

A Difference of Degrees: Ernst Juenger, the National Socialists, and a New Europe

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A Difference of Degrees: Ernst Jünger, The National Socialists, and a New Europe

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I. Introduction

“We are not willing to strike this war from our thoughts; we are proud of it.”

Ernst Jünger, *In Stahlgetwittern: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Stoßtruppführers*¹ (*Storm of Steel: From the Journal of a Storm Troop Officer*)

This sentence stands in the introduction to the graphic World War I journals of Ernst Jünger, and precedes the horrific narration of his experiences during four years in the German Reichswehr. Jünger describes the pain of watching his comrades fall in battle, the terror that seized him in the night as he stood only feet from the British trench, and the devastation he watched overtake the towns that he had come to love. Yet alongside such horrific images one finds sentences such as that above. One finds these statements of faith in the fight; pride in the cause which drove armies to stand facing each other day in and day out for the four years between 1914 and 1918. One wonders at Jünger’s ability to maintain the ideal of military honor amidst the horror, heartbreak and agony which he observed. In many ways Jünger is a peculiar post-war author; the response of his fellow German author, Erich Maria Remarque, could not have been farther from that of Jünger. Unlike Jünger, it was the futility of the battle, the futility of the cause that stuck with Remarque. The French author Henri Barbusse experienced similar disillusionment, as did the British Red Cross worker Vera Britain.² When one speaks of World War I literature, one thinks of anti-war images: soldiers shivering and

¹ “Wir sind nicht gewillt, diesen Krieg aus unserem Gedächtnis zu streichen, wir sind stolz auf ihn.“ Ernst Jünger, *In Stahlgetwittern: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Stoßtruppführers* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler, 1926), XIV.

² See Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth: an Autobiographical Study of the Years 1900-925* (London: V. Gollancz Ltd., 1948); Henri Barbusse, *Under Fire* (London: JM Dent, 1965); Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, trans. Brian Murdoch (London: Jonathan Call, 1994).

spirit-broken in water-filled trenches or shell-shocked young men returning to a devastated home front. In contrast, Jünger retained his faith in the power of military might. Despite the pain which he saw, the terror which he felt, he found a meaning in his time at the front. He saw in World War I the makings of a new people, and over the next thirty years would struggle to uncover what this meant.

Twenty-three years later he began work on another piece which at first glance appears quite different from his earlier journals, his extended essay *Der Friede: Ein Wort an die Jugend Europas, ein Wort an die Jugend der Welt* (The Peace: A Word to the Youth of Europe, a Word to the Youth of the World), first published in 1948. While these two works had largely contradictory goals, and dramatically divergent tones, there is one pervading similarity. The introduction to *Der Friede* concludes: “Your sacrifice and the pain that you leave to us will be fruitful.”³ Jünger is speaking to those soldiers who lost their lives in the Second World War, and to all of those who died. This sentence embodies the characteristic that unifies all of Ernst Jünger’s often contradictory writings; an overarching faith in improvement through war and the centrality of sacrifice to the purpose of life. While the ends of this improvement would be redefined over this thirty year period, understanding this continual theme assists the historian in making sense of Jünger’s complex sequence of works.

Throughout the past century Ernst Jünger has continually baffled historians. His writing ranges from militant right-wing nationalism to a mellow pacifism and anti-rearmament stance during the 1950s. In addition his fluctuating relationship to the National Socialists and their regime has proven consistently problematic. This interesting

³ “Ihr Opfer und der Schmerz, den sie uns hinterließen, wird fruchtbar sein.“ Ernst Jünger, *Der Friede: Ein Wort an die Jugend Europas, Ein Wort an die Jugend der Welt* (Zürich: Die Arche, 1949), 6.

juxtaposition has led historians to come to dramatically different conclusions. Historians generally accept that one can not discount Jünger's nationalism of the 1920s, to do so is to deny that which makes this political author the dynamic and controversial individual that he is. As Roger Woods argues, the nationalism of the 1920s is far too central a factor to be called accidental.⁴ Twenty years earlier in 1962, Helmut Kaiser, carried this further to claim that while Jünger might not have joined the NSDAP, his writings of the period prove an "intellectual fascism" at best, which assisted in heralding the Third Reich into power.⁵ I would argue, however, as would many later historians such as Martin Meyer and Thomas Nevin, that one can not view Jünger's National Socialist affiliations in the one-sided manner of many early Jünger critics.

While Jünger's works undeniably granted a level of legitimacy to the Nazi cause due to his prominent position as a World War I hero, I do not find him an intellectual fascist. Thomas Nevin's examination of Ernst Jünger provides a far more appropriate assessment. Nevin observes that while Jünger supported the National Socialist movement as a faction of the Nationalist movement, "at the crucial junctures, Jünger rejected Hitler, ridiculed the Nazis and defended those targeted by their virulent racism."⁶ While Jünger can not be called a protector of the Jewish community, he differed greatly from the National Socialists in his opinion towards both Jews and Communists. This thesis attempts to paint a balanced view of Jünger, tracing his quest for a new society from *In Stahlgewittern* through *Der Friede*. It will attempt to trace those experiences and

⁴ Roger Woods, *Ernst Jünger and the Nature of Political Commitment* (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1982).

⁵ Helmut Kaiser, *Mythos, Rausch, und Reaktion: Der Weg Gottfried Benns und Ernst Jüngers* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1962), 347.

⁶ Thomas Nevin, *Ernst Jünger and Germany: Into the Abyss, 1914-1945* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press 1996), 76.

developments that took Jünger from the Conservative Revolution to the attempted assassination of Hitler on July 20th, 1944. It traces Jünger's complex and turbulent relationship with the National Socialists and attempts to reflect on the similarities between the two while taking into account the decisive break between the two.

One can not understand the political progression and affiliations of Ernst Jünger without first understanding his experience during the First World War. Jünger had sought combat since early in life. Prior to World War I, while still underage, he joined the French Foreign Legion, only to be discharged when his true age was discovered.⁷ After this early set back, however, he went on to fight throughout the entire First World War, receiving both multiple wounds and a variety of decorations from the German government, including the Pour le Mèrite in 1918.⁸ This wartime experience would define his involvement in the Nationalist movement during the 1920s, and color his political perspective throughout his life.

For Jünger the war brought to life comradeship, loyalty, and the Prussian military ethic which he held in such high esteem. Throughout his war memoirs, one finds allusions to the positive characteristics which the war stimulated in his fellow soldier and in himself. Jünger's faith in these positive transformations culminated in his ideal of the "new German," which he elaborated in his 1926 essay "Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen" (The New Type of German Man). In *Stahlgewittern* records: "Here in the battle, the new Europe showed itself for the first time."⁹ Europe would develop from the

⁷ Marjatta Hietala, *Der Neue Nationalismus: in der Publizistik Ernst Jüngers und des Kreises um ihn, 1920-1933* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1975), 24.

⁸ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 25; Nikolaus Wachsmann, "Marching under the Swastika? Ernst Jünger and National Socialism, 1918-1933," *Journal of Contemporary History* 33 (1998): 575.

⁹ "Hier zeigte sich das neue Europa zum ersten male auch inder schlacht." Jünger, *In Stahlgewittern*, 100.

purification of war. Though the Allies triumphed, the German Nationalists, to whom Jünger gravitated during the coming decade, felt that in war they had discovered indispensable priorities: discipline, the willingness to sacrifice, comradeship, and responsibility.¹⁰ Throughout the coming years Jünger and his colleagues praised these qualities as those for which every German ought to strive, qualities which in their eyes put the Weimar Republic and its acquiescence to the Treaty of Versailles to shame.

From this military background Jünger entered the political turmoil of the Weimar Republic. For four years following the war, Jünger remained in the military, becoming a member of the 16th Reichswehr infantry in a frantic attempt to maintain the military lifestyle to which he had become accustomed.¹¹ He soon found himself disillusioned however, and turned to the political scene. While never directly politically active, and never a member of any party, Jünger became an increasingly vocal member of the diverse Nationalist movement. His writings from this period are imperative to understanding the nuances of his relationship to the National Socialists both during this decade and those following the Nazi rise to power. With this in mind, Chapter One addresses the relationship of his Nationalist political writings and the National Socialist during the 1920s.

Through the juxtaposition of writings which declare support of the Nazi party, such as “Schließ Euch Zusammen” (Unite Yourselves, 1926) and “Die Antinationalen Mächte,” (The Anti-Nationalist Powers, 1927) and other, more critical articles including “Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus,” (Nationalism and National Socialism, 1927), one can clearly see the fluctuating and ambivalent nature reality of Jünger’s relationship

¹⁰ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 25.

¹¹ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 76.

to the Nazi party. In order to uncover the true nature of this interaction, one can compare the arguments of these political writings with those of members of the NSDAP during this period, such as Joseph Goebbels, Otto and Gregor Strasser, and Alfred Rosenberg. One finds that alongside striking similarities, lie dramatic disparities. Jünger, like the Nazis, emphasizes the importance of the German Volk, a constant struggle for purity through violence and war, the importance and necessity of World War I, and the creation of a strong and powerful Germany. Juxtaposed with these qualities, however, one encounters differences on such issues as Jews in Germany, the movement's relationships to the Communists, and the proper means to achieve power.

As Germany entered the 1930s and the National Socialists took their seat in parliament, Jünger's writings and relationship to this growing party became increasingly complex. Articles such as "Die Totale Mobilmachung" demonstrate this increasingly layered relationship. His publications of the late 1920s include bear sharper criticism of the Nazi entrance into parliamentary politics, as well as of the Nazi emphasis on racial purity and the threat of "the Jew". Yet alongside such criticisms stands *Der Arbeiter: Herrschaft und Gestalt* (The Worker: Mastery and Form). Published in 1932, this work quickly became the flagship of Nazi ideology. In an action which is often cited as a deep tie to the National Socialist Party and ideology, Jünger sent a signed copy to Adolph Hitler.¹² Additionally the book's emphasis on the subjugation of individual needs before the state proved a dramatic depiction of the ideal Nazi citizen. This same superiority of the state, however, has also been as reflective of communist ideology and the

¹² Norbert Dietka, *Ernst Jünger: Vom Weltkrieg zum Weltfrieden, Biographie und Werk Übersicht 1895-1945* (Zürich: Hebsacker Verlag, 1994), 41.

establishment of a soviet government in Russia.¹³ Once again, as with the millions of casualties in World War I, Jünger saw the future of the nation in the sacrifice of the individual for the state.

After the Nazi rise to power in 1933, Ernst Jünger continued to distance himself from the National Socialists. Despite his decision to remain in Germany, in contrast to many other literary figures of the time, Jünger turned down a position with the Deutsche Akademie der Dichtung, arguing that being allied to such an organization would limit his literary potential.¹⁴ In addition his four major works from this period became increasingly blatant in their criticism of the Third Reich and its methods. Focusing on his four major publications during this period, *Blätter und Steine* (Leaves and Stones, 1934), *Afrikanische Spiel* (African Games, 1936), *Das Abenteuerliche Herz* (The Adventurous Heart, 1938), and *Auf der Marmorklippen* (On the Marble Cliffs, 1939), chapter two examines Jünger's widening break with the National Socialist party and the life under the Nazi regime which this distance created for him.

It deals with his disillusionment and feelings of increasing alienation, his new glorification of the everyday, and his condemnation of the increasing brutality of the regime, in addition to a refining of his love of battle into a love of struggle only for a just cause. While scholars typically accept that Jünger's later novel, *Auf der Marmorklippen*, is a flagrant assault on the Nazi regime, opinions vary about the importance and centrality of *Afrikanische Spiel*. Many, such as Thomas Nevin, see it as little more than "escapist"; in reality, however, it holds the impressive and dramatic kernels of Jünger's growing

¹³ Wachsmann, "Marching," 587.

¹³ Woods, *Nature*, 255.

ideological transformations.¹⁵ The second half of the inter-war years was a period of dramatic change in Jünger's work, beginning with his first publication, *Blätter und Steine*, still very much in keeping with his earlier works, and ending with *Auf den Marmorklippen*, a dramatic break with the past.

Haunted by increasing Nazi pressure on account of his publications, Jünger sought protection as an officer in the ranks of the Wehrmacht during the Second World War. During these years, Jünger continued to write. The first half of his extensive war journals were first published in 1942, with the full version appearing in 1948. These journals in contrast to those which were published following World War I, were published in their integrity, without the editorial revisions and narrative permutations his previous entries had undergone. Thus in Jünger's narration of World War II, the reader gains a different glimpse into the mind of a man who has seen his dreams perverted and destroyed by the abusive and, as Jünger saw it, plebeian, nationalism of the National Socialists. Thus Chapter four will begin with an examination of and development of these themes introduced during the 1930s, and the changing future which he saw for Germany through his letters and his war journals, as he draws farther from the National Socialists.

By the conclusion of World War II, Jünger had already begun writing his work *Der Friede*, a critical examination of the Second World War, its causes, its effects, and the possibilities left for the future of Europe. With the publication of this work, many find the transformation of Jünger complete. Yet despite the dramatic shift from German Nationalism to Pan-Europeanism, one can see the remnants of Jünger's previous vision. Though his methods have changed, Jünger still sees the positive potential that can result from devastation. While it is a different potential than that which he expected from World

¹⁵ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 150.

War I, it is the image of a transformed Germany. *Der Friede* serves as a fitting closure to an examination of Jünger's relationship to the German nationalist forces through its roots in the transformation of his ideology over the previous thirty years. With this work, Jünger attempted to find a pathway into the newly created German Federal Republic, making sense of a past that was less than clear. Chapter four will conclude with an examination of this definitive work.

Ernst Jünger was a man with a complex history. His ideology during the 1920s places him closer to the National Socialist camp than is today acceptable; however, this thesis attempts to address the importance of those disparities which existed and to create a coherent and unifying thread through the complex growth that characterizes his writing. The importance of his hope for a transformed Germany appears in all of his writing, from the violently nationalistic works of the early 1920s to his *Der Friede*. From the nationalistic vision which he saw fused in the violent battles of World War I to the cultural hope which he painted in *Auf der Marmorlippen*, Jünger carries on an ever transforming, ever adapting vision for his world.

II. Chapter I

The Nuances of Nationalism: The 1920s

As World War I drew to a close, Europe was forced to fashion a new community out of the shambles. The world which was created was for many of the returning German veterans entirely unfamiliar. It was a society ravaged by the destruction of World War I, a society in which the military values that had been ingrained in them meant nothing, a society with a new liberal government. For those who had fought and suffered for the old regime, the new world appeared antagonistic and strange, and with the signing of the Versailles Treaty, countless of these men considered themselves personally betrayed. The German government had denounced that which their fellow soldiers had died for. Ernst Jünger opened his 1926 article “Schliesst Euch Zusammen” (Unite Yourselves) with the words: “We the soldiers from yesterday, today and tomorrow find ourselves in a time in which we see everything that we believed in and that for which countless of us died sink into the abyss of wretchedness.”¹⁶ Their world had disappeared, replaced by a strange and altered reality. In letters written to his brother during this period, Jünger expresses his

¹⁶ “Wir, die Krieger von gestern, von heute und von morgern haben uns gefunden in einer Zeit, in der alles, woran wir geglaubt und wofür wir Unzählige sterben sehen hatten, im Abgrunde der Erbärmlichkeit zu versinken schien.“ Ernst Jünger, “Schliesst Euch Zusammen!“ in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 216.

struggle to make sense of a world which was overwhelmingly foreign.¹⁷ The Nationalist Movement would come to provide this purpose for both Jünger as well as countless other young veterans.

Jünger would become increasingly prominent in this movement throughout the 1920s. As illustrated by Helmut Kaiser's stance, Jünger's prolific essays from this time period have caused many to label Ernst Jünger as a fascist sympathizer. While one might be able to draw connections between Jünger's staunch faith in the power of a strong government and the model of Italian fascism, using these works of the 1920s to identify Jünger with the drastically divergent Nazism is more questionable, for juxtaposed with Jünger's respect for the early revolutionary spirit of the NSDAP, as early as the mid-20s one finds criticism of the party in his work. One must examine both the parallels with and divergences from Nazi politics in Jünger's conservatism. Paramount among the determining issues similarities such as the centrality of the German people, a revitalized German state, antipathy towards the Republic, as well as differences including relations with the socialists and communists, his stance on the "Jewish Question," and the road to Nationalist power.

It is important, however, to first understand the divisions inherent in the Nationalist Movement before attempting to comprehend Jünger's complex position therein. Armin Mohler analyzed Nationalist disunity by subdividing the "Conservative Revolution," into five subsets: the "völkischen," which consisted primarily of mass movements focusing on the German people; the "Bundischen," or organized, which was made up of organizations such as the youth and veteran associations of the 1920s; the "Jungkonservativen," or Young Conservatives embodied in the figure of Moeller von der

¹⁷ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 79.

Brucks; the “Landvolkbewegung,” the peoples land movements; and the “Nationalrevolutionäre,” the circle which formed around Ernst Jünger and his colleagues.¹⁸ These groups were themselves then divided into still smaller subsets; yet when taken as a whole, these groups were classified as the Nationalist Movement. Despite their divisions the right wing groups saw themselves as united in their vision for the future. The circle around Jünger, due to their prolific writings, quickly became influential voices in the Nationalist movement, and in 1926, Ernst Jünger wrote two articles which attempted to create a sense of unity amid this divided community.

In these two articles the first published on June 3, 1926, the second a month later, Jünger attempted to define the nature and task of the movement. He writes that they must set the example for the German masses. They must remain ready for the appearance of the new state.¹⁹ In his second article, Jünger elaborates that goal that drives all of the factions. While he acknowledges the inherent difficulties in creating a movement unified by a collective bureaucracy, he writes: “We possess a unified goal, indeed no goal with a set program, but a goal still, that is written clearly in the heart of every individual.”²⁰ He warns the nationalists in his article “Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen” (The New Type of German) that they can not “lose sight of the goal.”²¹ They must rise above their differences in the name of the vision. In yet another article, Jünger eloquently verbalizes the driving ideology which unites the Nationalists: “We do not believe in a universal morality. We do not believe in humanity as a collective conscience and a unified right

¹⁸ Marjatta Hietala, *Der neue Nationalismus*, 98.

¹⁹ Ernst Jünger, “Schliesst Euch Zusammen!,” 221.

²⁰ Wir besitzen ein gemeinsames Ziel, kein Ziel zwar, das programmatisch umrissen, aber doch eins, das klar in das Herz eines jeden geschrieben ist. . . .” Ernst Jünger, “Schliesst Euch Zusammen! Schlusswort,” in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 2001), 223.

²¹ Ernst Jünger, “Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen,” in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 171.

and morality through time, space, and blood. We believe in the worth of the unique.”²² Having acknowledged the divisions inherent in the Nationalist movement of the 1920s, it is most logical to begin any examination of Ernst Jünger and the National Socialists with an examination of this factor, seen by Jünger as the unifying characteristic of all Nationalist movements; this faith in the special and individual quality of the German people and community. The Nationalist movement shared a common goal; yet each faction felt strongly and divergently about the means which ought to be employed to achieve Nationalist power.

It is also important to be aware of these forces that drove these men to try to transform their world. From the perspective of Jünger and the nationalists, Weimar had betrayed all of those values that had become so central to their world at the front. For these men, with the signing of the Versailles treaty, the Republic renounced any claim to legitimacy. Gregor Strasser’s venomous depiction of the Versailles Treaty in his address to the Reichstag in October of 1930 embodies the bitterness felt by many Germans at the terms of this document. Strasser vehemently declared: “The treaty of Versailles is, first of all, based on error and violence; it secondly, therefore, leads to insoluble conflicts; thirdly it is a notoriously unrealizable treaty and is even in its basis immoral.”²³ For Strasser—like so many of his contemporaries—the treaty placed undue blame for the war upon Germany; he claimed that this “error” upon which the treaty was based and the repercussions, such as the occupation of the Rheinland, seizure of territories from Germany, and the hefty reparations payments, which it enabled, resulted in what he

²² Quoted in Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 52.

²³ Gregor Strasser, “The Nature and Aim of the National Socialist Idea,” in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Pres, 1978), 128.

believed to be an “insoluble conflict.” Even Thomas Mann, an out-spoken opponent of National Socialism, spoke out in condemnation of the peace agreement, stating that such a peace was extremely fragile.²⁴

With humiliation and degradation so close to home, the literature of the 1920s became increasingly political. A new German Nationalism had found its origin in the First World War, and nearly every political group had incorporated the newly influential word “national” into its name. For many, the Weimar Republic did not reflect this new spirit of the people.²⁵ They claimed that it was established not upon a legitimate claim to a republic, but, as Christian Graf von Krockow argued, almost solely in order to *avoid* authoritarianism.²⁶ For Jünger, Weimar was the opposite of the Nationalist ideal: it was weak. Without emotional and patriotic allegiance, Weimar was unable to muster strong support amid the economic crisis in which the country now found itself, which the Nationalists eagerly blamed this upon the new republic as well.²⁷

Yet the greatest crime of the new Republic was that of “internationalism.” In the invigorated nationalistic spirit of the times, internationalism was a mortal sin. Nationalists criticized the dependence of the Weimar government upon the western powers, declaring that internationalism eroded the power of the German union. In all segments of the Nationalist movement there had been an effort to prevent what Oswald

²⁴ Thomas Mann, “Dieser Friede,” in *Gesammelte Werke in Dreizehn Bänden: Reden und Aufsätze* 12 (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1960), 842.

²⁵ Günter Hartung, *Literatur und Ästhetik des Deutschen Faschismus* (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1984), 63; Heide Gerstenberger, *Der Revolutionäre Konservatismus: Ein Beitrag zur Analyse des Liberalismus* (Berlin: Panker und Humbolt, 1969), 18.

²⁶ Christian Graf von Krockow, *Die Entscheidung: Eine Untersuchung über Ernst Jünger, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 1990), 41.

²⁷ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 58.

Spengler termed the “decline of the west,” and Weimar by turning to external forces over German strength, was drawing it ever closer.²⁸

Weimar, for Jünger, stood for the bourgeoisie, that power that he tried throughout his political existence to fight. *Der Arbeiter* (The Worker), published in 1932, was Jünger’s explicit condemnation of the bourgeoisie for what he felt was their role in Germany’s World War I defeat. The criticism in this full length work was an expansion of opinions apparent many years earlier. In his 1927 article, “Die Antinationalen Mächte,” (The Antinational Powers) Jünger accused the Weimar state and those forces that supported it of undermining the German blood community, glorifying instead the individual and international cooperation. For those forces that supported the republic, he coins the term: the “anti-national” powers. Jünger applauds the cry of Herr Oberst Hierl of the Tannenberg-Bundes, when he shouts: “We hate the liberal state!”²⁹ In this cry is embodied the emotions of the German Nationalists of 1920s.

This abject hatred of Weimar was a basic unifying tenant shared by Jünger and the National Socialists. In “The Folkish Idea of State,” Alfred Rosenberg declares:

There was no glorification of the creative powers of a man
or of a people, which in the desire to create something new
storms against all obstacles, but there were only rootless
abstract conceptions like humanity, the brotherhood of
man, and other nice things.³⁰

²⁸ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 58; Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 63.

²⁹ “Wir hassen den liberalen Staat!” Ernst Jünger, “Die Antinationalen Mächte,” in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 294.

³⁰ Alfred Rosenberg, “The Folkish Idea of State,” in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Pres, 1978), 67.

