent that could never have been imagined before. The control of thought pursued goals of a kind that were not only prohibitive, but also constructive. It was not merely forbidden to express—let alone admit—certain ideas; it was prescribed what should be thought as well. An ideology that had to be assumed by the personality was created. An attempt was made to guide the personality's emotions and to impose a certain way of thinking and acting upon it. As far as possible, the personality was screened off from the outside world. Encapsulated in an artificial milieu, it was to be robbed of any possibility of comparison.[12] Beyond this, an attempt was made to change the human being completely and to construct a new personality type—a kind of *homo totalitaricus* having a specific psyche, specific intellectual qualities and specific qualities

of conduct. Standardization and unification of individuality, dissolution of individuality into the mass, were to breed a statistical mediocrity of an individual; it was necessary to sterilize the human being, or at least to eliminate his individual and personal aspects.

Fascist theorists assumed the premise that every organized and autonomous way of life required the blessing of the state. The formal elements of the state are its political and legal sovereignty. Thus did Nucio concede that organized units within the state could of course establish inner rules of conduct for their members, but these norms could come into effect only if they were sanctioned by the state. Because it possesses the exclusive right to the use of power, the state remains the sole source and the final instance of power. With that, the Fascists basically rejected any and all restriction of the state's political and legal sovereignty.

Apparently, both cases involve the absolute power of the state over the human being—a goal-oriented, all-comprehensive and systematically constructed intellectual control, a creation of myths and principled amorality, even a complete negation of moral criteria. Thus was the omnipotent dominance of the state over the society and the complete destruction of distinctions between state and society characteristic for both main variants of totalitarianism. Further still: the single ruling party in fact swallowed up both society and state. In the system of single-party rule, the first step was the composition or practical fusion of the highest party instances and the highest state organs. As the logical conclusion of this tendency, expansion of the party became a decisive, main element of the state structure. Characteristic for Hitler and other leaders of the Third Reich was their irreconcilable attitude toward 'Marxist, democratic-centrist' parties and other parties of all kinds; this was coupled with the conviction that the National Socialist Party would exist as long as the National Socialist state did. So long as the National Socialist Party existed, there could be no state in Germany aside from the National Socialist one.

It will be recalled that Article 6 of the Constitution of the USSR stated that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the core of the political system of the Soviet Union. Worth mentioning is also the fact that both Fascism (with astonishing openness) and Bolshevism (in a more hidden way) widely propagated and practised the authoritarian power of the leader in addition to the practice of a state and party dictatorship.

Ideological monism corresponds to party monism. It permeates the entire hierarchy of power relationships from top to bottom—from state and party leader down to the elementary state members and cells of the society. In the Stalinist variant of totalitarianism, mythologized Marxism became the ideological foundation of the totalitarian regime. This Marxism justified the myth according to which the Communist Party, which led the class struggle of the workers and initiated and executed the proletarian revolution, moved down the path of socialist construction and thus opened the door to the bright future—to Communism. This is why it had to possess all state power. On this question, the position of the Fascist possessors of power and ideologues evinces differences that are hardly worth mentioning.

In both main forms of totalitarianism, all resources—material, human and intellectual—are, without exception, subordinated to a universal goal: to the thousandyear Reich on the one hand and the Communistic Reich of universal welfare on the other. By contrast to traditional societies, which are oriented upon the past, totalitarianism is oriented toward the future. This all-consuming goal generates the mono-ideology as state

ideology and the political orientations and intentions derived from it; these, in turn—with the help both of an extended net of mass media and propaganda and of schools, Church, etc.—are 'drummed' day after day into the consciousness of all strata of the population. These goals have the task of explaining and justifying reality in terms of the ultimate goal and of eliminating obstacles from the path. All means to this end are permitted. Everything that runs counter to this straight line toward this goal is banned and exterminated. Procedures for resolving the social conflicts that emerge are not developed because they are regarded as superfluous; differences of opinion are regarded solely as an evil that should be mercilessly fought. The struggle of totalitarian ideals against other philosophical schools and ideological and social-scientific streams of thought was constantly filled with political content, because this struggle was organically connected to the political struggle. This was the source of the intolerance of adherents of totalitarianism toward positions and arguments of their opponents from other schools of thought; this was the source of their fanaticism in the defence of their own positions and principles. Here were the roots of the slogan coined by the Bolsheviks: 'whoever is not with us is against us'. In one of his speeches of 1925, Hitler adopted the same tone: 'our struggle admits only one exit: either the enemy goes over our corpses, or we go over his'.[13]

The meaning of all deeds and conduct ends in one single thing: attainment of unity between the human being and the masses. Society, state, party and all structures of social being should be inseparable from one another. The specific feature of human existence, of the functioning of various social communities, and of society as a whole is to be guided by a single ideal. Regardless as to whether the ideal is right or justified, the contrast between reality as it is and reality as it should be lies at base. The age-old dream of the human being living in a perfected and happier social order found concrete expression in countless utopias and eschatological visions of paradise on earth.

This ideal assumes the possibility of a fundamental harmony between human beings. Behind this lies the belief that the human being might be able to be made completely content after all; it might be conceivable, not only to secure its material well-being, but also to establish a complete harmony between material and spiritual dimensions of life, to banish all contradictions, temptations and sin from the world. The totalitarian variant of utopian political philosophy postulates an identity between individual and collective goals. 'The perfect society', wrote Novgorodzev, 'contains the meaning of a determinative moral substratum which endows the human being with a fulfilled life and the meaning of existence.'[14] From this, it follows that the moral perfection of the human being is indivisibly bound up with improvement of the society. The goals of every single individual are embedded in the structure of the society, the human being and history. An individual cannot dance out of tune, but can only conform. Totalitarianism returns to one or another form of utopian political philosophy, which pursues the goal of moral reformation using political and other means.

Some fundamental postulates formulated on the basis of capitalistic realities in the mid-nineteenth century were absolutized; these then were extrapolated and linked to both the entire prior history of humanity and its future. The result was a series of grave errors and existential mistakes in realizing the Marxist model. It should be noted that the loss of individuality and 'democratization' of all ideas impairs the self-realization of them, promotes both conformity to the psychological mediocrity of the masses and the

progressive disappearance of scientific integrity and credibility. The intransigence and insularity of this system increase correspondingly; increasingly, the system becomes the property of priests who use it as a means to earn their living.

Marxism, which was essentially regarded as the crown of all philosophy, was exempted from critique; its central principles became the measuring stick by which to assess all other philosophical systems. This was characteristic particularly of the 'Marxism-Leninism' of the Soviet period, with its fanaticism, its literalist religious faith and its eschatology.

The Fascist ideology—and its Nazi variant in particular—attained the status of a doctrine of religious faith complete with essential elements of mysticism and even of spiritualism. Its holy scriptures were the works of H.S.Chamberlain; in 1925, the *Völkische Beobachter* elevated his *Foundation of the Nineteenth Century* to the status of gospel of the twentieth century. Of course, *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* by Alfred Rosenberg and *Mein Kampf in* particular assumed a towering place among them; these works, after all, were to represent the ideologico-political platform of the thousand-year Reich.

It is important to emphasize that the religion of totalitarianism was a special kind of religion. The Church in medieval Europe, for example, prescribed the 'symbolum', which enabled a human being's confessions of faith to remain identical, unchanged up to death. The same can also be said of the modern confessions—Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, among others.[15] Totalitarianism, however, demanded the opposite. For all its monolithic unity, the object of totalitarianism remains a fluid quantity. Total loyalty is possible only if all substantive content is dispensed with.

It is worth noting that the totalitarian movements—each in its own way—relinquished its original party programme, which had contained concrete demands. 'Marxism-Leninism' was characterized by a 'desertion into the future', whereby the focus on the long view clearly worked to the disadvantage of living generations. Each demand that went beyond the limits of the 'ideological postulate of eternal consequence' was in this sense a hindrance for totalitarianism. The extent of its radicality is of secondary significance here. In this respect, Hannah Arendt determined that Hitler's essential achievement in creating the Nazi movement—which he built from a typical nationalistic splinter-party—consisted in his having overthrown the original party programme, not by abandoning it or officially setting it out of force, but simply by refusing to talk about it.[16] Stalin's task was more difficult still because the socialist programme of the Bolshevist party was incomparably weightier than Hitler's 25-point programme. After destroying the factions within the party, however, Stalin achieved the same thing Hitler did by setting a constant zigzag course for the Communist Party and by continually reinterpreting Marxism. As Gusseinov and Dragunski aptly remarked, the Soviet people heard every 10 to 15 years that their progress was correct on the whole, but the path was not right; and they had almost lost the way because their leadership had not been fit, its solutions had been meaningless, its statistics false and its politics short-sighted.[17]

One might say that totalitarianism reproduces and ensures its viability by remaining in constant motion. The use of principles and arguments based upon the ideology and not upon real facts is a decisive characteristic of the totalitarian mentality. Bound up with this is the need for a constant retouching of the past and a reinterpretation of recent events. This is supposed to prove that some mistake or another had not been made or that some

imaginary victory or other had been attained. Each significant transition in politics is accompanied by corresponding changes in the doctrine and by revaluation of notable historical personalities.[18]

An attribute without which totalitarianism cannot be imagined is its close connection between truth and power, whereby power determines what is true. The Nazi death camps and the Soviet Gulag are incarnations of totalitarianism. As special political structures, they are unique in their capacity to combine cruelty with rationalism, abnormality with normality, and evil with banality. Here, cruelty is rationalized and set within a world-historical context.

In this way, the human being attains complete freedom of action. Words can mean anything imaginable; they can mean almost everything, but, in fact, they mean nothing. This is the culture of totalitarianism. It permeates the political, social and cultural spheres of totalitarian systems. Power determines reason to be a means of recognizing the absolute truth about the world—past, present and future.[19]

In this context, we once again stress that power and terror in totalitarianism have not merely a purely physical, but an intellectual and spiritual dimension as well. This dimension manifests itself in the extensive activity of the propaganda apparatus for the purpose of the intellectual sterilization, spiritual castration and massive stultification of the population. George Orwell used to say that all propaganda spreads lies, even if it speaks the truth. And the lie is, as Iljin splendidly formulated it, 'a form of power which always leads to open or concealed violence if consistently applied. Conversely: power is one phenomenal form of the lie'.[20] At the end of the day, a peculiar 'dialectic' mutual influence emerges: propaganda—lie—violence—lie—propaganda. The absolute permeability of the totalitarian system and its characteristic merging of all areas of life are concretely expressed by the absorption of science—the social sciences in particular—and of art and culture by the ideology. Hitler once said to Goebbels that art has nothing in common with propaganda. As A.P.Foulkes of University College Cardiff remarks, this in no way contradicted Orwell's thesis that 'all art is propaganda' because, for Hitler, the only art that was free of propaganda was the art ruled by the values and convictions of National Socialism. In every book, Orwell reminded, the illusion of the 'pure aesthetic' hides propaganda in some form or another; every work of art pursues political, social and religious goals and our aesthetic positions are always tainted by prejudices and convictions. 'Propaganda', Foulkes wrote, 'does not necessarily approach under swastikas and calling, "Sieg Heil." Its real strength lies in its capacity to camouflage itself, to look natural, to identify itself completely and entirely with the values and the universally valid power-symbols of a given society.'[21]

The distinctive feature of the totalitarian regime is that fear and terror serve for it not merely as instruments by which to destroy and intimidate real and suspected enemies; they are also enlisted daily, as a normal means by which to lead the masses. To this end, an atmosphere of civil war is constantly stirred up. Terror has no immediately visible reason; no provocation precedes it; its victims are completely innocent, even from the standpoint of those who unleash the terror. This was the case with Fascist Germany, where terror was directed at Jews—people with shared racial and ethnic qualities, that is, and regardless of their conduct. In the Soviet Union—by contrast to Fascist Germany—the leadership never confessed that it had resorted to terror practised against innocent

human beings. Yet neither were the reprisals restricted to racial characteristics there; anyone could become the object of terror.

Terror can be violent. But it can also be non-violent; it can be purely moral. Not coincidentally, exclusion from the Party meant a catastrophe for the Soviet person; in many cases, it was tantamount to a collapse, the end of a career—for a political functionary, it meant political death.

> One is taken into the Party precisely in order to be able to be shutn out again; Party members were not installed in all offices in the country because they were better, more honest or more talented than others, but because they were obedient—they could be punished for even the slightest transgression without a penal trial and prison. The power and strength of the Party are based precisely upon the fact that the 'influence' (this is what it is called) of the party was palpable everywhere, that someone who was excluded could turn absolutely nowhere—nowhere in our large country.[22]

After official regimentation and judgement of social life, totalitarian culture and *homo totalitaricus* as its carrier become the governing elements of the social system, physical terror can move into the background as an instrument of political control; or it can even lose its meaning entirely. Of no small significance is the phenomenon of so-called 'horizontal totalitarianism'. With this, as Kara-Murza wrote, 'violence is not institutionalized in concrete power structures, but has almost dispersed into the air'.[23]

No idea has the chance of becoming anchored in the consciousness of broad strata of the population if the conditions for its assumption and use are not ripe. In its pure form, the 'totalitarity' of a regime does not consist only in the fact that one party, one clique or one leader subject all areas of social life and the state to absolute control by absorbing them, so to speak. It also consists in the fact that the mass of the population holds the main goals, tasks and orientations postulated by the party leadership or by the leader as sacred. The two sides are fused into a unity, as it were, in order to attain a universal goal. Assuming this standpoint, the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union and National Socialism in Germany could be regarded as purely totalitarian.

To be underscored in particular is that totalitarianism, as a particular sociopolitical phenomenon, is unimaginable without a mass base, without mass society as such and without absorption of the individual into the mass. Leadership with the help of external means alone—specifically, of the state and of physical violence is never enough. By contrast to all other movements and social phenomena, totalitarianism presupposes the complete and unconditional obedience of every member of the society. This obedience is exercised either within the totalitarian movement preceding the totalitarian regime, as with Fascism in Germany, or directly following the establishment of the regime, as with the Soviet Union. By exploiting certain aspects of the ideology and its role in the coercive apparatus, totalitarianism discovered the means to subordinate and terrorize the human being from within. Here, leader and masses are an indivisible unity: the leader is dependent upon the mass in the same measure that it is dependent upon him. Without him, it remains an amorphous sponge, without external representation. The leader without a mass is equally logically inconceivable. Taken together, all this determines another

important characteristic of totalitarianism: its extreme schematism and reductionism, which steer everything toward one single idea. On the whole, the totalitarian conception of things is based upon the dogma that there is only one single truth in politics. It might be described as political messianism in the sense that it postulates pre-determined, harmonious and perfected relations based upon a single idea. Science and art, economy and politics, philosophy and industry, morality and the relationship between man and woman—these and many other things are subordinated to a single, dominant idea.

Considering what has been said above, it is not at all surprising that one of the most important signs by which to recognize the presence of totalitarianism in all areas of ordinary life is the so-called 'Newspeak'. It represents the 'linguistic equivalent of the main idea of the official ideology'. Although the word 'Newspeak' is a literary invention of George Orwell, this language truly exists. According to Orwell's understanding, 'Newspeak' is not only a means to express the totalitarian world-view and habits of thought; it is at once a means to arrest, if not to render impossible, other forms of expression.

The essence of this phenomenon consists in the almost complete substitution of reality by a surreal, absurd, almost schizophrenic (it cannot be called anything else) image of the world, one that turns everything on its head and lets two plus two equal five. The people must accustom themselves to the irrationality of the language, which more veils than explains the real situation of things. They must eke out a schizophrenic existence: one for which it is impossible to obey the official regulations, yet one must still act as though one follows them. The people must fulfil the official duties that are convenient for the official ideology, but suppress their personalities. One is not permitted to show one's personal ego in public.[24] This produces a unique double standard in the conduct of the totalitarian human.

With regard to the various political conclusions and resolutions passed by the head committee of the party and the state, the people work on a constant immunity. 'Passionately' and 'unanimously' approved of in words, these measures encounter cold indifference or even gruff rejection in fact. Human existence and human consciousness become divided: at work, at assemblies, rallies and other official events, the individual presents himself as an enthusiastic citizen who is loyal to the country's political leadership. In his private life, however, he demonstrates a complete indifference and mistrust toward it. This is expressed in (among other things) biting jokes about the highest incumbents of the party and the state. Yet this state of affairs already points to the end of totalitarianism in its 'classical' form; for one of its fundamental principles—that of an absolute unity of mass and party, mass and leader—has been violated. Classical totalitarianism denatures into a form of the authoritarianism of party and leader; this is characterized by a totalitarian inlay at the official level accompanied by the regime's simultaneous distancing, not only from small groups of the so-called 'dissidents' within circles of the intelligentsia, but from broad strata of the population as well. Regarded from this standpoint, Soviet society was no longer a totalitarian society during the period of stagnation.

Under the conditions of total prohibitions, a personality took shape for which social apathy, ironic or sceptical attitude toward the environment as well as alienation were characteristic. Totalitarianism reduced or annulled the human being's capacity of critical judgement about the contemporary world, about his country's place in this world, about

himself and his social group or reference group in the real, social surroundings. This encourages one-sidedness, reductionism, the tendency to force everything into the Procrustean bed of an artificial system and a single, fixed idea. The one-dimensional way of regarding one's surroundings according to the formulas of 'absolute right versus absolute wrong', 'good versus evil', 'light versus darkness' becomes widespread. The middle is missing completely.

Without exception, this kind of thinking links all political (and other) problems together in a way that ends, sooner or later, in the conception of a crusade or of Manichaean messianism. The latter is based upon a sharp and uncompromising division of the world into the spheres of the divine and the diabolic, whereby the artificial erection of an unbridgeable gulf between good and evil encourages a boundless moralism and tendency to exaggerate. This inevitably causes a conflict between means and goals. The totalitarian cast of mind demonstrates a preference for an immediate and final answer. At the same time, this attitude provokes a tendency to a peculiar social narcissism, self-love and self-righteousness of the people and the society as a whole.

The most important components of this kind of thinking are both fanaticism—in the form of 'nationalism', 'revolutionary consciousness', 'proletarian internationalism' etc.—and an eschatological world-view which divides the participants of the 'historical drama' into the powers of good and of Satan. Whereas the power of good stands unreservedly behind the existing regime, the power of Satan plots a grandiose scheme to annihilate it. From the standpoint of a fanatic, not only opponents but all dissenting voices ultimately belong to this crowd as well.

The conspiracy theory excludes the possibility of a realistic estimation of social, historical or political factors. An accomplice knows in advance how things will proceed; he is concerned solely with concretizing the details and the levels of the pre-determined historical course. With its preclusion of all compromise, the conspiracy theory leaves no place for neutrality. To seek an agreement with those who revolt against the leader and his political course would mean to renounce the faith and defect to the side of the conspirators. Hate and mistrust are elevated to the world-view and credo of this type of consciousness. As a carrier of this cast of mind, an entirely normal human being facing individual life situations—in the family or workplace, for example—can fall into extremes and seize upon the most extreme means in the areas of politics and religion.

The Bolsheviks, who made the overthrow of the old social order their goal, were at first forced to act as a conspiratorial party. Yet even after their seizure of power, the fondness for conspiracy (a kind of esoteric) remained; intellectual, ideological and political insularity remained the Party's essential characteristic. The mystery-mongering, mistrust and an odd complex of conspirators influenced all its activity—in both internal and external politics. This lent almost a surreal character to the life of Soviet society. Most Soviet people saw the entire world as being divided into two irreconcilable camps: 'we' and 'them', 'friend' and 'enemy', 'red' and 'white', 'ours' and 'foreign'.

Obviously, Fascism and Bolshevism, Fascist ideology and 'Marxism-Leninism' had many similar and common functional and systemic elements. Of course, they also evinced differences, and these were not insignificant. For example, whereas 'Marxism-Leninism' chose class as its primary theoretical and analytical instrument for the interpretation of world history, the Fascists used the category of the nation. The Marxist concepts of 'majority' and 'class struggle' had the same place-value as the concepts of

'blood' and 'race' in National Socialism. Marxism posited the materialistic—and often the economic-deterministic—interpretation of history. For Fascism, by contrast, anti-materialism, irrationalism, mysticism and conviction were characteristic; such spiritual phenomena as fame, honour and prestige belonged among the powerful mainsprings and motives of action.

The similarity of the social, socio-cultural and intellectual sources of the two versions of totalitarianism is remarkable. As is widely known, consistent and militant collectivism is one of the fundamental principles of 'Marxism-Leninism', a doctrine that rejects individualism of all forms. In this respect, Fascism is hardly different from 'Marxism-Leninism'. Both represent a radical turn from that philosophical and political individualism which is the heart of the liberal-democratic intellectual attitude.

The Fascist doctrine of the state interprets the state as a moral incarnation of the essence of the nation and the individual as a bearer of civic virtues. It declares the state to be the medium by which is transmitted a pre-determined social consciousness and valid morality in which the individual discovers his own ego. This doctrine is derived from the conception of Georges Sorel. Sorel represented the opinion that, in an era of increasing passivity and incapacity of action, the syndicate—the workers organized for the sake of the social revolution, that is—must fulfil the function of carrying the moral renaissance.

With one exception—that the nation replaces the Sorelian class—this conception was also expressed in the social view of Mussolini. It cannot be denied here that Mussolini and the Italian Fascist Party had arisen from the bowels of the Italian socialist workers' movement. It is no coincidence, therefore, that Hitler also added the adjectives 'socialist' and 'worker party' to the name of his party.

