



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF  
ADVANCED STUDY  
LIBRARY \* SIMLA**

•

MARIE BONAPARTE



MYTHS OF WAR

**DATA ENTERED**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

•  
TOPSY: THE STORY OF A CHOW (Pushkin Press)

*IN PREPARATION*

EDGAR ALLAN POE: A Psycho-Analytic Study

MARIE BONAPARTE

MYTHS  
OF  
WAR

*Translated by John Rodker*

IMAGO PUBLISHING CO., LTD.  
LONDON



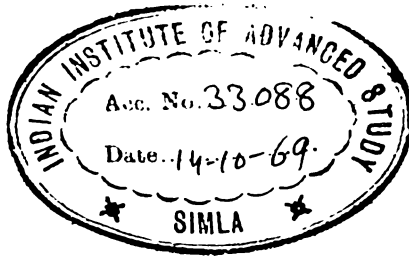
FIRST PUBLISHED 1947

 Library IAS, Shimla



00033088

*Of this edition  
25 copies, not for sale, have been  
printed on Hand-made paper.*



216  
398.2  
B64 M

Printed in Great Britain by Barnard & Westwood Ltd.,  
1-8, Whitfield Place, London, W.1.

# CONTENTS

	PAGE
PROLOGUE : German Mythology	9
CH. I : The Myth of the Corpse in the Car ...	13
II : The Myth of the Guessed Money	41
III : The Myth of the Doctored Wine ... ..	52
IV : Myths of the Powerless or Friendly Enemy and of the Mother's Tears ... ..	65
V : Battle Myths of Victors and Vanquished	76
VI : Myths of Britain in Peril	99
VII : The Myth of the Devil-Jew ...	119
1. Emotive aspects ...	119
2. Historic aspects ...	132
3. Functional aspects ...	136
a. Magical Function	137
b. Social Function ...	143
c. Political Function	149
EPILOGUE : Universal Myths	154

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

# PROLOGUE

## GERMAN MYTHOLOGY

*“ Though the universe collapse  
we must philosophize still.”—RENAN.*

We all know the legend of Siegfried, the fair young hero who slew the Dragon and conquered Brunhild. To the Germans, bowed for years under the weight of their 1918 defeat, Hitler re-incarnated the young hero. All over Germany, picture postcards revealed the identification, showing Hitler, in spite of his dark colouring and Alpine type, wearing the fair Siegfried's shining armour.

Siegfried, from the bits of his father's sword, shattered by the lance of Wotan who bears the runes or tablets of the Law, reforged Nothung, the irresistible blade. Hitler, from the bits of the German army, shattered in the last war, reforged arms for the German people.

Siegfried, the hero of light, will slay the dark Dragon that sleeps on his treasure, the Rhinegold, the Nibelung Ring, whose possession gives world power. Hitler, Siegfried's avatar, must combat the sharks of capital, shut in the Nibelheim of International Jewry and seize the treasure which the Dragons—the “haves” of this world—wrongfully hold.

Siegfried awakes the sleeping Valkyrie who greet him with loud Heils. Hitler would awake a somnolent Germania from her lethargy of post-war shame (*Deutschland Erwache!* cried the Hitler Youth!) who in return greeted him with the ritual *Heil Hitler!* Finally, the son hero, Siegfried, conquers even the Father of the Gods, Wotan, whose lance he breaks. So Hitler too would have wished to break the lances of the “have” Fathers of this world, whether named Churchill, Stalin or Roosevelt. Less fortunate than Siegfried, however, he failed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Le monde croulerait qu'il faudrait philosopher encore . . .

In the Nibelung cycle, Siegfried and Brunhild are finally betrayed by Hagen the son of the Nibelung Alberich, who wishes to recover the ring. Brunhild is treacherously torn from her bastion of flames. Hagen has made Siegfried drink a potion of forgetfulness. But when, hunting, his memory suddenly returns and he begins to chant of his exploits and lost loves, Hagen, from behind, pierces him with his lance.

So too, to the finally defeated Nazis, Germany and Hitler were betrayed! Was it the dark Nibelungs, International Jewry, who caused the ruin of that radiant pair? Who was it stabbed Hitler in the back that night of May 1st, when his death was so pompously announced? What Hagen, Bolsheviks, Jews or high finance forced him to commit suicide?

First and foremost, however, that historical law, which rules that conquered empires, unstabilised by time, collapse as fast as they are raised, and bury the rash conqueror beneath their ruins.

\* \* \*

What will happen to the Hitler legend? Doubtless it will suffer the dual fate of all conqueror-legends. The nations he attacked and brought suffering upon will curse his name. To his victims Hitler was a "criminal". The Anglo-Saxons, in the West, said that in fighting Hitler and his minions they were combatting the forces of Evil. This they proclaimed in their puritan way as though embarking on a crusade. The Russians, in the East, daily vowed Hitler and his "fascist bandits" to death. Thus, to his enemies, Hitler—as Napoleon once—was and will long remain Anti-Christ, the Beast of the Apocalypse, even for the Russians who, though they have renounced Christianity, reveal themselves, with their Asiatic egalitarian creed, the latest Christian sect.

Yet to his own people, the Germans, now that the Siegfried-Hitler funeral march has died in silence in a Germany mourning and in ruins, in spite of the passing curses of that wretched nation, the legend of the dead hero will arise.

Two great ideals will cross their beams over our ancient devastated Europe. From beyond the ocean, the Stars and Stripes will float in the West and, advancing from far Eurasia, the Red Flag and its hammer and sickle. But Germany, with its eighty millions at the Continent's heart, mortally struck and quartered by its four conquerors, will not forget that for a time she lorded it over Europe.

In spite of all the curses bestowed on the Corsican ogre, neither the retreat from Russia nor Waterloo ever expunged the legend of Napoleon from the memory of Frenchmen.

*"Long will they speak of his glory  
Under the humble thatch . . ."*<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the differing worths of a Napoleon and a Hitler, in spite of the massacres that tarnish his name, Hitler, to the German imagination will remain the Siegfried who fought the Dragon, the mythic hero who conquered Mother Europe : he who alone could destroy the "treacherous" coalition of dragons and the Judaic Nibelungs with their ancient god Jchovah !

Possibly even, despite the announcement of his death, some new legend, like that of Barbarossa, will place him in the caves of some similar Kyffhäuser, whence to emerge one day of vengeful glory?

For it is not enough to kill an enemy to obliterate him : he will survive in legend.<sup>2</sup>

LONDON, JUNE 5th, 1945.

---

<sup>1</sup> *On parlera de sa gloire  
Sous le chaume bien longtemps . . . Béranger.*

<sup>2</sup> The idea of this interesting parallel between Siegfried and Hitler and many of its details I owe to Prof. Joachim Rosteutscher, of the University of Cape Town.



## THE MYTH OF THE CORPSE IN THE CAR

Soon after the Munich agreement had averted immediate war, a friend and fellow psycho-analyst, Dr. R. Loewenstein, told me the following story in the Autumn of 1938, a story he vouched for as true. I give it verbatim :

1. "In September 1938, a young man who was expecting his call-up was driving his fiancée to Laval intending to leave her with relatives. Outside Paris he stops for petrol. A middle-aged couple ask where he is going and then beg a lift for the lady who is going in that direction whereas the man is returning to Paris to join up the following day. As they drive, the fiancée begins to cry and talk about their imminent separation. The stranger, however, assures them all will be well and tells the girl to stop crying. "You'll never be called up", she says to the man, because there won't be a war. Anyway Hitler will be dead in six months." This she repeats several times. At Laval, before taking leave of the young man she asks whether he intends to return to Paris, and when? He replies that he is returning immediately.

"The lady then advises him not to drive back that night because, if he does, he will find a corpse in his car. The young people however think her dotty and drive off without asking either her name or address. Later, before he leaves Laval, the young man's relatives ask him to give a lift to a lad they know who is also expecting an immediate call-up. He agrees. En route, the passenger says he feels drowsy, stretches out on the back seat and falls asleep. Back in Paris, the car stops at the passenger's address, the young man opens the door to wake him and finds the lad dead."

"What is this woman?"

A year later, in Autumn 1939, when Hitler, contrary to the latter prediction, had lived long enough to plunge Europe into war, another story came my way, this time told by a masseur at the Turkish Baths in Paris to my husband, with similar assurances of authenticity. According to him, the incident had happened to the brother-in-law of another regular patron, whose name he gave. Here again is the text of the story as given



me by the same masseur by telephone :

2. "A man is called up. With his wife and daughter he drives to Versailles. It is late and he says to his wife : 'I shan't have petrol enough to get up the hill'. Two or three hundred metres from the top of the rise to St. Cloud, his tank runs dry. He gets out, looks right and left, but to no effect. Then, however, under the trees, he sees some gypsies whom he calls to help push the car uphill. One of these gypsies then says : 'You won't get back to-night without a stiff in your car.' He fills up with petrol and is returning to Paris when he is stopped by a policeman who asks him to take an injured man to hospital. Before they could reach the hospital, however, the injured man was dead in the car. But before this, the driver had said to the gypsy : 'Since you're such a good prophet, can't you say when the war will end?' 'In the Autumn,' the latter had answered, 'after tremendous events.'"

As a good rationalist, what first struck me in both these stories was their improbability and I felt half inclined to laugh at the credulity of my informants, a credulity, however, which the psycho-analyst did not altogether share.

As a psycho-analyst, however, trained to take seriously even the most preposterous-seeming mental products, it was impossible, eventually, not to be struck by the similarity of the two themes : namely, that something is ardently desired, the realisation of which, in each case, seems assured by the death, also predicted in each case, of a man. Hitler, redoubtable as he is, must die : he will die as surely as did the passenger in the car. The war Hitler unleashed must end; it will end as surely as that the injured man, picked up on the road, dies before he reaches his destination.

I then found that variants of the same theme had been, and were, current throughout France and even existed abroad, thus raising the story of *The Corpse in the Car* to the widespread dignity of a myth. I shall first try to extract the general significance and meaning of the two stories already quoted and reserve for later the other variants I was subsequently able to collect.

\* \* \*

Underlying these stories then, there appears to be a link between cause and effect, clearly deeper than the mere truth of one prediction vouching for another.

Why in both cases is the pledge the death of a man? Any incident might have done : a dog killed on the road, a tree smashed by a car, a car

hopelessly wrecked—even an unexpected bit of good fortune learnt on reaching home : winning the big prize, for instance, in the National Lottery.

But we immediately feel that the first three, ordinary as they are, would seem inadequate to pledge so great, so immense, a piece of luck, as the death of the arch-enemy Hitler, or a victorious end to the war he began. As for the big prize in the National Lottery, this would be still less adequate as a pledge, for two such strokes of luck together would seem too improbable entirely. The death, however, of the stray passenger, the death of a man, seems a pledge of far greater potency and appears to set a seal of finality on fate's decrees.

For if man's spirit at the time was struck by and believed in an auspicious prophecy thus pledged by a death, and if the myth seemed almost universally to crop up, it is doubtless because war, with its anxieties and dangers, must have revived within us some of humanity's most ancient beliefs; in this case the conviction of the need for a sacrifice, to obtain some great good fortune.

\* \* \*

In their fine *Essai sur la Nature et la fonction du Sacrifice*,<sup>1</sup> Hubert and Mauss write very truly that, "generally speaking, sacrifices were more or less gifts which, to the believer, conferred rights over his god" (p. 30) though the sacrifice might be human, animal or vegetable and of a communal, expiatory (*piacular*), propitiatory, or professedly honorific nature. (I, personally, do not believe any sacrifice was ever wholly disinterested). Hubert and Mauss then discuss the theories of Robertson Smith and Frazer, which generally derive sacrifice from totemic rites, and continue : "*Whoever reaps the benefit from the sacrifice, or is affected by it, we call the sacrificer.* This may be either an individual or a group, family, clan, tribe or nation . . ." (p. 37). Later, treating of the preliminary consecration of the victim, they say : "we thus see wherein lies the distinctive feature of the consecration as regards the sacrifice : namely, that the object consecrated serves as the intermediary between the sacrificer and the divinity to whom the sacrifice is offered up." (p. 38). Later again, defining sacrifice, our authors thus distinguish it from a simple offering : "Sometimes the consecrated object is presented as a simple votive offering . . . such as the first fruits which, being brought to the Temple, remained intact and were the property of the priests. In other cases, however, consecration destroyed the offered object, as when an animal was brought

---

<sup>1</sup> *L'Année sociologique*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 2me année 1897-1898.

to the altar, the desired end only being attained when its throat was cut or it was dismembered or consumed by fire—in a word, *sacrificed*. The object thus destroyed is the *victim*. Clearly it is only oblations of this kind that can properly be classed as sacrifices. Between these two processes we feel there exists a difference in degree and efficacy. In the sacrifice proper, far more potent religious forces are released . . .” (p. 39).

It has become usual, our authors further write, “in particular in Germany, to classify sacrifice under certain distinct heads: for example, they speak of expiatory sacrifices (*Sühnopfer*), thank offerings (*Dankopfer*), precatory sacrifices (*Bittopfer*), etc. Actually, however, there is no clear line of demarcation . . .” (p. 42). All sacrifices to the gods appear in fact as *bargains* where payment is made either before or after the sacrificer has been duly rewarded: it is either the settling of an old debt to the divinity in the expiatory sacrifice, or a bill to be paid for some favour already received where a thank offering is made, or again an advance payment in the case of precatory or propitiatory sacrifices. Men, as well as their gods—conceived in their image—are good business-men. And if the victim, whatever it be, must be sacrificed, i.e. destroyed, it is no doubt because men see no better way of sending such gifts as they are ready to offer to that world where the gods dwell. In addition, the deep-rooted sadism, universal in man, can thus express itself without qualms of conscience, for in so acting he fulfils a duty to his gods.

\* \* \*

A moot point often discussed is whether human sacrifice preceded animal sacrifice, or vice versa. In the article *Sacrifice* in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*,<sup>1</sup> we read: “Many theories on the relation of human to animal sacrifice have been put forward, most of them on an insufficient basis of facts. It has been held that animal sacrifice is the primitive form and that the decay of totemism or lack of domestic animals has brought about the substitution of a human victim; but it has also been urged that in many cases animal victims are treated like human beings and must consequently have replaced them, that human beings are smeared with the blood of sacrifice, and must therefore have themselves been sacrificed before a milder rule allowed that an animal should replace them.” (p. 983).

From the psycho-analytic point of view it is the second hypothesis

---

<sup>1</sup> 1910-1911 edition: “Sacrifice” by Northcote Whitridge Thomas, M.A.

which seems probable. The Freudian concept of totemism and of the sacrifice of the totem animal—substitute for the father of the primal horde who was killed by the rebellious sons eager to possess the females—sheds new and strange light on a problem which, before psycho-analysis, sociologists and ethnologists found difficult to explain. That they so often were unable to allow priority to human sacrifice in primitive times must doubtless be set down to their own repression of early parricidal wishes, even the theory generally being rejected with anger or scorn. The same mechanism which formerly brought about the substitution of a totem animal for the father—and then for any human victim whatever—demands a similar substitution on the psychological plane. Yet the myths of many races preserve eloquent testimony of the probable order of events for those able to understand them: it is the ram that follows Abraham's son on the Hebrew pyre and the hind that replaces Iphigenia on the Greek altar.

In his book, first published in 1913,<sup>1</sup> Freud following Robertson Smith, reminds us that at the totemic feasts of certain ancient tribes, the totem animal—which is regarded as the ancestor of the clan and so generally spared as sacrosanct—is ritually eaten by the group. Then, turning to Darwin's hypothesis of the primal horde, in which a powerful and jealous male monopolises the females and drives away the growing sons and potential rivals, Freud advances his own theory thus: "One day the expelled brothers joined forces, slew and ate their father, and thus put an end to the father horde. Together they dared and accomplished what would have remained impossible for them singly. Perhaps some advance in culture, like the use of a new weapon, had given them the feeling of superiority. Of course these cannibalistic savages ate their victim. This violent primal father had surely been the envied and feared model for each of the brothers. Now they accomplished their identification with him by devouring him and each acquired a part of his strength. The totem feast, which is perhaps mankind's first celebration, would be the repetition and commemoration of this memorable criminal act, with which so many things began: social organisation, moral restrictions and religion."<sup>2</sup>

Then the sons, repenting—or fearing retaliation—and banded in a

---

<sup>1</sup> Freud: *Totem und Tabu*, 1913: *Totem and Taboo*, translated A. A. Brill, Pelican Books, London, 1938.

<sup>2</sup> l.c. p. 142.

fraternal horde would thenceforth prohibit any repetition of their deed and, as it were, retrospectively spare the father's life by ceasing to kill, except on ritual "occasions," the totem animal reincarnating the "ancestor" of the clan: at the same time by introducing exogamy they would also give up their claim to the females of their clan who represent the father's wives they once criminally desired. Nevertheless, those who will not allow priority to human sacrifice seem at times justified, to go by certain instances. Isaac, as he ascended the mountain for the sacrifice asked "where is the lamb or burnt offering" and, continues the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "if tradition is any guide, human sacrifice seems in many important areas to be secondary in character. In spite of the great development of the rite among the Aztecs, tradition says that it was unknown until 200 years before the conquest; in Polynesia human sacrifices seem to be comparatively modern, and in India they appear to have been rare among the Vedic peoples. On the whole, human sacrifice is far commoner among the semi-civilized and barbarous races than in still lower stages of culture."<sup>1</sup> To this psycho-analysts would reply that, without prejudice to such new discoveries as ethnologists may furnish, we might adduce those general psychological laws which govern regression and the return of the repressed. Just as the human form of the deified primal father reappears by degrees in the Egyptian Pantheon of animal-gods, so the primal human victim might at times reappear in place of animal victims and be substituted for them on altar and pyre.

\* \* \*

In our modern myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, a highly-charged regression, due to war and the anxiety it evokes, must have reactivated the need to offer a human victim in propitiation to fate. For it is clearly a human sacrifice that must be intended here, if only on a simple wish or phantasy plane. Comparison of the occasions of and elements in classic sacrificial rites—as described by Hubert and Mauss—with those of our own recent myth, will enable us to establish the latter's underlying relationship with the human sacrifices of our distant ancestors.

In their section on the *Orders of Sacrifice*, Hubert and Mauss distinguish three main stages: the *entry* into the sacred condition, the actual sacrifice of the *victim* and, lastly, the *exit* from the sacred condition. "Sacrifice," they explain, "is both a religious act in itself which can only be enacted in a religious place and an act made sacred through agents

---

<sup>1</sup> I.c. Art: Sacrifice.

themselves essentially religious. Generally, however, before the ceremony, neither sacrificer, officiant, place, instruments or victim possess this quality in the requisite degree. The first stage of the sacrifice therefore is intended to confer it on them. They are secular and must change their condition. Thus, rites are needed to translate them into sacred spheres and there fix them in varying degree according to the part they will be called on to play. It is this which constitutes, as expressed in Sanskrit texts, *the entry into the sacrifice.*" (pp. 47-48)

Innumerable forms of purificatory rites, ablutions, fasts, continence and segregation from others result, in different races, in rendering the sacrificer "sacred." In our present myth, we must first ask : who is the sacrificer, the gainer, for whom the sacrifice is to be made? Clearly it is the young recruit who, in one case, is going to Laval, and in the other to Versailles : not, however, that the place matters. And what is it here that takes the place of the rites that consecrate the sacrificer? In my opinion it is mobilisation. The fact of being called up, dedicated to the dangers of war and death have suddenly transformed the hitherto commonplace citizen into someone sacred : in receiving his call-up or reading the poster mobilising his group, the aura of the "*sacred*" begins to invest him.

But where is the officiant? For, as we see, the sacrificial victim through whom the sacrificer is to profit is clearly the man who must and in fact, does die, automatically, at the back of the car, though neither strangled nor with his throat cut. And only in the second version does the wayfarer appear as already injured, though it is not said by whom or by what. The officiant remains hidden and perforce anonymous because of the ever-increasing repression (though none will believe it) of man's age-old aggression. It is fate and fate alone which would seem to have slain and sacrificed the victim. In fact, however, it is either the sooth-sayer or gypsy, who thus prophesying, must be playing the part of the "officiating" priest or priestess, incarnation of divinity or murderous fate. Doubtless, that is why their words sound so uncanny to the hearer, as though one saw some fiery sword hover in the dark skies of war.

Nevertheless, in all sacrifice, it is the victim round whom all in the drama revolves, and from whom all seems to flow. In this modern myth therefore, we shall seek to discover the victim's identity and establish what confers the requisite sacredness on him? The stranger who dies at the back of the car is in one case a recruit, in the other someone already

injured. A recruit would admirably represent the sacrificer. "The victim," write Hubert and Mauss, "also at times stands for the sacrificer." (p. 66) Something is sacrificed in one's place to buy off ill-luck or acquire good-fortune. In the second version of the myth, this trick of the unconscious appears still more clearly: the victim is already injured. But in the interim, war is declared and our recruit may at any time be sent to the Front and there be wounded: another injured man, however, redeems him, and thus the common identity of sacrificer and victim springs to light. But it is the stranger who is offered as a holocaust while he himself will live, neither wounded nor mutilated, for the war will soon end and the injured man has already paid the debt of blood which he owes to the envious god, fate.

One element at first sight, however, appears to be missing from our sacrifice: the ritual employment of the victim's remains. "The sacrificial victim," write Hubert and Mauss, "had this in common with the dead, that his soul inhabited both the outer world and his corpse." The victim was despatched to the gods both as offering and messenger. With our modern passenger in the car, his soul too is free to take similar flight. But what becomes of his consecrated remains? Our authors continue: "The remains too were treated with religious respect: honours were paid them. The slaying thus left behind a something that was sacred and it was that which, as we shall see, could help to bring about the beneficent effects of the sacrifice. To this end, the remains would undergo alternative treatments. What remained of the creature was either dedicated wholly to the gods or wholly to the world, or was shared between them." (p. 71). Our myth, however, is silent as to the final fate of the stranger's body.

Doubtless, this was so obvious that there was no need to go into further detail. The passenger's remains will simply receive the funeral rites of the country, being either buried or burnt after certain civil or religious ceremonies. Unlike the communal rites accompanying certain propitiatory sacrifices, they will not be eaten either by sacrificer or officiant and, in effect, the victims' remains will be wholly attributed to the gods, as in the Greek holocaust or the Hebrew Olâ.

\* \* \*

In all sacrifice, however, two further elements must still be considered: the place and the instruments. For, say our authors, "it is not enough for sacrificer and officiant to be consecrated for the sacrifice as

such to take place. This cannot take place at any time or anywhere . . . The place of the sacrifice must itself be sacred; outside sacred precincts immolation would be merely murder." (p. 56). Certain places are permanently sacred, as for instance, the temples of the Hebrews; there are others, however, which are consecrated afresh whenever necessary, as with the Hindus where "each could choose his own place of sacrifice, though this had first to be consecrated by certain rites, the most essential being kindling the fires" (p. 57.)

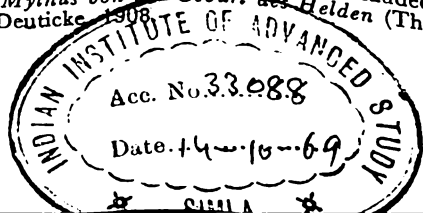
Having collected these two versions of the myth I began to record others, which I shall give later. In spite of certain striking differences one element, however, remains practically unchanged: that most modern substitution of the motor car for the altar or pyre, the motor car now having become the place of sacrifice and in some degree, the instrument.

Here the support of anthropology and sociology no longer help us. Only psycho-analysis, expert in deciphering symbols, will enable us to understand why the sacrifice must so frequently take place in a car, however strange may seem its interpretations to the layman.

In dreams, driving in cars is as constant a sexual symbol as climbing stairs or uphill. Indeed, we find both elements fused in the second version of our myth, where the car breaks down going uphill. The consort thus, in some sort, so far as the unconscious is concerned, would be performing a sexual act. The fact that in each case a woman—or two—is present with him in the car, corroborates this interpretation.

On the other hand, the victim in both our cases is a man, who, whether mobilised or injured, becomes a double of the sacrificer. One may ask therefore whether some hint of the Oedipus myth may not have lingered on into our modern myth of death in the car. The sacrifice would not merely be propitiatory and so release immense good; it would also permit the expiation of some hidden sin: that is, some conscript analogous to the sacrificer would be sacrificed in his place, in punishment for some original sin hidden so deep in time that it can be only the Œdipal parricide. The sacrificer who flees from Paris in his car, in a journey symbolising the sex act with one or more women, would be the "hero,"<sup>1</sup> the Oedipus son who, after slaying the

<sup>1</sup> In myths, which are the collective dreams of mankind, one often finds, as in the story of Œdipus, one son who, in variance with the Freudian hypothesis of the brother-horde, commits the primal parricide, taking on himself all the sin of, and glory for, his act. This is doubtless the origin of the concept of the "hero," lauded in so many myths. See Otto Rank, *Der Mythos von der Geburt des Helden* (The Myth of the Birth of the Hero), Wien, Deuticke, 1908.





father, seizes the females for whose possession he slew. (Victorious troops hardly consider it sinful to conquer, if not ravish, the women of defeated lands). To win forgiveness, redemption, the guilty son must then sacrifice some double of himself, a conscript or injured person who, taking upon himself the punishment for the crime, like a scapegoat or Christ, saves the former by his death.

Again, by dying as the car moves, the punishment takes on the form of the crime and the son is punished in that wherein he sinned. Yet this victim, offered in propitiation and in expiation too, (are sacrificial victims ever either separately?) this victim, in a sovereign *piaculum*, at one stroke redeems not only our driver, but a whole nation too, and in his person redeems all his fellow conscripts, themselves blood-guilty sons who, once their original sin has been washed in the blood of another, whether by the father's death or simply by the end of hostilities, will preserve their lives and rediscover the paradise of peace. Thus did Christ, the son of God, by a sacrifice both expiatory and propitiatory, redeem all mankind from original sin; mankind which, like Him, were begot of the Father Eternal but which were also His human brothers. Thus they won beatitude and gained eternal life in the paradise above.

The great Judeo-Christian myth differs, however, from the myth of *The Corpse in the Car* in that here a still more archaic process of regression resolves itself into the open return of the repressed material. In the Judeo-Christian myth the primal parricide can only be inferred by the talion of blood inflicted on the God-son victim<sup>1</sup>, whereas in the modern myth it is a new incarnation of the father that finally appears in order to be struck down.

Is not a national enemy, to the unconscious, but the Oedipus-father, that primal rival and first enemy of every male child, though later projected beyond one's own frontiers? Since the Oedipus crime has already been expiated by the sacrificial victim in the symbolic car the crime may now be committed with impunity; thus Hitler is slain and

---

<sup>1</sup> In his *Totem and Taboo* (IV. 6: The Infantile Recurrence of Totemism, trans. A. A. Brill) Freud says: "In the Christian myth man's original sin is undoubtedly an offence against God the Father, and if Christ redeems mankind from the weight of original sin by sacrificing his own life, he forces us to the conclusion that this sin was murder. According to the law of retaliation, which is deeply rooted in human feeling, a murder can be atoned only by the sacrifice of another life; the self-sacrifice points to a blood guilt. And if this sacrifice of one's own life brings about a reconciliation with God, the father, then the crime which must be expiated can only have been the murder of the father."

the conscripted sons may depart together to delight in peace in the homeland—that glorified mother! The processes of the unconscious attach little importance to time and, so far as they are concerned, the crime may very well follow the punishment.

\* \* \*

It remains, following Hubert and Mauss, to discover in our myth the *exit* from the sacrifice, the return to the secular state from that of the sacred condition of the sacrifice vowed to destruction.

What in our myth corresponds to the *Ite missa est* with which Christian sacrifice ends? I think it must be *demobilisation*. Thereupon the recruits—when Hitler is dead and the war victoriously ended—issue from the sacred aura of sin and sacrifice which will in truth have redeemed them and thus returned them to normal life.

\* \* \*

I will now give such other versions of our myth as I was able to gather as a result of questioning those I met with such assiduity that they might well have thought me mad on the subject of “deaths in cars.” My son suggested that I might also visit clairvoyants in different parts of Paris on the matter. The myth seemed to have appeared more or less ubiquitously between 1938 and 1940, significantly unchanged, though varying in detail. Nearly always the narrator vouched that the story was genuine and most often affirmed that it had happened to an acquaintance who actually knew the person involved. The fantasies of the unconscious demand to be believed.

I will now give these versions verbatim, as communicated to me either in speech or writing.

Here is one version obtained in November 1939 from an antiquary in Paris, quartier d’Europe.

3. “A young couple returning from a trip in their car, happen to have a breakdown. While the man tinkers about, a woman passes and, entering into conversation, predicts Hitler’s imminent death and that they will carry a dead man in their car. The couple are incredulous. The car is put right and they start off, but almost at their destination are hailed by a pedestrian who asks for a lift. He gets in and the car drives on, but what is their surprise, on reaching their destination, to find that their fellow traveller has died en route . . . .”

Here we again find all the participants in the sacrifice: the sacrificer, the officiating priestess, the victim and also the car—both place and

instrument. The entry into and exit from the sacrifice, represented in our war myth by mobilisation and demobilisation, though not mentioned, are nevertheless implicit, for how in France, in time of war, would any young husband not be liable to the call-up? The accompanying woman is expressly mentioned, since we have a "young couple" travelling in the symbolic car. As to the end of the war, this would result, without need of any special mention, from the death of Hitler.

Another version collected somewhat later was given me by a young French writer. He himself had heard it in November 1938, before the war and after Munich :

4. "In November 1938, a man living near Montauban starts off in his car for the week-end. En route he is stopped by someone who looks like a poet or tramp. He thinks it is someone wanting a lift. This man says to him : 'Hitler will die on December 8th, 1938 (or March 8th, 1939), and adds : 'And I'll prove the truth of what I'm saying by telling you something that will happen to you : when you get to a certain place on the road to Blois, you'll give someone a lift and the man will be dead when you've got to . . . .' Driving along he sees a motor crash and, hurrying to the scene, finds an injured man who must be taken at once to hospital. At the very place foretold the driver looks round : his *passenger is dead.*"

Here sacrificer, officiant and injured victim are all present. Yet, owing to what complex in him does my informant make everything happen between males? The woman has disappeared. As to the call-up that precedes every war, its menace hangs in the air : there is no need to underline it.

Another version was contributed in November 1939 by a clairvoyante in the quartier d'Europe, as having been told her by a Russian client, who swore he knew the lady in question. This lady had told him the story in March 1938, soon after Hitler first struck and attacked Austria.

5. "A German-Swiss lady is travelling from Basle to Zurich, driven by her chauffeur. After lunch at Basle, a lady there said to them : 'You needn't fear war because Hitler will be murdered before it can happen. To prove I'm right, it's as true as that you'll have a dead man in your car when you get to Zurich.' En route they pick up someone hurt in an accident, who dies before they get to Zurich."

Here again we have the same exorcism to avert the war that has not yet come to pass. Here, too, the victim is someone injured as in versions

2 and 4. The officiant is a woman, and there is the apparently noteworthy difference that the sacrificer is one too. But the owner of the car has her double in the chauffeur, and he, doubtless, is of military age. The place of sacrifice remains the symbolic car with the travelling couple. The country is no longer France but Switzerland, a country in parts more or less Germanic. Switzerland, German-Switzerland that is, after Austria was annexed, felt itself threatened by the infiltration of National Socialism; it feared to be drawn into the vast conflict about to burst upon Europe. A myth to exorcise the prevailing anxiety would find excellent soil.

But to return to the variants prevalent after the outbreak of war.

A clairvoyante of the quartier Saint-Germain brought me the following version in December 1939.

6. "A motorist is stopped on the road by a gypsy. 'Your father has had an attack and you'll have a dead man in your car. It's as true as that Hitler will be dead in three months.' So it happens."

It is worth noting in this version, succinct as it is and with many omissions, that the very significant detail of a grave illness of the real father is correlated with the death of Hitler, the inimical father.

The theme of the sacrificial slaying appears more clearly in the variants I now give.

These two versions were obtained in December 1939, first from a Parisian chauffeur living in the quartier de la Muette, then from his wife. It was she who had heard it first from a woman who claimed to know the man to whom it had happened. Here first is the verbatim version as given by the chauffeur's wife :

7. "On one of his trips in his car, a man meets a woman who asks for a lift. He obligingly agrees and they start talking. The woman suggests she shall tell him the future, but the man refuses, explaining that he doesn't care in the least. Whereupon his passenger remarks : 'All right, but one thing I can tell you is that in a few days you'll have a man in your car and that man will die; and if he dies, Hitler will die too. The driver was very upset by the man's death and all the legal formalities.'"

And here is the chauffeur's distorted version.

8. "A lady told someone that a fortune-teller had warned her she

would give a man a lift in her car, that she would have an accident and cause his death. She had also predicted that Hitler would die that year. The lady did give a lift to a man, there was an accident and he was killed."

It is amusing to note that, while in the wife's version, the driver is a man, in that of the chauffeur it is a woman, and that she is the cause of the accident. The general contempt of chauffeurs for women drivers! But the greatest interest of the story lies elsewhere: in the chauffeur's version it is the woman driver-sacrificer—a better officiating priestess than the distant fortune-teller—who kills her passenger by means of her car. Here the guilt of the murder is no longer attributed exclusively to fate. And if the male driver in the chauffeur's wife's version "was very upset by the man's death and all the legal formalities" that was doubtless because he too, by bad driving or for some other cause, was responsible for the man's death.

Hitler, however, was not the only major enemy whose death was foretold and pledged by a human sacrifice in the guise of *The Corpse in the Car*. The following incident was said to have taken place in the Spring of 1939, just when the Italian press was most violently attacking France and when, in consequence, Mussolini was hardly popular in France, above all in the South. The story was told me by a young woman of the quartier d'Auteuil, in November, 1939, who said she had it from a friend of the wife of a doctor practising somewhere in the Var who, naturally, would know the woman to whom it happened:

9. "A motorist living in the south of France had a breakdown. A passing gypsy tells him he will have a corpse in his car before he reaches Toulon, the man having been summoned from Nice by a relative ill in that city. The gypsy had foretold his finding the corpse near Toulon, his hurried return to Toulon to see someone ill and the assassination of Mussolini at the end of April."

The sick person in this story recalls the father and his attack in version 6. The woman companion is again missing, as in version 4 and those other versions where the female element seems to have changed places. We shall see it reappear in the centre of interest soon.

\* \* \*

I tried to track down this theme of *The Corpse in the Car* that predicts the end of the evils of war in other countries at war. From Greece,

where I stayed some weeks in the winter of 1939-1940, I was able to correspond with relatives in Germany. I then learnt that the story of *The Corpse in the Car* was as widespread there as in France and predicted Germany's imminent triumph, though not the murder of Chamberlain and Daladier. No verbatim stories were sent me, but one of my husband's nieces, married to a German, subsequently wrote from Lindau on October 6th, 1940—in a letter in English which was to reach me three months later—saying: "Can it be perhaps propaganda to spread these stories among the people?" (A German diplomat, to whom I related the myth in Paris, in 1940, also expressed this idea, so strongly did the power of "propaganda," of the control of public opinion, dominate the German mind, even to the extent of making it ignore the strength and legitimacy of the spontaneous psychological reactions arising from the unconscious). My niece continued: "The likenesses of these stories are really too striking to my mind!" She then gave me the following version.

10. "There is a man driving in a car and he has to stop for some reason (engine trouble or a level crossing) and an old woman says: as sure as you'll have a dead man this evening in your car the war will end at such and such a date (June or July). Then he drives on and soon comes across a motor accident, and he is asked to take an injured man to hospital and when he gets there the man is dead!" And slightly misquoting Goethe's *Erlkönig*, my niece concluded: "He reached the castle with effort and pain and lo! in his arms, the child was dead."<sup>1</sup>

This reference by my niece to the *Erlkönig* suggests to me that, apart from what we have already seen of the possible sexual symbolism of this myth, the corpse's journey in the car may well symbolise a speeding towards death, as in the *Erlkönig*, or a race to destruction as in Berlioz's *Damnation de Faust*. The car would then be the modern equivalent of the horse bestridden by Death, so often depicted in the Middle Ages. (Is not the father of the child in Goethe's poem himself the double of the *Erlkönig*, personifying both death and its summons?) The popular imagination readily conceives that a vehicle—horse or chariot or boat—would be needed to bear the dead on their last long journey to the beyond. Thus it is that to-day, the car in our modern myth has taken the place of

---

<sup>1</sup> "Er erreicht den Hof mit Mühe und Not, und wie er da kam in seinen Armen das Kind war tot."

the horse of Death or Charon's bark, a bark replaced in many a modern Greek ballad by the horse on which Charon heaps the dead.

