



UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND,
JOHANNESBURG

Masters of Political Studies

Faculty of Humanities

Jews as the Universal Enemy:

An analysis of Social Darwinism as the driving force behind the Holocaust.

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Date of Submission: 15 March 2017

Word Count: 22,702

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Political Studies.

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Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my supervisor Professor Joel Quirk of the School of Political Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand. Professor Quirk always made himself available with words of validation and support whenever I felt unsure about my research or writing. He consistently allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed it.

I must express my very profound gratitude to my parents Lorraine and Peter, for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you.

Abstract

Hitler sought to apply Darwinist theories to German social life, under what was regarded as Social Darwinism. In his words; “If I can accept a divine commandment, its this one - thou shalt preserve thou species”. His most loyal and undying belief was that the Aryan race was the most superior race on the planet and that it was their right to “starve the weak” in the name of self-preservation. The Nazis saw it as a social obligation to ‘listen’ to the law of nature and embark on a war of territorial expansion and bloodshed.

Darwinian thought provided a justification for Germany’s need for incessant colonialism and racial extermination. In this analysis, Lefort’s ‘Other’ becomes synonymous with Darwin’s ‘parasites’ and Hitler’s ‘enemy’. Through Social Darwinism, it is argued that Hitler ultimately achieved his God-given desire and goal, which was to get rid of the poisoners of the planet – the Jews.

"No matter how crooked the road was from Darwin to Hitler, clearly Darwinism and Eugenics smoothed the path for Nazi ideology, especially for Nazi stress on expansion, war, racial struggle, and racial extermination."

- Robert Richards, 2013

Introduction

The Holocaust is arguably the most well known, and carefully researched genocide in human history. At the forefront of the murder of millions of Jews and non-Jews in Eastern Europe was Nazi dictator, Adolf Hitler who controlled Germany from 1934 to 1945.

Adolf Hitler is regarded as one of the most evil men the world has ever known, and the events of the Holocaust firmly stand out as one of history's greatest tragedies. Owing to the extreme nature of Adolf Hitler, his totalitarian project and fundamentally the eradication of millions of Jews and non-Jews, Nazi Germany has been widely acknowledged in world politics and world history to the current day. And in saying this plenty of theories have been developed around how and why the Holocaust occurred.

A lead historian of his generation, Timothy Snyder claims in his book *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (2015), that there are several misconceptions "about Hitler and the Holocaust as we know it" (Snyder: 2015). He provides a fresher, more contemporary look at the Holocaust and subsequently brings up several interesting sets of arguments that can make one reevaluate what they think they already knew about it. Through this book, Snyder puts the Holocaust back in the spotlight for debate as he offers a radically new explanation of the event. (Schuessler: 2015).

The first of his arguments is about when one traditionally thinks of the Holocaust, they immediately and rightfully associate it with concentration camps such as Auschwitz, Madjanek, Belzec and Treblinka to name a few, in which 6 million Jews perished. Snyder claims, "we have got the Holocaust all wrong" (Evans: 2015). Although many did die in concentration camps, Snyder explains that most of the Jews were already killed prior to the advent of these camps, as most "of the deed was already done in Eastern Europe" (Siegel: 2015). Snyder writes; "most murdered Jews never even saw a concentration camp". He also explains that most Jews were murdered outside of Germany, while millions of ordinary people around the world just assume they were murdered within

Germany, as that is where Hitler was most associated. In fact, he believes that Germany was a significantly safer place for Jews than in neighboring regimes that the Nazi's destroyed (Snyder: 2015).

Snyder argues that most of those who murdered the Jews were neither Nazis nor Germans; this is in pure contrast to the common conceptions that the demise of Jews was solely by the hands of Nazi Germans. He also makes a claim that the theories that exist on why Hitler hated the Jews are not the case at all (Snyder: 2015). The most common conceptions of why Hitler hated the Jews and needed to exterminate them, take several forms. Joachim Riecker (2009: 107) in his book *Hitler's 9. November*, claims that Hitler's hatred for Jews emanated from his belief that Jewish family doctor, Eduard Bloch, poisoned Hitler's mother, Klara to death while treating her for breast cancer.

Another theory was that the Jews controlled much of the economy at the time of Hitler's rise to power. Here it is implied that Hitler saw them as the economic elite and hence, the powerful, which ultimately threatened Hitler's totalitarian project (Hall: 2009). Another theory as to why Hitler hated the Jews was because he saw them as his 'scapegoat' for losing the First World War. Hitler needed somebody to blame for Germany's defeat and its subsequent economic crisis. With creating the notion of the German enemy, attention shifted from the responsibility of the Nazi's and onto the idea that it was the Jews who caused the defeat.

Snyder (2015) appears to discount most of the preexisting arguments for Hitler's hatred of the Jews with his claims that the Jew was the universal enemy. Not only were they an enemy of the Nazis but also, they were an enemy of the world. Snyder articulates that in Hitler's mind the Jews were not even a race at all. They were nothing more than a "wound on society". Snyder (2015) digs deeper and claims that for Hitler, his worldview had to do with ecological and zoological terms. Snyder (2015) describes the Jews, for Hitler, as the cause of ecological panic as they introduced concepts of reciprocity, in terms of law, socialism, capitalism, the state or Christianity (Siegel: 2015). Jews fundamentally had an acknowledgement of one another as opposed to maintaining the

notion of Darwinism as Hitler wished for it to be; whereby races as species fought for survival against one another.

Snyder argues that Hitler hated the Jews because they were a symbol of modernity and science, two concepts that Hitler feared and despised (Snyder: 2015). Hitler saw the world as one that was corrupted by an overly Jewish civilization. Snyder further argues that the holocaust did not occur simply because Hitler built concentration camps, nor because he held limitless power, but because of the advent of stateless societies surrounding Germany at the time (Snyder: 2015). Hence, the key to Germany's strategy that allowed for the brutal slaughter of millions was the destruction of neighboring states (Siegel: 2015).

This research report will deal with the question: *How and why did Social Darwinism act as a driving force behind the Holocaust?*

In this, Timothy Snyder's arguments will be considered along with those of many others in order to argue that it was, in fact, Social Darwinism that drove the Holocaust to its apex. Snyder opens *Black Earth* with the premise that, in Hitler's world, human races were comparable to species and should ultimately behave like species, where "like mate with like and seek to kill unlike". The law of the jungle became Hitler's most profound obsession (Snyder: 2015, 1).

Bergman argues that of the many factors that permitted the Holocaust and World War II to occur, Darwin's theory of evolution was the most significant. As a boy, Hitler was introduced to the concept of Darwinism and this fundamentally shaped his worldview. Darwin's most popular philosophy was that of the 'survival of the fittest'. By this, Darwin infers that the stronger the species, the greater their chances of survival. Hitler, along with plenty other Darwinists, interpreted this in the stance that superior races have a greater right to life than inferior races (Bergman: 1999, 102).

Hitler sought to apply Darwinist theories to German social life, under what was regarded as Social Darwinism. In his words; “If I can accept a divine commandment, its this one - thou shalt preserve thou species” (Hitler: 1939, 281). There is no doubt that Hitler was a Social Darwinist, and this had a major impact on Nazi race policies.

His most loyal and undying belief was that the Aryan race was the most superior race on the planet and that it was their right to “starve the weak” in the name of self-preservation. John Locke, one of the most influential liberal thinkers of the seventeenth century introduced the common idea of every human’s “right to life” (Weikart: 2002, 327). Social Darwinism opposes this liberal view by putting forth the claim that “some people are more valuable and have a greater right to life than others”, and hence, challenges the liberal principle of equality. Darwin’s specific theory of natural selection fundamentally backed the devaluing of human life. Weikart cited that; “the human state also, like every animal community, must reach an even higher state of perfection, through the destruction of the less well-endowed individual”. Essentially, individual human lives were nothing, while the preservation of the species was everything (Weikart: 2002, 327).

Hitler was concerned with securing food supplies for his ‘master race’, and in contemplating this, natural law became his only law. The law of nature whereby species, and in Hitler’s case, races, must die off in the natural struggle for survival. Firmly planted in his worldview, “the right of the stronger as natural law”, became the notion that would define Nazi Germany’s policies, intended on protecting the ‘superior race’ against the weaker, parasitic, sub-human races they have come across (Hitler: 1939, 223). As expressed, Hitler’s regime relied heavily upon Social Darwinism and the concept itself appeared to justify and encourage the Nazi’s interpretations on both war and race.

This research report will effectively be assessing the argument that Social Darwinism acted as the driving force behind the Holocaust. I will be conducting this analysis through a library-based methodology, which will ultimately make use of secondary sources that hold close reference to my topic. For many subjects, such as the Holocaust, wide and extensive research has already been done and countless theorists and academics have

claimed to find ‘the answer’ to all the major questions that have been up for debate since the event occurred. A library-based study allows me to investigate my topic against the preexisting literature on the Holocaust in effect to weigh my arguments against several compelling and competing points of views. This will provide me with the opportunity to strengthen my argument and take my position on the matter as efficiently as possible. I utilized and studied a wide range of Holocaust related literature in order to expand my knowledge on the topic and compete with several opposing parties.

To succeed in this task, and capably arguing my case on the relationship between the Holocaust and Social Darwinism I have decided to focus my attention on four main issues – all of which, ultimately build up to a credible conclusion. The first issue, which is my first chapter, is about Social Darwinism as a concept. It is of fundamental importance to begin this analysis with the understanding of the dynamics surrounding Social Darwinism. Only once the concept is elucidated, does it become clear as to how and why Nazi Germany adopted the Social Darwinian worldview. In this chapter I consider the theories of some of the most renowned thinkers in history and use their claims to either strengthen my argument or denounce theirs. Social Darwinism as a concept, and its adoption by Hitler and his followers will prove to be an imperative starting point around which this analysis will develop.

My second chapter involves Hitler’s political ideology, totalitarianism. I chose to argue that without Social Darwinist underpinnings, combined with the arbitrary nature of the regime, the Holocaust would likely not have been able to occur based on its extreme brutality and unethical policies. Herein I consider Hitler as a man, and as a supposed savior of a distressed nation, as well as how he managed to legitimize his power over millions of followers. The legitimation of Hitler’s rule is an important point to make, because it ultimately provides an understanding for why the German population became so susceptible to his warped Darwinian visions and designs.

The third issue I will examine is Hitler’s worldview. I find it of critical significance to delve into the psychology of the man responsible for such hatred and death, in order to

gauge how far his admiration for Charles Darwin and his theories go, and to what extent they influenced his Nazi policies on war and extermination. Herein I engage in a discourse about the Aryan race, the theories surrounding Jew-hatred, and the conspiracies of Jewish world domination in order to lay the foundation for which my argument will sit. I use the theories surrounding Social Darwinism to argue for its fundamental influence on Hitler's worldview.

My fourth chapter relies on theories and philosophies outlined by Timothy Snyder in order to elucidate the key events that stemmed from Social Darwinism during the Holocaust, as well as how and why this concept led to the eventual demise of six million Jews. In this section, I consider Darwinian principles of natural selection, the survival of the fittest notion, and Nazi eugenics; in an effort to outline just how important Social Darwinism was for the realization of the Holocaust, as well as its key instigating factors that allowed for the genocide of close to an entire race.

It will be understood that it was nothing other than Social Darwinism that spurred the Holocaust and the mass murder of millions of people. These notions will now be discussed.

Chapter 1

Social Darwinism

Introduction

In beginning this analysis it is fundamental to elucidate the theories of Charles Darwin and what later transformed into Social Darwinism, and their implications on Hitler and Nazi Germany in an effort to engage in a narrative that is scientifically charged and socially motivated. Herein I will provide evidence to the argument that 'Social Darwinism acted as a driving force towards the Holocaust' by outlining the effects of Darwin's Theory of Evolution on society in general and then its effects on Hitler and Darwinists alike. It will be understood that without Darwinian principles prompting the change of specific worldviews – the Holocaust would have been unlikely to occur.

I do not wish to exhaust Nazi policies against other races nor Nazi practices in this chapter as I fundamentally wish for it to clarify how and why Darwinism has been so influential to those who support it and ultimately adopt its ideas. More so, this chapter has been devoted to the understanding of Social Darwinism in itself and where it stems from. Herein we will see why Social Darwinism was an accepted science at the turn of the century and what its implications were for dominance and struggle amongst individuals. The principle argument of this chapter is that Hitler was, in fact, an avid believer and follower of Darwin and his principles and further implemented Darwin's evolutionary theory into the Third Reich and their racial policies.

This chapter is broken into three parts: the first, "Darwin's Theory Of Evolution", the second, "Darwinism on Society" and the third "Hitler's Darwinism and Nazi Germany". Therefore, this chapter will begin with an analysis of Charles Darwin and his evolutionary theory. Darwin's evolutionary findings will be discussed herein in an attempt to grasp how and why a hierarchical system began between individuals – spurring on domination and socialism. His theory of natural selection or 'survival of the fittest' will be explained with the use of his popular 'Galapagos Island Finch' theory. I

will then go on to examine the roots of Social Darwinism by exploring the opinions and motives of key Darwinists in the early twentieth century. I will specify the ways in which Darwinism was applied to societal politics and why it was deemed a necessary worldview. I wish to provide a credible understanding of practices that arose from Darwinian teachings such as eugenics as well as how these practices were specifically espoused on different societies. I will then go on to analyze Hitler's views on Darwinism as well as his opinions on race and struggle and what should be done about the "problems" they caused for the German people. This chapter will act as a relevant starting point as it will lay the foundation for my engagement of the ways that Social Darwinism spurred on the Holocaust. It will allow me to further explore the ways that Hitler implemented specific Darwinian principles on society as well as how and why his inexplicable worldview came into being.

(1.1) Darwin's Theory of Evolution

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was a nineteenth-century English naturalist who is best known for his Theory of Evolution and owing to this; he is one of history's most influential figures. His theory of evolution is the widely accepted notion that the evolution of species occurs by the differential survival of "fit" or "superior" individuals – which include plants, animals, insects, and humans. This demands differences among a species, in order to distinguish "superior" traits against those deemed "inferior" (Darwin: 1859, 162) Individuals who encompass valuable traits are more likely to survive and pass on those genes to their offspring so that such traits will increase in number, while the "inferior" will eventually die off. So, those that possess advantageous characteristics are more capable of surviving while the "weaker" die off in the struggle for existence (Darwin: 1859, 164).