The Fascist leaders themselves suspected a certain relation between their constructions and Bolshevist doctrines and orientations, even if they vehemently asserted the contrary. The diaries of Goebbels contain interesting statements in this regard: ultimately, he preferred the fall of the Nazis to the power of the Bolsheviks to capitalist slavery (23 October 1925). He also found it terrible that Nazis and Communists fought one another, asking 'Where and when will we unite with the Communist leaders?' (1 January 1926). And in an open letter to a functionary of the Communist leadership, Goebbels wrote that Communists and Nazis are essentially not enemies, even if they wage war against each other.[25] If we consider these and many similar facts, what Ribbentrop said about his stay in Moscow in March 1940 no longer seems paradoxical: in a conversation with Ciano, the foreign minister of Italy, he said that he had felt in the Kremlin as though he were among old party comrades.

The assessment of Churchill, who described Fascism as a shadow and outgrowth of Communism, also contains a kernel of truth. Their similarity came complete with a conspiracy complex and a world-view that sees things in black and white. In assessing this exceedingly important characteristic of the totalitarian mentality, 'colour' is not the decisive thing—for both are rooted in the same or similar structures and phenomena.

In terms of this standpoint, the position of Ustrialov is also interesting. He attributed many related features to Russian Bolshevism and Italian Fascism alike, even though a 'fraternal hate' existed between the two.

Both are heralds of Caesarism. Ustrialov represented the thesis that Bolshevism had brought Fascism into the world, not the reverse. 'In the overthrow of formal democracy, which had been befallen by apathy,' he asserted, '"Moscow" showed "Rome" the way' In

his view, the 'international nationalism' of Bolshevism corresponded more to the spirit of the age than the 'old-fashioned addiction to greatness of Fascism'.[26]

The opinions of Churchill, Ustrialov and others about the temporal sequence of the origin of Fascism and Bolshevism are of course disputable. Their similarity and relatedness in some parameters, however, seem to me to be an abiding fact. It is remarkable that Fascism and Bolshevism appeared almost simultaneously on the historical scene, and that, in a brief period, both right and left variants of totalitarianism covered the distance from insignificant groups to influential sociopolitical movements— and this in order to subject hundreds of millions of people, many countries and nations to their rule.

Without a doubt, Bolshevism and Fascism as social phenomena possessed a drive that lent them a powerful energy, one that overtook the Eurasian continent and caused the entire globe to feel their almost hurricane force. That this phenomenon was personified in the figures of the 'bellowing Berlin pygmy' or the 'leader of all eras and peoples' is of secondary significance. Irrefutable is the fact that the great catastrophes, which shook the world in the fullest sense of the word, placed something uncannily grotesque before our eyes—either the Apocalypse or an omen of it. Far be it from me to assess all this in a co-ordinate system of 'Christ versus Antichrist' or 'God and Satan'. Yet it is clear that this melding and clashing of human will—mobilized, organized and brought into a seething mass, whether by brown, red or differently coloured ideas—triggered something like an earthquake or natural catastrophe and overturned the view of the world that had been held up to that time.

(Translated from the Russian by Vitali Altuchov)

Notes

1 *Woprossy filossofii* (1990), Vol. XI, p. 134.
2 Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York, 1971), pp. 34–5.
3 S.N.Berdyaev, *Novoie srednieviekovie* (Moscow, 1991), p. 14.
4 Compare F.List, *The National System of Political Economy* (Stuttgart, 1883), pp. 29–30.
5 Compare *Woprossy istorii KPSS* (1971), Heft 12, pp. 15 ff.
6 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke,* Vol. IV, p. 479.
7 Compare M.Agursky, *Ideologiia national-bolshevisma* (Paris, 1980), pp. 186–7.
8 Compare W.L.Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany* (New York, 1960), p. 85.
9 Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf (Munich,* 1942), p. 317.
10 Compare Shirer, *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,* p. 86.
11 Compare R.Farinacci, *Storia della Rivoluzione Fascista* (Cremona, 1937), Vol. III, p. 165.
12 Compare George Orwell, 'My Country, Right or Left, 1940–1943', *Collected Essays: Journalism and Letters* (New York, 1968), p. 135.
13 Compare Shirer, *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,* p. 119.
14 P.Novgorodzev, *Ob obschtschestwennom ideale* (Berlin, 1922), p. 18.
15 Compare Orwell, 'My Country, Right or Left', p. 136.
16 See Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1966), p. 324.
17 G.Gusseinov and D.Dragunski, *Nowyi wsgljad na staryje istiny. Oshog rodnogo otschaga* (Moscow, 1990), p. 10.
18 Compare George Orwell, *In Front of Your Nose, 1945–1950.* Vol. IV, *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters* (New York, 1968), p. 63.
19 Compare C.Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost: The Post-Totalitarian Mind* (Chicago, 1989), p. 39.

20 W.Iljin, *Religija revoluzii i gibel kultury* (Paris, 1987), p. 76.
21 A.P.Foulkes, *Literature and Propaganda* (London and New York, 1983), p. 3.
22 S.Solovietshik, 'Kartofelny sagowor', *Nowoje wremja* (1990), Heft 42, p. 6.
23 A.Kara-Murza, 'Totalitarism-fenomen XX**',** *Totalitarism kak istoritscheski fenomen* (Moscow, 1989), p. 23.
24 Compare Goldfarb, *Beyond Glasnost,* p. 58.
25 Compare Shirer, *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich,* p. 129.
26 M.Agursky, *Ideologiia national-bolshevisma,* p. 94.

20
National Socialism, Fascism and authoritarian regimes

Karl Dietrich Bracher

The fateful developments in Germany and Austria that led to the events of 1938 stand in a double connection. Essentially the result of aberrations in power politics, they were at once the result of ideological confusions that arose from the unsolved problemat of an all-German nation-state. Following the 'smaller German' outcomes of 1866 and 1870, both German and Austrian questions then erupted anew and intensified with the defeat of the central powers and the division of the Habsburg monarchy. Now, both national assemblies and both republican constitutions—hindered, of course, by the Paris peace treaties—demanded the annexation of 'German Austria' to the German Reich.[1]

The national-historical problem following Koeniggraetz and Versailles are only the one side of the historical-political connection, however. Just as important here seems to be the European dimension of the event; and here, the conflict of political orders and systems—particularly the confrontation of democratic and dictatorial ruling forms—gains a significance that is underestimated by a traditional, state-historical mode of investigation to this day.

The demise of both the German and the Austro-Hungarian monarchies was regarded as a final breakthrough of modern democracy in world politics. After only a few years, however, the advance of dictatorial movements overshadowed the newly formed world of European states. Whereas the double Russian Revolution of 1917 quickly led to a leftist, single-party Communist dictatorship, the parliamentary democracies of the Right encountered a declaration of war: a declaration that celebrated its first triumph in 1922 with the seizure of power by Fascism in Italy. As a result, the dictatorship problem moved into the foreground of the political and ideological confrontations; and it remained there throughout the entire 1930s. And here too, a question that I have posed—the disputed question as to the role and relationship of National Socialism, Fascism and authoritarianism—deserves more attention than has been customary in much of contemporary historiography.

At that time, intellectuals were divided and confused by the rapidly advancing European dictatorial regimes that arose primarily during the crises of the nationstates founded after the war. And as it was then, so it is today: classification of such regimes within the typology of political forms and systems is still completely controversial. This applies for both the context of the events and their interpretation and explanation; it applies for their long-term effects and consequences up to the present. Not the least, the controversy also involves the political and moral assessment to which this history is unavoidably subject: it is a past that in no way simply happened, but is supremely present now as well. This is because its consequences, experiences and theories cannot simply be

suppressed by declaring them to be historical—or indeed, by simply demanding their 'historicization'.

This begins with the political language and its relationship to the scientific terminology. The formation of historico-political concepts, as the argument surrounding the concepts of Fascism and totalitarianism of the last two decades has shown, is of greatest significance—and this not only for the formation of political consciousness, but for the research and portrayal of historical contexts themselves; for the latter is always based upon the selection and incorporation of the event, its tradition and its recollection.

I would like now to proceed in four steps. We will consider the following:

1 the problems of democracy and forms of dictatorship following the First World War;
2 the idea of the authoritarian state as a 'third path' between democracy and totalitarianism;
3 the authoritarian wave in the Europe of the 1930s; and then,
4 Austria between and within the fronts of the system.

Finally, a concluding observation of the historical significance of 1938 will be made.

I

Beginning in the early 1920s, a confrontation between democracy and antidemocracy—one that characteristically appears as the revolution and counterrevolution of 1918—had developed in the changed state system of Europe.[2] Within this confrontation also emerged differences between old and new democracies: between the states of western and northern Europe on the one hand and central, eastern and southern Europe on the other—not to mention between the victorious powers and the vanquished, or with those powers, like Italy and Japan, that were not satisfied with the victory. These tendencies then played a decisive role in the formation of fronts, especially after the crisis of the world economy in the 1930s. Here, the so-called domestic authoritarian and totalitarian movements intensified into the international pre-history of the Second World War.

Then, simultaneously with the nationalistic revisionism debate, the democracy debate divided the great political and ideological camps both within and among the states. At first, the First World War almost fitfully expanded both the external and internal spheres of modern democracy. This holds not only for the geographical extension of democracy throughout Europe, but also for the construction of institutions and constitutions, the development of systems of party and association, the claim of political equality for women and granting of the vote to women, the efforts to secure civil freedom and political participation. But along with this broadening and deepening of the desired 'democratization' of Europe, there also emerged the great structural problems of political modernization that existed in the older democracies themselves. (These problems were similar to those that later arose with the transposition of democratic forms to the third world following the Second World War.) The less the historical, social and ideational prerequisites which had enabled the rise and strong rooting of modern democracy in western and northern Europe, Switzerland and North America were present, the sharper and more critical these problems appeared. The assumption or transposition of democracy to central, south and eastern Europe depended upon the extent to which democratically

oriented politicians and parties could successfully expand and popularize the democratic base—which was for the most part still meagre—in order to preserve the new political system. This expansion and popularization could succeed only in a catch-up process involving favourable political and institutional precautions combined with social reforms. The task of undertaking this pioneer work in the misery and chaos of the post-war era may have seemed difficult. As difficult as it seemed, however, both the apparent superiority of the democracies during the war as well as the avoidance of radical revolution outside Russia alike offered a positive motivation: was the old system, after all, not done for? And would the overthrow of radicals on both right and left not also contravene the great desire for peace and just order, if the old pre-democratic order were now to be replaced by a new dictatorial one?

Much depended upon which image and inspiration the established, 'classical' democracies would communicate. That, as victors, they would have been made responsible for misery and injustices was hardly to be avoided; and the harsh peace treaties did not exactly improve this subjective impression. If the new order of Europe was to be secured by the internal constitutions of states as well, then it was all the more important that each democracy portray its high internal quality and great charismatic power. This is why one looked especially to France, Britain and the United States of America—countries that had not only determined the war and the post-war order, but must have seemed so authoritative in the democracy debate as well.

The politics of the Western powers was of course essentially determined by the fact that the differences among their interests in peace clearly emerged again following the end of the war. For France, the chief interest was primarily security; for Britain, it was political distance from Europe and restraint; for the United States, it was the reorientation of world politics. The result of all this was a restoration of the power politics of the nation-state and a rapid fading of the hope for an international alliance and European unification; ultimately, the result was simply a powerless politics of appeasing the dictators. This was all the more influential in that, by contrast to the western and northern European states, the introduction and development of democracy in the rest of Europe was accompanied by the foundation and rise of extremely hostile revolutionary or reactionary movements and ideologies. And these, in turn, had one thing in common: an anti-democratic thrust. This held for the Iberian countries, which remained on the leeside of the war; it held above all for the new foundings in eastern Europe, even if they stood on the side of the winning powers; and, finally, it held for Germany, Austria and Italy— states that had been particularly shocked or disillusioned by the war, states in which both economic and social problems assumed a unique dynamic. In all these cases, there was a close, mutual connection between the crisis of democracy and the burgeoning anti-democratic movements.

Following the leftist signal of the October Revolution, there emerged in Italy the signal of an equally emphatic 'power grab' from the right in Italy. Of course, Mussolini too came from revolutionary socialism: in terms of its structure and influence, his 'Fascism' was much too complex to be captured by the leftist slogan of 'counter-revolutionary'. Fascism and totalitarianism—those two concepts fraught with meaning and marked with seduction and terror, concepts that have been so hotly disputed in the analyses of the century—developed much more *simultaneously* in the bosom of the anti-democratic movement.[3] The intermingling of revolutionary and nationalistic, pro-

Communist and anti-Communist slogans and aspirations shook the politics of post-war Italy. Arising from this mix, there asserted itself for the first time one of those new mass movements that combated liberal democracy in particular. This it did with a combination of conservative and progressive, anti-Communist and socialist goals that appealed to all classes. Such movements were a genuinely new phenomenon of the period between the wars. From these would emerge a new form of dictatorship—the totalitarian form. Yet the significance of these highly ideologized mass movements and 'absolutist integration-parties'[4] also lies with their having enabled a further, final, excessive rise in the practice of imperial power politics by a European nation—only then to bring about the farthest fall of such politics. The unique contribution of Fascism to modern history was its discovery—one unexpected by the Left, in particular—that anti-Marxism and anti-liberalism together, as a mixture, could exert a great attractive force on the masses. Yet this anti-cipates the magic formula of 'National Socialism', which offered the 'masses' (against both 'red front and reaction') an alternative to Marxism and capitalism, liberalism and Communism alike—both national *and* social fulfilment in national-revolutionary clothing.

The very self-description of German National Socialism, which should by no means be understood simply as German Fascism, expressed this claim more clearly and radically yet. National Socialism's 'revolution from the right'[5] meant more than a simple counter-revolution of which the opponents on the Left spoke in such a fatefully dismissive way. Their judgement was stamped and occupied by the myth of the 'good' revolution: a myth that corresponded to the French model or even the Leninist total claim, but less often to the moderate US ideal. For their part, liberal interpreters rejected the exclusive claim of Marxists and Communists to the good or true revolution. (Even today, the latter still make a simplifying distinction between rightist putsch and leftist revolution.) On moral and intellectual grounds, however, liberals were loath to apply the concept of revolution to the National Socialists' seizure of power. For their part, the National Socialists regarded themselves as the great counter-strike against the French Revolution. With the power-seizure of 1933, Goebbels proclaimed emphatically: 'with this, the year 1789 has been stricken from history'.[6] Nonetheless, they also spoke of a revolution that was both 'national' and 'legal'—and not without reason. To miss or underestimate this element signifies a flaw in reasoning similar to the critique of the totalitarianism concept that invokes a difference between left and right dictatorships. To the extent that the mere form of an ideologized single-party rule and its brutal effects on the ruled and persecuted are comparable, qualitative differences in an intellectual or even moral respect represent no decisive objection. And here, German National Socialism, with its revolutionary, pseudo-democratic momentum, proved itself to be superior to Communism—and, after 1938, to Fascism too—in both the struggle with the republic and the dictatorial competition.

II

Thus, we are confronted in the 1930s with three different kinds of anti-democratic movements and rule. First, there was the Fascist national imperialism of an Italian variety—in reality, of course, only a 'totalitarismo imperfetto'.[7] This variety was

distinguished from other, imitative 'Fascisms' by its strong emphasis upon a state that is as total as possible and upon the Roman imperial tradition. Second, there were the two well-developed totalitarianisms of the Soviet Union and the 'Third Reich'. These not only strove for a regime that was incomparably more radical in terms of suppression; they were also based upon total ideologies of a pseudo-religious type—either of class and world revolution or of social Darwinism and race revolution. And finally, there was the broad field of authoritarian dictatorships: a type that included Austria after 1933 and 1934, in the shadow of both Italian Fascism and German National Socialism. From the old Austria had arisen not only Hitler and his anti-Semitism, but the earliest beginnings of National Socialism as well—elements that resulted in an ambivalent, tensioned situation.

How realistic was the claim of this 'authoritarian regime' to have realized the oft-imagined 'third path' between the fronts of democracy and dictatorship, of capitalism and socialism—a path lying beyond the great total dictatorships *and* the supposedly decaying democracies? Glancing at the contemporary research spanning from Juan Linz to Alfred Ableitinger,[8] it is first important—as with application of the concepts of Fascism and totalitarianism themselves—to recognize the substantial differences that existed from country to country. The diversified concept of the authoritarian state is anything but precise; it includes multiple forms of regimes, both pre-democratic and post-democratic orders. Nonetheless, the conditions of emergence seem in many respects comparable: in the context of a deep split of political and social life, dramatic disruptions of function arise in the parties and parliamentarism; these are then perceived or propagated as national crises of legitimacy. The new system is justified as a necessary emergency form by which to rescue the state from the disintegration of power and a power vacuum, from civil war and existential crisis. At the same time, the new system is also justified as new, a third path: in 1932, therefore, it was justified in a similar way in both Germany and Austria. Certainly, authoritarianism's style of thinking belongs to the world of dictatorships, to the introducing and sanctioning of non-democratic modes of governing. Yet it reminds more of the early, ancient Roman form of a temporally and materially limited emergency dictatorship. It is far removed from the revolutionary ideological thinking of both modern totalitarian dictatorships and liberal democracies, then, even if the authoritarian image of order might be justified in a more strongly traditionalistic or technocratic way. What is involved here is the preservation (or assertion) of estate-based, economic or military positions of power supported by a dictatorship. Totalitarianism, by contrast, involves a pseudo-democratic mobilization of all in the service of a monopolistic revolutionary movement and a quasi-religious ideology that makes a claim to exclusivity.

Authoritarianism can stand under right or left, private or state-owned, protectionist or developmental-political signs; it can stem from the crisis of a democracy or from pre-democratic, feudalist, absolutist relations. All this depends upon the degree of maturity of the political and social institutions, on the material and intellectual culture, on the forms of religion and morality. The large breadth of variation in the form of an authoritarian regime reflects—again, by contrast to the absolute claim of Fascist and totalitarian ideologies and systems—the lesser (or lacking) role of a revolutionary ideology and party. To be sure, a declared 'leader' or group elevated to the status of an elite exercises

power here too, but without the possibility of a suggestive effect on the masses and a trans-valuation of morality by utopian, chiliastic goals.

In fact, authoritarian regimes often seem more defensively constituted. Although they tend to suppress pluralism and restrict freedom, they also suppress radical ideologies and adopt a stance of neither-nor between dictatorships of totalitarian mobilization and a democratic relaxation of politics. Their legitimation of dictatorship combines arguments for tradition, order and protection in the sense of strengthening and heightening a state authority that is one-sidedly supported by certain strata or groups: by military, Church, pre-existing hierarchical structures and traditional community forms.

In the case of Austria, a well-known example of theoretical support could be found in 1920 already: in the authoritarian model of the 'true state'[9] that had been sketched by Othmar Spann as the foundation of an estate-based state as an alternative to egalitarian democracy. Critically received by the National Socialists, it served as a starting-point to the guiding intellectual forces of an organic, unitary co-existence and a merging of state and society. Here, conservative anti-liberal ideas and Christian social ideas were conjoined to corporatist ideas of organization of a steered hierarchical order of economy and occupational estates. Thus understood, the Austrian corporate state of 1934–38—in its forced political position between Fascism and National Socialism, which verged on civil war—was consciously undemocratic; yet it was also emphatically anti-totalitarian and understood itself as a defensive regime that required an authoritarian structure. Now, whether this was regarded as an ideal state in Spann's sense or merely as a prolonged emergency dictatorship, politically and racially persecuted critics of National Socialism in Germany also found refuge there until they were forced again to flee in 1938, or—like Eugene Kogon, a former student of Othmar Spann—were transported to the larger German concentration camps.

Situated closer to Fascism than to National Socialism—but also, like these, both anti-Communist and anti-liberal—all the authoritarian regimes of the period between the wars sought primarily to strengthen and stabilize the state as a means to attain national integration. This was undertaken in light of the threat of Communism or National Socialism on the one hand, but was also the product of nationalistic, revisionist tensions with neighbouring states and pressure from the large powers on the other. (That such pressure was to be feared was an idea propagated by the European 'small states' that had availed themselves of authoritarian politics at that time. It is the same in Latin America today, only now with the spectre of 'US imperialism'.)

From the dual 'anti' stance against liberal democracy and totalitarian dictatorship combined with the demand for an authoritarian 'third path' also resulted the vagueness, haziness and lack of clarity of the constitutional programmes that attempted to represent the emergency dictatorship: Papen's failed concept of the 'new state' of 1932, for example, or the May constitution of the Dollfuß regime of 1934.[10] Alfred Ableitinger is correct to note a

> basic character of authoritarian regimes in Europe that is more or less completely pragmatic, and in ideological terms, is aimed predominantly at rejection. Another indication of this is the fact that they were established almost exclusively in the wake of the economic crisis after 1930—often by powers that had already been involved in the regimes earlier and now

either dared to turn to authoritarian regimes or held them to be unavoidable.[11]

The levels of this process that were characteristic for Austria from 1932 to 1934 were the following: dismissal—or better said, self-dismissal—of the parliament through the resignation of all three presidents, further dismantling of political controls and controls of the constitutional state, suppression of opposition and resistance (even through violation of the basic law and use of military force), censoring of the press, prohibition of assemblies and termination of the right to strike, establishment of so-called detention centres for political opponents and *personae non gratae,* party prohibitions against Communists and National Socialists, but also against republican militias and social democrats beginning in May and June 1933, illegalization or self-dissolution of the parties and establishment of a unification movement called the 'Fatherland Front'.[12] As in the Weimar Republic, then, so here: this is the classical typology of the 'disintegration of power in a democracy'. But, of course, the essential difference from the totalitarian development in Germany revealed itself here as well. The Austrian 'Unity Party' remained a coalition of rivalling elites without mass disciples, and reconstruction of the corporate state produced a bureaucratic authoritarian state, not the least through an 'interaction with the workers that fluctuated between suppression and satisfaction'.[13]

That the Dollfuß-Schuschnigg regime was incapable of gaining any additional loyalty of the masses by means of a mobilizing and integrating national ideology lay above all with the strength of the Greater Germany idea. This idea persisted despite all fear of the 'Third Reich' and it remained virulent in all political camps. It was much more popular than the artificial affinity with Italian Fascism that had been cultivated by the corporate state—and especially by the Starhemberg Militia. At any rate, such affinity was burdened by memories of opposition in war and the South Tyrol problem. Nonetheless, Mussolini's regime was entirely effective as a counter-weight to the power of Nazi Germany, especially after the murder of Dollfuß in 1934. This was before the precarious balance was disrupted by the German predominance in the 'Berlin-Rome' axis, however. After 1936, the Italian counter-weight was increasingly lost.

