

## *The Jewish Parasite*

*Notes on the Semantics of the Jewish Problem,  
with special Reference to Germany*

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In pursuing the question of how the persecutions of the Jews under Hitler, incomprehensible in their organised cruelty as they still seem to us, could ever have been possible, not sufficient attention has, perhaps, been paid to the semantic aspect of the Jewish problem. When we examine the conception of the Jew as he appeared in the eyes of the persecutors and their contemporaries, we observe that next to the visual representation in the shape of caricature it is the language that provides the most relevant material. In language our thoughts and conceptions are mirrored; moreover, language is in fact the element indispensable to the formation of our thoughts: it shapes our mental images and conceptions and gives them final expression. Research into changes of meaning which words and their connotations have undergone has, therefore, gained its rightful place among the branches of historical study in the course of the last decades. It is now recognised as a distinctive sphere of historical research under the name of Semantics and as such bears a specific significance for our problem.

It has been rightly pointed out before that the image of the Jew, as perceived by the Christian world in the Middle Ages, and the likening to or even identification with the Devil, might have played a decisive part in the cruelty of the persecutions of the Jews at that time.<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, a connection could probably be established between the phrase of the Jewish usurer who "sucks the blood of the people", and the accusation that the Jews were using Christian blood for ritual purposes. Obviously, to arrive at a safe conclusion in this case, much systematic and detailed research into verbal usage and contemporary conceptions concerning the Jews would be necessary. But the picture becomes clearer when we turn our attention to modern times and the recent past,

<sup>1</sup>See in particular the fundamental book by Jehoshua Trachtenberg: *The Devil and the Jews. The Medieval Conception of the Jew and its Relation to modern Antisemitism*, Yale University Press, 1943; paperback edition in Meridian Books, New York-Philadelphia, 1961. See also my remarks on the Semantics of the Jewish Question in: *Modern Anti-Semitism and its Place in the History of the Jewish Question in Between East and West, Essays dedicated to the Memory of Bela Horovitz*, London, 1958, p. 164 ff., and particularly p. 192, footnote 40, in *Vierteljahreshfte für Zeitgeschichte*, October 1958, p. 340 ff., and in *Yad Vashem Studies on the European Jewish Catastrophe and Resistance*, vol. III, Jerusalem 1959, p. 7-15.

since here the literary evidence at our disposal shows an extensive range.

Victor Klemperer, the German philologist of Jewish extraction who, albeit under the degrading conditions of a slave labourer, deprived of honour and rights, was allowed to remain in Nazi-dominated Germany because of his marriage to an "Aryan" woman, tried to alleviate his tribulations by taking notes on the Nazi language, which eventually provided the material for an extraordinarily illuminating book published after the war.<sup>2</sup> What, asks Klemperer in the introductory chapter, was actually the strongest weapon in Hitler's arsenal of propaganda? The strongest impact, he answers, did not come from the variety of speeches by the leaders, "neither from articles and leaflets, posters or flags; in fact nothing that could be absorbed by conscious thinking and conscious feeling achieved the intended effect. Nazism rather crept into the flesh and blood of the masses by means of single words, turns of phrase and stock expressions which, imposed upon the people a million times over in continuous reiteration, were mechanically and unconsciously absorbed by them". According to Klemperer, Schiller's concept of "cultivated language that forms poetic imagination and thought for you (*die gebildete Sprache, die für dich dichtet und denkt*) had usually been understood too much in an aesthetic sense and without regard to its harmful element. For "language not only creates for me poetic imagination and thought, it also guides my feeling and sets the course for my whole spiritual being the more naturally, the more unconsciously I surrender myself to its power. What when this cultivated language is composed of poisonous elements, or has been made the carrier of poisonous substances? Words can act like tiny doses of arsenic: they are swallowed without being noticed, they appear to have no effect, but after a while the poison has done its work."<sup>3</sup>

Klemperer points out two characteristic features of the Nazi language, and the development of these features can be traced without much difficulty in the literary works which lead from the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century to the Nazis. The one characteristic of this

language is its singular appeal to faith, its magic effect.<sup>4</sup> Ernst Cassirer, in his book *The Myth of the State*, likewise points to this change in the actual function of the language. Words, he says, had to perform two totally different functions in the history of civilization. They could be briefly defined as semantic and as magic. Significant for the development during the decades preceding the Nazi rule was the predominance the magic word had gained over the semantic word. "New words have been coined; and even the old ones are used in a new sense. They have undergone a deep change of meaning. This change of meaning depends upon the fact that those words which formerly were used in a descriptive, logical or semantic sense are now used as magic words, destined to produce certain effects, and to stir up certain emotions. Our ordinary words are charged with meanings; but these new-fangled words are charged with feelings and violent passions."<sup>5</sup>

The second characteristic established by Klemperer is the welding of the mechanical with the organic. "Whilst the Nazi language emphasizes all the time the organic, the naturally grown, it has been swamped, at the same time, by mechanical expressions, and has remained unaware of the corruption of its style by such graceless combinations as *aufgezogene Organisation*."<sup>6</sup>

It is perhaps possible to outline a threefold intrusion into the growth of the language towards the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century: the biological, technological and mythological infiltration.

The most striking phenomenon is the infiltration of biological terms which might be called in German *Biologisierung* of the language.<sup>7</sup> Its origin goes back to the close of the 18th century. In the Romantic movement, with its emphasis on the "organic", the "naturally grown", this phenomenon becomes clearly visible.<sup>8</sup> Modern nationalism is hardly conceivable without this biological concept of the "organically grown" which can only too easily merge into the mystical ideas of "blood and soil" as the true basis of the life of the people. In the first instance such

<sup>2</sup>LIT (*Lingua Imperii Tertii*), „Notizbuch eines Philologen (Notebook of a Philologist)" 2. Aufl., Berlin 1949. Klemperer precedes his book with the motto: „Sprache ist mehr als Blut" (Language is more essential than Blood) by Franz Rosenzweig. Quite deviant, and not in keeping with the general trend of the book, are Klemperer's derogative remarks on Zionism in which his assimilation complex as a baptised Jew makes him see nothing but "the perverted romanticism" which he thinks is also responsible for National Socialism. In the third edition he even points to similarities of language between Herzl and — Hitler.

<sup>3</sup>Victor Klemperer, LIT, p. 21. See also Heinrich Boell in *Die Kiepe*, Koeln 1959, No. 1: "The saying: If words could kill, has long since been raised from the *irrealis* to the indicative: Words can kill, and it is solely a question of conscience whether one allows language to slip into fields of thought where it will become murderous."

<sup>4</sup>Klemperer, LIT, p. 29: "Every language which is allowed to express things freely serves all human needs, it serves reason as well as emotion, it is communication, conversation, soliloquy, prayer, request, command, invocation. The LIT solely serves invocation."  
<sup>5</sup>Ernst Cassirer *The Myth of the State*, Doubleday Anchor Books, New York 1955, pp. 355-56.

<sup>6</sup>Klemperer, LIT, p. 53: Examples are words like „Betriebszellen" (Party cells in factories and other organizations), word combinations like Menschen „gleichschalten" (make men think and act in conformity with the party line), „eine Organisation aufziehen" (set up an organization).

<sup>7</sup>See also Renate Schaefer, „Zur Geschichte des Wortes ‚ersetzen'“, *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung*, 18 (NF. 3), pp. 40-80. In Nazi language "biologically coloured images take up much space, and it is mainly by the murky, dark, dirty side of organic life that national-socialist metaphors have been inspired."

<sup>8</sup>V. Klemperer, LIT, repeatedly stresses the close connection between Nazism and the German romanticism, p. 151: "... for everything that stands for Nazism can be found

notions, taken from natural science, were mainly used by way of analogy and as long as they served, in effect, the purpose of illustrating abstract concepts, no objection needed to be raised against this kind of usage.<sup>9</sup> However, language follows its own immanent laws, and the image contained in the word has the tendency to free itself from the limitation of comparison and allusion, and to be taken altogether in its literal meaning.

Thus the image of "racial body" (*Volkskörper*), which had been used by the conservative parties in Germany for decades, could assume in the course of time more and more the meaning of a genuine biological term — as in the allegation of the poisonous penetration into, and the final destruction of, the "racial body" by the powers of bolshevism, capitalism and intellectualism. Such a presentation can be carried to absurd lengths when, for instance, the Nazi voices lament "the decay of the living body of the German language through the Jewish infection" (in German: *Untergang des lebendigen deutschen Sprachleibs durch die jüdische Infektion*), and when they describe the procedure as "the Jewish element eating into it."<sup>10</sup>

In discussions about Jews and the Jewish problem, words and verbal images bearing a biological character were used too, at first rather as analogies. In this respect one may recall Mommsen's saying — meant by him in a neutral or even positive sense — of the Jews forming, within the Roman Empire and at later periods, "a ferment (or "element") of decomposition" and observe how in antisemitic literature Mommsen's dictum is turned into the phrase of the "corroding influence of the Jews", and the phrase in this negative sense widely circulated, until it is understood solely as a biological term derived from natural science.<sup>11</sup> This process follows similar lines in such images as "the cancerous tumour of usury" (*das Krebsgeschwür des Wuchers*) used by Wilhelm Marr in his pamphlet

in its germinal beginning in the German Romantic movement: the dethronement of reason, the 'animalization' of man, the glorification of the power principle, the beast of prey, the 'blond beast'. Similarly see, among others, E. Friedell, *Kulturgeschichte der Menschheit*, vol. 3, pp. 954 ff. („Das Organische“); Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, Doubleday Anchor Books, 1955, pp. 227 ff.; R. Schaefer, *l.c.*, pp. 42 ff. As far as economics were concerned, the main basis for the theory of the "organic" had been laid mainly by Quesnay's physiocratic "système naturel".

<sup>9</sup>See the warning by the conservative historian G. Below (*Die deutsche Geschichtsschreibung von den Befreiungskriegen bis zu unsern Tagen*, 1924, p. 80): "The danger of the use of the concept of the 'organic' consists in the fact that all sorts of meanings can be read into it, and that it has been misused by making it appear that the 'organic' formation is strictly natural. We must always keep in mind that we are faced by an image only. The thus limited use of the analogy decides the usefulness of the organic theory."

<sup>10</sup>*Die Juden in Deutschland*. Published by the Institut zum Studium der Judenfrage, München 1939, p. 184.

<sup>11</sup>See my paper quoted above, footnote 1. Compare also, with regard to this as well as many following remarks, the informative paper by Renate Schaefer mentioned in footnote 7: „Zur Geschichte des Wortes ‚ersetzen‘“.

*Sieg des Judentums über das Germanentum*, published in 1879<sup>12</sup>; or in the comparison of the Stock Exchange with a poisonous tree (*Giftbaum*), first used by Lagarde and thereupon taken over by antisemites as a catch phrase. When in antisemitic literature the Jews are branded as a canker, a canker of the people (*Schädlinge, Volksschädlinge*), such an invective — accusation though it is — still retains its linguistically neutral appearance. However, since this particular word denotes, in common usage (according to the German Encyclopedia *Grosser Brockhaus*), "animal and vegetable creatures which damage the objects of man in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, stores, raw materials, products, also domestic animals, breeding stock, hunting packs, the human body itself and which, therefore, are more or less systematically attacked and destroyed (pest control),"<sup>13</sup> the word *Volksschädling* ("canker of the people") as applied to Jews acquires quite a different character. It leads towards the ominous German word *Schmarotzer* (a German word for which no English equivalent of equal force exists; the approximate term would be "sponger"), or "Parasite", very likely the most fatal word in this context, which was transferred from biological science to the sphere of social and political life, and has been particularly applied to the Jews. It will be, therefore, of interest to follow somewhat more closely the history of this word and its use with regard to the Jewish problem.

The Greek word *Parasitos* ("one that eats beside") — originally applied in a positive sense to the officers of the sacerdotal and municipal services who received their provisions at the expense of the state — has been used since the 4th century B.C.E. to describe poor starvelings, people who used to appear uninvited at lunch time in the houses of the rich and the noble, to endure in return for a midday meal the most humiliating treatment and the coarsest jokes at the hands of host and guests alike. The Parasite became a stock character in the Greek comedy of the middle and new periods.<sup>14</sup> With the reception and revival of the Greek and Latin languages and literature by the Humanists, the word in its derogatory meaning entered into the speech of the European peoples in the 16th century. It was now used as an expression of contempt for

<sup>12</sup>The word „Wucher“ also has, in German, a biological root. „Wuchern“ (to practise usury) means grow without check. The corresponding Hebrew word *Neshech* (bite) gives the word a more active meaning, with at the same time a negative evaluation.

<sup>13</sup>„Der Grosse Brockhaus“, 15th edition, vol. 16, (1933), p. 507. (At the end of the article attention is drawn to the following supplementary article: „Feldschädlinge, Forstschädlinge, Gartenschädlinge, Schmarotzer, Pflanzenkrankheiten, Unkräuter, Pflanzenschutz“).