When I passed through Berlin on my way from Greece at the outset of the Italo-Greek war, before Germany herself had entered that war, I was able to collect this other German version of the myth, on February 7th, 1941, from one of my husband's cousins.

11. "Three people in a railway carriage. One says: 'The war is nearly over.' 'How do you know?' 'Just as I know that you'll have a corpse in your car this evening and that gentleman over there has so much in his pocket.' The man then alights and gets into a car. On the road he picks up an injured man who dies on the way to hospital."

The motif of *The Guessed Money*, which we shall investigate later, here weaves itself into that of *The Corpse in the Car*. Sacrificer, officiant, victim, place and instrument of sacrifice are all again present, but the accompanying woman has disappeared, exactly as in the last German version.

\* \* \*

I also tried to trace our myth in England. When I wrote to friends, they replied that at first they could not track it down, so sure was the country of itself, they said. Soon, however, a fellow psycho-analyst to whom I had written, sent me the following letter, dated May 8th, 1940, signed by Charles Madge, one of *Mass Observations'* organisers.

"Dear Dr. Melitta Schmideberg,

The matter you raise is very interesting because I think the motive behind the spreading of some of these stories badly needs psychoanalysing.

"First the gypsy story. In various forms this has been current for at least five years. It came up at the death of George V, at the time of Edward VIII's abdication and at the time of George VI's coronation. It always seemed to imply a death wish about the ruling person concerned. It was mentioned in the Press (e.g., *Evening Standard*, *Londoner's Diary*) several times. It came in letters and reports to M-O quite frequently. Already before Munich, the story had a new twist, and was applied to Hitler; after the usual prelude about somebody being found dead in a car there is a prophecy that Hitler will die within some period. It was specially prevalent in September, 1938. . . ."

Another letter from England, dated November 21st, 1942, informed me that the myth of *The Corpse in the Car* was very widespread. My correspondent, a young woman in Army Transport, added: "I also heard the tale told, but when I got home and told it to the officer's wife

with whom I'm living, she broke in saying she'd heard it soon after hostilities started, first in Yorkshire, then in 1940 in an Essex garrison town and soon after in South Wales. She could not remember their source or the different versions but the story was always vouched for as being the solemn truth."

\* \* \*

Thus, from this short enquiry we see that, in widespread regions, similar themes arise spontaneously in the minds of the masses when they feel themselves menaced, either by some cruel external war or again by the death or desertion of their leaders. The wish-myth of *The Corpse in the Car* then arises to bind the prevalent anxiety and leave a loophole for hope, so maintaining the courage to live and fight on.

Doubtless some similar myth of a dead man found in a carriage or coach, such being the transport of the time, must have been current in England and on the Continent in Napoleon's day to serve to predict the death of the "Corsican ogre." Though the story may not be found in contemporary records, in all probability it is because it was not put down.

I have, however, found a version current in France showing regression from the car to the horse-carriage. At Saint-Tropez, on September 9th, 1940, the wife of the psycho-analyst to whom I owe the first version of our myth told me the following story which she had heard before the war, in May 1939 in Paris, soon after her husband heard the first version. She herself had it from her milliner, whose shop was in the Avenue Victor Emanuel :

12. "One fine morning a Swiss woodcutter goes off to work in the woods. On the way he meets a gypsy. They start talking, and the man begins telling her he is worried, has no idea what to do, he would like to buy some land, but is afraid there will be war. The gypsy then says : ' You may be sure there won't be any war because Hitler will be dead two months from now.' She is as sure of it as that, that very evening, he will have a dead man in his cart. The same afternoon some sportsmen shooting in the woods come in search of him, saying : ' We see you've a cart; there's been a shooting accident; can you take the injured man to the village?' The man is placed in the cart and the woodcutter sits in front : when they reach the village and he turns round, he sees that the man



is dead in the cart."<sup>1</sup>

A little later I was able to find a very different version of this same sacrificial theme. It came from a young friend, forced by the retreat to move from the Ecole des Roches in Normandy to Saint Tropez (Var). He had picked it up in Normandy about Whitsuntide 1940, and he told it to me that summer :

13. "A mathematics professor, as a result of his calculations, had succeeded in predicting events with extraordinary accuracy. He had foretold almost to a day when Norway and Holland would be invaded. Then, for fun, he predicted to his concierge that he would have an accident on such and such a date and added : 'Hitler won't last longer than six weeks from to-day.' The concierge has the accident; he is knocked down by a car."

Here, the car as the place of sacrifice becomes the instrument too. The victim is, of course, the concierge, an ordinary representative of all the Frenchmen to be saved. As for the officiant, he here assumes the distinguishing marks of the classic seer of antiquity, whose dread wisdom and Hermetic powers are brought up to date as mathematics.

\* \* \*

I have kept to the end perhaps the most instructive of the versions I was able to note. It was given me in December 1939, by a clairvoyante, this time in the quartier de la Muette, who said she had it from two girls, regular visitors, whose father owned a large cheese factory in Normandy. She believed it implicitly.

14. "A man has a breakdown on the Paris-Soissons road. While tinkering with his engine, another car stops and one of the occupants gets

<sup>1</sup> On December 30th 1943, at the Cape, K. Greshoff communicated the following version of the myth in which the car has not yet ousted the horse carriage. It evidently dates from the 1914-18 war.

12b. "Returning through Paris, a man on leave hears someone telling the story of a lady who knows when the war will end.  
"This lady, a little before, was on her way to the Sacré Cœur, in Montmartre. The cab goes stumbling along for the hill is steep. A beggar woman, with difficulty, is going the same road and the lady charitably offers her a seat in the carriage. The beldame gets in and they start talking. Everyone will guess the subject of their talk. 'Don't worry, little lady, the war will be over by the month of.....' 'By....., you're joking.' 'The war will end in ..... as true as that the coachman driving us will be dead in an hour.'

"They reach their destination and go their separate ways to pray. Coming out, the lady sees her carriage, but no driver in the seat. She looks about and is told he has just been moved to a neighbouring chemist's, having died of an attack. A tall story if ever there was one: strangest of all is that it appears to be true." (Guillaume Apollinaire, *Anecdote*, pp. 214-5, Paris. Librairie Plon, 1926.)

out and enquires if he can help. Thinking he can manage alone, the man thanks him and refuses, but noticing that the other speaks with an accent asks his nationality.

“‘I’m a German.’ They then begin talking about current events. ‘How will it all turn out?’ asks the Frenchman. ‘Oh, it won’t last much longer,’ replies the other. ‘Really—and Hitler?’ ‘Hitler? Hitler will be dead very soon now, and that’s as true as that you’ll be starting-up in a minute, that you’ll be stopped at a level crossing to take an injured woman to the nearest hospital and that she’ll die on the way.’ The German’s prediction was fulfilled in every particular.”

Thus, in this version, sacrificer and officiant are both present, though of enemy nationalities and so liable to be called up on opposite sides. The most striking variant, however, is that once again the accompanying woman has vanished, but only to reappear as a central figure in the guise of victim. The victim is no longer a recruit nor a man, but a woman who, by her injuries, represents a war-casualty.

Of course, in our present-day wars women are just as likely as men to fall victim to the bomb or torpedo. The injury to the woman in this fourteenth variant recalls that of the injured passenger in the second, also picked up on the road, who by his injury recalls the recruit in the first version. It remains none the less true that the victim of the expiatory and propitiatory sacrifice is this time a woman and so unable to represent the son who expiates the *Œdipus* crime.

Still, by comparing the two main variants of this particular version, we may find that they throw light on each other. If there is no accompanying woman it may be just because she here merges into the woman victim. The driver, the son guilty of the *Œdipus* crime, is here by implication commanded to restore to the Father-fate figure the coveted object for which he committed the crime: the woman. But it is not perhaps without significance that as a third divergence we find the chance soothsayer—who is both priest and incarnation of the Divinity, as were indeed the earlier woman and gypsy—turned into a compatriot of Hitler, the hostile Father. It is to this latter to whom, by implication, the criminally won booty must be restored, and only after this punishment-restitution can the wished-for crime take place. The *Œdipal* revolution will break out, the sons will kill the Dictator-father and the French and Germans, now brothers and no longer enemies, will come together as friends (the German met on the road may again be a refugee

driven from Germany by the National-Socialist terror, thus in himself representing a Franco-German compromise). Peace will then return and the demobilised citizens will again delight in their Mother in her pure and most exalted guise of the liberated Motherland.

We are reminded here of Iphigenia, sacrificed to obtain a favouring wind from the Gods for the Greek vessels: of Jephtha's daughter offered up as a thank offering; of all the female victims immolated on real or mythical altars. Thus the gods at times demand that the children of men be sacrificed and Jehovah requiring from Abraham his son appears as but a rival of the bull-god, Baal-Moloch.

Still, in these instances, though a deep-rooted Œdipal rivalry might help in deciding the father to offer up what otherwise he cherishes most, one characteristic feature of sacrifice does clearly emerge: the god demands of man what he holds most dear. "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest," commands the Lord. It is the magnitude of the willing sacrifice that, in exchange, pledges an equal favour from the gods.

This kind of sacrifice, so to speak, psychologically expresses the very antipodes of the diverse versions, so far given, of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*. In these, it is only strangers who die, as on the altar of Artemis at Aulis; beings with whom the sacrificer—here the motorist—had no real emotional bond. Doubtless, in prehistoric times, once the father of the primal horde had been murdered, it was strangers or prisoners taken in war who were used to re-enact the hideous crime—as later among the Aztecs—the person of the primitive father being projected on the enemy. Thus, man's sadism could achieve its satisfaction with the minimal ambivalence or hindrances.

Meanwhile, with the progressive internalisation of morality, man's own aggression must have become more and more intuned. As a result, more and more would the gods require that the object sacrificed was what was dearest to the sacrificer, that thus the sacrifice might have maximum effect. With such a progressive internalisation of aggression, sacrifice to the gods might even become the ritual suicide of which Frazer cites so many examples, an echo of which may be found in the story of Pope Pius XI, who, shortly before his death, offered his life to God to spare the world from war, or in the prophecy of Thérèse Neumann, the German clairvoyante, who predicted that Hitler would die three months after herself. Similarly inspired would appear to be a prediction reported

by my married niece in Germany in a letter dated Lindau, October 6th, 1940: an old woman of Stuttgart was said to have prophesied her death in June, the burning of London forty days later and peace forty days after that.<sup>1</sup>

Through *Paris-Soir*, which was kind enough to insert a request for prophecies relative to the end of the war, though I was not able to collect further versions of *The Corpse in the Car* myth, I did collect the following story, among others, which I shall give later.

15. "I can tell you a tale now current in the Corrèze which runs as follows: In 1870, during the siege of Paris, a bishop of Tulle died three months before the armistice. In 1918 another bishop of Tulle died some three months before the armistice and you can easily check that another bishop of Tulle died forty days back. You can therefore deduce that this war will end in six weeks to two months from now. I do not know whether these two bishops died exactly three months before the armistice: I leave it to you to find out.

*Signed Leopold Lavergne: Corporal.*

*9th December, 1939."*

Not that the actual three months really matters. What interests us here is the psychic reality of the story: Tulle, of all France's towns, in its civic pride, reserved for itself the signal honour of being the altar on which the expiatory and propitiatory human sacrifice takes place which always redeems imperilled France. And doubtless, its pious bishops, had

<sup>1</sup> James George Frazer: *The Golden Bough. The Dying God*. London. Mcmillan & Co., 1919, p. 47: ". . . This province" (of Quilacare, S. India) "has a king over it who has not more than twelve years to reign from jubilee to jubilee . . . when the twelve years are completed, on the day of this feast there assemble together innumerable people, and much money is spent in giving food to Bramans. The king has a wooden scaffolding made, spread over with silken hangings; and on that day he goes to bathe at a tank with great ceremonies and sound of music, after that he comes to the idol and prays to it, and mounts on the scaffolding, and there before all the people he takes some very sharp knives and begins to cut off his nose, and then his ears, and his lips, and all his members, and as much flesh of himself as he can; and he throws it away very hurriedly until so much of his blood is spilled that he begins to faint, and then he cuts his throat himself . . . The king of Calicut, on the Malabar coast, bears the title of Samorin or Samory . . . Formerly the Samorin had to cut his throat in public at the end of a twelve years' reign."

The aim of these barbarous customs would seem to be to ensure the continued prosperity of the kingdom by the periodic ritual suicide of the king. Naturally our own similar sacrifices offered to heaven take a less sanguinary and repulsive form. Neither Thérèse Neumann nor the Pope nor the old woman of Stuttgart would have thought of bespattering the assembled people with their blood, but there is an analogous propitiatory intent.

they been consulted—like Pius XI and the German clairvoyante—would readily have offered their lives to God in a voluntary sacrifice to save their country.

Christ, sacrificed by his Father yet consenting to His Passion remains the model for all these Believers. And the sacrifice of the self, within the limits of continued existence, may dictate every form of the asceticisms and renunciations that are "offered to God." Nevertheless, to the Believer these still remain bargaining factors, a bargaining profitable to man since, for passing earthly tribulations, God grants the eternal beatitude of heaven. Pascal's wager itself is based on a similar calculation.

Thus sacrifice must have passed through numberless stages, most of which still survive in our unconscious and in the phantasies to which it gives birth. We may therefore hope, by collecting yet more variants of these myths which prophesy the death of Hitler or the end of the war, that we may disclose, thanks to the successive regressions uncovered, a revivification of the various stages that mark man's universal practice of sacrificing to the gods to make them propitious.

\* \* \*

In the Spring of 1941, in Greece, I was able to collect three prophecies concerning the then recent death of Metaxas, the Greek dictator. A lady living in Piræus, on April 2nd, told me the following story:

16. "An old clerk in the People's Bank was said to have predicted, the previous winter, that one of the great men of our time, whose name began with M, would die on February 28th. People thought it meant Mussolini: it was Metaxas." (Actually he died on January 28th.)

The same prophetic employee was also said to have foretold that both Mussolini and Hitler would be hanged. In proof of the truth of his predictions, it was added that he had also announced the exact dates when Koritza and Argyrocastro would be captured from Albania by the Greek troops.

Thus the actual Greek victories of the time appeared to pledge the death of certain dictators. Mussolini should have died first but Metaxas died in his place, and one may ask whether this death of a national dictator did not in its turn become a sort of sacrificial-pledge of the death of the enemy dictators? In spite of himself, Metaxas would then in some degree have played the part of Pius XI, offering his life to God to bring back to suffering humanity the peace that would follow the hanging of the two enemy dictators.

Similar, though more emphatic, is the following prophecy collected by my son about the same time :

17. "A gypsy was said to have predicted her own death on a certain date, the death of Metaxas on another, and that of Mussolini at a yet later date.

The third prophecy, likewise related after the event, was reported by the lady living in Piræus. This was on April 2nd and ran as follows :

18. "A sick little girl was said to have been given a cup of milk. She then said : 'I shall drink my milk but I am going to die and Metaxas will also die the same day.' She drank her milk and then died and in two or three hours it was known that Metaxas had died." Another informant, this time Athenian, added that the child was said to have predicted the Greek defeats and subsequent peace.

If, in the foregoing prediction (version 17) Metaxas played the part of Pius XI. offering his life to God to bring peace, we have now a little Greek Thérèse Neumann whose death similarly appears linked with that of a dictator. Here, we have a quite unusual variant of the sacrificial myth, one that is defeatist. The people's aggression, instead of falling upon the enemy leader and people, turns inwards and strikes at the nation's leader and people : Metaxas dies and defeat brings peace. Possibly, this should be seen as a symptom of the war weariness of a heroic little people, for five long months at war against one great empire and daily expecting attack from a second? The wish that had shaped the myth would then be simply the wish for peace, that peace which makes armies and peoples sigh with relief when it at last arrives, even through defeat.

The same two ladies related this other prophecy on the same date :

19. "A shepherd foretold there would be peace at Easter; he had seen it in the bones of a lamb. He had said : 'I have 1,200 goats and I will sacrifice them all if I lose my wager.'"

Here is a version redolent of the aroma of antiquity! Greek shepherds, like their ancestors, even to-day read the future in the shoulder-blades of lambs. But here the animal sacrifice, as often in the past, replaces the human sacrifice. The goatherd, however, instead of sacrificing his goats should he obtain the peace he desires, will sacrifice them if he does not. A modern inversion, possibly, of the sacrifices of antiquity, due to the influence of racing in which it is the loser who pays. Possibly, however, this inversion derived from the fact that my

informants were town-dwellers, their homes being situated on either side of the Phaleron racecourse.

Somewhat later, on May 21st, in Alexandria, I picked up the following version from the wife of a diplomat evacuated from Athens. It had been told her between January 18th and 28th, the date of Metaxas' death, by an Athenian lady who claimed to know the baker in question :

20. "An Athens' baker whose son was fighting on the Albanian front dreamt that his son would be killed on January 18th and that Mussolini would die on the 28th. His son dies, he waits for the death of Mussolini, but it is Metaxas who dies on the 28th."

This variant suggests version 16, in which Mussolini was to die but Metaxas died instead, as well as version 18, where the death of a child is the pledge, not of that of an enemy dictator, but of that of the nation's head. Still, I doubt that this story, affirming this date, could have been told my informant before January 28th.

\* \* \*

Later, after Greece was defeated and my own departure, I was able to collect the following myths of the same type, this time in South Africa :

21. "A woman going from Durban to Pietermaritzburg meets a gypsy who says to her : 'Before nightfall you will have a corpse in your car.' She comes across a man who has met with an accident. She picks him up. He dies before they get to the hospital." Here, the prediction as to the end of the war is missing but we may be sure it was made.

22. "An air force officer, staying at the Caister hotel in Durban, received a letter from his sister in Sussex, telling him that some gypsies had asked for permission to camp in a field. The owner had said : 'Yes, you can have that field in which to camp.' To which, one of the gypsies replied : 'No, not that particular field, because something terrible is going to happen there.' Twenty-four or possibly forty-eight hours later, a bomber crashed in that very field! Next day the owner of the field sought out the gypsy who predicted the tragic event and asked : 'How could you know?' To which the gypsy replied : 'I can also tell you the war will end next October, but you won't be there to see it.' Three days later the old gentleman died of heart failure."

(These two variants were given me by the wife of the Mayor of Durban on September 14th, 1941. The incident reputedly took place three months earlier.)

In this version the human sacrifice is doubly determined: by the bomber that crashes and by the old gentleman who dies. The car is absent but is doubtless replaced by the bomber.

An almost identical version of the same myth reached me, also in September 1941, in a letter from England received in Durban:

23. "Some gypsies ask leave of a farmer to spend the night in one of his fields. He agrees, but stipulates that they must camp in a certain field. Next morning he discovers they have spent the night in the field he has prohibited. They explain that bombs would fall in the field he had pointed out and that was why they had spent the night in the other. The following night bombs fell as they had predicted. Deeply impressed, the farmer asks the gypsies to tell him when the war will end. They reply: 'Three months after the farmer's own death.'" (This was sent me by a fellow psycho-analyst in London, who added: "The friend to whom I owe this story tells me it has been current in England since June, 1941.")

Here again we find human sacrifice as the offering that pledges an end to the evils of war. But, as in version 22, the setting of the human sacrifice, where it takes place or is predicted, is modified by the grave perils that threatened Britain: large-scale air bombardments. For that reason a minor augury of good omen is fulfilled, namely the preservation of the lives of the campers, followed as was fitting, by the major auspicious prophecy announcing an end to the evils of war, in each case consequent on the preliminary sacrifice of a human life to fate.

\* \* \*

Still in South Africa, early in 1942, I learnt that there was another version of *The Corpse in the Car* myth current, which concerned a motorist driving from Johannesburg to Pretoria. Though many rumours of this story reached me, I was never able to obtain a detailed version.

However, on July 26th, 1942, Sir Herbert Stanley, Governor of S. Rhodesia until the end of 1941, to whom I had shown a copy of my first outline of this chapter, reprinted from the *American Imago*, sent me a letter from which I quote the following passage:

24. "Until I read it, I had no idea that this story—of which a version had been told to me a year or two ago as having just occurred in Southern Rhodesia—was a widely spread myth. I had never heard of it until one day—I forget whether it was in 1941 or 1940—somebody (whose identity I cannot at the moment recall) told me that on the previous



morning two ladies were motoring into Salisbury from a farm near Marandellas (a place not quite 50 miles from Salisbury on the Umtali road), and that on their way they had passed an old, shabby and grubby-looking European man, trudging along. They stopped and offered him a lift. He accepted and asked to be put down on the outskirts of Salisbury. He offered payment, and when that was refused, he said: Well then, I will give you some good news. Within twelve months from now Hitler will be dead. They looked incredulous, and he then added: I will tell you something more. Before this day is over, there will be a dead man in your car. Upon that they parted. The ladies did their shopping, lunched at the Grand Hotel and started back on their homeward drive. A few miles out of Salisbury they came upon a wrecked car and were asked to take an injured man back into Salisbury to the hospital. This they did, and when they arrived at the hospital, they found that the man had died. (They had put him in the back seat of the car; they both were sitting in front.)

"My informant assured me that this was a true story, and that he knew the ladies. I did not inquire as to their names."

25. Also in 1942, on September 14th, happening to be lunching at the Waldorff, the well-known restaurant in Cape Town, the manageress, knowing my interest in predictions as to the war, introduced a South African gentleman who, she said, had himself had a very strange experience.

"I was with my son," he said. "I took three sailors in my car down to the docks. When we came round one turned and said, 'Excuse me, Sir, you will have a dead body in your car before you go home together.' And then: 'The war will be over by November.' I picked up a man on the road, and he died at the hospital. It was two months ago."

Much of the value of this testimony, the only apparently direct testimony I was ever able to collect, was invalidated by something jocular in the man's air. And I never succeeded in encountering the son.

In South Africa again, on March 7th, 1943, when two young R.A.F. men, recently arrived, had come to dinner, the following variant was related by one of them:

26. "It was in 1939, six months before the war. A traveller was travelling along the road in England. He stops to give a gypsy a lift and before the gypsy leaves him she thanks the driver for his kindness and says that in repayment of his kindness she would like to disclose the

future to him. She then goes on to tell him three things. 1 : Before he reaches his destination he would see a huge fire. 2, He would have a corpse in his car before nightfall. 3, Hitler would be dead before twelve months.

“He goes home and soon sees a huge fire. He goes further and comes across a very bad car accident. The police commandeered his car as an ambulance. And he takes an injured man from the crash, who dies on his way to hospital.

“Now Hitler ought to die in twelve months. But he did not.”

My informant added : “I have heard this story from fourteen different sources.”

We see, therefore, that the myth of *The Corpse in the Car* was current in Britain as earlier correspondents had already indicated. The chief interest of the last variant lies in its prediction of a “huge fire.” We may see therein the glow of the pyres on which sacrificial victims are often ritually consumed, the smoke sent as a holocaust to the skies.

Finally, also in South Africa, from a letter dated April 8th, sent me by Hanns Sachs, a fellow psycho-analyst in Boston, I cull the following passage :

27. “Last Monday, one of my patients, Dr. R. B. told me that, while away for the week-end, she had started talking to the train guard. He had told her the war would end in July. One of his friends, a motorist, had met someone who had told him this, and who, seeing him sceptical, added that he knew it to be true because he was the seventh son of a seventh son of a seventh son and, to prove he could read the future, the motorist would have a fair man dead in his car that day. The motorist then drove on and picked up a fair man wanting a lift. He then gets caught in a traffic jam and forgets all about his passenger. But when he looks at him again, he sees that he is dead.”

“The same letter contained the following newspaper cutting :

### 28. “TO-DAY’S RUMOUR :

*That one about the fortune teller started  
last Spring.*

“This one comes from Sudbury :

“A man everyone knows was motoring along a road and was stopped by a woman who asked for a ride. She said she was a fortune teller and offered to tell his fortune. When he said he was not interested, she

said she would tell him something anyway. She said that six weeks from the day he carried a corpse in his car the war would be over.

"Well, well, believe it or not, a few days after that the motorist drew up to the scene of an automobile accident and was asked by a policeman to carry an injured boy to a hospital. And, you guessed it, when they drove up to the hospital, the injured boy was dead.

"That rumour started last spring and now comes from practically any community you want to name."

(*Boston Globe, Tuesday, February 24th, 1942.*)

What makes this last ironical American variant so interesting is the scepticism of its tone. The theme of *The Corpse in the Car* is recognised as being a myth. A mechanism similar to that which makes a dreamer think: "It's only a dream" here veils the immense gravity and profound psychic reality of the archaic sacrificial theme.

To conclude, here is a variant of this theme which shows the human victim frankly replaced by an animal victim.

29. "Recently, one of my friends, with a property in Sologne, related the following episode: Early one morning her old servant said to her: 'On no account let your dog out to-day; otherwise, at noon, he'll be bitten by a viper.'

"All the same the dog was let out at noon and was stung. This same old woman, in 1942, would tell anyone who cared to listen: 'The war will end on April 13th, 1945. . . .'"

"These predictions, made three years ago, give one to think. . .

"Will the war end on April 13th?"

(*Liberation-Soir: Thursday, March 22nd, 1945.*)

The war in Europe ended on May 8th, 1945.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MYTH OF THE GUESSED MONEY.

Another kind of prophecy dealing with Hitler's death and the end of hostilities was also widespread: it, too, was accompanied by similar proofs of authenticity, the story being generally related by someone who knew someone present at the time. I shall now again set down the various versions as they reached me, whether by word of mouth or in writing.

Here is the first version of this other myth, as reported by a Paris clairvoyante in the quartier d'Europe of Paris, whom I visited in November 1939, the incident apparently having taken place that Autumn, at the beginning of the war.

1. "A lady in a crowded railway carriage drops her purse. She kneels to pick up the small change scattered on the floor. Another lady present says: "Fancy upsetting the whole carriage for 20 frs.!" To which the first lady replies: 'That is exactly what I had in my purse.' One of the passengers, a man, then says to the lady who guessed so accurately: 'Well, you've certainly a nose!' To which she retorts: 'And you've got 500 frs. in your pocketbook.' Flabbergasted, the man says: 'If you're so clever you certainly ought to be able to tell me what will happen to Hitler.' 'All right, he'll be murdered on October 27th this year . . . ."

I now give another version of this theme, also collected about the same time from a clairvoyante, this time at Neuilly. She declared it to have come from one of her clients, whose maid was said to have witnessed the scene.

2. "While this maid was out shopping, a woman paying her bill dropped her purse. As she stooped to pick it up, a gypsy quickly put her foot on it. 'Are you trying to steal my purse?' the lady asked. 'It wouldn't be worth while,' the gypsy replied, 'for only 60 frs. But that man over there has a lot more: he's got 2,000 frs. in his pocketbook.' They look into the lady's purse and the man's pocketbook: 60 frs. and 2,000 frs.! 'And I'll tell you something else,' continued the gypsy,

'Hitler will be murdered before the end of the year.' Greatly impressed the man exclaimed: 'If it's true, I'll give you the 2,000 frs.!'"

Another version appeared in *Paris-Soir* in December 1939, and was said to have been overheard at Bourg-la-Reine:

3: "An Englishwoman in a bus with a little girl found a gypsy sitting at her side. Did she shrink back ever so slightly? She may have done: anyway, the latter said to her: 'Why look at me like that because I'm only wearing a cheap dress: you might do the same. Still, to show you I've certain powers, see that officer on the platform there; well, he's got 2,000 frs. in his pocketbook!' The officer, somewhat surprised, says it can easily be proved, counts his money and admits her statement is true. Then he says to the gypsy: 'Well, can you tell us something about the war?' 'Of course," she says, 'Hitler will be murdered on November 23rd (though maybe no one will know it) and the war will end in the Spring.' The officer took the gypsy's address and promised her the 2,000 frs. if her predictions proved true."

This fourth version, also found in December 1939, in *Paris-Soir*, was reported by the same corporal who contributed the story connected with the deaths of the bishops of Tulle:<sup>1</sup>

4. "Here is an incident," the corporal writes, "related by a comrade who prefers to remain anonymous.

"The brother of this man, too young for the call-up, at present lives in Paris. Well, about a month back, he happened to be in the Underground. An old lady was sitting facing him, there was a youngish man standing up and another man, probably a bank cashier, was on the next seat. The standing man, evidently wanting to blow his nose, pulled his handkerchief out of his trouser-pocket, in doing which his notecase fell on the floor. Seeing this, the old lady facing my friend's brother said: 'You see that man who's just dropped his notecase: well, it contains 16.25 frs. Just ask him out of curiosity.' To cut a long story short, she was exactly right. Then, still speaking to my friend's brother, she said: 'As for that cashier there, he's got 18,000 frs. in his portfolio.' After some further talk, she is again proved right. The ice then being broken, as it were, between these four people, the old lady says to them: 'Just now the country's in a state of war: well, I can tell you that on January 8th, 1940, Hitler will be dead, the war will be over, and you'll see for yourselves I was right.'

---

<sup>1</sup> Chap. I. Version 15.

And the corporal concluded: 'As much as you do yourselves, I hope this proves true, and wait for events to confirm it. You are welcome to this story if it's of use to you.'

No need to remark that events confirmed none of these predictions, neither on October 27th, November 23rd, the end of the year, January 8th or the following Spring, was Hitler assassinated.

However, on December 25th, 1939, I obtained the following version from the wife of an anthropologist, as some sort of proof of these predictions. At my request this lady later wrote it down and I now quote her letter:

5. "We reached Paris on Tuesday, October 31st and were back in Chateauroux on Sunday, November 5th. We had spent four days in Paris.

"On November 3rd, our concierge told me that a local girl going to (or returning from) work, overheard a man and woman discussing the war, Hitler's assassination, etc., and the man say: 'Can't someone kill him? I'd give my very ears, etc.' To which the woman replied: 'Don't worry. Hitler will be murdered on the 6th.' As the man remained sceptical, the woman then said: 'It's as true as that you have 2,000 frs. in your pocket.' The man took out his pocketbook and found, in fact, that it contained 2,000 frs. He then said to the woman: 'Give me your address. If it's true, the 2,000 frs. are yours.'

"On the 7th the Munich attempt on Hitler's life took place."

It should not be forgotten, however, that this story was not told until late in December and that it is easy to prophecy after the event. Still, worth noting in this version is the subtle manner in which the theme of human sacrifice, which forms the basis of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, is woven into the theme of the money offering. The man declares in effect that he would willingly sacrifice his ears to kill Hitler. However, the very real risk of execution for any attempt on the Führer's divine person almost entirely veils the archaic human sacrifice theme.

In another version, the theme of the human sacrifice appears still more clearly interwoven with that of the money offering. It was communicated to me in December 1939 through one of my cousins, who had it from a woman friend, and runs as follows:

6. "On September 2nd, 3rd, or 4th, 1939, a man is sitting in a railway carriage facing an old lady. He is rejoining his unit as his equipment, indeed, shows. Suddenly the old lady leans forward and says: 'It isn't very wise to go into barracks with so much money.' In answer

to his astonished glance she tells him he has 6,000 frs. in his pocketbook. 'You know, I'm a bit of a clairvoyante,' she adds. She then informs him he has a daughter and begins to talk to him about his past. She then tells him of his current difficulties and chances, begins to complain of the hard times, and adds: 'Luckily Hitler will die on December 14th, though unfortunately I shan't be here to see it, for I've only a month at most. He then asks her name and address before he gets out.

"Six weeks later, he is sent home as over age. He remembers the old lady, goes to visit her and learns from the concierge that she has been dead some days.

"This story was very widespread in Switzerland in November: it gave great hope to those who believed that Hitler's death would change all."

This old lady with her three prophecies, who is both officiant and victim, reminds one of Pius XI offering his life to put an end to the miseries caused by war. If she predicts and accepts her own death with such serenity, it is because she is, in fact, offering it to God and fate to redeem the miseries of mankind.

That is why there is no need to offer up the guessed money, since the greatest and most signal of all sacrifices is being made: that of a human life.

The fact that this story should have been so widely current in Switzerland was doubtless because Switzerland also believed it was menaced when war was declared.

\* \* \*

But to conclude with the simple myth of *The Guessed Money!* Thanks to my correspondents in Germany I was lucky enough to collect, in Greece, early in 1940, the following two versions current east of the Rhine.

The first I received from a cousin by marriage, living in the province of Hanover. Having first confirmed the similarity of the French and German versions of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, she continues:

7. "This is what was reported to me by Mr. 'W.', a company director, at Ettersburg. A friend of his son-in-law's was going somewhere by train when exactly the same thing happened to him as in the case of the gypsy and the pocketbook. She told him exactly how much money he had on him, whereupon he asked whether she could also say when we should have peace? To this she replied: 'On February 22nd,

and naturally, with *our victory!*' At that the man promised her his year's salary if it proved true."

The second version was sent me by a niece then staying in the Rhineland, who usually lived in Berlin, the niece from whom I was later to get version 10 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*. Here is her letter :

"I don't have much opportunity to see many people here, and as a result I don't hear much. I have only heard one story of the kind that interests you, but it should be of value as it's so like the second example in your letter. I have heard it told by three different people who themselves had heard it from others I don't know. This is the story :

8. "A gypsy enters a tram and squeezes herself down close to a man who draws himself away in evident disgust of the dirty gypsy. She says : 'You needn't give yourself such airs, you haven't got any more money in your purse than I have.' The man answers : 'How do you know how much money I've got on me?' The woman tells him : 'You have exactly that and that sum on you (of course the sum changes in each version). Now the other people in the tram begin to take interest in the strange creature and one person says : 'Well, if you can tell such things, tell us something about the future?' To which she replies : 'You know quite well that *wahrsagen* isn't allowed and that the gentleman over there is a *Kriminalbeamter* and would arrest me !' Everybody turns towards the man she has pointed out, and he laughingly admits that the gypsy is perfectly right, and adds : 'But go along and tell us the future as we have all got so interested; for once I will let it pass!' So the woman says : 'The war will be over then and then.'"

"I have heard this story," my correspondent went on, "the first time beginning of November. The prophecy was that the war would end the middle of November. Alas, it hasn't! But I think it is highly curious that this tale should be so very like your example No. 2. Of course, every person told it with slight variations, such as that it took place in the Underground, or some bus, the date of the end of the war was different, etc. But there was no case of prediction of revolution or murder in other countries."

Worth noting is the characteristic nature of this local variant with its introduction of the detective and its link with the terrifying police of National Socialist Germany. Note, too, the absence, according to my



informant, of any prophecy relative to the murder of leaders. Doubtless, neither Daladier nor Chamberlain—the man with the umbrella—were of a stature to provoke the assassin's bomb, bullet or knife. Scorning such adversaries, the victory of German arms, to German eyes, seemed dazzling trophy enough.

As to Britain, where I had no opportunity to collect versions of this myth of *The Gussed Money*, I find it difficult to believe no versions were current. No doubt, as in France, they were linked with the prophecy of the death of the huge enemy, Hitler.

\* \* \*

And now a final version, collected two months after the armistice signed by France, from a lady domiciled in Nice :

9. "My charwoman, who is Italian by birth, told me the following story :

"A lady I know was travelling to Nice from Antibes. Two soldiers got in and then a gypsy. One soldier somehow showed his annoyance, whereupon the gypsy said : 'You don't want to sit next to me. You're afraid I may take your money, although you've only 2 frs. in your pocket ! But the other, he's got money; he's got 6,000 frs. on him.' It was true. The latter then said to the gypsy : 'If you know that, perhaps you can tell me when the war will be over?' She made a grimace, stared into the distance and then said : 'The war will end in a month.' At which the soldier gave her his address, saying : 'If it's true, and if the war does end in a month, I'll give you half my fortune.'" This story, my correspondent added, had first been told her during hostilities in France, but the charwoman, at my request, repeated it to her thus.

Outstanding features of this story are the soldiers, the gypsy's grimace before predicting a peace which includes no victory, a grimace fully justified by the sort of peace that was promised France in 1940 ! Between the first and second tales and the differences between them, France's defeat had, in fact, taken place.

\* \* \*

In the myth of *The Gussed Money* we have before us what is doubtless a more refined and later version of the sacrificial offering than the archaically inspired myth of *The Corpse in the Car*. But first let us seek to trace our established sacrificial elements in this new myth.

The *sacrificer* is evidently the man with the pocketbook stuffed with notes, *i.e.*, with great offerings to make. The officiant, in this case a

woman, is the gypsy or old lady, who replaces the priest or priestess of the ancient sacrifices. As in the past, she becomes one with the gods or with fate, whose oracle she reveals. The *place* of sacrifice would be both the place where the money is guessed and the place where the money is to be paid over, the latter consecrated by the presence of the priestess charged with divine effluvia. She, too, eminently fulfils the divine function of the priests who consume the offerings to the God, since it is she who will pocket the 2,000 frs.

