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# The Psychohistorical Origins of the Nazi Youth Cohort

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*A man has come into the world; his early years are spent without notice in the pleasures and activities of childhood. As he grows up, the world receives him when his manhood begins, and he enters into contact with his fellows. He is then studied for the first time, and it is imagined that the germ of the vices and the virtues of his maturer years is then formed.*

*This, if I am not mistaken, is a great error. We must begin higher up; we must watch the infant in his mother's arms; we must see the first images which the external world casts upon the dark mirror of his mind, the first occurrences that he witnesses; we must hear the first words which awaken the sleeping powers of thought, and stand by his earliest efforts if we would understand the prejudices, the habits, and the passions which will rule his life. The entire man is, so to speak, to be seen in the cradle of the child.*

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835)

*Fate is not the sum of individual destinies any more than group formation can be comprehended as the mere coincidental coming together of numerous individuals. A sharing of the same world and the readiness to seize certain possibilities are the predeterminants that from the beginning guide Fate. The power of Fate is freed in the process of sharing and of conflict. The inescapable Fate of existence in and with one's "generation" completes the full density of individual existence.*

Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (1927)

*La guerre—ce sont nos parents . . . .*

Ernst Glaeser, *Jahrgang 1902* (1929)

THE HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP between the events of World War I and its catastrophic aftermath in Central Europe and the rise of National Socialism has often been postulated. The causal relationship is usually drawn from the

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savagery of trench warfare on the western front, the bitterness of defeat and revolution, to the spectacular series of National Socialist electoral victories beginning in 1930, as if such a relationship were historically self-evident. It is the thesis of this paper that the relationship between the period from 1914 to 1920 and the rise and triumph of National Socialism from 1929 to 1935 is specifically generational. The war and postwar experiences of the small children and youth of World War 1 explicitly conditioned the nature and success of National Socialism. The new adults who became politically effective after 1929 and who filled the ranks of the SA and other paramilitary party organizations such as the Hitler-Jugend and the Bund-Deutscher-Madel were the children socialized in the First World War.

This essay examines what happened to the members of this generation in their decisive period of character development—particularly in early childhood—and studies their common experiences in childhood, in psychosexual development, and in political socialization that led to similar fixations and distortions of adult character. The specific factors that conditioned this generation include the prolonged absence of the parents, the return of the father in defeat, extreme hunger and privation, and a national defeat in war, which meant the loss of the prevailing political authority and left no viable replacement with which to identify.

Most explanations for the rise of National Socialism stress elements of continuity in German history. These explanations point to political, intellectual, social, diplomatic, military, and economic factors, all of which are important and none of which should be ignored. The historian and social scientist studying nazism should be conversant with and well versed in these categories of explanation. The study of political leadership is also of unquestioned importance for the understanding of the dynamics of totalitarianism, and it should be intensively developed by historians as an approach to that understanding.<sup>1</sup>

This essay, however, will focus not on the leader but on the followers, not on the charismatic figure but rather on the masses who endow him with special superhuman qualities. It will apply psychoanalytic perceptions to the problem of National Socialism in German history in order to consider

<sup>1</sup> There is a growing bibliography of psychodynamic studies of Nazi leaders. See Gertrud M. Kurth, "The Jew and Adolf Hitler," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 16 (1947): 11-32; Robert G. L. Waite, "Adolf Hitler's Guilt Feelings: A Problem in History and Psychology," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 1 (1971): 229-49; and his "Adolf Hitler's Anti-Semitism: A Study in History and Psychoanalysis," in Benjamin B. Wolman, ed., *The Psychoanalytic Interpretation of History* (New York, 1971), 192-230; James H. McRandle, *The Track of the Wolf: Essays on National Socialism and Its Leader, Adolf Hitler* (Evanston, 1965); Peter Loewenberg, "The Unsuccessful Adolescence of Heinrich Himmler," *AHR*, 76 (1971): 612-41; Richard McMasters Hunt, "Joseph Goebbels: A Study of the Formation of His National-Socialist Consciousness" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1960); and Norbert Bromberg, "Totalitarian Ideology as a Defense Technique," *Psychoanalytic Study of Society*, 1 (1961): 26-38. Sigmund Neumann has treated the Nazi leadership, as distinguished from the mass of party adherents, in terms of the generation born between 1890 and 1900 in *The Future in Perspective* (New York, 1946), 221-25.

the issues of change rather than continuity in history, to deal with social groups rather than individual biography, and to focus on the ego-psychological processes of adaptation to the historical, political, and socioeconomic context rather than on the instinctual biological drives that all men share.<sup>2</sup>

The rapid political ascendancy of the NSDAP in the period from 1928 to 1933 was marked by particularly strong support from youth. Since this generation experienced childhood deprivation in World War I, the argument becomes a psychoanalytical one of taking seriously the developments of infancy and childhood and their effect on behavior in adulthood. I wish to offer an added factor, one to be included as an explanation in addition to rather than instead of the other explanatory schemata of history. Both history and psychoanalysis subscribe to overdetermination in causation. It would be a poor historian who sought to attribute a war or a revolution to only a single cause. Similarly in psychoanalytic theory every symptom and symbol is psychically overdetermined and serves multiple functions. When the subject of study is a modern totalitarian mass movement it requires analysis utilizing all the tools for perceiving and conceptualizing irrational and affective behavior that the twentieth century has to offer, including psychoanalysis and dynamic psychology.<sup>3</sup>

No genuine historical understanding is possible without the perspective of self-understanding from which the historian can then move forth to deal with historical materials. Likewise there can be no measure of historical understanding if we research what men said and did and fail to understand why they acted. The twentieth century has experienced the gross magnification of political and personal irrationality correlative to the exponential increment in the power of modern technology.<sup>4</sup> No history will speak with relevance or accuracy to the contemporary human condition if it

<sup>2</sup> History is an unceasing dialectic between the forces of continuity and change. Most psychoanalytical approaches to history have stressed the proposition of continuity, focusing on the timeless and unconscious id qualities of sexuality and aggression. See Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston, 1956); Norman O. Brown, *Life against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History* (Middletown, Conn., 1959); and Brigid Brophy, *Black Ship to Hell* (New York, 1962). For a work that incorporates concepts of ego adaptation to historical changes, see Fred Weinstein and Gerald M. Platt, *The Wish to be Free: Society, Psyche, and Value Change* (Berkeley, 1969). Where psychoanalysis is applied to biography, the emphasis is usually placed appropriately on the elements of continuity in personality patterns from childhood to maturity. See, for example, Alexander L. and Juliette L. George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House* (New York, 1956); Fawn M. Brodie, *Thaddeus Stevens: Scourge of the South* (New York, 1959); and Rudolph Binion, *Frau Lou: Nietzsche's Wayward Disciple* (Princeton, 1968).

<sup>3</sup> "Dynamic" in psychology is a descriptive term used to imply activity in contrast to theories that are "static" or "potential." Karl Menninger defines dynamic psychology and psychoanalysis as "theories of personality in which motivation, especially unconscious, is considered basic." *The Vital Balance: The Life Process in Mental Health and Illness* (New York, 1963), 467. Henry Murray uses dynamic "to designate a psychology which accepts as prevaillingly fundamental the goal directed (adaptive) character of behavior, and attempts to discover and formulate the internal as well as the external factors which determine it." As quoted in *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> This essentially Marxist point has been most elegantly developed by Herbert Marcuse in *Eros and Civilization* (Boston, 1955) and in his *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1964).

fails to assess realistically the profound capacity of the irrational to move men.

Psychoanalysts are concerned with many things that are relevant to the historical problem of what happens to children in a nation at war. They have studied the effects of separation from parents and have seen the long-term consequences of deprivation, material and emotional. They know the hows and whys of a child's identification with his parents. Above all, psychoanalysis as a clinical technique of investigation demonstrates that only the smallest part of human thought and conduct is rational. The world of disembodied minds acting in an emotional vacuum has no place in a psychoanalytically informed history. Too much of history is still written as though men had no feelings, no childhood, and no bodily senses. What is needed is a new kind of history, a history that tells us how men responded to and felt about the great political and economic events that shaped their lives, a history that gives due place to the irrational, the unconscious, and the emotions not only of men, but also of the child in the man.<sup>5</sup>

This new kind of history requires an understanding of the dual and related concepts of fixation and regression. Sigmund Freud, in a demographic metaphor of migration, once compared human development to the progress of a people through new territory. At those points where resistance is greatest and conflict most intense the people will leave behind its strongest detachments and move on. If the advanced parties, now reduced in strength, should suffer defeat or come up against a superior enemy, they will retreat to former stopping places where support stands ready. "But," says Freud, "they will also be in greater danger of being defeated the more of their number they have left behind on their migration." Thus, the greater the strength of early fixations, the greater will be the later need for regression: "The stronger the fixations on its path of development, the more readily will the function evade external difficulties by regressing to the fixations—the more incapable, therefore, does the developed function turn out to be of resisting external obstacles in its course."<sup>6</sup> As in Freud's migration metaphor, when an individual who has passed through the maturational phases of development meets with persistent and intense frustration, one of the means

<sup>5</sup> Psychoanalysis is distinguished from other psychologies in that it treats with seriousness the psychological developments of infancy and childhood. The dynamic relationship between the fantasies and behavior of childhood and "rational" adult patterns of conduct constitutes the special interest of psychoanalysis for the historian. Clinical evidence for this relationship can be demonstrated in the common features that have been established between early childhood mentation, the world of dreams in normal adults, and the thought of neurotics and psychotics. Another line of continuity between child and adult has been established by the social sciences in their study of the childhood socialization process. I will use both methodological approaches in this essay, for they are complementary.

<sup>6</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis" (1916-17), reprinted in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, tr. and ed. James Strachey et al. (London, 1953-), 16: 341. I am indebted to Martin L. Grotjahn and Lilla Veszy-Wagner for aid in locating this citation.

of coping with the pain and lack of satisfaction is to revert from the more highly developed stages of mental organization to modes of functioning typical of an earlier period.<sup>7</sup> The falling back, or regression, will be to phases of psychosexual development that have left areas of weakness, where the maturational step has been marked by unresolved conflicts and anxieties. Arrests of development or points of fixation occur in sexual-drive organization, ways of relating to people, fears of conscience, persistence of primitive kinds of gratification and of reacting defensively to old, no longer present, dangers. As Freud formulated it in 1913:

We have become aware that the psychical functions concerned—above all, the sexual function, but various important ego functions too—have to undergo a long and complicated development before reaching the state characteristic of the normal adult. We can assume that these developments are not always so smoothly carried out that the total function passes through this regular progressive modification. Wherever a portion of it clings to a previous stage, what is known as a “point of fixation” results, to which the function may regress if the subject falls ill through some external disturbance.<sup>8</sup>

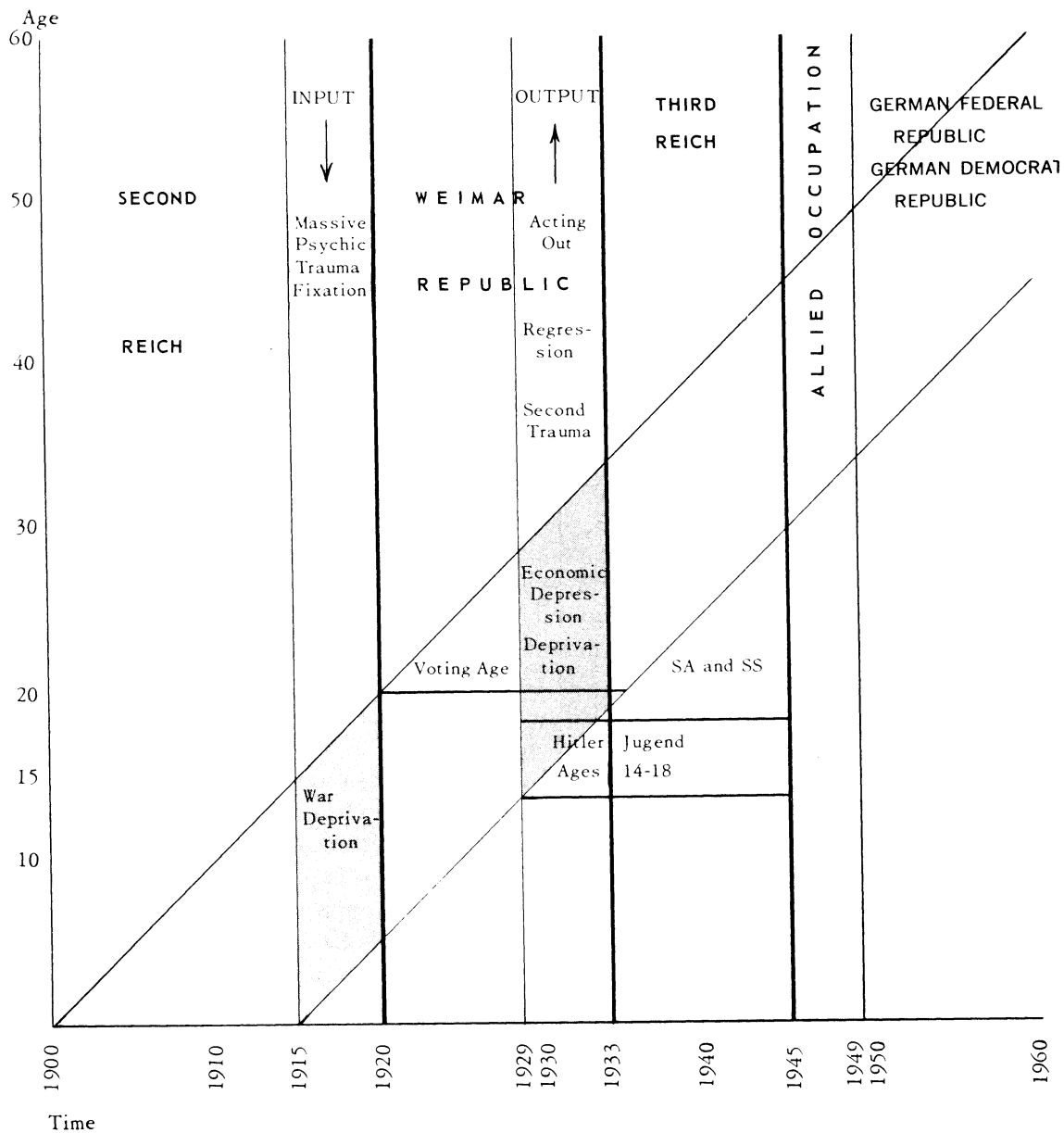
The concepts of fixation and regression may be best illustrated by an operational example taken from a clinical case. A German lady comes into psychoanalytic treatment because of intense marital discord and an acute telephone phobia that interferes with her work. She cannot speak on the telephone, breaks out into a cold sweat, becomes intensely anxious, and loses her voice. In 1943, when she was three years old, she experienced the bombing of Hamburg. She remembers the air raids, the burning and explosions. She was not evacuated. Her family lived near the city center. Her father was a fireman who was called to duty by a bell that rang on the wall of the house because the family had no telephone. The patient can recall being strafed by an airplane. She has no recollection, however, of any panic, fear, or rage. Her memories are affectless. They are clear but disassociated from any of the powerful emotions that must have been present in the child. Now, in a current marital crisis, her feelings of explosive destructive anger and fears of abandonment by a man who is important to her cause a regression. The symptom of the telephone bell symbolizes an earlier point of fixation when she was traumatized by fears of external disaster and internal loss. She now, as an adult, re-experiences all of the emotions that were buried and repressed after the childhood trauma because the later, adult trauma has mobilized the earlier point of fixation and caused a regression to the feelings of the child.