<sup>14</sup>„Der Grosse Brockhaus“, 15th ed., vol. XIV, p. 166. Compare Hans Lamer, *Wörterbuch der Antike* (Kroeners Taschenausgabe, vol. 96), 5th ed., p. 553: *Parasit*, gr. „bei anderen essend“, *Schmarotzer*, *Possenreisser*, der gegen freie Kost die Gäste unterhielt; *stehende Figur der neuen Komödie*. *Nouveau Petite Larousse*, edit. 1951, p. 743: *le parasite est un des types de la comédie latine*. (The parasite is one of the stock figures of the Latin comedy.)



people who live at the expense of others, and who by cringing and fawning to the rich and mighty make their profit without working for it, and are difficult to shake off.<sup>15</sup> In German the word became synonymous with *Schmarotzer* — a word of doubtful origin — also in use since the 16th century.<sup>16</sup> In the 18th century the word finds its way into natural science where it is apparently used, at first, as a botanic term only<sup>17</sup>, to be accepted in the 19th century as a general biological notion<sup>18</sup> applicable to animal creatures as well.<sup>19</sup>

M. Caullery, in his fundamental book *Le Parasitisme et la Symbiose*, gives the following definition: "Parasitism can be defined as the normal and necessary condition of an organism which feeds on another — called the host — without destroying it. So as to live regularly on the host, the parasite — with some exceptions — lives in permanent contact with the host, either on the external surface or in its interior. Parasitism manifests itself, therefore, as a general continuous association between two different organisms, one of which lives at the expense of the other. The association has an essentially unilateral character: it is necessary for the parasite which, from inability to feed itself, dies when it is separated from its host; it is in no way necessary to the host. Adaptation is the mark of parasitism."<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup>See "Gr. Oxford Dictionary": "One who eats at the table or at the expense of another; always with opprobrious application. . . . one who obtains the hospitality, patronage, or favour of the wealthy or powerful by obsequiousness and flattery; a hanger-on from interested motives; a 'toady.'" Rabelais used the word in this sense already in 1535; and it gained ever wider use. In 1607, Shakespeare makes his Timon of Athens say (III, VI, 99 ff.): "You knot of mouth-friends! . . . Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites . . ." In 1736 Bolingbroke writes in his "Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism": "Crowds of spies, parasites and sycophants will surround the throne under the patronage of such ministers."

<sup>16</sup>See Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 1941, col. 937. *Der Grosse Brockhaus*, 15th ed. XVI, pp. 708 ff.

<sup>17</sup>"Oxford Dict." notes: "1727-41, *Chambers Cycl. Parasites* . . . : in botany a kind of diminutive plants, growing on trees, and so called from their manner of living and feeding, which is altogether on others . . . Such is moss, . . . which, with the lichens and mistletoes, make the family of parasite plants."

<sup>18</sup>The word and concept of "Biology" for phenomena concerning all living beings has been coined in 1802 by the German biologist G. R. Treviranus (1776-1837) in his work *Biologie oder Philosophie der lebenden Natur* (6 vols., 1802-1822). See J. Leibovitz in *HaEncyclopedia Haivrit*, vol. 8, col. 313; *Der Grosse Brockhaus*, 16, XIX, 61; *Allg. Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 38.

<sup>19</sup>"Oxford Dict." names as first use a quotation of the year 1826 ("The great body of insect parasites"), and quotes from Darwin's book *Descendance of Man* (1871): Man is infected with internal . . . and plagued by external parasites. — In a still more pre-biological sense the word is used in Darwin's "The Origin of Species" (1859). In chapter VIII (Instincts) he says: "Some Species of *Molothrus* . . . have parasitic habits like those of the cuckoo . . . This bird . . . lays its eggs in the nests of strangers." (Ed. Mentor Books, 1958, pp. 237-8).

<sup>20</sup>M. Caullery, *Le Parasitisme et la Symbiose*, 2e Edition, Paris, 1950, p. 21: *Le parasitisme peut être défini la condition de vie normale et nécessaire d'un organisme qui se nourrit aux dépens d'un autre — appelé l'hôte —, sans le détruire. Pour vivre régulièrement*

The definition is couched in similar terms in the specific literature of natural science, in dictionaries, in general encyclopedias. In the Oxford Dictionary it runs: "An animal or plant which lives in or upon another (technically called 'host') and draws its nutriment directly from it." The *Grosse Brockhaus* (15th ed., vol. 14, 1933) says: "In biology the parasite is understood to be an animal (for example: flea, tapeworm, trichina, plant louse, bostrychus), or a plant (mistletoe, squamoid, rafflesia, typhoid bacillus, bacterium of stone fruit) which lives at the expense of the afflicted body of the animal or plant without directly killing it." The definition of the term *Schmarotzer* is given in a similar manner<sup>21</sup>, and the detailed data concerning parasites are also applied to the same term. All these definitions have this in common that the parasite exists at the expense of another living organism which is called its host. Its very existence is bound to injure the host, often to the point of death.<sup>22</sup>

As the concepts and methods of natural science passed into the social sciences, the concepts parasite, parasitism, *Schmarotzertum* were taken over in their new biological definition by the historians of ideas, and in particular by sociologists.<sup>23</sup> The concepts in this form can be found especially in the literature of a socialist and anti-capitalist kind. The

*de l'hôte, le parasite — sauf des exceptionnels — vit en contact permanent avec lui, soit sur sa surface extérieure, soit à son intérieur. Le parasitisme se manifeste donc comme une association généralement continuée entre deux organismes différents, dont l'un vit aux dépens de l'autre. L'association a un caractère continuellement unilatéral: elle est nécessaire au parasite, qui meurt s'il est séparé de son hôte, faute de pouvoir se nourrir; elle ne l'est pas nullement à l'hôte. L'adaptation est la marque du parasitisme."* See also the penetrating description of parasitism and its connection with the concept of Symbiosis in G. Lapage, *Animals Parasitic in Man*, Pelican Books, 1957, pp. 13-23. Pp. 18-19: "A parasite is an organism . . . that gets its food from the bodies of other organisms which are called its hosts, and that, as it does this, inflicts a degree of injury on these hosts . . . The parasite is usually smaller and weaker than its host." As to the concept of Symbiosis, see the remarks at the end of this paper.

<sup>21</sup>*Der Grosse Brockhaus*, 15. vol. XVI, p. 708 (Engl. transl.): "Schmarotzer [from late middle high German 'smorotzen' (to beg)]: parasites, living organisms (plants and animals), living on, or inside, the bodies of other living organisms at whose expense they feed."

<sup>22</sup>See the latest definition in *Fischer-Lexikon Biologie I* (1962), p. 208: "By parasites we mean such organisms as feed at the expense of other, 'host' organisms, on which they settle and live, damaging them and often also killing them . . . Among the lower plants there are many types of bacteria which, causing disease in men, animals and plants, find in these favourable living conditions." See also the definition of the biological concept of "Parasit" in the latest edition of *Der Grosse Brockhaus* (vol. VIII, p. 943): "an organism living at the expense of its respective host (Parasitism), without killing it directly, yet damaging it through withdrawal of food through its excretions etc., therefore possibly causing parasitic diseases. Under parasitology we understand the science of parasites, as well as the interrelations between parasites and their surroundings."

<sup>23</sup>See the appropriate definition of the word "parasite" in "Shorter Oxford Dictionary" 1959, p. 1430: ". . . c. fig: A person whose part or action resembles an animal parasite. 1883."

urban stratum of merchants and manufacturers, termed by the physiocrats as *classe stérile* (as distinct from the one and only productive class, those dwelling on the land and tilling the soil), becomes now the parasitic class of capitalist exploiters.<sup>24</sup> "Unproductive", in the meaning of Marxian theory, and "parasitic" become almost identical concepts in the ordinary vocabulary.

The Jew, decried since the Middle Ages as a blood sucker and exploiter of his "host nation", then made to bear the added burden of the odium of capitalism, always and everywhere regarded as an alien and belonging, according to the race theory of the antisemites, to an inferior unproductive race — who else would fit the descriptive term "parasite" better? Indeed, the biological definition seems in this case so fitting that it might have been specially made to measure!

In fact, we find the word applied to the Jews in its new biological sense ever since its new meaning came into existence. Already Johann Gottfried Herder, a glorifier of ancient Hebrew poetry and anything but an enemy of the Jews, summarises in the chapter "Hebräer" of his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* in 1784<sup>25</sup> his (and his contemporaries') verdict on the nature and history of the Jews in such words: "The people of God, once endowed by Heaven itself with a fatherland, have been for thousands of years, nay almost since the time of their beginning, a parasitic plant on the trunk of other nations; a tribe of cunning jobbers, spread over nearly the whole earth, they nowhere show, in spite of all oppression, a longing for honour and for a place of their own, a fatherland."

In the course of this development, two modes of perception begin to determine the word Parasite as applied to the Jews. Racial antisemitism,

<sup>24</sup>This is not the place for a more thorough investigation of the (so far too little dealt with) semantics of the social problem, of socialism, and Marxism. As an example from our own day I quote a paper by W. Ruge in the (Marxist) *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, vol. VII (1959), in which Imperialism is called "a necessary stage of... capitalism, and the last stage (monopolistic, parasitic) at that." The author points to Lenin, *Ausgewählte Werke*, 2 vols., Berlin 1954, pp. 839 ff. See there, for example, pp. 848 ff. the chapter "Parasitism and Corruption (lit. 'rotteness') of Capitalism"; p. 851: "The State of pensioners (*Rentner*) is the State of a parasitic, rotting capitalism." It would be of interest to examine, in this connection, the use of the word "parasite" in the USSR. It seems that proclamations against parasites as worthless exploiters of society, often expressly turned against Jews, are the rule there. See on this subject ff. the article "The Parasites to the Pillory" in the Hebrew daily paper *Davar* of 21. 9. 1960, or the antisemitic picture reproduced in *Maariv* of 3. 2. 1962, with the caption "Parasites — get out of Moscow!" On 21.2.1963 Khrushchev quoted the word several times in his reply to a letter from Bertrand Russell. See the official translation into English in the *Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, 8. 3. 1963, pp. 14-15: "Our State... protects honest working people from parasites." "The so-called 'work' of the speculators... and the like is simply social parasitism." "...the capitalist system... permits some people... to lead a parasitic life..."

<sup>25</sup>Herder's Works, Goldene Klassiker Bibl., vol. 5, p. 57.

the origin and theory of which I have examined elsewhere<sup>26</sup>, presents the Jews as a race without any creative faculties, which can exist only by the exploitation of other nations and races. The Jewish-Semitic race is shown as a parasitic race, its members are parasites who can only continue to live at the expense of their "hosts". This picture of the "host nations" (*Wirtsvölker*)<sup>26a</sup> among whom the Jews lead their lives changes its colouring under the fascination of such naturalistic interpretations as of the parasite and its host, whose blood and humours he is sapping to the detriment and often to the mortal danger of the host. Such conceptions are joined with anti-capitalist tendencies, particularly strong in many socialists (vaguely imbued with physiocratic ideas); but they also underlie the utterances of many other opponents of the Jews. P. I. Proudhon, writing in 1858,<sup>27</sup> ascribes the dispersion of the Jews to their innate "mercantile and usurious parasitism".<sup>28</sup> Since the time of Jesus, he says, they have lived "at the expense of other nations", and the liberties they received from the French Revolution have in no way altered this situation: *Le Juif est resté Juif, race parasite, ennemi du travail, adonné à toutes les pratiques du trafic anarchique et menteur, de la speculation agièteuse et de banque usuraire.*<sup>29</sup> And 25 years later: *Le Juif est par tempérament*

<sup>26</sup>See my article mentioned in footnote 1. In this essay also evidence for the following assertions, in the writings of Duehring, Lagarde, and others.

<sup>26a</sup>The concepts 'Wirtsvolk' (host nation) and 'Gastvolk' (guest nation) in their application to the Jewish question would seem to deserve some systematic examination and clarification. They obviously derive from the interpretation of the special jurisdiction with regard to aliens, as developed from antique tradition during the Middle Ages. Luther writes in his pamphlet "Of the Jews and their Lies" (1543): "Don't we suffer more from them [the Jews] than the Welshmen [Italians] from the Spaniards! These take from their Host kitchen and cellar, cupboard and purse, curse them into the bargain, and threaten them with death. Such do the Jews, our guests, to us: we are their *Hauswirte*." In the 19th century, from the beginning of the eighties, Treitschke Eduard von Hartmann, Duehring and others have so popularised the word *Wirtsvolk* (host nation), that in the end even the Jews themselves used it in an almost naïve way, without any notion of its implications. Friedrich Ratzel, the *Anthropo-Geograph*, applies the image in terms of political geography to the Jews when he says: "Jews, Armenians, and Gypsies live among other peoples as tenants, so to speak." (Friedrich Ratzel, *Erdenmacht und Völkerschicksal*, a Selection from his Works, publ. by Karl Haushofer, Stuttgart (Kroener) 1940, p. 240). Herzl strongly opposes the concept in the introduction to his *Judenstaat*. His remarks had been triggered off by a conversation with the Secretary General of the Alliance Israélite, Narcisse Leven. See *Herzl, Diaries*, I, 277; Engl. edition, New York 1960, I, 242. See also the remarks in A. Leschnitzer, *Saul und David*, Heidelberg 1954, pp. 200-201.

<sup>27</sup>In his book *De la Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Église*, quoted here from the book of E. Silberman, "Western Socialism and the Jewish Question" (Hebrew), Jerusalem 1955, p. 316.