As to the *victim* offered up, this is the money. To reach this point, man had to pass through ages of cultural and economic evolution, the human victim being successively replaced by animal, vegetable and object, until finally we reach that new form of offering, money, only conceivable in an era of Wall Street and the Stock Exchange. But, despite the simple offering it seems, it is still a sacrifice that is intended, just as when, in church, one gives one's Peter's Penny to purchase a spiritual favour. For the offering is to undergo destruction wherever it may be and be consumed either by the Pope or the gypsy, exactly as those sacred personages, the high priests, consumed such parts of the victims of antiquity as were not reserved to the gods.

But the most noteworthy difference in this last prophetic myth is that the sacrifice-offering will be made only *after* the destined event has come to pass. It is no longer a propitiation sacrifice, but a thank offering that takes place.

Man here, in his bargain with fate, has become as canny and stand-offish as a peasant. He only pays on results.

And here we see the basic principle of wagers with fate as against racecourse betting or roulette. In the latter, if I win I get paid; in the former, if I win I pay. Such appears to be also the principle that governs setting a price on a criminal's head. In our myth of *The Guessed Money*, it is as though the man had set a price on Hitler's head which it is the business of the destiny-priestess to secure. But generally speaking, Hitler's death only fetches bargain prices, the top bid varying between 2,000 frs. and 18,000 frs. (reached but once, in version 4). This is indeed a puny monetary sacrifice to buy off the death not only of oneself (the man no doubt having been called up, though this is only explicitly stated in version 6) but of one's family and all the sons of France: that multitude of soldiers and sailors who guarded the land and watched the seas!

These are the phantasies of the poor, in which sort of thank-

offering we may see a kind of expiation inflicted by the poor on the rich : let them pay ! Thus, as ever, social and economic elements combine with psychological factors to direct man's acts and dreams.

It may be objected that only in versions 2, 3, 5 and 7 is the guessed money offered as a sacrifice for destruction. It seems to me however, that in versions 1 and 8, the logical conclusion has merely been omitted. In version 4, where we have a bank cashier with 18,000 frs. in his portfolio, everyone knows what at times happens to bank cashiers. As to version 6, in which the old lady is willing to lay down her life, we have seen already how this major sacrifice renders the money offering unnecessary, an offering which, in any case, could only be placed on a tomb.

\* \* \*

Later, at the Cape, in October 1941, I found the following version, given to my daughter by the local mayor :

10. "The doctor said to me : 'the war will be over on March 15th. A lady friend of a friend, who is also a refugee from Iraq, was in a tram and when the conductor came round for the fares, the woman opposite her said : 'I'll pay for you as you haven't enough in your purse.' 'But I have!' she replied. However, opening her purse, she found it was true. 'Then,' she said, 'you can also read in the future when the war will end?' 'I'm a clairvoyante,' answered the woman. 'The war will end on March 15th.'"

On March 31st, 1942, with Japan sweeping over Asia and the war raging more violently than ever, I myself collected a similar version at the Cape from a very pious old lady who said she had it from someone to whom it was told by the lady to whom it happened, the latter having newly arrived from Cairo.

11. "A lady in Cairo got into a bus. Another got in too and sat by her side. When the conductor came round for the fares, the second lady paid for the first, who began to protest and ask why? To this, the second lady said : 'Because you've no money in your bag,' and when she'd opened her bag, she found, in fact, that it was empty. The second lady then said : 'You took the wrong bag, there was nothing in it.' To which the other replied : 'If you're so clever, tell me when the war will end?' and was told : 'On June 30th!' But some people contradict this and say the date was May 13th. Yet that seems a bit too early," concluded my informant. She added that one ought to concentrate on the idea of victory to bring it about. "Do you not believe in the power of

thought?" Thus she revealed the magical roots of the great 'V-sign' campaign. But she also believed that if, despite the omnipotence of thought and the strength of their righteousness, the Allies had sustained and were sustaining so many reverses, it must be to expiate their sins. And with a sigh, she said: "We must have been very sinful for God to punish us so!" Evil, which men may see enthroned on earth, is thus prevented by man's moral masochism from shattering his faith in God and, indeed, helps to preserve it.

Finally, my son sent me from Egypt the following extract from *La Bourse Egyptienne*, dated October 20th, 1941:

#### A FAKIR'S PROGNOSTICATIONS.

12. "This possibility of an early victory is also envisaged by a Hindu fakir serving in the Army of the Nile, as related in *Al Itnein*.

"A No. 15 tram is returning from Gizeh. Travelling first class are three young men, a Hindu officer and an Egyptian lady.

"The conductor enters our compartment and goes to the Hindu officer who hands him two piastres, the price of two tickets: one for himself and one for the Egyptian lady who sits opposite him.

"The lady, surprised, tells the Hindu officer he is a stranger to her and that she does not understand why he should pay her fare. The officer replies that it is his pleasure to pay for her ticket. 'But I've the money and can pay!' says the lady. 'Oh no, Madam,' the officer calmly replies. 'I paid your fare because I know you've left your purse at home.'

"The others, surprised, then hear the officer explain that he is a Hindu fakir whose family is renowned for being able to foretell the future. They ask whether he can foretell things to do with their own future. But he excuses himself as an army officer. He adds that he will be going to the front the next week and knows he will receive an arm wound. All the same, he will go, because he knows that it is all written. (Mektoub!)

"The others then ask for news of the war. He replies that it will end shortly. 'I see nothing clear, but I see all the European capitals lit up on Christmas Eve!'"

Here in this latter version (where officiant and victim fuse into one) the human sacrifice theme, watered-down to a mere arm wound, merges into that of *The Guessed Money*.

We may here ask whether, in all these mysterious personages with

supernatural powers which enable them to see through clothes into pocketbooks and purses, as well as read the future, we may not be seeing some carry-over of the Haruspices of old, reading the future in the victim's entrails? We have already seen that the Greek shepherd of version 19 in the last chapter, who read the end of the war in a lamb's bones, was one of their avatars.

All these auspicious auguries as to the war, pledged either by blood or money or both, thus seem more or less to represent regressions to what we call anal-sadistic levels, that primitive compost so fertile in magic rites.

\* \* \*

We have now considered various versions of two myths connected with the death—so ardently desired by millions—of Hitler the arch-enemy, or with the end of the calamities he unleashed. In each case we saw that this result had to be bought by an offering, a sacrifice of varying nature offered to god-fate. The most impressive of these offerings, however, always remains the human victim; that which is most precious and noteworthy of all: that which indeed, in times of conflict, most often falls as in some holocaust, in sea, air or land battles.

And always, in the different versions of the two myths, we find the same main elements of the classic sacrificial rite: sacrificer, officiant, and victim, as well as a place in some sort consecrated for the rite. And always, whether it be a human victim or an offering of money, the offering is a sacrifice-holocaust which vanishes, destroyed, either entirely consumed by the tomb in the case of a human body or more frequently, in the case of money, as the perquisite of the divine "Priestess." And in each case the omniscient soothsayer, male or female, appears as omniscient to us as does fate.

One feature, common to them all, is striking: though the results of the sacrifice, the great benefits it confers, are expected to extend beyond the sacrificer to a whole nation, there is, on the other hand, no communion, physically speaking, with the victim's body. The communion remains spiritual, somewhat as when worshippers at Mass share the blessings which the sacrifice on the altar, and the communion of a priest, bestow upon all.

Thus, to conclude, we are faced by the problem of the relation between sacrifice as such and communion-sacrifice. In these myths, is or is not the latter absent?

We know, according to Robertson Smith, that originally all sacrifice

must have been communion-sacrifice, intended to establish or restore a link between mankind and some supernatural power, one in which all partook of the victim in a meal consecrated to the gods. In our contemporary myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, the corpse is never eaten, cannibalism having become too deeply repressed. But doubtless, in the past, the victim would have been eaten, the better to bind the gods to the plans of the menaced tribe.

In our myth of *The Guessed Money*, the money remains unshared.

It seems to me, however, that sacrifice, and that from very early times, could not always have been communion-sacrifice. At a very early stage, more humble sacrifices would have been made. For the personal benefits they desired, individuals would themselves have sacrificed to the spirits of their dead and later made their expiatory, propitiatory or thanksgiving sacrifices to the gods born of those spirits.

It must remain an open question therefore, whether every sacrifice by a group began as communion-sacrifice and in what degree, among diverse peoples and on diverse occasions, they may persist as such in more or less symbolic forms.

Whether, however, it be a prayer to a divinity or to fate through some immolated victim, plant or object, or at a later stage by some ascetic abnegation of personal pleasures, sacrifice remains essentially religious in nature: that of a supplication to a superior power whom it is hoped to soften by gifts or tribute, like some savage king. Yet the ancient faith in magic, more primitive even than religion, none the less persists and those who take part in the sacrifice, write Hubert and Mauss, "must have implicit faith in the benefits that will automatically ensue" (p. 61). In his heart of hearts, man continues to believe that by his sacrifice, as such, he gains *rights* over his gods, powers that will control fate and so mould the Universe to human desires.

Because a human victim died as a holocaust at the back of a car, or because money was offered to fate through its priestess, Hitler, in conformity with our wish, must meet an early death and the war he unleashed end with our victory.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MYTH OF THE DOCTORED WINE

In October 1939, Military Intelligence forwarded the following report from the General commanding the "X" military zone to the General commanding the land forces. Behind the scenes, it was much discussed in Paris. Was it or was it not the work of some practical joker? In any case, it reflected a myth current in the French army.

The report ran as follows :

" Military Intelligence H.Q.

From General " X "

No. 60/64/2.

O/C " X " Military Zone.

To the General in Command of French Land Forces

G.H.Q.

E.M.G.

Military Intelligence.

Despite its unusual and even farcical nature, I have the honour to transmit a report from O/C Supply Services, Amiens.

There does not appear to be any truth in the accusation against the wine issue, but, as the rumours are current and apparently widespread and may affect morale, it would seem my duty to draw your attention to the matter."

Signed " X. "

The Superintendent, Security Police.

October 12th, 1939.

To O/C. Supply Services, Amiens.

At the risk of not being taken seriously and even perhaps laughed at, I deem it my duty and beg to report certain scabrous rumours, which by their proportions and ubiquity threaten to gain a certain credit.

A rumour, in fact, seems inclined to spread in the army that the wine ration has been doctored and that its continued use would lead to almost total impotence among the troops.

It has, in fact, been reported to me, from an entirely reliable source, that six of the wives of Reservists in the 29th 'R.A.D.' stationed outside Hirson, who were able to visit their husbands in barracks last week and there spend the night, returned all six to Amiens, not one having found her husband in a state to fulfil his conjugal duties.

Two Reservists in barracks at Friant, an N.C.O. and a man attached to a transit company, both between 33 and 38, two days ago personally made a similar complaint to two of my men. A third reservist, Georges C..... in Friant bar-

racks, also said yesterday, again to an inspector of mine, that he no longer dared share the conjugal bed for fear of being reproached with an uncustomary frigidity or being taxed with having formed a liaison elsewhere.

Finally, on the afternoon of Tuesday the 10th inst., a 25 or 26 year old Reservist of athletic build, brought a prostitute before me, from whom he claimed back his advance of 15 frs., on grounds of non-usage. To this the girl, in substance, retorted: "it's not my fault; I did my best for two hours, but there was nothing doing and I consider I've earned my money."

I am having enquiry made whether other instances of this nature have been reported. Information has also reached me that some of the troops have averred that the wine had a strong medicinal taste.

Superintendent: Security Police.

(Signature illegible)."

This report, authentic or not, may be amusing; its interest lies in the fact to which it alludes, namely an impoverishment, when war began, in the genital function of many soldiers, which they attributed, as I learnt later, to the bromide mixed with their wine.

\* \* \*

In July, 1940, Paris having been captured by the Germans, I was able to meet, in a neighbouring villa at St. Cloud, a Luftwaffe captain attached to the military courts. Previously he had been a barrister in Berlin.

He also reported that in September 1939, when war began and he was stationed at a small German town near the Alsatian border, the German troops were complaining that iodine had been put in their coffee and 'soda' (*sic*) in their meat, to reduce their sexual desires. As Hitler's troops got no wine ration, they had therefore to accuse something else, the coffee or meat. But they were apparently less knowledgeable than French soldiers, for neither iodine nor bicarbonate of soda (?) have the sedative virtues of bromide.

None the less interesting is the fact that young Germans, like certain young Frenchmen, found themselves temporarily afflicted with impotence at the outbreak of war.

\* \* \*

Next, in August 1940, I heard from a young cousin, then demobilised and wearing the *Croix de Guerre* with palms, that the myth of the doctored wine had been current in certain units from late 1939 and early 1940 until just before the Germans launched their attack on the Western Front. (Another informant told me that a suspicious whitish deposit would at times remain at the bottom of his wine issue). In other cases



troops, doubting the doctoring of the wine, would accuse some other foodstuff; one cook in the questioned regiment thought it would be the salt. "The fact remains," added my cousin, "that my comrades lost 50 per cent. and even 90 per cent. of their potency and that those who stopped eating in barracks and only ate out, regained their powers." But this, another informant, denied. My young cousin, however, firmly believed the wine was doctored. He also said that the same practice prevailed in the 1914—1918 war, a statement denied, however, by another informant, a doctor who had served in both wars. The latter explained the non-existence of this legend at the time by the fact that it was a war of movement from the start. "Besides," my cousin said, "it was the general thing in the army to drug recruits in this way in order to keep them quiet. Even before the war, in 1935—1936, the young men doing their military service often complained." In his opinion it was undeniable that the sexual potency of recruits always diminished.

About the same time, as this matter was being discussed, a young demobilised officer of the Polish Legion in France who was present, said: "But it's well known! When I was in Poland, at the Cavalry School in Graudenz, we all knew the coffee was drugged! During the first three months we were incapable of anything with women. It's positive there was something in the coffee. I myself have experienced the effects. It's because they want to keep the young men quiet. There's no myth there."

Possibly the extreme fatigue of the first days of military training had its part in thus diminishing the potency of the recruits, but other causes more general and of deeper import must have been operative in the instances just given.

\* \* \*

Later, when after the retreat in Greece, I found myself in South Africa towards the end of 1941, I received a letter from England telling me that the same myth was current in the British internment camps for young Austrian and German refugees. Here, the anxiety and inturnd aggression of the internees, who, though mostly pro-Ally were nevertheless treated as enemies, doubtless greatly contributed to encourage this genital inhibition.

I was able to observe the presence of similar sexual inhibitions in certain men prone to anxiety at the time Hitler marched into Vienna. They did not, however, attribute this to underhand practices by those in power. It would seem that it derived from intense but impotent aggres-

sion which was forced to turn inwards.

Later again, at the Cape, in March 1942, with Malaya lost and South Africa apprehensive of some Japanese sea-borne attack, I heard that a South African paymaster officer at the British naval base, Simonstown, had told a Greek woman friend that a similar rumour was current in the South African army. I give the account he specially wrote out for me: "The troops in South Africa generally believe that the cooks have orders to put bluestone ( I cannot say whether such a chemical exists) into the food they prepare for the troops, to act as an anaphrodisiac. Troops I have talked with on the matter are always very vague and never specify cases in which they are sure it happened." My informant added: " I have talked with the man who for years has been in charge of the rationing at Simonstown, and he assures me that no chemical of the kind was ever issued by the authorities."

The " bluestone " thus cited, according to a doctor at the Wynberg military hospital, who confirmed the wide prevalence of the myth, would be copper sulphate. He added that the " bluestone " story was even current in South Africa during the 1914—18 war and that nowadays the troops say that the same trick is being played on them once more.

The correspondent to whom I owe the notes relative to the prevalence, in Britain, of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, also wrote me on November 1st, 1942, that the officer's wife in whose house she lived had told her she had heard a similar story in Britain. " The doctored wine story she had heard from her husband—a civilian in normal life—who said that on joining the army he found it fairly common knowledge that as a secret measure the bread issued to the troops (possibly the flour) was mixed with a special ingredient to reduce potency and sexual desire."

A similar myth appears also to have been current among the A.T.S. in Britain. These young amazons were of the opinion that bromide was added to their tea. The fact of these young women having become warriors would resuscitate in them the archaic myth of a propitiatory continence as necessary to success in war.

\* \* \*

Can we not elsewhere find parallels to this real though temporary impotence in young soldiers and warriors?

In Frazer's *Golden Bough*, that inexhaustible mine of information, we read, in the pages on the " taboos " on warriors: ". . . Warriors are conceived by the savage to move, so to say, in an atmosphere of

spiritual danger which constrains them to practise a variety of superstitious observances quite different in their nature from those rational precautions which, as a matter of course, they adopt against foes of flesh and blood . . . . When the Israelites marched forth to war, they were bound by certain rules of ceremonial purity identical with rules observed by Maoris and Australian blackfellows on the warpath. The vessels they used were sacred, and they had to practise continence . . . .<sup>1</sup>

"For three or four weeks before they went on a warlike expedition, the Nootka Indians made it an invariable rule to go into the water five or six times a day, when they washed and scrubbed themselves from head to foot with brushes intermixed with briars, so that their bodies and faces were often entirely covered with blood. During this severe exercise they continually exclaimed, 'Good or great God, let me live, not be sick, find the enemy, not fear him, find him asleep, and kill a great many of them.' All this time they had no intercourse with their women."<sup>2</sup>

"With regard to the Creek Indians and kindred tribes we are told they will not cohabit with women while they are out at war; they religiously abstain from every kind of intercourse even with their own wives, for the space of three days and nights before they go to war. . . . And as a preparation for attacking the enemy they go to the . . . winter house and there drink a warm decoction of their supposed holy consecrated herbs and roots for three days and nights, sometimes without any other refreshment. This is to induce the deity to guard and prosper them, amidst their impending dangers. . . . they are not to take the least nourishment of food, nor so much as to sit down, during that time of sanctifying themselves, till after sunset . . . ."<sup>3</sup>

"An Indian, intending to go to war, will commence by blacking his face, permitting his hair to grow long, and neglecting his personal appearance, and also will frequently fast, sometimes for two or three days together, and will refrain from all intercourse with the other sex. If his dreams are favourable, he thinks that the Great Spirit will give him success."<sup>4</sup>

To which I would add : In February 1941, passing through Belgrade on my way from Paris to Athens, I heard on excellent authority that,

---

<sup>1</sup> Sir J. G. Frazer: *The Golden Bough: Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*. Macmillan, London, 1911, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> l.c. p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> l.c. p. 161/2.

<sup>4</sup> l.c. p. 163.

during the 1914-18 war, the Serbian troops believed that if they permitted themselves sexual intercourse before battle they would suffer defeat : this belief is an old tradition among Serbian fighting men.

\* \* \*

Thus all sorts of races, on the eve of combat, attach a magic virtue and propitiatory power to divers superstitious practices pre-eminent among which are abstinence from food and sexual intercourse. Among such people, warriors must be specially careful to abstain from sexual intercourse, an abstinence which, as in that other form of sacrifice, ritual fasting, must incline their God to defend and succour them amid the dangers by which they are menaced : or in other terms, incline the "Great Spirit" to grant them success.

Among our modern warriors, German or French, and even among raw recruits who, in their military training, experience a sort of dress-rehearsal of war, this continence must be determined by a similar psychic mechanism. It is not, however, a continence desired or freely accepted as with Red Indians, or Serbian warriors. These young recruits of 1939 found themselves, willy-nilly, afflicted with an impotence against which, in consciousness, they rebelled. The primitive commandment enjoining continence, as was but natural, had sunk always more and more deeply into man's unconscious as his biological and cultural evolution advanced; thus it could only emerge at last as an inhibition which enjoined the same continence on present-day Frenchmen and Germans as on the Israelites of the Bible, Maoris, Australians and Red Indians.

In each case, however, with primitives as with us, the continence accepted by, or imposed upon, the warrior, is never attributed to internal forces, but to coercion from some external power. With the Israelites, as with the Red Indians whom Frazer cites, magico-religious observances ostensibly ordained this from without. With us, this same imperative repression, which cannot be evaded, is attributed to the authorities, i.e., the quartermaster's staff.

In each case we find that a psychic injunction—with primitives a categorical taboo, with civilised man a neurotic inhibition—has been projected by the minds of the soldiers and warriors on powers ranged outside themselves.

\* \* \*

It remains now to ask why continence among warriors should be deemed to bring success?

One might be tempted to think that continence preserves the powers that ebb in the sex-act. The lassitude that follows the act is a common experience and athletes are advised to be continent before their contests.

Frazer, however, rejects this explanation when commenting on the instances he cites. After quoting numerous examples of fasts, abstinence and mortifications practised by warriors of many tribes in diverse climes, he concludes :

“When we observe what pains these misguided savages took to unfit themselves for the business of war by abstaining from food, denying themselves rest, and lacerating their bodies, we shall probably not be disposed to attribute their practice of continence in war to a rational fear of dissipating bodily energies by indulgence in the lusts of the flesh. On the contrary, we can scarcely doubt that the motive which impelled them to observe chastity on a campaign was just as frivolous as the motive which led them simultaneously to fritter away their strength by severe fasts, gratuitous fatigue and voluntary wounds at the very moment when prudence called most loudly for a precisely opposite regimen. Why exactly so many savages have made it a rule to refrain from women in time of war, we cannot say for certain, but we may conjecture that their motive was a superstitious fear lest, on the principles of sympathetic magic, close contact with women should infect them with feminine weakness and cowardice. Similarly some savages imagine that contact with a woman in childbed enervates warriors and enfeebles their weapons. Indeed the Kayans of central Borneo go so far as to hold that to touch a loom or women’s clothes would so weaken a man that he would have no success in hunting, fishing and war.”<sup>1</sup>

Later, in his chapter on *Manslayers’ tabooed*, Frazer shows how, on their return, warriors who have slain an enemy in combat must submit to various restrictions in the same manner as must ordinary murderers. “If the reader still doubts,” says Frazer, “whether the rules of conduct which we have just been considering are based on superstitious fears or dictated by a rational prudence, his doubts will probably be dissipated when he learns that rules of the same sort are often imposed even more stringently on warriors after the victory has been won and when all fear of the living corporeal foe is at an end. In such cases one motive for the inconvenient restrictions laid on the victors in their hour of triumph is

---

<sup>1</sup> Frazer : *The Golden Bough : Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*, pp. 163/5.

probably a dread of the angry ghosts of the slain; and that the fear of the vengeful ghosts does influence the behaviour of the slayers is often expressly affirmed."<sup>1</sup> I shall now give one or two of the many examples quoted by Frazer :

"In Logea, an island off the south-eastern extremity of New Guinea, men who have killed or assisted in killing enemies shut themselves up for about a week in their houses. They must avoid all intercourse with their wives and friends, and they may not touch food with their hands. They may eat vegetable food only, which is brought to them cooked in special pots. The intention of these restrictions is to guard the men against the smell of the blood of the slain; for it is believed that if they smelt the blood, they would fall ill and die . . ."<sup>2</sup>

". . . some South African tribes require the slayer of a very gallant foe in war to keep apart from his wife and family for ten days after he has washed his body in running water . . . . When a Nandi of British East Africa has killed a member of another tribe, he paints one side of his body, spear and sword red and the other side white. For four days after the slaughter he is considered unclean and may not go home. He has to build a small shelter by a river and live there; he may not associate with his wife or sweetheart. . ."<sup>3</sup>

"Among the Akikuyu of British East Africa all who have shed human blood must be purified . . . . For a month after the shedding of blood they may have no contact with women. On the contrary, when a Ketosh warrior of British East Africa, who has killed a foe in battle, returns home, 'it is considered essential that he should have connection with his wife as soon as convenient: this is believed to prevent the spirit of his dead enemy from haunting and bewitching him . . . ."<sup>4</sup>

"Among the Natchez of North America young braves who had taken their first scalps were obliged to observe certain rules of abstinence for six months. They might not sleep with their wives or eat flesh; their only food was fish and hasty-pudding. If they broke these rules, they believed that the soul of the man they had killed would work their death by magic, that they would gain no more successes over the enemy, and

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> l.c. p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> l.c. p. 175.

<sup>4</sup> l.c. pp. 175/6.

that the least wound inflicted on them would prove mortal . . . ."<sup>1</sup>

We will now leave these instances to ask how far Frazer lays bare the causal origin of these rites, on the one hand, by relating the propitiatory taboos laid upon warriors to sympathetic magic and on the other by relating these strangely similar expiatory taboos laid upon murderers to the fear of the return of the avenging spirits of the dead.

\* \* \*

Let us first consider Frazer's explanation of the propitiatory taboos laid upon warriors, which, in effect, form so strange a parallel to the impotence of our troops. To me, Frazer's assumption that they are due to a belief in sympathetic magic seems most plausible, for the imagined virtues of continence as preserving the warrior's strength far exceeds the limits of reality. But also, it would seem, of those of sympathetic magic where the contaminating effects of contact with women are concerned, and it is here that psycho-analysis may help to a deeper understanding.

To return, however, to the first attempt to explain this taboo by belief in the fortifying virtues of continence. To me, it seems that this virtue, in the primitive imaginings that still survive in our unconscious, derives not from rational but from magical beliefs and we know from psycho-analysis what omnipotence is attributed by the unconscious to the fecundating male fluid. Its retention would then imply preserving a mythic talisman of victory for oneself.

But another factor, in origin part religious and part magic, still more imperatively enjoins continence as the prelude to victory: the son's primitive, infantile fear of the Father, that first of all our enemies! He it is who is prefigured, resuscitated, by the real enemy. Thus, to gain the right to defeat him later, he must first be offered a sacrifice: thus it is that the most cherished possession of all must be sacrificed to him, that of the women, those same women for whom, when parricide occurred in the primal Horde, the sons committed murder. Thus, after an initial symbolic expiation, the original crime could be victoriously repeated on the enemy's body.

The continence, consciously accepted by primitives of their taboos or unconsciously imposed on our troops by their inhibitions, would again be equivalent to a temporary castration offered in submission to the Father, that same Father who, in prehistoric times, when his maturing sons coveted his females, must sometimes have punished them with

---

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. p. 181.

castration : that castration of which circumcision, still so widespread on earth, testifies and is the symbol. In addition, may it not contain, as the wife of one of our best psycho-analysts suggests, a kind of homosexual fidelity to the brotherly horde, in which the soldier, joining his regiment, is incorporated?

As for the fasting of primitive warriors and in particular their abstinence from meat, this must represent a renunciation by the sons of their original cannibalism after the murder of the father. But since cannibalism has been more deeply repressed and overcome than all other primitive survivals, it need not surprise us that there is no longer any need to deny it by ritual observances, nor that our troops never object to their food or the meat on their plates.

On the other hand, since it was not possible for sexuality to be so completely repressed, here in this warrior myth of the doctored French wine or German coffee and even in the similar barrack myths current in peace, precarious as that peace is, we rediscover, in the soldiers' unconscious mental processes, a primitive propitiatory rite of the greatest value and use.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, the expiatory taboos laid on murderers, so widespread among primitive warriors, no longer seem to be found in civilised peoples, who, after victory, return home innocent of remorse for the enemy blood they have shed. This difference, Freud had already remarked, when, during the last war, in his *Zeitgemässes über Krieg und Tod* (1915) he wrote :

“ Beside the corpse of the beloved were generated not only the idea of the soul, the belief in immortality and a great part of man's deep-rooted sense of guilt, but also the earliest inkling of ethical law. The first and most portentous prohibition of the awakening conscience was : Thou shalt not kill. It was born of the reaction against that hate gratification which lurked behind the grief for the loved dead, and was gradually extended to unloved strangers and finally even to enemies.<sup>1</sup>

This prohibition therefore was to culminate in the Christian precept, so little followed, however : “ Love thine enemies.”

But Freud continues : “ This final extension is no longer experienced by civilised man. When the frenzied conflict of this war shall have been

---

<sup>1</sup> S. Freud : *Thoughts on War and Death* : Collected Papers, Vol. IV. Hogarth Press, p. 311.



decided, everyone of the victorious warriors will joyfully return to his home, his wife and his children, undelayed and undisturbed by any thought of the enemy he has slain either at close quarters or by distant weapons of destruction. It is worthy of note that such primitive races as still inhabit the earth, who are undoubtedly closer than we to primitive man, act differently in this respect, or did so act until they came under the influence of our civilization. The savage—Australian, Bushman, Tierra del Fuegan—is by no means a remorseless murderer: when he returns victorious from the war-path he may not set foot in his village nor touch his wife until he has atoned for the murders committed in war by penances which are often prolonged and toilsome. This may be presumed, of course, to be the outcome of superstition; the savage still goes in fear of the avenging spirits of the slain. But the spirits of the fallen enemy are nothing but the expression of his own conscience, uneasy on account of his blood-guiltiness; behind this superstition lurks a vein of ethical sensitiveness which has been lost by us civilized men.”<sup>1</sup>

I myself think that our soldiers to-day have not entirely lost that ethical sensitiveness of the primitive though subject to a process by which primitive observances and rites are made to recede ever further back in time the deeper man’s cultural advance has repressed them in the unconscious.

Circumcision, which among primitives is a puberty rite marking admission to male activities, has been extended to younger and younger groups until we now find it practised among us by Jews only on children in the cradle, a rite they have observed for many centuries. Similarly, the expiatory rite of continence, intended to appease the spirits of the slain, is only observed to-day by modern warriors *before the battle* and *before the slaying*, as witness the myth of the doctored wine or coffee. Thus, once the war is ended and before they are demobilised, our modern troops, whether victorious or even vanquished, are able to recover that sexual potency which was blocked in them for a time.

The same young hero of a cousin whose tales I quoted earlier, has told me how one of his comrades behaved during the retreat, or rather rout, of the French armies in June 1940, when it was realised that, for France, all was lost. From June 12th he gave himself up to a veritable sexual orgy: he would pick up young refugees by the roadside and enjoy them in the speeding lorry, discreetly screened with tarpaulins by his

---

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. pp. 311/2.

comrades. (Usually, however, the men, worn out by the retreat and the general confusion had other things to worry about : food and above all, sleep !)

In the German occupation army in France and doubtless in other countries conquered by Hitler, death was the punishment for rape in the military code. If such a penalty was envisaged it was doubtless because the temptation to commit this crime is always especially strong among victorious troops. Sexual relations between consenting women of the conquered countries and the victor soldiers were not however punishable by death and everyone knows that Venus was always indulgent to Mars.

These sexual excesses which follow the end of hostilities and which primitive man sought to oppose with taboos as implacable, almost, as was the penalty for rape in the German Military Code, are worth comparison with that magical and imperative injunction—cited by Frazer—laid on the Ketosh warrior-murderer, in clear opposition to these very taboos : namely, to lie with his wife as soon as possible on his return in order to triumph anew over the power of his enemy, though this time in the spirit. In this return of what was repressed, we see the reflection of the primal double Œdipus crime, the murder of the father followed by the seizure of his wives.

Thus, the sexual excesses of certain European soldiers after battle once more indirectly celebrate that distant triumph. In 1945, with the end of the war in Europe, this archaic response of the victorious warrior was to declare itself, in Central Europe, in the widespread rape of the women of the conquered countries. And this in direct proportion to the degree in which the dark or Asiatic invasion troops approximated to man's original barbarism.

\* \* \*

The *Myth of the Doctored Wine* will now enable us to reply far better than the earlier myths of the *Corpse in the Car* or *The Gussed Money*, to a question the reader may possibly already have asked? Is the fact that similar myths appear in so many spots caused by diffusion from a common source or to a uniformity of the human mind, which will always bear the same fruit as does, say, the apple tree, wherever it may be? The same problem therefore confronts us as that which faces the folklore student in fairy-tales like *Red Riding Hood* or *The Sleeping Beauty* which recur in identical form whether among Kaffirs or Eskimoes.

As regards our myths of *The Corpse in the Car* or *The Gussed*

*Money* the temptation is strong to accept the theory of diffusion in these days of swift communications, thanks to wireless and aeroplanes. It is more difficult to accept this theory for the *Myth of the Doctored Wine*, which unlike the two first, is not openly current.

Though diffusion cannot be excluded from the propagation of certain myths, the oneness of the human mind is what first gives them birth. We, psycho-analysts, who, whether in savages or civilised man, see the same complexes haunt the unconscious depths of the human psyche, observe unsurprised that our contemporary war myths draw their nourishment from humanity's most primitive sources and reveal themselves similar in all climes.

## CHAPTER IV

### MYTHS OF THE POWERLESS OR FRIENDLY ENEMY AND OF THE MOTHER'S TEARS.

In each of the three myths with which we have dealt—*The Corpse in the Car*, *The Guessed Money* and *The Doctored Wine*—we have found traces of ancient human sacrifice, of sacrificial gifts and of continence observed as a propitiation. In each case we found that the general anxiety caused by the menace or declaration of war was kept under control by a similar psychic mechanism: in exchange for some sacrifice imposed on the warrior the enemy would be defeated by fate either through some murderer-agent, or some auspicious increase in the warrior's powers gained by continence.

In no case, however, was the great menace the enemy constituted denied: Hitler, indeed in the French myths, appeared clothed in a terrible majesty. Only some adversary even stronger than himself could make his destruction possible: namely, either the suppositious murderer or the French soldier defeating the German. Anxiety was therefore kept under by identifying, as it were, these adversaries of Hitler with Hitler's own formidable powers, an identification won from fate in return for part-magic and part-religious sacrificial rites which entreat but also compel destiny.

In our succeeding myths, the terror aroused in nations by the threat of enemy aggression gives rise to another mechanism, more primitive and even more simple, by which to control anxiety: the plain denial of the enemy's menace.

\* \* \*

Before war broke out, in Summer 1939, I was able to collect the following story from various people in France. It always remained strangely unchanged.

1. An Englishman had just been making a motor tour through the Rhineland (or along the Slovak or Hungarian border), in a splendid Rolls Royce. Suddenly, at a sharp turn, he sees a column of German tanks approaching. He is going too fast to be able to put on his brakes.

There is no chance that the crash can be prevented. The motorist shuts his eyes, sure his last hour has come. The crash takes place . . . When the Englishman reopens his eyes, imagine his surprise to find the Rolls Royce intact and the German tank in pieces around him. It just shows the wretched stuff the Germans use in their tanks; just tin and three-ply."<sup>1</sup>

In each case the narrator added that he or she had the story from a friend of the very Englishman. My immediate thought was that here was a myth which admirably expressed the hopes placed by the West, and not least by Britain's French allies, in the industrial superiority of the British Empire over that of German war production. What finer symbol of this superiority than the Rolls Royce, that wonderful product of British industry! Meanwhile the tin tank admirably reveals what Germany's adversaries would have liked all her vaunted armaments to be: just a huge bluff!

Nevertheless war did break out, and soon I was given the following story, told by a Danish cousin by marriage:

2. "Do you know," she said one day, "that in Denmark, just before the war, the following story was said to have happened to a German touring England? This German was travelling about in a superb Mercedes car. At a turn in the road he suddenly saw some English tanks approaching. He was going too fast to put on his brakes; the car was bound to crash into the foremost tank. The German shut his eyes thinking his last hour had come: there was a crash. . . . When the motorist reopened his eyes, there was the tank in bits all around, whereas his Mercedes was quite untouched. That just shows you the sort of stuff the British use for their tanks. . . ."

Thus, the same myth in almost identical terms voiced the hopes in the opposite camp: the might of German industry, symbolised by the superb Mercedes, triumphs over British war production, also a huge bluff!

In these reciprocal versions of the myth of *The Car and the Tank*, a similar negation of the enemy's power serves to master fears aroused by the imminence of war.

\* \* \*

---

<sup>1</sup> In March 1943, in South Africa, a young British soldier just landed from a convoy (the same to whom I owe version 26 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*) explained that, as the story went, these gimcrack tanks consisted of a painted wooden body mounted on a small Opel chassis. In April, 1945, a South African anthropologist explained that the story arose from the fact that, in order to save fuel, the Germans, in their army manoeuvres, had been using wooden tanks propelled by men on bicycles hidden inside them!

Continuing my myths of the powerless enemy, I now turn to some myths of a more simple type. This amusing story reached me late in 1939 from a Swiss psycho-analyst in Paris, Dr. Leuba, to whom a compatriot had sent it.

3. "I'd better relate this very diverting story for if I wait till we meet, I might, alas! have to wait very long. Well, on November 10th, during the night, a number of Boches who had received orders to create some frontier incidents crossed one of the Rhine bridges in batches of twenty. Not a shot was fired, not a soul was seen and eventually they found themselves in a big village square, rather astonished by the ease of it all. Suddenly, a bugle rang out and they found themselves surrounded by some 200 Swiss soldiers who appeared from all sides. Then a Swiss officer thundered: 'Shun! Eyes front! Ground arms!' And every one of the Boches obeyed and was interned. At another place nearby, seeing nothing astir, some fifty or so more Boches, stripped to the skin, with their rifles and uniforms in rubber bags, swam over the Rhine pushing their bags before them. But when they had crossed, they were helped out by our soldiers who took charge of their bags, and made them stand to attention in their birthday suits! I was told this by a Swiss commercial traveller, a very reliable man, one of whose customers, a chemist, saw the whole show. No need to tell you that nothing of all this appeared in the papers, I don't quite know why."