Darwin conducted several studies that contributed to his theory of evolution in which he expressed his findings in several published books. His first book, *On The Origin of Species* (1859), focuses specifically on the evolutionary developments of plants and animals. He fundamentally concluded that nature preserved the favorable traits of

species, allowing them to adapt to their environments and essentially better survive in the wild (Darwin: 1859, 155) He called this preservation of favorable individual differences and variants, and the destruction of those that are harmful, 'natural selection' or 'the survival of the fittest'.

"Darwin's finches" are an example of this. Darwin essentially studied fourteen species of finches on the Galapagos archipelago and observed that all the species had formed there, over several millions of years, from a single ancestor (Darwin: 1859, 202). He described how over time, and over slow progressions of change, the size and shape of their beaks adapted so as to accommodate their different diets and habitats – "each beak was modified for different ends" (Lack: 1940, 323). It was further observed through climate change and scarcity of food that some species of finches on the Galapagos Islands survived, while others had died out, and this was reliant on which species' beak was best designed for the most abundant food. This study is argued to be the most compelling evidence of Darwin's theory of evolution. The finches personify how traits alter and change to benefit the species, allowing those traits to be passed on to their offspring, while the remainder essentially succumbed to the struggle for survival (Lack: 1940, 327).

Darwin went on later to publish his work on human evolution called *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871). This book discusses several aspects of human evolution such as the development of both mental and physical traits that began with "savages" and ended with Victorian England society. Darwin was primarily concerned with observing the differences between human races in order to conclude that "savages, weak in body or mind are soon eliminated; and those that survive commonly exhibit a vigorous state of health", which in Darwinian terms translates into beneficial genes (Darwin: 1871, 104). More so, in this book, Darwin argued that there is no significant gap between human beings and animals and that lower humans were needed to fill the gap between higher animals and higher races.

(1.2) Darwinism on Society

It must be added that with Darwin's discoveries, it is commonly understood that he was neither a racist nor a eugenicist, however, after his death, his theories went on to cause some of the cruelest brutalities the world has seen under the guise of Social Darwinism. Social Darwinism was predominantly embraced and popularized by European scientists and physicians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The turn of the century produced a significant change in the worldviews of those who welcomed Darwinism and its principles and subsequently led to them arguing for the importance of Darwinism in religion, ethics and social thought (Haeckel: 1868, 487). Leading Darwinists fundamentally searched for a new worldview, specifically for a new ethical system, one that would replace Christianity and its values (Weikart: 2002, 325-326). Darwinism arose as religion's biggest threat because it introduced new views about the origin of humankind and morality, one that radically differs to the story of Adam and Eve as expressed in the Bible.

Ernst Haeckel, Germany's most recognized Darwinist of the time, believed that Darwinism would "bring forth a total revolution in the entire world view of humanity" owing to the animal ancestry of human beings (Haeckel: 1868, 487). He was infamous for his aggression towards Christianity, and his dismissal of Judeo-Christian beliefs and this was caused by Darwinism's debunking of previously held truths. And with this said, Darwinism had a paramount influence on human ethics (Weikart: 2002, 326). Haeckel's campaign to demystify religious and ethical thought was joined by many other Darwinists. Their widely held view was that whatever furthers the progression of humankind is ethically noble, while that which leads to weak or sick people is ethically bad regardless of what religion may claim is ethical or not (Weikart: 2002, 327).

Darwinists opinions relating to the value of human life was the most significant shift in moral thought and was intensely contrasted by the liberal view on human rights. As claimed by the Father of Liberalism, John Locke, "the right to life" was the unconditional right of every individual. Darwinism however, starkly contrasted the liberal view of the

sanctity of human life, rather enforcing the significance of human death (Weikart: 2002, 327). The liberal and egalitarian ideal that "all people are created equal" has not always been the dominating western ideology; the Social Darwinian Eugenics Movement heavily challenged it (Bergman: 1999, 1).

The Eugenics Movement was personified by Darwin's natural selection and survival of the fittest worldview. German eugenicist, Alfred Ploetz – who coined the term "racial hygiene" – founded it in 1905, and went on to recruit Ernst Haeckel and August Weismann, both German Darwinists, as honorary members of the movement (Weikart: 2002, 327). It held the belief that the genetic quality of human beings could be improved by natural selection. This, in turn, diminished the ideal of human equality. Instead, another idea arose – human life was, in fact, nothing more than a piece of property (Schmuhl: 1987, 106). Social Darwinism came to undermine equality amongst humans, rather driving the notion that some humans were more "superior" than others, and in turn have a greater right to life than those regarded as "inferior" (Weikart: 2002, 328). Haeckel and other Darwinists fundamentally saw human beings as no different from animals and in turn, have the ability to reach even higher states of genetic perfection as seen in the evolutionary processes of animals in the wild. Consequently, Darwin's theory of natural selection led to the ability of devaluing human life.

In the plight for genetic perfection amongst human beings, individual human lives were to be diminished for the sake of the species, and hence, human lives became less important in the grander scheme. Darwinists believed that the right of the superior is a natural law and should not be viewed any other way. As Darwin himself alluded to in *On the Origin of Species* (1859), death is beneficial and progressive, and leading Darwinists believed that like animals in the wild, humans should also die in the struggle for survival (Darwin: 1859, 459). One of the most commonly written themes by German Darwinists in the early twentieth century was that the individual was not as important as the species. "Without death, there is no progress, and progress is life; so the death of the individual is the condition of life for the whole" (Dodel: 1889, 90). Many countries, including the

United Kingdom and the United States, adopted eugenic policies in the early twentieth century in an effort to improve the genetic stock of their populations.

In the eyes of eugenicists and Darwinists alike, the mentally intelligent and physically strong were regarded as desirable and in turn had "superior" genes, while mentally or physically handicapped members of society had "inferior" genes which were, to say it bluntly, worthless to society in their plight for perfection. Leading Darwinists wrote of the risk of "infecting the population" with defective traits and so eugenic policies such as sterilization, infanticide, abortion and euthanasia were to be necessary (Weikart: 2002, 336). Haeckel became a pioneer of these policies. In his view, practicing these policies on human beings was no different to the killing or reproductive constraint of an animal. Haeckel not only justified the necessity of sterilization, infanticide, abortion and euthanasia, but he also avidly supported involuntary euthanasia for the disabled. Haeckel, however, was not alone in his support of this hindrance of human liberty and equality, many other Darwinists argued for the same necessities (Weikart: 2002, 336). Darwinist August Forel asked: "Is it really a duty to keep alive every idiot, every most wretched cripple with three-fourths of the brain damaged?" to which he answered "No" (Forel: 1905, 457). Ploetz (1895, 144) described a utopian society in which disabled children would be killed immediately after birth.

While not all Darwinists and eugenicists of the time supported Haeckel's radical worldview of exterminating the "inferior" population, Darwinism no less had a fundamental role in the shift of worldviews and ethical systems in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Brazil and Australia to name a few. It appears to me that each country had different eugenic targets in the early twentieth century. For example, the United Kingdom emphasized a preservation of the social class while the United States underlined the need to prevent the reproduction of the mentally ill through sterilization (Porter: 1999, 148). Brazil sought to enlarge their white population through the banning of miscegenation, and Australian policies emerged of separating mixed-race Indigenous children from their parents in an effort to 'civilize' them (Hered: 1940, 13). We see that numerous countries adopted eugenic practices with different emphases

around the turn of the century; however, none were as severe as Nazi Germany. Germany was the first and only country to implement eugenic policies in an effort to eliminate an entire race.

(1.3) Hitler's Darwinism and Nazi Germany

Historians and analysts continue to debate the relative connection between Darwinism and Nazi ideology. On the one hand, we have critics who pressed for the influence that Darwin's biology had on Hitler's racial beliefs, such as Weikart, Bergman, Snyder and Arendt. While on the other hand, we have those critics who deny the abovementioned connection, some being Gould, Arnhart, and Bowler (Richards: 2013, 4). The principle argument of this chapter, however, is to urge the issue that Hitler was, in fact, an avid believer and follower of Darwin and his principles and further implemented Darwin's evolutionary theory into the Third Reich and their racial policies. Some of the critics that deny the link argue that Darwin was long dead before Hitler, and his Nazi Party came to power. Thus, Darwin could not be held responsible for being the mind that thought up or influenced such moral atrocities that was the Holocaust, and hence Darwin and Darwinism ought to be saved from this association (Richards: 2013, 6). Although true that Charles Darwin himself ought not to be held responsible for Hitler's worldview and actions, I, however, do not agree that Darwinism could not be the reasoning behind Hitler's blueprint for power and that there is a definite connection there. I will now go on to elucidate the justification for my argument.

Leading Nazis exposed in their writings that Darwin's theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest had a significant influence on Nazi race policies (Bergman: 1999, 1). When Hitler was young, an understanding of Darwin changed all major forms of politics, and this is so because competition was acknowledged as a social right. In turn, Hitler became an avid supporter of Darwinism (Snyder: 2015, 1). He, like Darwin, saw the world in zoological and ecological terms, whereby humans were simply species, while the law of the jungle was the only law. With this said, he believed that people should consequently behave like species which involves "like mating with like and

seeking to kill unlike" (Snyder: 2015, 1). Hitler held this view so strongly that racial struggle, to him, was as inevitable as gravity. All that was to be accepted and believed was that "the world was not for the cowardly people" and that the weaker should be dominated in the struggle for land and food (Hitler: 1939, 103).

Hitler said that human beings ought to reject the biblical commandments, further claiming: "If I can accept a divine Commandment, it's this one – thou shalt preserve the species" (Hitler: 1939, 281). Hitler saw his people as living in 'filth' and sought to return them to their rightful place of paradise. He thought a race required a worldview that would allow only triumph while participating in mass murder would be only beneficial to the race in the plight for harmony and unity with nature. As Darwin stated, "death is beneficial to the species" (Darwin: 1859, 459); Hitler translated this into believing that murder was valuable to the future of the race. "The highest goal of human beings is not the preservation of any given state or government but the preservation of their kind" (Hitler: 1939, 287). Germany's defeat in the First World War determined the ruin of the planet, as he saw it, and it needed to be purified. Hitler consequently saw politics as nature and nature as politics, and this eradicated any necessity for political thought (Snyder: 2015, 2).

Hitler understood that "the human gene pool could be enhanced by using selective breeding, similar to how farmers breed superior cattle strains" (Bergman: 1999, 1). With this said, Hitler held the view that the German race was the Master race and should be preserved and maintained to hold its supremacy. Hitler's regime relied immensely on Darwinian principles (Bergman: 1999, 2). Particularly those principles set out by Haeckel, as he saw the world, like Darwin and Darwinists, in ecological and zoological terms, whereby "humans were simply animals while the law of the jungle was the only law" (Snyder: 2015, 11). For him, the Aryans were the fittest, and in order to carry this fantasy over, extreme Nazi policies were set in place (Bergman: 1999, 1).

These policies were adopted in order to protect the "superior" race from mixing with those deemed "inferior". Hitler's Aryan race as the "superior" race was based on the

theory of group inequality within species as described by Darwin (Bergman: 1999, 1). It has been argued that Darwinism supported and exhilarated the Nazi opinions on race and war, going as far as to claim that if the Nazis accepted the secular beliefs of Christianity instead of Darwin's theory of evolution then "the Holocaust would never have happened" (Bergman: 1999, 1). Nazi Germany, under Hitler, aimed at applying Darwin's accepted theories to society in effect to restore humankind. Aryans believed that their evolutionary advantages afforded them the right and duty as the "higher" race to subjugate all those deemed less superior. The blueprint was to separate the "inferior" from society in order to prevent them from further contaminating the Aryan bloodline (Keith: 1946, 230). This was acceptable because Darwin 'proved' that certain races were genetically inferior and therefore it was founded on science. Hitler would not ignore science, not while it held the facts and assurance of a better world; one which nature intended (Tenenbaum: 1956, 211). "Natural selection could and should be actively supported, and consequently the Nazis instituted political measures to eliminate Jews and blacks, whom they considered as 'underdeveloped'" (Wilder-Smith: 1982, 27). Furthermore, in order to actively achieve this, the ruthless elimination of "lower" races by barbaric behavior was seen as necessary.

It has been argued that Nazi policies did not so much come from a place of hatred towards Jews, blacks, gypsies, etc. but rather from an idealistic goal of protecting the race from "pollution" (Bergman: 1999, 5). Hitler's initial intentions about the "problems" with race were not clear from the start, and many argue that they began with the ban of Aryans from 'mixing' and breeding with non-Aryans and progressively resulted in the most extreme eugenic practices. "Once the inferior races were exterminated, future generations would be eternally grateful" (Bergman: 1999, 5). For the Nazis some races were not even human, they were merely animals, and their genes would infect society hindering the German's "glorious evolutionary future" (Whitehead: 1983, 15).

Those critics that deny the connection between Darwin's biology and Hitler's racism claim, "Any remarks made by Hitler could be traced back to Darwin – or to Aristotle, or to Christ" (Richards: 2013, 5). They position themselves on the premise that Hitler was not influenced but rather inspired by a myriad of great historical figures and that isolating

Darwin from the rest of the great minds of the past as Hitler's ultimate influencer, is bigoted and unreasonable (Richards: 2013, 5). However, Hitler and his henchmen were often noticed using terms such as 'superior race', 'lower human types', 'pollution of the race' and 'evolution'; terms avidly exhausted by Darwin in his theory of evolution (Bergman: 1999, 3). And this is a major contribution as to why there is such a compelling common conclusion amongst academics that Hitler was a firm supporter and preacher of Darwinism and that "the application of Darwin's theory was the particular characteristic of Nazism" (Stein: 1988, 51). More so, Philosopher David Berlinksi positively proclaims: "If you open Mein Kampf and read it, especially if you can read it in German, the correspondence between Darwinian ideas and Nazi ideas just leaps from the page" (Richards: 2013, 2).