<sup>28</sup>*Parasitisme mercantile et usuraire.*

<sup>29</sup>Similarly, the socialist à la Fourier, Alphonse Toussenel, represents in his anti-semitic book *Les Juifs, Rois de l'Époque: histoire de la féodalité financière* (Paris 1845, 2nd ed., 1847) the Jews as 'an exclusively parasitic race', and transfers 'the contemptible name of Jew' to all dealing in gold, and 'living, as unproductive parasites, of the substance and the labour of others... Jews, Usurers, and Dealers are, to my mind,



*antiproducteur . . . toujours frauduleux et parasite.*<sup>30</sup>

The socialist Albert Regnard, in 1890, sets the contrast between Jew and Arian in parallel to the antagonism of capitalist and proletarian.<sup>31</sup> The anarchist Bakunin, an opponent of capitalism and Marxism alike, writes in 1871<sup>32</sup> that the whole Jewish world formed "a sect of exploiters, a people of leeches, nothing but one single devouring parasite", at the disposal, at one and the same time, of Marx and the Rothschilds.

Thus in the racial antisemitic and the anti-capitalistic versions which intermingle in various turns of phrase, more and more the word "parasite" is used to designate the Jew as an individual, as a member of the Jewish or Semitic race, and as a representative of a social class.

Eugen Duehring — whose book *Die Judenfrage als Racen-, Sitten- und Culturfrage* came out for the first time in 1881 and provided so-to-speak the classical basis for racial antisemitism and as such also had a decisive influence upon the young Herzl — says that the Jew, parasite that he was, felt most at ease in a society whose corruption had already set in. "Whenever he settles in the flesh of the people, as his kind does, and shows his contentment, then the people should be heedful of their own health".<sup>33</sup> The well-known orientalist and *Kulturpolitiker*, Paul de Lagarde — by no means a fanatical racist like Eugen Duehring as far as his general views go — compares the Jews with bacilli and trichinae.<sup>34</sup> Any foreign body, Lagarde reflects, fosters in another living organism discontent, sickness, frequently even suppuration and death. "The Jews are as Jews aliens in every European state, and as such they are nothing but harbingers of decay".<sup>34</sup>

These examples will show how the analogy of the parasite, which was in the first instance used more as a medium of comparison, gradually becomes literally identified with the real objects of natural science. Further proof of this could be found in many formulations of the same topic. The physiologist Paolo Montegazza, for example, contends in 1893 in a

synonyms. Quoted here after E. Silberner, "The Attitude of the School of Fourier towards the Jews", *Jewish Social Studies*, IX, pp. 339-362.

<sup>30</sup>In the book *Césarisme et Christianisme*, 1883; quoted here after Silberner, op. cit., p. 317. It is interesting — and of great consequence — how traditional concepts unite with these formulations when, later on, Proudhon says: *C'est le mauvais principe, satan, ahriman, incarné dans la race de Sem*. On this subject see also further on.

<sup>31</sup>Quoted in Silberner, p. 320: *Le Juif est vis à vis de l'Aryen comme le capitalisme vis à vis du prolétaire*.

<sup>32</sup>*Gesammelte Werke*, Berlin 1931-1934, vol. 3, quoted here after Silberner, p. 354.

<sup>33</sup>"Wo er sich im Fleische der Völker nach seiner Art am behaglichsten fühlt, da sehe man wohl zu, ob es noch gesund ist."

<sup>34</sup>Paul de Lagarde, *Juden und Indogermanen, eine Studie nach dem Leben*, Göttingen, 1887, p. 339. See also p. 32 of this essay.

<sup>34</sup>*Deutsche Schriften, Letzte Gesamtausgabe*, 1886, p. 330; new edition Munich 1924, pp. 293-94. "Die Juden sind als Juden in jedem europäischen Staat Fremde, und als Fremde nichts anderes als Träger der Verwesung."

critical essay on contemporary antisemitism<sup>35</sup> that the Jews were reproached with "not being members of our European body, no sinews of our flesh, no veins filled with our blood, but knotty excrescences, tumours which afflict the body all over, impeding the free circulation of our vital humours. They are called, in one word, the swollen and strutting (*die feisten und dreisten*) parasites of European life".<sup>36</sup> And Theodor Herzl writes in 1897 that the Jews in Bohemia who had identified themselves with the Germans had to realize that the same Germans were now beginning to shake them off. "Suddenly they were said to be parasites sucking the tree dry".<sup>37</sup>

Similar analogies arise with increasing frequency after the end of the First World War, and their original character as mere comparisons recede more and more before the actual identification with the scientific term. And at the same time the biological elements are often lifted into the sphere of mythological thinking. This process was entirely in keeping with the spirit of the time which perhaps found its most typical expression in Oswald Spengler's view of the working of history, set out at great length in his book *The Decline of the West* which first appeared in 1918. As an intellectual heir of Nietzsche, Spengler drew in bold outline, and often dazzling colours a picture of world history which he called morphology, a term again taken over from natural science. In Spengler's eyes the individual character of the historical incident is not the decisive factor: it is the type which is the main agent of history. Civilisations are perceived by him as organisms, not unlike the organic bodies of natural science, and as such they are subject to the same natural laws of growth, ascendancy, decline, emaciation and petrification, followed by their ultimate fall. It is true that Spengler — like Nietzsche a despiser of the horde and an opponent of the cheap cult of the masses with its racial flavour — rejected the National-Socialist creed and was, in turn, later rejected himself by the National-Socialist leaders who resembled in no small degree the Caesarean type of leader extolled in his work. However, Spengler's book played a not inconsiderable part in popularising the current image of the Jew and its correlative myth. In this respect the influence of the book can be compared to that of Treitschke's *Deutsche Geschichte* forty years earlier. Through Spengler's book the fixed pattern of the contemporary image of the Jew — overlaid

<sup>35</sup>*Neue Freie Presse*, 23.-24. Sept. 1893; the passage quoted is from the final article of 24th September.

<sup>36</sup>From this diagnosis he draws the Zionist consequence: "And if we could freely express our hatred, we would — if it were within our power — gladly return Jerusalem to them and reinstate a State of Israel."

<sup>37</sup>"Plötzlich hieß es sie seien Juden, die den Stamm aussaugen". Herzl, "Die Jagd in Böhmen", in "Die Welt", 5.11.1897; reprinted in *Gesammelte Zionistische Werke*, Tel Aviv 1934, p. 217.

with morphological and mythical ideas – penetrated, as if it were a recognised scientific verity, even those circles that had so far stood aloof from the coarse, calculated distortion of history by the radical anti-semites. The chapter which contains Spengler's concept of Judaism<sup>28</sup> actually reveals a weird mixture of antitheses and analogies conceived in the chiaroscuro of half biological half mythical notions, and all the brilliance of Spengler's style cannot conceal that, despite some intuitive understanding of the unique conditions of Jewish existence among the European nations, the author has picked up too many stereotyped opinions and thereby furthered their propagation. He too speaks of the Jews as a "corroding element" (*zersetzendes Element*), as the instruments of a venomous cynicism, and of their inherent foreignness which, despite all their good intentions, inevitably sets them apart from the life of the "host nations".

Typical, in its own way, for such a mysticising of biological conceptions is Hans Blueher's pamphlet *Secessio Judaica* which first came out in 1922 and immediately attracted wide attention.<sup>29</sup> As its subtitle indicates, Blueher claimed to give in this writing "a philosophical foundation of the historical situation of Judaism and the antisemitic movement." Blueher, who came from the German Youth Movement and in many respects typifies its attitude, also eschews the grosser antisemitic jargon and comparisons. The words "parasite" and "parasitism" occur neither

<sup>28</sup>By the way, from his consideration of the Jewish question as a paragraph of the chapter "Problems of Arab Culture", a straight line leads to Toynbee's conception of Judaism as a fossil of 'Syriac Culture'. In this conception of Jewish history as the preceding history of Arab culture Spengler sees a great discovery. "Their unity has been sensed by later Arabs, but it has completely escaped the attention of occidental historians that not even a good designation can be found for them." See O. Spengler, *Untergang des Abendlandes*, vol. 2, chapter 3; On Judaism (*Ober das Judentum*), pp. 389 ff. As to Spengler's conception of Judaism see above all Max Grunwald, *Das Judentum bei Oswald Spengler*, Berlin, Philo-Verlag, 1924.

<sup>29</sup>I very well remember the deep impression made on me by the pamphlet, and by a lecture on the subject by Blueher in Nuremberg – after these the recurrence of pogroms seemed to me unavoidable. Blueher let the pamphlet be republished in 1933 in a new (third) edition; in the preface he says: "This pamphlet has been composed in 1921, at a period during which the Jews in Germany were at the height of their power and, generally speaking, were not disturbed in its exercise by anyone. At about the same time today's victorious German racial forces prepared their onslaught against the Jews by way of propaganda... Whether the 'Secessio Judaica' has been of any influence, it would be difficult to say: but today's events take place in a manner that makes them appear the direct, literal consequence of this pamphlet... Lastly, as far as the swastika is concerned, one must agree with me that in this pamphlet it shines in the full glow of its victorious significance, quite independently of the popular forces that have today helped it to victory; and that therefore I, though not a Nazi, could well wear it in my own right, though not next to, but rather beneath the cross." On Hans Blueher see also Walter Laqueur in Year Book VI of the Leo Baeck Institute (1961), p. 200: "In his writings profound insights appear side by side with downright nonsense, and a megalomania... coupled with painful doubts about his own creative gifts."

in this essay nor in similar writings concerned with the Jewish problem, published by him before or later. In the centre of Blueher's speculations is set another related concept, borrowed again from natural science and also overlaid with mythical connotations: the concept of mimicry. "The Jews", Blueher postulates, "are the only people that practise mimicry. Mimicry of blood, of name and of physical appearance."<sup>30</sup> Their simulation differed from that of other nations because it was more deeply rooted in their substance. The reason, Blueher decrees in accordance with the Christian tradition from Augustin to Hegel – except that he adds his own blend of mythical extravaganza and quasi-scientific terminology – was the historic failure of the Jews, whose title to be the Chosen People expired with the birth of Christ. With the rejection of Christ the whole of Jewry and each individual Jew became sick in their innermost being.

The one event of historical significance in this situation was the emergence of the Zionist movement, which Blueher views very positively. In Zionism, he propounds, Judaism had developed an intellectual attitude which would deracinate the inherent mimicry. The second historical event, happening at this time, was the severance of Judaism from the host nations, which Blueher called (apparently in deference to his intention of presenting a "philosophical foundation") by the Latin name *Secessio Judaica*. "The Jews", he says, using the current scientific terminology, "have tried to graft themselves upon Germany in such a way as to make the scars of the operation invisible." This attempt, he continues, had failed. The growing antisemitic movement was the empirical aspect of the present historical process of the secession of Judaism from the nations. And now in Blueher's arguments the customary set pieces recur: "the destructive effect" of all non-Zionist Judaism, or the "corrupt thought processes" which the Jews continue to offer as intellectual food to the people and hammer into their minds like a magic formula, in order to divert their "basic historical instinct".

At the present juncture, Blueher says, the historical situation of the Jews was being revealed in just this: the breakdown of their mimicry. The Jews had now been seen through and stood exposed before the eyes of the peoples: *Jehuda patet*, and the consequence: "The threat of a universal pogrom hanging over their head." Whoever recognised this separation of the Jews as a law of history and fought for its execution was an antisemite *sine ira et studio*. Antisemitism, Blueher pronounces in this essay of the year 1922, "has become, even if the fact has not yet been fully admitted, a fundamental condition in German Man." As a

<sup>30</sup>Cf. in this connection Alfred Rosenberg's dictum on "the continuous lie as the truth of the Jewish anti-race."



consequence of the *Secessio Judaica*, so Blueher again, the physiognomic difference of the Jewish type from the German would become manifest to everybody and sharpen the instinct for detecting the Jew and every kind of Jewishness with such a degree of certainty as to make any mimicry impossible.

If the writings of Blueher were designed for intellectual circles, there were other books, which propagated the same theories among other social classes, only couched in more primitive, coarse-grained, but all the more incisive similes. Perhaps the most typical example of this kind of literature, and the most widely read, were the books of the antisemitic writer Arthur Dinter and particularly his novel *Die Sünde wider das Blut* (The Sin against the Blood). It was published in 1918 and more than 100,000 copies had been sold by 1920. The book consists of a concoction of lower middle-class nationalist romanticism<sup>41</sup>, cheap vulgarity, racial mythology mixed with Christian-theosophic ingredients.<sup>42</sup> As if this were not enough, it has pseudo-scientific annotations and explanations. This brew proved to be an antisemitic best-seller appealing to a variety of instincts, interests, and anxieties.

The main character of the novel is an Aryan scholarly biologist, married first to a Jewess, and then to a Christian woman who in her youth had been made pregnant by a Jewish officer — a misfortune which according to the author's doctrine had for ever spoiled her hereditary substance. The marital experiences of the scholar make him aware of the natural and spiritual laws enshrined in the race theory, and he embraces the broadcasting of his new enlightenment as his life's work. The basis of this race doctrine is the firm belief that any contact with the bad Jewish blood will permanently defile the good German blood from generation to generation. So destructive is the poisonous influence of Jewish blood as to bring to the surface again and again the hereditary Jewish characteristics, even if a German girl strayed only once into sexual intercourse with a Jew.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup>The novel ends with the words: "So his wish was fulfilled after all: to die for the holy Fatherland."

<sup>42</sup>*Epilogue*, p. 431: "Next to my religion, the Race is to me the highest and holiest possession. I even own my Religion only by way of my Race... Race and Religion are one and the same thing! And the knowledge that I spring from the most noble race that ever trod the earth, a race destined to lead all the peoples of the earth to their highest last destination [Aryan against Jewish world domination?], confers on me the noble obligation to do everything in my power to keep this race pure and holy, and inviolate (*unantastbar*) by alien blood".