We see that the writer has every faith in this story. From other sources, I learnt that, with slight variations, both episodes were widely current in Switzerland. The intense patriotism of this proud little nation, the time honoured independence of whose territory was menaced by a possible German invasion, thus found sustenance in obviously legendary stories in which the brave Swiss capture unresisting Germans or Germans who are helplessly naked and unable to use their arms, so much do they fear the valiant Swiss.

Thus, in these myths, the legends of Gessler and William Tell are resuscitated.

The enemy's weakness is the intensest desire of a menaced nation, a desire which was nurtured in Switzerland by the sort of William Tell myth whose variants we have just given. In France and Germany and

doubtless in England, that desire was nurtured by the typical myth of *The Car and the Tank*.

\* \* \*

The threat that the enemy constitutes may, however, be still more emphatically denied by fantasies in which the enemy's aggression is not only stayed but turned into its opposite.

Here are two anecdotes collected early in 1940 :

4. "French and German soldiers meet at a well from which both have to draw water. 'No one's looking,' they say, 'We won't fire at each other!'"

5. "A patrol suddenly finds himself facing a German sentry with a tommy gun. The soldier thinks his number's up. But the sentry, by no means young, says to him in first-rate French : ' Buzz off, old chap, and look snappy. There's a youngster coming who's a dab at pot shots! ' " The young, in fact, are more implacable than the old as the Führer of the Hitler youth so well knew.

I conclude with two incidents from the letter of a fellow psychoanalyst, dated August 26th, 1940 :

6. "A detachment with rations for the front line gets lost and suddenly finds itself face to face with an enemy outpost. Instead of being taken prisoner, however, they are told they have missed their way and shown how to get back to the French lines. (I read this little story in an American paper, *Life*, I think, my correspondent added.) This story also links up with the way the Americans saw this war before events in Norway, often terming it a ' phoney war '."

7. "A young officer is in charge of an outpost in a quiet sector of the Maginot line. One fine day a German loudspeaker announces that in exactly three hours a heavy barrage will be laid down and that they had better retire to avoid utter destruction. The French, wholly sceptical, stay put. Exactly two and three-quarter hours after this first warning, the German loudspeaker starts up again and tells them they have only fifteen minutes to retire, otherwise it means certain death and the Germans do not wish to kill them! This time the French officer takes them at their word; he moves away with his detachment and at the appointed hour, in fact, sees shells burst just where he and his men had been. (I had this story, says my correspondent, from an American lady to whom it

was told by this very officer, who is engaged to her niece. A typical instance of the way one hears these stories.”)

My correspondent then ends : “ These two stories seem to me very typical and of great interest in many respects, especially as exemplifying the wish to deny war’s reality and its dangers. The friendly enemy, *i.e.*, something turned into its opposite, is an invention to master and overcome fear.”

It could not be said better.

To this series doubtless belongs the legend, widely current in 1914-18, of the good Wurtembergers warning the French in the opposite trenches that they would soon be relieved by implacable Prussians. Or that of the British and Germans playing football in *No Man’s Land*, a story which gratified the Frenchman’s scorn of his too sports-loving ally while also denying the dangers the enemy represented. Similarly in Austria, about the same time, the rumour prevailed that the Russians and Austrians were fraternising with each other and only fired, after due warning, when higher officers were inspecting the line.

\* \* \*

The young cousin who provided the very interesting details of the myth of *The Doctored Wine*, also told me the following story :

8. “ After the Franco-German armistice, one of his comrades in unoccupied France wished to visit his wife in Bordeaux, who had just had a baby. He set out, but at the frontier was stopped by a German sentry who asked to see his papers. These, however, were not in order, for, though dressed as a civilian, he had not yet been given his discharge. The German then advised him to turn back, since if he went on, he would be made prisoner.” My cousin, this time, vouched for the truth of the incident.

Doubtless, the Germans were swamped with prisoners by the time they had got to Bordeaux and but little inclined to add to the two million or so on their hands. The story, therefore, may well be true, but its mythical base, the wish-fantasy it expresses, none the less clearly appears. Reality and myth may well coincide at times.

I myself, in Brittany, when Finisterre was overrun, saw French officers and troops calmly rub shoulders with Germans in the streets of



Quimper and that before France had signed the armistice.<sup>1</sup>

Once the armistice was in force, other "friendly enemy" myths began circulating.

In Paris, in December 1940, my maid brought me the following story just told her by our chauffeur.

9. "A German comes out of a restaurant at Versailles after an excellent meal. He says he has had enough of the war, that France is the place to live. He then cries: 'Vive la France!' Whereupon another German grabs him by the collar. They say he's been shot."

My maid also told me the following story which she said had been told her by a lady who knew the young man involved.

10. "A private was orderly to a French officer. They had fought together in the Maginot line and were both taken prisoner. The orderly then said: 'It really is annoying we should be prisoners now.' 'Don't worry,' the officer replied: 'Just wait a couple of days.' A few days later he turned up as a German officer and told his orderly how to escape. The young man reached Paris safe and sound."

Now here are some myths which, far from denying the enemy's cruelty and formidable powers, exaggerate them, though only to throw into greater relief the rare privilege of his friendship.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Meerloo, a Dutchman, who spent a long time as a deportee in Germany, informed me in June 1945, that one of the most persistent myths that worried the Germans was that of *The Decent Britisher*, in which their adversaries appeared full of tolerance.

I would add that the myth of *The Friendly Enemy*, like all other myths, does in fact, contain a core of reality. Men are thus fundamentally ambivalent and cannot wholly love their friends or hate their enemies.

In this connection, I may recall the conduct of Dr. Anton Sauerwald, who, after the Nazis entered Vienna was placed in charge of the Freud publishing firm and all matters relating to the Freud family. This Austrian, a professional chemist and convinced National Socialist, a firm believer in the Greater Germany and so, like many Austrians, in the *Anschluss*, carried out his tasks with much kindness and understanding. He could not evade the order to destroy the stocks of the publishing firm nor that confiscating Freud's Austrian effects, but he did spare Freud and his family many personal infictions. Eventually, when Freud was able to depart for London, thanks to Dr. Sauerwald's efforts he was able to take with him the things he valued most, his furniture, his library and the whole of his precious collection of antiques. He was even able to get himself accompanied, when he left, by a doctor, Dr. Josefina Stross, as was made necessary by his great age and precarious health. Here was an "enemy" who, doubtless because of his high cultural level, revealed himself as truly "friendly," though possibly not without danger to himself.

Again in 1945, after Germany's defeat, Gen. Eisenhower found it impossible to make the original non-fraternisation order effective. It had to be legalised by degrees, after being freely practised, and not only in promiscuous relations.

11. "A German officer as he takes leave of his Parisian billetor urges her to hide her children in the cellar should the German troops have to leave, for when they withdraw his superiors will order every French child to be killed."

This new "Slaughter of the Innocents" was reported to me on December 20th, 1940, by a fellow psycho-analyst, Dr. Paul Schiff. A nun of the Petite Roquette order was said to have heard it as she came from Villacoublay. Again, a gentleman from Nantes was said to have told the same thing to his son, who repeated it to an actor in Paris, who had already heard it from his mother, who had had it from hers, living at La Queue les Yvelines. The same informant, that same day, gave me this other story, told by one of his patients a month or so before.

12. "A nurse had looked after a German officer. In his gratitude, he wants to make her a present. She refuses. In its place, he therefore advises her that should the German troops leave Paris, she must get her nearest and dearest safe, for the Germans have strict orders to kill everyone French before they leave. They would have to obey, sick at heart though they were."

Thus, in these last two myths, we see the friendship of an otherwise formidable and implacable enemy appear as a favour of great worth. What is more, by this fantasy born from the wish for reassurance, the Parisians, groaning under the enemy occupation, in anticipation enjoyed the longed-for departure of their oppressors.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

Here now is a "compassion myth" of a different order.

About March or April 1940, a new myth became current which certain newspapers even reported as an important item :

<sup>1</sup> The myth of a terrifying yet friendly enemy was to create the following legend along coasts threatened by the German submarines. I picked it up at the Cape in 1942-3 in various, slightly differing forms.

"A submarine surfaces near the lifeboats of a ship it has just torpedoed. After the usual cross-examination about the victims' identity, the Commander tells the survivors their position and distance from land (as did, at times, happen). But where the myth comes in, is that the Commander then tells the survivors that he had himself landed at a deserted spot some days before, travelled to Cape Town and passed the evening in a cinema. He even offers them (in some versions) the cinema tickets he has specially bought for them in advance. The survivors reach land."

Some days later they encounter the same submarine commander in a main street of a town. He is easily recognisable by a great scar down one cheek. Before they can find a policeman, however, the nimble enemy swiftly disappears in the crowd.

On the east coast of America a similar legend is said to have been current when the submarine war was at its height.

13. "The Sainte-Odile spring in Alsace, which has been dry for a very long time, is again reported to be flowing! This Spring, by common report, it is averred to have started flowing exactly as it did three months before the armistices of 1870 and 1918! Thus, France will have peace three months from now!"

I also heard from my son, just back from Assisi, that a similar legend prevailed there in connection with an intermittent spring:

14. "This spring, which issues near St. Francis's cell, would always begin flowing some weeks before a great national event, as in 1918, before the armistice. It was even supposed to have announced the Messina earthquake."

In the "Dictionary of German Beliefs"<sup>1</sup> we read as follows: "By springs, weather and harvesting may be foretold." The "hunger-springs" (*Hungerbrunnen*) and "hunger-ponds" (*Hungerpützen*) in Germany, are literally countless. When they flow, they foretell an increase in the cost of living (whence their name of *Teuerbrunnen*) and when they go dry, they on the contrary announce a good year, whence their name of "harvest springs" or "wine springs." "When springs dry up in Autumn, they flow to the corn": that is, prosperous harvests will follow the next year, says an old saw which the authors quote, citing Schönwerth.

If we compare these three myths their meaning may appear. What strikes us first is that their effects may announce some impending calamity, such as famine or the Messina earthquake. But it may be objected that if springs that dry up "in Autumn" announce abundance it is doubtless because the common belief is that they only dry up on the surface, the better to flow beneath to make their way "to the corn." However that may be, the apparent disappearance of water is found linked with good fortune and its reappearance with calamity, contrary to what one might expect.

But though the prevalent wish for victory might have made the Sainte-Odile spring, like that at Assisi, prophesy victory in addition to peace, yet I am assured by my Alsatian friends that most of the 1940 versions of the Sainte-Odile myth merely confined themselves to predictions of an armistice.

\* \* \*

---

<sup>1</sup> *Handwörterbuch des Deutschen Aberglaubens*, Berlin und Leipzig, Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1938, Vol. IX, article *Wassergeister* (Water Spirits), H.37.

We know that to children, as to primitive man, the whole of nature is anthropomorphic and that they readily see the earth as a gigantic creature which, like a veritable mother, nourishes all her child-beings with her products. To this magnified mother, then, may be attributed all the emotions that agitate humanity. Thus, intermittent and prophetic springs doubtless stand, in the popular imagination, for the tears shed by Mother Earth over the woes of her children.

When famine is predicted she weeps in advance for the pangs that men will suffer, and that is why, reversing reality, the symbol proves stronger than the fact and famine follows, not when springs dry, but when they flow. As at Assisi, she will weep in advance for the ruin and death caused by the Messina earthquake. But there too, as at Sainte-Odile, in Alsace, the Earth Mother's tears will herald an armistice and the end of the war.

The reader here may begin to feel somewhat bewildered and ask: is it for joy that returning peace is announced that the Earth Mother weeps? I hardly think so. Here, our mother earth must be supposed to be weeping over the *present* woes of her children: the sons who, strewn over her immensity, water it with their blood and so give sufficient reason for tears! Thus, the water-tears trickling from springs would seem the Mater Dolorosa's immense supplication to the heavenly Father to end the martyrdom of her children.

That the proud heralding of victory is found so seldom in these myths is, doubtless, because the main mission of Sainte-Odile's compassionate waters would seem to be supplication.

Did the waters of Sainte-Odile really begin to flow again in the Spring of 1940? I think they must have done, since mountain springs flow readily when the snows melt. However that be, the factual flow to the psychologist is less important than the symbolic. And lo! the Heavenly father seemed for a time to have granted the prayers of the Earth-Mother in appearing to suspend hostilities in France, in June, three months later.

\* \* \*

Another myth, however, collected at Saint-Tropez in September 1940 shows the compassionate mother resuming her human form. This was contributed by the psycho-analyst's wife to whom I owe the story of the woodcutter and his cart (Version 12 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*). She said that in July, when at Beg-Meil (thus after the Franco-

German armistice but under German oppression) a story ran in the village that the Virgin Mary had appeared to a girl of eight and said to her :

15. "Peace will be signed on August 15th, but you will not be there to see it, for then you will be dead."

Here we find the human sacrifice theme, examined earlier, poetically interwoven with that of the compassionate mother piously embodied by the Breton mind in the Virgin Mary.

Another myth of the same nature was told me early in October by a woman friend evacuated from Paris to Lecques par Saint-Cyr (Bouches du Rhône). The incident evidently occurred well before France's collapse : she had the story from her landlady :

16. "Two soldiers are overtaken on the road by a peasant who offers them a place in his cart. When they get in they find a young nun already there. Further on, with nothing but open country around, she professes to be at her destination and asks to get down. Before saying good-bye, she tells the soldiers to be unafraid, that the war will end before Summer, that they will suffer no hurt and that all will be well.

"She then disappears and the soldiers see a piece of paper on the ground, dropped, they think by the nun. They pick it up and deeply moved, recognise the very image of their fellow traveller in the holy picture of St. Theresa of Lisieux."

In this version, the Compassionate Mother appears as the double of the Virgin Mary which, for the pious, the young saint of Lisieux has become, and thus seems also to promise that the war will end well.

In these two latter versions, however, the tears of the compassionate Mother do not flow. But lo! in that Corsica which, despite Napoleon's shade, Mussolini wished to wrest from France, the Virgin Mary, like the Earth with its tearful springs began miraculously to shed veritable tears over the woes of her children.

17. "*The Holy Virgin weeps at Sartène.* . ." these words appeared in *Paris Soir* on January 7th, 1941.

"The Virgin weeps! the Virgin weeps! But where? Quite at hand : the yellow house in Santana Square. . . . Curious, excited and apprehensive crowds hurry to Santana Square, all struggling to enter the yellow house. The luckiest manage to climb the stairs to the top floor where they find themselves in a clean though humble room where three beds stand in a row. The walls are white-washed.

"The picture of the Virgin Mary has been unhooked from the wall

and stands on a chest of drawers. In vivid colours it depicts Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, with seven swords piercing her heart: in short, the sort of chromo-lithograph sold by pedlars which is afterwards framed. All most commonplace, were it not for the "tears" which one instantly perceives.

"A tear in the corner of the eye . . .

"And indeed, between the glass and the picture, I see one gathering already in the corner of the eye. Another has dropped into the hand which the Virgin holds like a chalice. It is as though the "tears" were trickling and running down a misty window pane.

"The fact is indisputable. It is the damp, say some. But, in fact, there is no trace of damp in the room. I touch the walls here and there: they are everywhere perfectly dry. Besides, the phenomenon has happened once before, then the "tears" reappeared and as mysteriously faded away.

"A profound silence reigns among the visitors. Then the clergy come in quest of the picture in order to place it under observation in the sacristy of the Parish Church of Santa Maria, to which the crowd immediately repairs. And while they wait for the Church's verdict, the whole population of Sartène feels that a sublime, a profound mystery is being enacted."

Thus, six months after France's collapse, the Virgin of Sartène wept exactly as three months earlier did Sainte-Odile of Alsace. In two of the marches of threatened France the same maternal tears were flowing.

## BATTLE MYTHS OF VICTORS AND VANQUISHED

*"Truth is the first casualty in war"*

When two stags or cocks or dogs meet and fight, each naturally expects to prevail. Otherwise they would run, as the rabbit from the fox or the gazelle from the lion.

The sense of invulnerability, of immortality, inherent in the unconscious, thus inspires each combatant with a conviction of unconquerable power. So too with man: when a nation decides on war, it is sure that it alone will prevail. Were it not, save for exceptional cases of great heroism, it would seek evasion, as does, as we said, the rabbit from the fox or the gazelle from the lion. That was what England and France did at Munich in September 1938, despite the treaty which bound France to support Czechoslovakia. "At Munich," as Weygand wrote in *Le Journal* of November 11th, 1938, "French weakness had to give way to German strength."

Nevertheless, on March 15th, 1939, Hitler entered Prague, despite the assurances given to Chamberlain at Munich that he had no more territorial ambitions. Chamberlain, at bay at last, turned, and, on March 31st, gave a British guarantee to Poland now menaced in her turn, thereby encouraging her to resist the demands of Hitler. For Britain, proud of her mastery of the seas and of her long tradition of invincibility had decided to take up arms against German hegemony in Europe, however recent and limited her own conscription measures might be. France followed in her wake, poor enough in equipment and especially in planes, but each ally relied on the other to make good her deficiencies, one in troops, the other in equipment and planes.

Above all, however, the Western powers believed their strength so tremendously impressive, one in her martial prowess, the other in her uncontested rule of the seas, that Hitler, seeing them resolved on battle, would be bound to give way. Infinite were the references to Hitler's "bluff" in the British and French press of the time. It was all bluff: Hitler had bluffed at Munich and the allies had fallen for it!

Next time, forewarned and forearmed and with all the armaments they had managed to amass, they would stand firm and strike him with fear. No need of blows : firmness alone would suffice to make him respect the territory he coveted, whether in Poland or elsewhere. Thus, with a magnificent gesture, Chamberlain, in addition to Poland, guaranteed the integrity of Rumania, Turkey and Greece. What mattered it, since Hitler would certainly yield to a threat so formidable as this British guarantee !

For their part, the Germans believed the Western powers to be bluffing. Never would the English or French, they thought, risk being killed for Poles ! The French, especially, would never be such fools, as one of their journalists put it, " to die for Danzig."

Thus, the belief in the enemy's bluff, at all times one of the most dangerous of the myths provocative of war, drove both sides into those uncompromising and vainglorious attitudes from which one cannot retreat.

When, however, the German troops had penetrated to the plains of Poland, who from the distant West, could succour her, even by air ? Italy's tardy offer to mediate was rejected, and only myths remained to stem Germany's lightning progress, myths which denied or palliated defeats only too real, myths which depicted an enemy cowardly and faithless, shorn of gallantry as of success.

Not that I suggest that a generally victorious enemy may never at times prove cowardly, unsuccessful or faithless.

\* \* \*

In spite of all the aspirations of the moralists, in spite of League of Nations' dreams, no international moral code exists because, as we are often reminded, morality rests upon coercion of some kind. Armies, which alone can implement sanctions, serve purely national interests in each country. Every country, whether it admits it or not, always follows the same maxim : *My country right or wrong*. For the sole duty of a state is the pursuit of its national grandeur.

But since Germany and Hitler's Germany in particular, as much or more than other nations, was fired by a strong national spirit, she made a clean sweep of her undertakings. When Chamberlain accused Hitler of violating his promise at Munich by entering Prague and coveting Danzig, did not the Reich-Chancellor proudly proclaim himself accountable to but one tribunal, that of the German people, to



whom he had promised to revise the "Diktat" of Versailles? That sacred promise he was keeping!

\* \* \*

It is with myths, however, that we are dealing. I now turn to myths collected while living in France in 1939-40. Apart from being myths I was able closely to study, they are especially interesting as representing typical defence mechanisms against the anxiety which, as the myths of a soon defeated nation, they in other ways betrayed.

We know how primitive peoples indulge in war boasts and disparagements of their enemies! We remember too how grandiloquent these sound on the lips of the Iliad's heroes. Translated into our machine and aeroplane-age languages the same boasts and accusations went hurtling through the air.

Immediately the Wehrmacht crossed the Polish frontier, the atrocities always attributed to invaders began to be reported. Cruelties of a military nature such as the night bombing of Polish airfields, civilians struck by bomb splinters, wounded strung along highroads—whether civilians or troops—with none to help them: all this, the inevitable evil of war, still left unsatisfied the hatred of the masses hungry for horrors which, pinned on the enemy, would make him better hated and better withstood. And though Polish plains remained too distant for armies to reach, or even planes from the West, rumour, more volatile, readily flew westwards to descend on Paris.

Thus, the Germans, first and foremost, were cowards. Their airmen, the very men who, in such cowardly fashion, had dropped their bombs by night and so wiped out the Polish air force while still on the ground, never went up unless drugged, so terrified were they! The few flyers the Poles were said to have captured were incredibly young, they had had to be tied in their seats and all smelt of ether.<sup>1</sup>

Still, on the ground, the Polish infantrymen were incomparably superior to the German; really brave and dashing! All Polish retreats were due to German superior numbers though they lost three or ten to

---

<sup>1</sup> In May 1941, after the German airborne attack upon Crete, my son told me that he had been shown a paratroop pack by a Greek officer who had been a German prisoner for a few hours. Besides food and arms, the paratroops were provided with tablets of chocolate containing Kola as well as with a white powder called *Energen*, intended to invigorate them physically or mentally when tired. Thus the Germans, to ensure success, methodically availed themselves of all the resources of modern science and it is probable that the German airmen in Poland had also taken, not ether, but Kola and Energen (doubtless Benzadrine).

one! Practically nothing would remain of the German army after the Polish campaign! Even their tanks were revealed as makeshifts, like the tank in the myth: bluff, pure and simple! It was only superior numbers that enabled them to advance. (The myth of the gimcrack tank even survived the utter defeat of the Poles.)

Further, if the Germans did score successes, it was due to their use of unfair means. Did not their planes attack open towns, schools, hospitals and Red Cross ambulances in preference to military objectives? Did they not methodically machine-gun women and children, fleeing by road and field? Almost every illustrated paper in the West reproduced a photograph of a little girl in a field crying over the body of her machine-gunned sister.

It is interesting here to compare what was alleged by the French and British press and broadcasts with what was whispered by the French Staff, as reported by a diplomat after talking with one of its officers. According to the latter, the Germans, when the war began in Poland always, in fact, attacked military objectives as they claimed, though civilians would naturally be hit by bomb splinters. As to Warsaw, one had only to keep one's eyes and ears open to have read and heard in British and French papers and broadcasts that the city, which had announced its intention to resist, had been given twenty-four hours in which to evacuate civilians, which period was further extended twenty-four hours before the methodical bombardment began. But to recall or even mention all this was to be considered pro-German . . . For, in times of war, some truths are better unsaid, and so the myth of an enemy always and everywhere cowardly and cruel, a myth good to inspire hate and so battle, had to be always maintained.

Meanwhile the Germans, in their atrocities against children, did even worse than mow them down! Pride of place was no longer given to stories of chopped-off hands, as in 1914, in Belgium. Now the Germans were said to be tempting children with pretty little balloons, filled with mustard gas, dropped from their planes; or, still more cunningly, were scattering poisoned sweets. Authoritative persons swore they had handled them and it was said that similar balloons and sweets had been found in France and even Paris. The fear of gas assumed immense proportions. The moment they heard the false alerts so frequent then in Paris, numbers of maddened women would think they smelt poison: indeed, some would immediately fling themselves on the ground—as was

advised when mustard gas was smelt — and one would see them thus spread about.

The Russians, bound to the Germans for a time by their pact of non-aggression, in their turn invaded Poland and took her retreating armies in the rear. Thus, after eighteen days of hopeless fighting, Polish resistance finally collapsed. Thereupon the accusations spread curiously wide: not only the enemy—whose success no myth could now deny—was stigmatised as a vile barbarian, but insult and ignominy were heaped on the vanquished ally. Though his futile gallantry might still be conceded the Polish soldier, the inconsistent Beck, the insignificant Smigly-Ridz and the whole gang of Polish “colonels” who fled to Rumania, became the scapegoats of the general disappointment of the Western peoples that their Eastern ally had collapsed.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

In September 1939, as indignation waxed ever greater in the West at the tale of German atrocities in Poland, the Germans went still better in their accounts of the cruelty of the Poles who were said to have murdered, tortured and even castrated, German airmen forced to land. Certainly the castration complex had its part in the genesis of this war and one of Hitler's capital grievances against the Poles, as reported in his famous talk with Sir Neville Henderson in August 1939, later issued as a White Paper, was his claim that they had castrated Germans. Personally, since the signature of the Treaty of Versailles, I always thought it contained four clauses that might threaten the peace of Europe, namely: crushing indemnities spread over thirty-two years, the confiscation of all German colonies and Germany's obligation to declare herself in Article I as alone culpable of war guilt, a quite futile humiliation of a conquered power. But perhaps the most serious cause of future conflict seemed to me the establishment of the Polish corridor, and the severance of East Prussia from the German body. However much a reborn Poland might need that lung to breathe and the Vistula for access to the sea, it exacerbated the castration complex of a great and virile people. And in fact, because of Danzig, and even because of Germans said to have been cas-

---

<sup>1</sup> In February 1942, at the Cape, a Polish diplomat related two other Polish myths current during the invasion. German planes were said to have dropped tobacco leaves on pastures to prevent cattle, which dislike the odour of nicotine, grazing there: as a result they died of starvation. Again, Polish peasants (myth anticipating the Fifth Column) were accused of trampling circles in their crops to guide attacking enemy aircraft.

trated by Poles—strange coincidence!—war did break out in 1939.

How much truth was there in the atrocities attributed by Germans to Poles, as by Poles to Germans? Popular fury, when not controlled by military discipline may well abandon itself to excesses against a hated invader! But the pitiless German reprisals must soon have stopped this. As in Belgium, in 1914, the Germans would certainly not have hesitated, in Poland, to burn down whole villages and even massacre their inhabitants if snipers were found. . . . Atrocities on either side are not always myth; man is still a wolf to his fellows, as says the old Roman tag. I merely wish to show how the barbarism latent in man, even when partly controlled by discipline is, like his treachery, solely attributed to the enemy.

Thus, in Germany, as counterblast to the mustard-gas balloons said to have been dropped by Germany in Poland and on Paris, a myth arose that Britain was supplying gas shells to the Poles. Great was the indignation expressed in the German press and broadcasts at this cowardly, treacherous act; then, a few weeks later, with Poland down, no more was heard of the matter.

For myths fade like flowers, only to reappear in their proper climes and season, like them, elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

A cruel winter had descended on the almost stationary Western Front when, on November 7th, a bomb exploded in a Munich beer house where Hitler had arranged to speak; a bomb destined for him but which killed a number of his supporters. The explosion only missed the Führer by a few minutes: his speech was shorter than anticipated and he had left. Thereupon, German propaganda immediately seized on this attempt to inflame popular anger against the enemy. The British Intelligence Service was said to have staged the coup: two of its agents were ambushed and arrested on the Belgian frontier and the whole diabolical British plot exposed.

Though few would have credited the British Intelligence Service

---

<sup>1</sup> In Athens, in April 1941, a twenty-year-old German pilot, shot down in Macedonia, interrogated by my son, declared: "But Sir, how could we not have fought Poland considering what she'd done! You know Posen? It's a German town! Well, the Poles massacred 50,000 Germans there!" "And you're simple enough to believe that?" answered my son. "But I assure you, Sir, that it isn't propaganda, it's the absolute truth!" Nothing could shake the conviction of this young fanatic. So long as a myth of this kind has its battle position, it will persist.

with so much astuteness, this myth-lie was immediately swallowed by the German people, howling with rage against an enemy capable of resorting to such means. Had not perfidious Britain, said German propaganda, and Germany's arch enemy, Churchill, her Lord of the Admiralty, as early as September 3rd and almost before war was declared—themselves caused the "Athenia" to be torpedoed, though crammed with American passengers—that they might inculcate some German submarine? Just as, in 1917, a so-called German submarine was said to have torpedoed the Lusitania, so forcing America to enter the war. Now it was the Führer's adored existence that perfidious Britain had attacked.

Meanwhile, on the opposite fronts, in France and England, another myth had gained credence: it was that Hitler himself had staged the Munich plot through the Gestapo, the better to whip up his declining popularity. The war was said to be growing ever more unpopular in Germany, the Führer was being held responsible for it and he himself felt that the game was up. That was why he had got his Gestapo agents to conceal an infernal machine in the ceiling of the Munich beer house, though careful to shorten his speech to give him time to escape before the explosion occurred. Besides, with demoniac cunning, Hitler, by exploding a bomb in a hall filled with supporters, could thus, unperceived, manage to rid himself of a number! What people forgot was that Hitler had no need to increase his popularity in this way in a Germany intoxicated with his recent victory in Poland.

The riddle of this attempt at assassination remains unsolved and the solution may never be made known. I, personally, think it plausible that so daring an attempt could only have been made by highly placed and dissident party members: only such, in spite of every precaution, could have managed to place the bomb in the beer hall ceiling. Be that as it may, neither the German myth of the British Intelligence Service, nor the Franco-British myth of Hitler's self-arranged plot seem to me to provide a sufficient answer.

\* \* \*

After April 1940, however, and the campaign in Norway, the communiqués of the contending sides began to display typical differences which were to change little while hostilities lasted. Were we listening to the German radio, this is what we would hear: "We have sunk 18,000 gross tons of British shipping off the coast of Norway!" But nothing was said of Germany's losses, though a small transport or torpedo-

destroyer might be admitted sunk. Were we the same evening listening to the B.B.C. it, in its turn, would declare: "We have sunk five German troopships off the coast of Norway; our losses are one torpedo-destroyer."

Which to believe? The concealment of one's losses is one of the dogmas of war. And the wish, apart from the need to deceive, may well magnify enemy losses and suggest that every ship hit may have sunk.

Yet the Norwegian campaign must have cost Germany a good part of her fleet, though no one knows the ships it cost Britain. In any case, in spite of Allied attempts to come to Norway's rescue, swiftly changed into a successful evacuation, that campaign gained Hitler the whole non-mythical Scandinavian seaboard and the Swedish iron.

The same reciprocal differences also appeared from the very first moments of war in the reports of air combats. "Today, we brought down 25 British aircraft over Norway," the German radio would proclaim. "Two of our planes have not returned to their base." The same evening the B.B.C. would announce: "Today we have brought down 32 German planes. One of our aircraft is missing."

\* \* \*

With the campaign in Norway, two new kinds of myth, at times official, but generally of popular origin, ousted most others in London and Paris; those dealing with the Fifth Column and with parachutists.

We know that the Fifth Column was the name given, during the Civil War, to the sympathisers of Gen. Franco who remained in Madrid, on which four columns were converging, and who strove to undermine the resistance of those inside the beleaguered city.

That the Fifth Column also existed in 1939 and 1940 cannot be denied, given the nature of the war at the time: as much a war of social religion as one of national interests.

Thus, on one side it was a war for individual liberty and again, from the nationalist angle, for the countries enjoying the good things of earth to keep what they had. (Did not the British and French Colonies cover a third of the earth?) On the other side, the Germans proclaimed they were battling to establish a "new social order," in which everyone, it was said, would be rewarded according to his effort; one in which the have-nots," in contrast to the "haves" (the Western "plutocracies") would see that the world's riches were redistributed according to the strength and vital needs of each: they also said that on their side was the revolutionary spirit that desires change. Now the cry for change, for reform of the

existing order, is far more dynamic to the young than the mere effort to maintain an old established order. It need not surprise us therefore, that in all countries young non-German fanatics of Hitler, the apostle of the New Order, were to be found. As for their secret activities and even espionage, these seemed permissible to such fanatics and even necessary and meritorious as spreading the good cause. Religions use all means to spread.

Nor did the National Socialists hesitate to gain their ends by every kind of blandishment, above all in neighbouring lands: but also they did this abroad, flattering the self-interest of some, the ambition of others. Hitler is reported to have said: "I shall find snobs, traitors or idiots to help me everywhere." Thus Oslo—where Quisling, devotee of the New Order soon established the Hitler government of Norway—was delivered unresisting to German warships while King Haakon sought refuge in Britain.

\* \* \*

The Fifth Column was to operate in other places too. Holland and Belgium, fearing its activity, were soon arresting thousands of German spies and often even their own pro-Hitler subjects. Little availed it! The Fifth Column seemed always reborn from its ashes, given the half-real, half-fictitious part it was to play.

On May 10th, 1940, while Goebbels' propaganda once more proclaimed, as it had done for Norway, that the Reich had only anticipated the invasion plans of the Western Allies, German troops simultancously entered Luxemburg, Holland and Belgium. Their incredibly swift progress was then attributed far less to superior equipment and tactics than to the secret and treacherous activities—always and everywhere—of the Fifth Column.

It was again the Fifth Column which was supposed to have issued an order, whose origin was never traced, to a certain regiment to retire; to have prevented a certain bridge being blown; to have surrendered a certain impregnable fortress; to have mysteriously pinpointed the German fire in such and such a battle. It again, had issued mysterious orders to terror-struck civilians to flee in order to block the roads. True, only the rich get credit, but they were credited with a great deal, even the negligence, unpreparedness and rapidly increasing confusion in the Dutch, Belgian and French military staffs and civil administration being attributed to them.

As to the myths about parachutists, these reached me most abundantly at the time of the invasion of Holland. They had already begun

to appear when Norway was attacked, since the German troops had been largely supplied and reinforced by air; now, however, they flourished on all sides, once the widespread Dutch inundations had been victoriously turned by air.

Not content with their large-scale exploitation of this new arm whose combatants dropped unsuspected from the skies, an arm whose chivalry was hotly contested and the bravery of its men denied, the enemy in his perfidy was now said to be resorting to still more sinister ruses. When they said that their paratroops dropped in white smocks, wearing a special though inconspicuous uniform which they revealed on touching ground, that was a German lie! Did not everyone know that most of their paratroops landed as civilians, the better to deceive the population? Or, more perfidious still, in Dutch uniforms?<sup>1</sup> Were not the paratroops even camou-

---

<sup>1</sup> At Athens, in April 1941, at Greek Headquarters, I was able to obtain the following story: During the fighting on the Mt. Olympus front, then held by New Zealanders, "German soldiers disguised themselves in Greek uniforms, casually passed the New Zealand troops, then suddenly turned back and began to machine-gun them. The New Zealanders took a large number prisoner," which proved the truth of the story.

I tried to find out what had really happened and, if possible, discover these prisoners.

I was then given a second version of the story ending thus: "The New Zealanders, enraged by such treachery, wiped out everyone of these Germans disguised as Greeks." Impossible therefore to discover even one.

Finally I was brought a third version—again from Greek Headquarters—which ended thus: "Thanks to this filthy trick, the Germans disguised as Greeks succeeded in taking prisoner all the New Zealanders they had attacked." Thus, it was not possible even to question the witnesses.

On the other hand, at the time of the German paratroop attack on Crete in late May 1941, a Greek officer, a friend of my son's, gave him the following facts: Two of the paratroops taken prisoner were disguised as New Zealanders, whereas the rest wore German uniforms. The Greek officer had seen and interrogated them himself. According to them the uniforms had been captured in Greece, in some depots the New Zealanders had abandoned.

Gen. Freyberg, however, who was commanding the New Zealanders in Crete and whom I later questioned in Alexandria, declared that no Germans were discovered in New Zealand uniforms during the fighting for Crete . . . We know that Mr. Churchill, stating they had, denied it publicly later.

In my opinion, an enemy determined to win at all costs is quite capable of resorting to no matter what likely ruse, but the accusation of the enemy treacherously assuming his adversaries' uniform recurs too regularly in times of invasion not to be often a myth.

On March 2nd 1942, the B.B.C. in its 6 o'clock news, announced that when Japanese troops were attacking Java, they approached an allied post disguised as British soldiers. Race alone, surely, would have sufficed to betray such a ruse.

That is not to say, however, that at times combatants may not resort to this classic stratagem! I merely stress here that the accusation is readily laid to the enemy, whether he uses it or not.



flaged as pedlars, postmen, bricklayers and at times women? Why, descending even lower, the enemy would sacrilgiously disguise his paratroops in the most sacred habits; had they not been discovered disguised as priests and even nuns? And since no one suspected them, these so-called holy people might with impunity accomplish their nefarious tasks in the rear, such as starting conflagrations or murdering the allies' key-men at home.

The anti-clericalism always latent in the masses could thus obtain satisfaction as could their contempt and hate of the foe. Priests and nuns fell victims to this myth, and were molested, injured and even at times killed, by the mob.