This virulent judgment on the Weimar regime can leave no doubt of Rosenberg's disdain. One can not help but be struck by the derision in Rosenberg's tone. These "nice things" are not what a country ought to devote itself to but instead, it should further the ability of a people to grow and to develop. In Rosenberg's opinion, a democracy with its emphasis upon equality, not hierarchy, can never draw the "best" from society, only a mediocre hodge-podge. Gregor Strasser expresses similar, more general dislike of the liberal state in his writing "From Revolt to Revolution." He writes of the revolution of 1918 saying: "We hate that day and we despise its supporters, just as we hate its fruit and the present state."³¹

Neither Jünger nor the National Socialists wanted an equal society such as that created by Weimar. Both the idea of equality under the law, and scorned the thought of defending minorities. They believed only in equality for the German race. Their outlook is easily traceable to the proliferation of the new theories of Eugenics. Over the decades leading up to the 1920s, Eugenics had quickly been gaining momentum as a new "scientific" theory. These theories took the ideas of Darwin and placed them onto trends in human society, creating what became known as Social Darwinism: the theory that in humans, as in other animals, nature, or in this case society, selects for the most advantageous characteristics, causing the weaker of the human species, for the good of all humanity, to die out. The Nationalists embraced this ideal of Social Darwinism in their visualization of the state.³²

Völkish ideology had since its inception rejected the idea of equality. At the heart of the *völkish* movement was the glorification of the German people above all others.

³¹ Gregor Strasser, "From Revolt to Revolution," in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1978), 98.

³² Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 22.

This in itself was incompatible with the ideas of unity, equality and equal opportunity. August Winnig, a prominent *völkisch* author and theologian wrote: “Nature is a many-splendored thing, but one aspect will not be found in nature: equality.”³³ Nor was inequality inherently negative. As the National socialist Otto Strasser would hold forth in his article “National Socialism and the State,” it was the duty of Nationalism and the National Socialists to weed the weak. By purging German society of the weaker and less resilient elements, the entire community would be stronger. Thus one comes to Rosenberg’s belief that republicanism could not, with its emphasis on equality, produce a strong, resilient society. Strasser maintains that the state must be established upon the knowledge that humanity is unequal. It is divided both by nations and races. By intelligence and strength. These “inner inequalities” are what divides the strong *völkisch* people from their inferiors. He condemns the liberal state for attempting to diminish these inequalities and to protect the weak elements in society. National Socialism will not protect these elements, but purge Germany of them. “Thus we oppose to the liberal state of ‘equality of all citizens with equal rights, equal duties,’ the National Socialist state of ‘inequality of all folk comrades, with unequal duties, unequal rights,’ thus creating a new society with new disparities, new relationships—disparities and relationships which are all related to service to the nation.”³⁴ Jünger maintained a similar belief. For him, as for the National Socialists, society is not equal. In his article “Die Totale Mobilmachung” he vehemently condemns the French Revolution and the legacy of equality that it left to the western world. He is repulsed by the idea of democracy and equality of the masses, a fact

³³ George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Gusset and Dunlap, 1964), 263.

³⁴ Otto Strasser, “National Socialism and the State,” in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Pres, 1978), 101.

which would directly influence his Nationalism well into the 1930s.³⁵ These were concepts that only decentralized the power and strength of Germany.

For Jünger, as for the Nazi party, the nation was everything. This striking similarity is nowhere expressed more powerfully and succinctly than in a comparison between the concluding paragraphs of Ernst Jünger's *In Stahlgewittern* (1926 edition) and Otto Strasser's "Fourteen Theses of the German Revolution," published in the *NS-Briefe* in 1929. When one examines these two excerpts the similarities are dramatic. Strasser certainly would have been familiar with Jünger's account of the First World War and the two moved in similar circles, as has been documented by the historian Nikolaus Wachsmann, often exchanging ideas. Both Otto and his brother Gregor contributed to nationalist collections edited by Jünger, and in 1929, the same year as the publication of Strasser's "Fourteen Theses," the Strasser affiliated *NS-Briefe* dedicated an entire issue to Jünger's political thought.³⁶ There can be no argument that Strasser, a prominent, though fringe, National Socialist party member, knew well that work to which his final paragraph contains obvious allusions.

Jünger concludes his 1926 edition of *In Stahlgewittern* with a dedication to those who sacrificed their lives and those of their companions to the First World War. The young former front soldier in Jünger's story can see the second battle which is approaching. Jünger writes: "we...already see before us the turmoil of the new battle in an uncertain light." He is prepared for the continued battle. One observes here Jünger's faith in the key role the front soldier of World War I will play. Strasser expresses an almost identical sentiment. In his closing statement he calls those individuals. They are as

³⁵ Jünger, "Die Totale Mobilmachung," in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 563

³⁶ Wachsmann, "Marching," 584.

Strasser writes, “the chosen ones.” Jünger and Strasser use practically identical terminology when they describe the way in which these “new” men will encounter the fight. Strasser writes:

And for the sake of this nation the German Revolution recoils from no battle, finds no sacrifice too great, no war too bloody, *for Germany must live!* Thus we youths feel the heartbeat of the German Revolution pounding, thus we front soldiers see the face of the near future before us and experience, humble-proud, the role of the chosen ones, to fight to win the battle of the twentieth century, satisfied to see the meaning of the war, the Third Reich.³⁷

While his youth will not “recoil” from this fight, Jünger uses the German word “scheuen,” translated “shrink from, shun.” Even more telling is the adamant declaration of both men that Germany must live. While Ernst Jünger includes an additional prohibition: “Germany should never fall go under?” the implications are identical. Both men conclude their writings with a cry for the defense of the state. Germany must be defended no matter the consequences.³⁸

³⁷ Otto Strasser, “The Fourteen Theses of the German Revolution,” in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1978), 110.

³⁸ Jünger concludes his 1926 edition of *In Stahlgewittern*: “Wir sind inzwischen durch diese Kämpfe geschritten und sehen schon wieder das Getümmel neuer Kämpfe vor uns im ungewissen Licht. Wir—unter diesem wir verstehe ich die geistige und begeisterungsfähige Jugend des Landes—werden sie nicht scheuen. Wir stellen uns vor das Andenken von Toten, die uns heilig sind, und unserem Schutze fühlen wir die wahren, die geistigen Güter des Volkes anvertraut. Wir stehen für das, was sein wird, und für das, was gewesen ist. Wenn auch von außen Gewalt und von innen Barbarei sich in finsternen Wolken zusammenballen,—solange noch im Dunkel die Klängen blitzen und flammen, soll es heißen: Deutschland lebt und Deutschland soll nicht runtergehen!” translated: “Meanwhile we have walked through this fight and already see again before us the turmoil of the new battle in an uncertain light. We—with this ‘we,’ I mean the spiritually and enthusiastically capable youth of the country—will never shun [this fight]. We place before

Alongside these obvious similarities the reader finds two very important differences: differences which characterize two great departures of Jünger from National Socialist ideology. Examining the paragraphs of these two men a second time, one notes Strasser's use of the term "Third Reich." Unlike Jünger, who leaves the nature of the future German state undefined, Otto Strasser uses the term which had been embraced by the Nazi party. One can look at this inclusion both as an attempt to connect the well known echoes of Jünger with the National Socialist movement as well as a telling difference between the two men's compositions. In the passage from 1926 *In Stahlgewittern*, Jünger might just as easily have included this heavily weighted term, however, he chose not to, leaving the conclusion of the struggle which he foresaw without exact parameters. For him the future of Germany is not entirely dependent upon this particular ideology. In addition, Jünger places far more emphasis upon the importance of the veterans and their sacrifice. While Strasser mentions the Front Soldier, Jünger's focus is this individual and the struggle he experienced during the war. He writes: "We place before us the memory of the dead;" while Strasser speaks of the new youth of the country and the future which they hold, the importance of the sacrifices of the veteran is not as apparent. This emphasis on the Front Soldier and the new levels of greatness achieved through his suffering became a primary feature in Jünger's work throughout this period.

His opening to "Schliesst Euch Zusammen," is an expressive depiction of its potential greatness. These men deserve more than to watch their values betrayed and

ourselves the memory of the dead, who are holy to us, and our ??????, entrusted the spiritual good of the people. We stand for that which will be, and for that which has been. If also from outer force and inner barbarism clench themselves in dark clouds,---as long as the swords still flash and blaze, it should mean: Germany lives and Germany should never fall!" Jünger, *In Stahlgewittern*, 283.

destroyed. This pride in the soldier and faith in his ability to carry Germany to the next phase of her development is readily apparent throughout *In Stahlgewittern*. Jünger writes of the “Schule der Gewalt” or the “school of violence” that allowed the soldier of the First World War to refine his dedication to his country. This “school” has taught him discipline and responsibility, and possibly more importantly it has given these soldiers something in their nation worth fighting for: the sacrifice of their comrades.³⁹ Jünger writes: “the idea of the Fatherland was forged ever purer and more brilliant...; the Nation was no longer devoid of symbols of hazy ideas for me, how could it be otherwise, when I had seen so many die and was myself wounded...”⁴⁰

The war had tested these men, it had strengthened them, helped them grow into adulthood. As Thomas Nevin describes it, these soldiers were meant to be above party obligations, separate from the every day battles of the average citizen. It was in fact this resolve which held much of Jünger’s followers together. Without a formal party, it was their experience of the war, their belief in the other’s ability to comprehend the current situation as a soldier which bound them together.⁴¹ Jünger wrote: “But we need...to recognize that we ourselves are entirely and essentially changed and that we still stand in the middle of this transformation.” These men had been altered by their experiences, and for were still not fully changed; they must unite in this metamorphosis. Throughout his publications of the 1920s, Jünger would condemn what he viewed as the greatest failing

³⁹ Jünger, *In Stahlgewittern*, 281.

⁴⁰ “die Idee des Vaterlandes immer reiner und glänzender herausgeschmolzen...; die Nation war für mich nicht mehr ein Leerer, von Symbolen verschleierter Begriff—wie hätte es anders sein können, wo ich so viele dafür hatte sterben sehen und selbst dazu geschult war...” Jünger, *In Stahlgewittern*, 281.

⁴¹ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 85; Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 100.

of the liberal community: that they were unable to see the positive things which could grow from the suffering and destruction of war.⁴²

These two men, however, like the ideologies that they stand for, agree that the new state which is created will be completely different from that which has existed before. This is a point upon which the Nationalists never wavered; there must be a change from the current liberal Weimar state.⁴³ As Jünger describes in his article “Schliesst Euch Zusammen,” the new state will be “a state that is entirely different from Weimar, but also from the old Kaiserreich. It means the modern nationalist State.” Unlike the days of Imperial Germany, the new society will be founded on the German people, but it will revive the idea of a strong central government, in contrast to Weimar: “It will be national. It will be social. It will be strong. It will be authoritatively organized.”⁴⁴ The National Socialist Alfred Rosenberg succinctly agreed with Jünger’s abandonment of that which was and that which had been, when he wrote in similar terms: “We do not want the past any more, we hate the present, we are striving for the future of the German people.”⁴⁵ The demand for a reformed state was something which every faction of the conservative movement desired.

Neither Jünger nor the National Socialists ever doubted their belief in a strong central government. Weimar was seen a failure, a state which could not command the faith or patriotism of the people.⁴⁶ This weakness was intolerable in Germany, and the

⁴² “Aber wir brauchen...um zu erkennen, daß wir selbst uns ganz wesentlich verändert haben und noch mittne in diesen Veränderungen stehen;“ Ernst Jünger, “Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen,” 169; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 89.

⁴³ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 53.

⁴⁴ “...einen Staat, der von dem von Weimar, aber auch von dem alten Kaiserreich durchaus verschieden ist. Es bedeutet den modernen nationalistischen Staat.“ “Er wird national sein. Er wird sozial sein. Er wird wehrhaft sein. Er wird autoritativ gegliedert sein.“ Jünger, “Schliesst Euch Zusammen,” 218.

⁴⁵ Rosenberg, “The Folkish Idea of State,” 61.

⁴⁶ Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 111.

conservatives attempted to create a unifying vision for the country. From early in their existence, the National Socialists had voiced this desire. In the “Program of the NSDAP” which came to be known as the “25 Points,” promulgated in February 1920, the party included a section entitled “The Common Good Before the Individual Good.” Herein stood the statement: “In order to carry out these policies we demand: the creation of a strong central authority in the Reich. The central parliament must have unlimited authority over the entire Reich and all its organizations.”⁴⁷ This demand for a powerful centralized government is hauntingly reminiscent of Jünger’s own demands. For Jünger, strong control and loyalty were central. Roger Woods describes Jünger’s surprising respect and admiration for religion, a reverence that springs from religion’s authority over its members. Unlike the weak state, it is able to wield complete power due to its ability to command based on faith and the security this grants to participants. While Jünger would not wish Nationalism to take on the nature of a religion, something which he views as ideologically constricting, the authoritative nature seems a superb model for a state.⁴⁸

The vision for a state was further shaped by the ideas of geopolitics which flourished during the 1920s. During this period, nations suddenly became organic, entities which must grow as nature intended. From this emphasis sprang the notion of “Lebensraum,” an idea which gained ever greater influence in Germany following the First World War. According to the philosophy of Geopolitics, a nation would expand wherever it found open boundaries and areas. This idea, one which gained popularity under Nazi propaganda, would later be used to justify German expansion in the east: this

⁴⁷ “The Program of the NSDAP,” in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Pres, 1978), 43.

⁴⁸ Woods, *Nature*, 147; Woods, *Nature*, 175.

area was necessary for the German nation.⁴⁹ Otto Strasser expressed this in his article “National Socialism and the State” that the revolution “wants no more and no less than sufficient living space for the young nation of the Germans.”⁵⁰ The state had become a living creation. Hans Golcher compares the state to an organic being. He says that while the word “organism” is typically used to refer to a living body, it can be appropriately applied to a state as well. Just as a living body, the state is composed of many very different and individually intricate structures with varied functions which must work together to create a functional whole.⁵¹

Jünger and his National Socialist contemporaries express this same thought throughout their writings and statements. Jünger wrote in 1926 that “a nation is something that lives, it lives and dies according to natural laws.”⁵² Strasser claims in “National Socialism and the State” that “the nation alone is an organism! The state is not an end in itself, but organization for the nation....”⁵³ It is easy to understand Jünger’s dedication to the growth and strength of the state when one understands the importance of the French nationalist Maurice Barrès on Jünger’s political thought. Barrès, as Jünger later would, emphasized the importance of the trio of “family, soil, nation” as that which determines the quality of an individual. According to Barrès, one is bound by loyalty to the dead, which as we have examined is a unifying feature in Jünger’s ideology and to an activism.⁵⁴ This emphasis on the pride and value of individual Germans was additionally

⁴⁹ Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 25; Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 27.

⁵⁰ Otto Strasser, “National Socialism and the State,” 101.

⁵¹ Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 26.

⁵² “Eine Nation ist etwas Blutmässiges, sie lebt und stirbt nach den organischen Gesetzen;”

Quoted in Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 50.

⁵³ Otto Strasser, “National Socialism and the State,” 101.

⁵⁴ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 90.

a factor that prevented the Conservative Movement from advocating a typical monarchy. Unlike the society of a monarchy, the individual citizens enjoyed great worth.

Many of Jünger's articles in this period represent the Nazis as a force to follow, a symbol of Nationalist military might, and Jünger wrote in his article "Reinheit der Mittel," published 1929 in *Widerstand*, that the NSDAP was at that time the most powerful of the Nationalist forces. He prefaced this, however, by stating that it was only the lack of a unified organization that allowed the NSDAP and the Nationalist movement to cooperate.⁵⁵ Alongside the Nazi power, Jünger recognized many incompatible qualities. It is this emphasis on the division between the Nationalists and the National Socialists that is most important to acknowledge when assessing Ernst Jünger's relationship to the NSDAP.

In the first of his two "Schliesst Euch Zusammen!" articles, Jünger urged the nationalist groups to create a unified voice and to establish a central headquarters. He declares the in order for the nationalist movement to succeed and maintain its integrity, it must "establish a united front" and locate a leader who might "watch over the purity and strength of the movement."⁵⁶ This article elicited responses from all camps of the Nationalist movement; many such as Constantin Hierdl, speaking for the Ludendorff Kreis and the Tannenberg-Bund (a segment of the Landvolkbewegung), wrote in support of Jünger's call for unity, declaring that it was indeed necessary. Unlike Jünger, however,

⁵⁵ Ernst Jünger, "Reinheit der Mittel," in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 515.

⁵⁶ "...eine gemeinsame Front geschaffen werden." "...der über Reinheit und Schärfe der Bewegung wacht" Ernst Jünger, "Schliesst Euch Zusammen!" 221.

Hierdl desired an ideological unification around the growing anti-Semitic feelings in the movement.⁵⁷

Throughout both of his two articles, however, Jünger references the German leader upon whom the nationalist movement waits. He writes: “The second primary question, that must undoubtedly be addressed, is the question of the central leadership.” This is a question, which for Jünger will consistently prove a sticking point. It is a point which is addressed in many of his articles, these two in 1925, as well as his article “Die Zwei Tyrannen” (The Two Tyrants, 1927).⁵⁸ While it is known that Jünger attended a speech of Adolph Hitler in 1923 and was significantly impressed, he continues to leave the position of this powerful nationalist leader open to interpretation.⁵⁹ In fact in his 1925 article, he goes so far as to say: “We still are not aware, whether we possess a man who is so gripped by the Idea, that he might unite all interests in his hands. But we do unfortunately know, that there is no man, who by wide recognition, must assume this position.”⁶⁰ One must undoubtedly read this as a critique of Hitler. Though he is increasingly in prominence, his calling to guide the movement and eventually the nation is still uncertain for Jünger.

The title of Strasser’s work, “From Revolt to Revolution,” exemplifies the conclusion that these men drew from the hatred of Weimar. They were guided by a longing for a strong German state with the freedom to grow, and the ideals of the First World War: Revolution. Each Nationalist nurtured a vision of a new German state. This

⁵⁷ Roger Woods, *Nature*, 160.

⁵⁸ “Die zweite Hauptfrage, die unbedingt zu lösen ist, ist die Frage der zentralen Führerschaft.“ Jünger, “Schliess Euch Zusammen,” 221.

⁵⁹ Wachsmann, “Marching,” 577.

⁶⁰ “Wir wissen heute noch nicht, ob wir einen Mann besitzen, der so ergriffen ist von der Idee, daß man alle Interessen in seiner Faust vereinigen könnte. Aber wir wissen leider, daß es noch keinen Mann gibt, der über die weite Anerkennung verfügt, die zu diesem Amte erforderlich ist.“ Ernst Jünger, “Schliesst Euch Zusammen!,” 221.

theme goes back to the concluding chapters of Otto Strasser's "Fourteen Theses," and Ernst Jünger's *In Stahlgewittern*. Both men were certain that there would be another fight. For these men, the revolution of 1918 was no true revolution, but instead as Jünger would argue in "Schliesst Euch Zusammen" only the first half of the true transformation of Germany. Jünger emphasizes the importance of a violent overthrow of the existing system. In both the second article to the "Schliesst Euch Zusammen" series and his article "Reinheit der Mittel" (Purity of the Means) he argues that one can not rid oneself of the Republic, if one utilizes its means. One can not gain freedom for Germany and be rid of those elements which he sees as destructive by following the rules established by the Republic. He writes: "and if we want to truly drive out the bourgeoisie, it can not occur through bourgeoisie means."⁶¹ Reason is for Jünger a quality of the republic, thus his movement must be one of action and impulse; the greatest danger for the revolution is stagnation.⁶²

This desire for revolution is yet another major characteristic of Jünger and the Nationalists. The writings of Nazi party members express sentiments similar to those made by Jünger in praise of violence and revolution, in fact, this early revolutionary quality was greatly respected by Jünger. The Nazis were not simply waiting for change to happen, they were initiating it, or so Jünger believed in the early 1920s.⁶³ Throughout the writings of the National Socialists, one finds the idea that in the twentieth century one is on the brink of a great transformation. Otto Strasser writes in his "Fourteen Theses" of the changes which will occur for Germany and the world as "that mighty revolution of

⁶¹ "...und wollen wir wirklich das Bürgerliche austreiben, so darf das doch nicht mit bürgerlichen Mitteln geschehen." Ernst Jünger, "Reinheit der Mittel," 515.

⁶² Woods, *Nature*, 196; Jünger, "Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen," 170.

⁶³ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 122.

the twentieth century, of which the 'World War' was only the first act."⁶⁴ Rosenberg records a similar view:

Today is again a turning point in the history of the world. At the beginning of the sixteenth century one began in Europe, at the end of the eighteenth century another set in; at the beginning of the twentieth is again decline and rebirth.⁶⁵

Like Jünger, Rosenberg acknowledges not only that transformation will occur, but through his mention of the "decline and rebirth" alludes to growth from the First World War.

Jünger goes so far as to imply at times that perhaps it was better that Germany lost; from this disappointment and suffering they had grown stronger. In 1914 they were not yet ready to carry out their destiny, but for Jünger, the National Socialists, and the other fragments of the Nationalist movement, the time was quickly approaching.⁶⁶ It was the desire for this realization of the potential of the German state that the Nationalist forces strove towards through the decade of the 1920s. Ernst Jünger put this desire, a desire which would bind his reputation to the National Socialists for years to come, forcefully and succinctly when he wrote: "We want the German state, and we want it powerful."⁶⁷

This revolutionary spirit had defined the Nationalist forces from the beginning. The Völkish movement, which had existed well into the 19th century, and in which the

⁶⁴ Otto Strasser, "The Fourteen Theses of the German Revolution," 106.

⁶⁵ Rosenberg, "The Folkish Idea of State," 173.

⁶⁶ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 60.

⁶⁷ "Wir wollen das Deutsche, und wir wollen es mit Macht." Ernst Jünger, "Schliesst Euch Zusammen," 219.

conservative Nationalists of the 1920s found their foundations, had always been dedicated to the ideals of militancy and revolution. These groups condemned parliamentary government for its taming of the revolutionary spirit, and strove to discourage their members from involvement in the increasing number of political parties, a ban which influenced the *völkische* bourgeois as well.⁶⁸ This dedication to extra-political means, carried through into the Nationalist movements of the 1920s, encouraged by the military mentality which remained after World War I. The Stahlhelm, the World War I veteran's league established during the Weimar, had itself been founded upon the premise of political neutrality and a certain superiority to political involvement.⁶⁹ Nor was Stahlhelm the only military organization during this time period; there existed in addition the Freikorps and following the disbanding of this organization based upon its revolutionary nature, a multitude of new "Wehrverbänden" were established.⁷⁰ These groups reflected Jünger's belief in the responsibility of veterans to spread the military values which they had imbibed, throughout the society, as he elaborated in his article "Der Neue Type des Deutschen Menschen."⁷¹

The decision of the National Socialists to take part in the parliamentary government, however, disrupted this long standing tradition. Their involvement overthrew that which the *völkische* movement had declared for decades. It was this decision to partake in the party politics of the Weimar republic which drove Ernst Jünger irretrievably away from the NSDAP. As early as the "Twenty-Five Points," one can see concessions to the main stream parties and populace in the emphasis upon education and

⁶⁸ Mosse, *Crisis*, 283.

⁶⁹ Mosse, *Crisis*, 255.

⁷⁰ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 97.