<sup>43</sup>13th ed. 1920, p. 238: "A dark-haired being, its head covered with jet-black, frizzled hair, met him [the Aryan father!] with his cries... A flat nose made the head look like an ape's." In such words the infant infected by Jewish blood is described. And the biological explanation of the fact is rendered in the following words (p. 350): "It is a significant racial law, well known in the breeding of animals, that a female of the

The Jewish *Kommerzienrat*, the father-in-law of the novel's hero, systematically employs this pollution of the race in pursuit of his "cold-blooded devilish aims." The author has no doubt whatsoever: "The German people have been systematically polluted and poisoned". All this is clearly revealed in the correspondence found after the death of the *Kommerzienrat*. Dinter has put into these letters many particulars which are similar to the contents of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" which just at that moment had begun to find willing ears in Germany.<sup>44</sup> Apart from demonic-pornographic matters already mentioned, the correspondence, ranging all over the globe, refers to the business of middlemen in every possible area of human activity, but nowhere is there a trace of any kind of productive work. The phraseology of Dinter's sensationalism clearly proves how the concepts of natural science, combined with mythological ideas and technical notions, had become a part of contemporary consciousness. The following passage may serve as an example: "The *Kommerzienrat* knew how to filch his gain from any work carried out by industrious people anywhere in the world. Hundreds of thousands, nay millions of human beings laboured in the sweat of their brows throughout the five continents, jerked on the wires assembled in his hand. Sitting like a spider in his office in Berlin, he drained through these wire-channels the marrow of these people, body and soul... It was the big pitiless heart which sucked human blood, to transform it into cash, no matter whether it flowed from the veins of white men or black, yellow or red people, Christians or heathens." As an obvious conclusion, the Aryan hero of the novel, when facing the jury after the murder of the Jewish seducer of his second wife (before her marriage to him, the hero, of course!) addressed the court with the following plea: "If the German people do not succeed in shaking off the Jewish vampire, which they unwittingly feed with their very heart's blood, and do not render him harmless — which could be done simply by legislative measures — the German people will perish before long!"<sup>44</sup>

best blood stock will be for ever unfitted for future stock breeding by even a single act of fertilisation by a male of inferior race. By such a pregnancy, produced by impure male blood, the whole organism of the female of noble blood will be poisoned... Now consider the damage done to the German race, year after year, by the Jewish youths who every year seduce thousands and thousands of German girls." This argumentation returns in very similar words in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, and gets elaborated through the length and the breadth of the Franconian Gauleiter Streicher's weekly *Stürmer* by illustrations and woodcuts, pornographic stories of violations and ritual murder, in the style of the gutter press. See also G. M. Gilbert, *Nuremberg Diary*, pp. 111-112.

<sup>44</sup>It is a special problem, how the grotesque forgery of the so-called "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" could have been distributed in ever larger editions since 1919 and have been accepted as truth — even by people who otherwise are very critical. Compare in this connection my essay quoted in note 47, pp. 23-31.

<sup>45</sup>Dinter, pp. 276-77.



The historian Georg von Below, as mentioned before,<sup>45</sup> had in 1924 in his book on German historiography uttered a warning not to employ the idea of the Organic indiscriminately, but to regard it purely as a means of comparison. This caution is all the more remarkable as von Below's book was dedicated to Othmar Spann, the teacher of economics, whose speculations show a closeness to theories of the Organic as propounded by the new nationalism. However, at this juncture, the notion of the Organic, against which Below wanted to warn, had already penetrated into ever-widening circles, together with many similar conceptions also transferred from natural science into the social sciences and the language of practical politics: the metaphor became identified with the imputed phenomenon and simultaneously translated into mythological spheres. Books like the one by Dinter proved a good example of how the word "parasite" was applied to the Jewish problem. The concept "parasite" merges by open or hidden association with the age-old image of the Jew, an association from former epochs of history forming, so to speak, the deeper geological layers of the popular perception of the Jew. The devil, the blood-sucking usurer, the exploiter, the international conspirator as depicted in *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and the mythological figure of the vampire<sup>46</sup> are synonymously used with parasite, despite the fact that the original term "parasite" had nothing at all to do with those designations. One of the prominent characteristics of mythical thinking is a merger of reality and the creations of phantasy that can render a man so captivated by the Mythos as to become incapable of discerning the boundary where reality ends and credulous imagination begins. In such cases all proportions are in complete disarray: tiny things may become powerful, and the enormous may shrivel into invisibility. Similarly the parasites, small and invisible though enormous in their effectiveness, get so closely intertwined in the mind with the demonic in the image of the Jew as to blot out any difference of substance and form before the eye or ear of the uncomprehending reader or listener. In such a way the users of the current catchword unthinkingly accept this exchange of attributes pertaining to heterogeneous objects — all the more so when they themselves live under the pressure of anxiety and compulsion neurosis, as happened with not a few leaders and followers of National Socialism.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup>See above, footnote 9.

<sup>46</sup>Brockhaus, 15th ed., vol. XIX, 1934, defines the word Vampire: "According to southern Slavonic, Roumanian and Greek popular belief the dead who rise from their grave in the night, so as to suck blood from the living. Vampire corresponds to the German *Blutsauger* (blood-sucker) or *Nachzehrer*." Cf. also Montague Summers, *The Vampire*, New York 1946.

<sup>47</sup>In this context it is perhaps typical of the period that a collective work appeared in America, in 1932, on the eve of the Nazi revolution, under the title: *Our Neurotic Age*. The editor of the book, Samuel A. Schmalhausen, says in the introduction:

Most typical in this respect and most far-reaching in their influence are, of course, the writings of Adolf Hitler, particularly his programmatic *Mein Kampf*. A comparison of the word "parasite" as it was used at the time of the rise of the modern antisemitic movement in the early eighties of the 19th century with the use of the word made by Hitler and his followers immediately reveals its much more naturalistic application. In 1883, the Viennese orientalist Adolf Wahrmund in his essay on "Das Gesetz des Nomadentums und die heutige Judenherrschaft (The Law of the Nomads and the Rule of the Jews Today)" 1883 had construed a characterization of the Jews as nomads and asserted the parasitic disposition of the nomad in the manner of an analogy rather than of a scientific definition.<sup>48</sup> Hitler, however, declares that the nomad maintained a definite attitude towards the conception of work, as distinct from the Jew, who, therefore, never was a nomad but always — one has to note the naturalistic terminology — "only a parasite inside the body of other peoples". Like all true parasites the Jew continuously looked for "a new feeding soil" for his own race. The Jew did not lead a roving life like the nomad, quite on the contrary: "He remains the eternal parasite, a sponger (*Schmarotzer*) who, like a terrible bacillus, spreads out more and more as soon as a favourable medium invites him to do so." And the effect of his existence was like that of all spongers: "Wherever he appears, the host nation falls into decay sooner or later." The Jew does exist as a "peoples' parasite (*Völkerparasit*)". To expose the ever disastrous effect upon "the people he eats into" — an influence that was the same everywhere, in the past as well as in the present — the author supplies a survey of Jewish influence on Germany in the course of her history. He goes on to describe the function of the Jew as an "intermediary link", as an usurious money lender in mediaeval society whose "blood-sucking tyranny", exercised over real estate as well, had roused universal hatred against him. The masses who experienced his "mere existence as a calamity like the plague" turned to self-defence "in order to ward off this scourge of God." By means of his flattery and his

"That the times are strangely and desperately perturbed even congenial optimists know. All the economists have taken to writing of contemporary civilization as if they were specialists in psychiatry and psycho-pathology. The social system is admitted to be in the last stages of a wasting disease. The atmosphere of modern life smells like a sickroom." Cf. also my essay "Die Judenfrage in der Literatur des modernen Antisemitismus als Vorbereitung der Endlösung." *Bulletin des LBI*, VI, 21 (1963) pp. 4-51.

<sup>48</sup>See Wahrmund, 3rd ed., 1919, p. 67: "If the Arabs are parasites even to this day, and have been so at all times — because being nomads they had to be —, and if on the other hand the Jews are called parasites by present-day non-Jews, then there is no reason why they should have lived in Palestine in any other way than as parasites."

money, the Jew, as the "eternal leech", succeeded in accommodating himself to, and gaining entrance into, the places from which he had just been expelled. "No persecution can deter him from his way of exploiting mankind." During the period of the rising power of the territorial princes he received his privileges in return for financial loans to the high and mighty, only to recover his money with interest and compound interest: "A veritable blood-sucker who attaches himself to the body of the unfortunate people and cannot be removed until the princes themselves need money once again and in person tap the blood he has sucked in before." This was the guilt with which Hitler reproaches the German princes: "They had sold themselves to the devil and landed in his domain." The Jew deliberately adulterated the blood of his host nations by means of systematic racial desecration. "But the end", prophesies Hitler, "will not only be the end of the freedom of the peoples oppressed by the Jew, but also the end of these 'Peoples' Parasites' themselves. With the death of the victim, the Vampire will also die sooner or later" (1, 358).

Looking back on the German collapse, Hitler says: (1, 184 ff) that the chance had come in August 1914 to liberate Germany from "the pestilential disease" of Jewish Marxism. At that time it would have been the duty of the government to prove its power and perseverance in "applying ruthlessly the entire military might in order to root out the pestilence". "If the best were killed on the front, then one could at least destroy the vermin at home." (1, 185/187). And in the final chapter (2, 227), when Hitler speaks of the missed opportunity of settling the account with Jewish Marxism, the ominous words occur which, while actually pointing to the recent past, also forecast the horrible shadow of future events: "If, at the beginning of the war and during the war, ten or fifteen thousand of these Hebraic corrupters of the nation had been subjected to poison gas, such as had to be endured on the front by hundreds of thousands of our very best German workers of all classes and professions, then the sacrifice of millions on the front would not have been in vain."

Perhaps even more typical for the literal naturalistic application of the word parasite to the Jews, and for its blending with the mythical images of a vampire, is an abstruse book which, nevertheless, left its mark upon some of the Nazi leaders. Among them was Alfred Rosenberg who commends the book in his *Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* (The Myth of the 20th Century) because it provided "the strictly scientific proof of the vital laws governing the Jewish parasite and his effect." The title of the book runs: *Sozialparasitismus im Völkerleben*. (Social Parasitism in the Life of the Nations.)<sup>49</sup> The frontispiece shows, painted

<sup>49</sup>Arno Schickedanz, *Sozialparasitismus im Völkerleben*, Leipzig, Lotus-Verlag, 1927.

in blood-red colours, the Jewish vampire-parasite with his all-devouring tentacles. For Arthur Schickedanz constitutes "the opposite of the 'ideal of an *deal einer konstanten Rasse* — subsequently an *asse*)." The Jew is the sponger *kat'exochen* (*Judentum*).<sup>50</sup> The author pursues at great length his thesisific arguments which have the typical ring of the seising Sombart's work on the influence of the Jews upon capitalism, Schickedanz arrives at the hyperbole *homo capitalisticus* but the *homo parasiticus* who, unmy transactions (*Geldwirtschaft*), has swollen into *icous* for his European host nations." The Jews are very bound together as a parasitic anti-race... Juibly progressing *Sozialparasitismus* which, a unique in *alm* of nature, afflicts all social communities of man *uch* as have reached the highest standard." The author the concept of *Sozialparasitismus* had come from th he quotes a passage from a work dealing with thich: "We nowadays know of a whole series of *pesites* among the ants." With certain species of ants, *wls* of an originally alien race, there appeared a "perv the primary species of ants" equal to the "gradual *ulty* of thought and discernment among the primary *l* by Jewish intellectualism." The corrosion of all *civiism* went "hand in hand with the physical *infiltrat* the people with Jewish blood which is nothing but *dec*

In a chapter called "Die Weltwende" (The *ads*) the author comes upon Herzl's view on the *Jeraws* the conclusion that political Zionism "has *suppliasite* which so far had worked separately within the *bdes*." In an adjacent table Schickedanz draws a *graphitic* effect of organized Judaism with the Jewish *Ord* the top and branches of Zionism as sucking tentacles a *sacullina*, and the whole is entitled: "Parasitised forms of appearance (parasitic affixture [*Schmagle body*)."<sup>51</sup>

This picture was adopted in its entirety by / his book, first published in 1930 and running *intolion*

<sup>50</sup>Schickedanz, *Sozialparasitismus*, pp. 121-22.

<sup>51</sup>The graphic representation mentioned has been given the *hor*: „Versuch die Überwucherung der deutschen Volksgemein *um* schematisch darzustellen (dauerndes *Sozialschmarotzertum* *inkt* verbundenen menschlichen Gegenrasse an einer *Artgemein*



copies by 1942, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*<sup>52</sup>, he identifies Judaism with — to use the German word — *Schmarotzertum*. "This conception" says Rosenberg in his half biological half mythical perspective, "shall in the first instance not be taken as a moral judgment but as biological reality, exactly in the same way in which we speak of parasitic occurrences in the life of plants and animals. The sacullina pierces the rectum of the common crab, and gradually grows into it, it sucks away its vital forces; the same process occurs when the Jew invades society through the open wounds of the people, consuming their creative forces and hastening the doom of society."<sup>53</sup> Rosenberg goes on to say that the Jew did not possess the organic form of the soul and, subsequently, no racial form either. Actually the term race could not be applied at all to Jewry since the Jews — Rosenberg follows here the book of Schickedanz — made up a "counter-race" (*Gegenrasse*), that meant a group of people joined together by a similar composition of the blood, representing in "their parasitic form of existence the opposite to the constructive work of the Nordic race." Lying was the element of Judaism. "To express it in a paradox: the permanent lie is the 'organic truth' of the Jewish counter-race." And yet this "parasitic transvaluation of creative life" had also its own myth: the myth of the Chosen People. Although it sounded like a mockery that God should have chosen "this counter-nation (*Gegennation*)" as His favourite, the concentrated power of Jewish parasitism derived, in fact, from the Jewish myth of the God Jahve promising to His righteous the dominion over the world." Zionism did not signify an essential change of this situation since it was not principally a political movement ("as incorrigible European sentimentalists believe"), but had been created only in order to provide a strategic centre for their parasitic schemes of dominating the world. "This universal hope of the Chosen People must find its realization in battenning upon all nations and in using Jerusalem as a merely temporary centre for scheming and planning"<sup>54</sup>.