III

With that, we have already listed a few characteristics of the authoritarian wave, which caught so many European states up into the dictatorial seizure of power in Russia, Italy and Germany. Above all, we have described those states which had newly emerged or been radically altered by the First World War; through both their own weaknesses and the influence and possible intervention of the great powers, these same states could become 'crisis boilers of world politics'.[14] Within a decade, the wave extended to include almost all of central and southern Europe. The fragility of the post-war order was also already a harbinger of a new war. Tellingly, however, it was no longer a matter predominantly of traditional diplomacy and the politics of influence; much more did inter-social and political-ideological tendencies and changes play an increasingly important role.

The problem of national self-determination emerged with particular force in light of the weakness of the post-war democracies. At the same time, there emerged the dashed

hope of a liberal optimism that believed after 1918 that a full realization of the right of self-determination in the new states would automatically and necessarily lead to a better international order. The relationship was to be much more complicated and deeply conflicted, as complicated and conflicted as the relationship of nationalism and the new international order, of self-determination and democracy—which had been prematurely regarded as identical—in general.

The freedom of movement that had arisen through the repulsion of Russia, the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the prior amputation of Turkey probably gave countless peoples the chance of national self-realization for the first time. The other side of the coin, however, was an economically and politically problematic collapse—one that had been further intensified by the stormy nationalism of these emphatically 'young' nations. Mixed settlements, multinational states and disputed borders generated pockets of unrest; the democratic principle of self-determination could quickly become authoritarian dictatorial gestures of the assertion of political power. Added to the resulting internal tensions were the socio-economic problems that had been so radically demonstrated in the neighbouring Soviet Union—especially with the agrarian reform, the implementation of which again set off the problem with minorities and created new conflicts.

In addition, the conditions and circumstances of becoming a state were understandably unfavourable. This exerted primarily a negative influence on democracy, which had been prematurely regarded as almost the natural outcome of national emancipation. Economically, the new state structures were mostly weak; they had little industry and depended strongly on the larger countries for both the sale of their agriculture and their supply of industrial goods. Thus did the dependence—one that had been rejected so emphatically in the political realm—remain almost unchanged. The multitude of new tariff borders intensified these difficulties even further; and the becoming of a state—with its many new institutions—was accompanied by additional costs. From the outset, then, state economies that had been weak in any case laboured under burdens that made the democratic beginnings of even 'victor states' like Romania, Yugoslavia, Poland or Czechoslovakia infinitely more difficult. These burdens would have been even heavier for such conquered and reduced countries as Austria, Hungary or Bulgaria. Added to this was their limited experience with the complicated practice of parliamentary democracy; these countries had been governed a long time by predominantly authoritarian monarchies. And finally, the prolonged nationalethnic and revisionist conflicts intensified an instability that had accompanied all the fledgling states since their birth and favoured the rise of 'small dictators'.[15] Only two of them—Finland and Czechoslovakia—were capable of surviving the period up to 1938 in a relatively democratic form.

For reasons of limited space, unfortunately, I can discuss the individual authoritarian regimes that are being investigated here only very briefly at this point. They were at least ten in number: the new Baltic states, the Poland of General Pilsudski, the vastly diminished Hungary of Admiral Horthy and the new Yugoslavia of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (who had never formed a state together before). Equally difficult to govern was the expanded greater Romania with its semi-Fascist 'Iron Guard', the Greece of General Metaxa and, finally, Portugal under Salazar and Spain under Franco.

The three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania owed their existence to the collapse of Russia and the shielding by German troops—having at first attempted to win the Balkans for Germany, these had even planned an independent 'East Germany'

extending from Eastern Prussia to Latvia in 1919. Left to the good graces of the Western powers, the new states attempted to gain democratic constitutions and agrarian reforms. But the pressure of Russia soon increased again—even if it had in every way acknowledged the founding of these states at first (1920).[16] Between Lithuania and Poland in particular, there were problems with minorities and borders; these surrounded the old Lithuanian capital of Vilnius, which Poland occupied at a stroke in 1920. When the League of Nations accepted the occupation as an accomplished fact in 1923, Lithuania recompensed itself by annexing the German Memel region. At this, the region became a potential crisis area that played a role in the revisionist confrontations leading up to the Second World War. By 1934, authoritarian regimes governed in all three states; despite their differences, they met the same fate by 1935 at the latest; and at the critical moment in 1939 and 1940, the closer, special relationship to the Soviet Union did not help even Lithuania in the least. Nationalism was their tragic, paradoxical destiny; for the same power that had helped them attain statehood rendered them incapable of political existence in that it had made them incapable of co-operating.

The duration of democracy in Poland was even shorter. Even its Western orientation and significance to the security system of France against Germany did not change the belief in Poland that the prolonged tension with Russia could be withstood only by an authoritarian regime. The democratic constitution of 1921 remained democratic on paper, but the inner conflicts of the parties and national groups did not admit a normal development of the democratic process. The administration arose from the three extremely different state traditions—Prussian, Russian and Austrian; yet Poland had been subjected to all three of these during a long period of foreign rule. There was also the nationality problem: of 29 million, 18 million were Poles, but 4 million were Ukrainians, 3 million Jews, 1.5 million White Russians, 1 million Germans and 100,000 Lithuanians. In Poland, moreover, as in Romania, a strong anti-Semitism prevailed; this too could be exploited as a ruling instrument by which to distract from internal problems.

It was problems with agrarian reform above all that triggered the conflict. In 1926, these provided an occasion for the putsch of Marshal Pilsudski—a man who had been celebrated on all sides as a war and post-war hero.[17] Of course, Pilsudski soon disappointed the expectations of democrats and reformers, as the regime of a veiled military dictatorship increasingly veered over the years toward the authoritarian right. In 1935, the year of Pilsudski's death, the regime launched a new constitution granting dictatorial power to the president and government. It was a semi-authoritarian, semi-'constitutional' dictatorship—as became almost the rule in the Europe of the 1930s. This conservative and semi-military authoritarian regime—which emerged as an alternative to democracy, Fascism and Marxism alike—extends from Hindenburg, Papen and Schleicher through Dollfuß and Schuschnigg, Horthy and Metaxas to Salazar and Franco; each nation had its own respective form.

In Poland too, invocation of a great national tradition did not yield a useful political solution, but strengthened the anti-democratic camp instead. For a time, Poland's overestimation of its own power profited from the weakness of Russia and Germany. Nonetheless, the country did not gain decisive significance as France's ally in controlling Germany; much more did the German-Russian interplay (of 1939) prove itself to be the decisive factor—as it had once before in history. After 1918, 1939 and 1945 alike, albeit in a different way each time, the 'Polish problem' consisted in Poland's almost

geopolitical dependence upon its two great neighbours. Deeply contradicting the Polish need for independence, this problem caused the repeated failure of the Poles' struggle for freedom.

Particularly thorny problems coalesced in the development of the successor states of the Habsburg empire. The earliest was Hungary, the path of which—following the adventurous intermezzo of Béla Kun's Soviet Republic—immediately ended in the authoritarian regime of Admiral Horthy. Horthy understood himself as the 'Regent of the Empire' of the monarchy, a fiction with which Hungary justified its claim to the re-establishment of its territory—much to the outrage of its neighbours. Horthy's supposedly provisional regency in fact endured up to the end of the Second World War, and the constitutional forms changed little about the continuity of an aristocratic, authoritarian regime that allied itself early on with the Fascist and National Socialist tendencies. Hungary became one of the mainstays of the authoritarian wave in the Danube sphere.[18]

Yugoslavia and Romania, the two states that had profited the most from Hungary's reduction, inherited its problems the most intensively as well. Characteristic were the minority questions and the developmental problems of a greater Romanian kingdom. This kingdom, which had originated as a reward for participation on the side of the Allies in the war, proved especially difficult to rule. Following his return from self-imposed exile in 1930, the scandal-ridden King Carol II finally understood to play the enemy parties off of one another and, in the rapid change of governments, to launch a personal dictatorship that pushed Romania into the camp of the Axis powers—although it was anything but a revisionist state. Parliamentary-democratic institutions and processes were not able to put down roots; and, after 1933, the anti-Semitic movement of the 'Iron Guard' prepared the transition to a semi-Fascist dictatorship, which was ultimately realized under Marshal Antonescu with German blessing in 1940.[19] Although it ended differently, the course of the newly founded state of Yugoslavia, which had been annexed to the Serbian monarchy, was no less problematic. The conflict between Serbs and Croats, who had never before formed a state together, proved to spoil any beneficial developments. A federalist solution did not emerge; and the murder of the Croatian peasant leader, Stefan Radic, by a Serbian parliamentarian during a heated parliamentary sitting in 1928 already signalled the end of a parliamentary democracy that had functioned only laboriously and careered from one cabinet crisis to another. In 1929, King Alexander I suspended the constitution. The dictatorship outlived his murder in Marseilles in 1934, and the efforts of the Prince Regent Paul to re-establish constitutional governing relations were drawn into the general whirlpool of dictatorial tendencies in central and eastern Europe.[20]

Greece and its government system, finally, was overshadowed by unclarified relations: toward authoritarian Turkey, for one (which led to the grave Greek defeat in Asia Minor), and toward Fascist Italy, which acted to demonstrate its Adriatic-Mediterranean ambitions. As with all the smaller states, a maximizing idea circulated in Greece too: the 2,500-year-old memory of a greater Hellenistic kingdom had emerged strongly during the period of political change following the war. Following a frequent change of monarchic and republican regimes, the returning king (George II) finally dissolved the parliament for an indefinite period of time and transferred the power to a quasi-dictatorial regime under General Metaxas. This regime was based on the jurisdictions of the state of war.[21] However: the great variation of socio-economic and political preconditions and forms

that led all these toward dictatorship mitigates against the application of a general concept of Fascism as is so often used to this day—in an ideological or thoughtlessly simplifying way.

This also holds, by the way, for developments in Spain and Portugal.[22] The establishment of the Franco regime during the civil war and in the decades that followed should be understood just as little in terms of the Fascism concept as the dictatorship of Salazar and other variants of the authoritarian wave should be. Only the Falange, which Franco occasionally used, was a Fascist movement; yet the Falange was never capable of attaining a larger following, to say nothing of control over the system. For this was lacking not only the indispensable charismatic leader—after the death of the younger Primo de Rivera in 1936, that is. In addition, the relations under which the Spanish regime originated were too little suited to it: the anti-democratic military putsch had no Fascist mass movement, and the conservative powers retained full control over the authoritarian dictatorship they had erected. This case, together with the Austrian one, demonstrate with utmost clarity that an explanation regarding Fascism merely as the executive organ of reactionary or capitalistic powers is false: Fascism and National Socialism were movements and regimes precisely and solely through the fact that they were capable of extracting themselves from these 'reactionary' powers in order to attain their own goals.

In Spain, the situation was fundamentally different from that of Italy or Germany in this respect. No great ideological goals were involved, but purely and simply the re-establishing and securing of the pre-democratic, pre-republican system of the conservative establishment. Even the person of the dictator was arrived at through almost pure chance: of the various conspiring politicians and generals, Franco became a candidate only as the leaders of first choice were killed. The Spanish, Latin American tradition of *Caudillo*—of the successful general—was followed here; and Franco's incorporation of the Falange into the national collective movement in April 1937 only made the uniquely Spanish character of the dictatorship more clear. As a politician who tended to be cautious on the international scene, Spain's head of state was the diametrical opposite of the mass demagogues of ideological revolution in Rome and Berlin. Although Franco of course accepted all help from Italy and Germany during the civil war, his attitude during the Second World War made this more evident still.

Franco's dictatorship, the Spanish version of anti-democracy, certainly did not fail to have an effect on the Latin American countries—from Peronism through to the Latin American military regimes of today. In the European context, however, it remained a special case. Its significance lies in the fact that the Spanish Civil War could be regarded as a *prelude* to the Second World War, a dress rehearsal of the ideological fronts ending in the *triumph* of the new dictatorships. As a dictatorship, however, the Franco regime remained far removed from the radicalism of the ideological, revolutionary right—almost as far removed from it as the regime of Salazar. For Franco too, then, the retreat to the monarchy was his final answer to the question concerning the goal and direction of this system. As for the Salazar regime, it ultimately remains a unique and interesting specimen. This early variant of the authoritarian wave might seem to have been entirely comparable to other experiments with the corporate state in 1932, the year of its appearance; yet it survived up into the 1970s like a fossil of the anti-democratic era, of even the pre-democratic idea of order. That it did not belong solely to a distant past is of

course demonstrated by the old-new dictators of Latin America—as well as by the authoritarian structures of Communist eastern Europe.

The agonies of democracy in the 1930s proved a heavy blow to the hopes surrounding the achievement of national self-determination. It was revealed that self-determination did not necessarily (or even probably) lead to the formation and consolidation of democratic systems. The relationship of nationalism, nation-state and democracy was more complicated than had been assumed in an optimism that was still rooted in nineteenth-century liberalism. In every case, the difficult structural problems—minority conflicts, economic crises, questions of agricultural reform and a politics of the industrial middle class, plus the fear of revolution and Communism—led to authoritarian dictatorial systems by the mid-1930s at the latest. To be sure, these were not capable of solving the problems either. And worse still, the illusion of a 'third way' discredited the idea of democracy itself by implying that it was capable of surviving only under the exceptional conditions of the developed Western states. The chaotic relations also presented the great powers with an opportunity to intervene and bring about the kind of power-shifts that could endanger the European system of peace and order as a whole.

But the example of the new democracies following the First World War also proves that a political susceptibility for dictatorship cannot be concluded simply from the level of socio-economic development. There were two completely different kinds of susceptibility. First, there were the under-developed and half-developed countries of the Balkans and, in part, also of Italy, Poland and the Baltic states. Authoritarian or even Fascist regimes could emerge here as developmental dictatorships precisely because a workable political infrastructure was lacking; yet such dictatorships never attained the politico-ideological perfection of the totalitarian regimes. Countries with a higher standard of development and living were also susceptible, though: countries threatened by decline or profound structural crises owing to the war and to further modernization. This applied to Germany and to Austria in particular. With its great tradition of state and culture, the latter now found itself the 'result of a subtraction' (Musil), as it were, in search of its lost role. Here, certainly, the conditions for the development of a parliamentary democracy were better. At the same time, however, Austria also had more radical, perfectionist tendencies as well as currents that were capable of being channelled in a totalitarian direction; and these currents sought a reactionary or revolutionary change of the post-war situation.

IV

Thus, the history and failure of the first Austrian democracy was entirely part of the authoritarian wave. This it was in a particular way, however; because it was directly connected with the German problem, it was confronted with the German path into an emphatically totalitarian dictatorship. Following the prohibition of the Anschluss, the rump republic—which was scarcely viable in economic terms as well and had to be kept afloat by loans from the League of Nations—laboriously attained a certain degree of consolidation up to 1931. In the end, it was led by the Christian Socialist prelate, Ignaz Seipel.[23] In the context of both the persisting Anschluss question and the economic problems, the confrontation of militant, quasi-militarily organized movements of the

Right and Left in particular disrupted a peaceful, integrative development of the country. Beyond this, the anti-Semitic atmosphere that Hitler had already absorbed in his Vienna years cropped up again.[24] Over and again, political enmity, strikes and violent demonstrations led to the brink of civil war; opposing one another in particular were the agrarian, right-authoritarian 'Heimwehr' under the Fascism-friendly Prince Starhemberg and the 'Republicanische Schutzbund' that dominated in Vienna. The approximately 60,000 Heimwehr people and the 90,000 likewise armed members of the Schutzbund far outnumbered the Austrian army, which had been reduced to 30,000 men. In July 1927, the Vienna workers stormed the Palace of Justice; this was set on fire owing to the liberation of some Heimwehr people who had been accused of murdering the socialists. The bloody unrest lasted for three days.[25] In the years that followed, the Heimwehr repeatedly threatened to march on Vienna; following the Fascist model, this was supposed to eliminate the weak, ostracized parliamentary democracy. In 1931, a putsch attempt occurred in Graz. At the same time, the plan for a tariff union with Germany was newly blocked by the objection of France and the entente that existed between Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Romania.[26] All these crises and humiliations were booked on the minus-account of the democratic republic. In 1931 and 1932, it was finally forced—by the granting of an urgently needed credit provided by the Lausanne Protocol and the International Court of Justice—definitively to forgo even a merely economic alliance with Germany, even though Germany was at that time still democratic (or in any case, not National Socialist).

This was the situation as the balance between the opposing camps of socialists, Christian socialists and Greater German nationalists—with the rise of Austrian National Socialism too—was increasingly lost. The balance had been unsteady anyway, but the loss of it brought parliamentary democracy along with it: not the least under the growing pressure of Germany's development into a dictatorship. To be sure, democratic options still continued to exist in Austria.[27] In the November elections of 1930, 90 per cent still voted for the republic's three founding parties, whereas in Germany at that time over a third already voted either right or left totalitarian—and in 1932, even the majority did! In both cases, however, the possibility of a grand coalition was rejected in accordance with the old, much-loved illusion that dictatorial emergency solutions are superior to democratic ones. Personal factors like the overthrow of Brüning and Otto Braun by the Hindenburg camarilla in Germany or the death of Seipel and Scober in the same fatal year of 1932 (both in August!) also played a fateful role. It occurred in Austria in a way similar to the way it had in the Weimar Republic; through presidential dictatorial power, the pseudo-legal 'general strike by instalments' (Peter Huemer) appeared as a 'general strike in small steps' (Manfried Welan) by the 'authoritarian Trojan Horse' of an old Enabling Act of the war economy of 1917.[28] In general, therefore, the following could be said: the transition occurred, not through a majority, but through the abuse of a self-dissolution of the parliament (4 March 1933) up to the bloody suppression of socialist resistance (12 February 1934) and a National Socialist putsch attempt (25 July 1934).[29]

For contemporary Austrian historians, there remain more difficult interpretative questions affecting all political camps: to what extent was the corporate state an emergency solution? Was it, rather, another path to dictatorship? How should its various preparers and coalition members from the Christian socialist, conservative and national camps be assessed? What significance did the Italian push for a Fascist reformation of

Austria have, and where were the forces of political opposition apart from the radicals on the Left and the Right? Did the rejection of the state hold for the state system in general, or solely for the authoritarian regime? What ultimately can be said of the authoritarian understanding of the state, according to which dictatorially shortened paths of decision are said to be more efficient than democratic ones, if the costs of mistaken dictatorial decisions that are exempted from control are considered? And did the experiment then in fact not fail after all? Or was it due primarily to the German ultimatum and entry of 1938? Trapped between National Socialist and Fascist regimes, Dollfuß and Schuschnigg steered a course that sought at first (until 1936) to contain both socialists and National Socialists; but they ultimately still succumbed, without alternative, to the Greater German coup, accompanied by the cheers of the misled majority of the population. The end of the long-drawn-out intermediate authoritarian state of affairs, experienced as self-resignation, liberation or occupation, revealed at the same time the apparently unstoppable progress of ideological stimuli and the close intertwining of power factors of both internal and external politics.

It had been one of the favourite ideas of the expatriated Austria-enthusiast, Hitler, that seizure of power in Germany should be followed immediately by a National Socialist revolution in Austria. Even more than in the case of his anti-Versailles revisionist politics, he could draw on strong Greater German moods on both sides of the borders and among all strata of the population. The 'Greater German' idea was no National Socialist invention, but a spirituo-political power that had remained alive since the end of the old kingdom and had gained new impetus from the collapse of the two empires in 1918.[30]

Certainly, the National Socialist initiative had endowed the notion of the all-German kingdom with a content of its own. Hitler did not strive for his special annexation of Austria in the federalist sense of the liberals of 1848 or the democrats and social democrats of 1918; nor did he seek a peaceful, legal and constitutional revision, but rather a rapidly forced incorporation into an integrated unitary state. With massive support from the Austrian National Socialists, German politics had directly interfered in Austrian internal politics since early 1933. At the same time, it had also placed Vienna under most intense pressure in terms of economic politics; it had answered to corresponding defence measures with a closing of the border and a boycott of tourism—two measures which heavily affected the country.[31]

Of course, this development prompted decided reactions not only from France, but now from Italy, too. In light of the German threat tactics, the authoritarian regime of Engelbert Dollfuß relied more heavily on Mussolini; it both suppressed the Austrian National Socialists and sought to realize its alternative corporate state with Italian support—whereby, of course, the social democrats were brutally excluded. On 17 February 1934, Vienna's agreements with Italy and Hungary combined with a solemn declaration of Britain, France and Italy strengthened Austria's independence and integrity. The National Socialists answered by planning a putsch and murdering Doll fuß on 25 July 1934—only shortly after the bloody consolidation of the National Socialist regime of 30 June 1934 in Germany.