⁷¹ Jünger, "Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen," 172.

religion.⁷² With the alliance of the NSDAP and the traditional German Conservative party, the Deutsche National Volkspartei in 1929, this separation from the greater revolutionary right, including Jünger, was dramatically widened. By the end of the 1920s, Adolph Hitler himself had preached the need for widening the appeal of the National Socialist movement. They must renounce a portion of their revolutionary zeal if they were to engage the average German. He began to distance himself and his followers from the Landvolksbewegung and similar people's movements, going so far as to denounce revolts and offer rewards for the denunciation of those who had participated.⁷³ Gregor Strasser's speech to the Reichstag on October 17, 1930, upon the significant Nazi increase of power in parliament, succinctly explains the new image that the National Socialists desired in their agreement to participate in the government to present. Strasser stated: "We want no war for we know that Europe and the world can only recuperate when the leading civilized peoples of earlier times have themselves recuperated."⁷⁴ This statement was a far cry from those words of his brother Otto in his "Fourteen Theses." This conciliatory, patient tone contrasts drastically with the other Strasser's references to the young soldiers of the First World War and their preparedness for further conflict. While he does continue on to say that Germany will not shun a fight if it presents itself, this is a very different mentality than the party had previously espoused. This force which had previously been fighting for an overthrow of the weak and impotent system now claimed: "We National Socialists want no reaction but recovery. We want no planless

⁷² Lane, Barbara Miller and Leila J. Rupp. *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978, 40.

⁷³ Wachsmann, "Marching," 583.

⁷⁴ Gregor Strasser "The Nature and Aim of the National Socialist Idea," 101.

revolution, but reorganization instead of disintegration and anarchy.”⁷⁵ The NSDAP had diverged from the adamantly anti-party politics of their precursors.

Many conservative figures, including the left wing of the Nazi party itself, who supported the grassroots *Landvolksbewegung*,⁷⁶ condemned this move into the mainstream of the parliamentary establishment. Ernst Jünger was not hesitant to voice his disappointment, and his article “Reinheit der Mittel” was almost entirely dedicated to emphasizing the importance of maintaining the fundamental Conservative Nationalist ideals of revolution and the overthrow of the republic. He wrote: “Every friend of the National Socialist Party must be disappointed at their decision to take part in the new national referendum.”⁷⁷ Throughout his writing Jünger had emphasized the dangers of falling into the parliamentary structure. In his article “Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen,” he describes the acceptance of the republican structure as the greatest danger of the nationalist movement; they must focus on the “dynamic power of the times” in order to triumph.⁷⁸ The NSDAP has lost its touch with the ideas, according to Jünger and must reintegrate these focal issues, not party politics, into their vision. While he continues to wish the National Socialists success and triumph, he continually reiterates his dismay at the methods which they have chosen. Although they might attempt to transform politics without struggle, there will be no transformation of the people. This divergence of opinions will widen as the 1920s come to a close.

His disappointment in the medium of the National Socialists is symbolic of the growing rift between Jünger and this powerful nationalist party. During the 1920s Jünger

⁷⁵ Gregor Strasser, “The Nature and Aim of the National Socialist Idea,” 127.

⁷⁶ Wachsmann, “Marching,” 583.

⁷⁷ Jünger, “Reinheit der Mittel,” 516.

⁷⁸ Jünger, “Der Neue Typ des Deutschen Menschen,” 170.

had often found himself interacting closely with the NSDAP, moving in the same circles as the Strasser brothers and Joseph Goebbels, the future Nazi Minister of Propaganda under the Third Reich. If these passing connections were not proof enough, Jünger dedicated a 1925 copy of his book *Feuer und Blut* (Fire and Blood, 1925) to Adolph Hitler,⁷⁹ and went on in the response to his article of the same year, “Schliess Euch Zusammen:” “There are no bands of fighters who are as central to Nationalism as the *Bünde* and the National Socialists. Whoever wishes to strengthen this organization, built up with love, vigor, and self-sacrifice, to strengthen its position, and to diminish the areas of friction at the same time, does Nationalism the greatest service by empowering those organizations which will serve the ideas.”⁸⁰ From this excerpt one observes that in 1925, Jünger still believed that the power of the National Socialists would be turned to fulfill the goals of all of the Nationalist powers; in his article “Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus” (Nationalism and National Socialism) of the year 1927, Jünger affirms the early visibility of this power in the ability of the NSDAP to survive the defeat during the putsch of 1923⁸¹. As the traditional parliamentary conservative parties would later believe, it appears that Jünger felt that the NSDAP would serve the Conservative Nationalists, while in actuality the situation would play itself out quite differently. In these early years, however, Jünger had not yet entirely made the distinction between the emphasis of Hitler’s conservatism, and in his political essays he continually heralded the

⁷⁹ Wachsmann, “Marching,” 581.

⁸⁰ “Es gibt aber heute keine Kampftruppe, die für den Nationalismus in Frage kommt, als die Bünde und die Nationalsozialisten. Wer diese, mit Liebe, Tatkraft und Opferwillen aufgebauten Organisationen in sich zu stärken, ihre Haltung zu verschärfen und ihre Reibungsflächen zu verringern sucht, der leistet zugleich dem Nationalismus den besten Dienst, in dem er die Organe kräftigt, deren sich die Idee bedienen wird;“ Jünger, “Schliess Euch Zusammen, Schlusswort,” 228.

⁸¹ Ernst Jünger, “Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus,” in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 318.

power of the National Socialists and the integral place which they held in the Nationalist realm.

Jünger's respect for the National Socialist powers during this early time period was far from one-sided. His work *In Stahlgewittern* was applauded by the National Socialists as a major German work, one which embodied the proud spirit of the German military man and his ideals. Joseph Goebbels in particular was taken with Jünger and his intensely proud and nationalistic work. Numerous references to this young soldier and political author appear in Goebbels own journals. On January 1, 1926 he writes: "I am reading: Ernst Jünger *In Stahlgewittern*. The gospel of the war. Awfully momentous!"⁸² This awe remains for many years, and as his reading of Jünger's narration of the First World War come to a close, his praise continues. "A man from the young Generation has seized the word of the deep, soul-touching events of the war, and voices the wonder of the inner account. A great book. A true man stands behind it."⁸³ Goebbels records conversations with others in the Nationalist movement in which he inquires after Jünger. This man, who was the author of what he regards as the greatest of German war novels, fascinates him. Continually he attempts, albeit unsuccessfully, to draw him further into the National Socialist camp.

This infatuation, however, fades as Jünger's criticism intensifies. Goebbels, as with the majority of the National Socialist figures, begins to give up hope of pulling this Nationalist further under their influence. It is Jünger's blatant criticism of the National Socialist decision to join in with the parliamentary politics, in such works as "Reinheit

⁸² Joseph Goebbels, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*. ed. Elke Fröhlich I (II) (Munich: K.G. Sauer, 2004), 45.

⁸³ "Einer aus der jungen Generation ergreift das Wort über das tiefe seelische Ereignis Krieg und verrichtet Wunder innerer Darstellung. Ein großes Buch. Dahinter steht ein ganzer Kerl;" Goebbels, I (II), 47.

der Mittel” and “Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus,” that drives Goebbels to write such statements as that written on April 4, 1929: “We spoke about the ‘New Nationalism,’ that is slowly developing into simple literature. It is too bad about Jünger. But when a political mind no longer finds its nourishment in the people, in the masses, in the Organization, then slowly he must wither away.”⁸⁴ Throughout this year a number of other references to the lost mind of Jünger appear, particularly in reference to the publication of the 1929 edition of *Das Abenteuerliche Herz*, a work which in his estimation is simply a literary creation devoid of any meaning. He writes: “Jünger is developing ever more into a literati. Pleasure in the language. Where is the thought behind it?”⁸⁵ A month later he continues in this vein, bemoaning the fact that the man who wrote *In Stahlgewittern*, could have, in his opinion fallen so far into the purely literary. Slowly Jünger was slipping away from the National Socialists.

Parliamentarianism was not the only issue that stood between Jünger and the National Socialists. There were other, more ideological disagreements which existed from the outset; as the National Socialist became more politically influential, however, these differences became more problematic, and Jünger could no longer ignore the increasingly delineated rift in his relations with this powerful faction. The two major factors upon which the two diverged were the Jewish community and the place of communists in the new society.

As established, Jünger was no proponent of social equality. Like the National Socialists he supported the idea of Social Darwinism, a concept that his glorification of

⁸⁴ “Wir sprach über den ‘Neuen Nationalismus,’ der langsam zum Literatum entartet. Es ist schade um Jünger. Aber wenn ein politischer Kopf keine Nahrung mehr aus dem Volk, aus der Masse, aus einer Organisation zieht, dann muß er allmählich verwelken;“ Joseph Goebbels, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*. ed. Elke Fröhlich I (III) (Munich: K.G. Sauer, 2004), 219.

⁸⁵ Goebbels, I (III), 336.

the results of the First World War dramatically illustrates. One would believe the logical consequence of this glorification of inequality to be prejudice and racism, and indeed this is a factor that became infamously apparent in the National Socialist doctrine. Arthur Moeller pursued this idea when he wrote about the place of the German race in the world. They were the upper most of the races, and all other s would be arranged around them. With assertions such as this, the virulent racism which accompanied the patriotism and nationalism of Germany is little surprise. Following World War I, just as the word “national” was prevalent in the names of all groups, anti-Semitism was present in the ideology. *Völkische* ideology had always integrated this prejudice into its mentality, and the severe nationalism of the 1920s and groups such as the National Socialist simply exacerbated this ready present quality. The nature of this prejudice that arguably made it all the more dangerous is the ideological shape it acquired. German Jews had become extremely assimilated, thus this prejudice was not aimed at any outward difference, but instead focused on a more spiritual and ideological foundation. The conservatives accused the Jews not only of difference, but also of standing for all that they opposed: liberalism, individualism, capitalism, freedom, equality.⁸⁶

Jünger would fail to make this segue from the inequality of humanity to the central danger of the Jewish community to the German state. While one could under no circumstances term him a great defender of the Jewish community, one can also not classify him as an adamant anti-Semite. Through his writings runs a consistent reminder that the greatest danger to the health of the German people and nation is not the Jewish community, but rather the liberal state. Glorification of the German race must not

⁸⁶ Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 62; Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 110; Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 63.

necessarily exclude other groups. There was not a scientific racism; the glorification of the irrational inherent in their beliefs precluded this, but a prejudice of the spirit. If an individual or group proved themselves to be “un-German” then they ought to be eradicated; yet, conversely, in one could prove oneself a friend of the German state and people, regardless of race no reason existed for isolation.⁸⁷

Jünger as with the majority of the German population at this time, did place importance upon the “German blood.” In his essay “Neue Typ der Deutschen Mensch,” he employs terms such as “biological sense;” and during the early 1920s he published in a number of anti-Semitic journals, including the *Völkische Beobachter* and *Deutsches Volkstum*.⁸⁸ Yet the full force of the racism of the National Socialists he found plebian, considering it common and simply an appeal to the least common denominator.⁸⁹

Thus he focused his standard for German upon the ideals of conduct and strong spirit, not those of blood and race. He emphasized this principle in his 1926 article “Gross-Stadt und Land,” (Cities and Country, 1926) in which he discussed the relationship of the German people to the land. He writes: “On the other hand, for the new Nationalism, the blood is not primarily biological, as for ‘Land,’ but on the contrary a primarily metaphysical idea.”⁹⁰ As Thomas Nevin emphasizes, for Jünger the German blood “is not biological it is a peculiar compound of the historical and metaphysical.” He goes on to argue that Jünger held an exceptionally assimilationist view of Jews, and since

⁸⁷ Gerstenberger, *Revolutionäre*, 61.

⁸⁸ Ernst Jünger, “Neue Typ der Deutschen Menschen,” 171; Wachsmann, “Marching,” 80.

⁸⁹ Kaiser, *Mythos*, 153.

⁹⁰ Ernst Jünger, “Gross-Stadt und Land,” in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 233.

he viewed them as themselves an enemy of the bourgeois republicanism, he saw them as a natural ally of the Nationalist movement.⁹¹

His emphasis upon a pure spirit then logically leads into his desire not to subjugate the Jews, but to undermine the Weimar state, which was supported by weak, ineffective liberals. He felt that with the fall of the liberal state, all enemies of Nationalism would fall as well. “Die Antinationalen Mächte” focuses on this idea. “The battle against the anti-nationalist powers cannot be separated and fought within the framework of the existing state, because their greatest support is currently the liberal state. The root of the evil must be purged; then, her shoots will also die.”⁹² The republic had permeated everything, causing other forces which fought against the German people to grow, giving them strength and meaning which they otherwise might not have. He continues to state: “We are not of the opinion that the German question is contained in the Jewish question.”⁹³ It is not solely the Jewish community that threatens Germany. In 1930 he published the article “Über Nationalismus und Judenfrage,” an article that addressed his own opinions on the “Jewish Question.” In this work he recorded: “But the Jew is not the father of Liberalism, he is the son, he can play no creative role in what the life of the German people will meet, neither good nor bad.”⁹⁴ For Jünger the power of the Jew is not great enough to threaten the will of a true German spirit whether for better or

⁹¹Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 94; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 110.

⁹² “Der Kampf gegen die antinationalen Mächte kann nicht abgesondert und im Rahmen des augenblicklichen Staates geführt werden, denn ihr größter Halt ist gerade die liberalistische Staat. Die Wurzel des Übels muß heraus, dann sterben auch ihre Schößlinge ab;“ Ernst Jünger, “Die Antinationalen Mächte,” 295-296.

⁹³ “Wir sind nicht der Ansicht, daß sich die deutsche Frage in der Judenfrage erschöpft;“ Ernst Jünger, “Die Antinationalen Mächte,” 295.

⁹⁴ “Der Jude aber ist nicht der Vater, er ist der Sohn des Liberalismus, wie er überhaupt in nichts, was das deutsche Leben anbetrifft, weder im Guten noch im Bösen, eine schöpferische Rolle spielen kann.“ Ernst Jünger, “Über Nationalismus und Judenfrage,” in *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik 1919 bis 1933*, ed. Sven Olaf Berggötz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 590.

worse. If the German community can come together in a world that is true to the German *Volk* then they need not worry about any subversive power of the Jews. He continues on in this essay to elaborate this fact, stating that by acknowledging the power of the statement “there is a fatherland, that is named Germany,” the German people will triumph over whatever evil they might feel the Jewish community capable of.⁹⁵ While Jünger’s writing is in no way defensive of the anti-Semitic attacks upon the German Jewish world, it is unavoidable that his brand of prejudice is quite different than that which one finds in the National Socialist ideology.

The National Socialists practice a far more virulent form of anti-Semitism. While Jünger argues that once the state which supports the Jewish community has been toppled, they too will be impotent to harm the German state, the National Socialists see the Jews as a threatening force that knows no bounds. They will not wither when the state crumples, but will outlive it continuing to dangerously infiltrate the German *Volk*. Despite the rare comment, such as Joseph Goebbels references in his article “The Radicalizing of Socialism,” in which he implies that the Jewish question is not of utmost importance to the NSDAP, the majority of Nazi literature at this time was adamant in the importance of neutralizing of the Jewish threat. As early as 1920 in the publication of the “Program of the NSDAP,” they make it clear that Jews would have no place in a National Socialist society. Point four reads: “Only he who is a folk comrade can be a citizen. Only he who is of German blood, regardless of his church, can be a folk comrade. No Jew, therefore, can be a folk comrade.” It goes on to state that in addition no individual who is not a *volk* comrade may contribute to German newspapers, automatically, on the basis of

⁹⁵ “...es ein Vaterland gibt, daß Deutschland heißt;“ Ernst Jünger, “Über Nationalismus und Judenfrage,” 591.

point four, excluding Jews.⁹⁶ With such a foundation to build on, the later writings of National Socialists are filled with anti-Semitic statements. Joseph Goebbels writes in his article of 1925, “National Socialist or Bolshevism,” that “the more the Russian peasant hates the Jew, especially the Soviet Jew, the more passionately is he a follower of agrarian reform, the more ardently does he love his country, his land and his soil.”⁹⁷ Thus is anti-Semitism intricately tied to patriotism and the love of one’s homeland. The peasant is led to believe that if he or she does not subscribe to the tenants of anti-Semitism, they do not truly love that land that nourishes them. Otto Strasser reinforces this mentality when he writes in “National Socialism and the State,” that “the German revolution sees this task as the full development of the unique folkish character and therefore fights with every means against racial degeneration or foreign influence in culture, and for folkish renewal and purity for German culture.”⁹⁸ Only by attempting to purify the German nation can one truly be a part of the German *volk*. Anti-Semitism is a foundation of the National Socialist mentality. It is a defining factor for the German individual. Very unlike Jünger, it is this racism which defines a true German nationalist, not simply his support of a strong German state and people

In addition to Jünger’s disagreement with the National Socialists over the centrality of the Jewish question to Nationalist goals, he differed from the mainstream segments of the NSDAP on the question of communism. The majority of the National Socialist party condemned communism as an evil which undermined and corrupted the German community. It was the habit of the Nazis to emphasize not those groups favorable

⁹⁶ “The Program of the NSDAP,” 41.

⁹⁷ Joseph Goebbels, “National Socialism or Bolshevism.” in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1978), 76.

⁹⁸ Otto Strasser, “National Socialism and the State,” 109.

to the movement, nor those who might strengthen it, but instead their enemies. One of these was the communists. They preyed on the minds of the German population by parading before them images of mass murder, chaos and complete destruction of personal property, as in the article of Heinrich Himmler, "Farmer, Wake Up!," published in 1926. Himmler elaborates on the lies to which the German farmer has fallen victim. According to him, they have been cheated of their capital by the Communists and the Jews and now lie in danger of falling into the abyss that is Bolshevism. Himmler writes: "The way that Germany, that you as a farmer, have been going so far will lead further into the depths, in to a misery which is called Bolshevism, as in Russia, and that means: mass murder and starvation in town and country, robbery and expropriation of your farms and your soil."⁹⁹ Himmler does not hesitate to call upon the images which the German people fear most when trying to terrify them into compliance. If they fall into the ways of Bolshevism, they will experience mass chaos. The perfect order of their universe will be destroyed and that which ought to be will be no more. Mass murder will pollute their streets and they will have to fear for the safety of their women and children on the highways, lest some highway man threaten them. Their farms will be stolen and their towns destroyed. German life as they know it will fall to pieces. Nor is Himmler the only one to suggest such threats from communism. Alfred Rosenberg presents the Marxist ideals as a dangerous threat to the economic stability of the Reich, linking the "international private and stock-exchange capitalism" that he believes is characteristic of the communist theory with the taxation and economic strain which plague the Weimar Republic.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹⁹ Heinrich Himmler, "Farmer, Wake Up!" in *Nazi Ideology Before 1933: A Documentation*, ed. and trans. Barbara Miller Lane and Leila J. Rupp (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1978), 97.

¹⁰⁰ Rosenberg, "The Folkish Idea of State," 63-65.

Himmler, however, does not confine himself to spectral, yet imaginary images but in addition calls upon the fears of the people that still linger following the revolution of 1918. This revolution, which brought to fruition all that the *völkish* movement feared, was used as a tool which might subdue the resistance of the masses. With the specter of the chaos of 1918, it is little surprise that the National Socialists were able to play on the fears of the rural German population with their anti-communists rhetoric. They were able to present the communists as a threat to everything that the German people stood for.

While this would be the mindset of the faction of the NSDAP which would eventually win out during the power struggle of the 1930s, during the 1920s, another mentality existed as well. It is this left-wing outlook which parallels most closely that of Ernst Jünger. Once again one can see the parallels between the outlooks of the Strasser brothers' circle and that of Jünger himself. It is interesting to note that the future Third Reich Minister of Propaganda himself, Joseph Goebbels, is seen attempting to woo the communists in his article "National Socialism or Bolshevism?" His primary purpose of this work is to argue that Russia ought to look to the National Socialist movement as an ally over the Jewish community within its own borders. He writes: "The Jew in a national-Bolshevist state is an absurdity."¹⁰¹ He is attempting to unite Communist forces with the National Socialist party through pointing out the danger of common enemies. The Communist government ought to acknowledge the threat that the Jewish community presents to their society.

Goebbels continues on to argue that the only real difference between the Communist goals and those of the NSDAP are whether or not the commanding and powerful government that is created will be a government based on a theory of

¹⁰¹ Goebbels, "National Socialism or Bolshevism," 77.

internationalism or one based on the premise of nationalism, as the National Socialists hope to create. He writes: “National or international in way and goal, that is the issue. We are both fighting honestly for freedom; we want as final fulfillment peace and community, you that of the world, I that of the people....” He draws the similarities even further, however, when he argues that the Soviet system survives, not because of its international allegiances but because of its national strength. “But the Russian soviet system does not endure because it is Bolshevist, because it is Marxist, but because it is national, because it is Russian.”¹⁰² Goebbels is applauding the communist system in the best way that he knows how, by praising the *volkish* nature. It is because the system is inherently and proudly Russian that the Soviet creation can survive, not because of its ideological background. For the future Minister of Propaganda during the 1920s, if the communists would only express and emphasis their pride in their culture and community, the two parties might work together.

This is a theory very similar to that which Ernst Jünger espouses. For Jünger, as Marjatta Hietala would argue, the revolution in Russia, like the fascist forces that were assuming power in Italy, embodied the best in a government. They came out of theories, but were embedded in the triumph of a battle. The Communist government came to power in Russian through a revolution, through a fight, and as we have seen previously, this battle was integral to Jünger’s understanding of the world.¹⁰³ He elaborates this point in his essay “Die Totale Mobilmachung,” when he states that Russia and Italy have achieved a state where freedom will not interfere with the government and strength of the state. An individual will be always subordinate. These states had created the form of state

¹⁰² Goebbels, “National Socialism or Bolshevism,” 76.

¹⁰³ Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 56.

through which the German nation could triumph. This complete power and subjugation of the individual to the state is exactly what Jünger wishes for Germany, the ideal which he defines in his work *Der Arbeiter*, published in the early 1930s. The socialist leanings which would become apparent in *Der Arbeiter* were resultant of a socialist leaning which had been growing throughout the later half of the 1920s in Ernst Jünger's writings and associations. By the end of the 1920s he had begun publishing in left-wing journals, including Ernst Niekisch's *Widerstand* and a journal edited by the Jewish liberal Leopold Schwarzchild.¹⁰⁴ Increasingly Jünger began glorifying city life and existence. He broke with his former mentor Spengler's view that the urbanization of society was the downfall of western culture, claiming one ought not to rebel against, but to reconcile and adapt oneself to the new technological situations in society.¹⁰⁵ This glorification of cities and industrial society was quite different from that of the National Socialists. The NSDAP drew much more on traditional pastoral ideals, as is evidenced by the Himmler article addressed to the German farmers, as well as in the Nazi emphasis on the Land.

It is also a key factor to note that unlike the dominant wing of the National Socialist party, Jünger did not list the communists as one of his "anti-national" powers. While the Free Masons, the Jesuits, and a number of other groups were named in his article "Die Antinationalen Mächte," the communists were noticeably absent.¹⁰⁶ In fact he goes on in this article to write: "We do not wish to deplete our power, by constructing a movement counter to Marxism; on the contrary, we wish to occupy ourselves with the

¹⁰⁴ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 105.

¹⁰⁵ Woods, *Nature*, 256.

¹⁰⁶ Jünger, "Die Antinationalen Mächte," 292.