There are other examples in Rosenberg's mythical view of history, (which is often couched in hardly intelligible language), of how the conception of the Jewish parasite is associated with age-old images of the Jewish demon and the legendary phantom of Ahasver. For Rosenberg it is the myth of a people which shows forth its creative and conserving power. Applying this theory to the Jewish problem, he proclaims: "Such an enormous power, however, does not only unfold a creative vision;

<sup>52</sup>Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Eine Wertung der seelisch-geistigen Gestaltenkämpfe unserer Zeit. München 1930. I quote here from the 7th ed. München, 1955.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 461.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 463-65.

from the parasitic Jewish vision of universal domination has also gone forth an enormous — albeit destructive — power. This vision has carried forward the black magicians of politics and economics in the course of nearly three millenia... In the figure of Mephistopheles this power has found its inimitable personification.<sup>55</sup> This figure demonstrates the same intrinsic law which also guides the masters of today's Corn Exchanges and Diamond Bourses, of the international press and the diplomacy of the League of Nations. Wherever the vigorous soaring of the Nordic spirit begins to slacken, the earthbound being of Ahasver sucks itself to the wearying muscles; whenever a wound has been torn open in the body of a nation, the Jewish demon always eats into the sore spot, and exploits, parasite-like, the weak hours of the Great of this world. Not like a conquering hero does he strive for domination; this parasite, obsessed by his vision, is driven by the urge to make the world his tributary. Not fighting, but sneaking; not serving true values, but exploiting debased values: thus runs the unalterable law of his constellation from which he can never escape — as long as he exists."<sup>56</sup>

Like Rosenberg, so others intermingle again the images of the Jew as devil and demon and Antichrist,<sup>57</sup> as pest and plagues<sup>58</sup>, as locusts and leeches<sup>59</sup>, as spiders<sup>60</sup> and vampires, with the notion of the parasite and its connotations of bacteria and bacilli causing putrefaction and final destruction of the affected organisms. Words that originally were not

<sup>55</sup>In Rosenberg's opinion Goethe has consciously depicted the Jew in the figure of Mephistopheles.

<sup>56</sup>Rosenberg, *Mythos*, pp. 459-60. Alfred Baeumler, who progressed from falsified Nietzsche to Rosenberg and became the herald and glorifier of the latter, rightly says that Rosenberg did not attack individual Jews but the Jew-demon become flesh, the mortal enemy of all that is German. See Alfred Baeumler, *Alfred Rosenberg und der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, München 1943, p. 19. — Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors; The Part of Scholarship in Germany's Crimes against the Jewish People*. New York, 1946, p. 24.

<sup>57</sup>See Jehoshua Trachtenberg, *The Devil and the Jews*, 1943 (new paperback ed. 1961).

<sup>58</sup>The word "pest" and words of similar meaning as regards their application to the Jews would be worthy of special investigation. It seems that at first the Jews were regarded as the originators of the 'pest' by means of the poisoning of wells and other means, especially with the help of magic; and only at a later period did they become identified with pest and plague — during which process this identification lost its original metaphorical character more and more in favour of biological and mythological concepts. Even the Nazis still used the first version "poisoners of wells, carriers of plague" as a justification for their action against the Jews, during the invasion of Poland in 1939 (see Trachtenberg, l.c., 1961, p. 240), but afterwards used it in the fullest measure and in the most realistic sense above all as the identifying concept. As to the metaphorical use, see for instance Treitschke, *Deutsche Geschichte*, II (1937), p. 265, where, following Vincke's „Übersicht über die Verwaltung Westfalens" of August 1847, he half quotes, half paraphrases: "and on top of all this, the pest of the country, the usuring Jews in every village."

<sup>59</sup>Already in 1819, a pamphlet speaks of the Jews who "spread among us like all-devouring locusts." See E. Sterling, *Er ist wie Du: aus der Frühgeschichte des Antisemitismus in Deutschland (1815-1850)*, München, 1956, p. 189. In Württemberg, in

used in a derogatory sense, like Mommsen's calling the Jews an "element (or ferment) of decomposition among nations and tribes" for the benefit of larger social units, assume in this atmosphere, as mentioned before, a grosser meaning and a definite biological aspect. The Jews as "corroding element"<sup>61</sup> within the European, the German civilization – a catchword receiving a semblance of confirmation from some tactless and overcritical writings of Jewish intellectuals<sup>62</sup> – become now, through the medium of the image of the "parasite", the purulent bacteria and bacilli. In this manner the original character of the word as a mere simile and comparison gradually is effaced and replaced by the word parasite in its actual meaning as a biological organism establishing the identity of Jews with parasites, demons, vampires and bacilli. Goebbels, in 1937, in a speech on *Die Wahrheit in Spanien* (The Truth about Spain) at the Party Rally in Nuremberg, condenses this variety of oscillating images and conceptions of the Jew into the following words: "Behold, this is the enemy of the world, the destroyer of civilizations, the parasite among the nations, the son of chaos, the incarnation of evil, the materialised demon of mankind's decay."<sup>63</sup> As to the use of the word parasite in France, the book by Georges Saint-Bonnet, published in 1932 under the

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the 'forties of the 19th century, a memorandum describes the Jews as "the damaging, gnawing worms within the system of the state." See the article on „Die bürgerlichen Verhältnisse der Juden in Deutschland" in „Die Gegenwart. Eine enzyklopädische Darstellung der neuesten Zeitgeschichte", Leipzig, (Brockhaus), 1848 ff., vol. 1, p. 362 and p. 390. Arnold Ruge of the Hegelian School says of the Jews "they are the maggots in the cheese of Christendom" (E. Sterling, L.c., p. 114)

<sup>60</sup>See above, p. 16, on Dinter; further Hitler (who seems to have learnt a lot from Dinter's *colportage* phantasies), *Mein Kampf*, I, 212, on the Jews in the so-called *Kriegsgesellschaften* (industrial companies serving the war effort): "The spider slowly started sucking the blood from the pores of the people." – Dietrich Stuermer said in 1920, in a study on Maximilian Harden, p. 17: "Harden is not a lion of the mind who destroys with a blow of the paw, but a spider crawling everywhere, being on the lookout continually... so as to put his uncanny arms round his victims, and to suck the blood from the unfortunates." Walter Frank (from whose book *Höre Israel*, 1942, p. 195, I am here quoting) adds: "Harden's essential nature is disintegration – in it and through it he exists, like worms in, and from, the carcass." The Nazi historian Friedrich Stieve chooses the biological image of the sponge. See, in his *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes* (München 1938, p. 465) on the conditions at the time of the Weimar Republic: "Like a sponge the alien body of the Jews was swelling, growing constantly through the immigration from the East."

<sup>61</sup>See the already mentioned investigation by Renate Schaefer, *Zur Geschichte des Wortes 'zersetzen'*, *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung*, Berlin 1962, pp. 40-80, and Cornelia Berning, „Die Sprache des Nationalsozialismus", *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung*, vols. 16-18, specially vol. 17 (1961), pp. 118-121.

<sup>62</sup>However, one should beware of still using today, albeit as a quotation with only half-hearted disapproval, the word "jüdisch-zersetzend" (Jewish corrosion), in the way Golo Mann does in his essay "Antisemitismus" (1960, p. 27) in these words: "And one should admit that in the Weimar period the then current expression "jüdisch-zersetzend" was not entirely without foundation."

<sup>63</sup>Quoted here from Renate Schaefer, „Zur Geschichte des Wortes 'zersetzen'", p. 69.

title *Le Juif ou l'International du Parasitisme*<sup>64</sup> could serve as a relevant example.

And to hammer this conception, derived from biology-cum-mythology and subject to the semantic process, into the brains of the people, the whole apparatus of modern "enlightenment" and propaganda was now put into operation. The aim is openly stated in 1934 by the "Institut zum Studium der Judenfrage", which advertised a book on the Jewish World Pest<sup>65</sup>: "It is the intention and the purpose of this book to make the danger of the Jewish world pest known to the widest circles of the public."<sup>66</sup> A syllabus for the ideological education of the SS and the police, apparently issued in the thirties, expresses the warning against the "corroding influence of racial cross-breeding with the Jews" in such phrases as these:<sup>67</sup> "These parasites of mankind have been cunning enough to avoid, up to the present day, a complete intermixture with their host nations<sup>68</sup>... Beyond this there has always existed a particular danger in that Judaism had begun systematically to undermine by its work of spiritual corrosion the traditional way of action and thought of other nations... The Jews poured scorn upon every genuine sentiment, and their whole propaganda aimed at the eating away and fragmentation of the people's body from within. The after-effects of this corroding infection during the decades preceding 1933 can still be traced among the nations even today. Persistent efforts are needed to efface the last traces of this plague and to lead Europe back to its one and only right and natural path".

And a pamphlet of instruction, issued in 1941, by the office of Rosen-

<sup>64</sup>Language penetrates so deeply the consciousness of contemporaries that the word 'parasite' is being taken over unthinkingly even by the Jews themselves. J. Chakoff (a Jewish socialist, it seems) writes in the preface to this book: *Pour moi la question juive n'est pas une question de race, mais une question sociale. Le parasitisme juif, qu'il serait puéril de nier, disparaitra avec tous les parasitismes.* In a similar way, the word is used not infrequently by Zionists, especially socialist Zionists, to mark the unhealthy professional structure of the Jews in the Diaspora, and to motivate the necessity for them to return to Palestine and to basic production. See f.i. A. D. Gordon, who describes a Jewish national economy, based on Jewish domination over Arab workers, as "national parasitism". A. D. Gordon's Writings, Jerusalem 1952 (Hebrew), Vol. I, p. 124.

<sup>65</sup>By Hermann Esser. The advertisement appeared, among others, in *Die Juden in Deutschland*, published by the already mentioned Institute, München, 1939.

<sup>66</sup>Similarly Rosenberg in the concluding words of his book on *Die Protokolle der Weisen von Zion* (4th ed., 1933, p. 132): "One of the most profound words on the Jew has been said by Richard Wagner. He called him [the Jew] the materialised demon of mankind's decay [den plastischen Daemon des Verfalls der Menschheit]. As one of the symptoms of this approaching struggle for a new shape of the world, we can regard the revelation of the nature of the demon of our present decay."

<sup>67</sup>Here quoted from Walter Hofer, *Der Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt 1957, p. 281.

<sup>68</sup>Observe how the word "host nations" i.f. (*Wirtsvolk*) is here (and in similar phrases) being used in analogy with the biological concept of "host" in Parasitology.



berg, "the Commissioner of the *Führer* for the surveillance of the entire intellectual and ideological training and education of the NSDAP",<sup>69</sup> establishes the biological treatment of the Jewish problem in the following words: "... In viewing such racial frictions, the current methods of historical research are no longer sufficient. In this field other perspectives are emerging, based upon biological thought. Exactly as the creative and the parasitic principle occur in nature, in the world of fauna and flora, so the same holds good in the life of peoples. These principles, the creative and the parasitic, have been effective from the very beginning in all parts of creation, and we have to look upon races and nations as a part of creation.

"A good example of such friction is supplied by the human body. The body is a highly developed 'State' composed of cells which is invaded by parasites, such as bacteria, which are incapable of building up a state themselves. These bacteria can, however, live in a body, they can multiply and attach themselves to certain spots. There they are secreting their poisons, thereby causing such reactions of the body as can be well compared with the internal processes in the life of nations arising from similar sources. A body thus afflicted must defeat the bacteria which have penetrated it, otherwise it will be defeated by them. Once the body has defeated them, it should for its own sake also cleanse its whole environment of the bacteria to prevent further infection.

"With regard to frictions and processes of this kind humanitarian principles cannot be taken into consideration at all, as little as in the case of disinfecting a body or a contaminated room. It is necessary to clear a path for a completely novel way of thinking. Only such thinking can really lead to the final decision which must be made in our time so as to safeguard the existence of the great creative race and its vocation in the world".