Certainly, this over-hasty attempt did not succeed in seizing power, and the German leadership could still extract itself from the affair. Nonetheless, Hitler's politics slid tangibly into isolation through the counter-strikes of 1934.[32] After the murder of Dollfuβ, not only the plan of annexation, but the idea of a close alliance with Italian Fascism

seemed to have become remote as well. Yet now, as in 1933 with Hitler's seizure of power in Germany, Franz von Papen served as a placatory mediator, as a 'special ambassador of the Führer' in Vienna—despite the murder of his closest friends and loss of his vice-chancellorship in 1934. Both before and after 1934, he was a proponent of the authoritarian, not the totalitarian, state; and this only strengthened the illusions. In addition, Mussolini turned away from the Western powers with the shift of Italian political interests to an imperialism of the Mediterranean Mare-nostro[33] in the Abyssinian war of 1935 and 1936 and the Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939. At this point, incorporation of Austria presented itself as a first, almost risk-free stage of German expansion. So long as it corresponded to the National Socialist idea of *Lebensraum,* the national right of self-determination presented the most effective pretext. And the authoritarian regime itself, which was not very popular in any case, was now out-manoeuvred by the recoiling of Europe before Hitler's Greater German politics. The report of Philipp von Hessen was decisive for the ultimatum of Berchtesgaden, in face of which Schuschnigg was forced to back down. As the son-in-law of the Italian king who had been dispatched to Rome confirmed, Mussolini would do nothing this time—by contrast to 1934. Correspondingly, Hitler's telegram of thanks came from Linz on 13 March 1938: 'Mussolini, I will never forget this favour!'[34]

After Hitler's success with the rearmament politics, Versailles was a thing of the past; intervention of the Western powers on behalf of the remains of a broken system was hardly to be expected. In Austria itself, the powerless semi-dictatorship of Dollfuß's successor, Schuschnigg, was not capable of popularizing an independent political course through initial prohibitions and persecution aimed at hindering National Socialist activity; indeed, Schuschnigg's regime had met with opposition from both the Left and the Right. In his isolation and in defiance of some warnings, the Austrian federal chancellor obeyed Hitler's formal summons to his border retreat of Berchtesgaden on 12 February 1938; here, he was convinced under threat to appoint Arthur Seyss-Inquart, a National Socialist, as minister of the interior. Hitler answered later attempts at resistance and the introduction of a plebiscite in favour of Austria's independence with a new ultimatum. In a hurried power-grab, Seyss-Inquart now took over the chancellery as well; and at the telephoned instructions of Göring from Berlin, he opened the borders to the German troops standing at the ready there.

On 13 March 1938—first in Linz, and two days later at the Heldenplatz in Vienna—Hitler proclaimed a 'reunification' of the future so-called 'East March' with the Reich. A 99 per cent (now totalitarian) plebiscite of 10 April 1938 legalized the action; almost without resistance, and of course accompanied by a hasty strike of Himmler's arrest commandos with pogrom-type, merciless persecution of Jews and political opponents, this 'reunification' was carried out under the more technocratic concepts of 'Anschluss' and *'Gleichschaltung'*. This marked the drastic transition from an authoritarian to a totalitarian regime; and revenge was also taken on representatives of the corporate state.[35]

Hitler had returned to Austria; his work, thus proclaimed the propaganda, was done. The international reaction confirmed the optimistic prognosis of the dictator, who had renounced any further surprises only one year before. In the Britain of appeasement, however, a tendency to show understanding for the process prevailed over all disapproval of the methods. The need for external peace and for the retention of the empire ranked above the European questions and crippled intervention on behalf of the values of

Western democracy. Shaken by a series of governmental crises, France remained almost motionless, absorbed by its own internal political problems. Mussolini, who still maintained a stance of *nolens volens,* received an exuberant telegram of thanks from Hitler. Congratulations came even from Chiang Kai-shek.

1938 was also a decisive year for marking a radical transformation of the structure of leadership in Germany itself. Occurring immediately before and after the 'Anschluss', it took the form of a further Nazification and totalitarianization of the personnel. Thus did the 'authoritarian' partners of the seizure of power of 1933 now fall: conservatives, German nationals and professionals. Generals Blomberg, Fritsch and Beck fell; in the Foreign Ministry, Neurath ceded to Ribbentrop and, in economic politics, Hjalmar Schacht stepped down in favour of an obedient follower like Walther Funk.

Thus was the foundation of the 'Greater German Reich' achieved as an almost unchallenged victory of National Socialist politics. Its consequences were unforeseeable: it signified, not the end of the revision, as all too many contemporaries wanted to believe, but the beginning of the expansion. Hitler's next step, the incorporation of the Sudetenland, was already proof of it. He could still invoke the ethnic-national tie, to be sure, but no longer the 'merely' revisionist ideology. And beyond this, the military directive of 30 May 1938 already concretized Hitler's 'inalterable decision' for 1 October: 'to crush Czechoslovakia in the foreseeable future with a military action'.[36]

The catastrophe of the Second World War loomed, as well as the inhumanity of its National Socialist author: with the transition from the authoritarian to the totalitarian political form in Austria in 1939, the persecution of the Jews was radicalized and the geo-political and racist Eastern imperialism of the 'Third Reich' was concretized.

V

The events of 1934–38 manifest the confluence of two powerful prevailing trends: those of radical nationalism and of authoritarian dictatorship. Throughout the 1930s, a comprehensive ideologization of politics coupled with a friend-enemy mindset and scapegoat anti-Semitism paved the way for the approaching ominous climax in the heart of Europe. By some, the violent 'solution' through power politics was heralded as a fulfilment of just claims to self-determination; by others, it was suffered as misfortune and oppression; and by all too many, it was accepted and shared as a historical destiny that was supposedly inescapable. The developments of 1933 to 1938 should certainly not be understood in an isolated way, as a peculiarly German and Austrian phenomenon; it forces the gaze toward the European landscape of crises and dictatorships in the 1920s and 1930s. Yet classification by historians into a wave of authoritarian and totalitarian dictatorships cannot mean a comfortable retrospective relativization—whether political or moral. In the radicalization, the leading role was still played by National Socialism; with its connection of ideas of Reich and nation, its influence extended beyond the borders of its own state. This radicalization brought the inhumanity attained by the authoritarian and Fascist dictatorships to new heights and spurred on the drive toward a totalitarian ruling system of unprecedented dimensions. This certainly held for Fascism: after 1938, National Socialism increasingly subordinated it to itself in terms of both military and power politics and ideological racism. Further: in one decisive point—in its politics of

enemy and destruction justified by racism—National Socialism superseded even the inhuman collectivization and show-trials of Stalinism.

In the pogroms of 1938 and occupation of Poland only a few months later, there already emerged those true characteristics that distinguished this regime from other tyrannies. These features indicated that it was far more than anti-Bolshevistic and anti-democratic in the sense of Nolte's Fascism theory, for example, or of the apology for authoritarian emergency dictatorship of Carl Schmitt.

In conclusion, therefore, the utmost significance of the German and Austrian components should once again be emphasized—especially in a study that compares the general European context and the circumstances of its political system. But how could such a dictatorship have first attained power in Germany and then expanded to Austria, even though similar spiritual, social and political streams—nationalism, anti-Semitism, social imperialism—existed in many countries after the turn of the century? This is related to two factors.

First, National Socialism itself was primarily a German phenomenon, not a 'Fascist' one—the latter was just as authentically Italian, as inspiring as its influence may have been for a time. It was based in large measure on a brutalization of political thought and conduct, on a disturbed understanding of politics. One might describe this as the perversion of German idealism and desire for order by the First World War and the crises that followed. George Mosse has recently portrayed this 'brutalization of politics' in an essay about 'the political right, racism and the German special path *(Sonderweg)*',[37] Here, admittedly, the disputed *Sonderweg* thesis applies only to the extent that it signifies that special consciousness that was determined by the inflated 'ideas of 1914' and the subsequent deep disappointment of 1918. The failure to cope with the defeat, a feeling of being unjustly treated by history, myths of being stabbed in the back: from this syndrome of national tension was nourished all that which Hitler called 'Mein Kampf', and then enlisted at the deepest level in his early agitation in post-war Munich.

Second, up to the end of 1945, National Socialism stood and fell with this German ideology of the war that was not lost. The ideology was not merely nourished by the 'negative' direction, by anti-Marxism and anti-Bolshevism—these were not peculiar to Germany. Much more was it fed by a pairing of emphatically 'positive' ideologemes of the progressivist programme. These ideologemes went beyond the extremely 'popular' nationalism of a racism that was distinct from the colonial apartheid racism of other countries—of Fascism, too—through its pseudo-scientific biologistic justification in terms of an 'Aryan' claim to rule and destroy. By its nature, this claim was necessarily directed against other peoples and races. Expanded from anti-Semitism to an anti-Slavism, it was then joined up with that expansive theory of a *Lebensraum* that was no longer determined solely geo-politically, but also in terms of racism and natural law. The 'implementation' of this 'unshakeable' ideology—according to National Socialist vocabulary—was unrelenting; by contrast to the anti-Bolshevism of the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939–41, it knew no compromise. Armed with it, Hitler was not merely a kind of anti-Lenin, as Nolte suggests; nor was National Socialism merely a negative image of Bolshevism—as propagandistically effective as the struggle against and simultaneous imitation of the Communist politics of rule and suppression might have been. It was much more.

What was ultimately lacking in Germany—and later, in Austria—more than elsewhere was political and moral powers of defence. Evidently, there was not enough support in the history, religion and culture to curb the totalitarian temptation and seduction or to offer an effective resistance. All too many contemporaries did not take the innermost driving forces of National Socialism—its social Darwinism, ideology of the *Lebensraum* and biological racism in particular—seriously enough early enough. Although they had been underestimated and trivialized as mere ideological extravagances or trimmings, it was these forces that first unleashed the totalitarian energy and sanctioned it in pseudo-scientific terms. Indeed, they even 'morally' sanctioned it—in the sense of a 'higher morality' and totalitarian belief without which the crimes of the Third Reich' ultimately cannot be explained. This is why the essential distinction remains imperative for any concept that attempts to capture the dictatorship problem in modern politics and history. Such a concept should make it easier to see how the confluence of tradition and revolution, of fear of Communism and belief in destiny, of authoritarianism, Fascism and National Socialism, made the German and Austrian false paths of 1933 and 1938 possible and led to the catastrophe of the Second World War.

Fifty years later, in the context of this colloquium too, it remains important and urgent to illuminate the position of Austria further. For a time, Austria stood in an intermediate position between Fascism and National Socialism; as such, it should serve as part of the analysis of the culturally vital yet politically dismal period between the wars. For Fascist Italy, this period was an epoch of practically uninterrupted dictatorship. For Germany, the onset of totalitarianism in 1933 marked the confrontation between constitutional democracy and a dictatorship that was incomparably more radical than that of Fascism. For Austria, however, the period breaks down into three different phases: democracy, authoritarian regime, National Socialist rule. The result was a peculiar complexity and layering of historical experience. Together with a number of European states, Austria took the path from newly created democracy to authoritarian regime, complete with the problems surrounding its identity as a nation-state and its socio-economic viability. Its fall from an empire to a republic that had been instituted against its will was intensified by its situation located between two revisionist, ultimately highly ideologized, large powers with which it shared partly historical and partly national ties. As a 'democracy in the shadow of imposed sovereignty',[38] Austria struggled with the structural problems of modern, party-state parliamentarianism; these were problems with which even the older democracies coped only with difficulty

By contrast to that period, Austria has now found its identity as a state. The German case is more complicated: here, the division of the nation was at once an important aspect of the confrontation with the National Socialist past. For both states, the burning moral questions thrown up and left behind by the destructive work of the National Socialist dictatorship—which was by no means solely 'Fascist'—remain. This holds equally for the GDR, which attempted unceremoniously to extract itself from the problem through a new dictatorship, which was indeed anti-Fascist, but not anti-totalitarian. The National Socialist dictatorship signalled a crisis of Europe and its values. But it was above all a German dictatorship and, unfortunately, also a Greater German one. There remains the experience and the warning as to the capabilities of the human being when it flees from rational political thought and the problems of the day into the intoxication of totalitarian ideologies and power politics. Some 200 years ago, at the beginning of our revolutionary

era, Edmund Burke remarked in 1784 that 'a people never relinquishes its freedom except in some kind of blindness'. Our century cannot dispense with those bitter experiences of self-imposed incapacitation; it is not permitted to suppress or forget them because, in an era of all too many dictatorships, they have cost too many victims of violence and false illusions. Let us recall Benedetto Croce's words: 'history is the only true critique that can be exercised on the facts of humanity'.[39]

Notes

1 For an introduction to the Austrian sphere of problems see Adam Wandruszka, 'Österreich von der Begründung der ersten Republik bis zur sozialistischen Alleinregiemng 1918–1970', in Theodor Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch der europäischen Geschichte,* 7/2 (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 823 ff. In the historical literature, Alfred D.Low, *The Anschluss Movement, 1918–1919 and the Paris Peace Conference* (Philadelphia, PA, 1974); also Alfred D.Low, *The Anschluss Movement, 1918–1938: Background and Aftermath. An Annotated Bibliography of German and Austrian Nationalism* (New York and London, 1984); Joseph F.Desput (ed.), *Österreich 1934–1984* (Graz, 1984); Gerhard Botz, *Krisenzonen einer Demokratie* (Frankfurt and NewYork, 1987). See also the latest essays on the 'Anschluss problem' by Gerhard Botz, Rolf Steininger and Michael Gehler in *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte,* supplement to *Das Parlament* B9/88 (26 Feb. 1988). The specialist literature has been growing quickly in recent years.

2 More extensively here, see my books: *Europa in der Krise* (Frankfurt, Berlin and Vienna, 1979), pp. 42 ff., 138 ff.; *Geschichte und Gewalt* (Berlin, 1981), pp. 93 ff., 127 ff.; *Zeit der Ideologien,* 2nd edn (Stuttgart, 1985), pp. 121 ff., 239 ff.; *Die totalitäre Erfahrung* (Munich, 1987), pp. 20 ff. On the significance of 1918–19, see Francis L.Carsten, *Revolution in Mitteleuropa 1918–1919* (Cologne, 1973).

3 Compare Jens Petersen, 'Die Entstehung des Totalitarismusbegriffs in Italien', in Manfred Funke (ed.), *Totalitarismus* (Dusseldorf, 1978), pp. 105 ff.; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen—Um Faschismus, Totalitarismus, Demokratie* (Munich, 1984), pp. 13 ff.; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Schlüsselwörter in der Geschichte* (Dusseldorf, 1978), pp. 103 ff.

4 Thus already in 1932, Sigmund Neumann, *Die Parteien der Weimarer Republik,* new edn (Stuttgart, 1965), p. 107. On Italian Fascism, see above all the works of Renzo de Felice. Compare also my article, 'Fascism', *Staatslexikon* 2, new edn (Freiburg, Basel and Vienna, 1986), pp. 549 ff.

5 The writing by Freyer of the same name appeared in 1931. On this, see in particular Jerry Z.Muller, *The Other God That Failed* (Princeton, NJ, 1987), pp. 193 ff. On the Fascism vs National Socialism discussion among historians, see Gerhard Schulz, *Faschismus-Nationalsozialismus. Versionen und theoretische Kontroversen, 1922–1972* (Frankfurt, Berlin and Vienna, 1974). On the revolution question see Leo Valiani, 'Il fascismo: controrivoluzione e rivoluzione', in Karl Dietrich Bracher and Leo Valiani (eds), *Fascismo e nazionalsocialismo* (Bologna, 1986), pp. 11 ff.

6 *Revolution der Deutschen* (Oldenburg, 1933), p. 155 (radio speech of 1 April 1933). Compare Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung,* 2nd edn (Opladen, 1962), pp. 7 ff.; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die deutsche Diktatur,* 6th edn (Cologne, 1979), pp. 209 ff.; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Zeitgeschichtliche Kontroversen,* pp. 68 ff. (on the ambivalence of tradition and revolution); David Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution* (New York, 1966); also Renzo de Felice, *Mussolini il Rivoluzionario* (Turin, 1965), as well as Eugen Weber, 'Revolution? Counter-revolution? What Revolution?', *Journal of Contemporary History,* 9 (1974), pp. 3 ff.

7 Compare Emilio Gentile, Partito, Stato e Duce nella mitologia e nella organizzazione del fascismo', in Bracher and Valiani (eds), *Fascismo e nazionalsocialismo,* pp. 267 ff.; Konrad Repgen, 'Faschismus', *Katholisches Soziallexikon* (Innsbruck-Graz, 1980), pp. 699 ff.

8 Juan J.Linz, 'Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes', in Fred I.Greenstein and Nelson W.Polsby (eds), *Handbook of Political Science,* 3 (Reading, MA, 1975), pp. 175–411; Juan J.Linz and Alfred Stepan (eds), *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes, 2: Europe* (Baltimore, MD and London, 1978), pp. vii ff.; see in particular the contribution by Walter B.Simon about Austria, ibid., pp. 80 ff. Also Alfred Ableitinger, 'Autoritäres Regime', *Katholisches Soziallexikon,* pp. 209 ff.

9 Othmar Spann, *Der wahre Staat* (Vienna, 1921). Compare from his school, for example, Walter Heinrich, 'Ständische Ordnung und Diktatur', *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik,* 136, 3. F. 81 (1932), pp. 868 ff. An early German parallel: Heinrich Herrfahrdt, *Das Problem der Berufsständischen Vertretung von der Französischen Revolution bis zur Gegenwart* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1921), pp. 181 ff. Compare Bracher, *Zeit der Ideologien,* pp. 253–62.

10 Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik. Eine Studie zum Problem des Machtverfalls in der Demokratie,* 6th edn (Dusseldorf, 1984), pp. 471 ff. On the ideational and economic elements of the portrayal by Ulrich Kluge, *Der österreichische Ständestaat 1934–1938* (Munich, 1984).

11 Ableitinger, 'Autoritäres Regime', p. 214.

12 Manfred Welan, 'Die Verfassungsentwicklung in der Ersten Republik', in Desput (ed.), *Österreich 1934–1984,* pp. 81 ff. Not without apologetics, Ludwig Reichhold, *Kampf um Österreich—Die Vaterländische Front und ihr Widerstand gegen den Anschluß 1933–1938* (Vienna, 1984).

13 Ableitinger, 'Autoritäres Regime', p. 215.

14 Hans Herzfeld, *Die moderne Welt 1789–1945, Part 2,* 4th edn (Braunschweig, 1970), p. 260.

15 Compare Antony Polonsky, *The Little Dictators. The History of Eastern Europe since* 1918 (London, 1975).

16 On this, see especially Georg von Rauch, *Geschichte der baltischen Staaten* (Stuttgart, 1970). Compare the corresponding chapter of Gotthold Rhode and Arved v.Taube, in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/2, pp. 1065–79, 1107–33.

17 Gotthold Rhode, 'Polen von der Wiederherstellung der Unabhängigkeit bis zur Ära der Volksrepublik 1918–1970', in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/2, pp. 1007 ff.

18 Leo Valiani, *The End of Austria-Hungary* (London, 1973); Denis Silagi, 'Ungarn seit 1918', in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/2, pp. 887 ff.

19 Gotthold Rohde, 'Die südosteuropäischen Staaten, Rumänien 1918–1968', in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/2, pp. 1135 ff.; further, Andreas Hillgruber, *Hitler, König Carol und Marschall Antonescu* (Wiesbaden, 1954).

20 Compare Werner Markert (ed.), *Osteuropa-Handbuch 1: Jugoslawien* (Cologne and Graz, 1954), as well as Klaus-Detlev Grothusen, *Südosteuropa-Handbuch 1: Jugoslawien* (Göttingen, 1975); Rhode, 'Die südosteuropäischen Staaten', pp. 1183–1208.

21 Gunmar Hering, 'Griechenland vom Lausanner Frieden bis zum Ende der Obersten-Diktatur 1923–1974', in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/2, pp. 1314 ff.

22 Compare the portrayals by Stanley Payne, *A History of Spain and Portugal,* 2 vols (Madison, WI, 1973); Raymond Carr (ed.), *The Republic and Civil War in Spain* (New York, 1971); Hugh Thomas, *Der spanische Bürgerkrieg* (Stuttgart, 1962), as well as Richard Konetzke, 'Die iberischen Staaten vom Ende des I.Weltkriegs bis zur Ära der autoritären Regime 1917–1960', in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/1, pp. 663–98.

23 Foundational here is Klemens von Klemperer, *Ignaz Seipel, Staatsmann einer Krisenzeit* (Graz, 1976), in particular, Ch. 4.

24 Compare Peter Pulzer, *Die Entstehung des politischen Antisemitismus in Deutschland und Österreich* (Gütersloh, 1966); Francis L.Carsten, *Faschismus in Österreich* (Munich, 1977), pp. 231 ff.

25 Botz, *Krisenzonen einer Demokratie,* pp. 65 ff.; Adam Wandruszka, 'Austrofaschismus. Anmerkungen zur politischen Bedeutung der "Heimwehr" in Österreich', in Manfred Funke, Hans Adolf Jacobsen, Hans Helmuth Knütter and Hans-Peter Schwarz (eds), *Demokratie und Diktatur. Geist und Gestalt politischer Herrschaft in Deutschland und Europa. Festschrift für Karl Dietrich Bracher* (Dusseldorf, 1987), pp. 216 ff.; Carsten, *Faschismus,* pp. 156 ff.

26 Bracher, *Auflösung der Weimarer Republik,* pp. 352 ff.

27 Compare Walter B.Simon, 'Democracy in the Shadow of Imposed Sovereignty: The First Republic of Austria', in Linz and Stepan (eds), *Breakdown of Democratic Regimes, 2: Europe,* p. 94: 'testimony to the vitality of democratic politics in the First Republic of Austria'.

28 Peter Huemer, *Sektionschef Robert Hecht und die Zerstörung der Demokratie in Österreich* (Munich, 1975), p. 213; Welan, 'Verfassungsentwicklung', p. 81; compare Botz, *Krisenzonen einer Demokratie,* pp. 119 ff., 155 ff. (with the literature about the controversy), also about 'ruling functionary', *Vergleichbarkeiten und Unterschiede zur deutschen Entwicklung* (1932) (compare Bracher, *Auflösung der Weimarer Republik,* pp. 287 ff., 465 ff.).