National Socialism as with a German socialism.”¹⁰⁷ Not only do they not wish to destroy the forces of communism, as this would weaken their own power, but they wish to create their nationalist movement as a new reflection of socialism. This theme of the improvement of the German nationalist movement through an understanding of socialism is a primary theme throughout Jünger’s commentary on communism. His earlier influential article “Schliess Euch Zusammen,” deals heavily with this point. In his writing he discusses that which Nationalism can offer to the worker. While he does not argue that it might offer more than Marxism, he maintains that it will be comparable, but different. Like the socialist and communist forces, and unlike the former Kaiserreich, Jünger’s nationalism recognizes the importance of the workers to the German cause. If the nationalists can only separate Marxism from its international flavor, it might serve the nationalist forces and needs perfectly. The Nationalists will transform the focus of the Marxist society from a state focused on economics to a state focused on Nationalism, drawing upon that which they view as strengths of the socialist ideas and in Jünger’s view, improving them through nationalist priorities.¹⁰⁸ For as he emphasizes throughout his articles of this period, one can not deny the influence which Marxism has had upon Nationalist thought, and in “Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus,” one finds a direct argument against the prevailing attitudes in the NSDAP. He writes: “it does not satisfy to pick the fundamental work of Marxism to pieces, ‘Das Kapital’ by Marx, and to weaken his foundations through counter-reasons.”¹⁰⁹ Simply destroying the ideas of Marx is in reality for Jünger counterproductive, as the growth and future of the German nation lies

¹⁰⁷ “Will wollen unsere Kräfte nicht erschöpfen, einen Gegenbeweis gegen den Marxismus zu donstuireren, sondern wir wollen uns mit dem Nationalsozialismus als mit einem deutschen Sozialismus beschäftigen:“ Jünger, “Die Antinationalen Mächte,” 294-295.

¹⁰⁸ Jünger, “Schliess Euch Zusammen,” 220.

¹⁰⁹ Jünger, “Nationalismus und Nationalsozialismus,” 318-19.

for him in the German worker. It is only through his abilities and his authority that nationalism might succeed.

Some historians argue, based upon Jünger's emphasis upon the socialist principles of the National Socialist movement that had the Strasser faction of the NSDAP won the power struggles of the early 1930s that Jünger might have finally agreed to enter into the party. I would argue, however, that while no one can be sure of the outcome of a hypothetical situation, there were too many other facets of Jünger's fiercely independent Nationalism which would have continued to hinder his integration into the party. First and foremost among these I find his animosity to the parliamentary system and government itself. The decision of the National Socialists to participate in the parliamentary system of the Weimar Republic, a decision which took place long before the decisive power split in the party, was one to which I believe Jünger would never have been able to reconcile himself. In addition, I find that his writings carry a strong individualistic message which would not adapt well to the aegis of the strict National Socialist party. From his observations in "Schliess Euch Zusammen," it is as if he is writing as an outsider to the movement, allowing himself the position of critic but not leader. One can also not ignore the focus which even the left-wing of the NSDAP placed on the "Jewish question." While Jünger was as much an anti-Semite as the next German citizen in the Weimar Republic, this focus nonetheless distracted the movement from that which he saw most important. Thus, while one might argue that the triumph of the leftist National Socialists might have prevented Jünger from developing into an outright opponent of the Third Reich, I do not believe that it would have been incentive enough for him to become an official member or his departure from politics in the coming years.

Thus by the assumption of power by the National Socialists, much of the foundations for Jünger's criticisms of the 1930s was in place. Not only had the NSDAP increasingly placed focus upon those issues with which he disagreed such as the Jews and particularly communism, they had all but renounced the communal struggle and battle that Jünger found so central to the proper development of the German people and state. Already he had begun to place intellectual distance, as the 1930s progressed this distance would become physical as well. Distance would become a form of criticism.

III. Chapter Two

From Crony to Critic: The 1930s

Following a contentious power struggle among German political leaders and elites, President Hindenburg grudgingly named Adolph Hitler Reich Chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933.¹¹⁰ The ascension of this individual to power would result in world altering consequences both inside and outside of Germany, and turned the year 1933 into a watershed year for Ernst Jünger, his country and indeed the whole world. The new regime quickly set to work remodeling German society in their image, not neglecting the literary community in which Jünger was entrenched. German culture would never be the same. With the overwhelming (and not quite above board) successes of the NSDAP during the elections on March 5, 1933, the National Socialists began their uprooting of

¹¹⁰ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler* (London: Pearson Education, 1991), 55.

the traditional German literary world. By the end of 1933, it would no longer be possible to pursue in a successful literary career without favoring the Nazi party.

It is not surprising that Hitler's party sought almost immediately to overtake the world of art. The arts were a central element for the National Socialists; they served as a powerful mechanism for disseminating ideas; thus the Nazi regime wished to ensure that it would be their ideas that were promulgated. During a speech on the 23rd of March, 1933, after an elaboration on the goals of his government, Hitler declared: "Our entire educational system—theater, film, literature, press, radio—will become the means for these goals...it is the task of art to be the expression of this particular spirit of our times."¹¹¹ This had been a long standing policy of the Nazi party. Throughout the late twenties and early 1930s, there existed a Fascist "literary" genre that strove to identify enemies of the new *volk*, drawing upon traditional German literary styles, and espousing the basic National Socialist tenets of "Blut und Bodenliteratur." This "blood and soil" emphasis became an increasing facet of fascist literature as the 1930s progressed, emphasizing both the importance of the purity and supremacy of German blood, and the centrality of the land and space that this race required and deserved.¹¹²

Quickly, the new regime sought to refashion the existing German literary organizations in order to facilitate the production of this pro-Nazi literature. The first group to come under the scrutiny of the Nazis was the elite department for literature of the Prussian Academy of the Arts. Due to the significant number of Nazi supporters in

¹¹¹ Ralf Schnell, *Literarische Innere Emigration: 1933-1945* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1976), 21; "Unser gesamtes Erziehungswesen—das Theater, der Film, Literatur, Presse, Fundfunk—sie weden als Mittle zu diesen Zwecke...Es ist die Aufgabe der Kunst, Ausdruck dieses bestimmenden Zeitgeistes zu sein." Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 30.

¹¹² Hartung, *Ästhetik*, 68; Eda Sagarra and Peter Skrine, *A Companion to German Literature: From 1500 to the Present* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 1997), 206-207.

the high ranks of the Academy, the government was able to enact thorough purge of individuals who were deemed of questionable allegiance or racial composition in the renowned Academy, after which the new institution underwent a change of name to become the Deutsche Akademie für Dichtung. The administration then turned its attention to the German chapter of the international PEN Club. Due to the international nature of the organization, purges in this group met with greater opposition and censure from abroad; eventually the prominent German group was forced to withdraw from the larger international organization. In addition the association of German publishers and book traders was coordinated and voluntarily imposed stricter restrictions on its membership, now obligatory. The group followed with a declaration that the policies of the Nazi government would be “‘carried out unconditionally within the committee’s sphere of influence.’”¹¹³

The most important transformation, however, came with the coordination of a number of former literary organizations into the Reichs Literature Chamber under the aegis of Goebbel’s Reich Chamber of Culture, an institution that the *Völkischer Beobachter* would refer to as the “‘heart of the National Socialist awareness and sense of responsibility.’”¹¹⁴ This new institution quickly became the dominant presence in the literary world of the Third Reich. With the enacting of the “‘Directive for the Execution of the Reich Culture Chamber Law” on November 1, 1933, membership in the Reich’s

¹¹³ Jan-Pieter Barbian, “Literary Policy in the Third Reich,” in *National Socialist Cultural Policy*, ed. and trans. Glenn R. Cuomo (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1995), 160-164.

¹¹⁴ Barbian, “Literary Policy,” 167; “Herzkammer des nationalsozialistischen Bewußtseins und Verantwortungsgefühl.“ Schnell, *Ästhetik*, 178.

chamber became compulsory for all those who wished to take part in the literary community, including authors, book sellers, publishers, and librarians.¹¹⁵

Without membership in the Reich Literature Chamber, German authors risked being black listed. The first of which was issued by the government in April of 1933, making public the names of individuals who were considered disloyal or subversive by the new government in addition to those Jewish authors deemed unsuitable. Not only were stores forbidden to sell books by these authors, but on the tenth of May 1933, a massive book burning demonstration took place in Berlin, during which thousands of books by censored authors were destroyed. By August of 1933 the first group of authors faced exile and the loss of their citizenship.¹¹⁶ While censorship had unofficially plagued German authors since as early as 1930, due the conservative judiciary and the increasing influence of National Socialist factions in cultural life, such lists and visible censure began the institutionalization of these attitudes. The Law for the Seizure of Assets Hostile to the Nation and the State, which went into effect on the 14 of July, 1933, effectively eliminated all political publications other than those sponsored by the NSDAP. Two years later in 1935, Joseph Goebbels passed the requirement that a copy of each book published in the Reich be submitted to the Reich Culture Chamber in order that they might ensure that it met the Nazi standards for publications.¹¹⁷

Literary regulations, however, were far from unified. With so many different literary organizations eager to influence policy, the realm of censorship was typical of the lack of centralization under the Third Reich. As in other arenas, this resulted in conflicting and often contradictory policies, which allowed authors to take advantage of

¹¹⁵ Barbian, "Literary Policy," 167.

¹¹⁶ Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 25; Sagarra and Skrine, *Companion*, 206.

¹¹⁷ Barbian, "Literary Policy," 160; Barbian, "Literary Policy," 180.

this limited freedom due to in-fighting.¹¹⁸ Additionally, the government of the Third Reich, preceding World War II, did not wish to awaken censure from the outside world by too visible limitations on the freedom of expression. Goebbels hoped to present at least the semblance of cultural diversity up until the outbreak of hostilities.¹¹⁹

Thus if one was lucky enough to have escaped the lists of Reich enemies, one found oneself living in a society with inconsistent policies and expectations. The case of Ernst Wiechert serves as a telling example. Wiechert spent two months in Buchenwald; yet his works were never banned, neither during nor following his imprisonment.¹²⁰

In addition, those who enjoyed a particularly prominent role in society, or those who had connections to the NSDAP leadership, such as Ernst Jünger, were able to live and write in relative freedom.

Such a situation, however, created a peculiar predicament for Germany's intellectual community. Artists were forced to decide whether to remain in Germany amid ever more stringent regulations or to leave their country and live in exile. Many chose to leave. They fled to Vienna, Prague, Zurich, Paris, London, the United States. Those on the political left fled to Moscow and Denmark. The German cultural community was now scattered, establishing small cells in foreign cities. Despite the difficulties of leaving their homes, a life in an alien land was for many preferable to being present for the destruction of their own. In the face of increasing impotence within Nazi

¹¹⁸ Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 130.

¹¹⁹ Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 32.

¹²⁰ Barbian, "Literary Policy," 176.

Germany, approximately 5,500 figures central to the arts, sciences, and journalism had fled the country by the fall of the Third Reich.¹²¹

Many others, however, remained. There have been many examinations of the disorganized group of individuals who became known as the Inner Emigration and their reasons for remaining behind in an artistically oppressive society. There have been excuses and condemnations, but all that can be said for certain is that each individual had their own motives. Some based their decision, as Reinhold Schneider did, upon their religious beliefs, hoping that through their writing they might motivate others to resistance; others remained as an “apologetic force” for the rise of the Nazi regime.¹²² Still more, like Ernst Jünger, remained because of a loyalty to the German nation, despite current failings. They decided to suffer for their country. In a 1982 interview with the *Der Spiegel*, Ernst Jünger criticized the well known German exile Thomas Mann for his decision to flee to England. Jünger stated: “It always angered me when I heard the English broadcasts—another German city was going up in flames and Thomas Mann was giving his speeches on top of it.”¹²³ Although Mann wished to establish an international resistance, Jünger felt that he brought guilt upon himself by abandoning his country. Bombs were falling and, for Jünger, Mann had betrayed his country. He did not see neither the bombs, nor the chaos that they wreaked; he could only condemn the impotence of his countrymen.

¹²¹ Sagarra and Skrine, *Companion*, 211; Barbaian, “Literary Policy,” 160; Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 156.

¹²² Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 14; Hartung *Ästhetik*, 105.

¹²³ Rudolf Augstein, Helluth Karasek, and Harald Wieser, “Ein Bruderschaftstrinken mit dem Tod: Der 87jährige Schriftsteller Ernst Jünger über Politik und die Bundesrepublik,” *Der Spiegel*, August 16, 1982, 158.

The individuals included in the Inner Emigration, are not primarily those who worked with the Nazis, but those who chose to participate in what Ernst Wiechert termed “internalization.”¹²⁴ Due to the constraints of the many institutions for censorship and regulation, outright resistance was limited under the Third Reich; authors and intellectuals, however, found more subtle ways to make their protests heard. Particularly in the period prior to World War II, questionable works were tolerated, so long as they were sufficiently shrouded in allegory or literary device. In one of his letters to the prominent conservative Carl Schmitt, Jünger writes: “I believe, that in this time one must learn a little bit of the art of magic, or the way by which one achieves the greatest effect with the least amount of movement.”¹²⁵ Many critics, including a number of those Germans authors who chose exile, criticized authors of the Inner Emigration for a failure to stage a meaningful protest. Elliot Neaman accuses these individuals of being reactionary and authoritarian for example. Though they were not all Nazi sympathizers, the possibilities that they offered for an alternative were, for Neaman, no better.¹²⁶ As Ralf Schnell emphasizes in his work on the Inner Emigration, however, one must consider the subversive effect that even minimal protest must have had on a public that was living under a totalitarian regime.¹²⁷

Having made the decision to remain in a repressed Germany, the authors of the Inner Emigration turned to the question of how to express their dissatisfaction while avoiding the censor of Goebbel’s literary institutions or the higher administration. Many

¹²⁴ Schnell, *Innere Emigration* 39.

¹²⁵ “Ich glaube, daß man in dieser Zeit ein wenig die Zauberkunst erlernen muß, oder die Art, wie man bei einem Mindestmaß an Bewegung ein Höchstmaß an Wirkung erzielt.“ Ernst Jünger, “Brief an Carl Schmitt, 6.8.1934,” reprinted in Helmuth Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger Carl Schmitt: Briefe, 1930-1983* (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1999), 27.

¹²⁶ Elliot Neaman, *A Dubious Past: Ernst Jünger and the Politics of Literature after Nazism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 104.

¹²⁷ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 141; Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 155.

found security in the historical novel, such as Jochen Klepper, who by his examination of Frederick William I in Prussia attempted to create a parallel discussion over legitimate and illegitimate authority. Others attempted to diffuse the responsibility for their criticisms by placing their works “mythically out of time,” as Ralf Schnell describes it. As Jünger’s writing became more subversive throughout the decade, he employed the idea of dissociation, separating his stories from both time and place, thus creating cloaked, multi-layered allegories. Despite all attempts at discretion, however, many books were still too open for comfort, and despite the comparative openness of the regime during the early thirties, most authors found themselves under the constant surveillance by the regime’s police force. The life of an intellectual who chose not to cooperate with the government of the Third Reich was a precarious one, a balancing act between irrelevance and censure.¹²⁸

Ernst Jünger chose to remain behind. Being of substantial means, he might easily have left with his family; I would argue, however, that in 1933, though disappointed by the National Socialists, Jünger still clung to his passion for his homeland and would never chose to leave Germany permanently. His critique of Mann’s supposed indifference towards his country’s plight is a valuable illustration of his sympathies at the time.¹²⁹

Published in 1934, his collection of essays, *Blätter und Steine*, included his essay “Die Totale Mobilmachung” and other testaments to his earlier faith in German power; he had not yet abandoned his hope for his Germany. While he disapproved of the National Socialist’s means and many of their policies while in power, he still wished to salvage

¹²⁸ Sagarra and Skrine, *Companion*, 208; Schnell, *Innere Emigration*, 102; Barbian, “Literary Policy,” 173.

¹²⁹ While one cannot take this statement, made nearly forty years later and potentially politically motivated at face value, it coincides with his ideas expressed at the time as well.

something positive from their regime. Although by 1939 he would have lost all faith in the Nazi regime, he would never give up on the potential of his country and what it might still become, although by 1939 he had eliminated the National Socialists from this hope. Thus he wished to remain and be present for the future, however it might play out. More cynically, however, one can also not ignore the fact, that while Jünger did encounter difficulties at the hands of the new regime, his home was searched by the Gestapo, his writing viewed with skepticism, he was called before many tribunals, and saw his friends imprisoned, he existed in a state of seemingly magical amnesty, and was never during the 1930s in any true danger of finding himself in the hands of the SS.

The transformations visible in Jünger's writing of this time period are among the most contested in his legacy. During the 1930s, Jünger's style would transition from an antagonistic, nationalist style to an esoteric, lyrical and allegorical condemnation of the repressive National Socialist state. While it is impossible to argue that a change does not take place in Jünger's writings, historians still debate the motivation behind this metamorphosis and how much they reflect the opinions of the author. Elliot Neaman writes: "One might conclude that the intellectual situation in Germany was so bleak that Jünger's stubborn independence seemed to be a breath of fresh air compared to the official literature of the Third Reich. Enough significant testimony exists, however, to reach a stronger conclusion that Jünger's books were read as a clear repudiation of Nazism."¹³⁰ I argue that Jünger's abandonment of the Nazi regime was complete by the beginning of the Second World War. His novel *Auf den Marmorclippen* (On the Marble Cliffs), first published in 1939, is universally acknowledged as an allegorical repudiation

¹³⁰ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 101.

of the repressive Third Reich, and more importantly than the opinions of historians, his books were seen as an attempt at resistance.

Jünger's politics during this period are often looked at skeptically due to his staunch nationalism of the 1920s and continued attempts by the NSDAP to exploit his early nationalist works. *In Stahlgewittern* was required reading in German preparatory school curriculum throughout the Third Reich, and Hitler's respect for Jünger's war record was undoubtedly one of the reasons that Jünger managed to obtain publication and avoid arrest for *Auf den Marmorklippen*.¹³¹ Other historians maintain that the ambiguous symbols in much of his writing during the early 1930s helped to support the Nazi cause. They argue that had he been more forthright in his criticism, much of the doubt concerning his allegiances would have been avoided.¹³² Jünger addresses this point himself, however, in his interview with *Der Spiegel*. When questioned about his response to the invitation of the Deutsche Akademie, he argued that had he answered their invitation with a blatantly offensive statement, he would quickly have found himself in a concentration camp.¹³³ This statement, though made retrospectively, can be corroborated by the conscious measures that he took during the Third Reich to hide or destroy any potentially harmful materials. He was well aware even then of the danger of outright criticism or denunciation of the regime. Despite his deeply allegorical and often mystifying texts, Neaman points out, that even during the times of his staunchest nationalism Jünger never employed such key National Socialist terms as "Volksgemeinschaft" and "Blut und Boden."

¹³¹ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 113.

¹³² Kaiser, *Mythos*, 154; Kaiser, *Mythos*, 190.

¹³³ AUSTEIN, KARASEK, and WIESER, "Bruderschaftstrinken," 155

Whatever the accusations against Jünger and his writing from this period, his attitude towards the institutions of the Third Reich were unquestionable. Following the purges and reestablishment of the Deutsche Akademie für Dichtung, in October of 1933 Jünger received an invitation for membership. He responded in two letters which showed with determination his wish to remain distant from formal institutions. In his first letter, dated November 16, 1933, he writes: “The peculiarity of my work lies in its soldierly character, which I do not wish to mar through academic ties.”¹³⁴ Jünger continues to elaborate on his long standing belief in the need for a dissociation of between art and organization. In this way, Jünger once again expresses his unequivocal disdain for the National Socialist party’s acquiescence to involvement with long established institutions. His first letter is far more conciliatory than that sent in response to what one can assume was a letter of further encouragement from the Deutsche Akademie für Dichtung. In this second letter he references the search of his home by the Gestapo; he writes: “I am determined to be a positive worker for the new state, despite such personal inconveniences as the search of my home that have begun.”¹³⁵ Jünger’s reference to his inconvenience at the hands of the state seems meant to reinforce his dedication by emphasizing that despite this he will continue to attempt to be a good citizen. This refusal could have been motivated by many things, as he states by a desire to remain outside formal institutions or ideological antipathy; yet, his declaration of support (even if grudgingly given) is more than he afforded the Weimar Republic. The dawning of the

¹³⁴ “Die Eigenart meiner Arbeit liegt in ihrem wesentlich soldatischen Charakter, den ich durch akademische Bindungen nicht beeinträchtigen will;“ Ernst Jünger, “Brief an Carl Schmitt, 11.16.1933,” reprinted in Helmuth Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger Carl Schmitt: Briefe, 1930-1983* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1999), 496-497.

¹³⁵ “...daß ich zur positiven Mitarbeit am neuen Staate, ungeachtet mancher persönlicher Verärgerung, wie etwa der Haussuchung, die in meinem Räumen stattgefunden hat, durch aus entschlossen bin;“ Ernst Jünger, “Brief an der Deutsche Akademie der Dichtung, 11.18.1933“ ,” reprinted in Helmuth Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger Carl Schmitt: Briefe, 1930-1983* (Stuttgart: Klett -Cotta, 1999), 496.

Nazi power saw Jünger, though increasingly distant, still hesitant to entirely condemn the group that he had once held such faith in.

As his letter to the Akademie shows, Ernst Jünger was already under suspicion by the regime as early as 1933. During this year the Gestapo carried out a search of his home due to his friendship with Ernst Niekisch, a suspected communist and the publisher of the journal “Widerstand.” Leading up to the Nazi rise to power, Jünger published a number of articles in Niekisch’s journal, and upon the forced closing of Niekisch’s journal in 1934, he expressed his regret and sympathy for the man in a letter to his friend Carl Schmitt.¹³⁶ Following the search in 1933, however, Jünger was consistently far more cautious with his writings, and during the mid-thirties, he would destroy a number of journal entries, fearing a similar situation. His friendship with such individuals as Niekisch and Gregor Strasser placed him under constant suspicion.

This suspicion was only heightened following a second instance like that with Academy. In the summer of 1934 the *Völkische Beobachter* reprinted a from the 1929 edition of *Das Abenteuerliche Herz* without citation. This action infuriated Jünger. He wrote to the journal: “The fact that this excerpt appeared without reference, gives the impression that I belong to your journal as a writer, which is by no means the case....”¹³⁷ Jünger did not wish there to be any misunderstanding about his involvement with the political publication; he had consciously retreated from the public literary and political world, undertaking his own “inner emigration.”

¹³⁶ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 144; Hietala, *Neue Nationalismus*, 28; Ernst Jünger, “Briefe an Carl Schmitt, 12.26.1934,” in Helmut Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger Carl Schmitt: Briefe, 1930-1983* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1999), 44.

¹³⁷ GERMAN Ernst Jünger, “Briefe an Carl Schmitt, 6.14.1934,” in Helmut Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger Carl Schmitt: Briefe, 1930-1983* (Stuttgart: Klett -Cotta, 1999), 44.

Despite the attempts of National Socialist leaders to pull him into political action, Jünger's apathy is additionally obvious in his own very literal Inner Emigration. His most fundamental emigration occurred in December of 1933 when, in an attempt to distance himself from an ever encroaching political reality Jünger and his family relocated to Goslar, a small town in Lower Saxony.¹³⁸ In addition he was able to enjoy a wide variety of travel opportunities outside of Germany. During the 1930s his destinations included such exotic destinations as Brazil, Morocco, the Azores, Norway, opportunities which as Thomas Nevin argues, allowed Jünger to begin to broaden his strictly bound nationalist viewpoint and transition into a larger world view. Nevin cites a letter from Ernst to his brother Friedrich Georg Jünger that displays a striking new mentality in the former avid nationalist. Jünger writes that the diversity of race and culture present in Rio de Janeiro makes the city "a residence of the Weltgeist [world spirit]."¹³⁹ While the Jünger of the 1920s might very well have seen an international mentality as an inherent weakness, by the 1930s he appreciated this as an enriching quality. One is also struck by his allusion to racial diversity, a quality which the regime in his own land was doing its very best to eliminate in all of its manifestations. In a similar way, Jünger's opportunity to visit Jewish ghettos in Greece awakened in him an interest in Jewish culture. Following the Kristallnacht of 1938, Jünger began avidly reading Jewish scripture. Thus it is little surprise that in his published travel journals, he blatantly criticizes Hitler and his regime as a force that has murdered the individual artist in favor of the bourgeois and unoriginal.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 143.