There can be no doubt that these accusations hurled against the Jews and clad in the armour of biological analogies are not simply inspired by satanic malice. The men who could write and teach in such a fashion believed in the truth of their doctrines if not at the beginning of their career at any rate increasingly so in the course of their campaign: the language inherent in the images and similes they had used, had gained such power over them as to make image and reality one. This happened not only in their own minds, but even more so in the minds of their disciples and followers. To the general mass of the people the Jew no longer appeared as a human being but as some lower animal, like worms and insects, terrible and incomprehensible in their destructive

<sup>69</sup>Quoted here from Hofer, *Der Nationalsozialismus*, pp. 279-80.

effect<sup>70</sup> and, above all, like the parasitic microbiologically visible to the naked eye, the bacilli and bacteria which one had read about as carriers of disease and decay. As early as Hepp-Hepp, *Juda verreck!* suggested that Jews were the German word *verrecken* (perish like a beast) is in decennatively applied to animals. This word experienced its rene hands of the Nazis in the battle cry *Deutschland erwache!* Now the time had come to declare with precision: "The ist has learned the lesson: The Jew is not a human being, m of decay."<sup>71</sup>

These concepts of the Jew as, actually, a non-human a direct line to another idea — the idea of the subhuman (*Untermensch*) which seems to have been voiced by the end of 1915 and began to be applied, about the year 1925, to the Jews who thus transformed and turned round Nietzsche's idea of (*Übermensch*).<sup>72</sup>

"The subhuman man" — as one of the manuals of the National-Socialist leadership says<sup>73</sup> — "who to all appeal-

<sup>70</sup>See also Maurice Maeterlinck's characterisation of insects: "The insect is to our world... One would be inclined to say that the insect is a more monstrous, more energetic, more insane, more atonal than our own... There is no doubt in our amazement and us by those beings incomparably better armed, better equipped than those creatures made up so to speak of compressed energy and activity we suspect our most mysterious adversaries, our ultimate rivals our successors..." Quoted here from M.V.C. Jeffreys, *Personal Fauna World*, Penguin Books, 1962, p. 9.

<sup>71</sup>*Der Jude ist kein Mensch, sondern eine Fäulniserscheinung*. Spoken by a Judge of the NSDAP Walter Bruch, in *Deutsche Justiz*, 100, 2, 1927, here quoted from Max Weinreich, "Hitler's Professors", New York 1946, 4) and p. 249.

<sup>72</sup>The concepts of *Untermensch* — *Übermensch* (sub-human being and the worthy of detailed investigation. For the word *Untermensch* see *Wörterbuch*, vol. II, part 3, 1936, columns 1686-87, and *in Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung*, vol. 17, 1961, p. 105. The origin of the word seems to have been used first by Lothrop Stoddard *Der Kulturumsturz. Die Drohung des Untermenschen*, transl. by I. A. different meaning it has been used already by, among others, say „Feuer in Galizien". Coll. Zionist Works, vol. I, p. 249: „Und diesen unter geradezu untermenschlichen Bedingungen ein Leben, das um noch verdient". As to the word *Übermensch*, see Grimm, vol. II, p. 20, and Kluge, *Ethymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, can be traced as far back as the 16th century, has been used by Goethe in given its new meaning in the sense of a higher ideal stage of development (*sich emporbilden*). See also Klemperer, LIT, p. 54, and *Belte Worte*, Berlin 1929 (Knaur), p. 154. For comparison look at the *see Grimm II*, part 3, columns 1173-1178), and at similar concepts in for instance in English: sub-human).

<sup>73</sup>S. Leon Poliakov — Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und die Jupp.* 120-121.

gically homogeneous natural creation with hands, feet, and some sort of brain, with eyes and a mouth, is all the same a totally different, a terrifying creature; he is endowed with human features — though merely a sketch version of the true human being —, mentally, spiritually he stands lower than an animal. Inside this man there rages a violent chaos of wild uninhibited emotions: unspeakable destructiveness, primitive lust, unashamed vileness. Subhuman man — nothing else... He hates the work of the other [that is, of the true man]. He rails against it, furtively as a thief, openly as a slanderer — as a murderer... Never has the subhuman man kept the peace, permanent trouble-maker that he is... He needs for his self-preservation the mire, the hell, but not the sun. — And this underworld of the subhuman man found its leader! The Eternal Jew! Devil and Antichrist and Eternal Jew interwoven into one biological myth!

Comparing the picture of the Jew expressed in these verbal images with that presented at the time of the incipient modern antisemitic movement in the eighties, we quite clearly note, as mentioned before, how these images came to be taken for reality and, simultaneously, came to be raised into the mythical sphere. This process gains a profound meaning in view of the consequences drawn from such perceptions. In the eighties life was still imbued with the spirit of Liberalism and with a common humanitarian ideal, although at this juncture the ideal began to pale and other currents were adulterating the liberal atmosphere. Had not Lagarde written in 1884 that it was time to break with the idea of humanity? Following such a direction there appeared the venomous disparaging talk of "silly humanitarianism" (*Humanitätsduselei*)<sup>72</sup>, under the influence of which the vital forces and instincts of mankind would wither away. "We poor mannikins", wrote Alexander Tille, a radical Social-Darwinist, in 1895, "have concocted a moral brew from all sorts of our own weaknesses. You, great Nature, have a quite different morality, and are therefore immoral by the standards of our own puny morality... You let the fittest survive — we the unfit. We have established special institutions where we pamper the cripple, the lame, the blind, the insane, the consumptive, the syphilitic, in order to release them sometime, so that they can procreate and hand on their sickness to the next generation."<sup>73</sup> Tille, followed by others, contrasts the "shortsighted altruistic morality" with

the morality of the species, as contained in the evolutionary theory, emphasising the right of the stronger race to annihilate the weaker and lower race. "Whosoever cannot hold out for himself must be resigned to his downfall."<sup>74</sup>

The biological way of looking at the animal was now equally applied to man; the new theories on the nature of instinctual life and the illnesses that may arise from its suppression — all these factors led to the depreciation of ethics as the force capable of taming the instincts and steering the libidinous passions into civilised channels. Dependence on an ethical conscience is in the eyes of Rudolf Klages<sup>75</sup> "the stigma of those... whom Nietzsche called 'slave men'... The anthropologist recognizes in the phenomenon of morality only one factor: the spiritual expression of inferior blood... But the principle of all sin against life is the so-called categoric imperative. The teacher of morality is unconsciously a systematic sinner against life." In the novel *Partenau*, published in 1929, the author Max René Hesse makes the Junker Kniebald say appreciatingly to the hero of the novel, Captain Partenau: "You are the first man I have been able to ask without embarrassment what actually such things as conscience, repentance, morals mean, compared with nation and country. Whereupon both of us shook our heads in utter incomprehension."<sup>76</sup> Nature, so runs the argument and its ever-growing generalization, knows of no inhibitions. And from such a premise the fallacious conclusion is freely drawn: man, arrogantly overrating his reason, must not try to rise above nature, but submit himself to the laws of nature. The liberation of the libido from the fetters of a religious and bourgeois tradition; the lowering of spiritual values to the level of a mere superstructure covering the tangible economic and social forces and the class struggle for bread and political power; Social-Darwinism and fanatical nationalism and imperialism — all these tendencies point to one end: the recognition and acceptance of the law of nature and the pursuit of all human affairs in accordance with this biological law!

With the dividing lines thus blurred, and with the inclusion of man in the animal sphere, the ensuing result leads to the vindication of all cruelty as a natural process which need not ask for justification. Consequently Adolf Hitler — and with him his henchmen — often say: "When Nature is

<sup>72</sup>The Viennese *Neue Freie Presse* deplores this word in an article of 14th July, 1891; H. St. Chamberlain uses it in 1898 in his *Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (I, 324) as a current phrase.

<sup>73</sup>A. Tille, *Darwin und Nietzsche, ein Buch der Entwicklungsethik*, Leipzig 1895, p. 120. Quoted here from Hedwig Conrad-Martius, *Utopien der Menschenzüchtung, der Sozialdarwinismus und seine Folgen*. München 1955, pp. 219 ff. On the development of "Social-Darwinism" see also my essay mentioned in footnote 47, pp. 47 ff.

<sup>74</sup>Conrad-Martius, p. 228. In the German original: „Was sich nicht behaupten kann, muss sich gefallen lassen, zu Grunde zu gehen.“

<sup>75</sup>Brief über Ethik, 1918; quoted here from H. Pross, „Die Zerstörung der deutschen Politik“, 1959, pp. 87-88.

<sup>76</sup>Victor Klemperer, from whose above-mentioned book *LIT*, Notizbuch eines Philologen (Berlin 1949) I take this quotation, remarks on this point (p. 34): „Der Landsknecht Partenau, kein Phantasiegeschöpf, sondern das klassisch typisierende Portrait vieler Zeit- und Berufsgenossen, ist ein gelehrter Mann, auch nicht nur zuhause in den Werken des deutschen Generalstabes; er hat auch seinen Chamberlain gelesen und seinen Nietzsche und Burckhardt's 'Renaissance'...“.



cruel, we may be so as well."<sup>77</sup>

In such an atmosphere where the history of ideas and the social sciences were influenced by biology, and biological realities mythologised; where under the impact of the First World War and its aftermath all spiritual and moral values had been shaken; where life in all its aspects became a phenomenon of the masses and acquired totalitarian character — from the motorization of transport to the practice of politics; the regulation of traffic and subtle techniques of advertising through simple yet persuasive words and slogans and pictures — in such an atmosphere the language, with its immanent images and conceptions, assumed an ever more penetrating and disastrous role. Nietzsche's longing, misunderstood though it was, for the primitive barbarian with his strong will and instinct, and Richard Wagner's revival of Germanic mythology on the stage, alluring the public by the powerful magic of alliterative rhymes and the pathos of his music, provided the basis for the semantic effect. The language reveals a growing tendency to use a word in the meaning of its primitive linguistic root, to take similes and allusions as realities, and to convert emotions, engendered by neurotic anxieties and wishful thinking, with magic power into images of hatred which in their turn stimulate the conscious will to the obliteration of the noxious object.

When in the course of the 19th century the demand was made for the extinction of Judaism, the understanding prevailed that the Jews who persisted in their claim to complete equality must first abandon their national cohesion in favour of a merger with the nations in whose midst they lived. It was not desirable, so it was said, to have a state within the state. The other side was willing — often reluctantly enough — to concede particular religious customs to the Jews, but the same Jews were asked to surrender their national identity. Most of the friends and opponents of the Jews were agreed on exacting this price, and any possible difference of opinion only concerned the best terms and means for the success of this deal. Mommsen had requested of the Jews the renunciation of their separate national existence and national consciousness; and their conservative opponents like Treitschke and even Lagarde were also prepared to admit the German Jews to full equality, provided they agreed without reserve

<sup>77</sup>Golo Mann, *Antisemitismus*, 1960, p. 7: „Einmal, in seinen ‚Tischgesprächen‘, verglich er [Hitler] seinen Antisemitismus mit der Reaktion der Affen, die einen fremden Eindringling tottrampeln, weil er nicht zu ihrer naturgegebenen Familie gehört.“ To Rauschnig (Gespräche, p. 22). Hitler remarks: „Wir müssen das gute Gewissen zur Grausamkeit wiedergewinnen“. Or (p. 78): „Ja! Wir sind Barbaren. Wir wollen es sein. Es ist ein Ehrentitel. Wir sind es, die die Welt verjüngen werden. Diese Welt ist am Ende!“ On barbarism as an ideal see also the quotations in H. Pross, *Der Untergang der deutschen Politik*, 1959, p. 72 (from E. Wolters, *Stefan George und die Blätter für die Kunst*, 1930, p. 41) and pp. 79-80 (from E. Jünger, *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis*, 1933, pp. 33-34).

to an amalgamation, body and soul, with the German people. Then some isolated voices were heard treating the race theory as matter and expressing the radical view that great harm would to the "host" should the complete Jewish assimilation to the "host" ever become a fact. However, Mommsen's frequently quoted phrase Jews as "an element of decomposition" was essentially meant in a positive sense. Even Richard Wagner's plea for Jewish self-extinction set forth in the final lines of his famous and notorious essay on *Das Judentum in der Musik* did not convey any other meaning. In this essay Boerne as the prototype of the Jew who in his longing for Germany had entirely attached himself to the German nation and tried to be absorbed by it. "To become a human being in common with us," Wagner, "imposes upon the Jew, first of all, no more nor less a demand of ceasing to be a Jew... If you will take your part — deservedly so — in this work of salvation, and if you wish to be saved through self-extinction, we shall become united and in no way separated from each other! But consider well, there is only one way to be saved from the curse lying upon you: the salvation of Ahasver — extinction."<sup>78</sup>

In the changed atmosphere prevailing during the twenties and the 20th century such images and allusions were taken in their full linguistic meaning, and the radical views, inhibited no longer by the ethical reasoning of the liberal epoch, gained the upper hand and the consequences to follow. The impact of this change upon the Jewish literature can be strikingly demonstrated by comparing the 1st and 2nd editions of Eugen Duehring's book on the Jewish problem. The 1st edition of 1881<sup>79</sup> Duehring speaks in a roundabout way of the necessity to be drawn from the antisemitic race theory. A co-existence of Jews, would in the long run be impossible the more national consciousness was growing among the peoples. What was to happen, particularly the question of where the Jews were to go, was a matter for the Jews themselves. Only in special cases could the thought of "clearing away whole groups of Jews thus concerned" be considered. For it being it was enough to exclude them from any public influence to outlaw mixed marriages. For the future, however, the goal was raised and "it cannot be reached without employing the most drastic means. The Jews are... a Carthage within, whose might the nations must break". In the enlarged 6th edition of 1920, published

<sup>78</sup>Richard Wagner, *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen*, 4th ed., vol. 5, p. 100. See herewith the essay by Otto Dov Kulka, *Richard Wagner und die Anfänge des Antisemitismus*, *Bulletin des IBI*, 4th annual 1962, pp. 281 ff., in particular 5.

<sup>79</sup>Eugen Duehring, *Die Judenfrage als Rassen-, Sitten- und Culturfrage*. Mitgeschichtlichen Antwort. Karlsruhe & Leipzig 1881. Cf. in this connection quoted above in note 1.