Returning to the larger historical case of the German children of the First World War, it is Germany's Great Depression, with its unemployment, governmental chaos and impotence, and widespread anxiety about the future

<sup>7</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Types of Onset of Neurosis” (1912), in *ibid.*, 12: 232.

<sup>8</sup> Sigmund Freud, “The Disposition to Obsessional Neurosis: A Contribution to the Problem of Choice of Neurosis” (1913), in *ibid.*, 317–18.

BIRTH COHORTS 1900 - 1915 IN GERMAN HISTORY



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"PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF THE NAZI YOUTH COHORTS"

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that constituted precisely such an “external disturbance” as Freud describes. The early point of fixation was the First World War, when the peoples of Central Europe experienced prolonged hunger, war propaganda, the absence of fathers and often both parents, and the bankruptcy of all political values and norms.

The psychological symptoms of regression to phases of ego functioning “fixed” by the traumata of a childhood in war included responding to internal personal stress with externalized violence, projecting all negative anti-national or antisocial qualities onto foreign and ethnic individuals and groups, and meeting frustrations that would otherwise be tolerated with patience and rationally approached for solutions with a necessity for immediate gratification.<sup>9</sup> The political expression of weakened egos and superegos that fostered regression was manifest not only in turning to violence but most especially in the longing for a glorified and idealized but distant father who is all-knowing and all-powerful, who preaches the military virtues and permits his sons and daughters to identify with him by wearing a uniform and joining combat in a national cause.

IT IS TIME TO LAY AT REST the idea that psychoanalytical explanations are necessarily unicausal or that they are inherently incompatible with quantitative data such as demographic, election, consumption, and health statistics. Indeed, psychoanalysis can give these macrodata new coherence and meaning, thus adding a vital qualitative dimension to history. Psychohistory uses dynamic psychology to integrate political and economic explanations with past experience, patterns of repetition, and the irrationality of conduct in times of anxiety, deprivation, and stress.

Traditional psychological interpretations of both political leadership and the personal dynamics of the adherents of mass totalitarian movements, in their explanatory model of adult political behavior, have stressed origins in childhood emotional traumata and in relations with the parents. This has been a particularly successful approach with biography. A consideration of childhood certainly reveals much about the way people are programmed to respond in adulthood. Yet intensive experiences in later life, if they are of a massive traumatic nature, can supersede both earlier influences and individual predispositions. This means that a major catastrophe will have an impact on all ages who are subject to its blows. It will necessarily affect the very young most because their egos are the most fragile. But it will also affect children in latency and adolescence and even adults, each according to his ego strength—that is, according to his ability to tolerate frustration, anxiety, and deprivation. In other words, if the adult trauma is great enough, for example an economic depression or a lost war, it does not matter who the parents were or how democratic they may have been; the anxiety-

<sup>9</sup> For a clinical discussion of the low frustration tolerance due to weakened egos that leads to aggression, see Fritz Redl and David Wineman, *The Aggressive Child* (New York, 1957), 76–78.

inducing social or political situation will bring to the fore feelings of helplessness and political irrationality. One of the foremost students of the authoritarian personality, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, has pointed out that "it seems that external pressures of a traumatic character, be they past or be they presently imposed, are likely not only to bring authoritarian personalities to the fore but to reinforce authoritarian trends in individuals who otherwise would remain democratic minded."<sup>10</sup>

The demographic approach offers new categories of explanation and presents an advantage from the standpoint of evidence. Human motivation and behavior is infinitely complex. Any choice of action by a single individual may be attributed to a multiplicity of unique and idiosyncratic causes that could be clarified only after an extensive psychoanalysis. The appeal of a generational approach is that it deals with probabilities—with the law of averages on a macroscale—thus canceling out any of the many individual variables that determine conduct. Whereas it can always be said that in a particular case there are other variables that have been overlooked, such an objection does not hold when we deal with a demographic scale of events affecting a population. In the latter case we have responses of an entire society to events that, while they may be confirmed in many particular cases, are not limited in their general impact by the idiosyncratic developments of a single life.

The seminal conceptual formulation of the generation as a force acting in history was established by Karl Mannheim in 1927 in his essay, "The Sociological Problem of Generations."<sup>11</sup> Here Mannheim speaks of the human mind as "stratified" or layered, with the earliest experiences being the basis, and all subsequent experience building on this primary foundation or reacting against it. The influence of psychoanalytic thought on Mannheim's conceptualization of the problem is apparent.

The human consciousness, structurally speaking, is characterized by a particular inner "dialectic." It is of considerable importance for the formation of the consciousness which experiences happen to make those all-important "first impressions," "childhood experiences"—and which follow to form the second, third, and other "strata." Conversely, in estimating the biographical significance of a particular experience, it is important to know whether it is undergone by an individual as a decisive childhood experience, or later in life, superimposed upon other basic and early impressions. Early impressions tend to coalesce into a *natural view* of the world. All later experiences then tend to receive their meaning from this original set, whether they appear as that set's verification and fulfillment or as its negation and antithesis. . . . Mental data are of sociological importance not only because of their actual content, but also because they cause the individuals sharing them to form one group—they have a socializing effect.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Else Frenkel-Brunswik, "Environmental Controls and the Impoverishment of Thought," in Carl J. Friedrich, ed., *Totalitarianism* (New York, 1964), 177.

<sup>11</sup> Karl Mannheim, "The Sociological Problem of Generations," in Paul Kecskemeti, ed., *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge* (London, 1952), 276–320.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 298, 304.



Mannheim then structures a further "concrete nexus" of the generation in history as "*participation in the common destiny* of [the] historical and social unit." And such groups he terms "generation units."

*Youth experiencing the same concrete historical problems may be said to be part of the same actual generation while those groups within the same actual generation which work up the material of their common experiences in different specific ways, constitute generation units. . . .* These are characterized by the fact that they do not merely involve a loose participation by a number of individuals in a pattern of events shared by all alike though interpreted by the different individuals differently, but an identity of responses, a certain affinity in the way in which all move with and are formed by their common experiences.<sup>13</sup>

This means that those of a generation who experienced the same event, such as a world war, may respond to it differently. They were all decisively influenced by it but not in the same way. Some became pacifists, others embraced international Leninism, some longed to return to the prewar, conservative, monarchist social order, and the ones we are concerned with sought personal and national solutions in a violence-oriented movement subservient to the will of a total leader. What was politically significant in the early 1930s was the facility with which individuals of this generation moved from one allegiance to the other. Mannheim's point is that although the units of a generation do not respond to a formative crisis in the same way due to a multiplicity of variables, the overriding fact is their response to that particular event. Because of this they are oriented toward each other for the rest of their lives and constitute a generation.

An organization, such as a youth group, says Mannheim, may serve to mobilize latent opinion in a generation unit. It attracts to itself those individuals who share the formative experiences and impulses of the particular generation location, thus institutionalizing and realizing collectively the potentialities inherent in the historical and social situation.<sup>14</sup>

Following the theoretical work of Mannheim, sociological demographers have developed the highly suggestive concept of the "cohort," a term whose Latin etymology significantly refers to a group of fighting men who made up one of the ten divisions of a legion in the Roman army. In the modern discipline of demography a cohort is the aggregate of individuals within a population who have shared a significant common experience of a personal or historical event at the same time. This is distinguished from the loose term "generation," by which historians usually mean a temporal unit of family kinship structure such as "the founding generation," or, more ambiguously, a broad and often unspecified age span during a particular institutional, political, or cultural epoch, such as "the generation of '48" or "the lost generation." An example of a cohort would be college graduates of the year 1929, who completed their education in prosperity and in their

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 303, 304, 306; italics in original.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

first months on the labor market experienced the onset of the Great Depression. This cohort is distinctively marked by the period-specific stimulus of the economic depression for their entire working years in the labor force so that they are to be distinguished from other cohorts, even thirty years later, by their common experience of having endured significant events simultaneously. The same may be said for those who served in the armed forces during World Wars I and II, or those who were children during a war.

These are, of course, examples of birth cohorts. But a cohort need not necessarily be born at the same time. A cohort may include people of all ages, even those *in utero*, if the historian seeks to define all of those who were influenced by a single traumatic event. When Robert Jay Lifton, for example, studied the people who were victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, he interviewed a wide range of people—from a boy who was but two years old to a number of elderly men and women—who constitute the cohort of atomic survivors.<sup>15</sup> Likewise those who have survived a Nazi concentration camp, regardless of age, have been through a traumatic experience that marks them for life.<sup>16</sup> They will never be the same; they are the concentration-camp cohort. As the demographer Norman Ryder says: “The concept [of cohort analysis] can be extended to the identification and surveillance of any group in terms of the time it enters any category of exposure to an event or behavior pattern of interest.”<sup>17</sup> Thus each cohort is itself unique; its members are different from all those who have preceded it and all who will follow because they have experienced certain traumatic episodes in their collective life at a common time and a specific historical moment.

In emphasizing what distinguishes one generation from another, Ryder and other generation and cohort theorists naturally tend to understate the equally important bonds of continuity that tie a society together by connecting one generation to another. In the last analysis it is these latter attachments that are most fundamental to society because they provide for the transmission of cultural modes such as language and social norms of behavior from parents to children and thus from one generation to another.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Robert Jay Lifton, *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima* (New York, 1967).

<sup>16</sup> See Henry Krystal, ed., *Massive Psychic Trauma* (New York, 1968); Klaus D. Hoppe et al., “The Emotional Reactions of Psychiatrists when Confronting Survivors of Persecution,” *The Psychoanalytic Forum*, 3 (1969): 185–211; Elie A. Cohen, *Human Behavior in the Concentration Camp*, tr. M. H. Braakmsa (New York, 1953); Bruno Bettelheim, *The Informed Heart: Autonomy in a Mass Age* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960), 107–235; Elie Wiesel, *Night*, tr. Stella Rodway (New York, 1961); and Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*, tr. Stuart Woolf (New York, 1959).

<sup>17</sup> Norman B. Ryder, “Cohort Analysis,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (2d ed.; New York, 1968), 2: 549.

<sup>18</sup> On the integration of the child into the social system during the first few weeks of life, see Talcott Parsons, “Social Structure and the Development of Personality: Freud’s Contribution to the Integration of Psychology and Sociology,” in his *Social Structure and Personality* (New York, 1964), 78–111. The process of the birth of the individual personality is described by Margaret Mahler as follows: “Infants present a large variety of cues—to indicate needs, tension, and pleasure. In a complex manner, the mother responds selectively to only *certain* of these

War has received special attention from cohort theorists as the most dramatic instance of a cohort being influenced by external events. Ryder writes

The Great War weakened a whole cohort in Europe to the extent that normal succession of personnel in roles, including positions of power, was disturbed. Sometimes the old retained power too long; sometimes the young seized power too soon. The most obvious effect of war is the mortality and morbidity of the participants, but war transforms non-combatants as well. . . . Traumatic episodes like war and revolution may become the foci of crystallization of the mentality of a cohort. The dramatic impact may mark indelibly the "naive eyes and virgin senses" of the cohort . . . and change them into . . . a virtual community of thought and action. . . . Solidarity is encouraged by idealized self-definitions, . . . by sharing anxieties concerning imminent and hazardous transitions, and by explicit associations that encourage the development of attitudes unsanctioned by family and community.<sup>19</sup>

The concept of the birth cohort—that is, those born at the same time—implies common characteristics because of common formative experiences that condition later life. Character formation, the direction of primary drives, and the internalization of family and social values are determined in the years of infancy and childhood. Each cohort carries the impress of its specific encounter with history, be it war or revolution, defeat or national disaster, inflation or depression, throughout its life.<sup>20</sup> Any given political, social, or economic event affects people of different ages in different ways. The impact of war, hunger, defeat, and revolution on a child will be of an entirely different order of magnitude than the impact on an adult. This commonplace fact suggests that the event specificity of history must be fused

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cues. The infant gradually alters his behavior in relation to this selective response; he does so in a characteristic way—the resultant of his own innate endowment and the mother-child relationship." *On Human Symbiosis and the Vicissitudes of Individuation*, vol. 1: *Infantile Psychosis* (New York, 1968), 18. This is not only how a child acquires his individual uniqueness; it is also the pattern of transmission and acquisition of the cultural norms of a society.

<sup>19</sup> Norman B. Ryder, "The Cohort as a Concept in the Study of Social Change," *American Sociological Review*, 30 (1965): 848-49, 851, 855.

<sup>20</sup> Such cohort analysis, emphasizing the importance of time-specific childhood socialization, has enabled Ronald Inglehart, for example, to explain convincingly why Dutch adults favor European unification to a higher degree than the adults of France, Germany, or Britain. Inglehart attributes this to the fact that alone among these four countries, the Netherlands was not involved in World War I and the great-power struggles that preceded it, when the age group he tested in 1963 at age fifty-five and over would have been children. He suggests that this difference is due to "a residue from the experiences of childhood and youth" in which the individuals over fifty-five in France, Germany, and Britain "were exposed to the period of intense nationalism which preceded that war, and to the powerful fears and suspicions the war aroused during a relative[ly] impressionable stage of life." Inglehart goes on to postulate that because by the end of the 1970s a majority of the voting population in the Common Market countries will consist of people who entered primary school after World War II, thus having derived an early "sense of positive participation in common activities" and of growing up "with some awareness of common endeavor," the advocates of the movement for European integration will move into positions of leadership within their respective countries. "An End to European Integration?" *American Political Science Review*, 61 (1967): 91-105. The quotations are from pages 93 and 94. I am indebted to Professor Inglehart for sharing with me the manuscript of his article "The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational Change in Post-Industrial Societies" (to be published in *ibid.*, Dec. 1971), which applies cohort theory to European post-World War II intergenerational value conflict.

with the generational-age specificity of the cohort of sociological demography and the developmental-phase specificity of psychoanalysis and childhood socialization to understand historical change. In this sense history may be the syncretic catalyst of qualitative longitudinal life history and the quantitative data of sociological statistical analysis.<sup>21</sup>

RATHER THAN PROCEEDING with the story of the Nazi youth cohort chronologically and beginning with its origins, this essay will use what Marc Bloch termed the "prudently retrogressive" method of looking at the outcome first, and then tracking down the beginnings or "causes" of the phenomenon.<sup>22</sup> This, of course, corresponds to the clinical method of examining the "presenting complaints" first and then investigating etiology. The outcome of the story in this case is the related and concomitant economic depression, the influx of German youth to the ranks of National Socialism, the political decline of the Weimar Republic, and the Nazi seizure of power.

The Great Depression hit Germany harder than any other country, with the possible exception of the United States. Germany's gross national income, which rose by 25 per cent between 1925 and 1928, sank 43 per cent from 71 billion RM in 1929 to 41 billion RM in 1932. The production index for industry in 1927-28 was halved by 1932-33. In the critical area of capital goods, production in 1933 was one-third of what it had been five years earlier. The very aspect of Nazi success at the polls in the elections of 1930 accelerated the withdrawal of foreign capital from Germany, thus deepening the financial crisis.

The greatest social impact of the economic crisis was in creating unemployment. By 1932 one of every three Germans in the labor market was without a job. This meant that even those who held jobs were insecure, for there were numerous workers available to take the place of every employee. The young people were, of course, the most vulnerable sector of the labor market. New jobs were nonexistent, and the young had the least seniority and experience with which to compete for employment. To this must be added that the number of apprenticeships was sharply diminishing for working-class youths. For example, apprenticeships in iron, steel, and metalworking declined from 132,000 in 1925 to 19,000 in 1932.<sup>23</sup> University graduates had no better prospects for finding employment. They soon formed an underemployed intellectual proletariat that looked to National Socialism for relief and status.

The electoral ascendancy of the Nazi party in the four years between 1928 and 1932 constitutes one of the most dramatic increments of votes and

<sup>21</sup> For an excellent review of recent scholarship in historical demography, see Franklin F. Mendels, "Recent Research in European Historical Demography," *AHR*, 75 (1970): 1065-73.