As is argued above, Hitler dedicated many a page to his opinion about race and struggle as inspired by Darwin in his Mein Kampf. "No cat exists which has a friendly disposition towards mice" and with this said, Hitler argued for 'natures will' (Hitler: 1939, 223). "If nature does not wish that weaker individuals should mate with the stronger, she wishes even less that a superior race should mingle with an inferior one" (Hitler: 1939, 223). He saw the United States as a utopian society, which had reached that level fundamentally through the purity of its racial stock and the unadulterating of its bloodline. For him, America was a "master continent", one that he sought to parallel. The maintenance of civilization was dependent on the German race, and Hitler saw it as his duty to instill these views into society (Hitler: 1939, 224). He detailed that a fight for survival was necessary and should the Aryans, "the highest category of race" perish, then so too would culture, as the world had known and loved. "He who does not wish to fight in this world – has not the right to exist" (Hitler: 1939, 226).

After the Nazis came to power in 1933, Darwinian practices were implemented with sterilization laws and later euthanasia and ultimately mass extermination. Hitler essentially used his platform as the Führer of Germany to instill these Darwinian ideals into the Nazi party, prompting an immediate shift in German politics. He stressed to his country that "we the Nazis, must understand and cooperate with science" to produce a

better society (Stein, 1989: 53); while taking pride in their 'honorable' title as "barbarians who shall rejuvenate the world" (Hitler: 1939, 87). And so the road to the Holocaust began.

Conclusion

To conclude my first chapter it appears evident as to how and why Social Darwinism could be used as the very concept that drove the Holocaust and the eventual death of over nine million people. I found it assuring to begin this thesis with the understanding of Social Darwinism so that it may maintain its fundamental importance in the exploration of the path to the Holocaust inasmuch that it will be used to argue for the occurrence of the event itself. Above we notice an inherent and widely acknowledged belief that Darwinism holds significant truths for those who embrace it, truths that ultimately challenged the way many saw the world concerning equality and religiously based ethics.

We now are able to understand the link between Nazism and Darwinism in a sense that may have been overlooked previously by many who have wondered why the Holocaust was "allowed" to happen in the first place. I will argue that it was allowed to happen owing to society's acceptance of Darwinian ideals as well as the notion that through this, "science", "nature" and "politics" became intertwined. It becomes apparent that madmen officially had a means to an end by the supposed proof that Darwinism's 'survival of the fittest theory' was what was required if races, classes and ultimately species, were to reach their desired and righteous, perfect state. Nature's will proved, for these Darwinists to be more powerful than the will of man or the Creator and consequently endorsed the most significant genocide in human history: the Holocaust.

Furthermore, the official link between Hitler and Darwin allows me to further my discussion that Social Darwinism was, in essence, the very factor that paved the way to Nazi domination and brutality. This chapter fundamentally argued that Hitler was, in fact, an avid believer and follower of Darwin and his principles and further implemented Darwin's evolutionary theory into the Third Reich and their racial policies. With the

basis of Social Darwinism laid out in this chapter, I will be able to proceed confidently in examining the ways in which this concept affected all aspects in and around Hitler's worldview as well as the subsequent policies and actions of the Nazis from the early 1930s until their demise in the Second World War. Later on, I will thoroughly attend to and tease through the way that Hitler's Social Darwinism targeted Jews, not a race but rather a religion, and why the Jews were coined a 'race' in Hitler's mind.

Chapter 2

The Totalitarian Project

Introduction

In continuing this analysis, insight into the totalitarian project is fundamental to understanding the political environment of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust, as the Holocaust is dubbed one of the most profound totalitarian events alongside the Russian Terror. Totalitarianism is essentially the political ideology of Hitler and the Nazi party during the 1930s. The principle argument of this chapter is: without the nature of totalitarianism, I do not believe that Social Darwinism and Hitler's worldviews and actions would have been acceptable to Europeans in the early twentieth century. The philosophy of Social Darwinism in conjunction with political atmosphere of totalitarianism ideally laid the foundation for the carnage that occurred during the Holocaust. It also provided Hitler with a platform for total control and domination over Germany in the post-war era. It will be understood that without totalitarianism, antisemitism would hold little value in the modern world, more so, Hitler would likely never have had the opportunity to embark on mass extermination, nor would Germany be granted the means to implement land expansion and conquest.

Herein I discuss the totalitarian project, the role of the totalitarian leader as well as the formation of the Other, or the enemy. I consider the rise of totalitarianism, in effect to explain the political capacity of the Holocaust. I chose to examine the role of the Egocrat or totalitarian leader, in order to show just how Hitler gained legitimacy and power over Nazi Germany and subsequently the adoration of millions of people. Finally, manufacturing the Other is paramount here in understanding later why the Jews, and minorities alike were considered as parasites and inferiors against the supposedly superior and master race.

This chapter is broken into three parts: the first, "The rise of totalitarianism", the second, "The role of the Egocrat" and the third, "The manufacturing of the Other". Hence, this

chapter will begin with an analysis of the rise of totalitarianism from two points of views, that of Hannah Arendt and Claude Lefort. Two works from these profound thinkers will be weighed up against each other in understanding how and why totalitarianism arose, and what the political atmosphere was before and during these regimes. The role of the Egocrat will be discussed regarding their characteristics, aims, promises and practices. The most famous Egocratic leaders are; Hitler, Stalin, and Mao, but obviously, I will concentrate my attention on Hitler for the sake of this analysis. Lastly, I will take this analysis back to the colonial era in an attempt to understand how and why people started being regarded and treated as Others, as well as how and why this Othering was necessary for the succession of totalitarian regimes. These notions will now be discussed.

(2.1) The Rise of Totalitarianism

Claude Lefort and Hannah Arendt are amongst the most influential thinkers in twentieth - century political thought as each managed to elucidate a credible understanding of the totalitarian phenomenon and subsequently made significant contributions to social theory (Flynn: 2005, xxi). Herein I will weigh the concepts described in Arendt's *On The Origins Of Totalitarianism* (1986) against Lefort's in, *The Political Forms of Modern Democracy* (1982). Although Lefort and Arendt are known to acknowledge and respect the works of one another, they fundamentally analyze the rise of totalitarianism in twentieth-century Europe from differing viewpoints.

The main differences between the two works are that Arendt saw the rise of totalitarianism as deeply rooted in imperialism and colonialism, as well as in the anatomies of modern states while Lefort found it through the collapse of traditional politics in premodern Europe. In his particular work that I am making reference to herein, Lefort takes us back to premodern European politics, specifically French; while Arendt fundamentally places her work in the experiences of modern states, specifically those under Stalinism and Nazi Fascism.

For Lefort, the French Revolution of the late eighteenth century played a critical role in the formation of totalitarianism as it represented the end of traditional politics and the end of an incarnated society. This is so because the shift from monarchy to democracy after the French Revolution created a void in the place of power in premodern Europe (Lefort: 1982, 225). The king's image substantially embodied the unity of the state as well as the junctures with the divine through which the operations have their validity. With the killing of the king, a "disincarnation of society" emerged through modernity. The king's place of power emptied as the premodern regime collapsed (Lefort: 1982, 25). Without the unity of the king, the people found themselves anything but unified, and this is so because they no longer had an object to identify themselves with, and their diverse identities and natures inevitably surfaced (Roess: 2012, 183).

Democracy and modernity necessitated that the place of power remained empty, while the image of the people should prevail to maintain their newfound liberalist identity regardless of the sociocultural and sociopolitical differences lingering amidst society (Flynn: 2005, 150). The danger that faced modernity, however, was the temptation of reversion, the temptation of 'filling the empty place of power' to silence society's discord. This temptation is the symbol of totalitarianism according to Lefort (Flynn: 2005, 150). Totalitarianism would act as the imaginary self-identity of the people to reunite society. Totalitarianism was a mutation of the symbolic structure of democracy as it saw the necessity to fill the void of the 'empty place' that democracy created (Flynn: 2005, 150).

Lefort claims that totalitarianism arose as a counter-revolution to democracy (Flynn: 2005, xvii). He explains why liberalism and democracy are susceptible to the threat of totalitarianism; and this is so because with the disharmony evident in society after the fall of the king, room was made for a figure to replace that of the king. In the totalitarian sense, situations such as these were opportunistic for individuals to claim total power and domination over an entire nation.

Arendt, on the other hand, finds the rise of totalitarianism deeply rooted in imperialism and the nature of the nation-state (Inceoglu: 2008, 1331). Arendt “diagnoses totalitarianism as a new form of political rule”, and on par with Lefort’s thought, claimed that it emerged as a result of a sequence of events that occurred in Europe after the French Revolution (Inceoglu: 2008, 1332). Arendt devoted many a page to critiquing the nation-state in her search for the “elements that crystallized totalitarianism” in her book; arguing that a totalitarian regime is the ultimate antithesis of the modern state (Arendt: 1986, 108). More so, the relationship between imperialism and the nation-state occupies a principal role in her theory, while she pays close attention to the Nazi experiences in Europe.

For Arendt, the rise of imperialism was a major factor for the emergence of totalitarianism, and this is so because the race for empire building among European nation-states caused negative results. The most important of these results was the opposing nature of the empire with that of the nation-state (Arendt: 1986, 125). Before the advent of imperialism, there was a balance that was maintained between the nation and the state owing to the fact that the bourgeoisie did not have control over the political body. Here Arendt alludes to the notion that imperialism marked the beginning of the bourgeoisie’s political rule. This factor ultimately turned the state into despotism (Arendt: 1986, 138).

More so, the end of the First World War witnessed the collapse of the last three European empires and through this two groups emerged: the minorities and the stateless. Here an entirely new element of division was introduced (Arendt: 1986, 269). This was so because the nation-state provided protection for its citizens inside and outside its territory while the stateless represented the barbarism and therefore were not afforded any state protection or equal rights and were fundamentally categorized as second class citizens (Arendt: 1986, 275). This notion reminds her of colonialism and the domination that arose from it. For Arendt, this was a critical turning point for the emergence of totalitarianism as the nation-state shifted from a sovereignty, which concerned itself with law and civil rights as an instrument of national interest (Arendt: 1986, 275).

Once the balance was broken, Arendt explained that Europe was left with an abundance of stateless people and minorities as a result of the First World War. These extreme numbers created a fear from European nations and with that came the fear of modernity. Arendt bitterly claims that Hitler held the solution to this crisis, which was to provide the stateless with their own 'states' in the form of concentration camps. The rights of man shifted to the rights of the nation-state (Arendt: 1986, 284).

Therefore it is evident as to why Arendt argues that imperialism and other weaknesses of the nation state paved the way for the rise of totalitarianism. For her, imperialism allowed the opportunity for statelessness and domination through colonial expansion and the collapse of the remaining empires in Europe. Imperialism was the factor through which masses fell under the tyrannical rule of others and further paved the way for similar control to occur many years later in the form of totalitarianism.

(2.2) The Role of the Egocratic Leader

Both Hannah Arendt and Claude Lefort place significance on the totalitarian leader in the successful shift from democracy to totalitarianism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Arendt refers to the totalitarian leader, specifically Hitler, as "the new man emerging out of the storms of destruction" (Arendt: 1998, 102), while Lefort dubbed totalitarian leaders, 'Egocrats'. These 'new men' or 'Egocrats' are an essential prerequisite for a totalitarian regime.

This is so because after the First World War, Europe found itself in crisis and its citizens were desperate for a 'hero' to save them from their turmoil. Like Arendt claims, "new men emerged out of the storms of destruction" in effect to synchronize society; while using society's vulnerability to commit unimaginable violence and murder for the sake of national interest. Germany's defeat in the First World War left the Weimar Republic in crisis; the country had lost land and millions of men, it was starved of food, the economy was debilitatingly weak, thousands of disillusioned soldiers were left wandering the

streets with their weapons in hand and, German citizens were severely traumatized by the impact of the war (Thomas: 1991, 1). Postwar Germany represented a disincarnation of society.

The Egocrat is an embodiment of the nature of the existing social order. Hitler, like all Egocrats, is an individual who longs for “the liberated human being”, one that is free from political limitations and free from their enemies (Debord: 1970, 143). He, like all Egocrats, holds ‘the idea’, ‘the solution’, and ‘the truth’ and this ultimately allows for him to be recognized as a ‘savior of the nation’ and further secured his legitimacy (Lefort, 1988, 247). Civilians of the post-war Weimar Republic were eagerly seeking a ‘hero to save them from their political shackles’, and through this, Hitler, The German Messiah, arose.

The German defeat in the war urged many Germans to reconsider their worldview, and for most, faith was restored by Hitler and by his ‘grand visions’ of the future of the country during the infancy of National Socialism (Thomas: 1991, 2). Hitler’s greatest gift was his charisma, and he used this to convert millions of people into accepting and supporting his fascist regime and political foresights. His cult of personality was very powerful, and his electrifying speeches, filled with valor and motivation, combined with the strategic and tactical image he portrayed easily legitimized his power. Hitler was rapidly adored by the country, to the point that “the Bible would soon be replaced by *Mein Kampf* and the cross by the swastika” (Thomas: 1991, 2-3). He held the heroic characteristics that Lefort necessitates that totalitarian leaders and Egocrats typically portray. Hitler personified change.

Hitler, like all Egocrats, had an implicit aim that was to establish hegemony over the masses, to become the leader of millions of followers. In most cases, the Egocrat forms an organization that protects his aims, in Germany for argument’s sake, this organization takes the form of a Nazi cell or a ‘Nazi reading club’ if you will (Perlman: 1977, 3). With unlimited power as the ambition, these groups inevitably become militant. Lenin elucidates here, “that the militant’s task is to reach working people with our ideas”

(Perlman: 1977, 4). Their ideas, however, become insignificant in practice and were rather used as tools for blackmail, and justify the group's repressive actions against society. 'The Idea' fundamentally becomes a sarcastically constructed collection of fears and hatreds of possible followers; like those who fell into the categories of Jews, counter-revolutionists, and anarchists, and its main objective and promise is the annihilation of these groups (Marchart: 2007, 107).

Hitler ultimately banned any political opposition and Germany became a one-party state, there were no limits to the power that he held over the working class as well as over the military and this was the consequence of the strong bond between the ruler and the ruled. Post-war German citizens were vulnerable targets for Hitler and he successfully implemented his decrees and ideas into their passive minds, coercing them into seeing something 'special' or 'mythical' in him (Strong & Killingworth: 2011: 394-395). While he spent time in prison he began to solidify his charismatic claim of being the only "great man awaited by the German people" and this was when he began manufacturing his prophetic image as Germany's Führer (Dobry: 2006, 158).