29 Joseph Buttinger, *Am Beispiel Österreichs* (Wien, 1972); Botz, *Krisenzonen einer Demokratie,* pp. 181 ff.; Gerhard Jagschitz, *Der Putsch. Die Nationalsozialisten 1934 in Österreich* (Vienna, 1976); Carsten, *Faschismus,* pp. 242 if.

30 Adam Wandruszka, 'Concezione della storia "Gesatdeutsch" e nazionalsocialismo', in Bracher and Valiani (eds), *Fascismo e nazionalsocialismo,* pp. 181 ff.

31 Gustav Otruba, 'Hitleres "Tausend-Mark-Sperre" und Österreichs Fremdenverkehr', in Rudolf Neck and Adam Wandruszka (eds), *Beiträge zur Zeitgeschichte* (Vienna, 1976), pp. 113 ff. Compare Norbert Schausberger, 'Anschlußideologie und Wirtschaftsinteressen 1918–1938', in Heinrich Lutz and Helmut Rumpler (eds), *Österreich und die deutsche Frage im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1982); also Heinrich Lutz and Helmut Rumpler, *Der Griff nach Österreich. Der Anschluß,* 3rd edn (Vienna and Munich, 1988).

32 Hans Adolf Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Außenpolitik 1933–1938* (Frankfurt, 1968), pp. 406 ff.; Bracher, *Die deutsche Diktatur,* pp. 319 ff.; Bracher, *Stufen der Machtergreifung,* 307, 350 ff.

33 Manfred Funke, *Sanktionen und Kanonen* (Dusseldorf, 1970), pp. 15 ff.; Jens Petersen, *Hitler—Mussolini. Die Entstehung der Achse Berlin-Rom 1933–1936* (Tübingen, 1973), pp. 363, 410 ff.

34 Kurt von Schuschnigg, *Im Kampf gegen Hitler* (Vienna, 1969), pp. 350 ff. In the euphoria of the time, some hoped even for the return of South Tyrol: Adam Wandruszka, 'Österreich', in Schieder (ed.), *Handbuch,* 7/2, p. 869; compare Ennio Di Nolfo, 'Die österreichisch-italienischen Beziehungen von der faschistischen Machtergreifung bis zum Anschluß', *Österreichisch-italienisches Historikertreffen 1971–1972* (Innsbruck and Venice, 1975), pp. 261 ff., and footnote 112 (literature).

35 Compare in particular the volumes on the Austrian resistance edited by the Vienna Documentation Archive, *Widerstand und Verfolgung 1934–1945.* These encompass all groups, from Left to Right. See in addition the witnesses in Ulrich Weinzierl, *Österreichs Fall. Schriftsteller berichten vom 'Anschluß'* (Vienna and Munich, 1987); also Thomas Chorherr, *1938. Anatomie eines Jahres* (Vienna, 1987).

36 *Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik,* Series D, Vol. 2 (Baden-Baden, 1950), p. 158.

37 George L.Mosse, 'Der Erste Weltkrieg und die Brutalisierung der Politik', in Funke, Jacobsen, Knütter and Schwarz (eds), *Demokratie und Diktatur,* pp. 127 ff.

38 Walter B.Simon, 'Democracy', in Linz and Stepan (eds), *Breakdown of Democratic Regimes, 2: Europe,* p. 80.

39 Benedetto Croce, *Gesammelte philosophische Schriften. Kleine Schriften zur Ästhetik,* 1 (Tübingen, 1929), p. 4: 'In reality, the true and perfect criticism is the transparent historical narration of prior events; and history is the only true critique that can be exercised on the facts of humanity.'

21

Religious and ecclesiastical structures in Communism and National Socialism, and the role of the writer

Michael Rohrwasser

Hostility toward religion

Through their hostility toward religion, both Marxism and National Socialism show themselves to be ideologies. For Hitler and Rosenberg, the Christian religion is part of what they called the 'ideas of 1789' and the 'Bolshevist revolution'. The Nazi ideology draws a line from Christianity to Bolshevism—the latter of which is understood as a secularized variant of Roman Catholic Christianity. Paul is said to have organized a 'pre-Bolshevism'.[1] To Alfred Rosenberg, the universalism of Christianity is connected with modern internationalism, which reached its climax with Bolshevism; the equality of souls before God then becomes the postulate of equality as such. Rosenberg conceives of National Socialism, by contrast, as a counter-movement—one based upon the race principle—against the principles of equality and universality of the Roman world-church. 'Roman Christianity is built upon fear and humility,' notes Rosenberg in his diary, 'National Socialism upon courage and pride.'[2] Hitler, by contrast to Rosenberg, refrains from making any direct, anti-clerical attacks. In the protocolled table conversations, the Christian Church appears as the 'enemy of international standing'. In public talks or in *Mein Kampf,* by contrast, it appears only on the margin—presumably because Hitler was aware of the danger that persecution could strengthen the Church. After the war, however, the Christian churches were to be torn out root and branch in Germany, their influence to be eradicated.[3]

Marx's early critique of the Hegelian philosophy of right begins with the following summary statement: 'For Germany, the *critique of religion* is essentially limited, but the critique of religion is the prerequisite of all critique.' He then adds the foundation of 'irreligious critique': 'The human being makes the religion; the religion does not make the human being.'[4] The goal of the Marxist critique is to negate the condition that gives rise to religions.[5] Only after the human being has become the master of his works will he find his contentment in the mundane community; he is no longer compelled to envisage the goal of his disappointed strivings with images of the beyond. The Marxist atheist does not believe in a god, but in the human being.'[6] Thus, it would seem that Marx rightly lies in that portion of the London Highgate Cemetery that is reserved for non-believers.

Yet Engels had already underscored the parallels:

> It [Christianity] first emerged as a religion of slaves and freed slaves, of
> the poor and those deprived of rights, of the peoples who had been

subjugated or scattered by Rome. Both Christianity and the workers' movement preach an imminent salvation from servitude and misery.[7]

Disregarding this 'irreligious critique' and its modern character, both ideologies—National Socialism and Marxism—are obviously characterized by strongly militant religious features. This is hardly surprising. The revolutionary mentality is characterized by an intense belief in the possibility of a total salvation of the human being (salvation through one's own power instead of with divine assistance: a Promethean variation) and by the further belief that total salvation—which includes the total negation of the existing world—is the only true goal of humanity.[8] Such salvation would stand in absolute contrast to the current condition of slavery or of racist decadence. Proximate too are the interpretative attempts to discern the zealously persecuting new Church behind the anti-religious features of the ideologies.[9] And the fascination history of National Socialism and Communism also seem to me to be indescribable without an analysis of religious undercurrents.

In both ideologies, old salvation motifs connect up with the modern consciousness that the human being is destined to make history and not to suffer. Presumably, it is this mixture of very old with modern motifs that is the basis of these ideologies' attractive power. The ideologies can be compared with respect to the militancy with which their goal of salvation either implies or explicitly demands the annihilation of the opponent; with regard to the contents of their goal, however, they clearly differ—the one is openly barbaric, the other humane.[10]

A wealth of material can be found to establish that National Socialism and Marxism are both characterized by a persistent use of religious metaphors, rituals, images and symbols, by eschatological thought and revolutionary messianism, by an attachment to biblical figures from Moses to Judas as well as by an unconscious application of concepts from ecclesiastical history. Repeatedly, the indices have been collected and analytically described—from Nikolai Berdyaev to Karl Löwith and Hannah Arendt, from Leszek Kolakovsky to Melvin Lasky, Albert Camus and Raymond Aron.[11] (Here, of course, calling the ideologies 'this-worldly religion' (Aron) or 'religious ersatz' of course depends upon the concept of 'religion' that lies at base.[12])

To be sure, one element has usually remained on the margins of interest: the fact that writers in a totalitarian system, attracted by the magnet of power, become priests and exegetes. This is mirrored in both literary texts and those involving current events—even in strategic silence. In the literature of ex-Communists (whose reception experienced a fate similar to that of the theories of totalitarianism in the 1950s[13]), finally, an area that has been rather neglected by historians of philosophy and critics of ideology is outlined: the return of Church structures. Admittedly, I become one-sided in pursuing this theme. This is because no comparable enlistment of writers occurred with National Socialism; in the National Socialist system, the Reich's propaganda ministry incorporated literature.

Religious structures

The beliefs of the National Socialist ideology—its anti-Semitism, anti-Marxism, social Darwinism and expansionism—are conjoined and activated by a charismatic faith in the

superhuman capacities of the Führer. Although it is a variable dogmatic system, it always presents itself as a unity. The ideological message gains influence through non-verbal symbols, rituals, gestures, uniforms, mass rallies. The undertaking of replacing religious symbols with different ones becomes a *modus operandi* for Alfred Rosenberg, for example:

> The Tannenberg Monument has now become *one* of those centres of which I spoke in the *Myth* as being necessary in breaking away from crucifixes and statues of Mary. Hitler's last cry: 'Dead field commanders, enter Valhalla now!' has been understood everywhere—by the Church as well.[14]

The ideology can be described as a charismatic doctrine of mission and redemption characterized by an unconditional faith in the will of the Führer. At the same time, it was aimed at its 'counter-ideology', Marxism, in two respects: as an attempted copy[15] and as a construction of' Jewish Bolshevism' as the absolute opponent. The dictum of a naturally inherent inequality of the peoples and within a people (setting aside the ideology of a community of nations existing in solidarity) is opposed to the Communists' beliefs in universality and equality. A vision of the future aimed at a militant regaining of the past is opposed to the Marxists' optimistic belief in progress; for the latter, the future appears as a militant, carefully planned realization of a historically pre-determined, unprecedented condition.[16] When he speaks of the relentless nature that 'proves' his biological racism, Hitler's language becomes full of pathos and religion:

> The result of each race-crossing, therefore, is…always the following: a) lowering of the level of the higher race, b) physical and intellectual decline and, with that, the onset of…infirmity. To bring about such a development means…none other than to sin against the will of the eternal creator. But this deed is also rewarded as a sin. If the human attempts to rebel against the iron logic of nature, then he falls into a struggle with the principles to which alone he owes his own existence as a human being. Thus do his actions against nature necessarily cause his own demise.[17]

The religious elements in Communism have often been described and given various names, whether universal salvation-history or (from Berdyaev to Nolte) Jewish messianism.[18] The phenomenological relatedness of ideological figures also leaves room for speculative interpretations that place the various strands into a complete picture.[19] The travel description of the New Testament can still be found in the Hegelian/Marxist dialectic: with setting out (thesis), transformation (antithesis) and return (synthesis), it is a rationalistic translation of the Christian resurrection drama.[20] A centre element of Marxist thought developed in the Paris Manuscripts of 1844 was the concept of alienation. Although this concept was derived in terms neither of anthropology nor of history and sociology, an image of the 'true nature' of the human being can be inferred from it. As Kolakowski has pointed out, a Christian component is hidden within it.[21] This component is connected with the motif of optimism concerning progress. The principles of alienation are strictly deduced; and this mixture of critical analysis with certainties known by faith

is characteristic of Marx's prose. The faith becomes evident when Marx speaks of the mission of the proletariat or attempts to define Communism:

> It is the *true* resolution of the conflict of the human being with nature and with human being, the true resolution of the fight between existence and being, between objectification and self-confirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solved puzzle of history and knows itself to be this solution.[22]

In Communist society, one does not have a certain exclusive sphere of activity, but can educate oneself in any branch one pleases. Because the society regulates the general production, it enables me to do this one day and that another: to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, breed cattle in the evening, engage in criticism after dinner—however I like at the moment, but without ever having to become a hunter, fisher, shepherd or critic.[23]

The Marxist theory appears as a salvation economy for which the proletariat occupies the role of saviour; by virtue of its suppression and its struggles, the proletariat is a messianic class in occupying the role of Christ. As a class, it is identical with true humanity, a class 'that remains spared from the original sin of exploitation'.[24] It is inspired by the belief that its historical hour, heavy with destiny, will come; the world-scale catastrophe is in progress and the Final Judgement is imminent; with it, history comes to an end. That the class that is most strongly affected by self-alienation assumes the role of saviour is the source of the inner dynamic of the Marxian philosophy of history: redemption will be achieved because of evil. The evil must grow and the darkness intensify so that the light might rise—from the deepest humiliation arises the highest dignity. The proletariat has a revolutionary mission. Thus Marx:

> Because the abstraction of all humanity, even of the appearance of humanity, in the educated proletariat, has practically been accomplished, because all living conditions of today's society are captured together in its inhuman pinnacle, in the living conditions of the proletariat, because the human being has lost himself in it, but has also not only gained theoretical consciousness of this loss, but is also directly forced by the need…that can no longer be dismissed, can no longer be beautified, is absolutely imperative—the need for rebellion against this inhumanity.[25]

Thomas Mann lets his Naphta prophecy that the task of the 'world proletariat' is 'terror for the redemption of the world and for the attainment of the saviour's goal—the stateless and classless condition of the children of God'.[26] It is clear that, not an empirical quantity, but a historico-philosophical one is intended by this proletariat. (In Lenin's further development of Marxist thought, this quantity is then transferred to the Party: no longer does class membership decide, but the act of confession by which class origin can be extinguished and through which the true consciousness of class first arises.)

In every political stirring, Marx saw the first ominous signs of the approaching catastrophe. Ever the apocalyptic, he sought to ascertain its potency in the world-historical drama: first in 1848, then in 1852 and then with the Paris Commune. The

paralysed progress of the revolution in Europe did not call the historical teleological concept into question for him, but only strengthened his tendency to underscore the necessity of a vanguard. Like the apocalyptics of old, Marx wants 'to shorten the birth pangs'.[27] The Communists are to hasten the path of history, which progresses too slowly. For him, the law of historical movement is established, inevitable, and fulfilment of it (through concentration, pauperization, etc.) is 'unavoidable'. Twenty years of study of economics in England follow the early philosophical allotment of a messianic role to the proletariat—but these only confirm the character of the Marxian prophecy.[28] The *Communist Manifesto* is then sociologically concretized and transported from the philosophical language of the early Marx; yet the core of certainty concerning revolution and redemption—a certainty that is marked by faith—remains untouched by it. 'Its demise [that of the bourgeoisie] and the victory of the proletariat are equally unavoidable.' The proletariat has found its vanguard:

> The Communists, therefore, are the most decisive in practical terms: as that portion of the workers' parties of every country that presses ever further, they have the theoretical insight into the conditions, progress and general result of the proletarian movement before the remaining masses of the proletariat do.[29]

Hereby are the communists appointed as the lever and 'executors' of the unstoppable plan of history, as the authentic revolutionary subject.[30] In these terms, Lenin's model of the party can be understood as an organizational consequence of Marxist thought. With Lenin, the religious intensity of belief in the law of history has grown greater still. Almost on the eve of the October Revolution, he proclaimed: 'there can be no doubt. We stand on the threshold of the world revolution of the proletariat.'[31] Lenin's model of the Party and his postulate of the Party's monopoly of knowledge that was bound up with it was a revision of Marx's hope for the proletariat and not dissimilar to the decree of infallibility of the Vatican Council of 1870. With this revision, the charisma of the doctrine became institutionally crystallized in the supreme Party Committee.[32] And with it, the persisting hope in the West that the 'country of the worker' would serve as the carrier of the historical mission was deferred.

That Marx had radically broken with the political utopians is expressed in the title and terminology of Engel's late writing, *Die Entwicklung des Sozialismus von der Utopie zur Wissenschaft* (1978). With his scornful remark that he does not plan 'to write the menus for the coffee houses of the future',[33] Marx charged that the utopians only stand in the way of the natural force of revolutionary change and rule. With gaze trained on Jeremiah, Martin Buber writes in his study, *Der Glaube der Propheten:* 'the pure prophet is utterly lacking in fantasy, so to speak; his truth can never be described beforehand'. If this is correct, then one might understand Marx as a prophet[34] who pointed the way—not as a dreamer and visionary, but as a believing possessor of knowledge. And as a prophet, he speaks more of collapse, just as the Communist (and the Nazi) ideology in general take aim at the opponent with passion and exhaustiveness. The credo states that 'the world is not permitted to remain as it is'. Certainly, a reading of Marx makes it clear that great emphasis is placed upon analysis and logical deduction. The social religion that proclaims the victory of the weak in an utterly Christian sense is connected with

Enlightenment methods and appears in scientific garb; in this, too, it is superior to the National Socialist ideology. In the place of a utopia that stands wide open to all criticism emerges the emphatically proclaimed prophecy. Whoever distils this core from the ideology is capable, like Freud in *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* or Kurt Tucholsky (relying on the sociologist of early religion, Christian Bry), of discerning the religious character of prophecy:

> The class struggle is necessary. Paradise on earth, however—this, it will not bring us… The new Russian social order provides no refutation of this view; it is much too young for that… But that a flock of palm-waving and psalmsinging angels will arise from a powerful and earth-bound people like the Russians, that I do not believe.[35]

As George Steiner has pointed out, the belief in Communism is anti-tragic. (Indeed, tragic motifs were still combated in the literature of the GDR.) 'To be sure, more expressly than the Christian one, the Marxist *Weltanschauung* admits mistakes, torments and temporary defeats; yet by no means does it admit tragedy. Despair is a deadly sin against Marxism no less than against Christ.'[36] Lunatcharski, the first Soviet People's Commissioner for Education, explained 'that one of the characteristic features of Communist society will be its lack of tragic drama'. Vsevolod Vishnevski's famous drama of the commissar who was forced to self-sacrifice (a Christ figure for whom Larissa Reissner acted as sponsor) bears the title, *Optimistic Tragedy.* This is because future redemption and final victory are already proclaimed in the sacrificial death itself. The Marxist confession of faith is optimistic:

> Like the medieval visionary with his unconditional faith in the approach of the kingdom of God, the Communist is firmly convinced that the kingdom of justice on earth is near. The Marxist understanding of history is a secular *commedia.* Humanity strides forth toward justice, equality and the leisure of the classless society… There may be catastrophes along the way… It might come to the detours of heresy and divisions within the socialist camp. Yet even the cruellest setback does not offer grounds for tragic despair. The march forward goes further, for it has on its side the inexorable laws of history; the final victory is as certain as the coming of the new day.[37]

Messianic elements are again mirrored in Marxism's image of history: in the image of the crisis and the present suffering, in the motif of revenge, in the theme of catastrophe—the day of the Messiah is near. They are reflected in the promise of redemption, in the certainty that a better world will arise; history itself is finally 'abolished' and the riddle of history is solved. These elements are mirrored, finally, in the image of daybreak: dazzlingly, a new Golden Age will begin.[38]

In further readings of Marx, one comes across traces of the Jewish tradition. When he wants to symbolize the accumulation of money in *Das Kapital,* Marx writes: 'it is the old story: Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, etc.' He also asks: 'what becomes, then, of the Ten Commandments, of Moses and the prophets, of the law of demand and

supply?' And in a messianic tone: 'just as was written in the stars to the Chosen People that it was the property of Jehovah, so does the division of labour leave a stamp upon the manufacturing labourer—one that brands him as the property of capital'.[39] Or: 'in our time, all houses are marked with a mysterious cross. The judge is history, the executor of the judgement, the proletariat.'[40] A note made by the Romanian historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, can be read as a commentary on this citation of Marx:

> Marx rediscovered and took further one of the great eschatological myths of the Asiatic-Mediterranean world: the saving role of the just (of the 'chosen one', the 'anointed one', 'guiltless one', the 'messenger'—in our time, the proletariat), whose sufferings are called to change the ontological state of the world. The classless society and the disappearance of historical tensions resulting from it are sketched precisely in the myth of the Golden Age: an Age that, in many traditions, marks the beginning and end of history. Marx has increased this venerable myth to a complete Judaeo-Christian messianic ideology. One need think only of the prophetic and soteriological [redemptive] role that he grants to the proletariat and on the final struggle between good and evil—a struggle that can easily be equated with the apocalyptic struggle between Christ and Antichrist from which the former emerges victorious. Tellingly, Marx adopts the Judaeo-Christian eschatological hope for an *absolute end of history.* In this, he is distinct from the other historicist philosophers (Croce and Ortega y Gasset, for example)—philosophers for whom historical tensions are consubstantial with the human constitution and thus can never be abolished completely.[41]

Ecclesiastical structures: the role of the writer

The churches failed and all eyes turned to those who promised redemption the loudest; this was the Communists and the adherents of Hitler. They differed only in terms of the size of their propaganda font', wrote Gustav Regler, Catholic ex-Communist, in his novelesque autobiography.[42] The picture of a deserted heaven that is then occupied by false gods is a topos of the renegade literature that might well have originated with Dostoevsky and Nietzsche. Koestler's 1951 novel is entitled *The Age of Longing;* the 'bacillus of desire' makes Western intellectuals susceptible to totalitarian systems. Koestler describes not only ersatz deities, but a Church as well.

With the Leninist transference of the revolutionary subject from the proletariat to the Party of the proletariat, a secret society that drove morality from the revolution was founded. The hierarchical order of this secret society was bound by a doctrine stating that the monopoly of truth no longer lies with the proletariat. Left to itself, the proletariat is no longer capable of redemption, as the polemic against Rosa Luxemburg's 'spontaneity theory' was supposed to prove. Redemption now lies with the Party instead: with the Party leadership and, ultimately, with the leader. Friedrich Pohlmann:

> With that, however, a far-reaching parallel of the Communist Party with the Catholic Church meets the eye. And we can locate this parallel without difficulty using Max Weber's concept of 'charisma of office'. The hierarchy of offices in the Catholic Church corresponds in a certain sense to a gradation of the sacred: the higher the office, the higher the degree of the sacred surrounding it, and in the office of the Pope it attains its highest form. However the person may be constituted as a human being, in ascending the hierarchy of offices he becomes the bearer of those extraordinary qualities that 'accrue', so to speak, to his office. And to the highest office accrues the 'infallible' monopoly of definition of the sacred. It is similar with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: the higher the office, the more superhuman the capacities that were conveyed upon its occupant And possession of the supreme office—office of the Secretary-General—grants its functionary a monopoly on the sole, 'true' interpretation and application of the 'holy source'—Marxism-Leninism. This charismatic principle was intensified to the point of madness with 'Stalinism', with its deification of the Party leader, its claim of his complete infallibility, its equation of 'Marxism' with the words of 'Comrade Stalin', 'Father of the Soviet Union' and 'Leader of the World Proletariat'.[43]

Consistently, Stalin tells his visitor, Lion Feuchtwanger, of the legend of Judas; for with Judas, the divinity of the one who believes himself betrayed is represented as well.