<sup>22</sup> Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, tr. Peter Putnam (New York, 1953), 45-46.

<sup>23</sup> Dieter Petzina, "Germany and the Great Depression," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4 (1969): 59-74.

political power in the history of electoral democracy. In the Reichstag elections of May 20, 1928, the National Socialists received 810,127 votes, constituting 2.6 per cent of the total vote and 12 Reichstag seats. In the communal elections of 1929 the Nazis made decisive gains. With this election Germany had its first Nazi minister in Thuringia in the person of Wilhelm Frick, a putschist of 1923. In the next Reichstag elections of September 14, 1930, the National Socialists obtained 6,379,672 votes, for 18.3 per cent of the total and 107 seats. At the election of July 31, 1932, the National Socialists became the largest party in the country and in the Reichstag with 13,765,781 votes, giving them 37.4 per cent of the total vote and 230 parliamentary seats.<sup>24</sup>

This extremely rapid growth of Nazi power can be attributed to the participation in politics of previously inactive people and of those who were newly enfranchised because they had reached voting eligibility at 20 years of age. There were 5.7 million new voters in 1930.<sup>25</sup> The participation of eligible voters in elections increased from 74.6 per cent in 1928 to 81.41 per cent in 1930, and 83.9 per cent in 1932. In the elections of March 5, 1933, there were 2.5 million new voters over the previous year and voting participation rose to 88.04 per cent of the electorate.<sup>26</sup>

The German political sociologist, Heinrich Streifler, makes the point that not only were new, youthful voters added at each election, but there were losses from the voting rolls due to deaths that must be calculated. He shows that 3 million voters died in the period between 1928 and 1933. The increment of first-time, new voters in the same period was 6,500,000.<sup>27</sup>

In the elections of 1928, 3.5 million young voters who were eligible did not participate in the voting. "This," says Streifler, "is a reserve that could be mobilized to a much greater extent than the older nonvoters."<sup>28</sup> He goes on to suggest that these young nonvoters were more likely to be mobilized by a radical party that appealed to passions and emotions than to reason.

The Nazis made a spectacular and highly successful appeal to German youth. An official slogan of the party ran "National Socialism is the organized will of youth" (*Nationalsozialismus ist organisierter Jugendwille*). Nazi propagandists like Gregor Strasser skillfully utilized the theme of the battle of the generations. "Step down, you old ones!" (*Macht Platz, ihr Alten!*) he

<sup>24</sup> The Nazi vote declined to 11,737,000, or 33.1 per cent in the elections of November 6, 1932. At the last quasi-free election in Germany, on March 5, 1933, five weeks after Hitler's accession to power, the Nazi vote was 17,277,200 or 43.9 per cent. See Koppel S. Pinson, *Modern Germany: Its History and Civilization* (2d ed.; New York, 1966), 603-04.

<sup>25</sup> I derived this figure by subtracting the total number of votes cast in 1928 (30,753,300) from the corresponding figure for 1930 (34,970,900), and adding the 1.5 million older voters who died in this period according to Arthur Dix, *Die Deutschen Reichstagswahlen 1871-1930 und die Wandlungen der Volksgliederung* (Tübingen, 1930), 36.

<sup>26</sup> Pinson, *Modern Germany*, 603-04.

<sup>27</sup> Heinrich Streifler, *Deutsche Wahlen in Bildern und Zahlen: Eine soziografische Studie über die Reichstagswahlen der Weimarer Republik* (Düsseldorf, 1946), 16.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

shouted as he invoked the names of the senior political leaders from Left to Right and associated them with the disappointments of the generation of the fathers and the deprivations of war, defeat, and revolution.

Whether they are named Scheidemann and Wels, whether Dernburg or Koch, whether Bell and Marx, Stresemann and Riesser, whether Hergt and Westarp—they are the same men we know from the time before the war, when they failed to recognize the essentials of life for the German people; we know them from the war years, when they failed in the will to leadership and victory; we know them from the years of revolution, when they failed in character as well as in ability, in the need of an heroic hour, which, if it had found great men, would have been a great hour for the German people—who, however, became small and mean because its leading men were small and mean.<sup>29</sup>

The Nazis developed a strong following among the students, making headway in the universities in advance of their general electoral successes. National Socialism made its first visible breakthrough into a mass sector of the German people with its conquest of academic youth. The student government (ASTA) elections of 1929 were called a “National Socialist storm of the universities” by the alarmed opposition press. The Nazi Student Organization (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund) received more than half the votes and dominated the student government in 1929 at the universities of Erlangen and Greifswald. In the 1930 student election it also captured absolute majorities in the universities of Breslau, Giessen, Rostock, Jena, Königsberg, and the Berlin Technische Hochschule. Both of these student elections preceded the Reichstag elections of 1930 in which the Nazis made their decisive breakthrough into the center of national political life. Developments toward National Socialism among the university students anticipated by four years the developments in German society at large.<sup>30</sup>

The comparative age structure of the Nazi movement also tells a story of youthful preponderance on the extreme Right. According to the Reich's census of 1933, those 18 to 30 constituted 31.1 per cent of the German population. The proportion of National Socialist party members of this age group rose from 37.6 per cent in 1931 to 42.2 per cent a year later, on the eve of power. “The National Socialist party,” says the sociologist Hans Gerth, “could truthfully boast of being a ‘young party.’” By contrast, the Social Democratic party, second in size and the strongest democratic force in German politics, had only 19.3 per cent of its members in the 18 to 30 age group in 1931.<sup>31</sup> In 1930 the Social Democrats reported that less than 8

<sup>29</sup> Gregor Strasser, “Macht Platz, Ihr Alten!” speech delivered May 8, 1927, as quoted in Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik: Eine Studie zum Problem des Machtverfalls in der Demokratie* (3d ed.; Villingen, Schwarzwald, 1960), 116 n.84.

<sup>30</sup> Karl Dietrich Bracher, *Die deutsche Diktatur: Entstehung, Struktur, Folgen des Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne, 1969), 179–83; Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik*, 147–49; Wolfgang Zorn, “Student Politics in the Weimar Republic,” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 5 (1970): 128–43.

<sup>31</sup> Hans H. Gerth, “The Nazi Party: Its Leadership and Composition,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 45 (1940): 529.

per cent of their membership was under 25, and less than half was under 40.<sup>32</sup>

"National Socialism," says Walter Laqueur, the historian of the German youth movement, "came to power as the party of youth."<sup>33</sup> The Nazi party's ideology and organization coincided with those of the elitist and antidemocratic elements of the German youth movement. The Wandervogel, while essentially nonpolitical, retreated to a rustic life on the moors, heaths, and forests where they cultivated the bonds of group life. The Nazi emphasis on a mystical union of blood and soil, of *Volk*, nation, language, and culture, appealed to the romanticism of German youth *Bünde*.

The Hitler Youth adopted many of the symbols and much of the content of the German youth movement.<sup>34</sup> The Nazis incorporated the uniform, the Führer principle and authoritarian organization (group, tribe, *gau*), the flags and banners, the songs, and the war games of the *Bünde*.<sup>35</sup> The National Socialists were able to take over the youth movement with virtually no opposition. On April 15, 1933, the executive of the Grossdeutsche Jugendbund voted to integrate with the Nazi movement. On June 17, 1933, the Jugendbund was dissolved and Baldur von Schirach was appointed the supreme youth leader by Hitler.<sup>36</sup>

A number of scholars have interpreted the radicalization of newly enfranchised German youth in the years of the rise of National Socialism. The Nazification of the youth has also been variously attributed to the spirit of adventure and idealism,<sup>37</sup> a lust for violence and military discipline,<sup>38</sup> the appeal of an attack on age and established power,<sup>39</sup> and the quest for emotional and material security.<sup>40</sup>

Among the first and most incisive political analysts to focus on the youthful element in the success of National Socialism was the Left socialist leader Carl Mierendorff, who has been described by Koppel Pinson as "a flash of genius shining across the Socialist horizon" of the late Weimar years.<sup>41</sup> After the municipal elections of November 1929, in which the Nazis made their first significant gains, Mierendorff called attention to the Nazi achievement of rivaling the Social Democratic party in breadth and scope of party

<sup>32</sup> Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (New York, 1968), 140.

<sup>33</sup> Walter Z. Laqueur, *Young Germany: A History of the German Youth Movement* (London, 1962), 191.

<sup>34</sup> Wilhelm Flitner, "Der Krieg und die Jugend," in Otto Baumgarten *et al.*, eds., *Geistige und Sittliche Wirkungen des Krieges in Deutschland* (Stuttgart, 1927), 292-302, 346-56.

<sup>35</sup> Laqueur, *Young Germany*, 194; Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik*, 131-32.

<sup>36</sup> Laqueur, *Young Germany*, 200-02.

<sup>37</sup> Reinhard Bendix, "Social Stratification and Political Power," *American Political Science Review*, 46 (1952): 357-75; Bracher, *Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik*, 116.

<sup>38</sup> Petzina, "Germany and the Great Depression," 73; Dix, *Die Deutschen Reichstagswahlen*, 37-43.

<sup>39</sup> Alice Hamilton, "The Youth Who Are Hitler's Strength: A Study of the Nazi Followers and The Appeal That Has Aroused Them," *New York Times Magazine*, Oct. 8, 1933, pp. 3, 16.

<sup>40</sup> Rudolf Heberle, *From Democracy to Nazism: A Regional Case Study on Political Parties in Germany* (Baton Rouge, 1945), 9-10.

<sup>41</sup> Pinson, *Modern Germany*, 415.

organization to the point where it now presented a challenge to the Socialists in every precinct and township. To explain this Mierendorff pointed to the age structure of the Nazi party. To a great extent National Socialist membership was born in the years between 1905 and 1912, which he termed: "a generation which knows little or nothing of the war." While Mierendorff's observations and data are excellent, the conclusion that children are ignorant of war and that, as a childhood experience, war will not affect them in later life, is a viewpoint that anyone conversant with modern concepts of psychology and the childhood socialization process is unlikely to share. The thesis propounded in this essay is in specific contravention to Mierendorff's Marxist interpretation. By contrast with his emphasis on conscious experience Mierendorff's psychological insight is perceptive when he evaluates the motives for this National Socialist appeal to youth. "It makes no intellectual demands of its followers, instead it expects of them first of all enthusiasm and both personal and intellectual arrogance. It flirts with pseudomale manners and presents itself in a basically aggressive pseudo-heroic posture."<sup>42</sup>

The historical demographer Herbert Moller, on the other hand, stresses the factor of cohort size in creating the preconditions for political turbulence in Germany in the early 1930s. He points out that the proportion of young adults in Germany was very high at this time as a result of the high birth rates twenty to thirty years earlier. "The cohorts of 1900 to 1914," he writes, "more numerous than any earlier ones, had not been decimated by the war." Moller shows that precisely this cohort had its ranks swelled by immigrants from the territories ceded under the Treaty of Versailles and by German nationals from abroad, especially from Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Close to one and a half million immigrants entered Germany from 1918 to 1925, just when emigration to America was being curtailed by immigration-quota legislation in the United States. By 1930, because of the depression, a reverse movement of re-emigration from America back to Germany occurred. As a result of these developments, in 1933 the age group from 20 to 45 was the largest in German history and constituted the highest relative percentage of the German population of any period before or since. In the year 1890 this age group constituted 34.4 per cent of Germany's population. In 1933 it peaked to make up 41.5 per cent of all Germans. By 1959 the 20 to 45 age cohorts had dropped to only 33.7 per cent of the German people. "From a demographic viewpoint," says Moller, "the economic depression hit Germany at the worst possible time: employment was shrinking precisely at a time when the employable population reached its postwar peak."<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Carl Mierendorff, "Gesicht und Charakter der Nationalsozialistischen Bewegung," *Die Gesellschaft* (Berlin), 30 (1930): 497, 498, respectively.

<sup>43</sup> Herbert Moller, "Youth as a Force in the Modern World," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 10 (1968): 243, 244.



There is ample evidence that this generation of German youth was more inclined toward violent and aggressive, or what psychoanalysts call "acting-out," behavior than previous generations. At this point the explanations offered for this phenomenon are inadequate in their one-dimensionality. To say that the youth craved action or that they sought comfort in the immersion in a sheltering group is to beg the question of what made this generation of German youth different from all previous generations. What unique experiences did this group of people have in their developmental years that could induce regression to infantile attitudes in adulthood? One persuasive answer lies in fusing the knowledge we have of personality functioning from psychoanalysis—the most comprehensive and dynamic theory of personality available to the social and humanistic sciences today—with the cohort theory of generational change from historical demography and with the data on the leadership and structure of the Nazi party that we have from the researches of political scientists, historians, and sociologists.

IN THE HALF CENTURY prior to World War I Germany was transformed from an agricultural to an industrial economy, and her population grew from an agriculturally self-sufficient forty million to sixty-seven million by 1913. This mounting industrial population made her increasingly dependent on the importation of foreign foodstuffs. In the decade preceding World War I, five-sixths of Germany's vegetable fats, more than half of her dairy goods, and one-third of the eggs her people consumed were imported. This inability to be self-sufficient in foodstuffs made the German population particularly susceptible to the weapon of the blockade. The civilian population began to feel the pressure of severe shortages in 1916. The winter of 1916–17 is still known as the infamous "turnip winter," in which hunger and privation became widespread experiences in Germany. Getting something to eat was the foremost concern of most people. The official food rations for the summer of 1917 were 1,000 calories per day, whereas the health ministry estimated that 2,280 calories was a subsistence minimum. From 1914 to 1918 three-quarters of a million people died of starvation in Germany.<sup>44</sup>

The armistice of November 11, 1918, did not bring the relief that the weary and hungry Germans anticipated. The ordeal of the previous three years was intensified into famine in the winter of 1918–19. The blockade was continued until the Germans turned over their merchant fleet to the Allies.<sup>45</sup> The armistice blockade was extended by the victorious Allies to include the Baltic Sea, thus cutting off trade with Scandinavia and the Baltic states.<sup>46</sup> Although the Allies undertook responsibility for the German food

<sup>44</sup> Karl Dietrich Erdmann, "Die Zeit der Weltkriege," in Bruno Gebhardt, ed., *Handbuch der Deutschen Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1963), 4: 49, 77.

<sup>45</sup> James A. Huston, "The Allied Blockade of Germany 1918–1919," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 10 (1950): 161.

<sup>46</sup> Erdmann, "Die Zeit der Weltkriege," 88.

supply under Article 26 of the Armistice Agreement,<sup>47</sup> the first food shipment was not unloaded in Hamburg until March 26, 1919.<sup>48</sup> On July 11, 1919, the Allied Supreme Economic Council decided to terminate the blockade of Germany as of the next day, July 12. Unrestricted trade between the United States and Germany was resumed three days later, on July 15.<sup>49</sup>

The degree of German suffering under the postwar Allied blockade is a matter on which contemporary opinions differed. Some Allied diplomats and journalists charged that the German government exaggerated the plight of her people in order to increase Allied food deliveries.<sup>50</sup> Today the weight of the historical evidence is that there was widespread extreme hunger and malnutrition in the last three years of the war, which was intensified by the postwar blockade. We may concur with the evaluation of two American historians that "the suffering of the German children, women, and men, with the exception of farmers and rich hoarders, was greater under the continued blockade than prior to the Armistice."<sup>51</sup>

Among the documents that Mathias Erzberger, the chairman of the German Armistice Commission in 1918, requested from the Reichsgesundheitsamt (Reich's public health service) was a memorandum discussing the effects of the blockade on the civilian population. The memorandum, entitled "Damage to the Strength of the German People due to the Enemy Blockade Which Contravenes International Law," was submitted on December 16, 1918. This document is of special psychological interest because it consists of statistics giving increases in deaths, disease, stillbirths, and loss of strength in the labor force, all of which bear sums indicating monetary losses per individual and to the nation. The most remarkable set of figures are those that conclude that, on the basis of a population of 50 million with an average weight of 114.4 pounds, who have each lost one-fifth of their weight, the German people have lost 520,000 tons of human mass (*Menschennasse*). The memorandum goes on to estimate that 1,560,000 to 1,768,000 tons of food would be necessary to restore the flesh (*Fleische*) that had been lost according to the previous calculation.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> *Der Waffenstillstand 1918-1919* (Berlin, 1928), 1: 49.