In order for Egocrats to broadcast 'the Idea', so as to manipulate the public, they need tools like the media. In most totalitarian cases, "the media are currently a monopoly of the ruling classes who divert them for their benefit". The media becomes the ultimate platform for propagandist texts and is the fundamental mode through which 'the Idea' gets disseminated. The totalitarian media eventually reduces its audiences to voiceless and powerless spectators, who become passive victims that are continually subjected to the existing order (Perlman: 1977, 4). Hitler used the media as a propagandist tool to take his image and vision further. He appointed his close friend and colleague, Joseph Goebbels as the head of propaganda through which the ideals of National Socialism, discrimination, antisemitism and anti-communism were expressed (Dobry: 2006, 162). Through the use of media propaganda, Germans were constantly reminded of the Nazi mission of classifying Jews as enemies of the state, as well as how 'glorious' Hitler was. Posters were continually projecting Hitler in the Nazi pose with swastikas in the background, further elevating his 'worshipped' image (Dobry: 2006, 166).

With this said, the Egocrat personifies a totalitarian leader, and without their presence totalitarianism would be impossible. They are the figureheads responsible for superfluous atrocities committed against millions. For the Egocrat, the media are the means; the objective is hegemony and power and the command of the secret police in their mission for the perfect society (Lefort: 1988, 247).

Along the lines of totalitarian theory, the principle aim of Egocrats was to reincarnate society as traditional premodern European forms of rule had come to an end. In order for heads of states and dictators to successfully rule, those they rule must be united in an effect to identify with and accept the ideologies of their ruler.

(2.3) Manufacturing the Other

Like Arendt, many intellectual thinkers liken the principles and practices of totalitarianism to the roots of colonialism. As we are well aware, colonialism involved the settling of several European powers in countries on continents like Africa, Asia, and the Americas, with the goal of establishing colonies and acquiring full political control over them, while exploiting them for their resources. Colonialism began as early as the sixteenth century and dated up until the twentieth century.

The term, ‘the Other’ in social thought has widely been used as a synonym for ‘difference’. Like imperialism and colonialism, totalitarianism relies on the presence of the Other in effect to reunite society after the fall of European premodernity and hence the fall of traditional politics and rule (Lefort: 1982, 115). The social classes were vulnerable to the plight of totalitarianism, and the manufacturing of the Other, or in Lefort’s work, ‘the evil Other’ assisted in the legitimation of totalitarian dominance (Lefort: 1982, 213).

As touched on above, the Other was manufactured during the colonial era but bares significant ties with late nineteenth and early twentieth-century politics. With the

existence of the Other, the social classes were able to construct the Self, against the image of the Other (Lefort: 1982, 214). In colonial consideration, the colonized Other was weighed against the Imperial Self and through this, the Others, slaves in this context, were used to define imperial Europe through negation. In the master-slave narrative, Franz Fanon argues that the existence of the colonizers is contingent to the existence of the colonized. He believes that “when there are no longer slaves, there are no longer masters” (Fanon: 2008, 171). Along these lines, Sartre asserts, “It is the Anti-Semite that makes the Jew” (Satre: 1948, 69). The Self needs the Other to define himself as superior to them, the inferior. With this said, the master depends on the recognition of the slave whether it be willed or forced because without this recognition he cannot recognize himself as superior and therefore cannot be dubbed as much different from the slave (Fanon: 2008, 172).

The classification of the Other as different from ‘normalcy’ served to legitimize and rationalize European domination over African countries and ‘underdeveloped masses’ alike. Colonialism was accepted through discourses of primitivism and savagery, and this positioned the colonized outside European familiarity (Asad: 1973: 16). McGrane nitpicks on anthropology and its functions to maintain a belief in “the exotic but to refrain from combining the alien with our world” (McGrane: 1989, 3). It must be noted herein that Nazi Germany categorized many people as ‘Others’; these included Jews, homosexuals, gypsies, political insurgents and the mentally and physically handicapped to name a few. But for the sake of this analysis, particular attention will be placed on the Jews as the ultimate ‘Other’ to the self-identity of the National Socialists.

As every totalitarian state required an Other to compare themselves to, the Eastern European Jews of the twentieth century were those people for the Nazis. Not only were Jews ‘Othered’ by the National Socialists and their propaganda, but the term the ‘Other’ became interchangeable with many other descriptive words used to define them. Jews were alien, they were outsiders, they were the universal enemy, they were parasites who carried diseases, they were devils, they were poisoners and polluters of the planet, an outcast people, “a pestilence worse than the Black Death” (Snyder: 2015, 8).

As each species on the earth bore distinctive characteristics that had been passed on hereditarily since the beginning of time, Hitler and the Nazis believed this notion of being true for human races too. The passing on of genetic traits related not only to the physical appearance of the people, but also involved their internal emotional, and mental traits. These genetic features included a person's way of thinking, artistic and logistic abilities, their intelligence and appreciation of culture, physical might and military proficiency.

Timothy Snyder, in his book, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (2015) explains that not only did Hitler regard Jews as 'outsiders' or 'aliens'; he denied that Jews were a human race at all. Instead, they were so different and unnatural to the world that they were a 'non-race' or even, a 'counter-race'. In aligning Hitler's worldview with the biology of Darwin, Jewish genetic traits unequivocally made them an 'inferior people' (Snyder: 2015, 4). Their characteristics were so absurd and impure that Hitler could not risk further 'infection' from them. Arguably, the most distinctive difference between the Jews and the Nazis was that the Jew's followed an alien logic of 'un-nature' by generating concepts that allowed the world to be seen as a human order, while the Nazis followed the Darwinist logic of 'nature' and fought for the world to be seen in ecological terms, as they felt it should be (Snyder: 2015, 5).

Claude Lefort claims that totalitarianism demands an Other, as it is founded upon the division between the Self, or as he calls it, 'the One people', and the Other and that this is the only division totalitarianism tolerates. He further insists that "the constitution of the One-people necessitates the incessant production of enemies" in order to safeguard its appropriate functioning and to maintain its unity (Lefort: 1982, 176). Lefort regards this division as a prophylactic command because the enemy is a "parasite to eliminate". For Lefort, totalitarian systems presented themselves like a body, a social body, and with the presence of enemies and Others, the body becomes full of illnesses and impurities that it needs to get rid of (Lefort: 1982, 174).

In discussing the role of the Other in pure totalitarian terms, Lefort highlights that a division between the 'inside' and the 'outside' is contingent to the identity of the Europeans against their enemies. This Other, according to Lefort, is "the Other from the outside" and with their existence society is depicted as one without internal divisions and conflicts, but rather a society that has united through its deliverance from its enemies (Lefort: 1982, 213). From Lefort's experience with totalitarianism, all signs of divergence are projected outside the unified body of the One-people. For totalitarianism, the evil Other is at the service of foreign powers, whether they be Jews, madmen, gypsies or homosexuals – "those who are not really part of the people" (Lefort: 1982, 214). The unity of the people needs the conversion of real rivals of the regime – the Other, and when these enemies are eliminated, then new enemies have to be manufactured. Lefort goes on to discuss that the threat of alien elements upon society justifies the logic of terror. It is, in this context, logical to unleash campaigns of terror against the Other because this would be the only way to protect the phantasmic unity of the One-people (Lefort: 1982, 214).

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, the concept of totalitarianism was developed by political philosophers like Arendt, and Lefort, in order to acknowledge a different and unthinkable reality, which was the experience of Nazism in the twentieth century. The occurrence of totalitarianism cast a negative light over all claims of liberal thought to democracy and through this both Arendt and Lefort decided to explain this phenomenon. Within their very different works on the matter, it becomes evident that the French Revolution was a turning point in the history of traditional politics as it brought about the advent of totalitarianism. More so, we notice through Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism that the dark shadow of colonialism and imperialism continued to haunt the modern world as nation-states became despotic, and branched themselves away from the rights of man. Arendt stands firm that totalitarianism broke the thread of tradition while appealing to the laws of life, and scientific reasoning, in eugenics and vulgarized Darwinism while employing terror through this ideology.

For Lefort, totalitarianism arose as a counter-revolution to democracy as it provided disincarnated societies with a 'hero' that would ultimately reunite them through their power and legitimacy. However, we now notice that democracy was susceptible to the threat of totalitarianism as society's discord allowed for them to be mute and vulnerable pawns in the totalitarian project. Lefort's conceptions of the Egocratic leader allow us to identify exactly how Hitler epitomizes this totalitarian figurehead. More so, it becomes evident that without this leader, totalitarianism would hold no ground as a political ideology.

Furthermore, in discussing the creation of the Other, also referred to as; the enemy, the evil other, the alien, the inferior and the outsiders, it becomes easier to figure out how the Jews and other minorities became vulnerable to the markings of difference. Similarly, totalitarianism and therefore Nazi Germany are dependent on the construction of the Other in order for it, as a regime, to maintain the unity of their society in order to quiet any internal divisions and therefore assure full political control by a single party and in essence, a single man.

Chapter 3

Hitler's World View

Introduction

When thinking about the egocrat, Adolf Hitler, an image of a madman in control naturally resonates in one's mind. He was a man of unimaginable evil who is argued to have suffered from a multitude of mental illnesses during the course of his adult life by many political and psychological thinkers of this day. Hitler is one of the most prominent figures, and the Holocaust, is one of the most important events, in world history. Many scholars have devoted much their time in an effort to understand the worldview of Hitler to explain his actions in the Final Solution (Hyland: 2011, 58). It was ultimately concluded that trying to pursue such understandings should be regarded as futile and that his actions could only have stemmed from his paranoid schizophrenia and delusions, therefore answering the question of why he saw the world the way he did – because he was insane and ill (Hyland: 2011, 58). Other scholars, though, don't believe that the mere labelling of Hitler as 'evil' and 'mentally insane' explains his atrocious actions towards millions of innocent people (Hyland: 2011, 59). We already know that my argument pertains to Hitler's worldview being foundationed on Darwinian principles, and with this I hope to further set out conclusive elements, relating to Hitler's particular beliefs and opinions about the world, those, which deem to examine how and why he was ultimately dubbed a 'madman'.

Hitler's psychology is unique; the principle argument in this chapter is that his worldview is made up of complex fixations regarding Darwinian principles of evolution. He is fixated on several issues: the position of the Aryan race in the hierarchical order of the modern world, the overtone that Jews are parasitic entities who 'pollute' the planet and his untiring pursuit of the destruction of any political ideology that was not in line with his 'third way'. In this chapter, I explore the theories surrounding Aryan superiority, Nazi antisemitism and the conspiracies of Jewish world domination from a National Socialist perspective. I find it necessary to discuss these factors in an attempt to establish

the very ideas behind Hitler's Darwinist worldview. It is of fundamental importance to gain an understanding of how and why Hitler felt the unconditional desire of eliminating the Jewish race. This chapter is broken into three parts: the first, "Hitler's Master Race", the second, "Jew Hatred" and the third, "The Judeo-Bolshevik Myth". In connection, these concepts will elucidate a broader understanding of Hitler's Weltanschauung. I will now discuss these issues further.

(3.1) Hitler's Master Race

Hitler, along with innumerable thinkers who shared his pro-Germanic spirit, saw the Aryan race as being wholly superior to all other peoples (Bhopal: 2005, 121). According to Hitler, present in the world was one superior race, one people, who ultimately created and perfected culture. He claims that "everything we admire on this earth today – science and art, technology and inventions – is only the creative product of a few peoples and originally perhaps of one race" (Hitler: 1939, 225). Hitler begins his chapter on 'Race and Culture', in his *Mein Kampf* (1939), with the prophecy that Germans ought to conquer the world. He goes on to profess that should the Aryan race perish then so too would all the world's beauty, as the continuance of culture is dependent on the Aryan and Germanic spirit (Hitler: 1939, 225).

Hitler credited every manifestation of global cultural development to his race. In line with Darwinian principles on evolution and human civilization, Aryans believed that it was their race that instituted a superior kind of humanity and that "he [the Aryan] is the Prometheus of mankind", and ultimately the "archetype of what we understand by the term 'man'" (Hitler: 1939, 226). Essentially, Aryans grasped the ideas laid out by Darwinism and dubbed themselves as the 'superior species' that Darwin spoke of in his evolutionary theory. They ultimately looked into origins of Aryanism and found some obscure connection between Darwin's premises and their cultural history. Hitler boldly claims in his book that the influence of the Aryan people aroused a worldwide desire for the achievement of human culture, as embodied in the Germanic and Hellenic spirit of Aryanism (Bhopal: 2005, 121). Hitler writes in support of the Aryan philosophy that "If

we subject the different people to a strict investigation, almost all have simply been the recipients of a culture created elsewhere” with implications of Aryan stimulus. The world is, therefore, indebted to the Aryan race for it was they who ‘created mankind’ (Hitler: 1939, 227).

Influenced by Darwin’s philosophies on ‘natural selection’ inclusive of superior bloodlines and beneficial gene pools, it is noticed above that Hitler and Aryans alike adhere to the idea that it was their blood and genes that created human culture. But what substantiation is there to support their claims? James Battersby and Juan Comas provide interesting sets of arguments in support of these bold postulations. Battersby, from what my research has shown, is pro-Hitler as he wrote *The Holy Book of Adolf Hitler* (1952) shortly after the conclusion of the Second World War and ultimately after Hitler’s demise, seemingly in what appears to be his words and opinion. Battersby elucidates a credible argument of how and why the Aryan race can be regarded as culture creating and superior to all other peoples in his writing.

Battersby starts his first chapter with the statement that; “For the German people, true religion is founded on race” (Battersby: 1952, 3). He takes us back over 3000 years B.C when people believed Aryans to have created culture, and civilization, as according to academic historians. During this period, it was claimed, that the civilizations of Mesopotamia were of genuine Aryan culture (Battersby: 1952, 3). He argues that owing to scientific observation; it is reasonable to accept that Aryans were the founders of social order and creators of culture. He credits the Aryan archetype – traditionally fair skin, blue eyed and blonde haired people – as being in their highest racial manifestation since the Bronze Age. Furthermore, for him, the civilizations of Greece and Rome and later of China and Egypt were Aryan in origin and pattern (Battersby: 1952, 3). Battersby fundamentally argues that it was the Aryan tribes of the Bronze Age that were responsible for human civilization and culture owing to their crop harvests, their acquisition of bronze and iron and their incentive of burning their dead as opposed to burying them. For Battersby, this was the turning point from savagery and barbarism – of

other ancient tribes – to cultural development and societal advancement with Aryan tribes at the helm (Battersby: 1952, 4).