In his travel report, *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.,* André Gide describes a scene that makes it clear how much this author, who had been stripped of his earlier praises, nonetheless feels himself connected to the Soviet empire. In Stalin's city of birth, Gori, Gide wishes to send the son of the city a greeting:

> I have the car stop before the post office and submit the text of the telegraph. It begins something like, 'in the course of our wonderful journey, coming through Gori, I feel the warm desire to…you'. But here the translator comes to a halt. I am not permitted to express myself thus, the polite 'you' does not suffice if it is Stalin…'You, the supreme head of the workers' was suggested to me, or 'Lord of the Peoples'… I find that absurd, confess the opinion that such Byzantinism is beneath Stalin. To no avail. The telegram can be typed only if I accept the addition. And because a translation over which I have no control is involved here, I submit, tired of the quarrelling… But I deny every responsibility and think how things of this nature must contribute to the growth of a terrible, insurmountable gulf between Stalin and the people.[44]

This reminds of the helpless critique of Toller or Oskar Maria Graf. These discern the religious signs, to be sure, but do not want to attribute them to the system.[45]

In 1951, in *The Age of Longing,* Arthur Koestler anticipates the death of 'Number One' and has a higher functionary of the 'new generation' reflect on personality cult and Church structures:

> One had to make of him an idol for the backward people, those who did not yet possess enough culture to do down the path of redemption without worshipping an idol. If pictures of Papa Number One had not been distributed far and wide to the masses to decorate their walls with, they would have hung up the old icons again, and that would have been a mess… The insatiable desire of the people for an object to deify was an inheritance of the dark past, and it would take several generations to extinguish… This is why the Father of the People was a necessary institution, and the people who mocked this cult's external forms of appearance abroad had not the faintest idea about the dialectic of history… The idiots abroad had entertained the hope that the entire pyramid would collapse on itself with the disappearance of its peak… But even the Roman Church did not die with the Pope, even though he let his slippers be kissed while he was alive—and the Church had embodied the ideology of the Roman proletariat at one time anyway, and only gradually had it been transformed into an instrument of reaction.[46]

The image of party Communism as Church implies the relationship of orthodoxy and heresy as well. Marxism and Communism were often described as Christian heresy. Norman Cohn finds the roots of Communism and National Socialism in medieval heresy and presents Rosenberg's speech in praise of heretics and Engel's preference for Thomas Müntzer[47] as proof—an argument that is of course skimpy. In their own self-understanding, however, the Communists saw themselves as heretics who conducted 'crusades' against their opponents. For its part, state Communism—as the final instance of right belief—seized the right to name and burn heretics and deviants in a measure that rightly reminded its victims of the Inquisition. Here too, an episode of Church history seemed to repeat itself: the persecuted became persecutors. In his novel trilogy, Manès Sperber has a protagonist say: 'But the most contemptible thing I have found in history is still the persecuted that became persecutors when the tables were turned.'[48] And in his renegade report, Ignazio Silone also writes: 'there is no sight sadder than the former persecuted who in turn have become persecutors'.[49] Not only novel figures, but Clara Zetkin also protested in Moscow against the persecution of heretics:

> It is claimed that an old farm wife brought a piece of firewood to the pyre on which Hus was burned. The wife desired historical immortality. But I do not have the least desire to appear in the role of the old farm wife and bring by pieces of firewood so that the heretics should be better roasted and burned.[50]

This development can no longer surprise us. With Stalinism, the Leninist party became a monolithic bloc that encompassed the entire people in a totalitarian sense, as a unity of ruling and ruled. Elimination of the inner enemy was a necessary procedure in this dynamic intended to establish a 'perfect unity'. The absolute opponent was discovered (and excommunicated) for the slightest deviation; with Stalinism, the opponent was ultimately created without the victim being involved at all. George Orwell's novel *1984* convincingly depicts the integrative power of the great, fictitious enemy who is produced

by the system itself. It would be revealing to draw the line of distinction between an early phase in which actual 'heresies' were fought (Bucharin's 'mechanistic materialism', Deborin's 'dialectical idealism', etc.) and a later phase in which the persecution of fictive heresies ('Trotskyism' in the Stalinist definition) served to maintain the dynamic of terror.[51]

> The remarkable thing about the religious structures in Leninism was that they were openly demonstrated, and this was done out of a propagandistic calculus. In his speech in praise of Lenin of 7 September 1918, Grigorij Sinoviev spoke of Lenin as the 'apostle of world Communism' and appointed his writings as the 'gospel' of all true revolutionaries: 'He is truly the chosen one among millions. He is the leader by God's grace. He is the authentic figure of a leader, of the kind that is granted to humanity only once in five hundred years.'[52]

One step from the right path and the abyss yawned open: the kingdom of the evil. In the first years of the revolution, there were complaints of demonology: the 'counter-revolutionary hydra', the devilish betrayer. This was by no means mere rhetoric. No propagandistic calculus or conscious imitation lurked behind the bizarre similarities of the tribunals of the Inquisition to those of the Bolsheviks in the years following 1936. If the Inquisition had allowed the remains of sentenced heretics to be dug up posthumously and burned on the stake, so did the Czechoslovakian judiciary let the ashes of those who had been sentenced in the Slansky trials be spread over Bohemian villages so that nothing more would remind of their existence. The function that the Trotskyite served in consolidating the Stalinist dictatorship corresponds to the function of the heretic in the reordering of the medieval world.[53]

The decision of either-or (each critique of Stalin was called a support of Hitler) consistently directed the hate toward those who took a different path (who sought to fight Hitler beyond the 'Stalinist line'). This is one reason why heretics were hated more strongly than unbelievers. The main enemies were not capital or National Socialism, but revisionism, social democracy, Trotskyism or the revolution in Spain—a revolution that threatened to call Soviet Russia's monopoly into question. The generosity with which Lenin still granted the 'renegade', Kautsky, a position as a school history teacher soon belonged to the past. The Polish ex-Communist and specialist of ecclesiastical history, Leszek Kolakovsky, explains:

> This pitiless hate, which is one hundred times greater than the most passionate aversion to the indubitable and acknowledged enemy, is easily explained. It is the product of the kind of social relations in which a political or religious organization becomes an end in itself, even if its creators originally conceived it solely as an instrument… Up to a certain point, external pressure contributes to the consolidation of the group; the subversive internal boilers are always a deathly danger… The essential features of every social formation called a 'sect' is the constant guard over the extremely precise determination of its own limits, the constant surveillance. This is supposed to guarantee the clear and precise

characteristics of differentiation that permit the drawing of strict borders between the sect and the rest of the world… Because it is incapable of reproducing the species, self-preservation is its sole reason for existence.[54]

In the literature of ex-Communists, description of the Communist system's religious elements takes up a great deal of space. This is likely due to the writers having felt the influence of the religious salvation doctrine themselves. It is also conspicuous that the ecclesiastical type of structures are emphasized here.

The religious charge can be clearly observed in texts spanning from Alexander Blok to Bertolt Brecht and Stephan Hermlin. In the Party writers *and* the sympathizing authors, we can perceive the priests of the system—priests whose worldly cult has replaced the one directed to the beyond.[55]

In closing, I would like to explicate the priestly role of the writer (as well as the salvation-history component of Communism) using one case. Certainly, the Munich Catholic, Johannes R.Becher, with his hymns to Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin and Stalin, is an especially representative example. Yet he could be replaced by the investigation of motifs of other authors; it would make sense to examine, for example, someone like Becher's Russian role model, Maiakovski.

The lines: 'the human, who creates the world anew, the Creator—let us praise him!' can be found in the 'diary' of the cultural politician in 1950.[56] Yet religious fervour and a biblical tone had already characterized Becher's work since 1917. His 'Auferstehungs-Ode' of 1924 invokes divine triumph and the 'redeemed state of creatures'; he expects 'convalescence' from the Final Judgement; as a prophet, he proclaims the breaking open of the doors 'of the dungeons of hell' and acknowledges 'the new kingdom'.[57] In 'Von der Tribüne' (1924), Becher recalls Jesus of Nazareth and then announces that 'the people itself will be resurrected. Humanity will be resurrected'.[58]

With gaze turned toward the east, the religious element is dominant from the beginning. 'Der Sozialist' (1917), in the poem of the same name, is a 'holy man', a Zarathustra and Moses figure:

Tower up new Sinai! Receive, Socialist, with open arms, the tables of the laws of the future. Distribute them among the people, explaining and commenting. Leap up to the stand to this end!…Honeyed wind pours from your pores. Manna snows from your clouds' hips.[59]

Becher sees himself as Moses. Causing his people to gaze toward the east, he proclaims the commandments as a poetic prophet. He writes to Katharina Kippenberg that his *Gedichte für ein Volk* will contain only twelve poems: 'Twelve Commandments!'[60]

Becher finds Last Judgement, eschatological thought and promise of salvation in the 'Sowjet-Republik':

Only your bread can appeal to the millions
In your state, we receive the holy kingdom.
The holy kingdom. Paradise. The free
Elevation to God's only heart.

Legacy of Tolstoy. Our armies rejoice.[61]

With the Soviet Union, he feels himself connected to a strong historical power that gives his inquisitorial fantasies and apocalyptical visions more nourishment than the combatants of the defeated German revolution had been capable of providing. Here he can picture the 'final battle', the 'just war', and hope that, soon, 'the guillotines will play'.[62] The gaze toward Russia was fixed on the authoritarian aspect; with its invocation of the 'large plan', it promised salvation from individuality and ultimately delivered the recognized father figures: Lenin and Stalin. A second creation story is described, the all-powerful subject of which is Lenin:

> As a darkness again lay upon the earth
> And it appeared irrevocable,
> That it would grow darker and darker,
> A man spoke: 'the world is changing
> Be consoled! The darkness will subside',
> And a light shine again on you and me.[63]

Lenin is the 'bold conqueror of the light'. Becher's oft-cited words are devoted to him:

> Thank you, pitch black but supremely clear, perceptive hour. For I, after all my wanderings, have still retained so much faith in light and sensitivity to the light that I was capable of recognizing the first flashing of the light-storm that rose from the east over the world.[64]

Becher's image of Lenin bears characteristics of a saviour whose words have become bread and of a Prometheus whose fire has become electricity. 'Der an den Schlaf der Welt rührt':

> He touched on the sleep of the world
> With words that became bread,
> With words that became armies,
> Against a famine…
> There was electricity,
> Hammers in the workshops,
> Indelible script
> Written on all hearts…[65]

In the poem 'Am Grabe Lenins' (1925), the resurrection is already celebrated:

> A people of millions marches on,
> With flags and banners,
> With wreaths braided from flowers
> and wreaths braided from wire mesh,
> With tables, stands written on them,
> shining: 'his work lives!'[66]

Finally: in *Leviste oder Der einzig gerechte Krieg* (1926), a novel that was confiscated by the Weimar judiciary, three religious elements melt together: the dichotomy of prophetic leader and passive herd human being (known from Nietzsche and Toller), the portrayal of the proletariat in images of the crucifixion and, finally, the crusade motif. The approaching class war is a crusade for the attainment of the soul's salvation. In the end, martyrdom promises enshrinement in the great heart of the working class.

Notes

1 Ernst Niekisch, *Das Reich der niederen Dämonen. Eine Abrechnung mit dem Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, 1980), p. 58; Friedrich Pohlmann, *Ideologie und Terror im Nationalsozialismus* (Pfaffenweiler, 1992), pp. 216 ff.; [Adolf Hitler] Henry Picker, *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier* (Wiesbaden, 1983), p. 81; ibid., p. 95: 'What Bolshevism does today on materialistic-technical foundations, Christianity has done on theoretical-metaphysical foundations.'

2 Alfred Rosenberg, *Das politische Tagebuch Alfred Rosenbergs 1934/35 und 1939/40,* ed. Hans Günther Seraphim (Munich, 1964), p. 64.

3 Hitler, *Tischgespräche,* p. 80; Hermann Rauschning, *Gespräche mit Hitler* (Zurich, 1940), p. 50.

4 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke,* I (Berlin), p. 378. All subsequent citations as *MEW.*

5 Jacob Taubes concludes: 'Marx has replaced the beyond of the [Hegelian] truth with the truth of the mundane world and exposed the atheistic roots of Communism as constitutive' (p. 191). Following Karl Löwith, *Von Hegel zu Nietzsche* (Zurich, 1941 by Europa Verlag; [3]1953 Stuttgart by W.Kohlhammer Verlag), p. 269. Taubes emphasizes the relationship of the social diagnoses of society of Marx and Kierkegaard, although their 'economy of salvation' is of course opposed: 'In the decision against Hegel's reconciliation of reason and reality, Marx and Kierkegaard decide for reality and convert the *reconciliation* into *critique*…. Their common ground is the critique of the bourgeois-Christian world and their common principle is to make the reality real' *Abendländische Eschatologie* (Munich, 1991), p. 175.

6 Karl Löwith, *Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen. Zur Kritik der Geschichtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart, 1983), p. 378.

7 *MEW* 22, p. 449. In 1895, Karl Kautsky had already dedicated a study to the 'Communism of original Christianity'. *Der Ursprung des Christentums,* Stuttgart, 1908; [14]Berlin, 1926) which then landed on the Soviet Russian index *Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus* (Baden-Baden, 1957), p. 130. Hannah Arendt, by contrast, has stressed that no revolution has ever been made in the name of Christianity or has invoked Christianity. Hannah Arendt, *Über die Revolution* (Munich, 1963), p. 31. Erich Fromm's testimony: 'Marx's atheism represents the highest level of development of rational mysticism, and he stands with it

closer to Meister Eckhardt or to Zen Buddhism than do most of God's soldiers who accuse him of godlessness.' Melvin Lasky comments on precisely this statement: 'The first Marxists might have believed that they had broken radically with the past; the last Marxists felt themselves enriched by relics from old times.' Melvin Lasky, *Utopie und Revolution. Über die Ursprünge einer Metapher oder eine Geschichte des politischen Temperaments* (Reinbek, 1989), p. 108.

8 Leszek Kolakovsky, *Der revolutionäre Geist* (Cologne and Mainz, 1972), pp. 7 ff.

9 Nikolai Berdyaev points out that, according to Article 13 of the Bolshevist constitution, every Communist is obliged to confess his atheism and to conduct anti-religious propaganda (p. 125). He writes: 'Communism persecutes all religions because it is itself a religion. As the *"only true religion",* it is not capable of withstanding the existence of others—of the "false" religions… It is a *religion of ultimate thisworldliness?* Nikolai Berdyaev, *Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus* (Baden-Baden, 1957), pp. 40 ff.

10 Friedrich Pohlmann, *'Marxismus—Leninismus—Kommunismus—Faschismus. Aufsätze zur Ideologie und Herrschaftsstruktur der totalitären Diktaturen'* Unpublished manuscript (1994), pp. 19 ff.

11 Also Hannah Arendt, *Element und Ursprünge totaler Herrschaft* (Frankfurt, 1955); Albert Camus, *Der Mensch in der Revolte* (Reinbek, 1969); Raymond Aron, 'Der falsche Messias', *Der Monat,* 3, 26 (1950), pp. 175–84. See in addition W.Banning, *Der Kommunismus als politisch-soziale Religion* (Berlin, 1953); T.H.Tetens, *Christentum, Hitlerismus, Bolschewismus* (Buenos Aires: Editorial La Campana, 1937).

12 This problem is developed by René König, for example 'Die Religionssoziologie bei Émile Durkheim', in Gerhard Szcesny (ed.), *Club Voltaire. Jahrbuch für kritische Aufklärung,* I (Reinbek, 1969), pp. 335–47.

13 Compare Michael Rohrwasser, 'Die Brücke bei Brest-Litowsk. Renegatenliteratur und Totalitarismustheorie', *Mittelweg,* 36 (October 1994).

14 Rosenberg, *Tagebuch,* p. 55.

15 Compare Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf (Munich,* 1938), pp. 422 ff. Hitler is referring here to ideology *and* organization. Ernst Niekisch: 'He [Hitler] copied the Marxist opponent in all arts.' Niekisch, *Das Reich der niederen Dämonen,* p. 43.

16 Compare Pohlmann, 'Marxismus', p. 10.

17 Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* p. 314.

18 Berdyaev sees in Russian Bolshevism the merging of Jewish messianism with the messianism of the Russian people. Berdyaev, *Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus,* p. 29.

19 Thus does Michael Ley generalize, for example, the messianic features in National Socialism into a thesis holding that it was a messianic populist movement which had its actual roots in Christianity. Michael Lay, *Genozid und Heilserwartung. Zum nationalsozialistischen Mord am europäischen Judentum* (Vienna, 1993). Compare Friedrich Heer, who discovered the 'Catholic' Hitler. Friedrich Heer, *Gottes erste Liebe* (Munich, 1967).

20 E.A.Olssen, cited according to Lasky, *Utopie und Revolution,* p. 107.

21 Leszek Kolakovsky, *Der Mensch ohne Alternative. Von der Möglichkeit und Unmöglichkeit, Marxist zu sein* (Munich, 1967), p. 218.

22 Karl Marx, *Die Frühschriften (Nationalökonomie und Philosophie),* ed. Siegfried Landshut (Stuttgart, 1968), p. 235.

23 *MEW 3 (Deutsche Ideologie),* p. 33.

24 Berdyaev, *Wahrheit und Lüge des Kommunismus,* p. 26.

25 Marx, *Frühschriften (Heilige Familie),* p. 318. 'The emancipation of the German is the emancipation of the human being. The head of this emancipation is philosophy; its heart is the proletariat. Philosophy cannot be realized without the abolition of the proletariat; the proletariat cannot be abolished without the realization of philosophy.' *MEW* 1, pp. 390 ff. 'lf the proletariat proclaims the *dissolution of the prior world-order,* so does it speak only the

secret of its own being, for it *is the factual* dissolution of this world-order.' Marx *Frühschriften (Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie),* p. 223.

26 Thomas Mann, *Der Zauberberg,* Ch. 6 ('Vom Gottesstaat und von übler Erlösung').

27 Taubes, *Abendädndische Eschatologie,* p. 186.

28 Compare ibid., p. 188.

29 Marx, *Frühschriften (Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei),* p. 539.

30 Compare Marx, *Frühschriften (Manifest),* pp. 546 ff.

31 Cited according to Pohlmann, 'Marxismus', pp. 63 f.

32 Compare ibid., p. 15.

33 Cited according to Lasky, *Utopie und Revolution,* p. 79.

34 Cited according to Lasky, *Utopie und Revolution,* p. 77.

35 Kurt Tucholsky (1930), *Gesammelte Werke,* VIII, p. 116; Sigmund Freud (1930), *Gesammelte Werke,* XVI, p. 472; Carl Christian Bry, *Verkappte Religionen. Kritik des kollektiven Wahns* (Gotha and Stuttgart, 1924).

36 George Steiner, *Der Tod der Tmgödie. Ein kritischer Essay* (Frankfurt, 1981), p. 265.

37 Steiner, *Der Tod der Trägodie,* pp. 266 ff.

38 Compare Lasky, *Utopie und Revolution,* p. 100.

39 *MEW* 23, pp. 607, 798, 382.

40 Cited according to Camus, *Der Mensch in der Revolte,* p. 167.

41 Mircea Eliade, *Das Heilige und das Profane. Vom Wesen des Religiösen* (Hamburg, 1957), p. 122. 'The overwhelming majority of "irreligion" is not truly free of religious manners of conduct, theologies and mythologies… The process of the de-sacralization of human existence led many times to hybrid forms of lower magic and the imitation of religion.' Ibid.

42 Gustav Regler, *Das Ohr des Malchus. Eine Lebensgeschichte* (Frankfurt, 1975), p. 179.

43 Pohlmann, 'Marxismus', p. 87.

44 André Gide, *Zurück aus Sowjet-Rußland* (Zurich, 1937), pp. 69 ff.

45 'The immortal genius like a wax doll in a glass coffin!… How vengeful world history is! He, who had hammered it into the heads of the masses that "religion is opium for the people"! And here it has, as if to mock him in death, set out his body as a relic!' Oskar Maria Graf, *Reise in die Sowjet-Union 1934* (Darmstadt and Neuwied, 1974), p. 36.

46 Arthur Koestler, *Gottes Thron steht leer* (Frankfurt, 1953), p. 277.

47 Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (1957).

48 Manès Sperber, *Wie eine Träne im Ozean. Romantrilogie* (Vienna, Munich and Zurich, 1976), p. 488.

49 Ignazio Silone, *Notausgang* (Cologne and Berlin, 1966), p. 179.

50 Cited from Reinhard Müller, 'Linie und Häresie', *Exil,* 1 (1991), p. 47.

51 'The periodical and spectacular shooting of "scapegoats" replaced a political analysis relating to reality. The secularized driving of demons from heretics was part of the ritual political analysis.' Ibid., p. 46. One aspect of the persecution of heretics is the Party's incapacity to form alliances: 'It can understand the unit only as a conversion of the partner. The Stalinistic party can just as little have allies as the Roman Church can collect around itself "allied" sects that are "somewhat" dogmatically distinct from it (if one of them had not acknowledged transubstantiation, for example, the other had thrown out the resurrection of the dead and the third, the Trinity). Try to suggest to a Catholic bishop that he overlook these "small" divergences and recognize a common dogmatic platform in the remaining questions as a foundation of unity!…Stalinism was a powerful sect, and the genius of hypocrisy was on its side. It formed a reality whose central divisions had approached its own idea—that is, a reality in which any critique of Stalinism had to be extremely careful not to be transformed into an apology for capitalism, to which it had systematically been pushed.' Kolakowski, *Der Mensch ohne Alternative,* p. 71.