Duehring's death in 1930, the author says: "When in the first editions of this book only incomplete measures and subsidiary means were recommended and discussed, because they alone seemed to be possible, such half measures appear now after so many experiences quite out of place. The world must settle its account with the Hebraic people in a radical manner".<sup>79</sup> Every gentle way only entailed the disadvantage of prolonging the trouble. Terror and brute force had ever been the method appropriate to the Jews since the time of Sinai! "Besides, it has to be considered that the right in time of war, particularly of a war against the anti-Aryan, nay, anti-human attacks of alien parasites is different from the right obtaining in time of peace".<sup>80</sup> Duehring continues in this vein, saying that in the face of the expanding Judaisation of the civilised world his former reference to Carthage within did not fit the situation any more. In the present age "when the killing of despots has nearly developed into a system" one was confronted with a more palpable task.<sup>81</sup> Now the time had come to accept in full earnest Duehring's definition of the duty of the nordic man "to exterminate the parasitic race in the way one has to exterminate dangerous adders and wild beasts of prey".<sup>82</sup>

Lagarde had spoken of "the mass of decay" accumulated in "Israel Europa" and the putrefaction which could be removed only by a surgical operation. "It needs a heart as hard as a crocodile's skin", he wrote in *Juden und Indogermanen* in 1887,<sup>83</sup> "not to feel for the poor sucked dry Germans and — what comes to the same — not to hate and despise those who — in the name of humanity! — speak up for these Jews or are too cowardly to crush this vermin. One does not negotiate with trichinae and bacilli; trichinae and bacilli are not chosen to be educated, they are exterminated as quickly and as thoroughly as possible". In Lagarde's time his comparisons — his extremely dangerous comparisons and similes — implied the necessity of confiscating the Jews' money in order to drain the source of their power. But now the analogy with putrefaction and boils, with trichinae and bacilli and vermin, with parasites and pests — all of them representing the Jews — was taken literally and accepted as plain reality. In a speech before the Reichstag on 30th

<sup>79</sup>Eugen Duehring. *Die Judenfrage als Frage des Rassencharakters und seiner Schädlichkeiten für die Existenz und Kultur der Völker*. Mit einer gemeinverständlichen und denkerisch freiheitlichen Antwort. Sechste, vermehrte Auflage, in Frau Beta Duehrings Auftrage herausgegeben von H. Reinhardt. Leipzig, O. R. Reisland, 1930, p. 114.

<sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>82</sup>Quoted here from Theodor Lessing, "Der jüdische Selbsthass". Berlin 1930, p. 112 (in the chapter on the Jewish antisemite Arthur Trebitsch).

<sup>83</sup>Paul de Lagarde, *Juden und Indogermanen*. Eine Studie nach dem Leben. Göttingen 1887, pp. 339, 347. Compare also A. Bein, "Modern Anti-Semitism and its Place in the History of the Jewish Question" in *Between East and West*. Essays dedicated to the Memory of Bela Horowitz, London 1958, pp. 190-193.

January 1937 Hitler explained the anti-Jewish policy he had inaugurated in National-Socialist Germany: "We endeavour, as well as we can, to make the German people immune against this infection. A part of our measures is the avoidance of any close relationship with the carriers of this poisonous bacillus".<sup>84</sup> A poster put up in France at the beginning of the forties shows in the background of a picture designed for the combat of parasites and insects, the inscription: *Tuberculose, Syphilis, Cancer sont guérissables... Il faut en finir avec le plus grand des fléaux: Le Juif!*<sup>85</sup> In 1943, when the policy of the gas chamber was already fully operative, Hitler said to the Hungarian Regent Horthy that the Jews "should be treated like tubercles which can infect a healthy body. Nobody could call this cruelty, considering the necessity of killing innocent creatures of nature like hares and roes to prevent them from causing damage".<sup>86</sup> And in one of his table talks at his headquarters in 1942 he referred to the transport of Jews to the eastern regions by asking what possible objection could be raised "when in the interest of the state an obvious canker of the people (*Volksschädling*) has to be eliminated".<sup>87</sup> Again, a manual of instructions, issued by the "National-Socialist chief staff of the army" (*nationalsozialistischer Führungsstab der Wehrmacht*) in 1944, justifies the systematic murder of Jews in the following way:<sup>88</sup> "There are still people among our nation today who are not quite certain in their own minds whenever we speak about the extermination of the Jews within our *Lebensraum*. We needed the strength of character and dynamic force of the greatest man of our nation in the last thousand years to tear the Jewish deception from our eyes... The Jew wants us to be forced into a life of slavery so as to live among us as a parasite who can suck us dry. Our people's sound way of life opposes the parasitic Jewish existence. Who can believe it possible", this harangue continues with an obvious allusion to Lagarde's previous phrase, "to reform or convert a parasite (a louse for example)? Who can believe in a compromise with the parasite?"<sup>89</sup> We are left with one choice only, either to be devoured by

<sup>84</sup>Quoted here from R. Schaefer, *Zur Geschichte des Wortes 'ersetzen'*, l.c., p. 73.

<sup>85</sup>Jaques Polonsky. *La Presse, la Propagande et l'Opinion public sous l'Occupation*. Paris 1946, p. 108.

<sup>86</sup>Quoted here from R. Schaefer, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes 'ersetzen'", l.c., p. 73.

<sup>87</sup>Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier 1941-1942. Herausgegeben von Gerh. Ritter, Bonn 1951, p. 310.

<sup>88</sup>Politische Aussprache. Führungsunterlagen No. 3, pp. 55-56; here quoted from Max Weinreich, *Hitler's Professors*, New York 1946, pp. 212 and 258.

<sup>89</sup>Similarly, already in 1885, in the collected essays edited by Robert Koerber and Theodor Fugel "Antisemitismus der Welt in Wort und Bild" (Dresden, Verlag M. O. Groh), p. 300: "Wer uns also das Lied von der 'Symbiose' singt, stimmt eine falsche Melodie an... Für uns ist und bleibt das Judentum, was Andreas Suter (1740) vor fast 200 Jahren sagte ('Der 100-äugige blinde Argos und zwey-gesichtige Janus', p. 375): 'Die Juden sind einem Land so nutz als die Mäuss auf dem Getreideboden und die Motten in einem Kleide.' Als aufrechte deutsche Männer lehnen wir ein 'friedliches Zusammenleben' mit



the parasite or to exterminate it. The Jew must be exterminated wherever we meet him! We do not commit a crime against life acting like this; on the contrary, we serve the law of life by fighting against all that is hostile to a sound existence. Our fight serves, indeed, the preservation of life".

We asked at the beginning of this essay how the murder of Jews systematically organised by the Nazis with the aid of the most modern technical means could ever have happened. A completely satisfying answer will probably never be found. Any human action arises within a web of intricate factors and only a comprehensive analysis of all these factors and their interaction could guide us towards a fuller insight and comprehension. It would seem, however, that the semantic method of approach promises to take us nearer to the core of the problem. It has been said that the Nazis were driven to their awful deeds, almost against their will, by the demons which they had unleashed.<sup>90</sup> Does not the demon of language belong to these demons also with the images and concepts contained in it? When a madman, possessed by a hallucination, kills another man, he often acts in the delusion that he is liberating himself and the world from some menacing monster embodied in his victim.<sup>91</sup> Did not the paranoiac at the helm of the Nazi state — the question must be asked — act under the influence of insane delusions of the same kind? It is no argument against this assumption to see Hitler in conversations with his confidants sometimes adopting a nihilistic pose and making light of his own theories and actions as if he were — unhampered by any belief — high above them, using such theories as the anti-semitic race theory merely for the better realization of his totalitarian rule.<sup>92</sup> The obsessed also has his sane moments, and is during such intervals well capable of sensible discussion and rationalization of his phantoms. Hermann Rauschning, who took down in writing some of Hitler's conversations, comes to the conclusion that Hitler actually believed in the malignity of the Jews and in their malignant influence upon the world. "For Hitler", writes Rauschning (page 221), "the Jew simply is the incarnation of evil. He has raised him to the rulership of his counterworld (*Gegenwelt*). He sees him in a mythical light... The intensity of his antisemitism can only be explained by such a mythical exaltation of

menschlichen 'Mäusen und Motten' ab..." On the concept of "Symbiosis" in connection with the Jewish question see the remarks at the end of this paper.

<sup>90</sup>Léon Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate*, Philadelphia 1954, p. 3.

<sup>91</sup>Cf. Robert Gaupp, *Zur Psychologie des Massenmordes*, Berlin 1914, esp. p. 182.

<sup>92</sup>Apart from this, the question would in this way only be shifted. For the use of this theory for the purpose of undermining the counter-forces would presuppose that the masses are ready to accept it as truth.

the Jew into an eternally fixed human prototype distinguished by rest of humanity". Hitler, in one of these conversations, declared that two worlds faced each other: the man of God and of Satan! "The Jew is the counter-man, the anti-man. The Jew is the creature of another God. He must have sprung from another human race. When I confront the Aryan with the Jew and call him a human being, I must call the other by a different name. The Jew is as widely separated as man from beast".<sup>91</sup> The linguistic analysis shows that these conceptions, based on mythology and demonology, and with the images of the parasite, bacilli and vermin, of cankers which infest the people's body contaminating and corroding it. In the field of mythical imagination constant quantities, as noted before-known: small matters are apt to assume enormous proportions and may turn into dwarfs or become invisible altogether.

To be sure, not all the leading Nazis were obsessed personalities by hallucinations. It may be conceded that Alfred Rosenberg believed in his own biological and semantic myth of a racial workshop place of the Jews in it.<sup>92</sup> It was certainly not so with a vain demagogue endowed with such intellectual versatility as Goebbels. In the counterfeit workshop the current theories were newly minted in catch-phrases. Between these extremes were the men of milk among the Nazi leaders, the types of subaltern army sergeants, and schoolmasters, who either credulously swallowed the word of the leader or, trained in obedience as they were, regarded the execution of the supreme leader's commands as supreme proof of the highest manly virtue. Any possible doubt as to the execution of these commands and ordinances was considered by them a pardonable offence.<sup>93</sup>

These men passed on to the multitudes of thousands and thousands the theories, commands and ordinances which dictated his particular part of the work of extermination. All of them

<sup>91</sup>Rauschning, *Gespräche mit Hitler*, pp. 227-8. Cf. also Hitler's words of Feb. 2, 1942, recorded in "Hitler's Secret Conversations", Signet Books, New York 1961, he discovered the Jewish virus is one of the greatest revolutions that have taken place in the world. The battle we are engaged in is of the same sort as the battle, during the last century, by Pasteur and Koch."

<sup>92</sup>He still stood by them when he was in Nuremberg Gaol before his conviction. In this connection the psychologist G. M. Gilbert in his "Nuremberg Diary" (New York, Signet Books, 1961), p. 72, after a talk with Rosenberg: "And so it is the perseverance in an obsessive-compulsive neurosis or an organic psychosis is neither sadism nor shame in his attitude; just a cool, apathetic obsessive. See also, in the same work, p. 325.

<sup>93</sup>It would seem that Adolf Eichmann also must be counted among these. It is also typical of him to insist on his absolute competence in a certain department to prevent absolutely the penetration of anybody else into his own field of work and responsibility. It is the personal and professional ideal of this type to the

the injunction of obedience, goaded on — in addition to it — by the fear of the consequences of any kind of disobedience. However, in practice — and here the language plays its decisive role — the question of obedience or disobedience never seems to have occurred to them at all: the presentation of the Jews as corroding and poisonous parasites, as vermin, as bacteria and bacilli, everywhere infesting and striving to destroy the body of the German people as a whole and each individual German with a demonic power, driven by their law of existence (*Lebensgesetz*) as parasites, bacilli and vermin, — this presentation paralyzed to a large extent any internal resistance on the part of the masses.<sup>94</sup> And who does not belong at least in a certain layer of his being to the masses?<sup>95</sup> Lagarde's phrase, still used as a metaphor, of the bacilli not to be negotiated with but to be exterminated, could now, in the atmosphere of anti-humanism, and of Bio-Mythology, become a horrible reality. These verbal images and biological concepts weakened and effaced the moral scruples, if such still existed, and enfeebled also any potential resistance among the millions who, if not actively involved in the persecution and extermination of the Jews, knew all the same what was happening or could have known, if they had not chosen to eschew any questions which might lead to doubt, or worse still, could be interpreted as opposition and failure in unconditional devotion and obedience.

Moreover, it may well be that this image of the Jew contributed to the methods of extermination. As in the Middle Ages the Jew was slain and burned as Antichrist and Satan, so the method of killing Jews in the gas chambers was but the logical consequence of their final identification with parasites, cankers, bacilli and vermin. Once the Jews were really so regarded, it was not only imperative to exterminate them<sup>96</sup>, it was also

quite obvious that in the process the same means we use against bacilli and vermin was to be employed: poison gas. Hitler in his *Mein Kampf* had already alluded to poison gas as a weapon against the Jews;<sup>97</sup> at this earlier stage he had remembered the gas attacks of the First World War when he himself had been wounded in such an attack. Traumatic experiences, paranoid delusions, the semantic conception of biological factors as reality interfused with boundless demagoguery and a methodical training in obedience as the highest civic virtue in a totalitarian state — out of these was created a system of the most advanced scientific technique to kill in gas chambers the Jew-parasite and the Jew-vermin.