Owing to this, it was argued that the Aryan was called upon and chosen by God for world leadership. And in this, Hitler was sent as the prophet, or redeemer of the Aryan people of the whole world. “Yes the Germans are the God-appointed lords of the earth, and those who have vowed their eternal loyalty to Adolf Hitler shall be given all power from high” (Battersby: 1952, 5). In the contemporary day, it was believed that National Socialism – the Germanic and Aryan world of ideas – would cure mankind of their impurities, sins, and woes. This took on a religious function. National Socialism or Aryanism in this sense, is even more than a faith and would act as a religiously sacred gospel, with their God, Adolf Hitler, who came down from heaven, leading them to paradise (Battersby: 1952, 10).

Battersby plays around with theories of Jewish conspiracy as being the cause of the downfall of mankind but doesn't specifically go into detail of how and why mankind has fallen; the just of his rationale is based on the fact that Germans or Aryans were not yet the rulers of the universe and hence the world was in disarray, believing that “one day the world will be healed by the German spirit” and a new social order will be established where Adolf Hitler will replace the Divine Jesus Christ in body and mind (Battersby: 1952, 15). Battersby goes on to claim that the supposedly chosen Aryan race was promised by Jesus Christ in the new testament, and with this the world will be shown an Aryan faith foundationed on blood and race, and in this, it was believed that the imminence of world Aryan power was clear (Battersby: 1952, 13-14).

Juan Comas, on the other hand, credits racism for the hyperbolic claims made by pro-Aryan groups. In contrast to Battersby, Comas appears to be a skeptic and highly cynical of the “so-called Aryan race” as he calls it. He discusses in his *Racial Myths* (1952) that “there is no scientific evidence whatsoever” to support the superiority of Aryans above other peoples. In fact, he argued that the Social Darwinian standpoint taken by Germans is no more than a myth for finding a scapegoat when the unity of a group is threatened

(Comas: 1952, 10-11). For Comas, racists were not satisfied with proclaiming and practicing their ‘superiority’ over non-white races; they went further in necessitating hierarchies within the white race itself. Here we see the anticipated link between Social Darwinism and antisemitism. Social Darwinism, as we learned previously, necessitates the differentiation of races. Jews were ultimately a white race, like Aryans. Comas outlines that Aryans needed to go as far as to subjugate minority groups within the white race itself, in order to play out their all-encompassing racial paradigms (Comas: 1953, 33).

He finds this to be a justification of new rights of conquest and domination over land and people (Comas: 1952, 33). For Comas, this is as doctrine of racial superiority and in essence the origin of Aryanism. It was the nineteenth-century aristocrat, Arthur de Gobineau, who set the path for Aryanism in all its extensiveness and labeled the Aryan race as superior over the other “white strains” (Comas: 1952, 34-35). This is in stark opposition to Battersby’s claims of Aryan superiority dating back to near the Stone Age. Like the other pro-Aryan thinkers, Gobineau also blames East Asia for bearing the Aryan culture and dubs them ‘culture bearers, not culture creators’, owing to the penetration of Aryan blood in their borders. Comas highlights more superfluous Aryan claims; that Julius Cesar, Alexander the Great, Leonardo da Vinci and Napoleon Bonaparte were all Aryans, thus associating the race with men of great stature in body and mind, men who made history (Comas: 1952, 39).

Most bizarrely, Aryan thinkers went as far as to argue for the Aryan origin of Jesus Christ, claiming “that there is not the slightest proof that his parents were of Jewish decent and that there was no doubt that the Galileans were of Aryan blood” (Comas: 1952, 37). As for the religious aspect of Aryans as the chosen race by God, Comas tackles this with announcing that this theology of German superiority was nothing more than a quasi- mythical cult based on extortion and world conquest – and these hyperbolic claims are a means to an end in turning their bizarre beliefs into a plausibly ‘moral’ reality (Comas: 1952, 39). It is quite clear of the Aryans’ belief that their race was ultimately superior to any other. Their belief of this was set in stone and was

untouchable, and clearly had no limitations; they managed to manipulate any significant link between their 'species' and the superiority that Darwin claims exists in the world, and ought to exist for the preservation and survival of the species.

(3.2) Jew Hatred

Hitler's hatred towards Jews was so profound that historians and analysts continue to debate the source of his antisemitism to this day. Some argue that his antisemitism stemmed from the death of his mother under the treatment of a Jewish doctor – while others argue that Jews were the cause of Germany's defeat in the First World War. Perhaps his hatred towards Jews was based on the Christian mentality that Jews were responsible for the crucifying of Jesus Christ, their God. There are a myriad of theories that have been acknowledged when attempting to understand Hitler's extreme antisemitism, but the principle argument that I will make herein is that his hatred is underpinned by Social Darwinism.

Robert Michael, in his work *Holy Hatred: Christianity, Antisemitism, and the Holocaust* (2006) fundamentally argued that National Socialist antisemitism resulted from the Christian churches, and that it was Christian theology that conditioned the road to the Holocaust. He claims that the Christian mentality and stance towards Jews stemmed from the historical relationship between them and the churches (Michael: 2006, 5) He argues that it was initially the churches that expressed the opinion that Jews were sub-human or devilish. Jewish antagonism was in practice since the earliest epochs of the Christian era, and this was apparently owing to the notion that Jewish traditions and rituals were so obscure from the Christian norm that they could not be understood (Michael: 2006, 2). Michael explains that this ancient Jewish antagonism was eventually replaced by the belief that Jews, all Jews, were guilty of murdering God and they were, therefore, deserving of any discriminations towards them, and that these discriminations were in turn, befitting (Michael: 2002, 2).

The 'deicidal' Jew subsequently became the archetypal villains in Christian belief. In his work, Michael examines the parts played by the churches in elaborating the disparaging image of Jews and Jewishness (Michael: 2006, 2). For him, it was the church that first likened the Jews to aliens and monsters, and that they were all examples of a punished people responsible for evil sins. It is claimed that the churches and Christian theology have been history's most significant source of antipathy towards Jews (Michael: 2006, 3). He questions, "Why did so few brave souls try to intercede during the Holocaust"? And the answer was because an idealistic anti-Jewish Christian ideology had conditioned them into antisemitism; and with this, they stood by and watched while the Holocaust occurred (Michael: 2006, 3-4). He further justifies long-standing Christian antisemitism by stating that millions of Jews had been murdered in Europe before Hitler was born, as Jews were denounced by the church fathers and regularly annihilated since the Middle-Ages (Michael: 2006, 4).

For the Nazis, Christianity played a critical function in most of their lives and subsequently in their Nazism. Nazi antisemitism fits effortlessly into Christian antisemitism, and the two ultimately became one and the same thing. In fact, Nazis are recorded to have claimed that Jesus was "a lynchpin in German history" as he was the "leading antisemite". So here we see Jew-hatred as stemming from the alleged Jewish responsibility for the murder of Jesus Christ (Steigmann-Gall: 2007, 10-12). Although this theory is popular amongst critics, it does not hold substantial weight because if Hitler were a religious man, surely the heinous crimes he committed would be contradictory to the Christian faith?

Bacharach's argument on Hitler's antisemitism is drawn from an entirely different perspective to Michael's. He argues that Jew hatred stemmed from a conspiracy of Jewish world domination. He points out that not only were Jews an enemy of the German state, but rather of universal mankind. Like Michael, Bacharach sheds some light on traditional Christian antisemitism, but ultimately asserts that it was Hitler who first related this antisemitism with racism (Bacharach: 1998, 1). Bacharach cites Reinhard Rürup, that "regardless of age-old antisemitism, there was in fact no Jewish problem or

‘Judenfrage’ rampant in German history, but that it was rather, a recent phenomenon that shifted into a universal problem” (Rürup: 1975: 74).

For National Socialists, Jews were the principle embodiments of capitalism and democracy and their “tendency towards political revolution and social unrest” against the socialist world ideology, were the chief traits that were inherently disliked in Jews (Bacharach: 1998, 3). Mechanized capitalism and the rise of the industrial worker threatened the middle class and because the Jew was seen as a representation of capitalism, then it was he who was the threat to middle class society (Bacharach: 1998, 5). Because of this, the Jews became the ‘pariahs’, an outcast people who held the true power in Germany. With this, the myth of ‘Jewish Might’, was born and it involved them as mortally dangerous enemies, Jews of power and destruction (Bacharach: 1998, 5).

Bacharach adds to Michael’s traditional Christian antisemitism by elucidating that Christianity perceived Jews as ones who bask in wealth and riches, and through this, the ‘Mighty Jew’ was born. Another theory of Jew hatred arose; that there could not be two ‘Chosen Peoples’ by God. The universally religious belief that the Jewish people were chosen by God riled Hitler, as he felt and believed deeply that it was his people, the Aryans, who were the true ‘Chosen people’, not the Jews (Bacharach: 1998, 5-6). For Hitler, as well as for the many other antisemites, the Aryans were the chosen people of God while the Jews were the chosen people of Satan; and this proclamation needed to be set straight by the Nazis for there cannot be two ‘Chosen People’. Jews, for Bacharach, were hated because they were perceived as the carriers of democracy and pacifism, two of the major plagues of humanity in Hitler’s mind (Bacharach: 1998, 6).

Most importantly of all, is to delve into Hitler’s reasoning for his antisemitism, the specific antisemitism that ultimately influenced the Holocaust. For him, the Jew represents the starkest contrast to the Aryan for a number of reasons. He faults the Jews for their alleged instinct of self-preservation as God’s ‘Chosen Race’ and this is due to the fact that the Jews even still existed (Hitler: 1939, 234). He proceeds with his theory that it was the Aryan who created human culture and blasted the Jews for adopting a

civilization that was never theirs to adopt. He asserts that Jewish intellectual powers are a result of lessons they had learned from other races and that their capacity for self-preservation was the chief reason as to why they were never capable of creating their own civilization, regardless of their intellect (Hitler: 1939, 234-235).

Jewish self-preservation was a mortal problem for Hitler as he drew the conclusions that Jews were incapable of mobilizing for a greater good, and their ability to sacrifice did not extend beyond their own personal gains. This made them outcasts of society instead of an integral part of society (Hitler: 1939, 235). Although Hitler's work is widely regarded as hearsay, he ultimately dubs the Jews as selfish and egotistic people who extort and poison the members of the societies they engulf themselves in. Their individual egoism expands as far as "bitterly fighting against each other like a swarm of rats" when their need for unity is no longer necessary, such as when a mutual danger threatens them or when a mutual prey attracts them (Hitler: 1939, 236). This notion of Jewish individual egoism and self-preservation is fundamentally the reason why the Jewish state had no territorial boundaries, because Jews fought for themselves, not for their race (Hitler: 1939, 236).

The Jew, who lives within the borders of foreign people, became a parasite and no longer a nomad – a parasite because they appropriated the culture of others, and had nothing to offer in return. They used the knowledge gained from others to paint themselves as part of a culture, but rather this was seen as a superficial imitation (Hitler: 1939, 238). The Jew was a sponger, someone who settled far and wide according to something they desired in another civilization. Hitler claims that the presence of a Jew in a territory that is not his own is the same as the presence of a vampire walking among the people. "Jews have always lived in states that have belonged to other races and within those states, they have formed a state of their own" (Hitler: 1939, 238).

It could be said that Hitler himself felt the threat of Jewish economic success in Germany and elsewhere in Europe because he writes, "the Jew's commercial cunning in economic life made them superior in this field than the Aryan" (Hitler: 1939, 241). It is known that should anything come in the way of the right of Aryanism then it was inherently evil.

More so, economic power saw patterns in the subsequent growth of Jewish political power and with this said, this was another rationale for why Jews were to be prosecuted because it threatened the new world order. Hitler saw commerce as becoming a Jewish monopoly, and it needed to be halted (Hitler: 1939, 242). Hitler explains that the economic success of the Jews gave rise to popular envy and that they used their wealth to integrate themselves into a society that they were not welcome to be part of, with their arbitrary introductions of philanthropy and monetary kindness. All of a sudden the Jew started preaching ideas of equality and liberalism, and with this, they pushed for the right to citizenship in European territories and further pronounced that they deserved this owing to their economic contributions within the societies they lived (Hitler: 1939, 241-242).

Hitler saw Jews as the poisoners of others because they begged the policy of extinguishing racial discrimination around Europe in a hope for the unity of man; For the Jew tried “to break down racial discrimination, but the loss of racial purity will wreck inner happiness forever” (Hitler: 1939, 256). Hitler perceived this to be a trick to gain support and in turn exploit and pollute the blood of others in a hope to grow his own race because, “the mongrels that result out the mixing of Christian and Jewish blood always declare themselves on the Jewish side” (Hitler: 1939, 247). Hitler became wary that underneath the guise of a liberal Jew and the introduction of social concepts such as democracy and equality, satanic characteristics were hidden. And out of the democratic Jew, arises the tyrant of the people, the totalitarian ‘Other’ and the Darwinian ‘inferior’ (Hitler: 1939, 250).

(3.3) The Judeo-Bolshevik Myth

Hitler’s hatred for Jews later transformed into a Jewish-communist conspiracy of world domination. He held the premise that Soviet Russia was a manifestation of a Jewish worldview. For him, the façade of communism was nothing more than a manipulative tool that led Slavs, the largest cultural group in Europe, to agree to their new ‘Jewish leadership’. Communism was the last straw for Hitler’s belief that all widely held ideas

were Jewish and all Jews were servants of these ideas (Snyder: 2015, 19). Hitler and Nazis alike concluded that the connection between Jews and communism was no coincidence and that communism was rather a 'Judeo-Bolshevik myth'. This myth underlined for Hitler, that Jews began to hold disparaging power over the masses with their deviant and unnatural worldviews. In this case, Jewish Bolshevism, which held power in Soviet Russia would start eating away at the very essence of the world's nations, leaving them in the wake of destruction (Snyder: 2015, 19).

Here we beg the question: how and why was a conspiracy of Jewish-Bolshevik political power and Jewish world domination conjured up? A possible answer to this question begins here: The Russian Empire was home to more Jews than any other country before the Revolution of 1917, but she had always been an inherently antisemitic state (Stanislawski: 1988, 280). Jews were subject to several forms of discriminatory acts and were the victims of pogroms, which continuously increased in intensity and frequency throughout the country. This antisemitism led to the migration of Jews across Europe and left the widely acknowledged notion that Jews from Eastern Europe were all of a sudden "everywhere" (Stanislawski: 1988, 281).