52 Cited according to Gerd Koenen, *Die großen Gesänge* (Frankfurt, 1991), p. 24.

53 Compare Lothar Baier, *Die große Ketzerei* (Berlin, 1984), p. 194.

54 Kolakowski, *Der Mensch ohne Alternative,* pp. 64 ff.
55 Cultural soldiers express judgements of damnation; commando positions on the literary front are occupied by spiritual leaders and carriers of historical progress. Under the sign of revolution, anti-Fascism and enlightenment, writers become exegetes of a murderous power politics, because they imagine themselves—also or precisely owing to their real powerlessness under National Socialism—as possessors of political power or ideological field marshals who are finally allowed to watch parades from official stands. See here Michael Rohrwasser, *Der Stalinismus und die Renegaten. Die Literature der Exkommunisten* (Stuttgart, 1991).
56 Johannes R.Becher, *Auf andere Art so große Hoffnung* (Berlin, 1951), p. 382.
57 Johannes R.Becher, *Hymnen* (Leipzig, 1924), pp. 115 ff., 118, 120. 'Read Becher: *Hymnen. Urlandschaften.* The belief in Christ is odd', noted Oskar Loerke in 1924 in his diaries. Oskar Loerke, *Tagebücher 1903–1939,* ed. Hermann Kasack (Frankfurt, 1986), p. 110 (12 July 1924).
58 Johannes R.Becher, 'Von der Tribüne' (1924), in *Gesammelte Werke,* 15, 53.
59 Becher, *Gesammelte Werke,* 9, 284 ('Der Sozialist').
60 Johannes R.Becher, *Briefe 1909–1958* (Berlin and Weimar, 1993), pp. 58 ff.
61 Johannes R.Becher, 'Gruβ des deutschen Dichters an die Russische Föderative Sowjetrepublik (1919)', *Metamorphsen eines Dichters* (Berlin, 1992), p. 143.
62 Johannes R.Becher, 'Augen zu: Laßt Guillotinen spielen!' (Widmungsblatt an die Russische Revolution 1917), *Das neue Gedicht* (Leipzig, 1918), p. 113.
63 Johannes R.Becher, 'Volkes eigen', *Gesammelte Werke,* 6, 50.
64 (1942), cited according to E.Hinckel, '"Seht den Weg!" Johannes R.Becher und die Sowjetunion', *Weimarer Beiträge,* 5 (1967), p. 796.
65 Johannes R.Becher, *Sterne unendliches Glühen. Die Sowjetunion in meinem Gedicht* (Berlin, 1951), p. 17.
66 Ibid., p. 27.

22
Enlightenment and terror

Historical-metaphysical prerequisites of totalitarian democracy
Hermann Lübbe

We have the Enlightenment era to thank for significant contributions to the humanization of our way of dealing with the dead. This can be demonstrated by the example of cemetery reform. At the same time, the Enlightenment is the era that invented terror—that is, the practice of political mass murder for the sake of cleansing society and humanity. Yet in the very technique of terrorist liquidation, the humanitarian ultimate intention of such liquidation can be recognized. The guillotine, at any rate, was conceived as an instrument for the promotion of humanity. It was supposed to work quickly and painlessly, and this goal was reached. In this case, too, it was proved that a machine conceived in the spirit of modern technology is capable of working far more precisely and reliably than an individual working by hand can.

This is a viewpoint that necessarily becomes clear—entirely apart from terror—in the context of the conventional penal sentencing of the Enlightenment period. As is well known, the Enlightenment also reformed the law and practice of capital punishment. The critique of the practice of placing even small, petty criminality under the threat of death extends as far back as the Renaissance era. Thomas More, for example, made the argument that the death penalty has an influence that promotes criminality rather than acting as a deterrent; the petty thief who would have to be hanged when caught would assume no additional risks if he let his theft be followed by another, capital crime. Such arguments gave rise to reforms of the penal law, and these reforms also took effect, in legal and political terms, during the Enlightenment era. Nonetheless, the thought that the death penalty could ultimately be abolished altogether remained minimal at that time. Indeed, no less a figure than Kant is known to have stated—in a consideration that sounds slightly old-fashioned—that a social body of citizens, if it were to wish to dissolve, would have also legally to execute the last who had been sentenced to death before formally executing this dissolution. To this extent, humanitarian reforms could affect only the method of execution; and the guillotine served as an instrument of this in an illuminating way. It became influential in the history of penal law, and has remained so here and there to this day. In a hygienic respect, to be sure, the procedure retained some difficulties which discretion prohibits one from describing; one can see, for example, the sense of the method of execution that was invented later: a definitively anaesthetizing injection which grants a sense of well-being offered the relevant progress in this sense.

In terms of the meaning of its origins, therefore, the guillotine is not an instrument of terror; it is much more an instrument for the preservation of humanitarian goals where death is concerned. As is known, however, terror then made use of this instrument—

albeit completely with the good intention of choosing, in committing that which was unfortunately unavoidable, the most humane form of execution imaginable.

But what, then, made terror unavoidable in the consciousness of its executor? The aforementioned fact that, wherever terror went to work, it nonetheless used a machine constructed with humanitarian intentions as its instrument—this fact already suggests the idea that terror as such also served humanitarian goals. Provisionally characterizing these goals with the use of a metaphor, one word is suitable: namely, 'hygiene'. This same word already played a large role in the cemetery reforms of the Enlightenment. Metonymically, the guillotine might represent the entirety of organizational and technical means to which terror was forced to resort in order to be able to attain mass influence. Hygiene, on the other hand, is an appropriate central metaphor for the following reason: it provides the extraordinary legitimation that one who wishes to be capable of terror must constantly have at his disposal.

With terror, the purification of the society from death—with which we are already familiar from the enlightened burial reform—becomes a purification of society through death. Hereby, the mechanization of killing makes a terroristic purification of the society possible in a technical sense. The principle of 'purification' or 'cleansing' is the specifically modern principle by which modern mass killings are legitimated. For this is to be thanked the spirit of the Enlightenment. As an analogy to the hygiene metaphor, the metaphor of surgery—which of course also arises from the context of medicine— suggests itself. 'Be inhuman out of pity, out of love for humanity; thus does the skilled and helpful surgeon cause the corrupted member to fall under his cruel and beneficial knife, in order to save the body of the ill person.' It is stated thus in a 'petition to the National Convent in the Year II of the one and indivisible French Republic', with the intent to justify why mercy could not be extended to the subdued counter-revolutionaries of the rebel state, Lyon.

It is appropriate, then, to characterize terror as a political practice that is peculiar to the Enlightenment era. In contemporary Germany, however, one who does this must fear being reported of having an inappropriate stance toward the Enlightenment, even an anti-Enlightenment cast of mind. This is why it is advisable first to make a digression that points out those contents of the political Enlightenment—including its revolutions— which not only invite agreement, but even oblige it. The concepts of both liberal and totalitarian democracy arose from the Enlightenment; and on the side of the matter involving freedom, the well-known praise of the French Revolution from Kant to Hegel must be related.

'The revolution of a clever people such as we have seen to occur in our time may succeed or fail…this revolution, I say, still finds in the souls of all spectators (who are not themselves embroiled in this game) a wish for a *participation* that borders on enthusiasm', wrote Kant. Analogously, decades later in Biedermeier's Berlin, Hegel recalls this enthusiasm for revolution in a historical way. 'A magnificent sunrise' has occurred. 'All thinking beings celebrated this epoch too. A sublime emotion reigned at that time, an enthusiasm of the spirit streamed through, as though the genuine reconciliation of the divine with the world had come for the very first time.'

In the late 1850s, the German intelligentsia—which had remained liberal—had to work through the painful experiences of the failed 1848 revolution. Heinrich Bernhard Oppenheim (born in 1819) had been schooled in the philosophy of Hegel. He still

announced that 'we have all grown up with a certain ideal cult of the first French Revolution'. Classical German philosophy had provided the textual foundations for this cult. The names of those 'who bring the matter in France into the new order'—into that order, further, 'which alone is worth preserving for ever'—remained 'saved for the temple of posthumous fame, in order to be established in it some day'. This is not a statement from the diary of a philosophy student; much more is it a dictum of the old Kant.

Nonetheless, as is known, Kant was an emphatic opponent of the revolution; Hegel was too, and the overwhelming majority of their students were along with them. This is no contradiction. Contra the Marxian interpretation of the matter, a faithful ideological reflex of German conditions—conditions that were far removed from a 'revolutionary situation', as it was called later—is not what was involved here. Much more did the German philosophical celebration of the French Revolution entail an acclamation of its principles combined with a critique of the revolution itself as having been a political act that negated rights and freedoms. Reform politics is the practical result of this double relation of agreement and opposition with regard to the French Revolution.

In fact, the political philosophy of the German classical period can be read as a philosophy of this kind of reform politics. So, for example, does Kant's late work about the fight among the faculties—from which arose the Kantian words, 'such an event no longer forgets itself'—offer a suggestion for the institutionalization of Enlightenment processes. Such institutionalization demands free research in the lower, philosophical, faculty and the unrestricted right to publish the results of such research in the higher, theological, juristic and medicinal faculties. The demand is made in the certainty that the truth—not least of all in the irresistible evidence of its usefulness—will thereby compel political reform of those laws, Church doctrines or medicinal orders for which instructors in the higher faculties are responsible. This had further influence in Humboldt's reform of the Prussian university; from Fichte through Steffans up to Schleiermacher, prominent philosophers were active here as authors of memoranda. Even Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie,* the most famous work of political philosophy from the epoch of German idealism, was, in terms of its significance at the time, no more than a professorial contribution to the Prussian attempt to legislate a constitution around the turn from the second to the third decade of the nineteenth century—an attempt that ultimately failed.

Reform: this, then, is the name of that exercise in political progress that joins the demand for the rights of man and citizen to the critique of a revolutionary practice that had revealed itself as terror. Schiller had still attempted to explain the atrocity of revolution as a phenomenal form of mob rule. 'In the lower and numerous classes', wrote Schiller, 'we are presented with raw, lawless instincts, instincts which are unleashed following the dissolution of the bond of the order of citizens and which rush with uncontrollable rage to their animalic satisfaction.' 'The loosely bound society', Schiller found, 'rather than surging upwards to organic life, falls back into the realm of the elementary.' 'The *moral* possibility is lacking', Schiller stated in sum. 'The generous moment' finds an 'unreceptive generation', and Schiller's politico-pedagogical aesthetic prepares in a compensatory way for a better future.

In Schiller's view, therefore, the terrors of revolution are the expression of deficient morals, and this moral deficiency acts in a way that is contingent upon the moral-political sense of the revolution. Hegel, by contrast, later taught that terror was to be regarded as

something entirely different—as a phenomenal form of political moralism. Hegel's analysis of terror might well count as his on-going and most significant contribution to the theory of modern revolutionary practice. Terror is constituted, not by a return to barbarism, but more in an act of institutionally emancipated moral self-empowerment to violence. In characterizing the political condition in France before the Ninth Thermidor of Year II of the new calendar, Hegel writes: 'There now reign' the abstract 'principles— *freedom* and, as it is in its subjective will, *virtue.* This virtue must now govern against the many, who, with their depravity and their old interests…are unfaithful to virtue.' 'Virtue is a simple principle here and distinguishes only those who possess the conviction and those who do not. Yet the conviction can be recognized and assessed only by the conviction. Suspicion reigns, therefore; but virtue, as soon as it is suspected, has already been judged.' 'With Robespierre, the principle of virtue was erected as the supreme thing; and one could say that this man was serious about virtue. Now, *virtue* and *terror* reign; for subjective virtue, which reigns purely in terms of conviction, brings the most dreadful tyranny along with it. It exercises its power without judicial forms, and its punishment is likewise simply—death.'

The sight of this terror, as Kant had already found, produces mourning in the moral sense. The object of this mourning is not simply the evils that human beings do to one another by seeking their own advantage at the cost of others; it is much more those misdeeds to which the doers know themselves to be legitimated, even obliged, in the 'pursuit' of supposedly supreme goals. The 'terrors of revolution', thus Hegel characterized it in one of the most impressive chapters of his *Phänomenologie des Geistes,* create a view 'of absolute freedom' in its 'negative being', 'that has demolished all difference and all existence' of a 'difference within itself'.

What should this be called? To let oneself be given the answer to this question by the young Karl Marx is no anachronism, but much more a matter of consistency in the history of the theory. The French Revolution had shown the freedoms of the citizen to their best advantage; but unfortunately, the Germans (thus Marx) had merely thought— admittedly, on the highest speculative level. To translate something revolutionary into reality, however: in this respect, the Germans had remained indebted up to this point in history. The revolutions that had just occurred were not the contents of the ultimate political emancipation, according to Marx; they were those of the historically *penultimate* political emancipation. The proletarian revolution would outdo the bourgeois revolution; and the demolition of 'all differences', of which Hegel had spoken in his analysis of Jacobin rule, would then look like the following: in place of the 'freedom of property' would emerge liberation 'from property', in place of the 'right to practise a trade' would emerge liberation from the 'egoism of the trades'. 'Religious freedom' would be surpassed by liberation 'from religion' and, with that, the 'emancipation of Jews' by the 'emancipation of humanity *from Judaism*'.

Banal though it may seem, the political promise of the Jew, Karl Marx, that was cited last does not involve the racist anti-Semitism that was to develop theoretically and practically in Germany only very much later. Much more did it involve a programme by which to surpass the 'political emancipation' (so-called by Marx) of a bourgeois-liberal stamp with 'human emancipation'. This is the concept of a revolution, the carriers of which, as Karl Marx found, would be precisely the Germans in their political future, for they had not once carried off a revolution to that point in their history. The Germans as

the subject of a final revolution surpassing even the bourgeois revolution in an emancipatory sense—this was the vision. 'Germany, thorough as it is, cannot revolutionize without revolutionizing from *the ground up.* The *emancipation of the German* is the *emancipation of the human being.* The *head of this emancipation* is *philosophy,* its *heart* is *the proletariat'*. The French Revolution was only a penultimate level in the history of human freedom. 'In Germany', by contrast, 'the impossibility of a gradual liberation' will 'give birth to complete freedom'. For this is required a philosophy in which Germany does not merely stand *'al pari'* 'with the *official* modern present', but anticipates the genuine fulfilment of history instead.

Such a philosophy is provided by the Marxist theory of history, with its surpassing of the philosophy of revolution offered by German idealism. 'Just as philosophy' finds its '*material* weapons in the proletariat', so will 'the proletariat find its *intellectual* weapon in philosophy'. As soon as the bombshell of thought has thoroughly 'struck the German native people's soil', the 'emancipation of the *German* as a *human being*' will have been accomplished.

At first glance, it might be almost impossible to understand such theses today. One senses, at any rate, that they far surpass the revolutionary enthusiasm of German idealist philosophy—an enthusiasm for which the impressive proofs of Kant and Hegel have been cited as examples. 'Dialectical and historical materialism is above all a philosophy of the revolutionary socialist transformation of the world.' Thus it is stated, in the spirit of the formerly governing Socialist Unity Party of Germany, in its philosophical dictionary of orthodox Marxism—a work that, even now, is as dry as it is exceedingly ambitious. In the self-understanding of the Party, Marx's certainty that the last in terms of revolutionary history—namely, the Germans—would ultimately be the first had thus been fulfilled in a certain sense. Again, of course, this was on the level of the theory that had become orthodox. In the meantime, however, there are believers in a concept of history that posits a long-overdue surpassing of the bourgeois revolution (for which the French Revolution is the unparalleled model) by the proletarian revolution throughout the whole world. And for these too, Marx has remained the first in the series of portraits of those classical thinkers who had succeeded in attaining canonical validity as prophets of this belief within the ruling sphere of real existing socialism.

To recapitulate, this means: Marxism succeeded in transforming the theory of revolution into a political ideology of the totalitarian type. 'It is no anatomical knife, it is a weapon. Its object is its *enemy,* which it seeks, not to refute, but to destroy.'

Even before Marx wrote the sentence just cited, Heinrich Heine feared that this would be the outcome of German intellectual thoroughness. He had a correspondingly low opinion of the stereotype holding that the Germans always merely think what the French do. It was the central intention of his *Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland,* therefore, to enlighten the French—who exhibited a romantic, Germanophiliac tendency to regard German philosophy as a matter of world-remote speculative profundity—of the political potency of this profundity. 'There will emerge on the scene armed Fichteans', Heine wrote, 'who, in their fanaticism about the will, will be able to be checked neither by fear nor by self-interest; for they live in the spirit, they defy matter.' The 'transcendental idealist' is immovable 'in the entrenchment of his own thought'. Through it, he will one day 'break forth' with revolutionary force 'and fill the world with horror and admiration'.

This famous passage from Heine's essay seeking to enlighten the French about the supposed remoteness of Gertnan philosophy from politics has not been cited here with the aim to suggest that later events of German history were anticipated by the 'breaking out' of German idealists from their entrenched ideas, as Heine predicted. The citation is significant, rather, for drawing attention to the descriptive precision with which Heine, as a theoretician of revolution and terror, characterized the revolutionary subject. 'To be checked neither by fear nor by self-interest'—this is an unsurpassably precise characterization of that which the language of the later German Youth Movement would call 'idealism'. Its political form of appearance is fanaticism if the goals from which neither 'fear' nor 'selfinterest' can deter are no longer strictly goals that are capable of acceptance by moral common sense; instead, these goals are known as goals of humanity. Further, one also believes one knows why people outside the circle of one's own philosophical inspiration have not yet by any means acknowledged these goals as their own. This is the context within which the idea just cited—the 'emancipation of the Germans' serving the 'emancipation of the human being'—first became thinkable. As the last answer of German philosophy to the challenges of the French Revolution, the boldness of this idea may be admired, but not without the accompanying fright that Heine expressed with regard to absolute idealism.

As metaphysics, 'absolute idealism' assumes the form of a philosophy of history. In all cases, this philosophy of history should be recognized as the ultimate legitimating basis of totalitarian democracy. When it is transformed into political ideology, the philosophy of history equips its subjects with an unparalleled legitimacy. It provides insight into the epochal course of history, and at the same time informs its subjects of the additional insight as to why they, by virtue of their position in the course of history, are the first and only ones to be capable of attaining this insight. From this arises the self-delegation of the role, as a party, already to represent future humanity in the form of a vanguard. Yet he who already knows today which future constitution of society will enable humanity to come to itself again also has the right, even the duty, to bring about the political events required to establish it.

The consequences of this historico-metaphysical and ideological orientation of politics toward a historical course that is assumed as fundamental are substantial. For only at this point does politics in the specifically modern sense become capable of terror: namely, through the political discrimination that results from the congruency (established by the historical metaphysics) between old and new on the one hand and bad and good on the other. Part of the irony of the matter is that politics oriented upon a historical metaphysics, wherever it becomes governing politics, necessarily becomes ultra-conservative and dogmatic. Indeed, nothing requires conservation more than a doctrine affirming that one finds oneself in a temporally privileged, world-historical position.

The historico-metaphysical preconditions of totalitarian democracy that have been sketched here are reflected in an exemplary way in a striking statement in the 18 August 1919 edition of the Tscheka organ, *Red Sword*. The statement declares that 'all is permitted to us'. The question is: under what orienting assumptions does one know oneself to be justified in making such a statement? The answer can be gathered from the same edition of the organ of the organization for the crushing of the counter-revolution. It states: 'our humanity is absolute… We are the first in the world who draw the sword, not for purposes of enslavement and suppression, but in the name of freedom.'

In terms of the historico-metaphysical grounds that legitimate it, therefore, the self-empowerment formula, 'all is permitted', is not a cynical formula, but a moral one. Further, the power that is released by it does not follow from moral decomposition, but from an act of grasping the metaphysical meaning of history.

Karl Popper has called the alleged insight into the conformity of historical courses to principles 'historicist', and has dedicated his book, *The Poverty of Historicism,* to the victims of the mistaken belief in the existence of historical laws. Expressed in a restrained, scientific-theoretical way, this error means that the unmistakable directedness of civilizational evolution is *not* a directedness toward a goal. The rushing, order-creating and order-dissolving actions within this process by no means fit together analogously to a plan; much more do they begin to combine and interweave in the course of time. They thereby gain the character of an event in relation to one another, with the effect that evolution as such, notwithstanding its directed character, cannot be foreseen at all. Put more simply: the future of the evolution of civilizations is open. And this is why a politics that is oriented, despite this, upon an ideology that treats the future as one characterized by a pre-determined succession of epochs necessarily transforms the society from an open into a closed society

An aside: Karl Popper had of course incorporated the naturalized philosophy of history of the National Socialist race ideology into his critique of the historicism of the ideology of history of Marxist-Leninist international socialism. It goes without saying that, in terms of its intellectual level, this race ideology sustains no kind of comparison to the class ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Nonetheless, the attempt to present the course of history as one of a race struggle rather than a class struggle also precisely fits the historicist theoretical figure that Popper analysed. Specifically, one must oneself belong to the preferred race about which the questionable race ideology teaches in order to be in any way capable of achieving the insight into the supposed truth of this race ideology. Here too, then, the naturalized philosophy of history sets a point in the course of history for which the concrete condition of the possibility of attaining the insight into the course of history is found. And here too, the practical political result is that one recognizes and understands oneself as a privileged historical subject. Further, one recognizes and assumes all those who contradict, by virtue of their contradiction, to be enemies who ought to be eliminated rather than refuted.