The uncovering of these inner links and their explanation has, of course, nothing to do with a justification of any kind or with extenuating the responsibility which those who have taken part in historical events must bear. Psychology and historiography lead astray if they induce a belief that the endeavour to understand is tantamount to justifying and excusing. Injustice and crime remain injustice and crime also when their psychological roots are laid bare. But the exposure of the inner motives can serve to warn us how not to act if we want to avoid being caught in a similar situation — as victims or as agents. Nothing is unavoidable in the historical process if it is recognized in time, and if in time the will is awakened to avert it, because it is injustice. We cannot prevent maniacs aspiring to leadership, but we can educate ourselves and others not to succumb to their criminal aspirations to gain power.

One of the consequences we have to draw is to be careful in the use and in the reception of language and of the images and the similes embodied in it. In this sense too one might apply Abtalion's saying in the "Ethics of the Fathers": "Ye sages, be heedful of your words",<sup>98</sup> for as it is said in Proverbs: "Death and life are in the Power of the tongue."<sup>99</sup>

100 per cent. execution of given orders. This perverted, mechanistic-militaristic concept of duty, which leaves no room for humanitarian doubts, explains many acts and omissions that would otherwise be inexplicable in their inhumanity. The degree of absurdity to which this attitude can lead in the thinking of such persons is shown by the argumentation of Adolf Eichmann in the Jerusalem Trial during which he identified this concept of duty and obedience with Kant's Categorical Imperative. As to the biological concept of the Jews as parasites see his remarks in *Life, International Edition* of Jan. 9, 1961: "Eager to strike against these parasites, the Roumanians... liquidated thousands and thousands of their own Jews". "I am no anti-Semite. I was just politically opposed to Jews, because they were stealing the breath of life from us."

<sup>94</sup>Benno Cohn, the last chairman of the Zionist Federation of Germany, relates the following reminiscence from Germany in September 1938: "I heard a child asking his mother: 'what kind of human beings (*Menschen*) are these, Mother?' And the mother answered: 'These are no human beings, these are Jews.'" Benno Cohn, *Das letzte Jahr. Mitteilungsblatt des Irgun Olej Merkaz Europa*, Tel Aviv, 18th Oct. 1963, p. 26.

<sup>95</sup>Cf. Thomas Mann (*Doktor Faustus*, p. 60) on the "Archaic-apprehensive" in the German concept "Volk": "Ich spreche vom Volke, aber die altertümlich-archaische Schicht gibt es in uns allen."

<sup>96</sup>Compare also W. Hofer, *Der Nationalsozialismus*, 1957, pp. 77-8: "Denn wer die Juden

als Schmarotzer und Parasiten bezeichnete und mit Läusen und Wanzen verglich, musste allerdings folgerichtig zu dem Entschluss kommen, sie auszurotten. Hier wurde die Vision des SS-Staates zur furchtbaren Wirklichkeit." Similarly says Elias Canetti (*Masse und Macht*, Hamburg 1960, p. 212): "Zum Schlusse galten sie buchstäblich als Ungeziefer, das man ungestraft in Millionen vernichten durfte." (Here quoted from: Kurt Loewenstein, *Juden in der modernen Massenwelt*, Bulletin des Leo Baeck Institut, Jahrg. 3, Tel Aviv 1960, p. 175). Further Aldous Huxley in "Eyeless in Gaza": "If you call a man a bug, it means that you propose to treat him as a bug." (Quoted here from D. Stafford-Clark, "The Psychology of Persecution and Prejudice," Robert Waley Cohen Memorial Lecture 1960, pp. 3-4.)

<sup>97</sup>See above, p. 20.

<sup>98</sup>*Pirkei Avot*, I, 11.

<sup>99</sup>*Mishlei*, 18, 21. I am indebted to Prof. Ernst Simon for having called my attention to this verse.



## DISCOURSE ON THE TERM "GERMAN-JEWISH SYMBIOSIS"

It has frequently been noticed that the Jews in the diaspora show an inclination to use words and notions in a more abstract manner than other people. For the latter the graphic, naturalistic image often retains its original force behind the polished façade of an abstract notion derived from it, whilst the Jews are less aware of these metaphorical associations. This difference of perception appears to me convincingly exemplified by the use of the word symbiosis in describing the close association of the Jews and the peoples in the diaspora. For Jews the word has been a favourite whenever the close economic and cultural relationship of Jews and Germans called for particular emphasis. Relying on the etymological root of the Greek word one took symbiosis to mean the fruitful and peaceful co-existence rewarding to both parties. Occasionally one speaks in a similar sense of the Spanish-Jewish symbiosis in the Middle Ages and the Greek-Jewish symbiosis in ancient Alexandria.<sup>1</sup> However, non-Jews apply this term, as far as I can see, to the Jewish problem only very seldom and then generally with marked reservation.<sup>2</sup>

It may be useful for the sake of clarification and as a warning against indiscriminate use of the word to have a closer look at the whole concept. The term "Symbiosis" was coined by the botanist Anton de Bary (born in Munich in 1831, died in Strasbourg in 1888) in the year 1879 to denote "the permanent intimate association of two organisms with mutually beneficial effect".<sup>3</sup> Obviously here we are dealing not with a word taken

<sup>1</sup>See for example Martin Buber's essay "Das Ende der deutsch-jüdischen Symbiose" in *Jüdische Weltanschauung* of 10th March 1939 where he says: "For the symbiosis of German and Jewish character as I have experienced it during the four decades I spent in Germany has been, since the Spanish epoch, the first and only one which has found the highest confirmation that History can bestow: the confirmation by *creativity*." Buber retains clearly the biological conception when, later on, he says: "This has not been a parasitic existence; the full weight of the human personality came into play and bore fruit. But even more profoundly than through individual achievement the symbiosis found confirmation through a unique collaboration between the German and the Jewish spirit." The concept of symbiosis becomes completely abstract and obscure in Adolf Leschnitzer's well-known book "Saul und David; Über die Problematik der Jüdischen Lebensgemeinschaft". See pp. 39ff., 100ff., 149ff., and many other passages. Eduard Rosenbaum has already pointed out the inadequacy of his (Leschnitzer's) definition of the concept symbiosis (*LBI Year Book* I, 312). Felix Weltsch uses the word without any more exact definition in his beautiful essay in *Leo Baeck Jahrbuch* I, 255ff., "The Rise and Fall of the Jewish-German Symbiosis: The Case of Franz Kafka." The *LBI News*, New York vol. 4 No. 1 (Spring 1963) announces on page 1 a lecture by Dr. Ernst Hamburger on "Symbiosis in Politics, Jews in German Parliaments, 1848-1914."

<sup>2</sup>As an example of the (generally disapproved) use of the conception by non-Jews, see the paper by Wilhelm Stapel: "Anti-Semitismus und Anti-Germanismus. Über das seelische Problem der Symbiose des deutschen und jüdischen Volkes." Hamburg 1928. p. 112.

<sup>3</sup>M. Caullery, *Le parasitisme et la symbiose*, 2e ed., Paris 1890, p. 241: "Le terme a été créé par Ant. de Bary, en 1879, pour désigner l'association intime et constante de

from antiquity like "parasite", which developed only comparatively late into a biological term; the word and concept "symbiosis" was deliberately created to define a biological phenomenon. It covers one of the various kinds of close associations of substantially different biological organisms and is in this so closely related to parasitism as to be almost undistinguishable from it.<sup>4</sup> It depends therefore largely on your point of view whether you speak in a given case of symbiosis or of parasitism. Geoffrey Lapage<sup>5</sup> defines the similarities and differences between symbiosis and parasitism in this way: "In symbiosis both partners benefit. In parasitism only one partner, the parasite, derives benefit. The other partner, appropriately called the host of the parasite, gets nothing from the partnership... Parasitism, therefore, is a one-sided partnership, a state of conflict that is in striking contrast to the harmony of symbiotic relationship. Its hallmarks are the resistance made by the host and the injury done by the parasite, whether great or small... It may be difficult indeed, where we find host and parasite thus living together in a state of what we call tolerance of each other, to decide whether these are instances of parasitism, or even of symbiosis. Parasitism, however, can be infallibly distinguished by one fact. Parasites always injure their hosts. The harm done may be very slight... but it does exist and it marks the dividing line between parasitism and all other forms of association between living things."

I have quoted here so extensively because it may serve as a manifestation of the danger of transferring this biological concept to the sociological domain at large and, in particular, to the relationship of Jews in the diaspora with their non-Jewish environment. It has to be added that such a transfer is usually apt to lose sight of a most important factor: human consciousness. Observing and defining the relations of vegetable or animal organisms we remain outside the actual process and examine only the physiological reactions accessible to our faculty of observation. It is less easy to observe human phenomena in such an objective manner since we ourselves are involved in them and our consciousness with its subjective sentiments and appreciations is an integral part of the process

deux organismes avec des rapports mutuels leur assurant des bénéfices réciproques." Shorter Oxford Dict., 1959, p. 2108, defines the biological concept symbiosis as follows: "Association of two different organisms (usually two plants, or an animal and a plant) which live attached to each other, or one as a tenant of the other, and contribute to the other's support."

<sup>4</sup>Caullery, *Le parasitisme et la symbiose*, p. 241: "Si même l'un vit aux dépens de l'autre et peut être considéré comme son parasite, son métabolisme fournit au partenaire des éléments plus ou moins essentiels... Comme je le dis ci-dessus, la délimitation de la symbiose et du commensualisme ou même du parasitisme n'est pas toujours aisée. L'analyse des exemples de symbiose... montre qu'elle n'est pas toujours purement mutualiste et que l'un des deux organismes associés est, en réalité, plus ou moins parasite sur l'autre."

<sup>5</sup>Geoffrey Lapage, *Animal Parasitic in Man*. Pelican Books 1957, pp. 17-18.

itself. As the process of symbiosis generally applies to the social association of unequal dimensions, the permanent question arises: what does the association look like from the viewpoints of the organisms themselves that form this association? Is the stronger party's viewpoint the same as the weaker one's? For lower organisms this question can hardly be answered; but it matters decisively as soon as we transfer the concept of symbiosis to the social life of man, to the relationship of groups of human beings differing among themselves by ethnical cohesion and historical consciousness. Considering the close proximity of the notions, parasitism and symbiosis mentioned above, it may be obvious for the weaker party with its attachment to, and affection for, the stronger party to look upon the union as symbiosis whereas the stronger party — convinced that it does not need the assistance — may regard the weaker party's clinging and fondness as parasitism, good only for this guest or — less indulgently — intruder. Beyond any doubt the relationship of Jews and Germans dating from the emancipation was often viewed by both partners in this contradictory fashion. What appeared to be symbiosis to the Jews looked to the Germans — and not only to avowed antisemites — like a more or less dangerous form of parasitism foisted upon the German "host nation".

Again the moral to be drawn is the necessity of greater carefulness in the use of biological concepts when the actual topic is the social problems of human existence. It seems unreasonable to speak of symbiosis when peaceful co-existence for the good of both parties is meant, or when it is intended to emphasize the synthesis of divergent tendencies and aims. The relationship of Jews and non-Jews especially should not be discussed in terms which might stimulate the conception of the Jewish parasite — a conception full of danger and the risk of those fatal consequences I have tried to demonstrate.

## Max Weber's Historical Interpretation of Judaism

BY HANS LIEBESCHÜTZ

### I. TERMINOLOGY AND VALUE JUDGMENTS

When we look back to-day on the work in which Max Weber analysed the influence of religious thought and practice on the development of society, it appears to us as the concluding chapter of German nineteenth-century historiography. The whole design, the discussion of a highly specialised problem in the framework of Universal History, points in this direction. In modern historicism Judaism has always formed an important chapter in the comprehensive surveys characteristic of a movement which since its beginnings has been closely connected with the rise of theological criticism. The ecclesiastical view of history, shaped in the patristic literature, has, by necessity, been ambiguous about the subject. In this respect the intellectual revolution of the eighteenth century did not mean a break with a tradition which finally can be traced back to the personal experience of St. Paul's conversion. There was a broad agreement between prominent representatives of the enlightenment in England, France and Germany that the Old Testament and its story of the Chosen People was the root from which the "sectarian" concept of a privileged truth had come to Christianity. This legacy was considered the main barrier between the humanitarian ideas of modern man and the religious tradition of Europe. The earliest form of Hegel's philosophy of history, as represented in the theological writings of his youth, bears witness to the intensity with which the German intellectual movement following the enlightenment took over this problem from their deistic predecessors. Jewish thought in the age of emancipation was very much influenced by the challenge from a politically allied camp, represented by this succession of modern thinkers from Spinoza to Hegel. Important features of the new school of Jewish scholarship, which, since the second quarter of the nineteenth century, attempted to reinterpret Judaism to the modern world, must be understood as defence against a position held in the gentile camp of liberal rationalism.

There is no doubt that Weber's interpretation has kept strong links with that tradition for which Judaism was the archetype of belief in the privilege of exclusive truth. But in 1921, Franz Rosenzweig in his intimate debate with his mother reported that, while reading Weber's book on Ancient Judaism, he felt the sociologist's interpretation as a confirmation from an alien camp of his own discovery.<sup>1</sup> Behind this

<sup>1</sup>Briefe, 1935, Nr. 316, 15.8.1921 to his mother, p. 405. „Ich lese Max Webers Judentum, das ich eigentlich während des Krieges lesen wollte. Es ist schade, daß ich es nicht getan habe, ich hätte es gut im Stern mit verarbeiten können; es ist historisch das Gleiche,