With the appointment of Vladimir Lenin in 1919 there was a shift in the tides, Jews were surprisingly and instantly given equal rights as citizens of the newly revolutionized state. No longer were they merely a religious minority in a state of oppressive domination. Lenin's impression of Jews was aligned with the notion that their support of him during a time so turbulent for the Russian empire was appreciated and acknowledged (Snyder: 2015, 24). Lenin saw Jews as an ally rather than a threat during his rule in Soviet Russia. This left the impression that Jews now had a means to which they could control their destiny in Soviet Russia and ultimately translated to them having some sort of political power there, political power that was overly exaggerated by Hitler and the Nazis. For him the notion of Bolshevism was more a way to associate Jews with a piece of territory than it was about the politics of Soviet Russia (Snyder: 2015, 27).

Mark Weber attempts in his work, *“The Jewish Role in the Bolshevik Regime and Russia’s Early Soviet Union”* (1994) to underpin the reasons why the Bolsheviks succeeded in dominating Soviet Russia as well as why the Slavs placed so much blame on Jews for their misfortunes caused by the cruel and tyrannical communist regime. It is fundamental to note that Bolshevism or in this case, communism was a small political faction directed by the philosophies of Karl Marx, a German-Jew. However, he was argued to be an anti-Semitic Jew (Weber: 1994, 11). The impression here is that Weber, drawing from several arguments, maintains for the notion that the Judeo-Bolshevik myth, is not a myth as such but that the conspiracy actually holds many truths. The premise here is that Jews in Bolshevik Russia did, in fact, play a largely decisive role in the early stages of the Bolshevik regime, ultimately directing the Soviet rule during its infancy (Weber: 1994, 15). It is claimed that some of the most influential Bolshevik leaders post the revolution of 1919 were Jewish or of some sort of Jewish lineage. Trotsky, Sverdlov, and Zinoviev were of pure Jewish blood while frontrunner Lenin had Jewish grandparents. Lenin himself claimed, “An intelligent Russian is almost always a Jew or someone with Jewish blood in his veins” (Weber: 1994, 16).

With the conclusive belief that many Bolshevik leaders were of Jewish origin, this made anti-Bolsheviks, with Hitler at the helm, extremely suspicious of an impending ‘Jewish World Conspiracy’. It was held that with the advent of international finance, Marxism and Freemasonry in Soviet Russia, supposedly orchestrated by Jewish ideals, that Jews were embarking on their tyranny over the world (Waddington: 2007, 7). It seemed that the transformation from imperialist Russia into the revolutionized Soviet Union could only be explained by the presence of the intervening planetary enemy – the international Jew. And with this, Hitler recognized that there was an intimate link between the power of the Jew and the Bolshevik revolutionaries (Waddington: 2007, 14). For Hitler and his followers, the image of the Soviet Union as a Jewish dictatorship became definite. Alfred Rosenberg, a key influential Reich Minister in the Nazi Party, believed that it wasn’t only in Soviet Russia that Jews held political sway but that their influence reached significant centers of international finance. His perception was that Jews in the Soviet Union were

collaborating with the Jewish capitalists of the West in an effort to initiate a Jewish world despotism (Waddington: 2001, 21).

It does not seem that Hitler drew any relationship with Jews and Bolsheviks prior to the Russian revolution of 1919. He claimed, “the Jewish-Bolshevik overlords were more firmly in the saddle than ever”, with their fundamental aim being the annihilation of other nations and the formation of Jewish world domination (Waddington: 2007, 26). The Nazis became aware that the threat of communism was drawing closer to their frontiers, and with Jews as the supposed driving force behind the ideology, Nazi hatred for Bolshevism was in full potency and ultimately, ‘Jewish’ influenced bolshevism became their mortal enemy (Waddington: 2007, 29).

Hitler proclaimed that his Aryan race could gain global power by removing the Jews of Eastern Europe and abolishing their supposed Soviet stronghold. This would eliminate any further Jewish threat and free the Soviet Union, which is Europe’s largest state, from tenuous Jewish control (Snyder: 2015, 20). Hitler thought that the destruction of the Soviet Russia would fall in line with the Darwinian philosophy of ‘the survival of the fittest’, by starving the weak in order for his master race to flourish with the threat of communism and its Jewish conspirators gone (Snyder: 2015, 21).

The supposed Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy was the breaking point for Hitler, and it was the very idea that crystallized his desire to annihilate Jews. It reiterated his belief that the universe was diseased by Jews and polluted by their ideas, sealing their fate as planetary enemies. The invasion of Soviet Russia would see the dream of heroic German intervention set in motion (Snyder: 2015, 26). Once Soviet Russia is defeated, the world would be restored from parasitic Jewry, and Germany would gain an empire. If and only if Jews could be destroyed, then false ideas of unnatural harmony amongst people could be realized, halting Jewish world domination altogether and making way for the Germanic weltanschauung of superiority and Aryan perfection (Snyder: 2015, 28).

Conclusion

I do not believe that it was a matter of secular beliefs that drove Hitler's hatred to such extremes. Evidence does not prove that Hitler was a religious man, but rather a man of science and biology. Under the guise of Social Darwinism, Hitler managed to maintain the notion that his people, the Aryans, the Master race, were the world's most superior. This gave him an unwavering sense of entitlement as depicted by 'the law of nature'. The Aryans as the strong ought to starve the weak in the struggle for survival; this was Hitler's manifesto. For him, his race was the very people that created culture that had subsequently been adopted and manipulated to suit foreigners, claiming that barely any of them, created a culture of their own. We see a significant obsession with Aryanism when the claims that Jesus Christ, Julius Caesar, and Leonardo Da Vinci to name a few, had Aryan blood running through their veins.

Also under the guise of Social Darwinism, Hitler now had his own example of a parasitic species – the Jews. Hitler fundamentally allowed his fear of modernity, communism, and capitalism to unravel into a deep hatred for the Jews, whom he believed were the root cause of all the world's evil, in terms of humanity, equality, democracy and kindness, none of which Hitler could fathom as being a universally good quality to have in people. I argue that his fear of all things liberal and fair could be rationalized by Darwin's biology as with this, he found a 'third way' of life – under National Socialism – wherein politics, individuals and globalism essentially mean nothing, while ecology and zoology mean everything in the successful preservation of a race. Further fueling Hitler's antisemitic fire was the advent of Bolshevism. Bolshevism represented two threats to him; the first was the rise of an ideology that was in conflict with his; and the second was the rise of the 'international Jew'. With this, the Jew was no longer an internal problem in Germany, but rather a problem faced by the entire world. Furthermore, all the abovementioned arguments relating to the cause of Hitler's antisemitism along the lines of Christian theology, Germany's defeat in the First World War, the Judeo-Bolshevik myth, and Jewish materialism, all add up to the fundamental Darwinist worldview that Hitler held so deeply.

Chapter 4

Occupation and Extermination

Introduction

Hitler saw America as the coming world power and the American population as “world class people” that were “younger and healthier than the Germans”. With the advent of globalization, states were able to compare themselves to others, and this led Hitler to the American dream. He wanted to “keep up with the Joneses” and this required a German empire that could be compared to that of America. Hitler admired America, not only for their ‘white picket fences’ and vast open spaces, but also for their successes in maintaining ‘racially pure’ stock through several eugenic policies such as, sterilization, abortion and segregation to name a few (Snyder: 2015, 9). America taught Hitler that need and desire were one and the same thing, and it set the precedent for how ‘superior’ countries can and should live. Hitler learned of the word ‘Lebensraum’ while in prison, and in *Mein Kampf* he turned this concept into his own purpose and attached it to an array of meanings. For him, Lebensraum referred to “a natural struggle of a racial fight for physical survival” and “a war that will ensure Germany the highest living standards in the world” (Snyder: 2015, 10). Applying Lebensraum to Nazi policy was the extraction point from where German land expansion and conquest transformed into human suffering and mass murder.

Timothy Snyder claims that “we have got the Holocaust all wrong” as common conceptions, such as that the Holocaust occurred within Germany, by the hands of the Germans, as well as that, Jews died in Auschwitz only, are myths that need to be readdressed. The principle aim of this chapter is to outline and argue that the Holocaust was driven by Social Darwinism, and with this, the mass murder of Jews in Eastern Europe fell under the direction of Darwinian principles such as colonial expansion and eugenics. This chapter consists of three subheadings, each which discusses and elucidates the explanations and examinations based on my argument. We will see herein how Darwin’s theory of evolution which involves natural selection and land expansion led to

the ultimate demise of the Eastern European population; and that without Darwinian principles, Hitler's worldview and his goals would seem outrageous and the killing of six million Jews would likely not have occurred.

(4.1) Lebensraum

Hitler's premise was that humans, as elucidated by Darwin, were simply animals. His intuition allowed him to transform his zoological theory into a kind of political worldview. He understood that Germans were not, in their daily lives, "beasts who scratched food from the ground" – but securing a regular food supply was not simply a matter of physical sustenance, but also a requirement for a sense of control. If Germany controlled enough territory then they could have the kinds and amounts of food that they desired. The German concept, *Lebensraum*, directly translates to 'living space', and from 1939, Hitler's search for more *Lebensraum* began.

The significance of understanding geography's relationship to politics has been examined and ultimately concluded that: history has proven that by ignoring the impact that geography has on politics, the consequences are dire. And this is something that has been paid for with tears and blood on battlegrounds across the world (Jacobson: 1968, 1). The policies of the Third Reich, it has been argued, stemmed from Germany's political geography after the First World War. Wayne Jacobson discusses the notion of *Lebensraum* as the cause for Germany's territorial expansion in his work, *Lebensraum: Geography, Geopolitics, and the Third Reich* (1968). Followers of the German school of geopolitical thought, such as Friedrich Ratzel and Rudolf Kjellen, are believed to have warped political geography into an instrument of Nazi policy (Jacobson: 1968, 7).

Geographically and politically, Germany was positioned as transitland between northern, southern, eastern and western Europe. The effects of the First World War devastated Germany's territorial land area. After her defeat, twelve percent of Germany's former land area was lost to France, Poland, Denmark, Czechoslovakia and Belgium (Bowman: 1929, 7). This left a population of over sixty million, dispersed over a region of only 181

000 square miles in size. Germany's political geography was significantly affected after their defeat in the war (Bowman: 1929, 8).

Friedrich List, a leading German-American of the nineteenth century, originated the theory of Lebensraum, or living space while Friedrich Ratzel, a German geographer, was most distinguished for using the expression of Lebensraum in the same logic Nazis later would. He was heavily influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution and adapted Darwin's philosophy to political geography (Carlson: 1958, 15). Ratzel saw the state as similar to a living organism with the natural requirement for growth. Insisting that, growth must occur and by force if need be. Ratzel quotes that "a large space maintains life" (Carlson: 1958, 16). Expansion then becomes a social obligation of the state to preserve the livelihood of its population. It is quite evident that the Nazi Party welcomed the above scientific reasoning and invoked the view as a means to 'save' Germans and their alleged interests throughout Central Europe. It was anticipated that numerous political superpowers would rise in the world, and in Europe that state would be Germany (Jacobson: 1968, 12).

Norwegian geography professor, Christian Abrahamsson, focuses on the way that the theories of Darwin were incorporated into Germany's geography in the nineteenth century. He emphasizes how Germany opened a continual dialogue with the theories of Darwin (Abrahamsson: 2013, 37). Darwin's work, "On the Origin of Species (1859)", was the key influencer and shaper of German geopolitics in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Ratzel's predecessor, Oscar Peschel, began encouraging Darwin's ideas straight after the publication of this book (Abrahamsson: 2013, 38). The fundamental impetus emanating from Darwinian ideas on geopolitics was the notion of evolutionary change. A frequent argument pertaining to the state of Germany post World War I was that colonies needed to be established in order to meet the needs of its growing population. In this sense, Darwinian thought provides a scientific explanation and rationale for Germany's incessant need for territorial expansion (Abrahamsson: 2013, 39).

For Ratzel, the expansion of a state is the condition that all other conditions are based. Lebensraum involves the anthropological, biological and geographical circumstances of an environment. Lebensraum is the “geographical surface area required to support a living species at its current population size and mode of existence” (Smith: 1980, 53). Essentially spatial needs will change with any increase or decrease of the population. “Every new form of life needs space in order to come into existence, and yet more space to establish and pass on its characteristics”, as believed by Ratzel. For him the rules that governed organic differentiations are the same laws that governed the differentiations of political societies and states and that the detrimental effects of overpopulation were a common concern amongst theorists in the nineteenth century (Smith: 1980, 55).

According to Ratzel, persistent expansion was critical for the wellbeing of states and the ascendancy of great powers. In his words, “the struggle over existence really means first of all a struggle for space” (Ratzel: 1901, 168). Swedish political scientist, Rudolf Kjellen agrees with Ratzel and he claims, “vital states, occupying a limited space, are governed by the categorical, political imperative to enlarge their territory through colonization, annexation or conquest” (Kjellen: 1916, 67). Unlike Hitler, however, both Ratzel and Kjellen promote the mixing of races. They believe that this is why Britain built its empire so successfully. The concept of Lebensraum was originally formulated in order to rationalize Darwin’s evolutionary theory pertaining to geopolitics and it later came to act as a crucial element in the policies of National Socialism, realizing its apex in the Final Solution (Abrahamsson: 2013, 43).

“Today we find ourselves in a world of great and powerful states, among which the importance of our own Reich is rapidly declining” (Hitler: 1939, 493). Hitler argues that Germany was not a world power after the First World War, and his justification for this was because the size of their population did not correspond with the ‘miserable’ size of their territory. The size of Germany could not be comparable to the size of the countries that were regarded as the prevailing world powers, such as the colossal state of France, China and Russia (Hitler: 1939, 493). Hitler however did not hold France in high regard,

for he believed the presence of ‘negroids’ was turning the country into an African state and that all traces of French blood would eventually be mixed with African blood. This presented an opportunity for colonial expansion as for Hitler an inferior race must succumb to the superior, in his view being Germany (Hitler: 1939, 492). Territorial restrictions were the bane of German life and it was necessary to win territory in order to save the Aryan race from the danger of perishing. Germany needed to build the courage to fight for its survival. With this Hitler reminded his people that they were the superior species of humanity and that they had a duty that they ought to fulfill (Hitler: 1939, 498).