¹³⁹ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 145; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 148.

¹⁴⁰ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 157; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 149.

Although Jünger gave up of publishing in political journals, during the Third Reich, he was not entirely absent from the literary world . Throughout the 1930s, Jünger managed to publish a number of works through the Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, a publishing house based in Hamburg, which, thanks to the prominence and strong will of its director, Benno Ziegler, was able to enjoy a surprising level of independence throughout the duration of the Third Reich.¹⁴¹ Between the rise of the National Socialists and the outbreak of the Second World War, Jünger published four major works. Two of these were revised or collected works: *Blätter und Steine* (Leaves and Stones, 1934), a compilation of earlier essays, and the second edition of *Das abenteuerliche Herz* (The Adventurous Heart, [1929] 1938). The other two were original novels: *Afrikanische Spiele* (African Games, 1936), a semi-autobiographical narration of a young boy's experience in the French Foreign Legion, and *Auf den Marmorklippen* (On the Marble Cliffs, 1939) the fictional (though allegorical) depiction of the dictatorial take-over of an idyllic community.

Each of these works effectively presents a stage in the development of Jünger's thoughts during this time period. His work *Blätter und Steine*, published in 1934 was meant to be collection of his meaningful work to date; in reality, however, as Gerhard Loose argues, this was not entirely successful.¹⁴² While there were indeed a number of articles which might embody his previous work, such as "Die Totale Mobilmachung," originally published 1930, there were significantly fewer of his nationalist pieces than would have been necessary to accurately portray his political position to that point. His next major publication, *Afrikanische Spiele* is seen in drastically different lights by

¹⁴¹ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 113.

¹⁴² Gerhard Loose, *Ernst Jünger: Gestalt und Werk* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Kosterman, 1957), 135.

various biographers and historians. Thomas Nevin describes it as “a charming picturesque tale” calling it “a fond reminiscence of late Wilhelmine adolescence.” He does accept, however, that it indeed carries an undertone of melancholy which “shuts the door on adventure,” and he concludes by saying that one “can never escape for good.”¹⁴³ I would argue, however, that this statement misses the central purpose of the work: not only can one not escape for good, but in reality there exists nowhere and nothing to which to escape. The vivid imagination of childhood was mistaken. This opinion is seconded by both Martin Meyer and Gerhard Loose, both of whom view this work not only as an autobiography of Jünger’s short experience in the French Foreign Legion, but also as a record of his personal experience with the National Socialists.¹⁴⁴ Both Jünger and Berger, the young narrator of *Afrikanische Spiele*, approach adventure with great expectations, only to be sadly disappointed by what they find.

By 1938 and the appearance of the second edition of *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, there could be little dispute as to the inherent criticism of the National Socialist government in many of the passages that appeared in the new edition. Jünger chose to remove the biographical elements and included a number of new and thought provoking essays which begin to introduce many of the elements that appear in full bloom in his novel *Auf den Marmorklippen*.¹⁴⁵ His final publication prior the Second World War, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, is widely acknowledged as a piece of allegorical resistance literature, which effectively breaks any left over ties with the Nazi movement. Each of these works consists of a unique mixture of Jünger’s old ideas and those adopted during

¹⁴³ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 150.

¹⁴⁴ Loose, *Gestalt*, 137.

¹⁴⁵ Kaiser, *Mythos*, 189.

this time period. By examining the balance of these concepts, the reader is able to obtain a multi-layered view of the Jünger who existed during this period.

To begin, one can trace those ideas that remain to be identified with the National Socialists. Most notably are those in his work from 1934, *Blätter und Steine*, a work that is still quite reminiscent of the former Jünger. In what he calls the “Epigram Appendix,” Jünger includes a number of observations that reiterate many themes from his works of the 1920s and parallel those of the National Socialists. One might consider number ninety-six: “The state is the fatherland, the home, the motherland,”¹⁴⁶ or number thirty-three: “The masses are their own tyrant,” a statement that parallels that made in number fifty-one: “Democracy strives for the situation in which everyone is permitted to ask a question of everyone else.”¹⁴⁷ Jünger has apparently not changed his mind about the worth of the democratic system; for him it is still a dangerous situation in which the uneducated masses have the run of society, and as he writes, are permitted to question everything. There is no viable hierarchy, and it thus allows the larger society to have control over the state, which as can be seen from his statements, is still supremely sacred. Home and country are still the two definitive factors for the individual.

Afrikanische Spiele is not without these elements as well. Throughout this work, the reader notices the word “race.” Jünger refers many times to the characteristics of a race, or identifies a particular character with a certain racial group, and peculiarly, this is, as in the case of the National Socialist, often applied to what today one might consider nationality or ethnicity, be it French or Jew. Jünger writes of the Italians that the narrator

¹⁴⁶ “96. Der Staat ist das Vaterland, die Heimat das Mutterland.” Ernst Jünger, *Blätter und Steine* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1934), 226.

¹⁴⁷ “33. Die Masse ist ihr eigener Tyrann.“ “Die Demokratie erstrebt einen Zustand, in dem jeder jedem eine Frage stellen darf.“ Jünger, *Blätter und Steine*, 220.

encounters in Africa declaring them “proletarians through birth and race.”¹⁴⁸ This statement could have fit in any National Socialist literature. They are not Europeans, but Italians. One also finds a negative reference to Jews. At one moment during the tale, the young narrator finds himself in a seedier area of town, being taken to the home of two ladies whom the narrator has been told by a friend are quite beautiful, enticingly young, and “Spanish.” Before being seen they are presented as a great conquest; however when the narrator sees them and finds that they “could just as easily have been twenty as sixteen years old and just as likely Jewish as Spanish...,” he once again appears disappointed and disillusioned.¹⁴⁹ One can not ignore the anti-Semitic overtones in this passage. While these Spanish women would have been exotic and enticing, as Jews they were average at best.¹⁵⁰

Additionally, the centralized and strong power of the National Socialists remained a point which he greatly respected, one which prevented a tyranny of the masses. A sketch included in *Das abenteuerliche Herz* entitled “Zur Dèsinvolture” examines the importance of this quality which he defines as “the innocence of Power.”¹⁵¹ The focus of this vignette is upon the centrality and importance of the unwavering power of a ruler. Jünger references famous kings of the past, such as Louis XIV. He writes: “Where the

¹⁴⁸ “Proletärer durch geburt und Rasse.“ Ernst Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1938), 138.

¹⁴⁹ “Dort sah ich ihn mit der Meine eines jahrelangen bekannten zwei Wesen begrüßen, die zwar ebensogut zwanzig wie sechzehn Jahre alt und ebensogut Jüddinen wie Spannierinnen sine konnten...“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 177.

¹⁵⁰ Race, however, as in his earlier treatises was far from a central factor, and once again one sees in companion with these statements other declarations in vocal condemnation of such prejudice. In what he terms the “Epigram Appendix” to *Blätter und Steine*, he records in point number forty-four: “The bad race is recognized by the fact that it seeks to exalt itself through the comparison with others and to abase others through the comparison with itself.”(p.220) This passage is as clear cut as those from his story from two years later: a race that attempts to improve itself through the degradation of another is no great race at all. This fact is in pointed contrast to the Nazi philosophy which was blatantly critical, dehumanizing, and insulting towards Jews.

¹⁵¹ “...die Unschuld der Macht.” Ernst Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz: Figuren und Capriccios* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1938), 124.

dèsinvolture is intact, no doubt concerning questions of power can exist.”¹⁵² Not only, however, is power in itself a license of innocence, but a truly powerful ruler couples this power with the wisdom to share riches with the people. He writes that power itself is the giving of gifts. While I do not believe that this statement is in praise of the Third Reich’s programs established to increase popular support, such as the introduction of a “people’s car”, I am struck by the parallels of this statement and such policies. In these programs, the absolute power certainly attempted to spread privilege throughout society so as to increase the contentment and approval of citizens.

In addition there were policies of the regime that Jünger supported outright. In an interview with the German magazine *Der Spiegel* in August of 1982, Jünger discussed many of the issues from the period of National Socialist rule. In particular he declared his approval for the destruction of the Versailles Treaty, the Anschluß of Austria, and Hitler’s policies in Czechoslovakia. He openly tells the interviewer of his disagreement with his brother Friedrich Georg over the annexation of Austria in 1937. Ernst Jünger records his reaction as: “Hitler has succeeded at something that our grandfathers did not achieve.”¹⁵³ The incorporation of Austria into the German Reich is obviously something for which Jünger feels Germany has been striving for some time now. Friedrich Georg counters with the argument that no matter how large one makes a prison, it will remain a prison. One can not doubt the criticism inherent in Friedrich’s statement; yet nor can one mistake the insistence of his brother in support of Hitler’s action. When clarifying this statement to his interviewer, however, Jünger adds an important counterpoint: “I am still today completely in accord with Hitler’s policy in the Sudetenland and with the Anschluß

¹⁵² “Wo die *Dèsinvolture* unversehrt ist, kann über Machtfragen kein Zweifel bestehn.“ Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 124

¹⁵³ Augstein, Karasek, and Wieser, “Bruderschaftstrinken,” 159.

of Austria, but I soon recognized Hitler's character."¹⁵⁴ Although one must be careful to examine this statement, made almost forty years after the fall of the Third Reich carefully, I believe that it can stand as a loose representation of Jünger's personal stance throughout the years of Nazi power. If he were to falsify the truth, it would certainly have been in his best interest to do so by distancing himself and his opinions as much as possible from the Hitler. He supported those achievements made by the Nazi regime as far as they furthered his staunch nationalist agenda; however, as the reality of Nazi rule became apparent his thinking increasingly diverged.

This separation, which was already evident in the late 1920s, is most directly displayed in the works of the next decade. These works are pervaded by a sense of disillusionment and the acquisition of a new and bittersweet wisdom. While during the 1920s his work was characterized by an appeal to the World War I veteran and a call to action which he faithfully believed would be answered; the writing from the period of National Socialism is, in contrast, characterized by disillusionment and an overwhelming sense of ignorance enlightened.

The most striking example of this belated comprehension appears in *Afrikanische Spiele*. Opinions over the importance of this work vary. Unlike Nevin, many authors view this novel as indeed a piece about Jünger's own entrance into a disillusioning reality; they do not, however, often see it as the first piece in which Jünger relinquishes his hopes for the National Socialist state. Martin Meyer probably places the most emphasis upon this work writing: "Indeed, 'Africa' must be understood by a dual-representation: the

¹⁵⁴ "Mit Hitlers Sudetenland Politik und dem Anschluß Österreichs bin ich noch heute völlig d'accord. Aber den Charakter Hitlers habe ich sehr bald erkannt." Augstein, Karasek, and Wieser, "Bruderschaftstrinken," 159.

meaning that underlies it, the author from the years between 1933 and 1945.”¹⁵⁵ It is a story that travels from excitement and anticipation of a grand new environment outside of what the narrator views as a limited and circumscribed existence into a disillusioned and melancholy work. I would argue that Nevin’s description of it as an upbeat piece is far from accurate.¹⁵⁶ A dark vein runs throughout. Thus I feel that it deserves a more prominent place in the examination of Jünger’s works. While *Blätter und Steine* might be introspective, *Afrikanische Spiele* is the first work in which the reader experiences a feeling of true impotence, a feeling which will only increase through the development of Jünger’s writing.

For Berger, the narrator, Africa is to be a place of novelty and challenge. As a seventeen-year old boy, it is a chance to escape from the watchful eyes of his parents and school teachers. “It appears to me more important,” he writes, “to first step over the borders, and with that to take the first step from order into disorder. I had the idea to eliminate the wonderful, the rich, the legendary hazards, and entanglements—one must experience its attractions stronger, the closer that one went to meet them.”¹⁵⁷ Such expectations are based in childish fantasies. These are not realistic expectations; Berger, however, is still ignorant of this. He carries with him a romantic picture book of Africa, a collection of the mysteries that he anticipates. It will be a release from the tedium of the modern bourgeois society. On the train, still safely in France, he fantasizes about the land that he will encounter. In his imagination it is still a jungle “in which an encounter with

¹⁵⁵ “Doch schon ‘Afrika muß aus der doppelten Darstellung heraus verstanden werden; was die Bedeutungen unterlegend, der Autor der Jahre zwischen 1933 und 1936.” Martin Meyer, *Ernst Jünger* (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1990) 249.

¹⁵⁶ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 150.

¹⁵⁷ “So schien es mir denn richtiger, erst einmal die Grenze zu überschreiten, um damit den ersten Schritt aus der Ordnung in das Ungeordnete zu tun. Ich hatte die Vorstellung, daß das Wunderbare, das Reich, der Sagenhaften Zufälle und Verwicklungen zu entfernen—man mußte seine Anziehung um so stärker erfahren, je mehr man ihm entgegenging.“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 8.

the extraordinary and unexpected was still at first possible.”¹⁵⁸ So Jünger saw the potential offered by the nationalist state. He had grand yet ignorant visions of the future that would exist under such rule. It would be a world in which each citizen fulfilled their duty. It would be a Utopia, the world of his *Der Arbeiter*.

As Berger approaches Africa, many of the people he encounters encourage him to turn back. Upon his arrival in France, he encounters a police officer who refuses to give him directions, instructing him instead to hurry home to his family in Germany. The most striking incident, however, is his discussion with the military doctor, Dr. Goupil, just before he is to leave for his service. Dr. Goupil is the last person with the ability to release him, but the stubborn and starry-eyed narrator will not agree. Goupil encourages him: “Go away from here back to your books, and go quickly; leave tomorrow morning!”¹⁵⁹ Goupil does his very best to convince Berger to acquiesce. The narrator knows no reality but that experienced through books; Goupil appeals to him: “You are at that age in which one overestimates the truth of books. There is a wonderful geography, but believe me, one undertakes outings of this kind best when one lies comfortably on his back and smokes Turkish cigarettes.”¹⁶⁰ Again and again, Jünger reiterates the naiveté of the young narrator. He is indeed simply a schoolboy, come for adventure, who knows nothing more of the world than what he has read, such as the ridiculous book of Africa that accompanies him. Goupil instead expands upon the dangers which await him; he attempts

¹⁵⁸ “...in dem die Begegnung mit dem Außerordentlichen und Unerwarteten noch am ersten wahrscheinlich war.“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 22.

¹⁵⁹ “Kehren Sie daher zu Ihren Büchern zurück, und kehren Sie schnell, kehren Sie morgen zurück!“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 92.

¹⁶⁰ “Sie sind in dem Alter, in dem man die Wirklichkeit der Bücher überschätzt. Es gibt eine wunderbare Geographie, aber glauben Sie mir, Ausflüge dieser Art unternimmt man am besten, wenn man bequem auf dem Rücken liest und türkische Zigaretten raucht.“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 92.

to convince the narrator of the dehumanization that occurs in this place. It is not pure adventure and excitement but instead a world that elicits the baseness of humanity.¹⁶¹

In addition, Goupil serves to further refine ideas which are reaffirmed from Jünger's ideology. Martin Meyer writes that Goupil, in his criticism of the desire for adventure and battle without a cause enriches the idea of the need for war and battle that Jünger subscribed to throughout the 1920s.¹⁶² This is reinforced later as well. Berger describes his companions at the camp: "Just as there are Generals who are indifferent which army and for which goal they employ their strategic art, so it was valued here for whom and where [one fought]...and whether it sought good or bad--"¹⁶³ Berger seems to be realizing the danger of this outlook, and his description is laced with disapproval and disgust.

The narrator quickly discovers that Goupil's warnings were correct. Berger discovers that the world that he finds is far from what he had envisioned. Upon waking on his first morning, he does not anticipate adventure, but instead it occurs to him that in this place there are "things which one does not read in the books, fear, weariness, and also the heart beat, that beats into one's throat."¹⁶⁴ In this world there is fear and loneliness shrouded in corruption. As Goupil warned, no one who has remained there long can return as they were. This is evidenced by a scene that takes place in the barracks. Berger describes a man, whose exclamations he describes as "a type of sermon;" this sermon, however, is not calling for virtue, but consists entirely in a

¹⁶¹ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 92.

¹⁶² Meyer, *Jünger*, 252.

¹⁶³ "Wie es Generäle gibt, denen es gleichgültig ist, an welcher Armee und für welche Ziele sie ihre strategischen Künste betätigen, so galt es diesem hier gleich wen und an welche Orte...und ob dies zum Guten oder zum Bösen geschah—." Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 158.

¹⁶⁴ "Dinge... von denen man in den Büchern nicht liest, die Furcht, die Müdigkeit, oder auch ein Herzklopfen, das bis zum Halze schlägt." Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 132.

repetition of a variety of blasphemous curses.¹⁶⁵ Berger observes another soldier in the room and thinks: “He had to belong to the old ones because he had the emaciated and dead expression that was common to them all.” This is a plague which quickly takes the new recruits as well. He describes these men, who arrived filled with enthusiasm, anxious for adventures, as he himself was, but instead, he writes, they found only meaninglessness and homesickness. Nor were they free as they had anticipated; far from it, they were under the constant supervision of their superiors, and they did not find the excitement of battle, but instead the boredom of barracks life. In this world, everything has been perverted, a powerful vision, in the context of the Third Reich.¹⁶⁶ This army is driven by no higher purpose; they care very little for what they fight, and have missed the deeper faith that Jünger acquired during the First World War. As Jünger believed that the National Socialists had, the soldiers of the French Foreign Legion have mistaken their priorities.

The reader realizes the true extent of Berger’s new cynicism when he finds himself in prison, just before his time in Africa comes to a close. When he becomes bored with the predictable life of camp, Berger attempts to join the forces stationed in Morocco. Having been captured, he is returned and thrown in jail. His idealism is shattered: “So I was truly in one of those places from which one reads about in books—.” This, however, was not the fantasy that he hoped to experience. This was instead a nightmare, one of the

¹⁶⁵ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 99.

¹⁶⁶ “Er mußte zu den alten Leuten gehören, denn er hatte den augezehrten und toten ... Ausdruck, der ihnen allen gemeinsam war.“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 100; Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 151; Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 133.

adventures, that as Goupil had said, was better experienced at home, while safely engrossed in a book.¹⁶⁷

Upon his return, he observes: “The contents of these short weeks appeared to me already so absurd, that I resolved to bar them entirely from my memory, like a silly and disjointed dream.”¹⁶⁸ His time in Africa had become ridiculous. It was not as he had hoped, an exhilarating excursion into the novel, but instead, a troubling and confusing experience of the dark side of peculiarity, only slightly outside the ordinary. As the doctor Goupil had predicted, it was a world better experienced vicariously.

Afrikanische Spiele is a story about the destruction of expectations and hopes; it can not be called an optimistic work. It leaves the reader with the feeling that plans and visions are worth very little in a world where one will consistently be disappointed. Though the narrator is now wiser, it is only through suffering. Thus it seems impossible to read this work outside of the context in which it was written. Ernst Jünger published this work three years after the assumption of power by the National Socialist, a right wing party that he had formerly supported and heralded as the greatest hope of the Nationalist Movement in such articles as “Schliesst Euch Zusammen.” *Afrikanische Spiele* was published three years after he declined the offer of the Deutsche Akademie and two years following his harsh chastisement of the *Völkische Beobachter* for their use of an excerpt from his work. This was a book published in transition. Three years had passed and the advent of the worker’s state had not come. Without Jünger’s actions during this time period, it might still be possible to read *Afrikanische Spiele* as simply a travel book, the

¹⁶⁷ “So war ich wirklich in eine jener Lagen geraten, von denen man in den Büchern liest—.“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 197.

¹⁶⁸ “Der Inhalt dieser kurzen Wochen erschien mir schon so absurd, dass ich beschloss, ihn ganze aus der Erinnerung zu verbannen, wie einem närrischen und unzusammenhängenden Traum.“ Jünger, *Afrikanische Spiele*, 213.

semi-autobiographical story of one boy's teen-angst; yet when considered in the context of its history, this is no longer a valid interpretation.

The themes of *Afrikanische Spiele* are ideas that will be central to all of Jünger's work during this period. One first encounters the overwhelming ignorance of the former self, the futility of battle without ideals, the darkness that underlies reality. Each can be found in increasing prominence in Jünger's writings as the 1930s progress. Both *Auf den Marmorklippen* and *Das abenteuerliche Herz* address this ignorance of the former self. In a similar way, the reader is struck by the comparison of the narrator in Jünger's vignette "In the Blind Quarter," from *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, to those blind men surrounding him.¹⁶⁹ This seems symbolic for the blindness with which Jünger was plagued earlier in his political writings; he did not see the potential outcomes of his theories. Additionally, *Auf den Marmorklippen* discusses the errors made when one does not recognize a danger for that which it is.¹⁷⁰

Thus in ignorance one risks falling into error. Both *Afrikanische Spiele* and *Auf den Marmorklippen* present a figure who come to the narrators and attempt to enlighten them. For Berger, one of these is the doctor, Goupil. His warnings, however, are ignored, leaving Berger to gain the wisdom of reality first hand. By 1939 and *Auf den Marmorklippen*, Jünger's narrator has begun to take more heed of his guides and teachers. This work suffers from no paucity of potential mentors, one encounters Belovar, the weathered resistance fighter, Father Lambros, the wise and distant priest, and the nihilist prince. The brothers, two intellectuals about whom the story revolves, flock to Father Lambros, the aged man of religion, adopting him as their guide. It is his sword that

¹⁶⁹ Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 14.

¹⁷⁰ Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen* (Hamburg: Hansische Verlagsanstalt, 1939), 30.

they carry with them into battle. Unlike Berger, the brothers' have begun to take heed of their guides. While they inevitably question his teachings, they generally respect his advice. Lambros is no perfect guide, but he is realistic; once he accepts that his isolation will not protect the village, he allows his pupils to join the fight. Perhaps this man's caution and the brothers' willingness to listen are symptoms of Jünger's own transition into a more mature outlook.

In addition to those themes introduced in *Afrikanische Spiele*, *Auf den Marmorklippen* presents a glorification of the innocent. Innocence becomes something beautiful, precious and fragile. This innocence is not the ignorant enthusiasm of Berger, but instead a pure and timeless quality, something that can be perverted only through external corruption. *Auf den Marmorklippen* depicts the pristine beauty and vulnerability of a community followed by the brutal destruction of this surreal serenity upon the violent usurpation of power by the tyrannical ruler, the Head Forester. From the outset of the work, the reader notices the emphasis that is placed upon the glory of bygone days. The narrator, or perhaps it is Jünger himself, asks the reader to think of those times and to appreciate the innocence that existed then; it is only when they have left that we can truly see their worth: "Only then do we comprehend how it is indeed a stroke of luck for us humans, if we live in our small community, under a peaceful roof, with good conversations and a loving greeting on morning and night. Ah, we always recognize too late, that with this the cornucopia was always richly open to us."¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ "Dann erst begreifen wir, wie sehr es schon ein Glücksfall für uns Menschen ist, wenn wir in unseren kleinen Gemeinschaften dahinleben, unter friedlichen Dach, bei guten Gesprächen und mit liebevollem Gruß am Morgen und zur Nacht. Ach, stets zu spät erkennen wir, daß damit schon das Fullhorn reich für uns geöffnet war." Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 6.