<sup>48</sup> Huston, "Allied Blockade of Germany," 162.

<sup>49</sup> United States Embassy, Paris, to War Trade Board, "Trade Resumption between the United States and Germany: Remaining Export Restrictions, telegram, July 15, 1919, in Suda Lorena Bane and Ralph Haswell Lutz, eds., *The Blockade of Germany after the Armistice 1918-1919: Selected Documents of the Supreme Economic Council, Superior Blockade Council, American Relief Administration and Other Wartime Organizations* (Stanford, 1942), 558-60.

<sup>50</sup> James A. Logan, Jr., memorandum to Herbert Hoover, Mar. 6, 1919, in *ibid.*, 184-88. See also "Food for Germany," *Daily News* (London and Manchester), Dec. 16, 1918; and John C. Van Den Veer, "The 'Hunger' Blockade: Truth about 'Starving Germany,'" *Sunday Times* (London), July 13, 1919, both quoted in *ibid.*, 670-71, 796-98 respectively.

<sup>51</sup> Bane and Lutz, intro. to *ibid.*, v.

<sup>52</sup> Dr. Rubner, "Notwendigkeit der Wiederauffütterung der durch die Blocade abgehungerten Bevölkerung," in Dr. Albrecht Philipp, MDR, et al., eds., *Das Werk des Untersuchungsausschusses der Verfassunggebenden Deutschen Nationalversammlung und des Deutschen Reichstages 1919-1928, Reihe 4: Die Ursachen des Deutschen Zusammenbruches im Jahre 1918, Abteilung 2: "Der Zusammenbruch," Band 6* (Berlin, 1928): 419-42. The psychology of this

The demographic and statistical data constitute an overwhelming case that the German civil population, particularly infants and children, suffered widely and intensively during the war and blockade. Public health authorities and medical researchers have compiled population studies indicating damage to health, fertility, and emotions from 1914 to 1920. These are quantifiable indexes of physical deprivation from which the equally damaging but much more difficult-to-measure facts of emotional deprivation may be inferred.

On the grossest level the figures show a decline in the number of live births from 1,353,714 in 1915 to 926,813 in 1918. The birth rate per 1,000 population, including stillbirths, declined from 28.25 in 1913 to 14.73 in 1918. The number of deaths among the civilian population over one year old rose from 729,000 in 1914 to 1,084,000 in 1918. While there was a decline in deaths from causes related to nutrition and caloric intake, such as diabetes mellitus, alcoholism, obesity, diseases of the gastrointestinal tract, as well as a decrease in suicides, the gross mortality of the German population increased due to malnutrition, lack of heating, and consequent weakened resistance to disease. Specific causes of death that increased sharply during the war were influenza, lung infections and pneumonia, tuberculosis, diseases of the circulatory system, diphtheria, typhus, dysentery, and diseases of the urinary and reproductive organs.<sup>53</sup> All these diseases indicate a population whose biological ability to maintain health and to counter infection had been seriously undermined in the war years.

Upon looking at the comparative statistics for neonates and infants, we

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quantification of human flesh is itself a subject requiring psychohistorical analysis. The high degree of isolation of feelings permitted by the use of statistics gives them an attractiveness to social scientists who wish to avoid their own painful emotions. "Statistics do not cry or bleed." This is not to question the undeniable advances in historical understanding that have been achieved by quantitative methods, but it is to suggest that these methods are ego syntonic for personalities who need emotional defenses against experience. It was by this mental process of compulsive depersonalizing and bureaucratic de-emotionalizing of experience that the suicidal depression of many Germans in 1918 was converted to the genocidal defense against depression by turning human beings into tons of hair and fertilizer a quarter of a century later. This was the active re-experiencing of a passively endured trauma of starvation and dehumanization. The depersonalization of personal suffering into statistical efficiency is also the complaint of many of the physicians who had the assignment of appraising claimants for restitution from the post-World War II German Federal government. Martin Wagh calls the demand for the precise measurement of misery of the survivors of concentration camps "an almost unanswerable question." "How," he asks, "is one to evaluate in percentages the distortions of personality growth, the warping of what should have been the 'normal' development of these children? Their ego functions have been profoundly affected by early object loss or object absence, the function of anticipation of danger has been severely altered, depressive moods are built into the character as stable structure and superego attitudes have often been monstrously deformed by archaic prototypes into over-religiosity or demands for absolute goodness. They cannot hate or, conversely, they fanatically endorse selfishness, litigiousness and belligerence. Indeed, does the question of M.d.E. [*Minderung der Erwerbsfähigkeit*], loss of earning capacity, make any sense at all? . . . The true loss of those who underwent such man-made disasters—and of those who are undergoing them today—is the very ability to experience happiness, and for this loss there is no measure." In Hoppe *et al.*, "Emotional Reactions of Psychiatrists when Confronting Survivors of Persecution," 200-01.

<sup>53</sup> Dr. Roesle, "Die Geburts und Sterblichkeitsverhältnisse," in Franz Bumm, ed., *Deutschlands Gesundheitsverhältnisse unter dem Einfluss des Weltkrieges* (Stuttgart, 1928), 1: 15, 17, 25, 58.

find a decline in weight and size at birth, a decline in the ability of mothers to nurse, a higher incidence of disease, particularly rickets and tuberculosis, as well as an increase in neurotic symptoms such as bed-wetting and an increment in the death rate. In the third year of the war the weight of neonates was 50 to 100 grams less at birth than before the war. In one Munich clinic in the year 1918 the females averaged 50 grams and the males 70 grams less at birth than in peacetime.<sup>54</sup>

During the first year of the war more mothers nursed babies and the period of breast feeding was longer than previously, but by the winter of 1915 a decline in breast feeding had set in that was to continue through 1919. This is attributed to the war work of mothers and the "prolonged malnutrition and the damaged body of the mother due to psychic insult."<sup>55</sup> One chemical analysis done in Berlin found a marked decline in the quantity and quality of mother's milk resulting in the retarded development of breast-fed children and a delay in their normal weight gain. Infants fed on cow's milk also received milk that was short of nutriment, butterfat, and vitamins because of the lack of feed for the milk cows and the skimming off of cream for butter production.<sup>56</sup> To the shortage and inferior quality of milk must be added the almost total absence of fresh vegetables and fruit, important sources of vitamins, in the diets of children during the war and postwar period.

Not only infants but small children also were materially deprived by malnutrition. By the third year of the war children in the third year of life were up to 2.2 pounds lighter than normal body weight for their age. A study comparing 300 Berlin children in 1919 with figures from 1908-09 showed that the boys were retarded in growth to the level of children 1.5 years younger, and the girls were 1.25 years behind normal.<sup>57</sup>

Like the infants, young children were also particularly afflicted with rickets, tuberculosis, and parasites. A medical examination of 2,154 children between 1914 and 1921 found that 39.1 per cent had rickets. Of the children in this group who fell ill between 12 and 18 months of age, 49.2 per cent had rickets. Cases of childhood miliary tuberculosis in the state of Baden rose 50 per cent after December 1918. A comparative sample of Berlin children aged three showed 8.1 per cent infected with tuberculosis in 1918; this rose to 29.9 per cent in 1919.<sup>58</sup>

The pattern of increased illness and death among infants and small children in Germany carried through to children of school age. Deaths of children between 5 and 15 years of age more than doubled between 1913 and 1918. Using figures for 1913 as a base of 100, the death figures for this age

<sup>54</sup> L. Langstein and F. Rott, "Der Gesundheitsstand unter den Säuglingen und Kleinkindern," in *ibid.*, 90.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 93, 95.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 99, 100, 102.

group in 1918 were 189.2 for boys aged 5 to 10, and 215 for boys aged 10 to 15. Among the girls the death rates for these age groups were 207.3 and 239.9 respectively.<sup>59</sup>

Among the leading causes of illness and death in this age group, as with the younger children, were rickets and tuberculosis. Corresponding losses in size and weight relative to age are also recorded. The medical statistics demonstrate an increased incidence among children of gastrointestinal disorders, worms, fleas, and lice. Psychological indications of stress among school children include an "enormous increase" in bed-wetting, "nervousness," and juvenile delinquency.<sup>60</sup>

The evidence for deprivation is supported from Allied and neutral sources. The British war correspondent Henry W. Nevinson reported from Cologne in March 1919 that tuberculosis had more than doubled among women and children and that the death rate among girls between 6 and 16 years had tripled. Because the children were so weak, school hours were reduced from seven to two hours daily. He wrote, "Although I have seen many horrible things in the world, I have seen nothing so pitiful as these rows of babies feverish from want of food, exhausted by privation to the point that their little limbs were like slender wands, their expression hopeless, and their faces full of pain."<sup>61</sup>

The British medical journal *Lancet* reported comparative figures derived from official German sources showing that the effect of food scarcity on the health of the German population was felt after mid-1916 but was stilled by skillful press censorship in wartime Germany. Among children from 1 to 5 years old the mortality was 50 per cent greater in 1917 than the norm of 1913. Among the children aged 5 to 15 mortality had risen 75 per cent.<sup>62</sup>

A tripartite commission of doctors was appointed by the medical faculties of the Netherlands, Sweden, and Norway to examine health conditions in Germany after the cessation of hostilities. This neutral medical commission found a state so deplorable that John Maynard Keynes was moved in 1920 to ask with prescience: "Who can say how much is endurable, or in what direction men will seek at last to escape from their misfortunes?"<sup>63</sup> The physicians reported on the effects of prolonged hunger and malnutrition.

Tuberculosis, especially in children, is increasing in an appalling way, and, generally speaking, is malignant. In the same way rickets is more serious and widely prevalent. It is impossible to do anything for these diseases; there is no milk for the tuberculosis, and no cod-liver oil for those suffering from rickets. . . . Tuberculosis is assuming almost unprecedented aspects, such as have hitherto only been

<sup>59</sup> Dr. Stephani, "Der Gesundheitsstand unter den Schulkindern," in *ibid.*, 117.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 129, 122-23.

<sup>61</sup> Henry W. Nevinson, "Babies 'Withering Away,'" *Daily News* (London and Manchester), Mar. 13, 1919; and his "Famine in Europe," *Nation* (New York), Mar. 8, 1919, both quoted in Bane and Lutz, *Blockade of Germany*, 731, 727, respectively. See also Nevinson's report carried as "Starving Europe" in *Herald* (London), Jan. 18, 1919, also quoted in *ibid.*, 701.

<sup>62</sup> "The European Food Situation," *Lancet* (London), Mar. 8, 1919, quoted in *ibid.*, 726-27.

<sup>63</sup> John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (New York, 1920), 251.



Berlin soup kitchen, 1916. Photograph from Annemarie Lange,  
*Das wilhelminische Berlin* (East Berlin, 1967).

known in exceptional cases. The whole body is attacked simultaneously, and the illness in this form is practically incurable. . . . Tuberculosis is nearly always fatal now among adults. It is the cause of 90 per cent of the hospital cases. Nothing can be done against it owing to lack of foodstuffs. . . . It appears in the most terrible forms, such as glandular tuberculosis, which turns into purulent dissolution.<sup>64</sup>

Contemporary German sources confirm this report. A writer for a prestigious liberal newspaper accompanied the Hoover Commission to the Erzgebirge where there was severe famine. He wrote:

I visited large country districts where 90 per cent of all the children were rickety and where children of three years are only beginning to walk. . . . Accompany me to a school in the Erzgebirge. You think it is a kindergarten for the little ones. No, these are children of seven and eight years. Tiny faces, with large dull eyes, over-

<sup>64</sup> Swedish press of Apr. 1919, as reported in *ibid.*, 250n.

shadowed by huge puffed, rickety foreheads, their small arms just skin and bone, and above the crooked legs with their dislocated joints the swollen, pointed stomachs of the hunger oedema.<sup>65</sup>

World War I was the first total war in history—it involved the labor and the commitment of full energies of its participant peoples as no previous war had. The men were in the armed services, but a modern war requires a major industrial plant and increased production of foodstuffs and supplies to support the armies. Yet the number of men working in industry in Germany dropped 24 per cent between 1913 and 1917. In the state of Prussia in 1917 the number of men working in plants employing over ten workers was 2,558,000, including foreigners and prisoners of war, while in 1913 the total of men employed had been 3,387,000.<sup>66</sup>

In Germany this meant a shift of major proportions of women from the home and domestic occupations to war work. In the state of Prussia alone the number of women engaged in industrial labor rose by 76 per cent, from 788,100 in 1913 to 1,393,000 in 1917. For Germany as a whole 1.2 million women newly joined the labor force in medium- and large-sized plants during the war. The number of women workers in the armaments industry rose from 113,750 in 1913 to 702,100 in 1917, a gain of 500 per cent. The number of women laborers who were covered under compulsory insurance laws on October 1, 1917, was 6,750,000. The increase of adult female workers in Prussia in 1917 was 80.4 per cent over 1913. The number of women railroad workers in Prussia rose from 10,000 in 1914 to 100,000 in 1918, an increase of 1,000 per cent.<sup>67</sup>

Another new factor in the labor force was the youthful workers. The number of adolescents aged 14 to 16 employed in chemical manufacturing increased 225 per cent between 1913 and 1917. For heavy industry the corresponding figure was 97 per cent. Many of these were young girls aged 16 to 21. This age group constituted 29 per cent of all working women.<sup>68</sup>

That German women were massively engaged in war work was recognized as having resulted in the neglect of Germany's war children and damage to the health of the mothers.<sup>69</sup> Reports came from government offices of increased injuries to children of ages 1 to 5 years due to lack of supervision.<sup>70</sup> S. Rudolf Steinmetz evaluates the demoralization of youth between 1914 and 1918 as an indirect consequence of the war. He ascribes to "the absence of many fathers, the war work of many mothers" the damaged morals and morality of youth.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>65</sup> *Vossische Zeitung*, June 5, 1919, as reported and translated in *ibid.*, 250n.-51n.

<sup>66</sup> Marie-Elisabeth Lüders, *Das Unbekannte Heer: Frauen Kämpfen für Deutschland, 1914-1918* (Berlin, 1937), 85, 85 n.1.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 84, 85, 86, 151, 151 n.1, 153 n.2.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 85, 86.

<sup>69</sup> Zunehmende Vernachlässigung der Kinder sowie wachsende gesundheitliche und sittliche Gefährdung der Arbeiterinnen waren unverkennbar. *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 128 n.1.

<sup>71</sup> S. Rudolf Steinmetz, *Soziologie des Krieges* (Leipzig, 1929), 169.

Many of the war-related phenomena under discussion were not unique to the Central European countries. The factor of a chauvinistic atmosphere of war propaganda was certainly present in all belligerent countries. The absence of the parents in wartime service was also not unique to Germany or Austria. The children of other countries involved in the war too had absent parents and were often orphaned. French and British families undoubtedly experienced the sense of fatherlessness and desertion by the mother as much as did German and Austrian families. Two added factors, however, make the critical difference in the constellation of the child's view of the world: the absence of German and Austrian parents was coupled with extreme and persistent hunger bordering in the cities on starvation, and when the German or Austrian father returned he came in defeat and was unable to protect his family in the postwar period of unemployment and inflation. Not only was the nation defeated, but the whole political-social world was overturned. The Kaiser of Germany had fled, and the Kaiser of Austria had been deposed. Some Germans would say that the Kaiser had deserted his people, to be replaced by an insecure and highly ambivalent republic under equivocating socialist leadership. Much more than an army collapsed—an entire orientation to the state and the conduct of civic life was under assault in 1918–19. These national factors unique to Central Europe exacerbated the familial crisis of the absence of parents and made of this wartime experience a generational crisis.