Soon the Germans crossed the Meuse and entered France between Liège and Sedan. It was nothing, declared the newspapers; the breach would soon be plugged. A new myth had arisen which for a few days solaced French anguish.

Meanwhile the paratroop myths went merrily on. People thought they saw them caught in the Paris trees, others were reported in the Bois de Boulogne and the police were called out to capture them. And since the flood of refugees from Northern France combined with the refugees from Belgium to block most roads, ever more frequently was it said that the Fifth Column had secret orders to make them flee thus, abandoning their chattels, farms and livestock. Alas, mere terror of the Germans would have sufficed, combined with the then general administrative confusion in France . . . .

This is not to say that the Fifth Column was not active in many places, as witness that mysterious order, possibly mythical too, issued by no one knew whom to certain troops defending the Meuse, to fall back on Compiègne where thirty thousand had already gathered. I was told this myself at the Quai d'Orsay as a great secret. The point I wish to make is that people saw it everywhere. Doubtless it seemed less humiliating to attribute defeat to its treachery than to admit that we generally retreated because the enemy was stronger, better armed, better led and because no soldier, even the French, could eternally endure being bombed with no chance of reply! It was said that the Gauls feared nothing save that the skies might fall. Well, the sky was falling. . . .

\* \* \*

Still advancing, the Germans approached Abbeville. And now another Fifth Column myth began to circulate. Something very un-

pleasant, it was said, had lately happened to a Frenchman living, possibly, in the department of the Somme. With truly French generosity he had received and lodged a Belgian refugee. But lo and behold, one fine morning, as the Germans approached, he saw his guest emerge from his room in the guise of a German officer! This very persistent myth was to move further and further south as the Germans advanced.

Later, in the Midi, I found this myth in a different form. On October 5th 1940, at Saint-Tropez, one of my cousins told me the following story:

"A nurse employed at the Gare de l'Est happened to be working there at the time the canteen was closed. She had told her the following story: After the Germans arrived and the soldiers' canteen was closed, she began to work in a canteen for the refugees. Provisions, at the time, were being solely distributed by the Germans. As they had practically run out and the canteen manager was nervous of asking for more, this nurse offered to do so. She therefore had herself taken to the German colonel in charge of the Gare de l'Est. Taking the lift to his office, she found two soldiers with fixed bayonets in front of the door who asked what she wanted. She then found herself facing an officer who wished to know how she had managed to worm herself up there? She said she was looking for the Colonel. It was he. She then asked for provisions for her 300 refugees since he alone had the necessary food. He at once allowed her the bread, which two soldiers took them, and then offered her a German car in which to collect the meat from the slaughter houses. This she refused, saying she had no wish to drive about in a German car, a sentiment the officer applauded. He spoke French perfectly, by the way, and then asked her whether she recognised him. When she admitted she did not, he began telling her that six months before France's collapse he himself had been working in the very same canteen. He then raised the lapel of his tunic and showed her a badge which she immediately recognised as one she had already seen at times worn by French soldiers. It was the sign by which Germans disguised as Frenchman recognised each other. This nurse had lovely fair hair. 'You are of true Aryan type,' the colonel said to her, 'perhaps you come from Alsace?' 'No. We come from the Auvergne. We're as French as can be.' 'Then I've made a mistake which you must have observed,' the officer continued. 'The soldiers called you Madam, and I called you Schwester.' 'But Alsatians did that too,' she replied."

Another version was given me on September 8th, 1940 by the Italian-born caretaker of my Saint-Tropez villa :

"My nephew," she said, "told me that a lady he knows in Lyons put up a Polish officer all through the winter. And only now, after all we've been through and France's defeat, has he come to thank her : but now he's dressed as a German captain ! He told her that whatever might happen he would never forget how kind she had been to him ; if there was anything she needed he would only be too pleased to help."

Thus, the theme of the "friendly enemy," in these last two tales, merges with that of the knavish spy. In both cases, to my mind, the change of uniform was necessary to provide a concrete image of the unmasking of the spy. We have here the same concern with presentation<sup>1</sup> that we find in the language of dreams.

\* \* \*

Since German spies undoubtedly crept into the millions of refugees spread over the French road, the following story was also averred to be true. It was told me at Saint-Tropez in August, by a woman cousin who had it from a cousin of hers : "Some friends of mine had been taken in by the good nuns of a convent at Gers, who were also housing some refugee nuns from Belgium. Well, one fine morning swarms of gendarmes appear. They make the nuns undress and discover three men, three German spies, under their holy robes !"

In the summer of 1940, at Saint Tropez, the young friend to whom I owe version 13 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, told me the following story which he had heard from one of the lecturers at the Ecole des Roches in Normandy, where he had happened to be during the German advance. "A nun was collecting alms for war charities at Vitry-le-François station when suddenly someone saw there was something mannish about her hands. On closer examination she was found to be a German. The police tried to get her away but failed and she was killed on the spot by the crowd."

Certain friends, responsible for some of the myths already quoted, assure me that in Paris, in December 1939, as they left a cinema on the Champs Elysées in the black-out, they glimpsed a most disturbing figure. "At the corner of the Rue Marbœuf, we half saw a nun—it was close on midnight—who looked freshly shaved and altogether suspect. She was out

---

<sup>1</sup> In analytic terms: "regard for representability" or "suitability for plastic representation."

of sight in a moment. We were sorry we had not pointed her out to the police."

Doubtless these are both forms of the story of the parachute-nuns. Jean Cocteau's striking epitome of it all has been quoted by André Maurois:<sup>1</sup> "Along all the roads of France, only nuns fastening their puttees were to be seen."

\* \* \*

There was also the stationmaster story; as for example at Bar-le-Duc and Villers-Cotterets. The psycho-analyst responsible for version 1 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car* told me the following story at Saint-Tropez on September 8th, during a visit after his discharge from the army.

"During the retreat late in May, when our regiment was about five kilometers from Villers-Cotterets, I heard that the stationmaster there had been unmasked as a spy. It had been noticed that the German bombers always managed to drop their bombs when military trains were in the station. Well, the stationmaster would often delay detraining for fifteen or twenty minutes on some pretext or other (Villers-Cotterets station then being an assembly point or marshalling yard). One day, while he was talking to a French officer, the stationmaster's little son ran up, saying: 'Papa! You're wanted on the telephone!' Confused, the stationmaster replied: 'But how's that? The line's cut.' The child, however, persisted, saying that it was downstairs, in the cellar, that they were telephoning. The officer, smelling a rat, demanded to be shown where this telephone was. He went down, picked up the receiver and heard a German voice at the other end. The treacherous stationmaster was shot. I heard the same story," added my informant, "from a young woman driver on active service just back from Bar-le-Duc, where the same thing apparently happened."

My husband tells me he heard the same spy stationmaster story in Paris and Normandy before the occupation, and I am told that it was reported in French broadcasts.

It would be worth finding out, I said at the time, whether these spy stationmasters took cover in their cellars when these bombing attacks, which they had signalled, took place.

Some few days later a Danish friend, also visiting us at Saint-Tropez, brought an almost identical story, this time concerning the stationmaster at Palaiseau, near Paris. Nothing was omitted, neither the telephone in

---

<sup>1</sup> *Tragédie en France*: Editions de la Maison Française, 1940, p. 111.

the cellar, nor the innocent child betraying his father : the sole difference was that a police inspector was substituted for the officer. In this case too, the stationmaster was shot.

The same informant added that the stationmaster at Amiens had been just as dangerous a spy who signalled the passage of trains to the Germans that they might be bombed. He too had been shot. So had the stationmasters at Autun-le-Ronan, Metz and Longwy.

One might have thought that all French stationmasters were spies : that they had almost been picked out expressly.

Thus, as usual in wartime, a plague of spy-itis raged; true, it was justified at times, but generally it was based on myth.

\* \* \*

As the German armies advanced, so woman's ancient war-terror of violation could be seen to emerge. Old women trembled at the idea and fled, flying from the enemy and also, doubtless, from their own unconfessed unconscious desires.

Perhaps the strange feature that made many towns and villages believe themselves the special target of the German airmen was similarly feminine in essence, built upon mingled narcissism, terror and desire.

\* \* \*

The motorised German columns had reached the sea, splitting the allied armies and encircling the rashly advanced Franco-British motorised spearhead in Flanders as well as the Dutch and Belgian armies. The Dutch army surrendered and Queen Wilhelmina sought refuge in England. King Leopold, still in Belgium with his army, capitulated.

Thereupon, both in France and England, a universal cry of reprobation arose. Leopold had betrayed his allies! Reynaud stigmatised him in broadcasts and, more extreme, the masses called him the royal tool of the Belgian Fifth Column. Had he not expressly inveigled the French and British on to Belgian soil in order to deliver them to the enemy? His mother, Queen Elizabeth, heroine of the 1914—1918 war and true spouse of the knightly Albert I, was branded as his evil genius because she was born a Wittelsbach (the age-old antagonism between Bavaria and Prussia being quite overlooked). They even went so far as to insinuate that Albert I, far from being the victim of a climbing accident, was assassinated at the instigation of his wife, a mere German tool!

\* \* \*

When the British Expeditionary Force, almost intact, evacuated

the Dunkirk beaches, while further south the French divisions, covering its retreat, lost two-thirds of their effectives in prisoners or dead, it, like the French, abandoned its guns, munitions and tanks; everything, in fact, most precious to the allies . . .

Whereupon a new myth—even more extravagant than the Norwegian “strategic” retreats—was launched by British propaganda: the Flanders operations which had threatened to be a disaster had, in fact, become a victory!

For, in spite of obvious defeats a nation’s morale must be kept high in hopes of future victory. This indeed is the function of the war myth. Yet to fulfil this purpose adequately its moral weapons demand the material support of guns and planes in battle.

The retreat, however, continued. The unfortunate French, stripped of all that was lost in Flanders and relentlessly machine-gunned by enemy planes against which they were helpless, since no allied planes came to their aid, could truly find little support in the fresh myth they were given: that allied aircraft were busy elsewhere! Despite acts of magnificent bravery as on the Ailette, where whole regiments of German infantry were mown down, or at Saumur where cadets of the Cavalry School defended the Loire—the retreat turned into a rout which none would admit but always went on calling resistance.

It was then that the Prefect of one of the *departements* in the West told me the following myth, a myth which kept cropping up and in which he too seemed to believe: Weygand, who had taken over from Gamelin, had expressly ordered the retreat, in order to trap the rashly extended German armies.

\* \* \*

In those days, people still found consolation in the thought of the “heavy losses” inflicted on the advancing enemy, losses the communiqués daily proclaimed, losses, it was added, out of all proportion to the ground gained. This evidently is the time-honoured tag. People consoled themselves further with the thought of their own moral superiority to an enemy reputed treacherous and faithless. Did not the invader repeatedly and treacherously attack civilians and “non-military” objectives? Was it not thanks to such barbarism that he progressed? To speed his advance his motorised columns crushed everything in their path and were preceded by waves of dive bombers which inexorably shot-up and bombed hospitals, Red Cross stations, schools and, most hor-

rible of all, cemeteries even! The dead, whose sacred bones none should trouble in their final slumber, were thus flung far and wide! (Yet the dead can neither be killed nor wounded!)

But it was above all on the French roads that the enemy's dastardly cruelty apparently raged, for there he inexorably pursued women and children in order to wipe out the French race! For the wretched flood of refugees which fled the invader continued to mount day by day and encumbered the roads with long rows of cars roofed with mattresses and piled high with suitcases; not to mention the farm wagons packed with women, grandads, children, dogs, hens, tools and clothing thrown in in haste nor the cyclists with little packs behind their saddles nor the plodding pedestrians who, from hunger or fatigue, would sometimes collapse in the ditches bordering the roads. Into this flood of civilians, more and more of the routed soldiers began to pour. Then, the enemy planes, in their pursuit, would begin to fire, and woe betide civilians mixed with the troops!

Similarly, when towns were bombed. The centre of Evreux was wiped out in a few hours with thousands of civilians buried under the ruins. But Evreux happened to be the British H.Q. When Paris had its only bombardment, which I saw, nearly a thousand people were killed or wounded. Yet the target was not the centre of Paris, but the factories, airfields and railways round about. Bombers at 16,000 ft. cannot pinpoint their targets, so woe to civilians nearby!

Thus, as regards civilians killed, the myth was reinforced by reality. Civilians were certainly killed and that is what matters. But the myth element enters when the masses, in their understandable rancour, attribute to the enemy the diabolical intention of always *preferably* killing civilians.

Had he wished, the enemy might have killed far more civilians fleeing by road! Instead, employing his "blitzkrieg" tactics, he first concentrated his attacks on military objectives, the quicker to end the war. The German staff disliked wasted effort. The systematic bombing of civilians was reserved for later, for England, if that proud isle did not capitulate immediately after France.

\* \* \*

Despite all the myths that solaced France's defeats, Paris fell. Then Italy, in her turn, attacked France on her Alpine frontiers and indiscriminately bombed villages and towns. Thereupon, a last myth

beguiled France: Russia, incensed by Germany's overwhelming successes, was on the point of attacking Germany and had massed troops along her frontier. The Soviet troops, however, merely occupied the Baltic countries and on June 17th, three days after the capture of Paris, Marshal Pétain requested an armistice. Only General de Gaulle, in London, held the flag high, announced that he intended to struggle on by the side of the British and called to the ranks of his little army all Frenchmen who still held to the liberal tradition.

But now the nations' frustrated hostility, which for so long had been trained against the Germanic enemy, largely collapsed or turned elsewhere. The latent hostility that all races feel for their allies and which might be seen wherever foreign troops were encamped, was reinforced by all the hostility that was no longer turned against the enemy to whom the French had succumbed. Even in 1939, the English in France were accused of theft, pillage, and even of murdering women by tattooing them (a myth my daughter found at Rennes!) Now, Britain had disappointed every hope! Had she not dragged us into this war and this disaster? Parisians, at the time, felt the full irony of the poster depicting the Franco-British empire, lettered: "We shall win because we are strongest" which, for a time, in the Paris Underground, continued visible over the heads of the helmeted, jackbooted occupation troops sitting in the trains.

But it was not only the British, yesterday's allies, who were accused of France's disaster by dragging her, unprepared, into a war whose loss was a foregone conclusion: there were the Freemasons and Jews! The Jews, especially, those age-old scapegoats of unhappy nations. The huge and doubly millennial anti-Semite myth, born in the shadow of the Cross, and in the blood shed by the Christ in whose name the holy Crusaders, as they passed, murdered Jewish parents and children in their ghettos, now once more blossomed in the new colours of the savage racial credo proclaimed by Hitler. Since the time when, as Nietzsche said: "God is dead" the Jews are no longer first and foremost the miscreants of religion, yet all the more they indelibly remain the miscreants of "race." Thus, just as, after its 1918 defeat, Germany, through Hitler, heard that the greatest anti-Semitic crusade of history was about to start and that Germany's disintegration and the stab in "the back" were solely attributable to the Jews, so too did the defeated France of 1940 accuse a section of its people of conspiring with "International Jewry," whether gilded or red,



to lead her to disaster. Not for nothing had France, half a century before, been rent in twain by the Dreyfus affair. True, the ministry of the idealist Léon Blum, and the decline caused by the strikes that, on the eve of the war, followed in French industrial production, provided a core of apparent reality for the great myth of the Jew as a "disintegrative ferment." Thus, one was soon to see France, a France which but yesterday had officially championed liberalism, fall into step with her conquerors in the way of racial intolerance. As a friend wittily said: "After chewing on priests for so many years, Jews have become the French diet."

But now the British, bitter at this utter collapse and the French rejection of Churchill's "last gasp" offer to merge both empires, and bitter too, at the absence of the French fleet from her harbours, it having been consigned by the armistice to French ports where they feared it might fall into German hands, called on the French squadron at Mers-el-Kébir to make for England, a British colony or Martinique, or scuttle itself. When Adml. Gensoul refused, they opened fire on their recent ally. Thus, there was bloodshed between them, and the anti-British party in France thrived.

So it was that at Saint-Tropez, on September 3rd, 1940, a woman friend related the following, heard from one of the local inhabitants: "The British are our hereditary enemies. They got us to declare war to bring about our destruction: *it was a trap.*" She herself thought the remarks exaggerated, but added: "Still, there's a grain of truth in it. The fact that the English helped us so little and only sent us ten divisions is because they hoped Germany and France would so weaken each other that then they could rule the roost!"

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, the enemy in his three-fifths occupied France was surprising the French by his "correct" behaviour, however inflexible his rules and regulations might be. For, despite the reputation for barbarism that had preceded them, the Germans, to everyone's great surprise, had not always and everywhere massacred people. As a result, the hate and hostility of the vanquished often changed to a fascinated, submissive admiration for their conquerors.

Besides, despite the ever-increasing scarcity of commodities attributed to the British blockade, the Germans with their science, like the alchemists of old, had succeeded in transmuting substances and creating their magic *ersatz* products.

And since gold was no longer fashionable, the weakness of the

“plutocracies” having been revealed, it was not worth while to turn things into it! As it was, the enemy’s superiority in planes, in tanks, in short, in all motorised equipment, had led to defeat. And despite their imagined and oft-proclaimed petrol shortage, not for a moment had the Germans failed to feed their war machine! Thus, just when in both occupied and unoccupied zones the lack of the precious fluid began to be ever more severely felt by civilians and at a time when cars, one after another, were forced to a stop, this is the myth that was current :

“Some German soldiers reach a village. They ask for petrol. Not a drop left. ‘No matter,’ they say, ‘give us water.’ Their tank is filled with water, they add a small pellet and continue on their way.” (Version picked up at Galan, Haute Garonne, in July 1940, by a girl refugee from Paris.)

In other versions, it is a little tube immersed in water which produces the motor fuel. (Version collected at Saint-Tropez somewhat later, by the same).

In a still more eloquent version, also heard at Galan in July by the same girl, it was not for themselves that the Germans did their magic. Some poor refugees, among the millions of hapless wights who then thronged the roads, run out of petrol while travelling home and meet some Germans of the occupation army. The kindly Germans, with one of their magic pellets, turn some running water into petrol for them. The grateful refugees continue on their way. (Whereupon a malevolent young man, to belittle the miracle, adds that the car stopped shortly after.)

This seems to suggest the marriage at Cana and the water turned to wine. But here, it is petrol—to-day the most precious commodity of all—into which the water is transmuted!

In addition, woven into this theme of the German master-magician we also see a magnificent example of the already-mentioned “friendly enemy” theme. The enemy after being our conqueror, becomes our saviour. It reminds one of the poster displayed more or less everywhere at the time in occupied France. This showed a German soldier holding one child by the hand and smiling at another which he carries. Underneath were the words :

“People, deserted by your rulers,  
trust the German soldier !”<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “Populations abandonnées  
faites confiance  
au soldat allemand !”

We have come a long way from enemy airman dropping poisoned sweets for babes.

\* \* \*

And now, as rationing became ever severer in France, the hate it engendered, though often, in unoccupied France, directed against the British and their blockade, in occupied France turned more readily against the Germans whose heel could be felt and who were accused, doubtless justly, of making excessive levies on such scarce commodities as remained. All kinds of additional barbarities were once more attributed to the conqueror. Thus, late in 1940, I was able to collect the following stories :

(a) Version collected by my daughter at Saint-Tropez in October, 1940. "A lady I met at the harbour said : Here's a little girl who's just come back from the occupied zone. She's four and in an indescribable state of nerves. She cries at the mere mention of Germans, they frighten her so."

"The lady then said : The Germans are absolute savages. Haven't they rounded up every French girl from thirteen to eighteen years old? They've put them into brothels for the German soldiers."

(b) Here is a different type of story, this time obtained in Paris, in December 1940, from a French ambassador's wife and told me by a woman friend : "A German soldier was picked up by the roadside during the retreat and nursed in hospital by my friend, the ambassador's wife. He was grateful, but when asked what he would like, replied : 'My one regret is not to have murdered you all!'"

Myths dealing with food, however, were the most frequent as, in the circumstances, one might expect. All the following versions were obtained in Paris in late December 1940.

(c) My maid related this one morning : "A German soldier being sent home on leave said to one of his French friends : 'What a pity! I'd much rather have stayed to see all the French people starve to death!'"

(d) An antique dealer established in the rue de Constantinople (to whom I owe version 3 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*) reported the following story to my husband : "One of my housekeeper's woman friends was waiting in a food queue when she heard a German say in very good French 'What, they still find something to eat! I'd like to see them all starve to death!'"

(e) A fellow psycho-analyst reported this incident to me : "The sister-

in-law of a char we know claims to have heard, with her own ears, the following remark from a really nice German officer to the lady on whom he was billeted. He was just saying goodbye, having been transferred. The German had been a most considerate guest and his billetter, patriotic though she was, felt she must express some regret at his departure. 'I, too, am very sorry to be going, Madam,' he replied, 'for I should have liked to have stayed until February when the French will have no bread or meat left, to see you all die of starvation!'"

(f) The same informant also said: "Since then, three other people have told me the story of the German who wanted to see the French die of starvation. The actor's mother who reported the *Myth of the Massacre of the Innocents* (Version 11 of *The Friendly Enemy*) was also said to have related the following incident: Outside a tripe shop in the rue Boulard she heard a lady describe how a gentlemanly German officer who had surprised her by his 'correct' behaviour said to her in a gentle voice while bidding her goodbye: 'I, too, am sorry to be going. I should so much have liked to watch you all starve to death in February!' The same story," continued my informant, "was told my wife by a patient from Normandy who heard it from her maid who had it from a neighbour.' 'And did you ask the neighbour where she got it,' she had asked. 'It didn't even occur to me.'" The mythical nature of the story had not escaped my informant.

(g) Finally, this further version was obtained at Arles on December 29th, though originating in the occupied zone. "A German officer was billeted on a lady. He was charming, most friendly and always just as courteous throughout his stay. Finally, as he was thanking her and bidding her goodbye, he said with a charming smile: 'Yes, I'm exceedingly sorry to be going. I should have been so glad to see you all starve to death!'"

In these three versions we see the German combining hypocrisy with savagery. Thus, these anecdotes reflect both the external propriety of the occupying forces and their no less real intrinsic harshness. The motive of the wish behind these obviously mythical stories is the need to justify the deep hatred for their conquerors that had begun to re-emerge in French hearts, though for a time beguiled. It does one good to realise how wicked the enemy is; one can then give free rein to one's hate!

In any case, the unconscious admirably discerns what passes in the unconscious of others. Both legends and myths which issue from it are

often, as a result, nearer the truth than is history.

The myth of the German wanting the French to starve to death accurately expresses the ancient persistent wish of the Teuton to be rid once for all of the Frank, his age-old enemy-neighbour.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The British, too, had their myths of the barbarous savagery of the enemy in his treatment of prisoners of war. My daughter, at the Cape, collected the following stories in mid-December, 1942:

(h) "A 'Cape-coloured' taken prisoner at Tobruk wrote to his wife, in S. Africa, that the Italians were treating him well, but added that since she was collecting stamps she should peel the stamp off the envelope, as it was rare. She does so and finds written below: 'It's dreadful, they've cut out my tongue.'"

(i) "A major, captured at Singapore, writes to his wife that the Japanese are treating him well and advises her to remove the stamp from the envelope. Below is written: 'They have cut out my tongue.'"

These myths, in which we see resuscitated archaic memories of the war practice of castration transferred to the tongue, are noteworthy for the obvious absurdity of their details, seeing that the correspondence cards issued to prisoners were always franked and never stamped.

The castrations and mutilations practised in war in archaic times also reveal themselves in a story, very widespread in Africa at that time, according to which the Poles, both officers and men, in the camps at Pietermaritzburg or elsewhere, were said to bite off the nipples of women rash enough to consort with them. This same myth was current in 1939 in the vicinity of the camp at Coëtquidan in Brittany, where the Polish Legion was stationed.

## MYTHS OF BRITAIN IN PERIL

After the defeat of France, one adversary alone stood against Hitler : the British who ruled the seas and who, entrenched behind their barricades of waves were far more difficult to reach than was deemed by a certain German. This officer, part of the then occupation army in Brittany, said to one of my friends : " England is not something to be taken, it must be swallowed like a pill ! " (*" England, das nimmt man nicht, das schluckt man !"*)

But Germany at the time had air superiority, and daily, all that summer, as one waited for the Germans to attempt a landing in Britain, the Luftwaffe made concentrated attacks on the British coasts, ports, shipping, factories, railways, airfields and A.A. sites.

More and more furious became the German attacks and ever more numerous and frequent the German air squadrons set out—first in daylight then soon at night—for Portsmouth, Bristol, Liverpool or London. In return the R.A.F. set out on its long night flights to bomb the Ruhr, the Hanseatic towns and Berlin.

Yet every day there were discrepancies in the communiqués of the contending air forces, discrepancies which only increased as summer advanced and more planes took part in the air battles.

Merely as an illustration, here are some balances of the daily air losses published early in September in *Le Temps* :

*Monday, September 2nd.*

London announces :

German planes brought down.....	42
British planes lost .....	14

Berlin announces :

British planes brought down .....	86
German planes missing.....	23

*Tuesday, September 3rd.*

London announces :	
German planes brought down.....	23
British planes lost .....	15
Berlin announces :	
British planes brought down .....	39
German planes lost .....	12

*Wednesday, September 4th.*

London announces :	
German planes brought down.....	45
British planes lost .....	11
Berlin announces :	
British planes brought down .....	54
German planes lost .....	17

*Saturday, September 7th.*

London announces :	
German planes brought down.....	99
British planes lost .....	22
Berlin announces :	
British planes brought down .....	94
German planes lost .....	26 <sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, we read the following note in *Le Temps* for Wednesday, September 11th : "The British Air Ministry announces that the figures for Saturday 7th, should be amended as follows : 103 German planes brought down, 75 in combat and 28 by A.A. fire."

Similar discrepancies continued daily.

If we now compare the total aircraft losses of each combatant in July and August 1940, as published, the discrepancies appear still more glaring :

On September 2nd, for instance, D.N.B., the official German news agency, reported that, despite unfavourable atmospheric conditions, the German air force, during August, had destroyed 1,386 British planes; 1,234 in air combats and 101 on the ground. The remaining 51 were brought down by A.A. fire. In addition, 193 barrage balloons were destroyed. German losses were 360 aircraft. (*Le Temps*, September 3rd,

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, in a round-up on 9th September, gave the following respective figures for German planes brought down and British planes lost: 2nd September, 55, 20. 3rd September, 25, 15. 4th September, 54, 17.

1940 : Agence Fournier.)

On September 5th, in a statement in the House, interrupted by an alert, Mr. Churchill said : " The German attempt to dominate the R.A.F. and our anti-aircraft defences by daylight attacks has proved very costly for them. The broad figures of three to one in machines and six to one in pilots and crews, of which we are sure, do not by any means represent the total injuries inflicted on the enemy. . . I asked that the German claims of British aircraft destroyed in July and August should be added up . . . I found them to make the surprising total of 1,921 British aircraft destroyed . . . The actual figure of British losses, which we have published daily for these two months, is 558. Our losses in pilots is, of course, happily very much less . . ." (*The Times*, 6th September, 1940).

This is very different from the 1,386 British machines reported by D.N.B. as brought down in August alone, as also from the 360 German planes lost which it admitted, since  $558 \times 3 = 1674$  and this divided by 2 gives 837 German machines lost monthly.

It is clear someone was guilty of dissimulation or was in error. The British and pro-British said it was the Germans; the Germans and pro-Germans averred it was the British. Be that as it may, the war-dogma " Conceal your losses " must have been more or less at work on both sides.

I was not able at the time to question a British pilot, but did talk to a German Air Force major. He told me that, as concerned enemy losses, no plane was counted lost unless seen to crash by two independent observers. But in the heat of battle might not four observers count the same plane twice? And might not wishful thinking lead to a mere hit being claimed as total destruction? In any case, no enemy plane could be affirmed totally lost until the wreckage was found. And all these causes of error might be increased by some possible juggling, this time high up, when the real figures were not substantial enough to maintain a nation's optimism. However, apart from a nation's greater or less respect for truth, the winning side is that which dissimulates least. The reassuring statements of the losing side are always suspect. But it was not always easy to gather at first sight from the mutually contradictory communiqués which side had or had not prevailed in certain air combats. Only the final issue of the protracted and monotonous series of air battles would show which side dissimulated least, that is which side had gained indisputable air supremacy. And that was to be the British.

\* \* \*



Nevertheless, it would seem fairly certain that these summer raids of 1940, whether over Germany or Britain, must have been mainly directed against military objectives, since airmen at that time generally disliked wasting their precious bombs. But it is equally certain that bombs often miss their targets, destroy houses and kill civilians, as I was able to see when Paris was bombed in June. And it is just as certain that the enraged masses will demand reprisals and that enemy towns and peoples be bombed—this time as a target and not by bombs dropped at random (“*planlos*” as Berlin said) or “*indiscriminate*,” according to London. Nevertheless, two general tendencies were visible behind the communiqués of the time: not only did they emphasize “our” moral superiority over the enemy since “we” never attacked any but military objectives whereas “they” unscrupulously bombed civilians, but “our” superiority in war material had also to be shown. “We” always inflicted heavier losses by sea or air on the enemy than he inflicted on us; even his most savage bombing of civilians did little damage; it was the intent alone that was so craven, horrible and infamous!

These official attitudes, however, admirably reflected certain psychic attitudes inherent in the unconscious—as originally in the primitive mind of man—which still survive deep in us all to reappear when some period of crisis threatens our existence.

\* \* \*

In his “Thoughts on War and Death” from which we have already quoted, Freud, dealing with our attitude to death, writes:

“Primitive man assumed a very remarkable attitude to death; it was far from consistent, was indeed extremely contradictory. On the one hand, he took death seriously, recognised it as the termination of life and used it to that end; on the other hand, he also denied death, reduced it to nothingness. This contradiction arose from the circumstance that he took up radically different attitudes towards the death of another man, of a stranger, of an enemy, and towards his own. The death of the other man he had no objection to; it meant the annihilation of a creature hated, and primitive man had no scruples against bringing it about. He was, in truth, a very violent being, more cruel and more malign than other animals. He liked to kill, and killed as a matter of course . . .”<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, “His own death was for primitive man certainly

---

<sup>1</sup> Sigm. Freud: *Thoughts on War and Death*. Collected Papers, Vol. IV. p. 308. Hogarth Press and Inst. of Psychoanalysis.

just as unimaginable and unreal as it is for any one of us to-day . . . ”<sup>1</sup> which earlier Freud states thus: “Our own death is indeed unimaginable, and whenever we make the attempt to imagine it we can perceive that we really survive as spectators. Hence the psycho-analytic school could venture on the assertion that at bottom no one believes in his own death, or to put the same thing in another way, in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality.”<sup>2</sup>

Freud then continues: “We ask what is the attitude of our unconscious towards the problem of death. The answer must be: Almost exactly the same as primitive man’s, in this respect as in many others, the man of prehistoric ages survives unchanged in our unconscious. Thus our unconscious does not believe in its own death; it behaves as if immortal. What we call our “unconscious” (the deepest strata of our minds, made up of instinctual impulses) knows nothing whatever of negatives or of denials—contradictories coincide in it—and so it knows nothing whatever of our own death, for to that we can give only a negative purport. It follows that no instinct that we possess is ready for a belief in death. This is even perhaps the secret of heroism. The rational explanation for heroism is that it consists in the decision that the personal life cannot be so precious as certain abstract general ideals. But more frequent, in my view, is that instinctive and impulsive heroism which knows no such motivation, and flouts danger in the spirit of . . . Nothing can happen to *me*.”<sup>3</sup>

One may therefore ask, are not such attitudes similar to those which inspire the reports of battles. The confirmation will be found in any recent war communiqué. It is always the enemy who suffers severely, is wiped out, or sustains “heavy losses”; “we,” on the other hand, sustain little or none. The negligible losses we admit are, however, only the tribute fiction pays to reality, as in the myth was his heel to the invulnerable Achilles. Yet, this is just where, for the weaker side, death and defeat may enter, as for Achilles . . .

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, reflecting the same primitive attitudes in respect to the enemy’s vulnerability as opposed to our own invulnerability, even more impressive wish-fantasies than the myth-tergiversations of the commun-

<sup>1</sup> op cit. p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> J.c. p. 304/5.

<sup>3</sup> J.c. p. 313.

iqués found credit with the masses in regard to the enemy's moral vulnerability. Many people in England, and many of the pro-British in France were positive that German civilians would never have the nerve to endure the R.A.F.'s concentrated onslaught. What they regretted was that it was not more intensive, since the Germans were neither accustomed, nor even prepared, to be pounded thus. Indeed, Goering and the German press, it was said, had promised them immunity from the air. As a result, the occupation armies, marooned in France and condemned to prolonged inactivity, knowing in addition that their relatives, wives and children at home were being incessantly bombed, would mutiny one day and cry: "Enough! This must stop." Then Hitler would be overthrown and the Germans would demand peace, even at the cost of abandoning all the territory they had gained. In addition, the British blockade, which was starving Germany out, would help to ensure this bloodless victory.

However, a reciprocal fantasy prevailed in Germany that summer and was taken up by those Frenchmen who had turned anti-British. This time it was the British, who, in insular pride in their invincibility, were unprepared to be hammered in this way. They would lack the nerve to withstand continuous bombing and would rise against the warmonger Churchill, overthrow him and demand peace. And this before even the need arose to attempt a German invasion. Besides, the "total" blockade of Britain by German submarines, mines and planes would help to bring about this collapse.

These wish-fantasies fostered each belligerent's hopes that the sternest part of their task might be avoided, the mutual shock of the land forces: they helped to perpetuate the myths current when hostilities opened, myths which predicted imminent famine and revolution in enemy lands.

Yet one side, all said and done, had to prove right and reality link up with the myth: one of the two colossi must totter at last. None the less, however, did the need for the final inevitable grapple continue to be denied by the phantasy of the enemy's moral collapse under a hail of bombs.

That is why they had to be made to pour down in a terrific deluge. Thus, from early September, the Germans with their then air supremacy, on the facile pretext that civilians in the Rhineland, the Hanseatic towns or Berlin had been killed, began their now admittedly "indiscriminate" bombing of London—justified as so-called "reprisals"—which they

methodically continued night after night.

At the end of the last century Nietzsche wrote: "All the animals hath man already robbed of their virtues: that is why of all animals it hath been hardest for man. Only the birds are still beyond him! And if man should yet learn to fly, alas! *to what height* would his rapacity fly!"<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

France, since that June night when she laid down arms, had become merely the spectator of the mighty duel between the continental Teutonic colossus and Britain, mistress of the seas.

Thus, to a large extent, she broke away from England and a consequent split in public opinion arose. Some now turned all their rancour, all their aggression, against the British ally who, they said, would have plunged them into a disastrous war while only rendering a little help. They thus preferred to bow to the facts and treat with the victor-enemy. Others clung fiercely to hope and continued to believe in the final, inevitable victory of Britain, mistress of the seas. "Why," they said, had not the French fleet joined the British instead of getting itself smashed at Mers-el-Kébir? Why, instead of walling himself up in Vichy, had not Marshal Pétain gone to Algiers or London to join de Gaulle, the Queen of Holland and the King of Norway and wait for and, help, Britain's inevitable victory? The British continued to remain the hope of these enthusiasts; those generous British who, despite her defection, had promised to restore the independence and integrity of France when victory was won. To them, to doubt for an instant of Britain's victory, would have been to weaken her resistance, so deep ingrained is man's belief in magic and the omnipotence of thought, whether for evil or good.

\* \* \*

Here, first, is an anti-British myth which reveals even better than that of *The Myth of the Petrol Pellet*, the submissive, the charmed admiration the defeated felt for their conquerors. The Germans, it seemed, had a "secret weapon," the secret weapon so much discussed since Hitler mentioned it in his first war speech: (the masses had no idea as yet of the atom bomb which presumably was the "secret weapon" on which the Germans were

---

<sup>1</sup> Nietzsche: Thus spake Zarathustra, Part III, Chap. LVI. Foulis, 1923: "Allen Tieren hat der Mensch schon ihre Tugenden abgeraubt: das macht, von Allen Tieren hat es der Mensch am schwersten gehabt. Nur noch die Vögel sind über ihn. Und wenn der Mensch noch fliegen lernte, wehe! *Wohinauf*—würde seine Raublust fliegen!" Also *Sprach Zarathustra*, III, 12. Von alten und neuen Tafeln.

working). This weapon was said to be a mysterious gas with which the Germans would cover the whole of England the moment they disembarked: a gas to send the English to sleep while the Germans took them napping... (I had, however, already heard a similar weapon attributed to the Germans and even heard it claimed as used to capture the forts at Liège: it had paralysed their garrisons for an hour. Later, German army doctors woke them by giving certain injections). This mysterious gas was like the Death Ray at the beginning of this war or the Turpinite of the last, which it was said could almost have blown up the whole world and was claimed by the French as theirs. This sleeping-gas myth of the summer of 1940 was far less widespread however.