The opening is filled with regret and pathos. The reader is shown the innocent pleasure of the world that existed previously, the love of family and friends, enriching conversation, a peaceful home. Beginning this novel in such a way, Jünger directly and effectively brings the reader to think of pleasant times past; by addressing the reader, bringing the individual into the mentality of pleasure and innocence lost, he intentionally and powerfully makes this book relevant to that time and place in which it was published: Nazi Germany.

He goes on to discuss the innocence of this world in which the two brothers have come to live. As the book opens the brothers spend their days lounging on their patio, one reading, one occupied with his botanical specimens. They are engrossed in discovery and the pursuit of knowledge and art. In the evenings, they can enjoy the beautiful view of the valley from the heights of the marble cliffs on which they live. The reader can not help but understand the enthusiasm of the brothers for these moments to be Jünger's as well. These scenes are reminiscent of what one could easily envision the aesthetically minded Jünger employing himself with during his extended adventures to Norway, Brazil, and Greece. Even the description of a tryst between the narrator and a young native woman who will go on to have his child is innocent and childlike. He describes the scene as they run through the forest, as though playing a game. It is a scene that if it were to occur later in the book would not bear such innocent implications. This game of chase in the woods would instead be an aggressive pursuit, Lairetta, the girl would run in fear, not in playfulness. As it is, any fear Lairetta experiences is soon appeased and the narrator writes of the moment when he takes her in his arms: "Then she too began to smile."¹⁷²

¹⁷² "Da began auch sie zu lächeln." Jünger, *Auf den Marmorclippen*, 12.

This occurs in proximity to a grand festival that is taking place in the land; it is an atmosphere of joy and happiness, devoid of dark undertones.

The child that is created from this union is also innocent and pure. He possesses the remarkable gift of gaining the trust of animals; instinctively they come to him: “It even seemed to me as though the animals sought out his company—.”¹⁷³ Coupled with the glorification of nature that one encounters in the book, such an ability to commune with it can only be seen as a great gift and proof of a particular blessedness. This purity and innocence can not last in this world that is threatened by tyranny and destruction. By the end of the book Laretta has been sent away, and their child, Erio, is employed as a messenger in the brothers’ fight against the growing destruction. No longer is anything or anyone innocent.

Not only is the purity of human relationships and interactions corrupted, but also the creative things that they produce. *Auf den Marmorklippen* is also a book about the rape of intellectualism and art. The brothers’ home is a testament to the author’s reverence for cultural production and intellectualism. Not only do both undertake academic pursuits, but their hermitage serves as home to illuminated manuscripts, pressed flowers, archaeological fossils; the rooms are lined by the “fathers of the church, thinkers, and classical authors of old and new and before all else a collection of dictionaries and encyclopedias of all types.”¹⁷⁴ This paradise that Jünger creates and glorifies for the reader is also a sanctuary for the worthwhile productions of humanity and nature. It glorifies creation.

¹⁷³ “Auch war es mir, als ob die Tiere seine Nähe suchten—.” Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 24.

¹⁷⁴ “...kirchenväter, die Denker, und die klassischen Autoren der alten und der neuen Zeit, und vor allem eine Sammlung vor Wörterbüchern und Enzyklopädien aller Art.” Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 17.

The forces that threaten this idyllic society are bent upon destruction. The Head Forester, the dictatorial power who gradually engulfs the entire community with his despotism and oppression, has no respect for creation. As his power grows, the reader is shown images of him destroying the natural beauty of this world, crushing fragile flowers.¹⁷⁵ In addition, prior to the coming of the Head Forester, the narrator describes the position of poets in the society as extremely honored. They were well known in the community and asked to compose works on momentous occasions. Once the new tyrant has assumed power, however, Jünger writes: “We lived in times, in which the author was sentenced to loneliness.”¹⁷⁶ Loneliness is a far cry from the prestigious position that artists previously held.

In addition this line appears to be a blatant critique of the cultural policy of the Third Reich. As was discussed, early in the National Socialists rule they brought the organs of cultural production in Germany under their control. Those figures who disagreed with them politically were removed from their posts and replaced by those individuals who would support the Nazi regime. Culture was subjugated to politics. Jünger’s comment on loneliness would very accurately describe the situation of the writer who did not buy into National Socialist ideology during this time period. While they might live in their old home, in their country, their work went unrecognized and unnoticed. They were indeed condemned to professional isolation. I believe that Jünger was referring not only to the brothers in Mauretania, but also to himself in this moment. While he was able to publish he had to do so cautiously. He was forced to burn his journals, and watch his actions. It was not a society of free artistic creation, nor could

¹⁷⁵ Jünger, *Auf den Marmorlippen*, 55.

¹⁷⁶ “Wir lebten in Zeiten, in denen der Autor zur Einsamkeit verurteilt ist.” Jünger, *Auf den Marmorlippen*, 47; Jünger, *Auf den Marmorlippen*, 81.

there exists a cohesive independent literary community; thus an author was forced into the “Inner Emigration,” a dictated loneliness.

Jünger’s own “Inner Emigration” and condemnation to loneliness was in a large part visible in his decision to remove himself from the political public eye. In his work, this meant creating narrators who often observed, without acting, a theme which comes into acute prominence in both *Das abenteuerliche Herz* and *Auf den Marmorklippen*. Action was the primary focus of his earlier work, particularly such articles as “Die Totale Mobilmachung,” and his full length work *Der Arbeiter*; yet now he is thrown into pitiful inaction. Many of the vignettes in *Das abenteuerliche Herz* focus on observations made by disinterested observers. They see the horror and havoc that is occurring, but do nothing. They, like the author, are destined only to describe the disturbing events that they witness. One of the most striking examples of this detachment appears in the story of “The Black Knight.” One is first struck by the fact that this story is in fact titled “The Black Knight.” In literature the black knight is typically not the hero, but on the contrary the villain; this idea is not contradicted in the story. The narrator finds himself in a very large castle, surrounded by doors on all sides. After walking for a while through the many rooms he comes to the decision to open one of the doors; to his utter amazement he finds a scene of gruesome torture.

The picture that he paints, however, is disturbingly unemotional, and the reader is struck by the technical way in which the knight is able to describe the mutilation of the girl inside. Before him stands a table at which three women sit; it is obviously a mother and her two daughters, one of whom is being tortured by her mother and sister. It is a traumatizing image. A mother is doing that which seems most unnatural, harming her

child. The knight, however, in contrast to what literature expects of someone in his station, does not rush in to prevent the further enactment of this strange ritual, but instead quietly shuts the door and disappears back into the hallway. “Then I knew: behind every door, from the deepest cellar to the highest tower, endless tortures played out, from which no one would ever hear. I had infiltrated the secret Castle of Pain, but already the first model was too strong for me.”¹⁷⁷ The knight knows that the entire castle is filled with violence, torture, and horrible atrocities, but he does nothing to end them; he simply flees. He detaches himself from that which oppresses. One must wonder if this is indeed a comment by Jünger on his own behavior; perhaps he like the black knight is simply an observer. His duty is only to report; he is not strong enough to combat even the mildest of the tortures. Likewise there seems to be little condemnation of the black knight’s actions; there is no comment that he ought to have interfered. In fact, as one reads it, it appears utterly natural that he leaves the inhabitants of the castle undisturbed. These individuals appear to be entirely and completely unaware of the knight’s presence (perhaps this is again a commentary on the loneliness of the author); they acknowledge neither his entrance into nor his exit from the room. Perhaps his only purpose is to be an observer and reporter.

The vignette entitled “Violet Endives” follows a similar plan; in this story, however, the outside observer enters long after the torture comes to an end: these victims are long dead. This narration, like many of the tales from *Das abenteuerliche Herz* is told

¹⁷⁷ “Da weiß ich: hinter jeder Tur, vom tiefsten Keller bis in das höchste Turmgelaß, spielen endlose Folterqualen, von denen nie ein Mensch erfahren wird. Ich bin in die geheime Burg des Schmerzes eingedrungen, aber bereits das erste seiner Modelle war zu stark für mich.“ Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 30.

as the sequence from a dream.¹⁷⁸ While passing by a shop one day, Jünger's narrator notices a window displaying especially enticing endives. Upon entering the shop and questioning the owner about their nature, he is led into a cellar filled with hanging human corpses. Arrayed in a case he finds various parts of human bodies for sale: hands, brains, livers. The shock of the reader increases upon the narrator's statement of: "It did not surprise me that the salesman explained to me that the only type of dish for which this would be suitable would be human flesh."¹⁷⁹ The narrator does not express any horror or distress at this information; in fact, the intense darkness of the tale springs almost more from the apathy of the narrator than from the occurrences themselves. "I did not know that civilization in this state had come so far forward," he comments as the salesman leads him back up the stairs.¹⁸⁰ At this moment, the reader must be appalled at the way in which the character takes such news, and ask him or herself what the author meant to convey with a scenario so far from the realm of one's expectations. The character has separated himself completely from what one would expect of the average compassionate human being. It is very difficult to read this sketch as anything other than a condemnation of the Nazi regime, which was becoming increasingly brutal, both mentally and physically, in the years leading up to the publication of this second edition. Nazi society has not only turned humanity into simply another product to be consumed, but in addition

¹⁷⁸ This dream motif in itself can be read as a form of dissociation from the present. Jünger narrates his dark and possibly subversive tales under the screen of an involuntary vision in a dream.

¹⁷⁹ "Es überraschte mich nicht, daß der Verkäufer mir erklärte, die einzige sorte Fleisch, für die dieses Gericht als Zukost in Frage käme, sei Menschenfleisch—." Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 11.

¹⁸⁰ "Ich wußte nicht, daß die Zivilisation in dieser Staat schon so weit fortgeschritten ist." Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 12.

created acquiescent accomplices. Yet like the knight in the castle, this narrator will only impart his discoveries to others.¹⁸¹

The brothers of *Auf den Marmorklippen* prove similarly distant observers in the face of the gruesome reality of the Head Forester's camp. This grizzly scene describes the inhumane treatment of the dictator's enemies: human hands hang from the wall, their former owners heads dangle from nearby trees; yet the brothers pose no opposition. They stand fascinated, horrified, and decide simply to turn away in shock. Like the knight and the narrator for "Violet Endives," they do nothing. In contrast, however, to those characters from 1938, these men, from the 1939 work, will join the fight. Jünger's resistance is growing. These atrocities can no longer be entirely ignored. The narrator writes: "Thus are the cellars on which the proud castles of tyranny erect themselves."¹⁸² While Jünger supposedly would not know of the extent of the atrocities of German prison camps until much later, one can assume that he was aware of their existence. Köppels-Bleek, as the Head Forester's camp is called, is unquestionably a seemingly dramatized version of how Jünger would have envisioned the work camp of the Third Reich.

The two brothers indeed join the resistance fight; yet as in the case of the Black Knight, one often finds them standing as observers. This is especially true during the concluding battle of the text. As the story comes to an end, the brothers stand in the middle of the chaos. The narrator retreats to a gazebo from which he can observe the burning of his world; yet despite the chaos he is still able to fantasize about the glory of

¹⁸¹ Martin Meyer does, however, question the irony in the narrator's statement, wondering if perhaps Jünger might indeed have seen this subjugation of the individual as a great advance in society. Meyer, *Jünger*, 20.

¹⁸² "So sind die Keller, darauf die stolzen Schlösser der Tyrannis sich erheben...." Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 96.

ideals that drive humanity to such ends.¹⁸³ Standing on the marble cliffs, he describes the destruction that the war has wrought.

Behind this distance, however, lies the undeniable brutality that these pieces describe. Building on the dark atmosphere first introduced in *Afrikanische Spiele*, darkness has become a permanent feature in Jünger's works by the end of the decade. *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, as can be seen from these two excerpts, is a work about an altered and painful reality where humanity is no longer sacred; *Auf den Marmorclippen* details the destruction of a world. The increasing foreboding and anguish that is present in Jünger's works of this period underscores his ever widening distance from the National Socialists. Nothing is quite normal, as in his story "In the Blind Quarter," during which he belatedly realizes that everyone around him is blind.¹⁸⁴ Even a seemingly normal situation carries a disconcerting moment of realization.

Yet underlying all of the subversive elements there exists one that remains from the 1920s: the revolutionizing effect of war. The four books of this period effectively display the transformation of this basic ideal of Jünger. During his first major work of the Nazi period, *Blätter und Steine*, these traces of are quite apparent, a fact which is inevitable given the fact that this work is primarily a collection of previous writings. The focus of his essay "Feuer und Blut" (Fire and Blood) is almost entirely the importance of war in life. He writes: "War is not a circumstance subject entirely to its own laws, on the contrary it is another side of life." His essay goes on to elaborate on this, emphasizing the representative way in which war integrates technology and tradition. The essay with which he concludes the collection, "Über den Schmerz" (Concerning pain), conveys a

¹⁸³ Jünger, *Auf den Marmorclippen*, 130.

¹⁸⁴ Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, 12.

similar idea, declaring that “eternal life” is only possible in a world where there exist ideals for which one would be willing to die.¹⁸⁵

Afrikanische Spiele reflects this primacy of the all important idea as well. While Jünger’s character might become disillusioned with life in the world in which he anticipated adventure, this is solely because of its failure to live up to his expectations of adventure and fulfilling a grand and greater goal. Berger attempts to join the action on his own with his friend Benoit, and until the end, he maintains the hope that had he encountered this conflict, then it might have been worthwhile. As it was, it was a thwarted attempt at achieving that one thing that might draw him out of the boredom of bourgeois existence: battle with a higher purpose. Jünger still holds on to the image of war and struggle as releasing. In addition the condemnation of the soldiers in the Foreign Legion seems to hinge on the fact that they do not fight for a true ideal, a factor that in battle Jünger sees as indispensable.

The primacy of the transformative power of war is present in his later works as well, however, particularly and probably most notably, as it was his final and most openly critical novel of the period, in *Auf den Marmorklippen*. The final battle of the novel finds the two brothers deep in the thick of the fighting. As it nears the end, they watch as the leader of the resistance falls. The reader is suddenly taken back to Jünger’s famed war journals as the narrator describes Belovar’s death using a depiction of glory in the fight, a similarity which is unanticipated. Jünger’s vision of growth through struggle comes to true fruition, however, as the brothers examine the rubble of their home and environs. The narrator observes: “There is no house built, no plan achieved, in which the

¹⁸⁵ “Krieg ist nicht ein Zustand der völlig seinen eigenen Gesetzen unterworfen ist, sondern eine andere Seite des Lebens....“ Jünger, *Blätter und Steine*, 87; Jünger, *Blätter und Steine*, 98; Jünger, *Blätter und Steine*, 177.

downfall which now lives imperishably does not stand as foundation....”¹⁸⁶ This is the heart of Jünger’s theory for the future. This is the cornerstone of the idea that will underlie his essay for the reconstruction of Europe. In this sentence he envisions a great battle, as Europe will see, one for him that set a solid foundation from which to build. This vision has changed, however, from that which was born during World War I. The darkness and cynicism of the works from these years gives birth to the glorification of the peace and serenity one finds in *Auf den Marmorklippen*. Thus the result of these struggles will not be the harsh German dominance that Jünger previously predicts, but instead a less abrasive reconstruction. During the 1930s, Jünger experienced a transition from underplayed ideological differences with the National Socialists to an understanding of the tragedy that these differences might bring about. He will carry this new vision that encompassed his increasing antipathy for the regime as well as his original philosophical goals, into World War II.

IV. Chapter III

The Rise of Pan Europeanism: The Second World War and Beyond

¹⁸⁶ “Es wird kein Haus gebaut, kein Plan geschaffen, in welchem nicht der Untergang als Grundstein steht...was unvergänglich nun lebt.“ Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 139; Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 150.

Auf den Marmoklippen was finished just two weeks before Ernst Jünger's entrance into the Wehrmacht.¹⁸⁷ There is something inevitably ironic in the fact that his most renowned piece of anti-Nazi literature appeared as he entered into the organization that was intended to protect that same state. His summons arrived on August 26, 1939. He writes: "At nine o'clock in the morning as I studied Herodotus comfortably in bed, Louise brought the mobilization order...I received it without great surprise, as from month to month, week to week, the picture of war emerged more distinct."¹⁸⁸ It is interesting to note that at the moment when his call to arms reaches him, Jünger is found reading Herodotus, a historian of great wars. Jünger seems to be preparing for this challenge that faces him, and he ought to prepare; this war will be entirely different from that of 1914. If in that war he saw men purified by their trials, this war would test men equally; yet most would fail.

Jünger served throughout the four and half years of World War II; yet unlike his years of service in World War I, he saw very little combat. Promoted to captain just prior to his departure from Germany, he spent the majority of the war as an officer with minimal responsibility working with the Vichy government in Paris. Although he briefly served on the eastern front, and for a time early on in the war, manned a refugee and POW camp, he experienced the majority of World War II under a lenient senior staff censoring soldiers' letters.¹⁸⁹ This light service allowed Jünger plenty of time to record his wartime observations.

¹⁸⁷ Loose, *Gestalt*, 151.

¹⁸⁸ "Um neun Uhr morgens, als ich im Bette behaglich im Herodot studierte, brachte Louise den Mobilisierungsbefehl herauf...den ich ohne große Überraschung empfing, da sich das Bild des Krieges von Monat zu Monat und von Woche zu Woche schärfer abzeichnete." Ernst Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen: Aus den Tagebüchern von 1939-1940* (Berlin: E.S. Miller & Shon, 1942), 49.

¹⁸⁹ Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 174; Woods, *Nature*, 265; Kaiser, *Mythos*, 187; Loose, *Gestalt*, 177; Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 183.

In the introduction to the second half of his World War II journals, entitled *Stralungen*, (Radiations, 1949) Jünger writes: “The journal...remains in a totalitarian state the only possible conversation.”¹⁹⁰ Jünger took full advantage of this ability; by the end of the 1940s, he had published close to a thousand pages recording his experience of the Second World War, beginning before his reentry into the army and concluding in mid-April of 1945. In contrast to his journals from World War I, these were preserved in purely journal format, supposedly undergoing only minimal revisions prior to their publication, a fact which lends these books a strongly personal and honest tone. Jünger records both the positive and negative experiences, the beautiful and the grotesque, because, as he writes: “There are also light and dark rays.”¹⁹¹ The reader realizes that unlike his work *In Stahlgewittern*, this is no ideological treatise, but instead a recording of his experiences, that is, at times, all too honest.

Gärten und Strassen: Aus den Tagebüchern von 1939 und 1940 (Gardens and Avenues: from the Journals of 1939 and 1940, 1942), the first volume of observances, appeared in 1942. This first portion recorded his experiences during his first two years of service prior to his arrival in Paris. The reader is reintroduced to the Ernst Jünger of wartime, but in a different guise than previously. While throughout his Second World War records, Jünger is careful to disguise references to Hitler, the SS, Himmler, and others of his contemporaries,¹⁹² his guise was not thick enough. *Gärten und Strassen* saw only one publication in Germany prior to the end of the war.¹⁹³ One must also assume,

¹⁹⁰ “...des Tagebuch...bleibt es im totalen Staat das letzte mögliche Gespräch.“ Ernst Jünger, *Stralungen* (Tübingen: Heliopolis Verlag, 1949), 9.

¹⁹¹ “Auch gibt es helle und dunkle Strahlungen.” Ernst Jünger, *Stralungen*, 10; Loose, *Gestalt*, 179.

¹⁹² Hitler: Kniëbolo; SS: Lemuren; Niekisch: Cellaris; Goebbels: Grandgoschier. Neaman, 199; Loose, 183.

¹⁹³ Neaman, *Durioub Past*, 177.

however, that this was due in part to the fact that unlike the renowned *In Stahlgewittern*, *Gärten und Strassen* no longer called unreservedly for the youth of Germany to sacrifice their lives at the front. His writings of World War II would never be required reading in Nazi schools. The second portion of his journals, chronicling the years from 1941 until 1945 remained unpublished in Germany until 1949. It is unsurprising that the publication of this portion had to wait until the fall of the Nazi regime; it is far more critical, or perhaps conversely, it is more critical due to the freedom allowed by the end of the decade. This second publication consists of four books: “The First Parisian Journal,” “Notes from the Caucasus,” “The Second Parisian Journal,” “Pages from Kirchhorst.”¹⁹⁴

The journals from this year have drawn a number of different responses from the German community and historians. These works have served to elicit understanding and compassion and on the other extreme have brought comparisons of Jünger’s attitudes to those of Nero, the infamous Roman emperor who gleefully watched his city burn. Eliot Neaman tends to take a more tolerant approach to Jünger’s attitude during this period. While he questioned Jünger’s dedication to the anti-Nazi cause during the 1930s, he cedes a more understanding and compassionate nature during his wartime station. After the description of Jünger’s awed admiration of ancient literary editions that he encounters in Paris, Neaman writes: “Consider the plundering of art treasures by coarse men like Göring and Frank, and Jünger’s discretion is the more admirable.”¹⁹⁵ This point can not be legitimately questioned by anyone with any true knowledge of Jünger’s actions. Always possessing a fascination with French literature, art, and intellectuals, Jünger expressed a respect and admiration for the occupied country that was scarce among other

¹⁹⁴ Loose, *Gestalt*, 177.

¹⁹⁵ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 178.

German officers. Neaman does concede, however, that “Jünger’s capacity for total dissociation as though he was not a participant in Hitler’s war of subjugation is astounding.”¹⁹⁶ It is this dissociative quality that has brought fifty years of criticism upon Jünger. In his 1982 interview with *Der Spiegel*, the interviewer’s the antagonism towards the aging and overly-defensive Jünger is apparent. This individual addresses Jünger concerning his seemingly unfeeling observation of the bombing of Paris while sipping champagne saying: “...a great fascination comes for you from death, defeat, and destruction...”¹⁹⁷ Critiques like these often spring from Jünger’s sometimes clinical, sometimes purely aesthetic descriptions of the horror that attended World War II.

I would argue that Neaman is quite accurate in his description of Jünger’s ability to dissociate; this is a quality that is apparent throughout the thirty years of his writing to this point, as with the Black Knight in *Das abenteuerliche Herz*; it is equally important, however, to observe the obvious change in Jünger’s description of horror and destruction. The journals of World War II are distinctly and dramatically different than those of the First World War. Victims now have names, and Jünger begins to address the question of responsibility. Unlike his response in World War I, Jünger realizes that not all fighting, not all death, is for a glorious cause. While the war might indeed transform society, allow it to grow, it will do so at a great, dehumanizing, and brutal cost. Aptly, Helmut Kaiser describes the question that underlies Jünger’s work during this time period as the question of “what to do?” Sadly, he observes, Jünger seems to find no solution.¹⁹⁸ Like his fictional brothers in *Auf den Marmorklippen*, Jünger finds himself impotent without guidance in the face of literal and cultural destruction.

¹⁹⁶ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 196.

¹⁹⁷ Augstein, Karsek, and Wieser, “Bruderschaftstrinken,” 162.

¹⁹⁸ Kaiser, *Mythos*, 344.