Hitler’s aim to be pursued was the gaining of territory as the objective of Nazi foreign policy. Hitler had no doubt that this ambition could only be achieved through bloodshed; in an effort to restore the frontiers they had had to forfeit after the war. Territorial space needs to be assured to the German people in order for their continued existence on earth (Hitler: 1939, 499). Hitler went as far as to protest against those who regarded territorial expansion as a “violation of the sacred right of man”, but rather that it was their right as the ‘highest’ and most evolved race, to invade and conquer land. Hitler advocated that territorial boundaries were established by man and may be altered by man (Hitler: 1939, 499). The reality of owning colossal territories is proof of the might of the conqueror and the weakness of those who are subjugated.

The new territory in Europe at the time was Russia, believed by Hitler to be governed by Jews. The invasion of Soviet Russia was on the agenda for Nazi Germany (Hitler: 1939, 500). “A coalition of cripples cannot attack a powerful state that is determined to shed the last drop of its blood to maintain its existence”. Hitler believed that the racial inferiority of the Judeo-Bolsheviks confirmed that the destiny of his people was much greater than theirs (Hitler: 1939, 503). Lebensraum was the extraction point in Nazi Policy that allowed for Jews of Europe to be murdered. The continent would become the anti-garden, a landscape of trenches.

(4.2) Statelessness and Conquest

Bloody warfare was always the objective of Hitler's foreign policy. He and his leading henchmen, Göring, Himmler and Heydrich, strategized a war of extermination, colonization and starvation in Eastern Europe. Although Jews made up a small part of the German population, they were however part of German high society and culture (Snyder: 2015, 21). With this consideration, Hitler categorized the Jew as a pariah in German culture, and in order to remove them, the only way forward was to eradicate them from the planet completely. By 1938, the Nazis discovered that the most successful way to prevent states from protecting Jews was to destroy those states completely. Statelessness was the opportunity for the non-Jewish citizens of Eastern Europe - who were prepared for violence and thievery. States did not matter, but races did, conventions did not matter but personal decisions of the Führer did (Snyder: 2015, 24).

The Judeo-Bolshevik myth cemented the image of the enemy in Nazi worldview but did not supply a foreign policy. While Hitler's Lebensraum was contingent on foreign invasion and the implementation of a particular political action, in order for him to achieve his conquest for Lebensraum and the successful extermination of the Jews, he had to do two fundamental things: the first was to transform the German state and realign its foreign policies, while the second was to destroy the neighboring states where Jews were citizens (Snyder: 2015, 27).

Jews were no longer normal citizens in Germany, but rather aliens, enemies and outsiders and hence, did not deserve any further state protection. Instead they became objects whose future could be bargained, amongst foreign representatives (Snyder: 2015, 59). Although Hitler saw the Jews as a universal problem, his Eastern European neighbors, although they might have thought it not ideal to have Jewish citizenry, they did not feel as deeply about them, and in turn did not consider the Jews to be a problem that had to be dealt with per se until Hitler infiltrated their states (Snyder: 2015, 58).

The Nazi suggestion of settling the Jews of Eastern Europe on the island of Madagascar was in serious negotiation from the onset of Hitler's totalitarian regime and later became a general European concern (Snyder: 2015, 60). The Poles positioned themselves from an empathetic viewpoint when regarding a 'homeland' for the Jews, as the Poles also once found themselves in a position of displacement, and believed that the Jews should be given statehood in Palestine and not in Madagascar (Snyder: 2015, 68). While for Nazis, the transfer of Jews to Madagascar became synonymous with the Final Solution. This idea was so desirable for the National Socialists that German leaders would continue to speak of Madagascar even after they had commanded the killing of all the Jews who they intended to move there (Snyder: 2015, 76).

The common conception that Hitler preached was that Jews were responsible for the sins of modernity and communism and should ultimately pay for their evils. In order for both the threat of communism and Jews to come to an end, as well as for Hitler to achieve more living space, the necessity for state destruction and the instigating of statelessness across Eastern Europe needed to begin. Germany set their sights first, on Poland, but with no success. Poland had the largest number of Jewish citizens in Europe, approximately three million (Snyder: 2015, 77). Austria was next, being home to over 200 000 Jews. Hitler considered Austria to be a country of an unhealthy mixture of races and he presented the Austrian Chancellor, Kurt Von Schuschnigg, with his concerns, in the hope that an easy persuasion of Austria's collaboration in the Jewish Question could be achieved (Snyder: 2015, 78).

One Sabbath, Chancellor Von Schuschnigg announced on the radio that he did not intend to defend Austria against Hitler and that the country would essentially participate in the Nazi war against Jews. That same night Austrian citizens were marching the streets with Nazi slogans in a search of Jews to attack (Snyder: 2015, 82). Subsequently, they were instantly stripped of all their rights as citizens. Austrian Jews were subjected to ritual humiliation. A journalist commented in horror that "a Jewish surgeon was on his hands and knees before half a dozen hooligans with swastika armllets and dog whips" (Snyder: 2015, 82). Along with ritual humiliation came the decriminalized raping of Jewish

women and the stealing of Jewish property. As a consequence of the intolerable punishment endured by the Jews of Austria, many started to commit suicide. All of a sudden Austria became the masters of antisemitism and “taught the Germans how to effectively treat Jews” (Snyder: 2015, 83).

Austrians were astonished at how quickly Austria’s internal policies had collapsed and how successfully Nazi Germany had managed to destroy their state in a matter of weeks. Austria’s success in terrorizing the Jews was an unexpected motivation for Nazi Germany (Snyder: 2015, 77). When Austria was destroyed, their Jewish citizens ceased to benefit from state protection. The German destruction of Austria ultimately saw many Austrian Jews being sent to Poland (Snyder: 2015, 87).

When Austria fell, the future of Czechoslovakia darkened. Czechoslovakia would be the second state destroyed by Germany, further declining the position of European Jews. A German invasion of Czechoslovakia, however, would have provided the pretext for a Soviet invasion of Poland (Snyder: 2015,89). Several European state leaders had decided that Czechoslovakia should give Germany the territories that Hitler wanted. Like the Jews of Austria, the Jews of Czechoslovakia were suddenly deprived of state protection. After Germany’s invasion, the Jews that remained there feared the total destruction of the state and thus the loss of their property rights (Snyder: 2015, 93). Hitler was consciously provoking a European war and after the destruction of the Austrian and Czechoslovakian states, the Third Reich added nine million people, and Austria’s gold and Czechoslovakia’s arms, to their racial war.

In early 1939, Hitler had decided that he wanted the complete destruction of the Polish state. Through the Nazi-Soviet Pact, Stalin and Hitler agreed not to go to war with each other and to split Poland between them, although Hitler did not intend to keep this pact from the onset (Snyder: 2015, 98). For Stalin, a joint invasion of Poland would make Germany a friend and ally, as he was fearful and hopeful of German power and Hitler’s military strength. Stalin gave Hitler Europe’s most important Jewish city – Warsaw. At this point Germany was a military powerhouse because of what they gained without war

from Austria and Czechoslovakia and their technical superiority, which Hitler saw as racial superiority had become a fact (Snyder: 2015, 105). The destruction of the Polish state was achieved in both ink and blood and had dire consequences for Poland's Jews; instantly they were no longer citizens of that state, but a misplaced people with a foreboding future. Polish civil law was ultimately replaced by anti-Jewish repression and by the end of 1941; most of Poland's Jews were behind the walls of a ghetto. They had no power to decide where they would reside and had no claim to possessions (Snyder: 2015, 109). The ghetto was the urban expression of state destruction. For most Polish citizens, the ghettoization of Jews from 1940 to 1941 was the moment when Jews disappeared from their lives. Helping Jews leave the ghetto was punishable by death. Hitler also successfully invaded the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Denmark, Yugoslavia, Greece, Norway, as well as commanded Soviet countries to fight in their war such as, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and others (Snyder: 2015, 109-111).

The Jews, not even a race in Hitler's mind, were to be removed from the earth entirely and with this, the ghettos became nothing more than the holding tanks of Polish Jews. Although the war's aim was Lebensraum, the vision of deporting Jews to Madagascar was deemed unfeasible as the moving of millions of people would require the approval of the British Empire. The Führer could never be wrong, only the world could be wrong; and when it was, the blame would be borne by the Jews. Once states started being destroyed, the Final Solution was realized (Snyder: 2015, 113).

Jews across Eastern Europe experienced a gradual deprivation of rights as states began to be destroyed by Nazi Germany. They were "threatened more than any other race by the sudden collapse of the system of nation states". The two million Jews who came under German rule in Eastern Europe would die and so would the other two million Jews under Soviet rule (Snyder: 2015, 117). The Jews who initially fell under Soviet rule were the first to be gassed en masse by the Germans as the Soviet police, the NKVD were experienced in mass murder. The Nazi worldview in the midst of all the bloodshed was that "what happened was simply what happened, the strong should win". At this point,

with Germany's industrial strength, it was the only power that could possibly destroy both Poland and the Soviet Union (Snyder: 2015, 131). As of summer 1940, European Jews were reduced to two possible rulers: Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union. And with this Jews had no choice but to see Soviet Russia as the lesser of two evils. However, ultimately as we will see in the next chapter, Jews were going to die either way regardless of which regime they fell under; Nazis or Communism.

(4.3) The Extermination of Six Million Jews

As abovementioned, Hitler's antisemitism was extreme. There were no limits as to how negatively he portrayed the Jews. All the damaging views that Hitler held of them led him and the Nazi state to believing that Jews were nothing more than a parasite. His antisemitism as we know, took a biological approach. Jews had 'bad blood', and were the polluters and poisoners of the universe, and with this, they consequently became a health risk, a diseased race; a life threatening force that had to be dealt with (Proctor: 1988, 10). The 'Final Solution' to the 'Jewish Problem' – which was the ultimate removal of Jews from the earth – was in full force in Eastern Europe by 1941. Hitler's policy of 'racial hygiene' fundamentally involved the collaboration of German doctors and eugenicists under his rule. The 'Jewish Problem' eventually became a medical problem. Hitler turned to Germany's leading scientists to assist him in achieving his Aryan purity by exterminating the supposed 'racially impure'. Hitler believed that 'positive eugenics' could be used with Darwin's 'natural selection' as a guideline (Proctor: 1988, 2).

Hitler's 'racial hygiene' policy involved a set of state sanctioned programs that would solve the German issue of the infiltration of 'inferior races' in their culture and community. Eugenic practices that were used during the Holocaust included laws on, marriage and sex, mental health and physical health, sterilization and effectively, forced euthanasia (Weikart: 2002, 336). Hitler's eugenics and determination for Jewish annihilation took the form of concentration camps and extermination camps, set up around Germany. Not only did these camps act as 'states' in which Jews were to live, work and die, they also represented 'asylums' in which scientific human experimentation could be conducted. The idea of Jews being a 'non-race' and not worthy of life,

essentially justified the forced removal of them from Eastern European society, and into trains which would transport them to their eventual demise (Weikart: 1999, 343).

Timothy Snyder aims to debunk the commonly held myth that “all Jews died in concentration camps in Germany, by the hands of Germans”. According to him, “we have got the Holocaust all wrong” (Snyder: 2015, xi). From the onset of Germany’s colonial Lebensraum, Eastern European countries were ordered to kill all the Jews living within their borders. The least Jews in fact, were killed in Germany as compared to the many other countries that participated in the Holocaust. This notion will become clear herein.

State destruction and the allegiance and command of the countries Germany invaded allowed for the extermination of Jews, and the specific method that was implemented was to kill Jews where they lived. (Lower: 2005, 28). By the end of 1941, the shootings transitioned from targeting the Jews that soldiers and civilians came into contact with, to massacring the entire population. The Final Solution ultimately became the practice of mass murder. Soviet citizens from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and others, were also active participants in the murdering and handing over of Soviet Jews to Germany (Lower: 2005, 31). The worldviews of the Soviet citizens started to alter too, when they were rallied and asked, “with whom do you have a score to settle?” they answered, “the Jews!” So not only did Jews have to fear the Nazis, but the Soviets too (Lower: 2005, 34). Regardless of which state they lived in Eastern Europe, they were going to die either way. In Soviet Russia, a Jewish woman had to stop during a march to give birth to twins; she and her infants were shot immediately after delivery (Lower: 2005, 36).

Most of the Jews that were brought to their deaths, both directly and indirectly, were by the hands of Soviet citizens. This was the way in which civilians living under communist rule were “paying for their sins of the past – the acceptance of Marxism” (Kuromiya: 2003, 263). Participating and murdering Jews would pardon them from their crimes of living as communists. Mass murder was rampant in both the Nazi and Soviet occupied countries of Eastern Europe by 1941; and giving locals Jewish property became a social policy of reward and acknowledgment for their efforts. Ordinary citizens were at risk of

being murdered if they were caught hiding Jews or assisting them in any way (Kuromiya: 2003, 288) .

Three techniques were developed and used to massacre large numbers of Jews. The first and most significant method was to shoot them over pits. This was the method in which all participating countries could carry out. A journalist described that in Poland mass graves were dug in which Jews had to lie in rows, after hundreds of shots were fired over the first row, Jews had to lie in a second row over the dead corpses of their family members and friends and so on, until thousands were shot in that one pit in a matter of hours (Snyder: 2015, 209). The second technique that was developed by German eugenicists was the method of gassing Jews in vans. Vans were adapted by where Jews would be asphyxiated by the exhaust fumes of combustion engines. Jews were packed into these vans, particularly Jewish children. The vans eased the trauma of soldiers and civilians because once in the van, they did not have to look at and witness children perishing. Those that shot children at face value were described as being extremely traumatized, and many had to be drugged or drunk in order to carry out this duty (Snyder: 2015, 190). Jewish children called these vans ‘Black Ravens’, as they knew the darkness that would behold them once forced into the van. The end of 1941 saw the killing of more than one million Jews in the occupied Soviet Union alone, by the first two killing methods (Snyder: 2015, 191).