This must be recalled in order to see the meaning of the moralizing respect that Heinrich Himmler expressed before the leaders of his SS elite troops on 4 October 1943, in Posen. Bound by duty, those had now become active in killing 'this people…that wanted to kill us'. 'Most of you will know what it means when one hundred corpses lie together, when five hundred lie there or when one thousand lie there. To have withstood this and to have remained decent in doing so—this has made us hard. This is a credit in our history that has never been written and should never be written…'To get one's hands dirty, but for higher goals—a subject thinking within the limits of capacities of reflection of instrumental reason does not arrive at such an understanding of his deeds. What is involved here is not the technical 'co-ordination of means of proceeding to ends', but much more the derivation of extraordinary means from the binding ideological duty of the predetermined ultimate goals themselves. The words of Himmler that have just been cited are words of one who is aware of his goals in the most extreme sense, of one whose moral common sense has been ideologically ruined and whose power of practical

judgement, as a result, has been corrupted by a high degree of the loss of reality. Not with the truncated rationality of 'positivist' indifference toward the practical goals of their deeds, but with the ideological fanatic's certainty of his goal—one that can no longer be touched by doubt—could the National Socialist race politicians say 'we had the moral right' to implement the higher meaning of the history of the race struggle. Yet this is a meaning that moral and cognitive common sense is in fact incapable of understanding.

Hitler himself, finally, represents the unparalleled case of a certainty about a higher goal that is far beyond the reach of merely 'instrumental reason'. As he had testified long before his seizure of power in his main book, *Mein Kampf,* the leader of the National Socialist German Workers' Party was a strict anti-positivist: a contemptuous opponent of juridical procedural justice and a mocker of the 'objectivity fetish' of the scientists, with their self-obligation to rules prescribing a value-free ascertainment of facts. The legitimacy that Hitler claimed for his 'struggle' was a legitimacy that was in fact derived from those highest values whose absolutely obliging character becomes clear as soon as one has understood world history as a course that conforms to the laws of the race struggle. Absolute dominance of ideologically interpreted value-rationality, pyrrhonization of merely individual interests, anti-pragmatism—in short: 'idealism' in the worst sense of the word—stamped the consciousness of the great believers in the saving power of politics of this century.

Only on this background can we understand Hitler's testament made during the final days of the collapse of the Reich. As a duty binding all successors after his death, he imposed a 'scrupulous observance of the race laws' and the continuation of the 'merciless resistance against the world-poisoner of all peoples, international Jewry'. 'Eerie', one would tend spontaneously to comment in historical hindsight. Yet we are seeking here to understand the rationality of this testament, and only if it is understood as an ideologically bound value-rationality is the meaning of Hitler's testament revealed. The Greater German Reich was lost; the Soviet grenades drummed on the concrete of the bunker of the Reich Chancellery; the final victory had gone to the enemies. What might now be retained? Only consciousness of the higher law of one's own business. This consciousness *had* to be maintained, moreover; for a person's very subjectivity would have had to implode if he were forced to acknowledge, beyond the collapse of his own business, that he had driven millions and countless millions to death through an ideological obsession.

The ideology of the race struggle is of course not a sufficient condition of the National Socialist genocide. Yet it is a necessary condition. Believing National Socialists also existed with a certainty of the laws of history. The cognitive basis of this certainty was the supposed insight into the determination—guided by laws of natural history—of the history of culture by race struggles. To which conditions it should be attributed that this absurdity was able to seize hold of the consciousness of relevant groups—including the intellectual leadership of these groups—is another question. Yet, after this consciousness had become the reigning consciousness of a party and, ultimately, the consciousness of a ruling party, the questionable ideology was even elevated to the status of an established science. There were chairs for racial ethnology, specialist publication organs and continuing education courses for teachers, doctors and party cadres.

Again, a complete unity of theory and practice resulting from a consistent anti-positivism also applies to the race-struggle theory of world history. The relevant

information can be gathered directly from the acknowledged natural law of history. Whoever contradicts here does not simply err; much more does he reveal himself as an enemy. Every contradiction of one's own historical certainty only serves to intensify this certainty. The supposedly value-free objectivism of the scientific ascertainment of facts is revealed to be an ideology of decadent political disengagement.

If one recalls these connections today, it is still astonishing in retrospect that it was ever possible to mistake the instrumentalism and objectivism of methodologically restricted rationality for pre-dispositive ideological engagement. The material relation is precisely the opposite: the consciousness occupied by an ideology is a consciousness for which value rationality absolutely dominates. Yet this is a value rationality that has been radically emancipated both from the restrictions of methodological objectivism and from the ties of a socially controlled common experience—thus, from the traditionalism of common sense. A 'return to barbarism', therefore, is not what was involved with the National Socialist despotism. To use this formula in interpreting the facts—which, unfortunately, has been done all too often—would be to commit a retrospective injustice against the peoples in the early history of Europe who were in fact called 'barbarians'. For this reason alone, National Socialist terror should not be called 'barbarian'. Much more was it a political phenomenon that can be understood solely in the context of modern civilization: namely, as a political outcome of the attempt to escape the disorienting consequences of one's own failure to meet the challenges of modernity (which is itself already rife with disorienting elements) by retreating into the certainty of an ideology of history that places one in the role of the final victor.

23
On Marxism, Christianity and totalitarianism

An interview with Leszek Kolakovsky

TUROWICZ: Once, a long time ago, you were—or so it appears—a believing Marxist. Your studies of Marxism took you quite far from these earlier positions. Upon what, fundamentally, was the evolution of your relationship to Marxism based?

KOLAKOWSKI: As you know, the turn toward Marxism was always a double turn. Strictly intellectual and political reasons, that is, could actually not be distinguished and the one could be separated from the other only artificially. It is true: Marxism attracted me—like so many people—through its having appeared to offer a rational yet unsentimental vision of history in which all was explained. Everything—only seemingly, of course—appeared understandable; not only was the past explained, but the future became transparent as well.

Marxism was attractive on account of its purely humanistic—that is, its anthropocentric—philosophy. Sartre once said that the Marxists were lazy, and this in the sense that Marxism—particularly in its simplified, primitive form which held sway for many years as a political ideology—was easy to learn. It offered one the comfortable feeling that one possessed knowledge of the entirety of history, whereby it was not at all necessary to study history to this end. In addition, it offered a clear perspective on the future and the conviction of being on the good side of social conflicts—on the side of the exploited, suppressed, etc. All of this was of course lined with cruel lies, but it nonetheless functioned with a certain degree of effectiveness for many years.

There were also other motives. Like many friends and comrades who took a similar path, I reacted rather strongly against a particular Polish tradition that I did not like, toward the clerically bigoted, nationalistic, anti-Semitic tradition represented by the Polish national democrats, toward this entire mixture that appeared to me to be dreadful in a cultural respect—and it simply repelled me personally as well.

Communism, as I imagined it, was a certain continuation of a tradition—the tradition of free thought, etc.—to which I stood closer than I did to the nationalist and cosmopolitan ones. When one says such things today, it sounds funny, especially if one considers the actual circumstances under which this Communism functioned. I wish by no means to justify these illusions.

I wish only to say that, if we reflect upon the entry into Communism—which had been accomplished by a portion of the Polish intelligentsia in the years during or directly after the war—then I would prefer not to reduce it to stupidity or to morally unworthy motives. Instead, I would prefer to reflect upon how Communism also presented itself as a negation of a certain stream of the Polish culture: a stream that,

for the left intelligentsia in particular, and in particular in the last years before the war, was tremendously irritating and hostile.

To a great extent, we reacted against a strain of Polish tradition that I continue to dislike; only this dislike now obtains in terms of another standpoint, so to speak. For I still do not like the tradition of the Polish national democrats; I still do not like Polish chauvinism; I still do not like clericalism, even if the sense of this tradition has changed in the meantime and even if very many stereotypes have changed or assumed a different meaning. In spite of this, this tradition is still foreign to me, although Marxism has long since ceased to be an intellectual place to which one can flee from it.

Just as the turn toward Marxism was at once political and intellectual in the case of people like myself, separation from it also had these same two aspects. For a time, I belonged to a stream that was branded as revisionism. This was an attempt at a revision that was supposed to bring Marxism out of its orbit around Stalinism, to return to it its intellectual values, its high esteem for the truth, its high esteem for democratic values.

For some years, from approximately the beginning of 1955 on, I (and many of my friends) believed that Marxism was suited to a revision or reform. Indeed, although I held this opinion for a significantly shorter time, I thought that Communism could be regenerated without dispensing with its basic premises. This was an internally contradictory standpoint; for if one took Communism seriously—that is, if one took seriously the self-definitions formulated within the movement—then the idea that there could be democratic Communism or a Communism that respected the truth was internally contradictory.

For all its illusions and contradictions, however, the whole movement was not completely ineffective; it contributed to the subversion of the reigning ideology Certainly, it soon had to come to light that this movement was based upon internally incoherent premises; in this sense, revisionism was a construct of short duration and had to come to an end. At a certain point, it became clear that there was nothing left to revise, that the hopes for an intellectual regeneration of Communism were vain and useless.

It is true: I, along with many of my colleagues, was a member of the Party for several more years. This was not for ideological reasons, but because we believed—rightly or wrongly—that, even under the conditions of intellectual muzzling and restrictions on the freedom of the word, the Party still provided a certain forum in which certain changes could be fought for. At the moment, I would not like to assess whether this was a complete illusion or to what extent it led us into various kinds of ambiguities. Yet, it became clear that this   situation could not hold for the long term. It ended with some stepping out of the Party and others being thrown out of it. And, finally, the break with this tradition…was made permanent.

I set to writing a history of Marxism, one I concluded in the late 1970s. Here, I attempted (among other things) to ascertain what the Marxist sources of Stalinism are. In fact, it was said for a while—and this stereotype is still in circulation today—that Stalinism was a distortion, that it had nothing in common with true Marxism, etc. Now, it is clear that Marx never imagined a Communism like the Gulag—about this, there can be no doubt. Nonetheless, one makes it too easy for oneself by seeking to

dispose of the matter in this way. That Stalinism had a mantle that it had assumed from Marxism was not a complete misunderstanding and did not require a drastic falsification of the Marxist tradition. The intentions of Marx are not decisive here. At any rate, it was Marx and not Stalin who said that the entire idea of Communism could be summed up in a single solution: the elimination of private property. As a logical consequence, wherever private property is eliminated, there is Communism in Marx's sense. So it cannot then be said that it was absolutely necessary to revise Marx completely in order to create a monstrous system of crime and lies that was underpinned by the principles of Lenin. Marx had predicted that, in this perfect system, all means of production and trade would be centralized in the hands of the state and that the market, together with its injustices, would be eliminated. But if the market had in fact been eliminated, then why should it be said that there is something anti-Marxist about it? Certainly, Marx said—he took this expression over from the Saint-Simonians—that there would be no more rule over human beings in the coming order, merely an administration of things. Yet somehow, it did not occur to him that things cannot be commanded, that things can be administered only with the help of human beings and not the other way around. As a result, a system of the absolute administration of things, if it wishes to succeed, must be a system of the absolute administration of human beings. Thus, even if Marx had imagined things entirely differently, a Communism that accords with his premises can be nothing other than slavery.

TUROWICZ: Let us change the theme of conversation. Apparently, Winston Churchill answered the question as to whether he believes in God thus: 'What a continental question!'

KOLAKOWSKI: I have not heard that before; I like that very much!

TUROWICZ: I do not intend to pose this question to you, not only because you now also live outside the European continent. On the other hand, it is a fact that, for a long time and certainly in Poland, the problems of religion and Christianity have assumed a place of honour in your thought. You are still occupied with these problems today; the titles of some of your books show as much. I would like to ask, what is the basis of the change in your relation to religion in general and Christianity in particular?

KOLAKOWSKI: Of course, I will not answer the question whether I believe in God, for I think the dear Lord will know that already. As for the change of   my relationship to Christianity and religion, on the other hand, it was in fact very essential. From my very early youth, I have always been interested in questions of Christianity and religion. As a young boy, I read the Gospels and the Old Testament with tremendous fascination; and I recall that I devoted much time to reading on these themes during the occupation period. And this interest was never extinguished.

Nonetheless, I was—as I mentioned already—very anti-clerical and very repelled by the religious tradition that presented itself to me as a part of the Sarmatic Polish cultural complex that I could not stand. And I devoted much time to fighting multiple aspects of Christian philosophy, which is something I now regret. This is not primarily because there were many erroneous, overhasty or unjust judgements, but mainly because this philosophy was simply poor in the political and cultural situation of the time.

The free-thinkers of the pre-war era who attacked the dominant model of Polish Catholicism—the bigotry, the clericalism, the Catholic intolerance, etc.—acted in a situation where they were in the minority and the Church enjoyed significant privileges. After the war, the situation was reversed. During this entire time, the Church was almost the only—in any case, the only important—non-state institution in the country. Its mere presence preserved pluralist elements that saved Polish culture from destruction. For this reason, attacks against the Church during that period had a negative significance in the cultural situation of that time—even if there were many things that could be justifiably attacked and called into question on rational grounds. Nonetheless, this too was not without a certain advantage for me, because I learned many things on this occasion.

But for me, as I see it today, Christianity is indivisible from European culture. This means, I believe, that this culture could not survive whatsoever in a non-Christian form. Systematic theology actually does not interest me at all. What interests me is the history of theology, the history of dogmas, the theological conflicts and religious conflicts in the Church, the history of the Reformation, the history of the heresies. Dogmatic theology as an attempt intellectually to interpret the original sources of Christianity, by contrast, does not interest me much. I think that what we have with the biblical tradition—both in the New Testament and especially in some books of the Old Testament…this is something that we can understand without theology. It is not so difficult to understand. On the contrary, theology has obscured much for us. For me, Christianity is the New Testament—that is, the religious and moral appeals and the Commandments and the life of Jesus. These are something that is—or so I imagine—accessible to us without the mediation of theology. Thus, my view of Christianity is approximately the same as that of Erasmus of Rotterdam: not Barth, but not the Scholastics either.

TUROWICZ: …you also write very often about the threats that arise for Europe and for Christian values, in particular about the threat posed by totalitarianism. How do you regard these threats today, when some have disappeared from these systems or have become a little weaker? From time to time, it is   said that we already find ourselves in a post-totalitarian epoch. I think that this claim is probably somewhat premature. How do you regard this threat today?

KOLAKOWSKI: I agree with you that this judgement is too optimistic, this expression that we live in a post-totalitarian epoch. It is true that the totalitarian systems have proved themselves to be not only culturally destructive, but also tremendously incompetent in economical terms. And we now observe the decay of totalitarianism in its Communist version, a decay whose results we cannot predict. We see that these systems collapse under their own weight, as it were, whereas they also feverishly seek a way out of the social, cultural and, above all, the economic defeats that they have inflicted upon themselves. Although they are already besieged…although they are full of holes (if one can put it thus), the totalitarian systems still retain their totalitarian will; they still attempt to find the means of adaptation that would allow them to retain a maximum of control and monopolistic power—to the extent that is now conceivable. The totalitarian will is still effective, even if it is true that it cannot be realized in the form or dimensions which were once the case.

But to me, it also involves cultural tendencies that can be observed in the Western world, in democratic countries. Not in the sense that strong, organized totalitarian movements exist here; for, in the industrially developed countries, the Communist movements are certainly falling into decline. But threats do not lurk there alone.

I think that there exists a dangerous potential, one that is already entailed in the mere function of the states, in democratic societies. On the one hand, the people want to have freedom; they want of course to be as independent as possible from the rules and restrictions imposed by the state. On the other hand, however, they want more and more means of protection and security from this state. They want the state to take care of their whole lives, to provide total security in every respect. Thus, on the one hand, they do not love the state because it becomes unwieldy and intrudes more and more into their lives; but, on the other hand, they cause this growth themselves by demanding more and more instruments of protection and security from the state. One cannot have it both ways.

We observe an infantilization of political life connected with the development of the welfare state, which is unquestionably a good thing. There is an abiding tension between the hunger for freedom and the hunger for security.

Let us take the clearest example: unemployment is in fact a central and difficult plague of the democratic lands supported by a market economy. Many factors contribute to it. Among others, there is of course technical progress itself, which quickly turns a whole series of diverse occupations and skills into anachronisms. Various traditional estates and occupations are eliminated from life by it. For this, there is no good solution.

It is said that the right to work is one of the human rights. This is easily stated, but let us simply consider the consequences if this right is accepted in unconditional form. If I am imprisoned without any reason—and the right to protection against unjustified imprisonment is one of the human rights—then I know who has done it, against whom I can protest, who has committed this injustice. But how do things stand in the case of unemployment? If we assume that there is a right to work, then we assume that there must be an instance from which I can demand the fulfilment of this right of mine. Yet this instance can only be the state. In other words, we assume that the state is obliged to create a job for everybody.

But this is only possible under the conditions of a complete regulation of the economy by the state—that is, under the conditions of forced labour. This is not a nice dilemma, but I do not see how it is to be got out of. This of course does not mean that unemployment is something unimportant. Unemployment is an extremely painful and uncomfortable side of life—even if it does not produce extreme situations, even if people do not starve, even if there is a system of insurances and services for the unemployed. This is a dramatic situation, particularly under conditions for which an entire class of people is without work.

Yet a situation in which no one whatsoever must attempt to find work, in which no one remains without work and everyone receives it immediately from the state is possible only under conditions of total nationalization. But that is the worst thing imaginable. A certain percentage of unemployment can be socially tolerated, so long as it does not assume very large dimensions and so long as no significant social class remains a marginal, unemployed group. It is better that the state attempt to ensure that the

unemployed do not die of hunger and are not lacking basic care than that it eliminate unemployment by resorting to Communist means—means of total nationalization, that is.

It is natural that the people want freedom in a completely general sense. But they also want a feeling of security and demand this from the state. Increasingly extensive demands upon the state contain a totalitarian potential, even in the democratic countries, which are not exposed to the danger of a totalitarian about-face and do not face dangerous pressure from totalitarian movements. None of us knows how the future of the world will look, but it is certain that freedom is not guaranteed for eternity. There will never be a situation in which it does not require unabating watchfulness and the will to preserve it.

TUROWICZ: my last question. At the beginning of the 1970s, you published the famous 'Theses on Hope and Hopelessness'. Do you still hold these theses to be relevant?

KOLAKOWSKI: I could not say that I am prepared to defend every sentence I wrote in this article, for I no longer recall the details so precisely. As far as the basic premises I attempted to express there are concerned, however, I would still defend them. And these premises were the following: Communism cannot be reformed. This is because it has no inner reserves that could help it release energies that might enable it to overcome its culturally, politically and economically destructive characteristics. It cannot reform itself in a spirit that would fulfil the expectations of our society.

Yet this does not mean that it cannot be reformed at all. For—and this, I think, is our experience—it *can* change under social pressure, provided that this pressure is well enough organized and can find sufficient expression. And secondly, it can change in light of the economic defeats it has caused and with which it must grapple—even if it seeks to divert these defeats without disposing of its political framework (which, by the way, is impossible). It is compelled to seek means of adaptation that necessarily also presuppose political changes.

Up to a certain point, those who rule in these countries become aware that no repair of this stiff, unproductive and wasteful economic system is possible without political changes of the type that run counter to the tradition and premises of the system. In Poland of course, this is—among others, but by no means not only—the question of reconstructing a legal *solidarnosc*. Even if this is a central question in our context, though, it is still only one case in the more general process involved here.

I am against deriving a description of Communism from the unchangeable nature of totalitarianism and working with a schema holding that Communism is Communism and all differences among its variants have no significance. It would be absurd to claim that it does not matter whether we live in a concentration camp like the Cambodia of 1975 to 1978 or under conditions as they now are in contemporary Poland or Hungary—even considering the existing methods of repression, the censorship, the police pressure that still persists (although it has been minimized), etc. By the same token, it cannot be said that it makes no difference at all whether we are in a situation like the one now or in the Stalinist system. After all, the third generation is now living in this social order. How long the order will endure is not known; at any rate, essential differences are involved for life and for the retention of cultural constancy. The limit beyond which this system has not progressed—with one exception—is the coming to terms with social pluralism. The exception I speak

of here is of course the acceptance—albeit unwilling, albeit one that has come to exist under pressure—of *solidarnosc* in the Poland of 1980.

This process will go on further. Accordingly, so long as Communism rules, I think it is a very unclever attitude to think that nothing one might do within this system has any significance. From this would follow that we should wait for an indeterminate explosion or an explosive failure of the entire Communist world-system—and that, until that time, nothing counts. But it has been demonstrated that social pressure can rescue the various forms of pluralism from even this apparently rigid, immovable system. Further, even this system—which has made various concessions—must register economical defeat: a defeat that it has brought upon itself and from which it attempts to emerge—to this point downright ineptly.

As a result, the perspective is open. There now remains to us nothing beyond that which we have already done: to continue. That is, we must attempt to hollow out this system from the inside, as it were, to strive to see that only its shell remains. And this shell, at a certain moment, will be able to be   broken relatively easily. I think that this is what can be done and is what you are doing. But that is probably not suited for print…

TUROWICZ: Well, we shall see. Leszek, I thank you for the conversation.

In the mid-1950s, Leszek Kolakovsky still seemed to be the great hope of Marxist philosophy in the People's Republic of Poland. In 1966, after his attitude became increasingly critical, he was excluded from the Party under the accusation of revisionism. Two years later, he lost his chair as a professor at the University of Warsaw. In 1968, he left his home and, since that time, has taught at universities in the Western world. In December 1988, he returned for the first time to Poland. During this visit, he granted an interview to *Tygodnik Powszechny,* a Catholic weekly newspaper based in Krakow. The interview appeared on 12 December 1989. The questions were posed by the newspaper's chief editor, Jerzy Turowicz.

(Translated from the original Polish by Wolfgang Grycz)

Index