I now give some myths inspired by anti-German or pro-British feeling which were current in France during the Summer, Autumn or Winter of 1940. Some illustrate Germany's alleged demoralisation, others British efficiency and others again call down avenging fire.

When the same psycho-analyst to whom I owe the first version of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car* visited us at Saint-Tropez in September, 1940, he told the following story:

(a) "A civilian coming from Thiviers related that a civilian from Angoulême had there seen a German commandant crying in his office. He had not questioned him, but the orderly explained that he had had news from his family that their district was being heavily bombed and was very anxious about them."

(b) In September, 1940, at Saint-Tropez, this same friend's wife told me that in Germany an "alert" was always sounded whenever a hospital train went through (evidently from battles in the Channel) so that people should get into the shelters and see nothing."

Later, in January 1941, in Vichy, a lady told me the following incident as coming from a French officer met on a train, who had himself seen the writing:

(c) "Some German soldiers were about to leave Paris; just before, they wrote on the windows of an hotel in the Avenue de la Grande Armée 'We're fed up: we want to go home.'"

The same month, also at Vichy, my daughter told me this tale:

(d) "A Dutch lady a few days ago told me that seventy suicides had taken place in one of the big Amsterdam palaces requisitioned by the Germans for their flying officers, the reason being that the men saw no hope

the war would end." My daughter added this piece of information :

(e) "The Germans, apparently, have not given up the idea of invading England. As exercises for crossing the Channel, they are forcing the men at Biarritz to jump from the Virgin's rock (a place notorious for dangerous currents). Every day a hundred of them are drowned."

The supposed demoralisation of the invasion troops stationed along the Channel is best illustrated, however, by the following tale, contributed on January 30th 1941, by Dr. Paul Schiff, my most constant Parisian informant :

(f) "A German officer billeted on a Frenchman in a provincial town suddenly woke his host one night : 'You must take me at once to Villers-Cotterets' (or elsewhere). 'It's 2 a.m. : there's no chauffeur.' 'This is an order and what I say goes!' The German pulled out his revolver. The Frenchman drove three or four hundred kilometers in the dark with this revolver at his back. They arrived. The German officer got out and disappeared. Half-an-hour later he returned in a state of collapse. 'We can take ourselves back; I've been to say goodbye to my son who refused to embark for England and is going to be shot tomorrow morning.'"

Later, we shall examine in detail the most typical of the myths dealing with the invasion of Britain; meanwhile, here are some myths of British efficiency.

At Vichy, on December 29th, 1940, a friend, who had fled from Paris, told me the following story, alleged to have happened in Brittany :

(g) "Two German officers knock at an old peasant woman's door. 'Put us up.' 'But there's no room!' 'We order you!' She puts them up. Next morning the goodwife goes to the two officers' room. They have left. But on the mantelpiece is a piece of cardboard with the words, 'Thank you!' They were Englishmen in German disguise." This is the converse of the myth of German officers disguised as Frenchmen, Poles, Belgians or Dutch. Many versions of this story were current in France at the time.

The same masseur at the Turkish Baths, to whom I owe version 2 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, told my husband the following story on December 12th, 1940 :

(h) "Near Paris there is a big mill called the Gaillon mill. A German officer on an inspection tour turns up and asks : 'What's that in there?' There were 21,000 quintals of wheat. The officer thereupon ordered the whole of this wheat to be moved to a certain barn. Well, that very night a

bomb from a British plane dropped on the lot and burnt it all up. The officer was a Britisher in German disguise, who wanted to prevent all that wheat going to Germany."

In any case, the masses in France gave ready help to the British or pro-British, as the following story testifies : it was told me on January 30th 1941, by my usual Paris informant :

(i) "A lot of people wanting to get to England went to Brittany. They hoped to get there by sea. The Germans were combing the houses for them. Some of these fugitives, seeing a funeral, went and joined the procession. A woman mourner, noticing a stranger at her side and realising the position, at once said 'Give me your arm, Monsieur.'" My informant had two versions of this story, one as happening in a Breton village, the other in a village near Boulogne.

And here, finally, is the myth of avenging fire.

Early in October 1940, all Paris rejoiced at this news brought me by my maid :

(j) "Marshal Goering, who was in charge of the bombing attacks on England, had himself been killed when the R.A.F. bombed Havre. The bomb was said to have hit the Casino where some 150 officers were met. In Paris, huge wreaths had been seen going through the streets, and the German flag on the Admiralty building in the Place de la Concorde had been flown at half-mast."

This next version I had from a fellow psycho-analyst on October 17th, 1940 :

(k) "Goering got a leg injury near Trouville. There was no hospital there, so they moved him to Rouen where he is said to have died."

(l) Even then, to most Frenchmen, Laval appeared a traitor in German pay, slyly double-crossing Marshal Pétain. Thus, rumours of his murder were as persistent in France as those of Goering's death.

King Leopold too, according to public opinion, deserved punishment for capitulating to the German forces. Thus, in January 1941, when I met my daughter at Vichy, she related the following story, told by a lady to one of my daughter's friends with every assurance of its veracity.

(m) "King Leopold has been killed in the street or in the park of his palace while walking with a German officer." This walking companion admirably and concretely expresses why the "wicked" Leopold must be executed !

And now for perhaps the most charming and untrimmed of all the

versions of this type of myth, given to me on October 20th 1940, by a publisher friend in Paris.

(n) "A gentleman always bought his paper at the same kiosk. One day, as the newsagent hands him his paper she whispers: 'He's dead!' 'Who?' he asks. 'Sh, sh!' she answers, 'He's dead!'"

Here imagination may do what it will: the worst of our oppressors is dead!

\* \* \*

I have kept to the end the most widespread and recurrent, as well as the most typical and impressive of the myths that began to circulate in the Summer of 1940, almost immediately after France capitulated.

At a time when the monotonous repetition of air combats no longer sufficed to whet the general impatience, in July 1940, the following rumours began to spread in occupied as in unoccupied France; rumours sometimes reported as broadcast by the Russians or Swiss, but mostly reported with personal assurances of their veracity.

1. Version obtained in Paris in July from a chef who said he knew a doctor who was a friend of the works manager involved: "One of the managers of the Le Sueur works, recently visiting his villa at Dunkirk, wanted to go down to the beach. But it was guarded by German soldiers with fixed bayonets to prevent anyone seeing the mounds and mounds of corpses thrown up on the beach. The Germans were burying them in the sand."

2. Version collected in Paris in July from a woman cousin, as related to her by a lady: "A lady on her way to St. Malo meets a lorry that has broken down. 'What have you got in there?' she asks the German soldier-driver. 'Beached corpses,' he answers, 'We burn quantities every day at the crematorium!' The Germans know only too well the fate in store for them: they have to be fastened into the boats to make them embark for England.'"

3. Version told my husband in Paris, in July, by a big wholesaler in the quartier de l'Opéra: "My landlord, a large timber merchant in Calais, has a daughter. She has just been home and returned and says the Germans have made a big attack on Britain, for 35,000 corpses have been washed up on the coast. This is no rumour, she saw them herself! The proof is that I've been to see her and she tells me they're paying 8 frs. an hour to the men burying the corpses."

4. Version obtained about mid-August at Saint-Tropez, *i.e.*, this



time in the unoccupied zone, from the wife of a cousin who is a naval officer and lives at Toulon : "They're saying in Toulon that the Germans have already lost one big battle against Britain. Apparently they attempted to land and the sea's full of their corpses. They're said to have rounded up all the Frenchmen along the coast to collect the bodies, which would total about 35,000. The English apparently gained their victory by spreading petrol on the sea and setting it on fire."

5. Version also collected about mid-August at Saint-Tropez from some young neighbours : "The Germans have attacked England with a landing force of 100,000 men. But they were all wiped out by the English pouring oil on the sea and setting it alight."

6. Version collected at Saint-Tropez on August 18th from some Alsatian friends living on the coast : "The Germans have tried to land in England. The B.B.C. is said to have broadcast one night that 60,000 bodies were thrown ashore. The English had simply roasted the men alive by spreading petrol on the sea and setting it aflame."

7. Version collected on August 29th 1940, from a woman friend living in Nice : "A lady told me today that the British laid a belt of heavy oil around their island and when the German boats approached, to land their men, they were all burnt. 10,000 or 100,000 of them?"

8. Version collected on September 4th 1940, from a lady inhabiting Saint-Tropez : "A gentleman in the Secret Service confirms that an attack did take place on England and was repulsed."

9. Same source and date, as told by a young French prisoner, a lorry-driver who had driven a number of Germans, members of an Enquiry Commission, to the South. "It was about a fortnight ago, when the German long-range guns started shelling the English coast, that the attack took place. The British long-range guns replied, then stopped firing. The Germans thought them destroyed and launched their attack. The ruse was successful; the British guns reopened fire just when the Germans were going to land; the British had also spread fuel-oil on the sea; they repulsed the German attack."

10. Same source and date, this time according to an important business man in Marseilles, who claimed to have got the tale from a colonel in the French Army : "This colonel had told him that the coast of Brittany was littered with corpses. The Germans had attacked Britain with 300,000 men; no one knows how many were killed. Still, badly burnt men had been sent to hospital as far afield as Angoulême."

11. Version collected on September 6th at Saint-Tropez from a passing refugee from Paris who had come from Cintrac (Dordogne): "The Germans have tried to land in England. There are even German wounded in the hospital at Bordeaux. In Paris, all the hospitals have been requisitioned and they're all full. Trains keep on arriving packed with wounded still wearing their field dressings. My wife, who lives near the Rothschild hospital, swears its full of burnt face and eye cases, because the English set fire to the sea."

12. Version collected by my daughter early in September from a lady inhabiting Saint-Tropez: "The Germans have tried to land in England. It was a terrible failure. I can vouch for it, because I know a doctor who personally attended two German soldiers whose faces were burnt; it happened when they fell into the sea which the English had set on fire with fuel oil." Another informant added that why the British had not yet announced this victory, was because they did not wish to seem too cruel!

13. Version collected on September 6th by my daughter, at Saint-Tropez, from an Italian Anti-Fascist, visiting a cousin, our neighbour: "I've got some excellent news which I had from my friend, the Brazilian consul at Hamburg. German morale has reached rock-bottom. They're desperate at seeing the way the war drags on, after all the promises that it would be short. They can't find volunteers for their attack on England; no one will go. That's because they've already had three tries, and not a soldier came back! They have to shoot thousands of people a day. If this lasts a year more, Germany's sunk."

In this version we find the theme of the conquering sea linked with that of revolution in the enemy country. Of the British generals jocularly referred to by Hitler in his speech of September 3rd, Gen. Revolution, Gen. Famine and Gen. Bluff, the first, in concert with Britain's ally the sea, sufficed to assure her victory.

14. Version also collected at Saint-Tropez in September from a young and recently demobilised Niçois: "The Germans apparently made two attempts to land in England, one five weeks ago, the other three. (Each time we heard it a week later from Gaullists or Jews). The first time they had about 25,000 killed, the second 60,000. They tried to land from speedboats and rafts. The English apparently spread sheets of heavy oil and fuel oil on the sea and set it alight. The Germans were all roasted alive."

15. Version collected by my son at Constantinople, also in September 1940, from a Turk returned from Ostend where he worked: "He had seen soldiers lined up on the beach collecting the burnt corpses of German soldiers thrown up in hundreds by the sea."

16. Version collected at Saint-Tropez on September 7th, from a psycho-analyst's wife, a refugee from Paris, just back from Beg Meil, in Brittany. This lady had already provided me with Version 12 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car* and the pretty myth of the Virgin Mary appearing to the little Breton girl . . . "About July 20th some German officers at Quimper told me and also my friends, so that I have it from three different sources, that the Germans had made an attempt to land in England starting from Calais and Brest. They had used rubber canoes (like those they use for crossing streams and rivers). The attempt failed (*Nicht gelungen!*) How many killed had they had? No one knows. From that moment, my informant added, there was a big drop in German morale. The Germans said: 'We've had enough of the war: we want to go home.' One German, back from leave, was said to have declared: 'It's no fun to have to leave home and everlastingly stay in the army. Everyone at home's had enough and wants the war to be over.' She herself had heard that at Brest alone the Germans had had to shoot 200 of their men. Another German officer was reported to have said: 'This is the moment to fear a revolution.' Since then, they had had to force their men into the boats at the pistol point. The Germans kept on reiterating that they did not wish to be drowned, or, as they picturesquely put it: *Nicht kaput glouglou!* A woman friend from Florac (Lozère) reported the same thing." My informant's husband added in my presence that at Thiviers (Dordogne), on which his regiment had fallen back, he heard that 250 Germans had been shot for cowardice at Angoulême.

Here again, we see the revolution theme—this time in occupied territory—grafted on that of the abortive landing, though due allowance must be made for the disillusionment and even disaffection that might exist in an army beguiled with promises of that early peace of which they saw no sign.

What is strange is that this latter version should have come from German lips which, given my informant's veracity, seems hardly susceptible of doubt. It is a rebound; the price the occupiers pay for their occupation. The myths of the conquered may also contaminate the victor.

I now give another version of the myth of the drowned, burnt

corpses—the most sinister of all—collected on October 6th from a young cousin living at Saint-Tropez :

17. "I heard some time ago that the Germans had tried to land in England. 350,000 men were burnt alive by fuel oil spread on the sea! The British collected the corpses, identified them by their identity disks, loaded them in planes and dropped each corpse in its own village to strike terror into their families and undermine German morale."

My informant added: "From Calais to Honfleur, the German soldiers could be seen swimming ashore upright. It was an army of the drowned. Their heavy equipment had slipped to their feet and so they were kept upright."

He concluded: "The Germans are in such terror of embarking for England that they have to be driven on board with machine guns at their backs and their hands tied, to prevent them committing suicide."

This young cousin, brother of the courageous youth whom I have now several times quoted, has an unusual imagination and a pronounced taste for shocking folk. I will not therefore vouch for how much, in his tales, he heard or invented, nor would it greatly matter as regards man's deeper responses, since myths must germinate somewhere. This particular myth, wherever it originated, was only too likely to be passed on, given its striking, horrible nature.<sup>1</sup>

One could continue these variants of the myth of *The Burnt Drowned Corpses* indefinitely; the variants, it would seem, were as many as there were people in France. And since the dreaded attack had been smashed

<sup>1</sup>In March 1942, at the Cape, I succeeded in finding yet another version of this myth. A South African officer told the following tale to the same Greek friend who gave me the story of the Bluestone (see p. 55). 17a. "A man who lived at the Cape told me that, towards the end of 1940 or early in 1941, he had talked to two soldiers from a convoy which had called at the Cape and whom he took out in his motor. These men told him that one of their jobs for nearly a week had been burying drowned and half-burnt Germans thrown up on the English South coast."

On March 7th, at the Cape, one of the two R.A.F. boys, to whom I owe version 26 of the myth of *The Corpse in the Car*, related the following story:

17b. "In September 1940, there was apparently an invasion by the German forces on the South coast of England. Apparently oil was released on the water and lit. The whole sea at night was like a blazing furnace. Corpses were washed up along the coast the next morning. This was told me by an M.T. driver of the R.A.F. who had been patrolling the coast."

My informant believed that the story was fact. His friend did not. He argued that if the British had gained such a victory they would have announced it!

Another young soldier of the convoy then at the Cape, to whom I gave a lift towards Muizenberg, specified that the German invasion troops would have been smashed on the coast of the Isle of Wight.

there was no need to feel further anxiety. The danger was overcome and had passed! The numbers of the invaders, moreover, tended always to increase: from 35,000 in version 3 (July) it swelled to 60,000 in version 6, to 100,000 in versions 5 and 7 (August), to 300,000 in version 10 (early September), not to mention the 350,000 in version 17 (October)! The size of the victory went on increasing as at times did the number of attempts, as witness versions 13 and 14. Each version too, was always furnished with every possible proof of authenticity.

Nevertheless, the B.B.C. to which I listened every night that July and August, did not broadcast any such news and this negative fact, which the believers explained as necessary for mysterious strategic reasons—though however, version 6 tends to invalidate it—would alone have sufficed to mark the story's mythical nature. It is not usual to conceal victories on such a scale!

And this, all the more, at a time when the intentional bombing of civilians had been transferred, by order, from the domain of myth to that of reality; for, in early September, the Germans, as so-called reprisals for civilians killed in R.A.F. night attacks on Berlin, Nuremberg and elsewhere, announced and carried out those massive nocturnal air attacks on London and Londoners which gutted houses, hospitals and churches and slaughtered men, women and children.

\* \* \*

In view of the fact that so many minds, in France, had turned against their ex-ally, it may seem surprising to find the myth of *The Burnt Drowned Corpses* so widespread among the French. The reason is that myths germinate in the human and racial unconscious. Thus, this myth would seem to prove, in spite of Mers-el-Kébir and the increasing scarcity of foodstuffs said to be due to the British blockade though largely caused, as they knew, by the demands of the occupying forces that, in the unconscious, the French remained truer to their ex-ally than in consciousness.

Actually, one would hear this story not only from pro-British Frenchmen, but also from Frenchmen more or less neutral and even at times from those who were anti-British, so powerful is the inertia inherent in the unconscious processes of the human psyche. Thus, faith was kept with the ancient alliance though often repudiated in consciousness.

But, chiefly, the French kept faith with their own ideals of liberty, though these alas, for the time, had been conquered by Hitler's weapons.

Deep in their hearts a feeling, not always conscious, made them hope that the war would end with the liberation of a British victory, despite their recent German-inspired faith in the New Order, to which many loudly proclaimed their conversion. "If only the British win!" some would have said. "If only those pigs of British would win!" the rest would have said. Thus, jocularly, the one difference between the two camps was expressed.

\* \* \*

Yet myths, like dreams, seem sometimes prophetic: namely, when reality sufficiently supports the wish by which they are engendered.

In his broadcast on September 11th—which incidentally caused an immediate drop in the pound on international exchanges—Mr. Churchill announced that those preparing to attack the British Isles were massing self-propelled barges and shipping in every port on the Continent from the Bay of Biscay to Norway. This speech, by the way, in contrast to our myth, duly placed the invasion attempt in the future. Thus, on September 13th, a much weakened version of this myth was reported to me at Saint-Tropez by a cousin-neighbour:

18. "A friend, a former naval officer with many old acquaintances in Toulon, was told that the burnt bodies thrown up on the Channel coast could be accounted for thus: the Germans had apparently not attempted a landing but an embarkation manœuvre; this was seen by the British who attacked them with a new type of bomb: slabs of incendiary material. One of the German boats had caught fire and this accounted for the men burnt—of whom there were 3,000 only. Hence the rumour." Thus the myth, by claiming less, came nearer to reality.

For, about September 16th, the myth of *The Burnt Drowned Corpses*, which throughout the summer had fed the hope of all oppressed Frenchmen did, in fact, come to pass after the manner suggested in version 18. Not in an attack smashed on the coasts of Britain, but even before the landing force was at sea. Actually, on the night of September 24th, the B.B.C. broadcast that the Germans, whom the British had been bombing in their "invasion ports," had sustained some 50,000 casualties. It also claimed that so many of their barges had been sunk that they had had to round-up workers to clear the entrances to the blocked ports.

Later, in January 1941, at Vichy, I learned, from an Admiral seconded to the French Government, that the British airmen had

employed the following tactics. It appeared that the Germans had attempted a most ambitious embarkation manœuvre in the various ports they had captured, stretching from Norway to Finisterre, but had not bothered to provide adequate A.A. cover. The R.A.F. had spotted them, gone over in force and sprayed them with oil followed by incendiary slabs, as a result of which barges and troops were incinerated. Thus, some ten weeks after its birth, the myth of *The Burnt Drowned Corpses* became reality.

\* \* \*

Later, two official versions of the abortive embarkation manœuvre were printed in the British press. I reproduce Mr. Churchill's declaration as given in the *Cape Argus* for June 20th, 1944 :

"Mr. Churchill, when asked in the House of Commons today if he would, as a matter of historical interest, say whether the Germans ever set in motion the apparatus for a sea-borne invasion against Britain (states Sapa-Reuter), replied : ' I do not quite know what is meant by setting in motion. Setting in motion in the sense of crossing the Channel, No ! But setting in motion in the sense of making a very heavy concentration of troops and ships to cross the Channel, Yes ! '

"Asked if any of this shipping ever emerged from ports across the Channel, Mr. Churchill said : ' Not to my belief. A great deal of it was sunk in the ports and then they changed their minds.' (Laughter)."

I also quote some passages from the statement issued by Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd at his first press conference as Minister of Information, as printed in the *News-Chronicle* for Monday, June 4th, 1945 :

"He made it clear that *the flame of British resistance* was far more than a symbolic expression. The Germans would have found flame sweeping the beaches, blasting the defiles through the cliffs and shrivelling their tanks as they drove inland; bursting in searing jets from hedges and garden walls . . . Red tape was cut, and soon petroleum, fire and explosive experts had ready a terrifying system of flame-throwing, which could not only set the sea afire by underwater pipelines, but could fortify every conceivable vantage point on land . . . German raiders bombed the experimenters on their first days and saw all the subsequent rehearsals . . . I got in touch with Lord Hankey . . . That was about June 25 . . . (so) the rumour which swept the world nearly five years ago that a German invasion fleet had sailed for this country and had been disastrously defeated in a sea of fire was untrue. But it might well have been true.

Britain was ready to do just that thing to invaders. And the Germans killed thousands of their own troops in an effort to restore confidence where terror of the fire weapon spread fastest—through the ranks of the Wehrmacht. They arranged a great demonstration to show that specially equipped troops could pass unscathed even if the sea was on fire. Thousands of asbestos suits were made, and each man of the troops to take part in the demonstration wore one (100,000 asbestos suits were ordered in Paris alone!) Huge quantities of oil were spread off the French coast and set on fire. The trial armada set out—to disaster. A large number of the headpieces of the suits were defective and the men inside were roasted to death. For weeks afterwards the burnt bodies of German soldiers were being washed up on the South Coast. Meanwhile, by pamphlets dropped by planes, radio, and whispering campaigns, stories of Britain's terrifying fire defences were being spread."

In view of these two statements, so divergent on many points, one sees how difficult it is to establish the truth, especially in war time. Personally, I more readily accept the sobriety of Mr. Churchill's statement than the spectacular revelations of Mr. Lloyd.

\* \* \*

In 1940, the self-assurance of the Anglo-Saxons, entrenched behind their seas, was fed from two sources, one real, the other mythical.

Clearly, the Germans, methodical as they were, would never attempt to invade an ever-more strongly fortified Britain unless positive of success. Setting their then air supremacy against Britain's sea supremacy, they would naturally extend in fullest degree the power and frightfulness of their attacks on the ports, factories and towns of the impregnable island and similarly speed up the destruction of its ships by their submarines, bombers and mines. In a word, in place of an all-too risky attack on the Island Fortress, they would methodically besiege its sea-lanes from the North Sea to the Atlantic, second-best though it might be, an *ersatz*.

Reality alone, however, will not suffice to fire a nation's imagination. And though the girdle of waves which surrounds Britain is a very real rampart, hard to force by sea or air, nevertheless, the self-assurance justifiably credited to the British issues from a different source than that which reality warrants; namely, from those unconscious processes which are but little concerned with facts. For, in their sea-girt isle, which has known no conqueror since September 28th 1066, the British, as it were, were the chosen people of some supernatural power, whether they



called it God or Providence, to which they addressed those solemn nation-wide prayers which seemed so amusing to the Germans. Even after Britain's defeats in Norway and Flanders, even after the so-called "mechanised Attila" Hitler, more formidable than Napoleon, had conquered Europe's seaboard from North Cape to the Pyrenees, the British still felt safe from any landings on their beaches: they took it for granted that they were totally immune from the sea and so did others.

For the sea, more even than the earth, if that is possible, is a maternal symbol to all mankind. And rightly: for did not life originally emerge therefrom and did not all earth's creatures, in remote ages, successively emerge from the sea? Some dim intuition would seem to have revealed this to man long before he was taught it by science. And, as the universal womb of life, the sea, in fact, in the sagas and myths of nations as in individual dreams, does appear as a great vast-breasted Mother.

Thus, the British, ruling the waves, felt and seemed like the favourite child of this great Mother and, like all sons who are the preferred of their mothers, they derived therefrom an immense assurance and were invested with a great glamour. Nor is it by chance that Britain gives no heed to the Salic Law and that great Queens have at times ruled her destinies. It is as though she is protected by some matriarchal influence which emanates from her seas.

Thus Hitler, with his savage aggression and the male potency symbolised by his thousand bombers, must in the British unconscious and even in that of the spectator-nations of the mighty duel, admirably have represented the enemy-father who seeks to tear her favourite son from the paradise of his mother. The Mother would then have to defend her child with all her powers; those powers which, to the British, appear as vast as are its symbol, the limitless seas.

All this, regardless of what was to be the final result of the mighty duel in those heroic months when Britain alone stood resisting—France defeated; Russia and America still uncertain—and permanent sea and temporary air supremacy grappled to decide the fate of the world.

## THE MYTH OF THE DEVIL-JEW

## 1. EMOTIVE ASPECTS

Innumerable were the occasions on which Hitler and, copying him, the Nazi leaders, proclaimed that "National Socialism is inseparable from anti-Semitism." And with reason, for Germany, defeated in 1918, had to find someone on whom to pin its defeat. Post-war Germany, obsessed by its longing for revenge, had of necessity to find some enemy in its midst against which to muster its youthful armies, preparatory to launching them against the world. Thus, the outrages of the Hitler Youth in 1933 on the German Jews and again the excesses of that same youth in Austria and Germany in 1938, despite the natural horror felt by the civilised world, must be seen as large scale deployments possibly necessary to enable German aggression to re-emerge.

\* \* \*

Hitler has himself described how he was converted to anti-Semitism :

"My ideas about anti-Semitism changed also in the course of time, but that was the change I found most difficult. It cost me a greater internal conflict with myself, and it was only after a struggle between reason and sentiment that victory began to be decided in favour of the former. Two years later sentiment rallied to the side of reason and became a faithful guardian and counsellor.

"At the time of this bitter inner struggle, between calm reason and the sentiments in which I had been brought up, the lessons that I learned on the streets of Vienna rendered me invaluable assistance. A time came when I no longer passed blindly along the streets of the mighty city, as I had done in the early days, but now with my eyes open not only to study the buildings but also the human beings.

"Once, when passing through the Inner City, I suddenly encountered a phenomenon in a long caftan and wearing black side-locks. My first thought was : Is this a Jew? They certainly did not have this appearance in Linz. I watched the man stealthily and cautiously; but the longer I gazed at that strange countenance and examined it feature by feature, the more the question shaped itself in my brain : Is this a German?"

(It was obviously a Polish Jew). Hitler then began buying and burying himself in anti-Semitic pamphlets.

"The subject," continues Hitler, "appeared so enormous and the accusations were so far-reaching that I was afraid of dealing with it unjustly and so I became again anxious and uncertain.

"Naturally I could no longer doubt that here there was not a question of Germans who happened to be of a different religion but rather that there was question of an entirely different people. For as soon as I began to investigate the matter and observe the Jews, then Vienna appeared to me in a different light. Wherever I now went I saw Jews, and the more I saw of them the more strikingly and clearly they stood out as a different people from the other citizens. Especially the Inner City and the district northwards from the Danube Canal swarmed with a people who even in outer appearance bore no similarity to the Germans.<sup>1</sup>

"This knowledge was the occasion of the greatest inner revolution that I had yet experienced. From being a soft-hearted cosmopolitan I became an out-and-out anti-Semite."<sup>2</sup>

The contemporary transmutation of self-confessed anti-Semitism into racial anti-Semitism could not be better illustrated than in the following lines :

"The life which the Jew lives as a parasite thriving on the substance of other nations and States has resulted in developing that specific character which Schopenhauer once described when he spoke of the Jew as 'The Great Master of Lies.' The kind of existence he leads forces the Jew to the systematic use of falsehood, just as naturally as the inhabitants of northern climates are forced to wear warm clothes.

"He can live among other Nations and States only as long as he succeeds in persuading them that the Jews are not a distinct people but the representatives of a religious faith who thus constitute a 'religious community,' though this be of a peculiar character.

"As a matter of fact, however, this is the first of his great falsehoods.

"He is obliged to conceal his own particular character and mode of life that he may be allowed to continue his existence as a parasite among the nations. The greater the intelligence of the individual Jew, the better will he succeed in deceiving others. His success in this line may even go so far that the people who grant him hospitality may be led to believe that the Jew among them is a genuine Frenchman, for instance, or Englishman, or German, or Italian, who

<sup>1</sup> Hitler, *Mein Kampf*. Hurst & Blackett Ltd., p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *l.c.* p. 65.

just happens to belong to a religious denomination which is different from that prevailing in these countries.<sup>1</sup>

“Jewry has always been a nation of a definite racial character and never differentiated merely by the fact of belonging to a certain religion. At a very early date, urged on by the desire to make their way in the world, the Jews began to cast about for a means whereby they might distract such attention as might prove inconvenient for them. What could be more effective and at the same time more above suspicion than to borrow and utilise the idea of the religious community?”<sup>2</sup>

Everything adduced by anthropologists that tends to prove that the Jews of to-day, scattered as they are, represent the final result of an agglomeration of different races, predominantly Mediterranean, as a result of successive conversions, falls to pieces against the rock of racial fanaticism. Thus, sure in himself and his faith, Hitler elsewhere, after condemning the Jewish Press, Jewish art, high finance and international Marxism—that “Jewish poison”—impressively concludes :

“Should the Jew, with the aid of his Marxist creed, triumph over the people of this world, his Crown will be the funeral wreath of mankind, and this planet will once again follow its orbit through ether, without any human life on its surface, as it did millions of years ago.

“And so I believe today that my conduct is in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator. In standing guard against the Jew I am defending the handiwork of the Lord.”<sup>3</sup>

One sees how, convinced of such a mission, Hitler would be adamant against all pity for the Jews and, as the Pope if not deity of racialism, would decree an Inquisition for the Jews as incarnations of the Devil and of Evil.

Thus, the German Jews, even those who between 1914 and 1918 shed their blood for Germany, found themselves systematically harassed and despoiled. All their property, “stolen from the Aryans,” was “retaken” from them, none were exempt, neither the Rothschilds nor the small shopkeepers in Vienna or Berlin whose wares the young fanatics pillaged. Lawyers, doctors, chemists, writers, if Jews, found themselves denied the right to use their talents or practise, while concentration camps of sinister fame stifled the lamentations of modern Jeremiahs for whom exile would

<sup>1</sup> l.c. p. 256.

<sup>2</sup> l.c. p. 256.

<sup>3</sup> l.c. p. 66.

have been the one salvation. They, however, often found all roads barred as one frontier after another closed . . .

Fanaticism, owing to its liberating effects on the aggressive instincts of the psyche, is highly contagious. The anti-Semitic faith of its Führer swept Germany and then overflowed the frontiers. Rabid propagandists exerted themselves to disseminate it. Open the "Stürmer," the weekly devoted to "the Struggle for the Truth," as it said of itself, which was run by Streicher who inspired the Nuremberg laws, and you will find in the issue dated October 10th, 1940, that every regicide in history was a Jew, or instigated by Jews: or again on October 17th, 1940, that every disease (leprosy, plague, syphilis or smallpox) whether physical or moral, to which humanity is subject, was conveyed to Aryans by Jews.

At the foot of each page, in capitals, one would find this kind of slogan:

1. "Jews are the cause of war."
2. "To know a Jew is to know the Devil."
3. "The Jews are our calamity."

which, for the benefit of the defeated, the victors converted into the following slogan posted all over occupied France:

"The Jews are your calamity . . ."

Thus, on July 24th, 1940, barely a month after their defeat and while the bewildered and heartsore French sought those "responsible" for their disaster, the following leading article appeared in *La France au Travail* (one of the new Paris papers heralding the New Order) entitled *The Three Jewish Wars*. I quote it *in extenso*:

### THE THREE JEWISH WARS

1870 — 1914 — 1939

"The first Jew war! It was Edouard Drumont, in his immortal *France Juive* who first popularised the phrase, a *Jew War*. It was when he described how the Jews engineered their 1870 war, forerunner of the two others.

"After they had raked in all they could from big business and State loans, exhausted small savings by repeated public appeals, made all they could from usury and the peace and prosperity of the Second Empire by swearing there would never be war since Rothschild did not wish it, they suddenly switched round.

"Here are Drumont's own words:

"Peace had been worked to a shadow. Now, as their base of operations, the German Jews took war: under all sorts of military guises they organised the most immense, the most wonderful financial

speculation that anyone ever attempted with success . . .

. . . Actually there was little for Germany to do and the army of spies and secret agents sent against us by Sieber, Berlin's police chief, found the job already done. The Jew delivers France to Germany bound hand and foot."

"Drumont explains how the Jews work :

"Advance all the paper money Bismarck needs.

"Then get this paper converted into money by declaring war on France, the one country with real money.

"Strip France in Prussia's favour and strip Prussia by rigging the banks; such was the plan that was successfully executed.

"The difficulty was to create a *casus belli*.

"German Jews and French Jews thereupon combined to engineer the promising disaster.

"But Napoleon III jibbed and resisted the urgings of the Empress egged on by the Jew Bauer, that one-time broker's agent and later vile priest, who became the Empress's confessor.

"King Wilhelm jibbed also."

"Drumont continues :

"Wilhelm's conscience was troubled to think that 100,000 men, then peacefully tilling the earth, might in a month lie dead on the battlefield, were the word given. Up to the very last moment did Queen Augusta implore him for peace; it is even said that, when everything seemed decided, she finally threw herself at his feet to conjure him to make one last effort.

"Wilhelm did what the Emperor would certainly not have done in his place and the Prince of Hohenzollern's candidacy to the Spanish throne was withdrawn.

"In desperation, the Jews tried their trick of disseminating false news, which has generally proved so successful; the Tartar ruse, as it's called at Rothschild's. A Jew firm, the Wolff news-agency, announced that our ambassador had been grossly insulted by the King of Prussia. One easily imagines the enthusiasm with which the Jew-run French press took this up.

"Our Ambassador has been insulted : France has received a slap in the face; it makes my blood boil—so vociferated these future founders of the Republic, who nowadays submit to every form of diplomatic kick with a 'thank you !'" (Written in 1886).

"Unnecessary to add that the ambassador in question, Count Benedetti, in his book *Ma Mission en Prusse*, formally denies the story of the imaginary insult.

"The faked *Bad Ems*' telegram roused the final hullabaloo that touched off the war.

"The whole Jew and Masonic scum got rich providing supplies for a war continued endlessly by that Gambetta whom the squat Reynaud sought to imitate in prolonging this.

“Drumont continues :

“From end to end of Europe there rose a Jew hosanna, accompanied by the sounding of clinking millions. The Jews repeated, on a prodigious scale, what Rothschild did in little in the collapse of 1815. They grew rich by lending to the French; they took from the Prussians what the French paid them. Of those five billion francs, four at least remained in their hands.

“Edouard Drumont died in February 1917, before he could tell us what he thought of the second Jew War. As for the third Jew War, he predicted that too and even foretold how France would disintegrate and dissolve in the Jew acid.

“For it is not a question of merely liquidating the last war, but all three, including the restitution, by the two (or three) hundred Jew families, of the billions stolen by Israel in nearly a century, amid the slaughter and flames that Jehovah loves.

(Signed) JEAN DRAULT.”

Unnecessary to remind those who know anything of history how greatly misunderstood is the part played by Bismarck in the genesis of the war of 1870, as in those of 1864 and 1866! Admirers of the Iron Chancellor and inspired architect of the German Empire will find little of use to them here.

\* \* \*

But this was only the beginning of a vast campaign. Inspired by dogmas from Hitler's Revelations and Gospel, French anti-Semitism was soon all the rage in the press of the occupied and even unoccupied zones. The Freemasons and British, however, shared with the Jews the function of target for the rancour of an unhappy people.

Thus, in the free zone, a long front-page article in *Gringoire* for August 22nd, 1940, signed Robert Boucard and headed: *From Jacques de Molay to the Union Jack*, showed how both Freemasons and British, Judaified as they were, throughout history and to the great detriment of France, had always remained the hidden avengers of the Grand Master of the Templars executed in 1314 by Philip le Bel.

I glean from these lines a few of the crimes committed by these wretches, through the ages, against France.

“It was with the taking of the Bastille, one-time prison of the Grand Master of the Templars, that the Revolution began. Its destruction had been planned since 1314! . . . .

“But it was forbidden to set fire to the Tour Saint-Jacques, last vestige of the church of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, for under its foundations the Templars had buried part of their archives . . . .