For Ernst Jünger, World War II was entirely different than World War I. This war was not the battle for the integrity of Germany any longer, but one that had been perverted by a corrupt and misguided government. In August of 1941, Jünger wrote in a letter to his friend Carl Schmitt: “What do you have to say about the development of this war? I find that that a severe demonic architect dwells within it...”¹⁹⁹ This was not a war that was guided by noble principles, not a cleansing battle, for honor such as World War I, this was a demonic war. When this letter is read in conjunction with Jünger’s journals, it becomes quite clear that this demon that dwells within the war is Hitler. Throughout Jünger’s works, Hitler is portrayed as base and evil, a force that degrades the war and those who fight it. Jünger records in March of 1942 upon being read the newest orders for the military government in Paris: “The change in Kniebolo [Hitler] from the diabolical to the satanic is now ever more apparent.”²⁰⁰ Hitler’s newest orders and goals are becoming only more appalling to Jünger’s elite sensibilities. Jünger does not hesitate to place blame on the National Socialists for breaches of noble moral conduct. A month before his observation on the continual corruption of Hitler himself, he observes that one can not question who it is that is causing the havoc that destroys Europe, massive reprisals for German deaths are causing resistance and uprising in Paris, resulting in a demolition of society that Jünger makes quite clear he sees as ineffective.²⁰¹ On March 12, 1942, he records: “It is said that since the sterilization and death of the insane, the number of children born with mental illnesses has multiplied. Similarly, with the elimination of the beggars, poverty has become universal, and the decimation of the Jews drives the spread

¹⁹⁹ “Was sagen Sie zur Entwicklung dieses Krieges? Ich finde daß ihm eine Streng dämonsische Architektonik innewohnt...” Ernst Jünger, “Brief an Carl Schmitt, 2.8.1941,” 123.

²⁰⁰ “Bei Knièbolo wird die Wendung von Diabolos zum Satanus jetzt immer deutlicher.” Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 111.

²⁰¹ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 93; Neaman, *Durioub Past*, 184.

of Jewish characteristics in the world. Through extermination one does not extinguish the model, but makes it free.”²⁰² While the prerogatives to which Jünger points might not be entirely noble, the reader understands the meaning of his criticism. The policies of the regime are not solutions.

The perverse nature of the war causes, instead of engendering the noble qualities that Jünger felt were propagated by the first war, the spread of internal disintegration. As early as 1941, soon after his arrival in Paris, he writes of the variety of illnesses that pervade Paris. The reader understands that these are not illnesses of the flesh, but instead of the spirit. He writes: “It appears that...there are higher and dirtier types of death.”²⁰³ In addition, this war has created not unity but loneliness. Upon meeting a fellow World War I combatant, Jünger wonders at the unity and community that was forged by that war; yet one finds in his journal of this second war, only mentions of loneliness. It is loneliness that drives people to confide in one another, it is homesickness that causes a feeling of isolation and the sense of being forever foreign. This is not a war that produces a unified, honorable and strong fighting force.²⁰⁴

These feelings of horror and disappointment in the war create a sense of impotence in Jünger. While he experiences fleeting moments of actions, such as that on one of his first evenings in charge of the French prisoners of war in which he sacrifices his own dinner so that they might have food, the reader most often finds him speaking of the uselessness of action.²⁰⁵ As the war comes to a close and he listens to a speech of

²⁰² “Es heißt, daß seit der Sterilisierung und Tötung von Irren die Zahl der geisteskrank geborenen Kinderlich vervielfacht hat. Ganz ähnlich ist mit der Unterdrückung der Bettler die Armug allgemein geworden, und führt die Deziernierung der Juden zur Verbreitung jüdischer Eigenschaften in der Welt. Durch Ausrotterung löscht man die Urbilder nicht aus; man macht sie eher frei.“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 110.

²⁰³ “Es scheint,..., hohe und niedere Arten des Sterbens gibt.” Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 63.

²⁰⁴ Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 200; Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 127; Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 52.

²⁰⁵ Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 167.

Hitler, he comments: “In the same way, freedom of the will and the power to resist fade.” Hitler’s power and overwhelming rhetorical style seem hopeless to fight. They affect the people like a drug, killing their ability to think freely or resist.²⁰⁶ As for Jünger’s own resistance, for the most part it takes place in private. He keeps his journals under lock and key and rejoices in those moments and places where he might read and speak freely, without concern for being heard or betrayed. Those that he observes resisting, seem to him fools. Describing the French youths who wear yellow stars on their lapels bearing such words as “Idealist,” he cynically records: “These are the types who do not yet know that the times of discussion are over.”²⁰⁷ Jünger’s fatalistic approach is to wait, to wait for the war and its twisted creators to play themselves out.

Jünger seems to fall under the category of Nazis who joined the army or participated in the hopes that by doing so, they were preventing the rise to power of someone more vicious. This is most apparent in one of the most quoted and most detailed episodes of Jünger’s journals in which he is called upon to oversee the execution of a young man sentenced to death. Jünger describes his hesitation; he considers remaining home, but in the end, he writes: “I thought: perhaps it is better, that you are there than any other.” Thus he attends. He even admits a curiosity to see the moment of a man’s death. As a soldier, he has seen many men die; yet he has never been present and observed them in that very moment. When that moment comes, however, it is not as glorious as he anticipated. While many point to this passage as a proof of his insensitivity and morbid curiosity, I believe that this is a moment when Jünger begins to show compassion for his

²⁰⁶ “Im gleichen Verhältnis schwinden Willens freiheit und Kraft zum Widerstande.” Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 566.

²⁰⁷ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 58; Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 153; “Das sind Nature, die noch nicht wissen, daß die Zeiten der Diskussion vorüber sind;“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 126.

fellow human. He does not watch the man's death without feeling but says: "I would like to look past, but nevertheless I force myself to look straight...." For one of the first times, the reader finds Jünger distraught by death. He worries that the convulsions, the movements of the man's face were horror at the realization of his death. Terror. The doctor assures him that they were simply muscle reflexes; nonetheless, Jünger is disturbed.²⁰⁸

This is an example of one of the greatest differences between the Jünger that appears during the Second World War and that that gave him his famed reputation as a warmonger. He has begun to think about the victims. Suddenly, it is no longer simply a story about Jünger's glory, but one also about those others who suffered as well. Suddenly, the reader finds his family mentioned. In the "Epigram Appendix" to *Blätter und Steine*, Jünger wrote: "The number of the sufferers is meaningless."²⁰⁹ This is a statement in true keeping with the Jünger of 1918. The number of dead means nothing, only the effect that they produced. World War II negates this statement. On December 7, 1941, the day that Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, all but ensuring an American entrance into the war, Jünger writes: "Perhaps the year of 1942 will be that in which more men than ever will go to Hades."²¹⁰ This is not said with the easy indifference that one might expect to find from the hardened soldier Jünger, but instead it is said with a resigned cynicism. All that exists is destruction.

²⁰⁸ "Auch dache ich: vielleicht ist es besser, daß *du* dort bist als irgendein anderer." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 39; "Ich möchte fortblicken, zwinge mich aber dennoch hinzusehen...." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 41.

²⁰⁹ "Die Zahl der Leidenden ist bedeutungslos." Jünger, *Blätter und Steine*, 226.

²¹⁰ "Vielleicht wird das Jahr 1942 dasjenige, in dem mehr Menschen als jemals zugleich zum Hades hinübergehen." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 73.

Yet increasingly the seasoned war veteran frowns upon the scenes of violence that he finds ever present or rumored. In 1943 Jünger observes of those Parisians who collaborate with the Nazi regime: “Frequently I encounter now people, even women, who pride themselves on the fact that barbarity and in particular the mass killings of our days do not unsettle them, and that the killings are understandable, natural, indeed something to strive for, in them they see commitment.”²¹¹ For Jünger this is appalling; he compares it to attending a masked ball and suddenly seeing the guests in their true ugliness. While one might question Jünger’s right to criticize when he himself is a part of the regime that makes such killings and horror possible, the distinction for him comes in the fact that he does not actively and vocally condone such inhumane actions. Jünger encountered similar ideas two years earlier during a discussion with a man at the German Institute. This man had waxed eloquent at his surprise that the German forces were not carrying out mass slaughters of Jewish citizens. He claims that if the communists had been present, that they would have “taught” the Germans how to handle the Jewish community. At this point, Jünger still appears quite baffled by these statements. While one does not see the open horror that one encounters in the later passages over such statements, Jünger accuses this man of Nihilism, one of the worst insults from a man who believes that a deep sense or purpose ought to underlay every action.²¹² This man’s sadistic desires are for Jünger, a negating of this purpose.

This half fascination has become outright shock by the time that Jünger himself sees first hand the treatment of Europe’s Jews. While he was present in Germany for the

²¹¹ “Häufig begegne ich jetzt Menschen, auch Frauen, die sich rühmen, daß die Grausamkeit und insbesondere die Massentötung unserer Tage sie nicht beunruhigten, und daß sie etwas Verständliches, Natürliches, ja Anzustrebendes, Vertrautes in ihnen sehen.“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 311.

²¹² Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 72.

Nazi anti-Semitic policies of the 1930s, it is not until he arrives in Paris and watches the quick degradation of this great city's Jewish population that he begins to be truly horrified. In addition, he begins to hear rumors of the horrible fates of those who are deported. Early in 1940 Jünger wrote in his journal something that proved almost prescient for the situation of the Jews of Europe: "One sees only when one searches, so there are many things in the world, that one first accepts as true when one has contact with them. And others are there that one does not see."²¹³ Rumors of the horrors of the Holocaust filter into Germany and the western occupied territories, but they are believed too late internationally and met with disbelief or inaction in Germany.

As the situation worsened in Paris, Jünger's feeling of shame increased. In June of 1942 he first encountered the Jewish star on the blouses of three young girls; a month later he watched a deportation of Paris's Jews with horror and dismay. He realizes that until this point, he too has acted without thinking; he neither questioned who he is nor what he has done. He writes: "Even I have if it came to that, never let in a doubt to how I think and who I am."²¹⁴ He realizes that these soldiers who carry out these orders do not consider what they do, and they do not question why. It is not until April of 1943 that he becomes entirely aware of the true extent of the massacres of Jewish communities. "At such disclosures, horror gripped me; the idea of a monstrous danger seized me.... There is in these highest executioners a type of eerie clear-sightedness, that is not based on

²¹³ "Man sieht nur wenn man sie sucht. So gibt es viele Dingen der Welt, die man erst wahrnimmt, wenn man Kenntnis von ihnen hat. Und andere sind da die man nicht sieht." Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 99.

²¹⁴ "Auch habe ich wenn es darauf ankam, nie einen Zweifel daran gelassen, wie ich denke und wer ich bin." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 136; Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 125; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 191.

intelligence, but on demonic drives.”²¹⁵ This is not as death in a glorious war, nor the noble killing of worthy opponents for a meaningful purpose, but the mass slaughter of the innocent. These forces of destruction wanted only to kill, and they possessed a determined and clear vision of who these casualties would be. His distress and disapproval carries through the rest of his narration. This is not the second war that he had predicted and hoped for, this is a war of attrition against those who are least deserving of such destruction. This is a war fought not for the protection of sacred causes, but by its use of the names of such causes, a war that is fought in the perversion of these hopes.

According to Jünger, the reality of such destruction and terror in Europe removes all sense of security and normalcy. As the war enters its final months in 1944, he records in response to a speech by Hitler that actions such as those carried out by the Nazi government “destroy the security and give the masses the opportunity for agreement.”²¹⁶ Jünger believes that it is only through the complete and total breakdown of a sense of security and safety that people are able to agree with such absurd policies. This destruction of the sense of normalcy and security is also reflected in the abundance of dream references throughout Jünger’s journals. There are references to his dreams, to those of comrades, and indeed to those of his wife as well. They now live in a time when reality has been so far deformed that Gretha will write to her husband of dreams that she has of his well-being; they live in a time when dreams, whether fantasies or nightmares can seem to depict reality.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ “Bei solchen Mitteilungen erfaßt mich Entsetzen, ergreift mich die Ahnung einer ungeheueren Gefahr...Es gibt bei ihren höchsten Henkern eine Art von unheimlicher Hellsichtigkeit, die nicht auf Intelligenz, sondern auf dämonischen Antrieben beruht.“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 309.

²¹⁶ “...zerstört die Sicherungen und gibt der Masse Gelegenheit zur Zustimmung.“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 562.

²¹⁷ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 47.

As early as 1939 these dreams were taking on nightmarish qualities, centering on death and destruction. Jünger records one dream just after his arrival at the front, at the end of September, 1939: “I dreamt that I was sentenced to death. The completely hopeless situation in such a dream by far surpasses the reality of life.” He describes the feeling he has at that moment as like that before an exam: “Life converts itself into a test, and we will never pass it. How happy one feels when one awakes.”²¹⁸ Little did Jünger know how like reality this dream would become. While in late 1939 the idea of such a verdict, if possible, was still quite foreign, by the end of the war it was quite real. Death and arrest lurked around the corner; by the war’s end many of Jünger’s colleagues in the Wehrmacht would come to just this fate.

In other dream scenes Jünger was visited by voices giving him guidance or advice. In April of 1941 he was visited by a dream woman who whispered to him that “it is still not too late.”²¹⁹ The reader is left to wonder what it is that Jünger is being goaded to do, perhaps to resist those powerful forces in the National Socialist party. Yet by the end of that same year, this hope is past. Dorothea, the dream woman of *Afrikanische Spiele*, come to him crying: “freedom is over.”²²⁰ This admonition, coming only eight months after the first, arrives on December 8, 1941, the day after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Only the day before he had reflected that the coming year might be even bloodier than that that preceded it. Perhaps in that moment Jünger realized that all hope of an easy answer had fled. There would be no clean end to the war now.

²¹⁸ “Träumte, daß ich zum Tode verurteilt sei. Die völlig hoffnungslose Lage in solchen Träumen übertrifft bei weitem die Wirklichkeit des Lebens....Das Leben verwandelt sich in eine Prüfung, und wir werden sie nie bestehen. Wie glücklich fühlt man, wenn man erwacht.“ Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 54.

²¹⁹ “Noch ist es nicht zu spät.“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 28.

²²⁰ “mit der Freiheit ist es vorbei....“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 74.

Jünger, always an aesthetic, once again turned to natural beauty and intellectual activity to distance himself from the destruction and devastation which confronted him each day. The pages of his Paris journals are filled with the stories of hours spent in the salons of the Parisian intellectual elite. As Thomas Nevin observed, this was the group that would have been Jünger's natural milieu at any time in history. thus he found himself quite comfortable returning to these realms in occupied Paris. He frequented the homes of society ladies, families of high standing, attended lunches and teas. Many historians from this time period paint him as quite the society man, which indeed is not difficult to do. Again the passage is cited in which he watches the fires burn in Paris. In this passage a true morbidity is shown; he calls his drink a drink of companionship with death. Yet one must be cautious to judge, as this statement is said with a sense of resignation and bitterness. He concludes with the statement: "That is the anarchy."²²¹ For a man who advocates a strong and powerful government, who denounces nihilism,unbridled anarchy would seem quite unpleasant. These men, the officers who spent their hours in the officer's clubs of Paris, experienced only mildly the true difficulties of occupied Paris. As Nevin argues, they did not see the shortages, the difficulties inherent in a wartime society; they were able to enjoy the luxuries.²²²

Jünger, like so many who participated in the military government of Paris, was often able to live under the delusion that they "owned" the streets. After an evening of joviality, Jünger returns home, thinking to himself: "The Parisian streets and plazas—with union one becomes especially befriended, especially trusted...."²²³ Or so it would

²²¹ "Das ist der Anarch." Augstein, Karasek, and Wiser, "Bruderschaftstrinken," 162

²²² Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 183; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 186.

²²³ "Die Pariser Straßen und Plätze—mit einigen wird man besonders, befreundet, besonders vertraut." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 67.

seem to a German officer living in a world of acceptance and welcoming intellectuals; this, however, was not the only Paris. Though his meetings were brief, Jünger also encountered this other Paris, peopled by Parisians who did not want him there, those individuals from whom his uniform elicited scorn. One such moment came in a shop in the summer of 1942. To his surprise, Jünger finds himself confronted by the angry eyes of a shop girl; he writes: “it became apparent to me that she regarded me with astounding hate.”²²⁴ Unlike so many of his willing admirers, this woman did not pretend to see anything admirable in his uniform; she saw only an occupying and oppressive power. Here is one of the only moments when Jünger specifies that he meets with hostility from the populace. Yet of overarching importance, one realizes is that which Jünger concludes with: “Nothing except destruction and death are able to bridge the gap to us on such attitudes.”²²⁵ Jünger knows that until this hatred is overcome, there can be no lasting society, no triumph over war and no victory. He is forced in this moment to come out of his pleasant day dreams of Paris streets that welcome him as a trustworthy friend, and recognize that however comfortable he might feel, he is indeed part of an occupying and hostile force.

While aestheticism and the tendency to claim comfort and the right to power was one that had characterized Jünger’s writing for some time, one also saw during this time period an increasing glorification of normalcy. This was a quality to which one was first introduced in *Auf den Marmorklippen*. One is reminded of the quote at the very opening of the story in which Jünger reminds the reader of how simple those things truly are that

²²⁴ “...es wurde mir deutlich daß es nicht mit erstaunlichem Haß betrachtete.“ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 155.

²²⁵ “Auf solchen Strahlen bracken kann nichts anderes zu uns kommen als die Vernichtung und der Tod.” Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 155.

create true contentment: simply good conversation, loving greetings. Jünger appears to once again realize this, and to incorporate it not only into his fiction, but into his own life as well. Neaman argues that perhaps this is because as he has aged, the devastation that he witness increasingly affects Jünger, due to the fact that now he also has a family at home that he must worry for.²²⁶ I would argue that it can also be traced to the fact that throughout the 1930s, Jünger has observed as the regime became increasingly threatening. It has torn apart his friends' families and by the end of World War II and the death of his son Ernst in Italy it will have torn his own family apart as well. In May of 1939, before he received his mobilization order, Jünger returned to his childhood home; his feelings are reminiscent of those of the two brothers from his novel. He writes: "When I see the old houses, hope seizes me that the human race will not be exterminated so soon. Late but powerfully it is beginning to occur to me what consistency in life means." As he realizes that life is indeed fragile, that the possibility for the human race to be destroyed exists, Jünger begins to appreciate all the more what it means to live in quiet contentment.²²⁷ This feeling is reiterated as he lies in bed, hearing the voices from the radio, predicting and foretelling war. "With thoughts of how I want to spend fall in Kirschhorst, I fall asleep."²²⁸ For once, Jünger is not wishing to venture to the front and adventure; he wishes simply to remain where he is: at home with his family. The famed militarist has found something that can entice him from war.

²²⁶ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 177.

²²⁷ Loose, *Gestalt*, 187; "Wenn ich die alten Häuser sehe, erfährt mich Hoffnung, daß der Menschengeschlecht so bald nicht ausgerottet werden wird. Spät aber mächtig, beginnt mir einzuleuchten, was Stetigkeit im Leben heißt." Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 31.

²²⁸ "Mit Gedanken, wie ich den Herbst in Kirschhorst verbringen wollte, schlief ich ein." Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 50.

As the war began to draw to a close, and Jünger found himself increasingly disturbed by the path that it had taken, he was concurrently surrounded by a number of figures in positions of relative power who shared a similar feeling. Jünger's superiors and acquaintances during this time were of almost entirely revolutionary leanings: General Heinrich Stülpnagel, General Speidel, Lt. Gerhard Heller, and Walter Bargatsky. From the early years of the war Jünger would refer to the safe nature of their quarters, it was a place where they might be honest. He was quick to discover whom he could and could not trust, possibly one of the factors that allowed him to avoid arrest and internment throughout the war years. As early as 1942 he referenced the officers' quarters saying "only here in this house are the powers that are able to delay or hinder" the triumph of the National Socialists.²²⁹ It was only through the powers of the army and these men that they might be able to topple the regime and its French collaborators.

Assassination, however, was a prospect of which Jünger had always been suspect. In his 1982 interview with *Der Spiegel*, when asked about his conversations concerning the plot he responded: "I said to him [Hofacker]: "Hofacker, I am against the assassination; I see nothing good coming from it. Look, the assassination against Louis Philippe extended the Bourbon regime thirty years, and the assassination against Lenin brought great disaster to the people."²³⁰ Nevertheless, Bargatsky called Jünger the "spiritual foundation" of the plan, based upon Jünger's ideas that all had read in the manuscript for his post-war publication *Der Friede*. Jünger was extremely hesitant about

²²⁹ "Nur hier im Hause sind die Kräfte, die die Verbindung dieser Partner zu verhindern oder doch aufzuhalten fähig sind." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 94.

²³⁰ "Da sagte ich ihm: 'Hofacker, ich bin ein Gegner von Attentaten, ich sehe darin gar nichts Gutes. Sehen Sie mal, das Attentat gegen Louis Philippe hat das Bourbonen-Regime um 30 Jahre verlängert, und das Attentat gegen Lenin hat ein ungeheures Unglück über die Menschen gebracht.'" Augstein, Karasek, and Wieser, "Bruderschaftstrinken," 161.

backing the proceedings, and indeed he would not know what day it was to happen, nor exactly how it was to take place. These were details that he would glean only after the failed attempt.

Despite Jünger's hesitation to support the assassination attempt prior to its enactment, this did not stop him from bemoaning its failure. In the introduction to the edition of *Strahlungen* published in 1949, Jünger argues that though they might have failed in the eyes of history, they had succeeded morally. They had not ignored words such as those from the dream visitor that declared that it was not yet too late; they had taken a stand against a power that they felt was destroying Germany. The subsequent executions of many of his former colleagues and friends led him to a still greater anger. As Neaman points out, after Stülpnagel's assassination for treason, Jünger's writing becomes far more apocalyptic.²³¹ Upon hearing news of Stülpnagel's attempted suicide, Jünger wrote: "Which victims here again fall and into the small circle of the last chivalric men, the free spirits, those beyond the ----- mass sufferingfeeling , and thinking. And therefore, I consider these victims important, because they achieve an inner space, and they hinder the fall of the entire nation as a block into the horrible deep of fate. Indeed, the blind hate those for whom the light is effective."²³² Although Jünger might have been hesitant about their means, they were "the last chivalric men." They were the last ones there to attempt to defend freedom, and their willingness to see faults and the possibility of an end without total destruction, gained Jünger's admiration. The news of Speidel's

²³¹ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 13; Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 124; Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 125.

²³² "Welche Opfer hier wieder fallen, und gerade in der kleinen Kreisen der letzten ritterlichen Menschen, der freien Geister, der jenseits der dumpfen Massenleidenschaften Fühlenden und Denkenden. Und dennoch halte ich diese Opfer für wichtig, weil sie inneren Raum schaffen und verhüten daß die Natioinals ganzes, als Block in die entsetzlichen Tiefen des Schicksals fällt. Doch hassen die Blinden jene, die für sie ihm Lichte tätig sind." Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 541.

arrest met with a similar response. Jünger bemoaned again the passing of the last of the group of protestors, the last of that group might save Germany from the fall. He was the last free one, and indeed, the last one alive.²³³ Jünger himself was called before the court in September of 1944; the case, however, was dismissed. General Speidel wrote in his diary of Jünger's luck: "Ernst Jünger escaped the imprisonment as though by a miracle—despite denunciations—and was dismissed from military service."²³⁴ Jünger merely received news of his dishonorable discharge in the fall of 1944; his situation, however, could have been much worse.