At the end of 1941, Hitler announced that “This world war is here; the annihilation of all Jews must be the necessary consequence” (Snyder: 2015, 196). At this point tens of thousands of Jews died of starvation and disease in Polish ghettos. While millions were shot and gassed outside of ghettos, there were still two million Jews that were alive in Poland. They were to be killed by the third and final technique of mass murder –large and effective gas chambers that were housed in extermination camps (Snyder: 2015, 190). Zyklon B was the specific toxic pesticide that was used to suffocate Jews in extermination camps across Nazi territories. Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec and Auschwitz were the largest and most significant death camps of the Holocaust, none of which were in Germany itself (Snyder: 2015, 200). The final destination of the remaining Jews in Eastern Europe was to one of these facilities, in which they would be over worked,

malnourished, experimented on and eventually gassed. By the end of 1945, six million European Jews were killed, as well as five million other 'inferiors' under the command of Hitler during the Holocaust. Hitler witnessed his dreams in motion and succeeded in almost wiping out an entire race.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, it has become apparent that the need for extra living space was the condition on which Jews of Eastern Europe were murdered. Through Hitler's search for Lebensraum, the destruction of countless states was achieved. He managed to break down institutions, expand his territory and murder Jews in unison. As a consequence of Hitler's successful occupation of most of Eastern Europe, Germany became an industrial powerhouse, and his manpower was extensive. This cast a dark shadow over the future of communist countries and ultimately saw the submission of many states to his leadership and worship in most cases. The Nazis in their war of extermination gained millions of war participants and the murder of Jews near and far, was swiftly achieved.

As Snyder seeks to demystify, it is evident that most Jews did in fact die outside Germany's territorial borders, but rather in German occupied zones of statelessness. What's more is that the Nazi's created their own 'states' for Jews to live, in the means of ghettos, labour camps and ultimately death camps. It is also clear that Darwinian principles were used to drive the Holocaust to the point of depravity that it reached by 1945. From Darwin's claims that land expansion is the consequence for a fruitful and growing population, to the theory that racial stock can be purified and improved through natural selection, Hitler put all of these into play. He decided that the Aryans deserved a great empire, more than those who had them and with this, the Nazi policy of Lebensraum was underway. He also decided that it was the Nazi duty to defeat the weak, by annihilating the Jewish race. Furthermore, we see that Nazi conquest and Jewish extermination became interchangeable and heavily relied on the successes of each other. With this said, under the guise of Social Darwinism, Hitler achieved in the conquest of more living space and he ultimately achieved his God-given desire and goal, which was to get rid of the poisoners of the planet – the Jews.

Conclusion

Social Darwinism was the driving force behind the Holocaust. Charles Darwin's theory of evolution prompted the change of much of Europe's worldview in the nineteenth century, as his biological premises on survival influenced the many who followed it. He ultimately developed a hierarchical system between individual, which, when adapted to states and the social, spurred on domination and socialism. His theory of 'natural selection' or the 'survival of the fittest' became the structural pillars on which Darwinists of the nineteenth century thought and behaved. Darwin was the person responsible for distinguishing the differences between species and ultimately dubbed the terms, 'superior' and 'inferior'. He claimed that superior species were more likely to survive in the world while the inferior, eventually die out. And that nature preserved favorable characteristics of species, while eradicating those that are harmful, through the slow process of natural selection. Darwin in his works touched on colonialism and conquest, in which he discussed the ways in that 'savages' were inferior while Victorian English society were superior based on their mental intellect, physical appearances, and societal developments.

With this, Darwinism converted to Social Darwinism through the implementation of his principles into society; and under this guise, some of the harshest crimes have been committed. Social Darwinism arose as religion and ethic's biggest threat as it sought to debunk the truths held on Christianity and God. In saying this, Social Darwinism's influence on human ethics was paramount. It necessitated the devaluing of human life and liberalism as a whole, while encouraging the importance of human death. With this, the Eugenics Movement was born and it ultimately sought to put Darwin's theory of natural selection to practice by developing ways to strengthen European populations by scientific means. Social Darwinists took from him, the notion that the right of the superior is a natural law, one that should not be viewed in any other way.

Hitler was, as justified in this analysis, an avid believer and follower of Darwin and his principles, because when he was young Social Darwinism began to change all major

forms of politics. He, like Darwin, viewed the world in ecological and zoological terms whereby humans were nothing more than species; while the law of the jungle was the only law. And through this, he believed that the weak should be dominated in the struggle for land and food. He saw his race as living in ‘filth’ and wanted to restore the world for them, for them to maintain their ‘superiority’. The Aryan race was the master race, and they ought to be preserved. Hitler sought to protect his race from the polluters in the world – all those he deemed inferior. Therefore, with this said, there is no doubt that Darwinism heavily influenced those that followed him and his principles allowed for people like Hitler to justify their brutal actions, in the name of nature.

Furthermore, the National Socialist ideology of totalitarianism was the platform through which Hitler, as a single man, could legitimize his control over millions of people, and entrenching his Darwinian ideas into the passive minds of his followers. Hitler arrived on the German political scene in a time of political, economic and social crisis after Germany was defeated in the First World War. The Weimar Republic was in disarray and citizens were experiencing devastating impacts left behind by the war. They were searching for a leader, a savior, and for them, Hitler was this person. He claimed to possess a vision and plan for the betterment of their future, not only by restoring the country, but also by transforming Germany into the strongest and most superior empire in the world. With his grand predictions, evident commitment to the country and his extraordinary charisma, Hitler was worshipped and his Nazi Party was fully supported.

Claude Lefort thoroughly described how the creation of ‘the Other’ came into being, and this was so because ‘the Self’ needed something to weigh itself against in order to identify its own individualism. This, under totalitarianism, relates closely to Darwin’s special differentiation; the difference between the weak and the strong, between the inferior and the superior. Nazi Germany sought to define their superiority against the ‘false’ misfortunes of others, such as Jews, Poles, Slavs, gypsies, homosexuals, and handicapped to name a few – because for Hitler, they all had degenerate genes and impure blood. Lefort’s ‘Other’ became synonymous with Darwin’s ‘parasites’ and Hitler’s ‘enemy’.

The mere labelling of Hitler as mentally insane or evil is just not enough. It is of severe importance to get into his mind, in trying to articulate his warped ecological worldview. Hitler's worldview is made up of complex fixations revolving around Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Hitler obsessed over a number of issues – some being; the position of the Aryan race in the hierarchical order of the modern world, the overtone that Jews were parasitic entities who need to be removed from the earth, and, the pursuit of destroying all opposing political ideologies that posed as a threat to his.

Hitler believed that the Aryan race was more superior to any other because they allegedly created and perfected human culture and civilization. And with this, the Aryans should rightfully be the conquerors of the world and have access to all the world's beauty, food and land. In line with Darwin's principles on evolution and human development, the Aryans believed that it was them who personified the superior kind of humanity that Darwin spoke of. The Aryan archetype, typically people with fair skin, blonde hair and blue eyes, embodied superior physical and mental traits, and had evolved to be the strongest species in the world, according to Hitler.

Theorists went on to claim some superfluous notions; that the Aryan was chosen by God to rule the world, with Hitler as the prophet and that Julius Cesar, Leonardo da Vinci and Napoleon Bonaparte were all Aryans – men of history, men of valor and talent. The fact that the Aryans were not yet the rulers of the world was regarded as a crime, for Hitler and the Nazis, but that they would soon replace Jesus Christ in the hearts and minds of the world's population. Hitler's belief of his race's superiority had no bounds. He was not satisfied with being a racist; he needed to proclaim his superiority over other 'white races', on top of his hatred towards 'black races' and 'Asian races'. This sought to legitimize his classification of the Aryans as the world's only superior race. Hitler and the Nazis evidently seemed to manipulate any significant connection between the Aryans and the superiority that Darwin claimed exists in nature.

The argument that Hitler's antisemitism stemmed from his mother's death under the treatment of a Jewish doctor, the notion that Jews caused Germany's defeat in the First World War, or that Christian mentality of Jews as being responsible for crucifying Jesus Christ, and the numerous theories that have been credited here – are together, underpinnings of Social Darwinism.

With reference to the Christian churches, it was explained that Christian theology played a significant role in expressing that the Jews were subhuman or devilish, due to the notions that Jewish traditions and rituals could not be understood, being too different from the Christian norm. Jews were therefore deserving of the discrimination towards them and they were all examples of a punished people. This made it convenient for Nazi to therefore adopt antisemitism and Social Darwinism and the two concepts became one.

Jew hatred also stemmed from the perception that they were involved in a conspiracy for World domination and subsequently the enemy of universal mankind. For the National Socialists they were also the embodiments of capitalism and democracy. Mechanized capitalism and the rise of the working class were also accredited to the Jews and they therefore threatened middle class society. There could also not be two 'Chosen Peoples' by God and they believed that the Aryans were the true 'Chosen People'. Jews were also hated for their instinct of self-preservation and for adopting a civilization that was never theirs. Jews were selfish, parasitic and egotistic people living within borders of foreign people – vampires walking among the people whose economic success and growing political power threatened Germany. Their philanthropy and ideas of equality and liberalism were an effort to extinguish racial discrimination and in the guise of the liberal Jew would arise the tyrant of the people, the totalitarian 'Other' and the Darwinian 'inferior'.

Hitler believed that Soviet Russia was being manipulated by a Jewish-communist conspiracy of world domination. He despised communism and deemed Jews to be the servants of these ideas. This supposed connection between communism and Jews formed the Judeo-Bolshevik Myth that Jews were gaining power over the masses with their

deviant and unnatural worldviews. This myth was probably conjured up because the Russian Empire was home to more Jews than any other country before the Revolution. They were however historically systematically discriminated against with growing intensity, which led many Jews to migrate across Europe, and were seemingly now everywhere.

When Lenin came to power in 1919, he viewed Jews as allies and granted them equal rights as citizens, creating the impression that Jews were now able to control their own destiny and the perception was created that Jews now had political power, which Hitler and the Nazis greatly over exaggerated. The Judeo-Bolshevik Myth was a conspiracy that held many truths. The Jews did in fact play a decisive role in the early part of the Bolshevik regime. Many influential Bolshevik leaders post the Revolution of 1919 were Jewish or had Jewish lineage. Lenin himself had Jewish grandparents. With this conclusive belief, the anti-Bolsheviks with Hitler at the helm were extremely suspicious of an impending 'Jewish World Conspiracy'. It appeared that the transformation from imperialist Russia into the revolutionized Soviet Union could only be explained by the presence of the intervening planetary enemy – the international Jew, who held both political sway and influenced centers of international finance, collaborating with Jewish capitalists of the West to bring about Jewish world despotism.

For Hitler, Lebensraum was a struggle for survival that would end in the granting of the highest living standards for Germany. He wanted to 'keep up with the Joneses' as he admired America for both its vast open spaces and racially pure population. He considered America to be the visible superior empire at the time, one that needs to fall second to Germany. Hitler believed that humans were merely animals, along the lines of Darwinian thought, and that if Germany fought in the struggle for survival then the country would have copious amounts of land and food to preserve and grow their race. Through this, Lebensraum became the root from which Germany's desire for territorial expansion stemmed.

Geographically, Germany had lost a significant amount of territory after its defeat in the First World War and with this, the size of Germany's population was not proportionate to the size of its large population. This also represented Germany as 'small' and in turn, 'weak'. Friedrich Ratzel and Rudolf Kjellen advocated for the Darwinian principles of land expansion in an effort to maintain and preserve the conditions of a country's population, and through this, Hitler saw it as a social obligation to 'listen' to the law of nature and embark on a war of territorial expansion. Darwinian thought provided a justification for Germany's need for incessant colonialism. Lebensraum came to act as a fundamental element in Nazi policy, as Germany desired and rightfully deserved territory comparable to that of Russia's and China's – the prevailing world powers. Hitler knew that the task of achieving land expansion, colonialism, and conquest, could only be accomplished through a war. However, regardless of the consequences, it was the Aryans right as the 'highest' species to take land from the 'weak' and 'less worthy of life'.

Hitler and his leading henchmen strategized a war of colonial expansion, starvation and extermination on the grounds of Social Darwinian philosophies. As Hitler saw the Jews as the pariah's of German culture, he saw the only solution to the 'Jewish Question' as being their complete eradication from the earth. The Nazis discovered that the most successful way to prevent Jews from benefitting from state protection was to destroy Eastern European states entirely. Along the lines of Social Darwinism, Hitler did not find the state as important, all that was important was the species, and that state destruction was justified and right.

As Hitler considered the Jews to be aliens, enemies and outsiders, he did not feel that they deserved state protection and that by eliminating them; the threat of both communism and Jewish pollution would be diminished. Austria was the first country to fall under German occupation. They subsequently participated in Hitler's war to exterminate Jews and actively subjected them to ritual humiliation, rape and ultimately stole their property. Czechoslovakia was the second country to be occupied by Germany, and like Austria, citizens of Czechoslovakia assisted in targeting Jews and handing them over to German soldiers. With the easy conquest of these two countries, Germany's

industrial strength became very powerful. Hitler then decided that he wanted Poland to be completely destroyed next. Once this happened, the Jews of Poland were placed in ghettos, which were urban expressions of state destruction. Once Poland was invaded Hitler and the Nazis went on to invade many other countries, including those occupied by Soviet Russia. Once these states were all destroyed, the Final Solution was set in motion as Jewish rights started to decrease evermore, and both civilians and soldiers from the countries where they lived were killing them.

Furthermore, state destruction and the allegiance and command of the countries Germany had invaded allowed for the extermination of Jews, and the shooting of Jewish men of military age turned to the murdering of the entire population. The Final Solution ultimately became one of mass murder, lead and achieved by Darwinian techniques and principles. Even Soviet citizens started to alter their worldviews when Hitler expressed his Darwinian concerns about the state of Europe, and with this, most of the Jews were killed by Soviets. By 1941, Jewish mass murder was rampant in both Nazi owned and Soviet owned territories.

Three techniques were developed to massacre large numbers of Jews, all three foundationed on Darwinian inspired eugenics of natural selection. The first was to shoot Jews over pits, the second was to asphyxiate them in vans and the third, was to suffocate them in gas chambers. With the use of Darwinian modes of murder, Hitler's war on racial extermination was achieved as six million Jews, along with five million others, died under his warped worldview and regime. So, Timothy Snyder is right, "We have got the Holocaust all wrong", it was in fact, an event driven by nothing other than Social Darwinism.

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