“When Louis XVI fell, his dwelling was to be a prison, that

ancient palace of the Templars which still stood, with its keep and towers, to await the royal prisoner whose doom those with implacable memories had vowed."

(In fact, a Capet did have to pay with his life for Philip le Bel, who murdered Jacques!)

"All this time, the alarm gun thundered on the Pont Neuf, just where the stake at which Jacques was burnt had stood . . ."

"Again, it was in the Paris 'Temple,' the one time Mother-house of the Order, that the little Louis XVII was tortured by the unspeakable Jewish cobbler Simon." (Thus one sees the hidden and devilish connection between Israel, Albion and the Templars!)

"Will this frightful vengeance of Bourguignon de Molay never work itself out?"

The author of this document continues :

"In certain Scottish grand lodges, the disciples of Jacques de Molay still swear fealty before a model of the tomb of Bourguignon de Molay. Below an urn and skull wreathed with laurels, a papal tiara and a royal crown stand out. Is this sufficiently clear? On the pedestal may be read the following figures :

13141793487070

"These apparently mysterious figures are in fact only a reminder of certain historic dates.

"1314 : Burning at the stake of Jacques de Molay.

"1793 : First French Republic proclaimed.

"1848 : Second French Republic proclaimed.

"1870 : Third French Republic proclaimed.

"1870 : All papal temporal property confiscated.

(These examples alone will serve to show the kind of vengeance these hidden forces, heirs to the Templars, succeeded in exacting from altar and throne).

"But let us pass to the hold of the Templars on Britain :

"Is it really necessary now to adduce these three further proofs of the persistence of the Templars—enemies of France and its kings—in Scotch Freemasonry particularly and in the British government generally?

"(1) The motto of the British coat of arms (as that of Scottish Freemasonry) is the same as Jacques de Molay's : *Deus meumque jus* (Dieu et mon Droit).

"(2) The flag of Britain (the Union Jack) is the flag of Jacques de Molay.

"(3) All British possessions are known as the 'Union Jack' : in French 'Union pour Jacques.'"

It is unnecessary to attempt to criticise such lucubrations rationally : they appear the wanderings of some case of schizophrenia where verbal



associations are taken for real associations.

In this same so-called "free" zone there also appeared, on September 7th, 1940, in *Emancipation Nationale*, a leading article signed by the editor, Jacques Doriot, head of the "French Workers' Party," entitled "*The Jewish Problem must be solved.*" The banner headlines ran: *Jewry and Freemasonry, two gifts from Britain.*

Here are the main points of this indictment :

"War and defeat have made the solution of the Jewish problem imperative for France . . ."

After which, having recalled his earlier anti-Semitic efforts, Doriot continues :

"The effects of the Jew Army in France was more decisive than is generally believed. Deriving its power from its gold, holding almost every key position, monopolising the press, radio and cinema, influencing the government, now through Blum, now through Mandel, and always working together behind the scenes, they monopolised all propaganda and news . . .

"This policy was not the work of only a few Jews. Every Jew who lived in France took part. The few known exceptions only proved the rule.

"The Jews wanted the war and were entirely successful in achieving their programme.

"They wanted the war. We had it. They wanted their war and we carried it out. And though Israel's sons might don uniforms it was hardly to fight . . ." (Yet I have known not a few Jews who fought at the front).

"They thought that the war they did not fight would bring them wealth as well as victory. But we were defeated instead. Then France saw Israel madly stampeding. The Rothschilds and the Mandels (no difference between them), the Blums, the Levys, all fled with their gold, their jewels and their securities, hoping to ruin the country they had slain . . .

"Thus it was the Jews themselves who brought the Jewish problem into the open . . . The French government, roused by many anti-Semitic mass demonstrations throughout the unoccupied zone, is now giving serious thought to the matter . . .

"A law will provisionally determine the fate of the Jews . . . The government must find an immediate solution to restore the rights of Frenchmen.

"Such solutions, radical though they be, will only, however, be provisional.

"One result of the 1939-1940 war will be to settle the whole of the Jewish problem throughout Europe.

“Europe, which has suffered so many calamities at their hands, will doubtless decide to part with the Jews. It will allot them some far-off land where, once they are cast, they may at leisure reflect on the drawbacks of starting wars merely to please Israel.”

Thus, the whole of Israel is here singled out as responsible for every European calamity and the one panacea for all these woes must be their total expulsion.

\* \* \*

Let us pass from the unoccupied to the occupied zone. In *Au Piloni* where, week after week, the Jews were castigated, the issue for September 27th 1940, carried an article entitled *Is the Jew intelligent?*

I quote from the indictment :

“Thanks to a shameless, artfully concealed publicity campaign, the wretched Christians that we are were finally given a real ‘inferiority complex,’ to use an expression dear to Freud, that typical humbug of the chosen race . . .”

“Though no one can deny the Jewish talent for swiftly enriching themselves by pillage, usury and corruption, yet the chosen race has always in its wake left seeds of disruption, death and ruin in all the countries where it has spread.”

But, our informant continues, the greatest men were not Jews, as witness “Julius Caesar and Napoleon” (nevertheless, Edouard Drumont in his *France Juive* does insinuate this of Napoleon) “Michaelangelo, El Greco, Beethoven, Wagner” (and yet it has been murmured that the latter was illegitimate and half-Jew), “Racine, Molière, Goethe, Pasteur, Edison.” Of famous Jews our author finds but a single name to quote :

“Where Israel is concerned, one man only is world-renowned, a man who admirably symbolises in our eyes the rare virtues of this race : his name is Judas.”

(Our author forgets to mention another Jewish name—at least as famous : Jesus).

Next the paradoxical alliance between Capital and Bolshevism under the Jewish aegis is brought up again :

“*The capitalist Jew subsidises the revolutionary Jew* to help him stir up the unrest and disorganisation that always bring grist to his mill.”

Hitler thus denounced the peril :

“Their presence having become undesirable in the Third Reich, this universal vermin began to pullulate in France, the nation chosen to be the instrument of Israel’s vengeance. France, however, was

defeated and the hopes of the Jew-malefactors frustrated. Now, like those creatures of darkness dazzled by light and scurrying away, the Jew sees his power collapse the moment he is publicly charged in the full light of day."

We thus learn that the Jew, though cunning enough at times, lacks intellect: nevertheless, he always manages to trick the Christian or Aryan, which hardly honours the latter's intelligence, one would say. We also find, as so frequently in this kind of writing, that high finance and Bolshevism are branded as accomplices, paradoxical though that be. In fact, high finance has no worse enemy than Bolshevism as was clearly seen in Russia and as became evident to those who held Russian loans! But the international nature of both high finance and the revolutionary aspirations of the proletariat here create an illusion and our theorists discerning Jewish profiles behind both these "internationals" see red, which makes it difficult to see clearly.

\* \* \*

Now let us again cross the border between the two zones and once more quote from *Gringoire*, where the "creatures of darkness" receive equally hard knocks. On October 3rd 1940, *Gringoire* wrote:

"From 1924 to 1928 and from 1932 to 1940, the party with the greatest influence was the Radical Socialist Party. Everything was decided by it . . . . The Radical Socialist party got its orders from the Rue de Valois. This Rue de Valois in fact, however, housed the executive committee of the Masonic Lodges and it is now impossible to doubt, given the documents published in *Gringoire* and several of our contemporaries, that that secret and international organisation, Freemasonry, got its orders from London, the government there being itself dominated by the City which itself was ruled by international Jewry. Thus, once more, we find that diabolical trinity, the Freemason, the Englishman and the Jew, unmasked. Thus, through the Freemasons, the fate of the French nation, for good or ill, was in the hands of the British government and international capitalist Jewry."

After which, recalling that Britain's "Jewification" dates much further back than in France, since it was in fact Cromwell (1599-1658), the tool of the Dutch Rabbi Manasseh, who authorised the Jews to settle in England, *Gringoire* shows how the Jews went to work: these include the Jew Disraeli, Lionel Rothschild, Levy Lawson, Rufus Isaacs, Sassoon and a number of others, even to "the man with the umbrella," Chamberlain, who is also treated as a Jew!

Later, *Gringoire* recalls Britain's luckless humouring of Germany after 1918, and accounts for it thus: "*The stronger the Reich, the more chance of getting money as dividends through the banks.*" Naturally, this naive reasoning is attributed to the capitalist English Jews.

"But the Anglo-German flirtation," it continues: "was not to last long. The Nazi anti-Semitic measures, shortly after followed by Italy, and the closing down of the lodges by Mussolini and Hitler, were soon to alarm the Judaist London government and its satellite, Freemasonry."

Thus, according to the writer, the war had no other cause but this:

"One day, the order arrived to avenge Israel. Le F..... 33rd Supreme Grand Master received formal instructions to that end. France would declare war and since this was unpopular with the French, both socialist and radical deputies and senators and even Freemasons hesitating to vote it as they feared their electors, they themselves would take matters into their hands and violate the Constitution under which no President of the Republic could declare war without the previous consent of both Chambers . . . .

"That was how, in the year of Grace, 1939, the great Jewish capitalists and the London Judaist government decided that France must take up arms for Israel."

One must admit that the Jews, wherever they might be, could scarcely adore the National Socialism that persecuted them and which they would naturally wish to see overthrown. Whence doubtless arose, in some, the dream of a victorious war as the one way to bring this about. But every liberal heart felt the same, there was no need to be a Jew: to love liberty was enough. The reproach that might be levelled against France, as against liberal England is not so much that it passively bent to the totalitarian powers as that it did not prepare to combat them effectually one day.

\* \* \*

Now, returning to the occupied zone, let us look at an article in the weekly, *La Gerbe*, for Thursday, October 10th, 1940. This article by André Gaucher, with its philosophic and historical pretensions, is entitled *The Jew in Nature and History* and was evidently commissioned.

In it, we are reminded how, in the Middle Ages, the Jews combined with the lepers and indubitably poisoned the wells of the Christians; then, that later they combined with those other lepers of the towns, the proletariat, similarly to poison the public mind with Bolshevism. Then we are shown the diabolical power of Jewish gold crouching in darkness, the Jewish corruption of the blasphemous Order of Templars, and finally the

"wonderful way in which the progress of nations synchronises with their expulsion of the Jews." Thereupon a universal panacea was offered France in the light of the past :

"From 1394, when France first drove out the Jews, she steadily rose. From 1789, when she took them back, she steadily declined" (quoted from Edouard Drumont, *France, Juive*, I, p. 186). And :

"this is not just an observation drawn from our history. It is a law. A law provided by the wonderful way in which the rise of nations coincides with the eviction of the Jews, or alternatively, the absorption of the Jews is followed by the swift disintegration of the wretched nations that were feeble enough to take them in."

This "wonderful coincidence," emphasised by Gaucher, might be contrasted with one no less astonishing. It occurs in Christopher Columbus's report on his expedition.

"In that same month when their Majesties promulgated the edict expelling all Jews from their kingdom and territories, in that same month they commanded me, with a sufficiency of men, to undertake my voyage of exploration to the Indies."

Now, it was with the discovery of the New World and the gold that flowed into Spain as a result that, Jews or no Jews, her decline began! And it would be difficult to maintain that thereafter Spain, with the least Jews in Europe, retained more dominance in Europe than, say, England under Elizabeth or Cromwell. The Jewish expulsion ordained by Ferdinand and Isabella and the welcome accorded the Jews by the Protector, were not to hinder the British ships from striking a mortal and symbolic blow to the Invincible Armada.

But the poverty of their arguments bothers these raging polemicists little. Their job was to arouse the hate of an unhappy nation eager to discover and punish someone "responsible" for its woes and to focus that hatred on a specific object.

\* \* \*

Anti-Hitlerites too, in their way, at times shared the convictions of those against whom they contended. The following myth, for example, was very widespread. Hitler was really a renegade Jew. The proof was that in such-and-such a Rumanian Jewish cemetery there was a gravestone on which might be read : "Here lies Adolf Hitler." (This appears also to be a wish-myth for Hitler's death). And Hitler himself had written :

" . . . his utterly low-down conduct is so appalling that one

really cannot be surprised if in the imagination of our people the Jew is pictured as the incarnation of Satan and the symbol of evil."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, for many people and even for those who no longer call themselves Christians, the Jew has remained a diabolical incarnation of evil. To French anti-Hitlerites however, Hitler, like Napoleon in his time, must also have appeared as anti-Christ. Thus, two things equal to a third being equal to each other, if Hitler=Antichrist and Jew=Antichrist, it follows mathematically that Hitler=Jew. This is the unconscious equation that made many imagine Hitler a Jew.

I even heard a worthy Saint-Tropez tradesman before the war, that is, in the Summer of 1939, seriously assert that though the Jew Hitler was driving the Jews from Central Europe under pretence of persecuting them, it was, in fact, in order to disperse them through the world and so make doubly sure of their universal domination. Others, too, inform us that they have always aspired to this empire, as witness the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, in which, though demonstrated a manifest forgery, large numbers believe, as did Hitler, who thus projected his own dreams of domination on this abhorred race.<sup>2</sup>

\* \* \*

---

<sup>1</sup> *Mein Kampf*, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup> It was after writing this that I came across the very interesting lecture delivered by Otto Fenichel in Prague, in April 1937, to help endow the David Eder Foundation. In it, Fenichel begins by suggesting that psychology alone will not help one to understand anti-Semitism but that political, historical, and economic factors all contribute to its genesis: as to all social phenomena, I would add. As regards the psychological aspects of anti-Semitism, he particularly stresses the projection mechanisms at work. Anti-Semites project on to the Jew, attribute to the Jew, all their more or less unconscious evil instincts; longings for bloodshed, riches, depravity, sensuality. Thus, by transferring these burdens to the Jew, they themselves are washed clean and seem to become radiantly pure. In this way the Jew serves as an admirable foil on which to project the Devil who, as it were, is only dragged from hell the better to live on earth. Thereafter, this fresh incarnation of Evil provides a focus for the aggression of the nations which accept the Jew.

By why just the Jew and why not, for instance, those with red hair? Here Fenichel attaches a certain importance to the dark ethnic type of the Jew. The American negro also assumes a similar function, as many a lynching proves, by focussing the aggression of the nation amid which he lives. Nearer at home, the gypsies are rightly or wrongly charged with every kind of misdeed: theft, murder, kidnapping, etc. Money and business factors also play their part in the horror the Jew inspires, as it must have done, too, in the persecutions and massacres of Armenians by Turks.

The "uncanny" quality of the Jew must for long have been due to his persistence in his faith and customs, the most striking of which is the ancient circumcision rite. As a result, he has always remained a stranger in our midst and thus the enemy in our bosom. Even to-day, this impression that he is a stranger, like an anachronism, remains part and parcel of even the most completely assimilated European Jews by reason of the inertia inherent in the unconscious responses of the human psyche.

One might continue indefinitely to multiply such quotations from the French press of 1940 and on. The press of the occupied zone was obviously prompted by the victor, while that of the other fell more or less into step. The victor, besides his fanatical belief in the total noxiousness of the Jew, prime miscreant of the new racial faith had, in fact, every reason to whip up the anti-Semitism of the French, for the hatred in men's hearts has limits and the more that could be turned on the Jews the more would be turned from the Germans. This then would help "collaboration" between victor and vanquished and defeated France would accept her vassalage. France, crushed as she was, could not resist this German anti-Semitic pressure which, moreover, many a French reactionary welcomed in compensation for the generous welcome which France, before the war, had accorded the persecuted of Central Europe.<sup>1</sup> Besides, men are so made that they soon put up with persecutions which do not affect them. Thus, to humour Berlin and its proselytes, the Vichy government on Friday, October 18th, proclaimed its first "Jewish Statute"! In this, even Jews whose families had been established in France for over a hundred or a hundred and fifty years, even ex-soldiers and recent combattants were debarred from holding commissions in the army, filling political or administrative posts or becoming doctors or lawyers (outside a small percentage). Thus, Jewish talent, despite its outstanding contributions to European culture, was debarred every academic position, save in a few barely tolerated cases.

France was reduced to the goose step: vanquished, she was officially converted to the victor's ideology. The defeat of her ideals followed the defeat of her arms. In their very birthplace there set in a strong reaction to the very principles of 1789, and the "Rights of Man" were trampled under the triumphant jackboot of Hitler's soldiers.

## 2. HISTORIC ASPECTS.

Anti-Semitism goes back well over a thousand years. We recall how the Crusaders, en route for the Holy Land, worthily precluded their attacks

---

<sup>1</sup> It is no doubt this xenophobia which was responsible for the insertion of the shameful Article 19 in the German-Franco armistice agreement. By this Article, France undertook to hand over such German political refugees in France as Germany named. Such a violation of the right of sanctuary—considered sacred from the most ancient times—was two years later to enable Laval's government to deliver to Germany thousands of refugee Jews with their wives and children, and that even from the unoccupied zone. In vain did the French clergy protest and strive to protect them, in vain did indignation swell every generous breast: the French policemen had to deliver up the victims to their executioners to die of hunger or cold or be massacred in Polish ghettos.

on the infidels of Mahomet by many a pogrom on the infidel Jew. To-day, however, with the general decline in the old Christian faith, we must ask why the new racial faith should have chosen the very same infidels to attack: infidels whom it considers even baptism can no longer redeem?

Numerous factors would <sup>\*</sup> seem <sup>\*</sup> to determine anti-Semitism, which doubtless explains why authorities so differ, some stressing one factor, others another.

I first give the over-simple Christian explanation: if the Jews are persecuted it is because they themselves brought their calamities on their heads that fatal night when, freeing Barabbas, they condemned Jesus to the Cross. Did not the Jews then cry: "Let his blood be upon us and upon our children." Thus, from age to age the blood flows!

Still, there is truth in this barbarous concept of collective responsibility. It is certainly largely because Christ was slain that so many Jews in ghettos have paid with their lives. Pogroms at first originated from religious causes: thus, every belief while young and strong, must have infidels to persecute and mighty religions, to prosper, need flesh and blood for their diet. What more facile prey then could there be than that composed by a religious minority, fierce in its pride, which preserves its separate rites and so is contrasted with the surrounding community? What better target than a small group close at hand, offered defenceless to attack? There was not even the need to start on a Crusade and good Christians went eagerly to work.

Yet the Jew has always had to pay dearly too, in other ways, for his dispersion, and his is the curse of having no fatherland to call his own, for the countries where, willy-nilly, he was accepted, would not allow him to till the soil. Then, since one must eat and feed one's children, the Jew was forced into tasks his hosts despised, and so became sometimes an artisan but more often a trader. He would barter the products of others' labour and clearly levy the best profit he could. Later, he began to trade in commodities and then lend money at interest. Since the Jews are intelligent, all these enterprises succeeded. Whereupon, after the curse of blood, the curse of gold fell upon him, and the impoverished or stripped peasant or worker would turn savagely on the man whom Shakespeare so magnificently embodies in Shylock.

Yet another curse weighed on this race, scattered amid the nations. Because of his faith, his changeless rites, though centuries passed he



could never merge into the communities by which he was surrounded. Thus, everywhere he seemed a stranger. Then, since we know that for primitive man—as for the unconscious in which the primitive survives in us all—stranger is synonymous with enemy, whenever some calamity, so frequent in life, befell a nation, it seemed natural to attach the responsibility to the stranger who, as scapegoat, must pay. Pay with his blood and, where possible, his ducats.

But another factor is worth mention. The Jew as a Talmudist from time immemorial has been moulded to intellectual effort by his religion and its subtle dialectics. Very early in the Middle Ages he excelled in certain professions, of which medicine was one. Certain Jewish doctors had even the honour of attending the Popes. Thus, the workers' age-long hatred of the intellectual was bound also to turn against the Jews and contribute to the revolts staged by Christians, peasants, craftsmen or knights against these beings who did not toil with their hands and who shone with the evil and magic aura of wisdom.

I believe these four main causes, in varying degree, to be still operative today in a number of places, despite the defeat of Hitler, the Pope of the racial creed.

\* \* \*

But let us hear what one of the greatest Jewish minds has to say on the causes of anti-Semitism.

In the last work he published before his death, *Moses and Monotheism*<sup>1</sup> Freud puts forward the hypothesis (already advanced before him by Sellin and even Goethe), that the founder of the Mosaic religion, an Egyptian and disciple of the revolutionary Pharaoh Ikhnaton, was probably assassinated by the Jews before they reached the promised land. Thus the original murder of the father of the primal horde<sup>2</sup> would have been re-enacted on the person of a new "father." And just because they had thus re-enacted humanity's immemorial crime, the Hebrews, in reaction to the guilt they must have doubly felt but could not endure, as well as in repudiation of the parricidal act, raised up a father-cult superior to anything before; namely their implacably monotheistic religion dominated by the grim figure of Jehovah.

But let us see what the consequences of such an attitude would have been :

---

<sup>1</sup> Sigmund Freud: *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion*: Allert de Lange, Amsterdam, 1939. *Moses and Monotheism*, 1939. Hogarth Press, London

<sup>2</sup> See note (2), p. 17.

“The poor Jewish people,” writes Freud<sup>1</sup>, “who with its usual stiff-necked obduracy continued to deny the murder of their ‘father,’ has dearly expiated this in the course of centuries. Over and over again they heard the reproach: you killed your God. And this reproach is true, if rightly interpreted. It says, in reference to the history of religion: you won’t admit that you murdered God (the archetype of God, the primæval Father and his reincarnations). Something should be added, namely: ‘It is true we did the same thing, but we *admitted* it, and since then we have been purified.’”

“Not all accusations with which anti-Semitism pursues the descendants of the Jewish people are based on such good foundations. There must, of course, be more than one reason for a phenomenon of such intensity and lasting strength as the popular hatred of the Jews. A whole series of reasons can be divined: some of them, which need no interpretation, arise from obvious considerations; others lie deeper and spring from secret sources, which one would regard as the specific motives. In the first group the most fallacious is the reproach of their being foreigners, since in many places nowadays under the sway of anti-Semitism the Jews were the oldest constituents of the population or arrived even before the present inhabitants. This is so, for example, in the town of Cologne, where the Jews came with the Romans, before it was colonised by Germanic tribes. Other grounds for anti-Semitism are stronger, as for example, the circumstance that Jews mostly live as a minority, and the numerical weakness of the minority invites suppression. Two other peculiarities that the Jews possess, however, are quite unpardonable. The first is that in many respects they are different from their ‘hosts.’ Not fundamentally so, since they are not a foreign Asiatic race—as their enemies maintain—but mostly consist of the remnants of Mediterranean peoples and inherit their culture. Yet they are different—although sometimes it is hard to define in what respects—especially from the Nordic peoples, and racial intolerance finds stronger expression—strange to say—in regard to small differences than to fundamental ones. The second peculiarity has an even more pronounced effect. It is that they defy oppression, that even the most cruel persecutions have not succeeded in exterminating them. On the contrary, they show a capacity for holding their own in practical life and, where they are admitted, they make valuable contributions to the surrounding civilisation.

---

<sup>1</sup> l.c. pp. 143-148.

“ The deeper motives of anti-Semitism have their roots in times long past; they come from the unconscious and I am quite prepared to hear that what I am going to say will at first appear incredible. I venture to assert that the jealousy which the Jews evoked in the other peoples by maintaining that they were the first-born, favourite child of God the Father has not yet been overcome by those others, just as if the latter had given credence to the assumption. Furthermore, among the customs through which the Jews marked off their aloof position, that of circumcision made a disagreeable, uncanny impression on others. The explanation probably is that it reminds them of the dread castration idea and of things in their primeval past which they would fain forget. Then there is lastly the most recent motive of the series. We must not forget that all the peoples who now excel in the practice of anti-Semitism became Christians only in relatively recent times, sometimes forced to it by bloody compulsion. One might say, they are all “badly christened”; under the thin veneer of Christianity they have remained what their ancestors were, barbarically polytheistic. They have not yet overcome their grudge against the new religion which was forced on them, and they have projected it on to the source from which Christianity came to them. The fact that the Gospels tell a story which is enacted among Jews, and in truth treats only of Jews, has facilitated such a projection. The hatred for Judaism is at bottom hatred for Christianity, and it is not surprising that in the German National-Socialist revolution this close connection of the two monotheistic religions finds such clear expression in the hostile treatment of both.”

\* \* \*

A living illustration of this latter motive in German anti-Semitism appears in Alfred Rosenberg's *The Myth of the XXth Century*, a sort of Bible of the young National-Socialist religion. Here we find the diabolical “Syrian” spirit attacked: the spirit of Evil embodied in both Jews and the Roman Church. Jew and Jesuit are here lumped together in contrast with the shining virtues of the Aryan and Nordic in whom every possible virtue resides.

### 3. FUNCTIONAL ASPECTS.

A phenomenon so persistent and resurgent in various forms throughout the centuries must, nevertheless, serve some purpose. Everything that is, is natural, is an adage which covers even the worst crimes that, in the

eyes of moralists, have sullied history. It is fitting, therefore, to enquire dispassionately what function anti-Semitism may fulfil in the lives of nations?

(a) *Magical Function.*

Fraser, in his cycle *The Golden Bough*, gives many instructive and interesting instances from this aspect :

“The notion that we can transfer our guilt and suffering to some other being who will bear them for us is familiar to the savage mind. It arises from a very obvious confusion between the physical and the mental, between the material and the immaterial. Because it is possible to shift a load of wood, stones, or what not, from our own back to the back of another, the savage fancies that it is equally possible to shift the burden of his pains and sorrows to another, who will suffer them in his stead. Upon this idea he acts and the result is an endless number of very unamiable devices for palming off upon someone else the trouble which man shrinks from bearing himself.”<sup>1</sup>

In this way, Frazer explains, a man can transfer his discomforts to inanimate objects : to stones, sticks, plants, animals or men :

“In the western district of the island of Timor, when men or women are making long or tiring journeys, they fan themselves with leafy branches, which they afterwards throw away on particular spots where their forefathers did the same before them. The fatigue which they felt is thus supposed to have passed into the leaves and been left behind. Others use stones instead of leaves. Similarly in the Barbar archipelago tired people will strike themselves with stones, believing that they thus transfer to the stone the weariness which they felt in their own bodies. They then throw away the stone in places which are specially set apart for the purpose. A like belief and practice in many distant parts of the world have given rise to those cairns or heaps of sticks and leaves which travellers often observe beside the path and to which every passing native adds his contribution in the shape of a stone or stick, or leaf. Thus in the Solomon and Banks Islands the natives are wont to throw sticks, stones, or leaves upon a heap at a place of steep descent, or where a difficult path begins, saying, “There goes my fatigue.” The act is not a religious rite, for the thing thrown on the heap is not an object with spiritual powers and the words which accompany the act are not a prayer.

---

<sup>1</sup> Fraser : *The Golden Bough : The Scapegoat*, p. 1. Macmillan & Co., London, 1919.

It is nothing but a magical ceremony for getting rid of fatigue which the simple savage fancies he can embody in a stick, leaf, or stone, and so cast it from him."<sup>1</sup>

" . . . Among the Sihakana of Madagascar, when a man is very sick, his relatives are sometimes bidden by the diviner to cast out the evil by means of a variety of things, such as a stick of a particular sort of tree, a rag, a pinch of earth from an ant's nest, a little money or what not. Whatever they may be, they are brought to the patient's house and held by a man near the door while an exorcist stands in the house and pronounces the formula necessary for casting out the disease. When he has done, the things are thrown away in a southward direction and all the people in the house, including the sick man, if he has strength enough, shake their loose robes and spit towards the door in order to expedite the departure of the malady."<sup>2</sup>

Now let us quote some examples of the transfer of disease to animals :

"A Guinea negro who happens to be unwell will sometimes tie a live chicken round his neck so that it lies on his breast. When the bird flaps its wings or cheeps, the man thinks it a good sign, supposing the chicken to be afflicted with the very pain from which he hopes soon to be released, or which he would otherwise have to endure. When a Moor has a headache he will sometimes take a lamb or a goat and beat it till it falls down, believing that the headache will thus be transferred to the animal."<sup>3</sup>

Or again :

"Some of the Todas of the Nilgherry hills in like manner let loose a calf as a funeral ceremony; the intention may be to transfer the sins of the deceased to the animal. In Kumaon, a district of North West India, the custom of letting loose a bullock as a scapegoat at a funeral is occasionally observed. A bell is hung on the bullock's neck, and bells are tied to his feet, and the animal is told that it is to be let go in order to save the spirit of the deceased from the torments of hell. Sometimes the bullock's right quarter is branded with a trident and the left with a discus. Perhaps the original intention of such customs was to banish the contagion of death by means of the animal, which carried it away and so insured the life of the survivors. The idea of sin is not primitive."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 8 - 9.

<sup>2</sup> *l.c.*, p. 213.

<sup>3</sup> *l.c.*, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *l.c.*, p. 37.

Yet the idea of the sin which must be expelled may come to include practically all the "evil" to be driven out, as with Hebrews of old and their rigid moral injunctions. We are familiar enough with the Hebrew ceremony which the Bible describes.

"On the day of atonement, which was the tenth day of the seventh month, the Jewish priest laid both his hands on the head of a live goat and confessed over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and having thereby transferred the sins of the people to the beast, sent it away into the wilderness."<sup>1</sup>

By losing their sins, the people also at the same stroke found themselves delivered of the ills visited on them and in this roundabout way, as it were, were freed from all their sufferings.

Let us pass now to the transference of evil to men :

"The scapegoat upon whom the sins of the people are periodically laid, may also be a human being. At Onitsha on the Niger, two human beings used to be annually sacrificed to take away the sins of the land. The victims were purchased by public subscription. All persons who, during the past year, had fallen into gross sins, such as incendiarism, theft, adultery, witchcraft, and so forth, were expected to contribute twenty-eight ngugas or a little over two pounds. The money thus collected was taken into the interior of the country and expended in the purchase of two sickly persons 'to be offered as a sacrifice for all the abominable crimes—one for the land and one for the river.' A man from a neighbouring town was hired to put them to death. On the 27th of February, 1858, the Rev. J. C. Taylor witnessed the sacrifice of one of these victims. The sufferer was a woman about nineteen or twenty years of age. They dragged her alive along the ground, face downwards, from the King's house to the river, a distance of two miles, the crowds who accompanied her crying, 'Wickedness! Wickedness!' The intention was 'to take away the iniquities of the land.' The body was dragged along in a merciless manner as if the weight of all their wickedness was thus carried away. Similar customs are said to be still secretly practised by many tribes on the delta of the Niger, in spite of the vigilance of the British government."

"After a war (among the Banyoros) the gods sometimes advise the king to send back a scapegoat in order to free the warriors from some evil

<sup>1</sup> op. cit., pp. 210 - 211.

that had attached itself to the army. One of the women slaves, a cow, a goat, a fowl, and a dog would be chosen from among the captives and sent back to the borders of the country whence they had come : there they were maimed and left to die. After that the army would be pronounced clean and allowed to return to the capital.”<sup>1</sup>

But it is not only among savages that these practices are found. What higher civilisation than the Hellenic? Yet “in civilised Greece, whenever Marseille, one of the busiest and most brilliant of Greek colonies, was ravaged by a plague, a man of the poorer classes used to offer himself as a scapegoat. For a whole year he was maintained at the public expense, being fed on choice and pure food. At the expiry of the year, he was dressed in sacred garments, decked with holy branches, and led through the whole city, while prayers were uttered that all the evils of the people might fall on his head. He was then cast out of the city or stoned to death by the people outside the walls. The Athenians regularly maintained a number of degraded and useless beings at the public expense and when any calamity, such as plague, drought or famine, befel the city they sacrificed two of these outcasts as scapegoats. One of the victims was sacrificed for the men, and the other for the women. The former wore round his neck a string of black, the latter a string of white figs. Sometimes, it seems, the victim slain on behalf of the women was a woman. They were led about the city and then sacrificed, apparently by being stoned to death outside the city. But such sacrifices were not confined to extraordinary occasions of public calamity. It appears that every year, at the festival of the Thargelia, in May, two victims, one for the men and one for the women, were led out of Athens and stoned to death. The city of Abdera in Thrace was publicly purified once a year and one of the burghers, set apart for the purpose, was stoned to death as a scapegoat or vicarious sacrifice for the life of all the others; six days before his execution he was excommunicated ‘in order that he alone might bear the sins of all the people.’”<sup>2</sup>

“From the Lover’s Leap, a white bluff at the southern end of their Island, the Leucadians used annually to hurl a criminal into the sea as a scapegoat. But to lighten his fall they fastened live birds and feathers to him and a flotilla of small boats waited below to catch him and convey him beyond the boundary. Probably these humane precautions were a

<sup>1</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *l.c.*, pp. 254 - 255.

mitigation of an earlier custom of flinging the scapegoat into the sea to drown . . . The Leucadian ceremony took place at the time of the sacrifice to Apollo, who had a temple or sanctuary on the spot. Elsewhere it was customary to cast a young man every year into the sea, with the prayer, 'Be thou our off-scouring.' This ceremony was supposed to rid the people of the evils by which they were beset, or according to a somewhat different interpretation, it redeemed them by paying the debt they owed to the sea god. As practised by the Greeks of Asia Minor in the sixth century before our era the custom of the scapegoat was as follows: When a city suffered from plague, famine, or other public calamity, an ugly or deformed person was chosen to taken upon himself all the evils that afflicted the community. He was brought to a suitable place, where dried figs, a barley loaf, and cheese were put into his hand. These he ate. Then he was beaten seven times upon his genital organs with squills and branches of the wild fig and other wild trees while the flute played a particular tune. Afterwards he was burned on a pyre built of the wood of forest trees and his ashes were cast into the sea. A similar custom appears to have been annually celebrated by the Asiatic Greeks at the festival of Thargelia."<sup>1</sup>

But nowhere perhaps does the transference to a scapegoat of the ills affecting a whole nation assume a more picturesque form than in this account:

"In the *Jataka*, or collection of Indian stories which relate the many transmigrations of the Buddha, there is an instructive tale which sets forth how sins and misfortunes can be transferred by means of spittle to a holy ascetic. A lady of easy virtue, we are told, had lost the favour of King Dandaki and bethought herself how she could recover it. As she walked in the park revolving these things in her mind, she spied a devout ascetic named Kisavaccha. A thought struck her. 'Surely,' said she to herself, 'this must be Ill-luck. I will get rid of my sin on his person and then go and bathe.' No sooner said than done. Chewing her toothpick she collected a large clot of spittle in her mouth with which she beslobbered the matted locks of the venerable man and having hurled her toothpick at his head into the bargain, she departed with a mind at peace and bathed. The stratagem was entirely successful; for the king took her into his good graces again. Not long after it chanced that the king deposed his domestic chaplain from his office. Naturally chagrined at

---

<sup>1</sup> op. cit., pp. 253 - 254.



this loss of royal favour, the clergyman repaired to the king's light o' love and enquired how she had contrived to recapture the monarch's affection. She told him frankly how she had got rid of her sin and emerged without a stain on her character by simply spitting on the head of Ill-Luck in the royal park. The chaplain took the hint, and hastening to the park bespattered in like manner the sacred locks of the holy man; and in consequence he was soon reinstated in office. It would have been well if the thing had stopped there, but unfortunately it did not. By and by it happened that there was a disturbance on the king's frontier, and the king put himself at the head of his army to go forth and fight. An unhappy idea occurred to his domestic chaplain. Elated by the success of the expedient which had restored him to royal favour, he asked the king, 'Sire, do you wish for victory or defeat?' 'Why for victory, of course,' replied the king. 'Then you take my advice,' said the chaplain, 'just go and spit on the head of Ill-Luck, who dwells in the royal park; you will thus transfer all your sin to his person.' It seemed to the king a capital idea and he improved on it by proposing that the whole army should accompany him and get rid of their sins in like manner. They all did so, beginning with the king, and the state of the holy man's head when they had all done is something frightful to contemplate. But even this was not the worst. For after the king had gone, up came the commander-in-chief, and seeing the sad plight of the pious ascetic, he took pity on him and had his poor bedabbled hair thoroughly washed. The fatal consequence of this kindly meant, but most injudicious shampoo may easily be anticipated. The sins which had been transferred by the saliva to the person of the devotee were now restored to their respective owners and to punish them for their guilt, fire fell from heaven and destroyed the whole kingdom for sixty leagues round about."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see what danger lies in wanting to save scapegoats from their fate! What would have happened, for example, to the poor children of Adam, had some ill-advised philanthropist saved Jesus from the Cross?