Many theories have been posited for how it was that Jünger was able to avoid arrest and imprisonment or even possible death not only for his participation in the assassination plot, but also for his continual flouting of party power. Among the most practical explanations for his survival during the war years, is the fact that Hitler could not afford to purge the entire Wehrmacht; he needed skilled administrators. While this might be a practical explanation it is not one that can provide a full explanation. As discussed, Jünger served in only a very menial post during the Second World War; there was undoubtedly another soldier who might just as easily supervise the censoring of soldiers' mail, and in fact, someone who would probably do so more thoroughly. In addition, the party had no qualms in demanding the imprisonment and execution of others participants, many of whom were of higher rank than Jünger. Thus the argument that the Nazis could not afford to completely strip the army of power, has a number of weak points. One needs another argument to back this up.

²³³ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 559.

²³⁴ "Ernst Jünger entgeht wie durch ein Wunder—trotz Denunziationen der Verhaltung und wird aus dem Wehrdienst entlassen." Jünger, *Der Friede*, 86.

This explanation is Hitler's admiration of Ernst Jünger. Upon the publication of *Auf den Marmoklippen*, censors took the issue to Hitler. He was reported to have responded: "Nothing's to happen to Jünger." He argued that the allegory of Jünger's work could just as easily be set in another state, particularly Soviet Russia; in addition, as Nevin argues, Hitler saw Jünger with his long list of military accomplishments as the soldier that he had always hoped to be. He had great respect for the fact that Jünger had indeed survived four years of the First World War with minimal chances of survival. These had been ideas that were set long before the outbreak of war, probably before Hitler's own rise to power, and as Jünger would observe in the years after the fall of the regime, Hitler did not like to change his opinion of people. Somehow, Jünger was able to survive the years of the National Socialist dictatorship in relative comfort, despite his increasing criticism.²³⁵

The years of World War II saw Jünger's love of stability become almost complete. Europe had been torn apart, hostilities were high, and the German people found themselves once again forced to face a losing peace. The uncertainty and destruction of security in sectors of the world that were meant to remain permanent and stable, caused him to begin to question the nature of change and to value stability all the more. While war might still be something to grow from, it was something that would now produce a secure and productive society. Reading Jünger's description of these war years, it seems that Europe has exhausted itself; it no longer has any fight, and now it must begin to make peace. Jünger, however, had been contemplating the necessary conditions for a lasting piece for some time. Since as early as 1942, when the first mention of his work

²³⁵ Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 206; Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 209; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 162; Nevin, *Into the Abyss*, 210; Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 210.

Der Friede: Ein Wort an die Jugend Europa, Ein Wort an die Jugend der Welt (The Peace: A word to the youth of Europe, a word to the youth of the world, 1949) appears in Jünger's journals, the goal of a peaceful reconstruction of Europe featured prominently in Jünger's and many of his acquaintances' understandings of the war and its path.

The short manuscript of *Der Friede*, once destroyed and rewritten, found its way into the hands of countless military officials during the last years of the war, as well as into the circles of resistance fighters throughout the Reich. The afterward of the first German edition of the work included excerpts documenting the increasing audience of the book throughout its history. As early as 1943, the early manuscript was supposedly being read among resistance fighters in Berlin, and in March of 1945 Manfred Schwarz carried the as yet unpublished work on his trip to southern Germany; as Jünger records "this is the source of the countless transcripts that are common."²³⁶ It is also known that Jünger's fellow German officers in Paris would have would have read the work as well, particularly those who would play a part in the incident of July 1944. One can not help but be touched by the statement of thanks that Jünger includes during the 1949 introduction. He writes: "It is necessary for me to thank the readers of the manuscript for the care with which they preserved the secret—so many, despite all the horrors of imprisonment. I thank in particular the General Heinrich von Stülpnagel, under whose chivalric manhood the writing came into being."²³⁷ Many of Jünger's fellow officers in Paris, those who would have read *Der Friede*, were in fact taken into custody and many

²³⁶ Ernst Jünger, *Der Friede*, 83; Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 76; "Dies ist die Quelle der zahllosen Abschriften, die verbreitet sind." Jünger, *Der Friede*, 87.

²³⁷ "Es ist mir ein Bedürfnis, den Lesern des Manuskriptes für die Sorgfalt zu danken, mit der sie da Geheimnis bewahrt haben—so mancher von ihnen trotz aller Schrecken der Gefangenschaft. Besonders gedenke ich des Generals Heinrich von Stülpnagel, des ritterlichen Mannes unter dessen Scutze die Schrift entstand." Jünger, *Der Friede*, 5.

were themselves executed, they never gave up, however, the man and work who supposedly so greatly influenced their ideas. The first published version came out in 1945, without Jünger's knowledge, from an underground conservative company in Marburg, Germany. In a strange twist of irony, the fact that this publishing house was run by a former leader of the Hitler Youth caused the work, as well as all of Jünger's publications to be banned under the occupying Allied governments. While the first authorized publication came out in Amsterdam in 1946, a German version was not permitted until 1949.²³⁸

Within this work, the reader can still see the traces of the violently nationalist Jünger who wrote so aggressively during the 1920s. *Der Friede* is written with an entirely different purpose and tone; however, these new qualities grounded in a foundation that was established for twenty years. For Jünger a peace without revenge meant a peace unlike Versailles. In his treatise, he spends a number of pages elaborating on the evils of this treaty and its significant shortcomings. According to Jünger, after the treaty had been in place for some time, not even the victors were satisfied anymore. "After a short celebration even the victors became scarcely happy... Looking back we recognize in relation to the damages, how few advantages were secured through the peace..." he writes. Those things gained could in no way outweigh the negatives and anger that was generated. With this new wisdom, they must establish a peace without vengeance. As proven by the Treaty of Versailles, a peace based on anger and revenge can not be successful. Jünger warns against allowing anger and horror at the actions of a few, to allow the conquering powers to justify injustice for all; he writes: "From this it is especially important that reason and awareness of the whole reign here, and not the blind

²³⁸ .“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 87; Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 126; Woods, *Nature*, 266.

vindictiveness of the parties; that adds a new injustice to old.”²³⁹ He continues to argue that if the crimes against humanity that were committed by the National Socialists are met by revenge instead of justice, the tragedies themselves will no longer be “visible” but instead will become hidden by anger and frustration at what are viewed as unjust punitive actions. “Right has a nature of light that makes even the shadows clearer. The less that one reflects oneself in the suffering of his source, the clearer the crime comes forward in its ugliness.”²⁴⁰ Jünger believes that if one does not separate oneself from sorrows, one finds only hate, not justice. Hate and vengeance will only further misunderstanding, not make people aware of their crimes. Nor can this new peace be what Jünger refers to as a “peace of violence.” One can not, as in the First World War, continue to live in a world that is founded on the rules of war. On the contrary, the new society must emphasize not old wrongs, but the great positives of the new peace that will be established.²⁴¹

In addition to a continual hatred for Versailles, Jünger retains his faith in the transformative power of war. Even during the Second World War, one can find evidence of his faith in the transformative power of war. While the war might have been needlessly bloody and fought upon betrayed ideals, it nonetheless has the possibility to open new doors; as he has felt that war always does. As he first enters the war, he has not yet learned the true extent of the horror that the Second World War will achieve. Despite his love of home, and his initial reluctance to go, he writes while on the first march: “It was

²³⁹ “Daher ist es vor allem wichtig, daß hier Vernunft und Kenntnis des Ganzen regieren, nicht aber blinde Rachsucht der Parteien, die neues Unrecht zu altem fügt.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 48.

²⁴⁰ “Das Recht hat Lichtnatur, die auch die Schatten deutlicher macht. Je weniger sich in seiner Quelle die Leidenschaften spiegelt, desto Klarer tritt das Verbrecher in seiner Häßlichkeit hervor.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 51.

²⁴¹ “Sie alle nahmen an den leiden teil, und daher muß auch ihnen allen der Friede Frucht bringen.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 28.

almost like 1914 for me, when I feared that I would not get any of the skirmishes.”²⁴² Yet one sees this unbridled passion for the fight far more rarely than in *In Stahlgewittern*. Statements such as this are far more common in the first sections of Jünger’s World War II journals. At this time it seems that war might still be something glorious and elegant; even in *Auf den Marmorklippen* the brothers had to engage in a battle, and one which at times seemed quite glorious to them. Shortly after joining the army, Jünger writes about how war is able to open one up to a different world. By 1941, however, war has taken new turns and pain has become a necessary, but more melancholy aspect of life; he writes: “What does not kill us makes us stronger, and that which kills us, makes us immensely strong.”²⁴³ This is the epitome of Jünger’s expression of the faith in struggle. While he might condemn the violence and the horror of the Second World War, while he might have come to appreciate the creature comforts and stability in his life, he has not forsaken his faith in the idea that from these struggles and from deprivation, the world will be fresh for new growth. It was this that laid the foundations for *Der Friede*.

While the war was unquestionably bloody and painful, an experience that destroyed countries and families, it was also an occasion for growth. Whatever ideas Jünger might have adopted, the transformative power of war has remained. He writes towards the beginning of *Der Friede* that there is no way that this peace might have been achieved through any means other than force. He writes: “The peace can not be a peace of understanding.” There must be struggle because through this struggle humanity has been united; as he writes in *Der Friede*: “They all take part in the suffering and therefore

²⁴² “Es geht mir fast wie 1914, wo ich befürchtete, nichts mehr von den Gefechten abzubekommen.“ Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 125.

²⁴³ “Was uns nicht umbringt, macht uns stärker; und was uns umbringt, macht uns ungeheuer stark.“ Jünger, *Gärten und Strassen*, 59.

the peace must bring them all fruit.” Only by communal suffering can the communal desire for peace be established.

One can not, however, look past the fact that the new universal goal is peace. This is an idea that would have been foreign to Jünger’s writing during the 1920s; no longer is he searching through war for the strongest and most powerful men but to achieve a lasting peace. *Der Friede* was a work intended to create a coherent view of what led to the war, what the war accomplished and where the world should go from there. Benno Ziegler, the owner of the Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, the publishing company through which Jünger published throughout the 1930s, wrote of the book in August of 1944: “Through this not only the political landscape in Germany and the formation of the foreign policy desires of the German people should be decidedly influenced, on the contrary at the same time a convincing international impression of the political will of a new Germany should also be produced internationally.”²⁴⁴

For the first time Jünger emphasizes the unity of Europe. Everyone must accept blame, and it is only through acknowledgement of Europe’s oneness that any true peace can be attained. Jünger begins his treatise discussing the universal nature of this war. He writes: “One might well say that this war has been the first universal work of mankind. The peace that ends it must be the second.”²⁴⁵ The fact that all have suffered; all have erred; and now all must come together to make it right, is the paramount point of his proposition. Versailles was not universal; it did not end the war, because it did not create

²⁴⁴ “Da durch sollte nicht nur die politische Lage in Deutschland und die außenpolitische Willensbildung des deutschen Volkes entscheidend beeinflusst werden, sondern gleichzeitig sollte auch im Ausland ein überzeugender Ausdruck von dem politischen Willen eines neuen Deutschland erzeugt werden.“ Benno Ziegler in Jünger, *Der Friede*, 86.

²⁴⁵ “Man darf wohl sagen, daß dieser Krieg das erste allgemeine Werk der Menschheit gewesen ist. Der Friede, der ihn beendet, muß das zweite sein.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 8.

unity, but instead divided. As Jünger writes in his introduction to *Strahlungen* in 1949, no one wins the Second World War. There was suffering and devastation on all sides; now they must attempt to overcome these differences in order to create a functional society. He continues that it is only through faith in Europe that any good can triumph.²⁴⁶ He uses the image of the Unknown Soldier as the allegorical figure for this. This image is put in a central place in all societies; it is honored and shown extreme reverence for. Yet for Jünger this is divisive. It does not bring countries together. Though they all celebrate their own “Unknown Soldier,” they do so separately, emphasizing not their common humanity but instead their former aggressions. After this second war “the new victims will be formative and effective far across their borders.”²⁴⁷ The new victims will cross boundaries not reinforce them.

This mutual suffering and recognition will be enhanced by the understanding that was created by interaction during the war. One must be slightly amused at Ernst Jünger’s seeming naiveté in assuming that the French would have felt the same fondness for the Germans as the Germans did for France. He wrote “The best from the peoples met each other because such times of fate always offer opportunity to help.”²⁴⁸ While the Germans might in this time have learned to see the French as colleagues, not enemies, one must wonder if these were also the emotions of the French citizens as well. There remains the image of the shop girl who looked so piercingly at Jünger; she does not seem to have acquired any feeling of understanding with Jünger as a representative of the German folk. He, however, is dedicated to this idea. As one could see from his effusive praise of

²⁴⁶ Jünger, *Strahlungen*, 15.

²⁴⁷ “so wird das neue Opfer weit über ihre Grenzen wirksam und bildend sein.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 27.

²⁴⁸ “Doch lernten sich auch die Besten der Völker kennen, denn immer dieten solche Schicksalszeiten auch zur Hilfe Gelegenheit.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 47.

France and the French people in his World War II journals, Jünger certainly felt connected with those that he ruled over; there appeared very little hostility. To further prove this he claims that the soldier “who truly recognized the enemy in the opponent and was able to fall without doubt in his breast” was truly lucky.²⁴⁹ World War II seems to have been devoid of this for Jünger; each army fought, but not against definite foes, but in a battle that had to be waged for a peace to be forged.

Returning to some of his more revolutionary ideas, Jünger declares that the fact that these nations fought, despite what he saw as a complete lack of hostility and anger towards one another, is a sign that the world desires change and transformation. All sides suffered such drastic losses; there must have been a deeper desire. “That is no accident; it is the sign that the world wants to win a new form and new meaning as a home for mankind.”²⁵⁰ Thus one can not expect Europe and the world to return to the form that it once held. They must establish new institutions and forms. It falls to the leaders of the European nations to carry this out. “It depends on them [the leaders] whether the new house spares the good spirits and whether the people live in freedom and contentment or whether prisons...are again concealed in the foundations.”²⁵¹ The world had the opportunity to create a new system and institutions, free of the evils of the past.

The new institutions that Jünger so staunchly encouraged were those that would enhance the strength and unity of the continent. After experiencing the Second World War and realizing the importance of a stable society, Jünger began to advocate a unified

²⁴⁹ “...der im Gegner wirklich den Feind erkannte und fallen durfte, ohne das Zweifel in seiner Brust lebendig war.” Jünger, *Der Friede*, 15.

²⁵⁰ “Das ist kein Zufall; es ist das Zeichen, daß die Welt als Menschenheimat neue Form und neuen Sinn gewinnen will.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 36.

²⁵¹ “Von ihnen hängt es ob, ob dann in neuen Hause die guten Geister walten, und ob die Menschen darrinnen in Freiheit und Behagen wohnen, oder ob wieder Gefängnisse...in den Gründungen verborgen sind.“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 8.

Europe. He writes: “As the monarchy was vanquished in the First World War by democracy, in this second and more powerful struggle, the old style nation states will be overcome....”²⁵² Just as he hopes that the victims of the Second World War will be able to tear down the borders of the nation, he expects the new empire of Europe to overcome these divisions. While he does not ask for the destruction of cultural boundaries, he expects these to be decided peacefully, much in line with the self-determination that was ineffectively advocated at the end of the First World War. “Europe can become the Fatherland; yet there can remain many Motherlands...”²⁵³ Jünger now embraces the idea of a communal European world. Thus, through the “common good of men...out of his most noble and selfless layers”²⁵⁴ a Europe will be built that will be able to compete with the United States and Russia. Jünger describes the plight of Europe, sandwiched between these two super powers. He hopes that through the union of Europe it might prove to be a third force, free of American influence and free of Soviet as well.

Jünger has thus managed both to transform his ideology entirely, while still maintaining a stable and dependable foundation. While he has transformed his ideals from those of violence and continual struggle to one of finite struggle followed by universal peace and fellowship, both of these are founded on the idea of transition through suffering. The communities of Europe are only united by their communal struggle; without this last battle and pain, they would still be glorifying their individual Unknown Soldiers.

²⁵² “So wie im ersten Weltkrieg die Monarchien durch die Demokratien besiegt wurden, werden in diesem zweiten und mächtigeren Ringen die Nationalstaaten alten Stiles überwunden werden...” Jünger, *Der Friede*, 30.

²⁵³ “Europa kann Vaterland werden, doch bleiben viele Mutterländer...” Jünger, *Der Friede*, 59-60.

²⁵⁴ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 32; “gemeinsamen Gut des Menschen,...aus seiner edelsten, uneigennütigen Schicht;“ Jünger, *Der Friede*, 9; Jünger, *Der Friede*, 56.

V. Conclusion

Ernst Jünger leaves behind him a complex legacy. The large disparity in his political beliefs and affiliations over time leave much to interpretation. In fact, Jünger himself seems to struggle deal with his own past resulting in even greater confusion. As Nikolaus Wachsmann observes, his inability to address the years of his life between the two World Wars, has made it all the more difficult for historians to accurately do so. A reader is faced with contradictory facts. On the one side, Jünger's decision to omit his nationalist writings of the 1920s from any edition of his collected works, up until the time of his death and on the other, statements such as that made to *Der Spiegel* in 1982. When asked if he would classify himself as a Nationalist during the 1920s he answered: "Without a doubt, but I make no fundamental distinction between right and left."²⁵⁵ This is an interesting answer to such a question. While it stands in direct accordance with many of Jünger's actions and positions of the 1920s, it appears as well that he is attempting to exculpate himself from the guilt of the National Socialists and the moral degradation associated with the far right.²⁵⁶

He has referred to his works from this early time period as his "Old Testament," implying that there indeed exists a "New Testament."²⁵⁷ It is interesting to examine this observation from the Christian perspective in which the "Old Testament" is generally viewed as the scripture of a vindictive God and that of the "New Testament" is seen as that of a loving and forgiving God. Indeed, Jünger's works follow this pattern. Those of

²⁵⁵ Wachsmann, "Marching," 588; Wachsmann, "Marching," 574; "Kein Zweife. Aber ich mache keine fundamentaler Unterschied zwishene rechts und links." Augstein, Karasek, and Wieser, "Bruderschaftstrinken," 157

²⁵⁶ As discussed, Jünger published his political writings in journals of all political colors. He was friends with National Socialists and Communists, and indeed his own ideology, while decidedly nationalist, lent far more to the left than that of the NSDAP. One could also argue that this failure to distinguish between right and left was reflected in his refusal to ally himself with a political party. He did not wish to place himself on the political spectrum.

²⁵⁷ Woods, *Nature*, 277.

the 1920s are violent and angry, calling for the violent overthrow of the Weimar government; while those from the years of World War II and *Der Friede* are far more conciliatory.

In regards to his actions during the 1930s, one finds statements of regret for inaction coupled with reminders that action meant death. In addition to his statement from 1982 in which he made quite clear to the interviewer that had he been more forceful in his rejection of the invitation to participate in the Akademie der Deutsche Dichtung, it would have meant being relegated to a prison camp, there is the quote from a letter to a friend written in 1955 in which he writes: “You have misunderstood my remark about Hitler...my comment was meant in a moral sense: that one should have perhaps made a sacrifice to what intelligence and out better insight told us. In that case, of course, I would no longer be living.”²⁵⁸ It is interesting to note that this is the same man who declared in *In Stahlgewittern* that he had discovered ideals for which it is worth dying.²⁵⁹ This is man who even at the age of eighty-seven when asked if he regretted not dying in the First World War answered: “Those who die in war will be honored by men and gods. That would indeed have been a good departure.”²⁶⁰ This man, who sees an honorable death for an honorable cause as a justification for life, somehow did not feel the need to act for the ideals that he saw crushed during the National Socialist period and the Second World War.

In Jünger’s novel of 1939, *Auf den Marmorklippen* Brother Otto is said to have commented about their former friendship with the Head Forester and their early inaction

²⁵⁸ Quoted in Neaman, *Dubious Past*, 112.

²⁵⁹ Jünger, *In Stahlgewittern*, 282.

²⁶⁰ “Im Kriege Gefallene warden von Menschen und Göttern geehrt. Das wäre schon ein guter Abgang gewesen.“ Augstein, Karasek, Wieser, “Bruderschaftstrinken,” 160.

by saying: “An error only first becomes a mistake when one persists in it.”²⁶¹ Thus the question arises, did Jünger persist in his mistake of the 1920s? One can look at the evidence of Jünger’s literary protest against the regime that, but one must ask oneself if this is truly a departure from error. It is evident from his lack of action that Jünger did not feel that these were priorities for which he wished to die; however, I would also argue, that Jünger never made the leap from viewing the destruction of the Nazi regime as negative social consequences to seeing them as threatening his country, the primary cause throughout his lifetime for which it was necessary and right to lay down your life. While the war of the Head Forester would destroy the brothers’ mountain hamlet, Jünger discovered only later that his own world might be destroyed by the National Socialists.

Above all Jünger valued the German Nation, and next to this he despised politics as weak and plebian. These two theories would prove to be a dangerous and harmful combination in his decisions regarding the National Socialists. While one can see that by the end of the 1930s Jünger had broken with this group, he still would not dare to resort to political means to overthrow them. He would not be part of any party or any organized movement. Yet while one might disagree with Jünger’s decision, one can not argue against its consistency. Those things that are pointed to as actions that helped to bring the National Socialists into power are all literary. His protests would also be entirely literary. For a man who advocated action throughout his entire life, he would participate in very little of it, with the noticeable exception of that organized by his ever respected army. While one might condemn him for his choice of relatively ineffective means, one must also acknowledge that his support of the National Socialists took the same form as his

²⁶¹ “...ein Irrtum erst dann zum Fehler würde, wenn man in ihm beharrt...” Jünger, *Auf den Marmorklippen*, 30.

protest; his protest was, however, required to be more veiled based on its origination during the oppressive environment of the Third Reich. Perhaps Jünger truly is the Black Knight. Having acknowledged the evils and unnatural nature of the regime, he uneasily condemns these actions, but does not act other than to verbally question them. Both act in ways contrary to what one theoretically would expect from both a knight and a World War One soldier. Both of the figures one would expect to show valor and bravery; neither act.

Thus one is left to acknowledge that Jünger, like the large majority of his fellow Germans, did not act in resistance. His ideas might have acted as foundations for many of the arguments of National Socialism, but as discussed in Chapter One, these were often ideas that were already prevalent in Nazi ideology, and many of the harshest and most venomous eventualities, such as the Holocaust and extensive persecution of Communists, were anathema to Jünger's ideology.

Like the large majority of the German population, Jünger was blind to the eventual consequences of the policies of the NSDAP. Like the knight who comes to acknowledge the horrors of the castle, however, Jünger realizes the horrible consequences of the National Socialist ideology. Whether due to age, enlightenment, or disillusionment, Jünger unquestionably undergoes a transformation during the years between 1920 and 1950. Though his thirty years of work is united by a lasting faith in the power of war to open the way for progress, the meaning of this, changes dramatically over the years. Jünger begins his literary legacy with *In Stahlgewittern*, a true glorification and cry for the supremacy of Germany. His writing during the 1920s is unquestionably nationalist and centered on the hegemony of the German state.

His faith in this state will never falter; yet by the end of World War II, the strength of Germany is no longer separated from the strength of Europe. He transitions from the idea of a glorified German nation, to one of a unified Europe. Unlike the National Socialists, he sees in the blood of World War II, no longer a forging of a great Aryan world, but instead a razing of the cities of Europe that will allow for a strong and united continent. The end of the 1930s had broken him away from the National Socialists, and by the end of the Second World War, he had pledged allegiance to the idea of a Pan Europe.

While one might condemn Ernst Jünger failure to strive actively to topple the National Socialist regime, he did not as brother Otto said “persist in his errors.” He resisted his former colleagues in the same manner in which he supported them and in the only way that the faux-intellectual Jünger knew how: with his writing.

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