TODAY IT IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED that the emotional constellation of the childhood years is decisive for the future psychological health and normality of the adult. Modern war conditions, through the long-term breakup of family life, added in some cases to a lack of essential food and shelter, and a national atmosphere highly charged with unmitigated expressions of patriotism, hatred, and violence must inevitably distort the emotional and mental development of children, for imbalance in the fulfillment of essential psychic and bodily needs in childhood results in lasting psychological malformations.

It may be helpful to review briefly modern theories of phase-specific development and emotional growth from infancy to adulthood in order to point to the areas of greatest potential stress due to family or social trauma. What follows is necessarily no more than a theoretical model of development, an ideal typology of the psychodynamics of personality development that will be useful as a heuristic device against which to test empirical and cultural data. It does not presume to be a precise model of any single individual's development.

More is now known than ever before about the psychological processes and fantasies of children. There is a high level of agreement among child-guidance specialists that maternal deprivation of the child has long-ranging effects on the mental health and emotional strength of the adult. The first



relationship a child forms is with his mother.<sup>72</sup> His attitude to the object—in the first case, the mother—is a passive, receptive one; that is, the child is narcissistic and selfish, he wishes to be given pleasure and to have his discomforts removed. A number of British psychoanalysts of what has come to be known as the “English school” have stressed the quality of destructive oral rage that is normally present in all children. This cataclysmic world-destroying rage is, of course, intensified in cases of deprivation.

The late British pediatrician and psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott described the rages experienced by infants in which they want to destroy their mother’s breasts and believe they can do so by feeding from them.<sup>73</sup> Melanie Klein also pictures the world of the infant as a seething cauldron of intense emotions of love and hate in which the baby is dominated by impulses to destroy the very object of all his desires—his mother.<sup>74</sup> When describing the baby’s uncontrollable sensations of rage and his experience of threatened destruction from within and without, Joan Riviere writes:

He becomes aggressive. He automatically explodes, as it were, with hate and aggressive craving. If he feels emptiness and loneliness, an automatic reaction sets in, which may soon become uncontrollable and overwhelming, an aggressive rage which brings pain and explosive, burning, suffocating, choking bodily sensations; and these in turn cause further feelings of lack, pain and apprehension. The baby cannot distinguish between “me” and “not me”; his own sensations are his world, *the* world to him; so when he is cold, hungry or lonely there is no milk, no well-being or pleasure in the world—the valuable things in life have vanished. And when he is tortured with desire or anger, with uncontrollable, suffocating screaming, and painful, burning evacuations, the whole of his world is one of suffering; it is scalded, torn and racked too.<sup>75</sup>

René Spitz, in his classic studies of hospitalism, has shown that the absence of an emotionally available mother during the child’s first year damages his physical development as well as his personality. Spitz compared children who were cared for by their own mothers in a prison nursery with children in an orphanage whose care was in the hands of professionally competent nurses but who had no close personal care or contact with their mothers. Although on admission the children in the orphan home rated much higher in body-mastery, development, and achievement indexes, within four months they deteriorated and continued to sink. They were unable to speak, feed themselves, or to acquire habits of cleanliness. The infants in the prison nursery went through a progressive development because they had an intense emotional interchange with their mothers during the first twelve months of life.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> I use the masculine pronouns for convenience. The infantile object relationships to the mother are not sexually differentiated; they are the same for the girl or the boy.

<sup>73</sup> D. W. Winnicott, “Aggression” (1939), in his *The Child and the Outside World: Studies in Developing Relationships*, ed. Janet Hardenberg (New York, 1957), 170.

<sup>74</sup> Melanie Klein, “Love, Guilt and Reparation,” in *Love, Hate and Reparation* (New York, 1964), 58.

<sup>75</sup> Joan Riviere, “Hate, Greed and Aggression,” in *ibid.*, 8–9.

<sup>76</sup> René A. Spitz, “Hospitalism: An Inquiry into the Genesis of Psychiatric Conditions in Early Childhood,” in *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 1 (1945): 53–74; and his “Hospitalism: A Follow-up Report on Investigation Described in Volume I, 1945,” in *ibid.*, 2 (1946): 113–17.

A somewhat later and very great threat to a child's security is the trauma of separation. It is considered to be essential for sound personality development that the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with a mother or permanent mother figure, a relationship in which both infant and mother find gratification and pleasure. John Bowlby observes: "Prolonged breaks [in the mother-child relationship] during the first three years of life leave a characteristic impression on the child's personality. Clinically such children appear emotionally withdrawn and isolated. They fail to develop libidinal ties with other children or with adults and consequently have no friendships worth the name."<sup>77</sup>

For the infant and child the mother is the supreme agent who can give gratification and assuage pain. "The absence of the mother," writes Margaret Mahler, "exposes the normal infant . . . to the danger of helplessness and longing, with consequent anxiety."<sup>78</sup> The danger is particularly threatening to the child not only because of his utter dependence and helplessness but because of his own acute ambivalence. There is a great accumulation of aggression toward love objects during the oral-sadistic, anal-sadistic, and Oedipal phases of child development. The child must struggle with intense fears of loss of love due to his own hostility and aggression. He must preserve his love for the object (mother) despite his rage and fear. If the mother's love and acceptance of the child is not forthcoming, he reacts as if he has been rejected for his badness. There is a deficit in self-esteem.<sup>79</sup> The child views himself as unlovable and worthless, as an evil creature who drives loved ones away. His healthy narcissistic balance is destroyed, and his ego is weakened. One way of coping with feelings of inner badness is to project these evil, asocial parts of the self out onto others.

Bowlby terms separation from the mother or mothering figure the "primal anxiety" in the life of a young child. The condition of separation causes intense alarm, fright, and distress. Because of the mother's tremendous importance for the child's survival, the response of separation anxiety is permanently ready for activation; it is easily activated and cannot be completely terminated except by the child's preferred mother figure.<sup>80</sup>

Some specialists in the problems of childhood separation and individuation suggest that the desire to merge with a mass movement in adolescence and adulthood expresses the need to regress, while in a state of panic or terror, to the preindividuation phase. The merging may be a crowd fusing with each other or with an authoritarian regime and its dictatorial leader.<sup>81</sup>

Separation from the mother engenders hostility because it is interpreted as rejection by the loved object; it is experienced as the loss of love. The

<sup>77</sup> John Bowlby *et al.*, *Maternal Care and Mental Health and Deprivation of Maternal Care* (New York, 1966), 11, 32.

<sup>78</sup> Margaret S. Mahler, *On Human Symbiosis and the Vicissitudes of Individuation* (New York, 1968), 1: 234.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>80</sup> John Bowlby, "Separation Anxiety," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 41 (1960): 105.

<sup>81</sup> Edith Jacobson, *The Self and the Object World* (New York, 1964), 41 n.4.

period when this anxiety and hostility is most active is also the period when patterns of control and of regulating conflict are laid down. Thus, separation anxiety and hostility are provoked by the same experience. The hostility must be repressed because it is directed at the loved object and to express it and risk further loss is far too dangerous. Being repressed, the hostility generates further anxiety.<sup>82</sup> Both the increased need for the mother and the heightened unconscious hostility toward her promote a neurotic, anxiety-prone personality inclined to regress to primal anxiety and rage when confronted with frustration in later life.<sup>83</sup>

Children are traumatized by the horrors of war, by hearing reports and seeing actual pictures of killed and maimed fathers, mothers, and dead children. But it is a fantasy of the innocence of childhood and a misconception of the nature of children to believe that destruction and aggression are unknown to them.

Aggression, of course, does not end in infancy and childhood. What Winnicott, Riviere, Klein, Spitz, Bowlby, and Mahler describe as anger and rage in neonates and infants is observable as destructive behavior in any nursery as the infant becomes a child. Anna Freud and Dorothy T. Burlingham describe their observations of the conflicts with aggression and control that characterize the struggle of bowel training:

Children between the ages of one and two years, when put together in a playpen will bite each other, pull each other's hair and steal each other's toys without regard for the other child's unhappiness. They are passing through a stage of development where destruction and aggression play one of the leading parts. If we observe young children at play, we notice that they will destroy their toys, pull off the arms and legs of their dolls or soldiers, puncture their balls, smash whatever is breakable. . . . The more their strength and independence are growing the more they will have to be watched so as not to create too much damage, not to hurt each other or those weaker than themselves.

The authors then add a highly significant sentence: "We often say, half jokingly, that there is a continual war raging in a nursery."<sup>84</sup>

The young child experiences murderous death wishes toward all people who have disturbed, offended, or rejected him in fantasy or reality. The

<sup>82</sup> Bowlby, "Separation Anxiety," 108-09.

<sup>83</sup> The critical importance of early childhood separation from the mother is demonstrable in the clinical setting of psychoanalysis, particularly in the transference relationship to the psychoanalyst. Separation anxiety is characteristically exacerbated on the eve of holidays and other interruptions in the analysis. In some cases separation phenomena will be expressed by depressions on the weekend when the analytic routine is interrupted and retaliatory desires to leave first of an "I am going to leave you before you can leave me" variety. Patients under the dominance of separation anxiety react to the interpretations of the analyst as though they are being fed. They are insatiable, demanding, and they drink in every word indicating that they are reacting on an oral level. See Ralph G. Greenson, *The Technique and Practice of Psychoanalysis* (New York, 1967), 1: 240. These patients sometimes somatize their anxiety by getting sick during the analyst's absence, or will try to invade his private life. Their dreams often include disasters or accidents occurring to the loved person, demonstrating the unconscious hostile ambivalence that exists. Fusion with the analyst serves as reassurance against hostile death wishes, as it is evident that no harm has occurred if the loved one is present and therefore protected from the patient's hostility.

<sup>84</sup> Anna Freud and Dorothy T. Burlingham, *War and Children* (New York, 1943), 21-22.

jealous desire to do away with an interfering sibling or rival is a universal commonplace. One of the most important social aims of education is to curb the unmitigated aggressiveness of children. At first direct action on destructive wishes is prohibited by outside authority. Later the child learns to inhibit these impulses in himself. They are defended against by reaction formations such as compassion and pity, and compulsive defenses such as scrupulous care and meticulousness. They may be repressed or sublimated into competitive and constructive activity. The child learns to criticize and overcome in himself his hostile, antisocial wishes, which is to say that he refuses them conscious expression. He accepts that it is bad to hurt, cripple, and kill. He believes that he has no further wish to do any of these violent and destructive things. He can only maintain this belief, however, if the outer social world is supportive of his struggle by likewise curbing its aggression.

When a child who is struggling with his aggressive and destructive impulses finds himself in a society at war, the hatred and violence around him in the outer world meet the as yet untamed aggression raging in his inner world. At the very age when education is beginning to deal with the impulses in the inner environment the same wishes receive sanction and validation from a society at war. It is impossible to repress murderous and destructive wishes when fantasied and actual fighting, maiming, and killing are the preoccupation of all the people among whom the child lives. Instead of turning away from the horrors and atrocities of war, he turns toward them with primitive excitement. The very murderous and destructive impulses that he has been trying to bury in himself are now nourished by the official ideology and mass media of a country at war.

The power of his aroused inner fantasies of violence is anxiety-producing for the child. It is as though an inner signal alerts him to beware of the danger of losing control. When, in addition, the child is not with his family, he will often develop the symptoms of nervousness, bed-wetting, fecal incontinence, stealing, truancy, and delinquency that Winnicott describes.<sup>85</sup>

Many political scientists and historians have pointed to the function of National Socialism as a defense against emotional insecurity. Harold Lasswell, in contrast to those who have interpreted Hitler as a father or a son symbol,<sup>86</sup> develops precisely the theme of Hitler's maternal function for the German people, suggesting that nazism was a regressive attempt to compensate for mothering and family life that had been inadequate. Lasswell stresses the imagery of cleanliness and pollution of the anal phase.

There is a profound sense in which Hitler himself plays a maternal role for certain classes in German society. His incessant moralizing is that of the anxious

<sup>85</sup> Winnicott, "Residential Management as Treatment for Difficult Children" (1947), in *The Child and the Outside World*, 100.

<sup>86</sup> These interpretations are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Hitler, in accord with the principles of multiple function and overdetermination, may have represented mothering, fathering, and filial roles to the same people at various times and to different groups of people at the same time.

mother who is totally preoccupied with the physical, intellectual and ethical development of her children. He discourses in public, as he has written in his autobiography, on all manner of pedagogical problems, from the best form of history teaching to the ways of reducing the ravages of social disease. His constant preoccupation with “purity” is consistent with these interests; he alludes constantly to the “purity of the racial stock” and often to the code of personal abstinence or moderation. This master of modern Galahadism uses the language of Protestant puritanism and of Catholic reverence for the institution of family life. The conscience for which he stands is full of obsessional doubts, repetitive affirmations, resounding negations and stern compulsions. It is essentially the bundle of “don’ts” of the nursemaid conscience.<sup>87</sup>

Similarly, research indicates that paternal deprivation in childhood, which assumes increasing importance in later years as the child approaches and works through his Oedipal conflict,<sup>88</sup> also has a profound impact on the personality and ideas of youth concerning father images, political authority, and sources of power.<sup>89</sup> In a study comparing father-separated from father-at-home elementary school children, George R. Bach found that “father separated children produce an idealistic fantasy picture of the father” that “seem[s] to indicate the existence of strong drives for paternal affection.” In turn, then, “the severely deprived [*sic*] drive for paternal affection provides strong instigation for the idealistic, wish-fulfilling fantasies.”<sup>90</sup> The absent father is idealized. This is in part a reaction formation—that is, a de-

<sup>87</sup> Harold D. Lasswell, “The Psychology of Hitlerism as a Response of the Lower Middle Classes to Continuing Insecurity” (1933), reprinted in his *The Analysis of Political Behavior: An Empirical Approach* (Hamden, Conn., 1966), 240–41.

<sup>88</sup> During the period of the Oedipal conflict, roughly from ages three to six, the child has feelings of jealousy and hatred toward his father and his siblings combined with the desire to be loved by his mother. This conflict also gives rise to fear of his rival lest the father retaliate by mutilating and castrating him because of his intense hostility to his father. The Oedipal conflict ends in the boy’s repressing his passionate love for his mother and replacing it by tender feelings toward her and by repressing his mixed feelings of love and hate for his father, and also replacing them with tender feelings toward him. The child begins to seek object relationships outside of the family in teachers, in relatives, and in friends of the same age and sex.

<sup>89</sup> Lois Meek Stolz *et al.*, *Father Relations of War-Born Children* (Stanford, 1954), 192–207. Weinstein and Platt argue that after the mid-nineteenth century the Central European father had lost his earlier household and nurturant functions in the family. He became the social representative to his sons of the standard of a highly competitive economic and social order that condemned passive and dependent gratifications. Industriousness and calculation were the lessons that he taught, and self-control and discipline were the restraints that he imposed as a consequence of his new role as a power outside of the home after changes imposed by the industrial and economic revolutions. *The Wish to be Free*, 148–52, 177–82.