But for centuries the Israelites have enacted the part of "Ill-Luck" to the nations among whom they are scattered, and the part that in 1940 they had to play in conquered France, after years of such treatment under the Hitler régime, is well revealed by what one of the most notorious anti-Semitic journalists in France said to me when I reproached him that

---

<sup>1</sup> op. cit., pp. 41 - 42.

summer for the hatred he stirred up. After referring to the harm done to France by the numerous strikes that took place under the ministry of Léon Blum, he said: "Anyway, one can't deny we're living in a period of revolution . . . there's been no bloodshed yet . . . but the masses have got to work their feelings off on someone, they must find victims somewhere. . . So it will have to be the Jews . . ." True, other sections, at diverse times, have fulfilled a similar function: one need only mention witches in the Middle Ages, the different heretics of the Inquisition, the Jesuits, the priests and monks in anti-clerical periods, the "suspects" under the Revolution, the "bourgeois" under the Soviets. Each in their turn have been Evil incarnate; accursed, whose persecution, expulsion or extermination *must* ensure the nation's happiness. And the Jews, for the many reasons with which we have already dealt and for others we shall see, seem doomed always to be chosen for persecution, a part they still play to-day. Thus, in the XXth Century, whipped up by Hitler, we saw the most savage, most widespread outburst of anti-Semitism ever known.

(b) *Social Function.*

The most common, most widespread accusation against the Jews, even from those who did not share the National-Socialist creed, was that the Jews are a "disintegrating ferment." I have myself heard it repeated by very sober individuals, university professors for instance, with little interest in political credos, and wholly absorbed in their work.

I shall not insult these intellectuals in their detachment by suggesting that their tolerance of the racial laws which were promulgated in France, thereby expelling Jewish professors and rivals from University posts, had a more or less unconscious "economic infrastructure." They were already at the top and they were patriots. What haunted them was the spectre of Blum and his sincere humanitarianism which, exploited by so many strikes at the time, disrupted the war industry of France on the very eve of battle.

The Jew then is said to be a "disintegrating ferment." What Jew, one asks? Clearly, those who accuse Israel of being a "disintegrating ferment" think first and foremost of the Bolshevik Jew. And we know how Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, characterises the Jews' gradual and "parasitic" conquest of his hosts. Beginning by describing how they first infiltrated into various nations, Hitler says:

“A tremendous economic development transformed the social structure of the nation . . . <sup>1</sup> and society became more and more divided into manual workers and intellectual workers. . . . The division created between employer and employee,” he continues, “seems now to have extended to all branches of life. How far this Judaizing process has been allowed to take effect among our people is illustrated by the fact that manual labour not only receives practically no recognition, but is even considered degrading. That is not a natural German attitude . . . <sup>2</sup>

“The Jew then ‘kowitzed’ to the worker, hypocritically pretended to feel pity for him and his lot, and even to be indignant at the misery and poverty which the worker had to endure. That is the way in which the Jew endeavoured to gain the confidence of the working classes. He showed himself eager to study their various hardships, whether real or imaginary, and strove to awaken a yearning on the part of the workers to change the conditions under which they lived. The Jew artfully enkindled that innate yearning for social justice which is a typical Aryan characteristic. Once that yearning became alive it was transformed into hatred against those in more fortunate circumstances of life. The next stage was to give a precise philosophical aspect to the struggle for the elimination of social wrongs. And thus the Marxist doctrine was invented . . . <sup>3</sup>

“By categorically repudiating the personal worth of the individual and also of the nation and its racial constituent, this doctrine destroys the fundamental basis of all civilisation; for civilisation essentially depends on these very factors. . . . <sup>4</sup>

Hitler then describes how :

“the propaganda which the freemasons had carried on among the so-called intelligentzia, whereby their pacifist teaching paralysed the instinct for national self-preservation, was now extended to the broad masses of the workers and bourgeoisie by means of the Press, which was almost everywhere in Jewish hands. To those two instruments of disintegration, a third, and still more ruthless one was added, namely, the organisation of brute physical force among the masses . . . <sup>5</sup>

At the same time he systematically endeavours to lower the racial qualities of a people by seducing its women and adulterating their blood :

“For as long as a people remain racially pure and are conscious

<sup>1</sup> *Mein Kampf*, p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> l.c., pp. 266/7.

<sup>3</sup> l.c., p. 268.

<sup>4</sup> l.c., p. 268.

<sup>5</sup> l.c., p. 269.

of the treasure of their blood, they can never be overcome by the Jew."<sup>1</sup>

"In the field of politics he now begins to replace the idea of democracy by introducing the dictatorship of the proletariat,"<sup>2</sup>

which he counts on ruling, thereby realising his age-old dream of world domination. For :

"in the masses organized under Marxist banners he has found a weapon which makes it possible for him to discard democracy, so as to subjugate and rule in a dictatorial fashion by the aid of brute force. He is systematically working in two ways to bring about this revolution. These ways are the economic and the political respectively."<sup>3</sup>

Again "Aided by international influences" (high finance and Marxist organisations) "he forms a ring of enemies around those nations which have proved themselves too sturdy for him in withstanding attacks from within. He would like to force them into war and then, if it should be necessary to his plans, he will unfurl the banners of revolt even while the troops are actually fighting at the front."<sup>4</sup>

"Economically he brings about the destruction of the State by a systematic method of sabotaging social enterprises until these become so costly that they are taken out of the hands of the State and then submitted to the control of Jewish finance. Politically he works to withdraw from the State its means of subsistence inasmuch as he undermines the foundations of national resistance and defence, destroys the confidence which the people have in their Government, reviles the past and its history and drags everything national into the gutter."<sup>5</sup>

"Culturally his activity consists in bowdlerising art, literature and the theatre, holding the expressions of national sentiment up to scorn, overturning all concepts of the sublime and beautiful, the worthy and the good, finally dragging the people down to the level of his own low mentality.

"Of religion he makes a mockery. Morality and decency are described as antiquated prejudices, and thus a systematic attack is made to undermine those last foundations on which the national being must rest if the nation is to struggle for its existence in this world."<sup>5</sup>

"The Jew triumphs and will rule and thus become 'the Jew of the Blood, the tyrant of the peoples. . . .' Russia furnishes the

<sup>1</sup> op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> l.c., p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> l.c., p. 273.

<sup>4</sup> l.c., p. 273.

<sup>5</sup> l.c., p. 274.

most terrible example of such slavery. In that country the Jew killed or starved thirty millions of the people, in a bout of savage fanaticism and partly by the employment of inhuman torture. And he did this so that a gang of Jewish *litterati* and financial bandits should dominate over a great people."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, Hitler, in these pages dedicated to the "evolution of Judaism" shows us in his inflammatory style how the Jew, that devil incarnate, becomes an ever increasingly virulent "ferment of disintegration."

\* \* \*

So debatable a simplification of the Jewish problem, however, could never be accepted by any thinking person. Its weaknesses, and there are many, may easily be refuted. One has merely to remember that, despite its Jewish author, Marxism derives far less from the Mosaic religion, aristocratic in form, than from an egalitarian Christianity plus German philosophy through its high priest Hegel. As to Christianity's progressive decay and the consequent dawn of new social credos, that came mainly to pass in the last two centuries: first in France, in the XVIIIth Century under the hammer-blows of the Encyclopædists—none of whom were particularly Jews, as well as those of Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau—and then in the XIXth Century under the still weightier blows of German philosophy from Hegel to Nietzsche plus the methodical investigation of sacred dogmas and texts. In Russia, whose Bolshevik dawn was stained with the blood of many a massacre, allowance must be made for the Asiatic barbarism of the motley races grouped in the Czarist empire.

And though Leon Trotsky and other People's Commissars were Russian Jews, it is generally forgotten that the great architect of the young Soviet state was Lenin, christened Ulyanov, who was doubtless of Slav origin with Mongol traits, as his face shows, and that his successor in the task, Stalin, is a Caucasian.

But now, leaving Russia and Germany, let us see how far the accusations that the Jew is a "disintegrating ferment," a "parasite" on other races, can be justified.

\* \* \*

France contains many kinds of Jew. Let us consider them separately.

There were, for instance, socialist and communist Jews. The intellectual who lacks that place in society which he thinks his due, readily swings left, and this is often so with many a Jewish intellectual when unsuccessful in life, which is far from common with them. But such a

---

<sup>1</sup> op. cit., p. 274.

claim to success is not exclusive only to the "resentful" race, "le peuple du ressentiment," as Nietzsche calls them. It may be found in all embittered intellectuals who hope some social upheaval will at last accord them a position worthy of their imagined merits. Thus, the Jews, in socialist or communist movements, are only disintegrating ferments in so far as socially discontented. And indeed, for the Jew, there is often cause for resentment against society!

In France too, there is the merchant Jew. When he is successful, it can profit him nothing to work to "disintegrate" the society by which he lives: if he is the "disintegrator" it must be much against his will. No doubt a moneylender eventually exhausts the soil on which he lives, but Shylock today, in Western countries, no longer dwells in ghettos. As for our rich Jewish antiquaries, why should they wish to ruin a prosperous France which welcomes the strangers to whom their treasures are sold?

Also in France there were the Rothschilds with all their international family affiliations. Hitler attacked high finance as violently as International Marxism. Everything international is by nature and definition hateful to nationalism as a threat of outside interference with the national structure. Since high finance is perforce anti-jingo, or to coin a word "un-jingo," it does, as a result, secrete a certain "disintegrating ferment" of the worst forms of nationalism. But it is difficult to conceive or accept its collusion with Marxism, denounced so often by Hitler and others. High finance and the Workers' International are perforce antagonistic. "Workers of the world, unite!" Against whom? Against bellicose nationalism which drives the workers to mutual slaughter. But "unite" *against* the bankers, is also implied!

There remains another class of Jews, the intellectual. France also had Vidal and Debré who enriched science and the art of prolonging life. Then there was Henri Bergson, the philosopher of intuition and of life, whose way of living was wholly ascetic and who, in Paris, under the German occupation, died from lack of the fuel to warm his frail limbs. Were any of these Jewish intellectuals particularly a disintegrative ferment? Vidal? Debré? Bergson? And must one, alas, confess yes!

It is simply because *every intellectual* is a "disintegrative ferment" amid the religious and mystical groupings which the nations of Europe strive to establish, spurred on by their young nationalist creeds. But this is not particular to the Jews. Writing this modest study, I myself am a "disintegrative ferment." At all times intellectuals have been that as

regards other creeds and other religions : such as, to cite one of the greatest examples, Galileo brought before the Inquisition for maintaining that the earth turned. No faith, while it retains its youthful vigour will tolerate liberty of thought; its very breath is intolerance and dogma. But the tendency of intellectuals is free enquiry into facts and human activities of which creeds and dogmas form part.

That is again why, consistently enough, Hitler in his books equally condemned Jews and German " professors." That the war, in 1918, was lost, according to him, was because German schools, instead of teaching the boys to box and so developing their fighting spirit, created too many intellectuals.

" All this could only happen because our superior scholastic system did not train men to be real men but merely civil servants, engineers, technicians, literateurs, jurists and, finally, professors, so that intellectualism should not die out."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the persecution to which German intellectuals were subjected by the National Socialist Revolution almost equalled that suffered by the Jews, a fate endured at first by intellectuals in most revolutions. As a result, most of the glories of German thought and science, Jew or non-Jew, were forced to emigrate. Faiths will only tolerate those who bend to the discipline they impose. Some in Germany did, it is true, and remained, but at the cost of surrendering their intellectual independence.

We can now therefore answer our first question—is the Jewish intellectual a " disintegrative ferment"—by answering that he is, in so far as, according to the young nationalist credos, he chooses liberal professions. And since, given his talent and energy the Jewish intellectual often does, he is feared and persecuted by intolerant nationalisms. But that is less for being a Jew than for being an intellectual..

\* \* \*

The Jew, however, be he merchant or intellectual, perforce is always politically liberal, for liberalism which, after '89, gave him egress from his ancient ghettos, is the one air in which he can live and breathe. Consequently, his cause is identical with that of the great democracies, the British Empire and the United States.

But it is just this community of ideals, this pursuit of the same air in which to breathe, that enabled German propaganda—distorting historical events and confounding cause with effect—to proclaim that fighting Britain was the " agent of international Jewry." Britain, however, which

<sup>1</sup> *Mein Kampf*, p. 344.

would have defended her Empire with equal tenacity had there been Jews or not, seemed to the Jews in their persecution a sanctuary which a British victory would assure. So, too, with the U.S.A.

But liberalism is a disintegrative agent of every creed, since it permits them to be criticised and discussed. And when he is a brain-worker, the liberal Jew with his strong Talmudic tradition is a formidable intellectual adversary for the new dogmas.

Thus the Jew, as both intellectual and liberal, is a disintegrant of the régimes by which he is oppressed. But every liberal, every intellectual, everyone dissatisfied, is so too, whether he be Gentile or Jew.

(c) *Political Function.*

Despite its many injustices that outrage both feeling and reason and despite its persecution of the loftiest intelligences, as witness Einstein driven from Berlin and Freud from Vienna, anti-Semitism, in its political aspect, may have an important service to fulfil.

In Spring 1941, Germany's motorised armies, swift on the heels of her overwhelming air force, chose a new prey, the Balkans, where heroic Greece, adding lustre to her deeds at Marathon and Missolonghi, for five long months, in Albania's mountains and snows, held the Italian onslaught. Like Yugoslavia, however, she was quickly overthrown. Then from Cape North to Crete, all Europe endured the German yoke, the National Socialist formula for which was that all Europe had at last re-entered the blessed framework of the New Order: all, that was, but Russia, whose account the Germans thought they would soon settle.

The New Order was an economic one: it intended to establish mutually profitable barter relations between victor and vanquished.

The New Order also meant that workers would be sent to Germany from every conquered land, thus freeing equal numbers of Germans to specialise in their work of conquest.

Lastly the New Order stood for the ideological structure which underlay the whole National Socialist edifice, with its implicit faith in the *race*, in the divine superiority of the German and in less degree, of the "Aryan." To establish the blessed kingdom of these elect on earth however, their antithesis, the Jew, the accursed one, had pitilessly to be hunted down that Germany might be purged and Europe thereafter. In spite of a Spinoza, an Einstein, a Freud, to cite but the greatest, the



Jews *en masse* were ruled to be not only calamitous, but racially inferior. Though true racial experts, conscious of the real superiority or inferiority of different human "races" were deeply shocked, the masses, as ever, remained indifferent! Anti-Semitism everywhere made a triumphal entry, not in the conquerors' baggage train, but with his vanguard.

\* \* \*

The hatred in mens' hearts must be vested somewhere. One focus, in preference to all others, seemed to attract the rancour of the down-trodden peoples: the invader. And, in fact, much of the free-floating hatred did attach itself to the helmets and jackboots of the brutal Germans. They were hated in France and in all occupied countries for the short rations, pillaged stores, commandeered homes, furniture "removals," gagged press, censored books, tapped telephones, opened letters and the infinity of obstacles that hampered the least step: not to mention the ever more frequent deportations, arrests and executions. In short, they were hated because people were no longer free, free to eat and drink, read, write or speak or move and more important still, to live. Yet conquerors, tyrants and hated though they be, are always in some degree admired: every defeated nation is in part a submissive female charmed by strength.

Thus, given the ambivalence of nations which have submitted to their conquerors, part of this "free-floating" hate was free to be vested elsewhere. And the Germans, skilled propagandists as they were, cunningly exploited this hate and in all their subject countries focussed it on "war-mongers" whom the masses then accused of urging them into a war which they should have known was lost from the start, so causing their misfortunes.

The British who, as allies, had been unable to ward off the war, were also accused. It was said they had egged other nations on to shed their blood for them and then had only sent a unit or two to help: after which, beating one of their brilliant "strategic retreats," they had abandoned their dupe and his territory to the enemy. So it was with Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, then Yugoslavia and finally Greece. . . . Thus, part of the hatred of the defeated, the hatred which the Germans sought to deflect from themselves, turned readily against the British. But the British had gone, one no longer saw them in the defeated countries and hatred must be able to visualise what it hates. Nor could the Freemasons be forever exploited since all the lodges had been swept away. There

remained, however, the arch-enemy the Jew, devilish and accursed, everywhere present and plainly visible in the midst of each conquered race.

In Hungary, in Rumania, in Poland, anti-Semitism was always a chronic disease, though others would say it was the Jew. But as a result, the Hitler dogma of the Jew as the scourge of humanity found ready adherents in these East European countries. In Salonika, too, the age-old tolerance of the Greeks for those once persecuted by Ferdinand and Isabella gave place to new outbreaks against the Sephardim of which even certain Greeks did not disapprove, for an anti-Semite slumbers in every Christian heart, as in the pocket of every merchant who sees a competitor suppressed. I have already dealt with the violent resuscitation of anti-Semitism in France, but in Belgium and Holland, too, similar phenomena took place, not to mention Fascist Italy which, even before the war, few as were her Jews, had begun to fall in line with Hitler. Thus, throughout Europe, the Germans were able to muster the anti-Semitism latent in each race and so deflect from themselves part of the hatred that remained in the hearts of the oppressed.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, Hitler's Europe-wide anti-Semitism fitted into a vast design and constituted a sort of "draining-sore" for the latent hostility of the European.

In his "Civilisation and its Discontents"<sup>2</sup> Freud writes: "It is always possible to unite considerable numbers of men in love towards one another, so long as there are still some remaining as objects for aggressive manifestations . . . one can . . . see that it is a convenient and relatively harmless form of satisfaction for aggressive tendencies, through which cohesion amongst the members of a group is made easier. The Jewish people, scattered in all directions as they are, have in this way rendered services which deserve recognition to the development of culture in the countries where they settled; but unfortunately not all the massacres of Jews in the Middle Ages sufficed to procure peace and security for their Christian contemporaries. Once the apostle Paul had laid down universal love between all men as the foundation of his Christian Community, the

---

<sup>1</sup> A story current in London towards the end of the war illustrates the anti-Semitism that existed even among Hitler's enemies. A Jewess pushes in front of a fish-queue and asks for the best fish on the slab. People protest she is out of her turn. She thereupon spits on the fish so that no one else shall buy it. Here, concretely expressed, we find the greed, the low and dirty habits which the masses attribute to the Jews.

<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud: *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*, 1931: Civilisation and its Discontents: trans. Joan Riviere. Hogarth Press, pp. 90-91.

inevitable consequence in Christianity was the utmost intolerance towards all who remained outside of it. . . . Neither was it an unaccountable chance that the dream of a German world-dominion evoked a complementary movement towards anti-Semitism; and it is quite intelligible that the attempt to establish a new communistic type of culture in Russia should find psychological support in the persecution of the bourgeois . . .”

Indeed, these same contemporary Christians or rather Aryans, despite the persecutions which gave such relief, none the less vied for pre-eminence in slaughtering each other by land, in the air, or at sea. So great is the quantity of hate in the human heart that there would always seem to be enough to focus on fresh objects. None the less is it true—as Hitler justly suspected—that hatred of a common enemy, in this instance the Jew, might have brought together the different European races that were bowed under his yoke. For nothing so binds men together as hating the same thing.

As Hitler wrote: “. . . the National Socialist Movement . . . must open the eyes of our people in regard to foreign nations and it must continually remind them of the real enemy who menaces the world today. In place of preaching hatred against Aryans from whom we may be separated on almost every other ground but with whom the bond of kindred blood and the main features of a common civilisation unite us, we must devote ourselves to arousing general indignation against the maleficent enemy of humanity and the real author of all our sufferings.

“The National Socialist Movement must see to it that at least in our own country the mortal enemy is recognised and that the fight against him may be a beacon light pointing to a new and better period for other nations as well as showing the way of salvation for Aryan humanity in the struggle for its existence.

“Finally, may reason be our guide and will-power our strength. And may the sacred duty of directing our conduct, as I have pointed out, give us perseverance and tenacity; and may our faith be our supreme protection.”<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

Myths beget acts. The bloody glare of this immense war has made the results of this savage mythic credo visible. Hitler carried to its logical extreme his “sacred duty” of disinfecting Europe of its Jewish “vermin” by instituting the slaughterhouses of Poland.

Thousands, millions, of men, women and children deported from

---

<sup>1</sup> *Mein Kampf*, p. 521.

Germany and the invaded countries were massed in them and asphyxiated in vans or special gas chambers.

The rest of the world condemned these massacres but could do nothing to stop them. And had they been able to act, what would those other nations have done that for so long barely opened their frontiers?

Thus, thanks to the progress of science and German method and organisation under the dominion of a savage creed, the greatest Massacre of the Innocents in history took place in the XXth Century.

\* \* \*

But Hitler's slaughter of the Jews of Europe was his only non-illusory victory.

For, after the German rush, halted at the gates of Alexandria, and the German invasion of Russia, stopped outside Stalingrad, Hitler's armies began to retreat.

In November 1942, the Anglo-American armies landed in North Africa, then in 1943 invaded Italy, which capitulated. Finally, having overcome the submarine menace, obtained air supremacy and subjected Germany and the occupied countries to prolonged air bombardment, they landed in the North and South of France in the summer of 1944.

Meanwhile the Soviet armies, in the biggest and longest of all the victorious counter-offensives, had freed all Russia, reconquered Poland, and were menacing the eastern frontiers of the Reich.

Thus, on July 20th, German officers, seeing the spectre of defeat, attempted the life of the Führer—fanatically determined to resist—and to seize power. They failed, but despite a savage purge of the army by the Gestapo, the Nazi edifice began to totter to its fall.

It is not enough to slaughter Jews to win world-dominion!

## UNIVERSAL MYTHS

At 10.26 p.m. on May 1st, 1945, Radio Hamburg announced the death of Hitler. Next day the Russian advance-guard entered Berlin, while their main forces linked up with the British and Americans and spread out over East Germany. On May 7th, Adml. Doenitz signed the unconditional surrender of the Wehrmacht.

Bomb and cannon were hushed over Europe.

But not the anguished groans for, as the Allied armies advanced, they uncovered the full horror of the German concentration camps.

Not Jews alone, but political deportees of all lands, even Germany, packed by thousands into camps at Lublin, Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Belsen, Dachau, were brought to light, emaciated and ravaged by hunger, forced labour, torture and blows. Unless, indeed, it was only their bones that were seen, piled in great heaps by the crematory ovens.

A cry of horror rang through the world. Civilisation saw itself faced by this torturing problem: how had a nation as civilised as the Germans had recently been, a nation which had produced such great philosophers and musicians, relapsed to such barbarism?

The answers differed. The majority claimed that such cruelty was native to the German character. "Only Germans," they declared, "could have perpetrated such horrors; no other nation on earth could have done such things." This statement was based on the belief that evil is the monopoly of some special group; in fact, of the devil and his minions. To such eyes, every German, from the tottering greybeard to the infant, was an incarnate devil, more or less well disguised. Whence the conclusion that it was best to destroy as many Germans as possible. This was the "racial" attitude of the Nazis, but inverted and now transferred to German from Jew.

Others — convinced Christians — explained this wild outbreak of cruelty as due to the Nazis having abandoned the Christian faith. Certainly, as Freud wrote, the Germans were "badly christened." But this abandonment of Christianity was not solely theirs: we see the same

decline among all Christian nations, however numerous their hymns and prayers. And it so happens that when Christianity flourished most and enjoyed its greatest power, the worst cruelties and massacres were committed in Christ's name—as witness witch trials, the Inquisition and the wars of religion.

Now it is in just this historical fact that the true explanation of the Nazi excesses lies. Christians refuse to admit it, yet it alone remains convincing. It was not because they had lost the religious spirit but, on the contrary because, in them, it was so savagely reborn that the Germans could confess themselves so cruel. "The Gods are not immortal, but the religious spirit, that is eternal,"<sup>1</sup> and if the Nazis in charge of the concentration camps—those camps of torture and death—slaughtered so many victims, it was because they obeyed a strict religious injunction, a categorical and mystic imperative which made them deem their horrible deeds a wholesome purifying task.

What confronts the world in the slaughters committed in the Nazi concentration camps is the ferocious countenance of young and triumphant religions, avid for the blood of the heretics who deny their creed.

With the good conscience of accomplished duty, of serving the true faith, the young Nazi believers, in blind obedience to barbarous commands, flogged their slave workers, men, women and children and turned lethal gases on to Jews or workers too weak or ill to toil. In one such camp, a German doctor relentlessly working his sick or dying Commando prisoners to death, declared: "Their last ounce of energy belongs to 'Greater Germany'" (*Ihre letzten Kräfte gehören Gross Deutschland*)<sup>2</sup>. Certain of these German doctors, devoted in addition to the limitless cult of their science, would remorselessly use these doomed heretics for their experiments.

With the same good conscience, the Inquisitors once sent Christianity's heretics to the torture chamber or stake and the judges of the Terror the heretics of the young revolutionary faith to the guillotine.

With the same good conscience of duty done, the Russians sent and send to the deadly Siberian or Turkestan steppes or to the camps of Kaluga

<sup>1</sup> Les dieux ne sont pas immortels, mais l'esprit religieux, lui, est éternel. Gustave Le Bon: *Lois psychologiques de l'évolution des peuples*, Paris, Alcan. Livre IV., chap. II.

<sup>2</sup> As told by Dr. Paul Schiff on his return from captivity in the prison hospital at Rottenmünster, where he heard this said by a German doctor, since reported to the War Crimes Commission. See also the secret orders of Himmler as revealed at the Nuremberg trial. *London Times*, 15th December, 1945.

the nobles and bourgeois of the regions they occupy or hold, heretics as they are of the new egalitarian faith which fanaticises the Soviet Empire.

Nothing is more terrible than faith. It is the greatest myth of all which asserts that religion is always beneficent and softens men's hearts. Whatever they contain, even if, like Christ's, love is their doctrine, their youthful onset is always rough and cruel, for intolerance is their law.

Here one recalls certain reflections lent by Anatole France to old Brotteaux in *Les Dieux ont soif*.

"He said he refused to attack religion which he considered necessary to nations . . . It was regrettable to him that the Jacobins should wish to substitute for it a religion of liberty, equality, the Republic and the Fatherland. He had observed that it is in their vigorous youth that religions are most savage and cruel and that they calm down with age. Thus, he hoped that Catholicism would remain, for though in its youthful vigour it had devoured many a victim, now, bowed under its years and with its appetite poor, it was content with four or five roast heretics a century."

No truer word was ever said. It is only at the feet of the gods, as once at the feet of the Aztec god of war Huitzilpochtli, that such quantities of blood can be shed under the scourge of duty. The atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps cannot be understood unless they are seen in their true light as acts of faith, auto-da-fés.

Most people will exclaim that it is frightful that Europeans in the XXth Century should behave like the ancient Aztecs or Torquemada's henchmen and that one would have thought humanity had made some progress. Alas, progress as regards human emotions is but another myth. It is only human hypocrisy that has progressed. Hitler would never have had himself portrayed, as did the Pharaohs on their monuments, mutilating and killing his prisoners. Nor would he have exhibited public shows to edify his people, as Torquemada with his auto-da-fés. But man's regression to primitive barbarism—Taine's fierce and lustful gorilla—is always possible under certain evil stars and above all, under the star of a new faith which justifies his cruelty. True, some propensity to active sadism was requisite in these torturers in the Nazi camps and Germans highest in the cultural scale would not have lent themselves as instruments of the savage new faith, for there always exists an elite not subject to such great national and mystical drives.

But it remains none the less true that all nations—even those which in time of security behave with the greatest humanity—are liable to regress to original barbarism. The divers nations which share the earth have merely progressed temporarily, in some degree, from this common point of departure : progress it would seem, in proportion to the sum of happiness and especially well-being which has fallen to their lot, so providing conditions favourable to culture.

Such are the Anglo-Americans. Grateful it would seem to the ancient God of their prosperity, they retain the old Christian faith—though modernised and thinned down into a hundred different sects—which, while its potency remains, checks the virulence of the new fanaticisms. Thus, more than others, they can cherish reason.

When Germany was invaded by the Slavs from the East and the Anglo-Americans from the West, the terror-struck population, en masse, strove to fly westwards. For the Anglo-Americans, in spite of their heavy bombing of the German people and towns, being the richest and best fed, are the most rational, generous and least cruel, and so are least to be feared.

\* \* \*

It remains to examine the divers ideals borne on the banners of the embattled nations. How much in these ideals was reality, how much myth?

The Germans were fighting for an Order, their "New Order," representing as they said : Right, Justice, Civilisation. They even baptised as Freedom the right their nation claimed to overrun its neighbours, compelled as they said they were, to secure "living space" for a great, cramped people. Faced by the British Empire with huge areas still so frequently virgin, they felt the envious rage of the poor for the rich ; the poor who, through lighted windows, see the rich eat and leave enough on their plates to feed the whole brood of the famished onlooker at home. This, they called, "land-hunger." Thus, it seemed "just" to them to trample down their neighbour's territories, to despoil them and deport the inhabitants to Germany to force them, willy-nilly, to toil for Germany's greatness. Primitive "morality" demands that one have no obligations but to one's own.

On the Anglo-American flags, their forces first and foremost read the magic word "Freedom." Beneath the same standard had fought Abraham Lincoln's anti-slave campaigners, descendants of the Anglo-Saxons with their age-old liberal tradition. They fought and died "that



these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."<sup>1</sup>

Such has remained the gospel of these nations which battle with Freedom as their cry. Nor is this gospel wholly mythical. For, indeed, only in Anglo-Saxon countries or those under the influence of the West, is the freedom of the individual respected in so far as consonant with an organised State: only in them is one able to criticise the government and sleep unafraid of being waked by some Gestapo making a house-search or hauling one to gaol. Consequently, this is what Right, Order, Justice, Civilisation appears to the Anglo-Saxon.

But, during this war, the Anglo-Saxons gave yet wider meaning to the word Freedom borne on their banners. *We fight for world freedom!* they said: that is, for the freedom of all the nations temporarily under the Nazi heel—Poland, France, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Greece, Yugoslavia and the Baltic countries. They even promised this new liberty to the nations fighting as Hitler's henchmen: Italy, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Finland, and even to the Germans themselves if they but repudiated their tyrants; not to mention China in the Far East, victim of Japan.

Now it is here that the myth begins to envelope reality. The countries of Western Europe are within reach of the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. But the countries of Eastern Europe will only see the flutter of the Red Flag and its hammer and sickle. And the freedom this holds in its folds is by no means that of the Union Jack or the Stars and Stripes.

A difference in longitude, terrestrial and mystical, more even than the different languages gives different meanings to the words Freedom and Svoboda, as again to the falsely analogous word Democracy, which in the West, is confused with the aspiration towards individual *liberty* for all, while in the East it implies the aspiration towards *equality* under the harsh dictatorship of the proletariat; aspirations, in any case, as impossible to reconcile as difficult to attain.

Yet the Russians also fought in their way for Freedom, but a freedom very different from that of the Anglo-Saxons, which to those of the West, jealous mainly of their personal liberty, no more seems to merit the name than did German "liberty" as the Nazis understood it. The Russians

---

<sup>1</sup> Gettysburg address, November 19th, 1863.

care little for individual freedom which their government scorns and suppresses, but much for national freedom : that of Russia, its territory, its fields, its woods, even its government and régime, to which they submit. This for them is Right, Justice, Order and in fact, Civilisation. They deem it right to sacrifice everything to these ideals, and pillaging and killing, have returned on the vanquished the calamities they once inflicted on them by themselves deporting thousands of Germans, as also " pro-Fascists " from the countries they have invaded to work as slave labour throughout the immense wastes of Russia.

But, again, it is also true that in countries that are still feudal the Red Army really appeared as heralds of freedom to the poor. Did they not free the peasants of Poland, the Baltic States, Hungary and Rumania from their age-old subjection to their lords? If these last, in Soviet concentration camps, must expiate the fact of their class—if not of their race as under the Nazis—the peasants who share the spoils naturally greet the Red Flag as that of the new Freedom. And the outcasts and discontented in all lands acclaim them from afar.

But this was surely not freedom in the Western sense. And though press, propaganda and wireless continued to maintain the confusion between Freedom and Svoboda, it was because the strength of the vital interests threatened, plus the geographical factor—this fate of nations, as Napoleon said—had for a time cemented the paradoxical alliance, prematurely denounced by Hitler, between Western Capitalism and Eastern Sovietism against the common Hitlerian enemy. Not for nothing has Germany always had land frontiers bounded eastwards by the Slav and westwards by the Rhine and Atlantic powers, both fated to unite when the Germanic danger waxed too great.

Thus, providing we give different meanings to these words according to the peoples that employ them, and understand how relative are these ideals, the whole world, in its way, fought for Freedom, Right, Justice, Civilisation. For anyone who does not believe he fights for these ideals, in their integrity, fights ill.

The Fatherland is always right, the Fatherland which embodies our modes of feeling, thinking, acting. Thus, its customs, laws, civilisation, its order and its right, to the patriot appear as Justice, Order, Civilisation, Law, and Right. And in the light of battle, those of other countries seem Injustice and the very negation of Law, Order, Right and Civilisation.

In truth, every nation, in addition to its law, its justice, civilisation,

right, order, freedom, fights first and foremost for its life. There is nothing gentle about the struggle for life in Nature, and the struggles of mankind, greediest and cleverest of all animals, are the most cruel and all-embracing of all.

\* \* \*

"The time of battle for the domination of the world draws near—it will be fought in the name of *philosophic principles*," ideologies, as we should say to-day. Thus cried Nietzsche at the end of the last century. And again, "How will the earth be governed as one whole?"<sup>1</sup>

The imperialism of a Hitler had led him to boast of . . . "a peace which would not be based upon the wearing of olive branches and the tearful misery-mongering of pacifist old women, but a peace which would be guaranteed by the triumphant sword of a people endowed with the power to master the world and administer it in the service of a higher civilisation!"<sup>2</sup>

His own, of course. *Pax Germanica*.

The imperialism of that great empire-builder, Cecil Rhodes, led him to write at the end of the last century: "I contend that we are the first race in the world, and that the more of the world we inhabit, the better it is for the human race. I contend that every acre added to our territory provides for the birth of more of the English race, who otherwise would not be brought into existence. Added to which the absorption of the greater part of the world under our rule simply means the end of all wars."<sup>3</sup> *Pax Britannica*.

And Gogol, in *Taras Bulba*, puts these words into the mouth of the dying *hetman*: "Wait! A time will come when you will learn what is meant by the true Russian faith. Nations both near and far will thenceforth hearken to it: a Czar will rise in the Russian land and no Power on earth will not bow before him. . . ." *Pax Slavica*.

Are such aspirations to world dominion realisable? The test of arms has already relegated a Hitler's dream to the category of myths, as soon after the Japanese dream of a "Greater East Asia."

<sup>1</sup> « Die Zeit kommt, wo der Kampf um die Erdherrschaft geführt werden wird, — er wird im Namen *philosophischer Grundlehren* geführt werden . . . » (*Nachlass*, Vol. XI, p. 309).

« Wie soll die Erde als Ganzes verwaltet werden? » *Wille zu Macht*, Vol. XIX, p. 314).

<sup>2</sup> *Mein Kampf*, p. 333.

<sup>3</sup> "Some of my ideas," quoted by J. C. Macdonald in *Rhodes—a Life*. London, Geoffrey Bees, 1927; chap. IV.

Remain the two great imperialist ambitions of the Anglo-Saxon and Slav worlds.

For Britain, the dream of a Cecil Rhodes reduces itself more and more to retaining possessions already acquired. But young America would seem to have inherited that dream and restlessly aspires to enlarge her zones of influence, even at the expense of her ageing mother.

As for Taras Bulba greeting the future world-Czar, could he know that after a Lenin would come a Stalin, the Pope of the new creed—to embody his dreams of world-power in the new egalitarian religion preached to the world?

Thus, in addition to the bickerings that follow all great wars, two vast imperialisms that stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific, those of the Old and New Worlds, now confront each other over the ruins left by the vast conflict. And with them clash the great economic ideals they each represent: on the one hand State Capitalism seeking maximum co-ordination of production: on the other Capitalism and its encouragement of private enterprise. \* \* \*

And now the terror of a new war, even more destructive than the last—with its V weapons and air bombardments—particularly haunts humanity since the two first atomic bombs, dropped by the Americans, devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki and led to Japan's immediate collapse. This terror makes a war-weary world seek pledges of peace and rest. To this end, as also for the only too human motive of revenge, the return to the spirit of the "Roman triumph," exemplary punishment of all "war criminals" has been demanded; not only that of sadistic torturers but also of heads of State, ministers, officials and army chiefs of the vanquished nations. Meanwhile delegates of the victorious United Nations gather at conferences at which only the great confer.

Alas! who hears the voices of the small? And the voices of the great are often discordant. For insatiability is the law of the strong.

Thus, this second League of Nations, should it be raised, is doubtless once more doomed to illustrate how mythical is that great mirage of which humanity, despite its ineradicable instincts of aggression and conquest, still dreams at weary moments: the supreme myth of peace, universal, everlasting.

Paris — Saint-Tropez — Vichy — Athens —  
 Alexandria — The Cape — London. 1939-1945