<sup>90</sup> George R. Bach, “Father-Fantasies and Father-Typing in Father-Separated Children,” *Child Development*, 17 (1946): 71. Bach’s research showed that “beyond influencing the child through father-typing, the mother may actually modify the child’s personality development in the direction of femininity during the period of father-absence. The father is not available for imitation of or identification with masculine social behavior, and there is now more opportunity to imitate feminine attitudes, manners, and values of the mother. The idealistic father-fantasies of *both* the separated boys and the separated girls with their stereotyped, affectionate and non-aggressive themes are very similar to the doll play fantasies *characteristically produced by girls* (in contrast to boys) under ordinary family conditions. This “feminization” of the father-separated child’s fantasy may then be a reflection of the increased potency of the mother as a social stimulus. The idealistic father-fantasies may, therefore, not only be an expression of the child’s wish for an affectionate father but may actually also be symptomatic of a personality reorganization produced by exclusive maternal domination.” *Ibid.*, 77.

fense against hatred toward the father by replacing these repressed hostile feelings with their conscious opposite.

Psychoanalytic theory and clinical evidence tell us that prolonged absence of the father results in intensified closeness to the mother. This in turn will heighten Oedipal conflict for the son in latency.<sup>91</sup> Stimulated incestuous fantasies will increase the fear of punishment for the forbidden longings. The sharpened castration anxiety of the boy left alone with his mother results in strengthened identification with the absent idealized father and in homosexual longings for him. The homosexual feelings for the distant father are a love for him shared with the mother and a defense against heightened incestuous feelings for her.

The emancipation of women, which was accelerated greatly in World War I by the needs of a total war economy, gave to women what had been traditionally men's vocational roles and familial responsibilities. In such circumstances, in her own eyes and in the eyes of her children, the woman who works in industry and agriculture is now doing "man's" work. Thus the mother who manages the affairs of the family may acquire a "phallic" or masculine image to her children. As she is not accustomed to bearing the full responsibility for the family welfare and discipline, she might tend to become anxious. This anxiety is further exacerbated by her sexual and emotional frustration and concern for her husband. Anxieties of all kinds are immediately and inevitably communicated to children, who then become anxious as well. In her uncertainty a mother will often be more punitive than she would be under normal circumstances, both to ward off her own sexual feelings and because of anxiety about her role as disciplinarian. This heightens the passive masochism and castration anxiety in young boys.

Boys who become homosexuals are often those who were left alone with their mothers and formed an intense attachment to them that was unmediated by the father's presence and protection. The struggle against feminine identification and the regression to narcissistic object choice—that is, choosing someone who is like himself, what he was, or what he would like to be—are all greatly intensified in boys raised without fathers.<sup>92</sup>

If early separation and deprivation damages the frustration tolerance and reality-testing functions of children, we must look at the process of the political socialization and political-fantasy formation of normal children. Research in the field of children's concepts of politics, political leadership, and national identity indicates that many of the primary identifications of a lifetime are already formed by the second grade of elementary school, that is at age eight

<sup>91</sup> During the latency period—approximately ages six to eleven—there is a marked increase in the strength of the defenses against the sexual drives. This is the period when children are emotionally relatively calm, learn well, master their bodies, and develop their intelligence. The child acquires the equipment with which to encounter the onslaught of sexual-drive energy at puberty.

<sup>92</sup> I am indebted to Oscar Sachs for his discussion in a personal communication of the homosexual dynamics of the Nazi generation.

or nine.<sup>93</sup> Children in elementary school develop predispositions for a political party, intense nationalistic chauvinism of a “we are good, they are bad” variety, and positive affectual attachment to symbols of patriotism such as the flag or the Statue of Liberty. “Affect,” David O. Sears points out, “precedes information. Children express strong positive affect toward leaders, and only later acquire supporting rationalizations.”<sup>94</sup> Familiarity with high leaders is practically at adult levels by the second grade. In Fred Greenstein’s sample, 96 per cent of American children aged nine knew who the president was.<sup>95</sup> In Robert D. Hess’s study 95 per cent of the children aged seven through nine recognized and correctly identified the president. A similarly high level of recognition was found for the national leaders in studies done in Chile, Japan, and Australia.<sup>96</sup>

Children tend to idealize the president and to personalize the government—that is, they see it in terms of the person of the leader rather than as an institution in which people play roles. The extent to which children exaggerate the personal power and charisma of the leader is impressive. He has God-like qualities in the child’s imagery. Eighty-six per cent of second graders see the president of the United States as “running the country”;<sup>97</sup> 76 per cent of second graders think that the president makes the laws.<sup>98</sup> The president is viewed by children as benevolent and protective, powerful and strong.<sup>99</sup> In a study of 366 children in Chicago, 60 per cent of the second graders felt that the president is “the best person in the world.”<sup>100</sup>

The mentality of a state of war complements the child’s most archaic psychic mechanisms for coping with himself and the world, the devices of splitting and projection. Splitting is what a people at war does by dividing the world into “good” and “bad” countries, those on our side who have only virtues and whom we love, and the enemy who is evil and whom we hate. We are thus enabled to get pleasure by gratifying our aggressive feelings. For the

<sup>93</sup> Marvin Rintala, a historian, explicitly argues for the years of “late adolescence and early adulthood” as “the formative years during which a distinctive personal outlook on politics emerges, which remains essentially unchanged through old age. The crucial years are regarded as approximately 17 to 25. If these years are in fact formative, neither the years preceding nor the years following them are decisive in the formation of political attitudes.” “Political Generations,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 6: 93. This is undoubtedly an overstatement by Rintala. The earlier determinants of the political-socialization process, including the preschool years of infancy and childhood when the identifications that constitute the basic components of identity are formed, may not be discounted or ignored.

<sup>94</sup> David O. Sears, “Political Behavior,” *Handbook of Social Psychology* (2d ed.; Reading, Mass., 1969), 5: 415, 416.

<sup>95</sup> Fred I. Greenstein, *Children and Politics* (New Haven, 1965), 32.

<sup>96</sup> Robert D. Hess, “The Socialization of Attitudes toward Political Authority: Some Cross-National Comparisons,” *International Social Science Journal*, 25 (1963): 555.

<sup>97</sup> Robert D. Hess and Judith V. Torney, *The Development of Political Attitudes in Children* (Chicago, 1967), 35.

<sup>98</sup> David Easton and Jack Dennis, “The Child’s Image of the Government,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 361 (1965): 48.

<sup>99</sup> Greenstein, *Children and Politics*, 37-42; Greenstein, “The Benevolent Leader: Children’s Images of Political Authority,” *American Political Science Review*, 54 (1960): 934-43.

<sup>100</sup> Robert D. Hess and David Easton, “The Child’s Image of the President,” *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 24 (1960): 648-54.

child, too, there are two kinds of men, one "good" and one "bad." In wartime the absent father-soldier is idealized. He is glorified and any hostile feelings toward him are projected onto the evil enemy on the other side.<sup>101</sup>

Much of recent emphasis in psychoanalytic research and clinical work, particularly in psychoanalytic ego psychology, has been on the importance of the years of adolescence for character formation and identity resolution.<sup>102</sup> These are the years when the basic choices and commitments of a lifetime are made after much painful searching, testing, and doubt.<sup>103</sup> What then happens when children who have been deprived become politically effective? How do they respond as adolescents to the frustrations of reality? There are many theoretical and empirical approaches to adolescent aggression. Albert Bandura and Richard H. Walters offer what is essentially a social-modeling or imitational view of adolescent aggression. For us their study is significant because it shows that aggressive boys come from families where they have experienced deprivation of affectional nurturance.<sup>104</sup> The post-Oedipal child has to repress his sexual and hostile impulses in favor of affectionate attachments to his parents. In adolescence the biological maturation process leads to a temporary revival of the Oedipal strivings. But now the incestuous sexual and hostile wishes must be finally relinquished. The adolescent's affectionate ties to his parents must also be sufficiently loosened to guarantee his future freedom of object choice and a sound adjustment to social reality. His practical and emotional dependency on his parents must be definitely and finally abandoned. This detachment from parental authority is, said Sigmund Freud,

<sup>101</sup> George L. Mosse specifies the function of anti-Semitism as a displacement for the frustrations of the postwar children. He asserts the role of anti-Semitic agitation in the Weimar Republic was to provide "the children with a clearly defined object to vent their frustrations on, an identifiable obstacle to their aspirations which could be blamed for all their failures in later life." *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York, 1964), 267.

<sup>102</sup> Adolescence is marked by a rapid increase in the rate of growth, by a resurgence of the erotic drives that were repressed after the Oedipal crisis, by allegiance to heroic ideals, and by the use of group ideals by the young men and women emerging from childhood. Adolescence is still far from adulthood. The period after puberty is one of the most volatile and unstable that the growing, not yet mature, person undergoes. His personality is still incomplete, requiring a reconstitution and remodeling of the psychic structures under the onslaught of renewed instinctual and emotional conflicts. The adolescent passes through violent, affective crises. He has rapid, sudden swings of mood. He tends to suffer from recurring painful states of depression and despair that may involve severe guilt conflicts, harassing feelings of shame and self-consciousness, and hypochondriacal body preoccupations. In climbing the tortuous path to adulthood the adolescent experiences at every new step anxiety, confusion, disorganization, and a return to infantile positions, followed by reorganization and advance to more mature levels. He must not only free himself from his attachments to persons who were all-important in this childhood, he must also renounce his former pleasures and pursuits more rapidly than at any former stage of development.

<sup>103</sup> For the best discussions of psychological problems of adolescence see Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York, 1963); and his *Identity and the Life Cycle* (New York, 1959); Peter Blos, *On Adolescence: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (New York, 1962); Gerald H. J. Pearson, *Adolescence and the Conflict of Generations* (New York, 1958); Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence*, tr. Cecil Baines (New York, 1946), 149-93; and Jacobson, *Self and the Object World*, 159-216.

<sup>104</sup> Albert Bandura and Richard H. Walters, *Adolescent Aggression: A Study of the Influence of Child-Training Practices and Family Inter-relationship* (New York, 1959).



“one of the most significant, but also one of the most painful, psychical achievements of the pubertal period.”<sup>105</sup>

In discussing the effects of childhood deprivation we have followed the phase-specific psychosexual development of the child. We saw, in order, the traumata of the oral phase, of separation-individuation from the mother, the struggles with aggression and control that constitute the anal phase, the Oedipal conflict, the latency years of grade-school political socialization, to the crisis of adolescence that precedes adulthood. Each phase has its special stresses and focuses of conflict. Each may become a point of fixation to be returned to at a later date if the turmoil has been too great or the storm too violent to permit the child passage unharmed.

WE MUST SEEK THE WIDEST possible type and range of clinical material, cultural documentation, and quantitative statistical data in our quest for historical evidence. This essay will present three bodies of historical materials, some from each of these categories of data: comparative, qualitative, and quantitative. All varieties of historical evidence have an important and complementary function in generating new hypotheses, contributing new insight, and demarking future areas for exploration.

Psychoanalytical interest was directed at the war generation almost contemporaneously with the events. As early as 1919 Paul Federn interpreted the psychological dimensions of the postwar strikes and the soldiers' and workers' councils that sprang up throughout Central Europe.<sup>106</sup> He viewed the loss of the national father figure, the Kaiser, who could no longer satisfy infantile fantasies of a father who is omnipotently powerful, wise, and strong, who offers absolute security and protection, as the traumatic psychological event of the war. Now the Kaisers of Germany and Austria were deprived of land, throne, power, and the ability to offer a feeling of security. Thus a fatherless society was created that no longer stood in awe of the state. For some sons of the state, Federn suggested, the disappointment came during the war when their leaders and army officers made irresponsible and sometimes impossible demands that condemned them to death. The soldiers' and workers' councils were seen as an attempt to establish a nonpatriarchal social order, a brotherhood to replace the defeated father. Such a situation is unstable, however. Federn in March 1919—the date is worth noting for it was the zenith of republicanism in Europe—predicts the demise of the republic in

<sup>105</sup> Sigmund Freud, “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality” (1905), *Standard Edition*, 7: 227. Erik H. Erikson emphasizes the marked adolescent quality of Hitler's self-created image before the German public. He interprets *Mein Kampf* as a skillful portrayal of a fantasy that would appeal to the psychic needs of many Germans of the postwar generation. It is the fantasy of the adolescent who never gave in and identified with the domineering father. He stubbornly never surrendered. Hitler presented himself as a glorified older brother, “an unbroken adolescent,” “a gang leader who kept the boys together by demanding their admiration, by creating terror, and by shrewdly involving them in crimes from which there was no way back. And he was a ruthless exploiter of parental failures.” *Childhood and Society*, 337.

<sup>106</sup> Paul Federn, *Psychologie der Revolution—Die vaterlose Gesellschaft* (Vienna, 1919).

Central Europe and a turn to dictatorship on the psychological grounds of prevailing family patterns and man's desire to be dominated. The fatherless society will not succeed. "Among those who have now freed themselves of the social father-son relationship, the tendency toward it still remains so strong, that they only wait for a suitable newly appearing personality who embodies their father ideal, in order to again relate as a son to him."<sup>107</sup>

A study such as the present one, which attempts to assess the impact on children of a catastrophe like a war, should use the best clinical observations in comparative historical situations when these are available. If wartime deprivation has profound emotional effects on young children, these effects should not be limited to one time and place in the modern world.<sup>108</sup> The findings in Germany should also be evident in another industrial land and for other twentieth-century wars, such as for England in World War II.

The British experience is especially valuable to the historian who would consider the emotional effect of war on children because many English children were evacuated from their homes and families in London and the other big cities during World War II, and they were helped through this trying experience by the expert guidance of such specialists in the psychology of children as Anna Freud, Dorothy T. Burlingham, and D. W. Winnicott. These psychoanalysts carried out close residential observation of the evacuated children and published detailed studies of the children's responses and adaptations to the breakup of families in wartime. These were "normal" children, they were not hospitalized, nor were they juvenile offenders. They were not so heavily traumatized by their experience that their regressive defenses resisted all modification, as is the case with most of the children who survived concentration camps.<sup>109</sup> The blitzed English children were provided with a homelike environment and encouraged in every way toward normal development.<sup>110</sup> The fact that they were out of their homes and away from their families provides a degree of objectivity to the observations. The data were not filtered through reports of the parents; they are first-hand observations by trained professionals.

Anna Freud and Burlingham found that while a child will accept mother substitutes in the absence of its own mother, "there is . . . no father substitute who can fill the place which is left empty by the child's own father." "The infant's emotional relationship to its father begins later in life than that of

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>108</sup> For the case of an American pubescent boy suffering heightened aggressiveness and confusion of sexual identity due to the absence of the father in war and to maternal deprivation, see Anna Maenchen, "A Case of Superego Disintegration," *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 2 (1946): 257-62.

<sup>109</sup> Gerd Biermann, "Identitätsprobleme jüdischer Kinder und Jugendlicher in Deutschland," *Praxis der Kinderpsychologie und Kinderpsychiatrie*, 13 (1964): 213-21.

<sup>110</sup> I am especially impressed by the warmth and empathetic quality of D. W. Winnicott's wartime papers and broadcasts on the BBC. See "Children in the War" (1940), "The Deprived Mother" (1939), "The Evacuated Child" (1945), "The Return of the Evacuated Child" (1945), "Home Again" (1945), all in *The Child and the Outside World*.

its mother," they write, "but certainly from the second year onward it is an integral part of its emotional life and a necessary ingredient in the complex forces which work towards the formation of its character and its personality."<sup>111</sup>

The researchers found that absent parents were greatly idealized. Their letters were carried around and had to be read to the children innumerable times.<sup>112</sup> When the father was away in the armed services he was spoken of by his child in terms of endearment and admiration. Especially children who were in reality rejected or disappointed by their fathers formed passionate, loving, and admiring relationships to them. When a child had never known his father he would invent an idealized fantasy father who sanctioned his forbidden greedy and destructive wishes, who loved him and gave him security.<sup>113</sup>

When a father came home on leave, however, and thereby encroached on the existing close mother-child relationship, he was met with resentment and hostility by the child. The father was viewed as an intruder who separated the mother and son. One little boy said: "Do write to my Daddy, I don't want him to come here. I don't want to have lunch with him. Somebody else can have my Daddy."<sup>114</sup> But the same son and his father were best of friends when they were left alone without the mother.

When in some cases the ultimate disaster struck, Anna Freud and Burlingham report a complete inability of the children to accept their father's death. All the orphaned children talked about their dead fathers as if they were still alive. They denied the fact of death with fantasies of the father's rebirth and return from heaven.<sup>115</sup>

The most original psychoanalytical approach to National Socialist youth, and the one that I find conceptually most perceptive and useful, is Martin Wangh's excellent analysis of 1964.<sup>116</sup> He structures the psychodynamics of the First World War German children who came to the age of political effectiveness with the rise of Hitler with precision and insight. A preoccupation with guilt, Wangh points out, is also an unrecognized self-reproach for unresolved aggression against the father. Aggression toward the absent father-rival is expressed in gleeful ideas concerning his degradation and defeat. But the hostility is coupled with a longing for the idealized father that exacerbates childish homosexual wishes. These homosexual longings offer a way out of the Oedipal conflict that is heightened for sons left alone with their mothers. In these cir-

<sup>111</sup> Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham, *Infants without Families: The Case for and against Residential Nurseries* (New York, 1944), 102, 103, respectively.

<sup>112</sup> Anna Freud and Burlingham, *War and Children*, 154-55.

<sup>113</sup> Anna Freud and Burlingham, *Infants without Families*, 108, 110, 113.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>116</sup> Martin Wangh, "National Socialism and the Genocide of the Jews: A Psycho-Analytic Study of a Historical Event," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 45 (1964): 386-95; see also Wangh, "A Psycho-genetic Factor in the Recurrence of War," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 49 (1968): 319-23.

cumstances the woman is often rejected, and the incestuous wish is ascribed to someone else. These mental defenses, Wangh suggests, were renewed in the Nazi movement's deification of the Führer and its infernalization of the Jew. Homosexual tension was relieved through submission to an all-powerful leader, through turning women into "breeders" of children, and by persecuting Jews as "incestuous criminals" and "defilers of the race." The passive-masochistic inclinations that develop when boys are brought up and disciplined by mothers who are anxious and punitive may be defended against by preference for submission to a man, as this is less threatening and less castrating than submission to a woman. Self-humiliation and self-contempt were displaced onto the Jews and other supposedly inferior people, thereby assuaging feelings of unworthiness and masochistic fantasies of rejection. Since the former wartime enemies were for the time being unassailable, the Jew, who was defenseless and available, became by the mechanism of displacement the victim of those who needed a target for regressive action.

This line of research has been carried on to the contemporary problem of the children of World War II.<sup>117</sup> Herman Roskamp, in a clinical study of German university students born during the Second World War, emphasizes the conflict between the child's perception of the father during the war as a highly idealized fantasy object bearing his ideas of omnipotence and the way in which the father was perceived on his return in defeat.<sup>118</sup> While away the father had been honored and admired; he was the object of extreme hopes and expectations upon his return. It quickly became apparent that he was not what had been longed for. Instead he was a defeated, insecure father breaking into a heretofore fatherless family. Up to this time the mother had represented all aspects of reality. The father, by contrast, was now a demanding rival who left most wishes unfulfilled, who disappointed many hopes, and who set many limits where formerly there had been none.

Among the richest sources for the expression of the experience of young Germans during the war and postwar years is the literature of the period, which more than held its place amid the cultural fecundity of the Weimar epoch. Sometimes literary expression can capture for historians the essence of a generation's experience both graphically and with a depth of emotional subtlety that cannot be conveyed by statistics or quantitative data. Many qualitative affects cannot be statistically comprehended or documented. It is possible to see, identify, and demonstrate father identification and castration anxiety without necessarily being able to computerize them. This is the appeal to the historian of both clinical insight and literary sensibility.<sup>119</sup> Can

<sup>117</sup> Alexander Mitscherlich, *Auf dem Weg zur Vaterlosen Gesellschaft: Ideen zur Sozial psychologie* (Munich, 1963), tr. by Eric Mosbacher as *Society without the Father: A Contribution to Social Psychology* (London, 1969).

<sup>118</sup> Herman Roskamp, "Über Identitätskonflikte bei im zweiten Weltkrieg gebornen Studenten," *Psyche: Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse und ihre Anwendungen*, 23 (1969): 754-61.

<sup>119</sup> For a discussion of the advantages and techniques of using literary evidence in history see Alain Besançon, "Psychoanalysis: Auxiliary Science or Historical Method?" *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3 (1968). 149-62.

one measure or compare quantitatively, for example, the degree of suffering, mourning, loss, or rage a subject feels? For this kind of emotional evidence we must rely on that most sensitive of our cultural materials—the subjective written word of literature.

When this has been said, it is nevertheless astonishing to experience the great autobiographical pacifist novel *Jahrgang 1902* by Ernst Glaeser (1902–63), which describes the author's feelings with such intensity and pathos that it often reads more like the free associations of a patient in psychoanalysis than a novel. The critic William Soskin ranked *Jahrgang 1902* with *Sergeant Grisha* and *All Quiet on the Western Front* as one of the most significant works on the First World War.<sup>120</sup> This book ran through six German printings during the winter of 1928–29. It sold seventy thousand copies in Germany and was translated into twenty-five languages.

The book takes its title from the year of the author's birth, which also automatically became the year of his military-service class. The class of 1902 was not to experience the war of 1914–18 on the front.<sup>121</sup> For that they were too young, but as Glaeser pointedly noted, "The war did not establish a moratorium on puberty." The book, he said, deals with "the tragedy of murdered minds and souls and diseased temperaments in the noncombatant social body."<sup>122</sup>

As the war began the fathers left to join their regiments and the twelve-year-old boy observes that "life in our town became quieter." The boys played war games in which the French and Russians were always soundly beaten.<sup>123</sup> The fathers were sorely missed. They were quickly idealized and glorified. Glaeser describes the process of overestimation and identification with the father who is absent at war:

We thought only of our fathers in these days. Overnight they had become heroes. . . . We loved our fathers with a new sublime love. As ideals. And just as

<sup>120</sup> William Soskin, as quoted in Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, eds., *Twentieth Century Authors* (New York, 1942), 540.

<sup>121</sup> For a sardonic expression from among the youngest class that went to war, see Erich Kästner, "The Class of 1899," in his *Bei Durchsicht meiner Bücher . . .* (Zurich: Atrium Verlag, 1946), 97–98. "We took the women to bed, / While the men stood in France. / We had imagined that it would be much more wonderful. / We were merely confirmants. / Then they took us to the army, / For nothing more than cannon fodder. / The benches at school were emptied, / Mother wept at home. / Then we had a bit of revolution / And potato chips came raining down. / Then came the women, just like they used to / And then we caught the clap. / Meanwhile the old man lost his money, / So we became night-school students / By day we worked in an office / And dealt with rates of interest. / Then she almost had a child, / Whether by you or by me—who knows! / A friend of ours scraped it out. / And the next thing you know we will be thirty. / We even passed an examination / And have already forgotten most of it. / Now we are alone day and night / And have nothing decent to eat! / We looked the world straight in the snout, / Instead of playing with dolls / We spit at the rest of the world, / Insofar as we were not killed at Ypres. / They made our bodies or our spirit / A wee bit too weak / They threw us into world history too long, / Too fast, and too much. / The old folks maintained that the time has come / For us to sow and to reap. / But wait a moment. Soon we will be ready. / Just a moment. Soon we will be there! / Then we will show you what we have learned!"

<sup>122</sup> Ernst Glaeser, as quoted in Kunitz and Haycraft, *Twentieth Century Authors*, 540.

<sup>123</sup> Ernst Glaeser, *Jahrgang 1902* (Berlin, 1929), 242, 250–58.

we formerly used to express our admiration for the Homeric heroes or the figures of the Wars of Liberation by token symbols of clothing such as golden helmets of tin foil or Lützow caps, so we now also began, but in far greater measure, to turn ourselves symbolically into the idealized figures of our fathers.<sup>124</sup>

The boys of the village went to the barber to have their hair cut in the close-cropped military style like their fathers.

We had our hair cut. Bare. Smooth. Three millimeters high. For this is how we had seen it on our fathers as they left for the front. None of them had hair to part now.

One evening late in September a group of fifteen determined boys went to the barber. We stood according to height and let the instrument pass over our heads. As the barber was sweeping up our hair with a broom an hour later, he said: "Now you look like recruits."

We were proud of this distinction and enthusiastically paid 40 pfennigs each.<sup>125</sup>

By the winter of 1916 the privation of the war began to be felt in the daily lives of the boys. They were always hungry. There was never enough to eat. The steady diet of turnip soup became inedible. City folk bribed and bartered away precious possessions in order to get nourishing food from the farmers. The mother gave Kathinka, the maid, one of her finest blouses so that she would bring back food when she visited her peasant parents. Faithfully Kathinka smuggled butter past the gendarmes in her woolen bloomers. Field gendarmes and controllers appeared on the roads and at the stations to search travelers for contraband foodstuffs. The children developed tactics for deceiving the gendarmes and smuggling forbidden foodstuffs home. One boy would serve as a decoy to draw the gendarme's attention while the other raced home across the fields with a sack of flour or a ham.<sup>126</sup>

This progression within two years from idealism to hunger and the struggle for survival is vividly described by Glaeser.

The winter remained hard until the end. The war began to burst over the fronts and to strike the people. Hunger destroyed our unity; in the families children stole each other's rations. . . . Soon the women who stood in gray lines in front of the shops talked more about the hunger of their children than of the death of their husbands. The sensations of war had been altered.

A new front existed. It was held by women. The enemies were the entente of field gendarmes and uncompromising guards. Every smuggled pound of butter, every sack of potatoes gleefully secreted by night was celebrated in the families with the same enthusiasm as the victories of the armies two years earlier. . . . It was wonderful and inspiring to outwit the gendarmes and after successfully triumphing to be honored by one's mother as a hero.<sup>127</sup>

Oedipal longings were heightened for the sons left alone with their mothers during years of war. Starvation led to the mobilization of unconscious wishes

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 292, 294-95.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 292-93.

for a return to the oral comforts of early mother-child units. Occasionally the prolonged hunger was broken by feasting on an illegally slaughtered pig or a smuggled goose that the father sent home from the eastern front. Then an orgy of feeding took place. Gluttony reigned and undernourished bellies got sick on the rich food. The windows had to be stuffed to keep the neighbors from smelling the meat. The adolescent boy and his mother consumed almost an entire twelve-pound goose in one night. A stolen drumstick for his girlfriend was to her the convincing symbol of love. Glaeser writes, "We scarcely spoke of the war any more, we only spoke of hunger. Our mothers were closer to us than our fathers."<sup>128</sup>

The fathers were not present to shield the sons from maternal seduction. One young adolescent in the novel is seduced by a motherly farmer's wife with the promise of a large ham. But, much as the pangs of his stomach and his mother's pleading letters argued for bringing the ham home, he could not do it. The great succulent ham had become an incestuous object. He had earned it from the farm wife by taking her husband's place. Now he was too guilty and too anxious to permit himself and his family to enjoy it. The pangs of guilt were stronger than the pains of hunger. As if he could "undo" his Oedipal crime, the boy laid the ham on the farm wife's bed and left. He was tearful and depressed, feelings he rationalized as being due to his injured feelings because he was really only a substitute (*Ersatz*) for the husband. He climbed into bed with his boy comrade. In the stillness of the dawn they embraced, keeping each other warm, and he shared his story of seduction and sexual discovery.<sup>129</sup> In this episode we see fully elaborated the heightened Oedipal conflict when the father is absent, the increased guilt and fear of retribution, and finally the rejection of the woman as a sexual object and an exacerbation of adolescent homosexuality arising from the emotional effects of the war.

By the winter of 1917 the fathers had become aliens to their sons. But they were not only unknown men, they were feared and threatening strangers who claimed rights and control over the lives of their sons. They had become distant but powerful figures who could punish and exact a terrible price for disobedience and transgressions. Glaeser recounts his reaction as a fifteen-year-old to a letter from his father on the Russian front in terms of intense castration anxiety. The adolescent boy's Oedipal victory in having displaced his father would now be terribly expiated and revenged by a towering, castrating monster of his guilt-laden fantasies. Glaeser attempts to deny that his father has any legitimate claim to control over him

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 314, 342-44, 314. "Strange what part food now plays," noted a Hamburg educator and poet in his diary. "Every conversation turns on food. Whoever has hoarded supplies keeps it secret. Whoever gets anything hides it as if it were a crime. A pound of butter has become the object of a thousand questions and outpourings of envy. From where? from whom? how?" (Nov. 11, 1916). "Formerly, eating was a means to live, now it has become its purpose" (Dec. 18, 1917). Quoted in Ernst L. Loewenberg, "Jakob Loewenberg: Excerpts from His Diaries and Letters," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 25 (1970): 192.

<sup>129</sup> Glaeser, *Jahrgang 1902*, 317-21.

at all. But his father would know where to find him and the inevitable retribution would be inexorable.

We were frightened. That was the voice of the front. That was the voice of those men who formerly were once our fathers, who now, however, removed from us for years, were strangers before us, fearsome, huge, overpowering, casting dark shadows, oppressive as a monument. What did they still know of us? They knew where we lived, but they no longer knew what we looked like and thought.<sup>130</sup>

It is of biographical interest for the thesis of this essay that Glaeser went into emigration from Germany after 1933, living in Prague, Zurich, and Paris. In Zurich in 1939 he wrote a newspaper article condoning Hitler's policies and condemning his fellow emigrés. Within days he received a contract from a Berlin publisher. He returned to Germany and joined the war effort, becoming a war reporter for the Luftwaffe and the editor of the military newspaper, *Adler im Sudan*.<sup>131</sup>

Thus, as did so many others of his cohort, Glaeser was two decades later to choose to wear a uniform and to identify with his distant and glorified father. The identification with the father who went out to war served to erase the memory of the feared and hated strange father who came home in defeat. By being a patriot and submitting to authority, the ambivalence of the young boy who gleefully observed his father's humiliating defeat and degradation was denied and expiated. Now he would do obeisance to an idealized but remote leader who was deified and untouchable.

Many of the emotions of German middle-class generational conflict in the decade after World War I were profoundly explored by Thomas Mann in his story of 1925, "Disorder and Early Sorrow."<sup>132</sup> The setting is the home of Professor Cornelius, a historian, the time is during the inflation of 1923, and the social climate is filled with anxiety about loss of status, a widening gap between the cultures of youth and adults, and the deepening economic crisis that has caused a deterioration of faith in stable moral norms. Solid bourgeois ladies are now the Corneliuses' house servants while the brash young man who lives by speculation, drives a car, treats his friends to champagne suppers, and showers the children of the professor with gauche gifts of "barbaric" size and taste represents the postwar generation.<sup>133</sup>

The story opens with the menu of the midday meal in which the main dish is croquettes made of turnip greens. The meatless dinner is a meager contrast to the opulent menus succulently described by Mann in *Budden-*

<sup>130</sup> Wir erschrecken. Das war die Stimme der Front. Das war die Stimme jener Männer, die früher einmal unsere Väter waren, jetzt aber, seit Jahren von uns entrernt, fremd vor uns standen, beängstigend, gross, übermächtig, mit schweren Schatten, erdrückend wie ein Denkmal. Was wussten sie noch von uns? Sie wussten, wo wir wohnten, aber wie wir aussahen und dachten, das wussten sie nicht mehr. *Ibid.*, 323.

<sup>131</sup> Erich Stockhorst, *Fünftausend Köpfe: Wer war was im Dritten Reich* (Bruchsal, Baden, 1967), 155.

<sup>132</sup> Thomas Mann, "Disorder and Early Sorrow," in *Death in Venice and Seven Other Stories*, tr. H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York, 1959), 182–216.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.



brooks and *The Magic Mountain*. What reader can easily forget the sumptuous repasts in the restaurant of the International Sanitorium Berghof or Mann's descriptions of solid fare on the table of the patrician merchant home in the Hanseatic seaport? In the professorial home of the Weimar era the dessert is a powdered pudding that tastes of almonds and soap—an *ersatz* concoction symbolizing the current hard times and the decline in standard of living. Many people have had to give up their telephones, but the Corneliuses have so far been able to keep theirs. Repairs cannot be made on the house for lack of materials. The professor washes at a broken basin that cannot be repaired because there is nobody to mend it. Clothing is worn and turned, yet the adolescents of the family do not notice, for they wear a simple belted linen smock and sandals. They are, says Mann, by birth the "villa proletariat" [*Villenproletarier*] who no longer know or care about the correct evening dress of the middle classes or the manners of a gentleman. In fact, the professor cannot, from observing their style of dress or personal bearing, distinguish his son from his working-class Bolshevik household servant. "Both, he thinks, look like young moujiks." His children are products of the disrupted times, specimens of their generation, with a jargon of their own that the adults find incomprehensible. The young enjoy contriving to get the family extra allotments of rationed foods, such as eggs, by deceiving the shopkeepers. They function better than the old folk in a world in which money has lost its value. The generational struggle is underlined by the professor's consistent mental depreciation of his adolescent son when comparing him with other young men: "And here is my poor Bert, who knows nothing and can do nothing and thinks of nothing except playing the clown, without even talent for that!" The younger son, who is but four years old, is subject to the rages of "a howling dervish." He, who is "born and brought up in these desolate, distracted times, . . . has been endowed by them with an unstable and hypersensitive nervous system and suffers greatly under life's disharmonies. He is prone to sudden anger and outbursts of bitter tears, stamping his feet at every trifle."<sup>134</sup>

Thus Mann pictures the dislocation of continuity between the generations of the Weimar Republic. They differ in expectations and methods of dealing with reality. In the decade since 1913, when the professor bought his home, the family has in fact been proletarianized. One of the themes of the story is their varied response, as individuals of different ages, to this fact. The old generation cannot adjust, while their children are born into the new situation and need not make any adaptation of life style. Mann has sketched superbly and for all time the psychological experience of the impoverishment of the German upper-middle class and the rebellion against the norms and values of their parents by the children of the war.

The third variety of data I wish to examine is quantitative. It is a series

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 182, 196, 185, 183, 204, 188.

of autobiographical essays collected in 1934 by Theodore Abel, a sociologist at Columbia University, in an essay contest offering cash prizes for “the best personal life history of an adherent of the Hitler movement.”<sup>135</sup>

In reading the essays one is often struck by their didactic quality. Some writers say outright that they are delighted to write down their experiences for the benefit of American researchers at Columbia University.<sup>136</sup> As the essays were solicited by a bulletin at all local headquarters of the NSDAP and by announcements in the party press, and as the writers were not anonymous, one may infer that the writers suspected that party organs would be informed of any criticism and political or personal deviance in the essays. In some cases one senses that a local party functionary may have encouraged the writers to respond to the essay contest. Some contributions bear the NSDAP *Abteilung Propaganda* stamp.<sup>137</sup> Many tiresomely repeat propaganda slogans about Jewish war profiteering, Red vandalism in the revolution of 1918–19, and so forth.

All these caveats notwithstanding, these nearly six hundred essays constitute a valuable historical source. In the first place it is a contemporary source. No set of interviews of ex-Nazis thirty-seven years later could possibly elicit the same material. The Abel autobiographies may be utilized, not as a statistical sample for generalizations, but as bases for theory building. They will serve as a cognitive prism for drawing attention to necessary variables of political behavior rather than as a monolithic statistical sample that can produce conclusive findings for the population of the Nazi party. They can tell us, however, what excited and stimulated the writers, what preoccupied their fantasies and imaginations, how they viewed themselves, their childhoods and homes, and their enemies. These data can then become

<sup>135</sup> Theodore Abel, *Why Hitler Came into Power: An Answer Based on the Original Life Stories of Six Hundred of His Followers* (New York, 1938). Republished as *The Nazi Movement* (New York, 1965). For the purposes of this study I have used the first edition. Abel stressed that style, spelling, or dramatic story value were of no consideration. What was to be considered were “accounts of family life, education, economic conditions, membership in associations, participation in the Hitler movement, and important experiences, thoughts, and feelings about events and ideas of the postwar period” (p. 3). Abel had the cooperation of the National Socialist party in gathering his data. His announcement soliciting essays was distributed to all local Nazi party headquarters and was published in the party press. Abel used 600 of the 683 manuscripts contributed to the contest for his study. He did not use those that were too brief and the 48 written by women. Fortunately for historical research the original autobiographical manuscripts were turned over to the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace in Stanford, California. Today 582 of these essays are available for research, the others having been lost. I acknowledge the cooperation of the staff of the Hoover Institution, particularly Mrs. Agnes Peterson, curator of Central and Western European Collections, for making the Abel Collection available to me. Hereafter the original autobiographies, which are in the Hoover Institution Archives, will be referred to as AC and cited according to their archival number. There are factors that should induce caution in drawing generalizations from the Abel autobiographies. The sample is self-selected, not random, suggesting that motives such as the prize money and exhibitionism may have biased it. The sample is geographically weighted toward Berlin (30 per cent) and the Rhineland, and in favor of large- and medium-sized cities rather than small towns and the countryside.

<sup>136</sup> AC, 31.

<sup>137</sup> See, for example *ibid.*, 33.

referents for further theoretical conceptualization and behavioral model building, particularly with respect to emotional connotations that are not censored by the writers because they appear to be apolitical and therefore unimportant.

The most striking emotional affect expressed in the Abel autobiographies are the adult memories of intense hunger and privation from childhood. A party member who was a child of the war years recalls, "Sometimes I had to scurry around eight to ten hours—occasionally at night—to procure a few potatoes or a bit of butter. Carrots and beets, previously considered fit only for cattle, came to be table luxuries."<sup>138</sup> Another man's memory is vivid in its sense of abandonment and isolation expressed in language that makes a feeling of maternal deprivation very clear.

Hunger was upon us. Bread and potatoes were scarce, while meat and fats were almost non-existent. We were hungry all the time; we had forgotten how it felt to have our stomachs full.

All family life was at an end. None of us really knew what it meant—we were left to our own devices. For women had to take the place of their fighting men. They toiled in factories and in offices, as ostlers and as commercial travelers, in all fields of activity previously allotted to men—behind the plow as well as on the omnibus. Thus while we never saw our fathers, we had only glimpses of our mothers in the evening. Even then they could not devote themselves to us because, tired as they were, they had to take care of their household, after their strenuous day at work. So we grew up, amid hunger and privation, with no semblance of decent family life.<sup>139</sup>

A study of the Abel autobiographies focused on a sample from the birth cohorts 1911 to 1915, who were small children during the war, indicates the presence of the defensive mechanisms of projection, displacement, low frustration tolerance, and the search for an idealized father. For example, the essays of two sisters born in 1913 and 1915, whose father fell in 1915, clearly demonstrate that Hitler served as an idealized father figure for them. Their earliest memories are of their mother crying a great deal and of all the people wearing black. They relate their excitement at first hearing the Führer speak in person at a rally in Kassel in 1931. The sisters were so exhilarated that neither of them could sleep all night. They prayed for the protection of the Führer, and asked forgiveness for ever having doubted him. The sisters began their Nazi party activities by caring for and feeding SA men.<sup>140</sup>

Some of the men in the Abel Collection who lost their fathers early in life and were separated from their mothers especially valued the comradeship of the SA. One such man wrote, "It was wonderful to belong to the bond of comradeship of the SA. Each one stood up for the other."<sup>141</sup> Massive projec-

<sup>138</sup> Abel, *Why Hitler Came into Power*, 14.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 14–15.

<sup>140</sup> AC, 41, 42.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

tion of ego-alien impulses is evident in many of the essays. One man says that bejeweled Jewesses tried to seduce him politically with cake.<sup>142</sup> Many of the SA men who engaged in street brawls and violence blamed others, such as the police and the Communists, for instigating the fighting and for persecuting them.<sup>143</sup> One man displays remarkable projection and displacement of his own murderous feelings toward a younger brother when he relates the death of that brother in an unnecessary operation performed by a Jewish doctor. "Since I especially loved my dead brother," he writes, "a grudge arose in me against the doctor, and this not yet comprehensible hatred increased with age to become an antagonism against everything Jewish."<sup>144</sup>

A body of autobiographies such as the Abel Collection invites a variety of research approaches, each suited to its own ends and including quantitative computerization.<sup>145</sup> This is now being undertaken by Peter H. Merkl with the aim of discovering and conceptualizing the phases of political mobilization.<sup>146</sup> Merkl writes:

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 86, 96, 206.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>145</sup> Computerization of the emotional content of autobiographical data presents almost insuperable methodological difficulties in evaluating the nuances of individual meanings and generalizing them. So very much depends on the subjective judgment of whoever does the computer coding. A statement in an autobiographical essay that one evaluator would code as "extreme leadership or Hitler cult" may appear to another man as just normal party politics. The same may be said for "anti-Semitism with a sex angle," "political violence," and other categories. As in other areas of history, much that passes as cold impersonal statistics is underpinned by a highly relativized subjective human temperament. In many cases the findings constitute such a small number of cases that they are statistically insignificant.

<sup>146</sup> For preliminary findings see Peter H. Merkl, "Die alten Kämpfer der NSDAP—Auswertung von 35 Jahre alten Daten," *Sozialwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch für Politik*, 2 (1970): 495–518. Professor Merkl is preparing a major secondary statistical study of the Abel data on which the hypotheses of the present essay may be tested. He has already established that the sample of 582 Nazi autobiographies approximates the total National Socialist party membership in such important variables as age distribution, vocational distribution, and date of initial party membership, so that this collection of autobiographies may in these respects be used as a representative sample of the Nazi party. Merkl reports that almost one-half of the autobiographies describe a childhood economic setting of poverty. A quarter of the subjects were working instead of going to school by age fourteen. A fourth also had parents who both worked or lost their fathers early in life. Only one-sixth may be said to have enjoyed a secure, middle-class childhood. Further, the response of these people to the German defeat, occupation, border wars, revolution, and the establishment of a republic, was denial and projection. Over one-fourth of the respondents placed blame for the defeat not on the Kaiser and the German general staff, which had misled them, nor on the German social and political system that was still semifeudal in 1918, but on various versions of the "stab-in-the-back" legend. Almost three-fourths of the writers attributed the Revolution of 1918 to the treason of the Spartacus Bund, international Bolshevism, the democratic parties of the Weimar coalition, or the Jews. Factors that respondents listed as activating them to membership and political participation in the Nazi party were, in over fifty per cent of the cases, marching in uniform and demonstrations. A further one-quarter named the attraction of violent action. Nearly half of the almost six hundred writers took part in street battles and fights at mass meetings or quasi-legal frontier warfare against Poland. Another sixth stated that they only participated in deployments and violent encounters with the Communists. Only one-sixth was satisfied with conventional electoral party activity. It appears that the quest for a mode of direct and violent action was the most powerful motive impelling this group toward party membership. A fascinating view of the inner objects of the respondents

A politically violent new generation was evidently raising the storm ladders against the gerontocracy of Weimar. . . . There can be little doubt about the youthful character of the Nazi movement, a political youth rebellion of violent virulence which seems to have no equal prior to our own age. It was evidently the good luck of the Nazi movement to become the chief beneficiary of an enormous, destructive tidal wave in the ebb and flow of the generations.<sup>147</sup>

THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS of massive health, nutritional, and material deprivation and parental absence in Central Europe during World War I should lead the historian to apply theoretical and clinical knowledge of the long-term effects of such a deprived childhood on personality. The anticipation of weakened character structure manifested in aggression, defenses of projection and displacement, and inner rage that may be mobilized by a renewed anxiety-inducing trauma in adulthood is validated in the subsequent political conduct of this cohort during the Great Depression when they joined extremist paramilitary and youth organizations and political parties. In view of these two bodies of data for which a psychoanalytic understanding of personality provides the essential linkage, it is postulated that a direct relationship existed between the deprivation German children experienced in World War I and the response of these children and adolescents to the anxieties aroused by the Great Depression of the early 1930s. This relationship is psychodynamic: the war generation had weakened egos and superegos, meaning that the members of this generation turned readily to programs based on facile solutions and violence when they met new frustrations during the depression. They then reverted to earlier phase-specific fixations in their child development marked by rage, sadism, and the defensive idealization of their absent parents, especially the father. These elements made this age cohort particularly susceptible to the appeal of a mass movement utilizing the crudest devices of projection and displacement in its ideology. Above all it prepared the young voters of Germany for submission to a total, charismatic leader.

But fantasy is always in the end less satisfying than mundane reality. Iron-

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is revealed when we see their descriptions of the party enemy. Twenty-eight per cent, according to Merkl, used categories such as "immoral," "unclean," and "subhuman." An additional 22.5 per cent described the opponent as "a faceless but powerful, treasonous conspiracy." Over one-third felt threatened by powerful foreign nations; one-fifth viewed the non-German peoples as morally and otherwise inferior; a further one-third expressed hatred for foreigners residing in Germany; one-sixth wrote in vague terms of "the international enemy of the German people," "the conspiracy," or made hostile references to international Catholicism; 28.1 per cent of the group showed strong xenophobia. It is apparent that splitting and projective mechanisms for coping with negative self-feelings and with the contemporary problems of Germany are particularly massive in the Abel sample. Merkl's computerization of the Abel autobiographies is especially valuable because it permits cohort comparisons and cross-tabulations. When the older generation of the birth cohorts 1860-1901 is compared with the birth cohorts 1902-05, only 10 per cent of the older group showed a pattern of an early enthusiasm for the war followed by disillusionment, while this was true of 34.5 per cent of the younger people in the sample.

<sup>147</sup> Peter H. Merkl, "The Pre-1933 Nazi Movement: The Abel Collection Re-examined," paper read at the regional meeting of the Conference Group on German Politics, Apr. 1, 1970, in Sacramento, Calif., p. 5; courtesy of the author.

ically, instead of finding the idealized father they, with Hitler as their leader, plunged Germany and Europe headlong into a series of deprivations many times worse than those of World War I. Thus the repetition was to seek the glory of identification with the absent soldier-father, but like all quests for a fantasied past, it had to fail. Hitler and National Socialism were so much a repetition and fulfillment of the traumatic childhoods of the generation of World War I that the attempt to undo that war and those childhoods was to become a political program. As a result the regressive illusion of nazism ended in a repetition of misery at the front and starvation at home made worse by destroyed cities, irremediable guilt, and millions of new orphans.

A return to the past is always unreal. To attempt it is the path of certain disaster. There was no glorified father who went to war and who could be recaptured in Hitler. He existed only in fantasy, and he could never be brought back in reality. There are no ideal mothers and fathers; there are only flawed human parents. Therefore, for a World War I generation seeking restitution of a lost childhood there was to be only bitter reality in the form of a psychotic charlatan who skillfully manipulated human needs and left destruction to Germany and Europe. What the youth cohort wanted was a fantasy of warmth, closeness, security, power, and love. What they re-created was a repetition of their own childhoods. They gave to their children and to Europe in greater measure precisely the traumas they had suffered as children and adolescents a quarter of a century earlier.