

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

IDEOLOGY, SCIENCE, IMPERIALISM:
THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE IMPERIAL IDEA

by

Helga Mardirosian

A Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of
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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates and compares the dominant schools of thought in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century and their influence on the perceptions regarding Imperialism. In doing so, the thesis applies the methodology of Karl Mannheim as suggested in his book Ideology and Utopia.

The thesis concludes that there was a strong commonality in the starting assumptions and the basic concepts in the analysis of Imperialism, a commonality that can be seen through Mannheim's central notion of Weltanschauung.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Has man's stature qua man increased or diminished over the past 150 years? Or to pose the question more definitively: has science increased or diminished man's stature over this time period?

The question might sound metaphysical but it is not. It has become of pressing concern for many intellectuals and laymen alike. An estimated 100 million human beings¹ have been killed as a result of wars, revolution, and Imperialism over the past sixty years alone and science seems to be involved in their death in a twofold manner: first in its technological manifestation² by providing the means of destruction, i.e. the weapons - chemical, biological, and nuclear - and also in its ideological manifestation by furnishing what might be called the "intellectual weapons", the "scientific rationale" for this human destruction.

Ideologies are instruments of explanation. The ideologies which have accompanied and justified these events have claimed to be a "rational scientific explanation of history, its conflicts and their

¹R.D. Laing cites this number in his book The Politics of Experience, Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1967, p. 24. It might be safely assumed that since the publication of this book in 1967 many more million people have become victims of wars, conflicts and retaliations, for instance in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, the Middle East and South America.

²"Technology", Habermas points out, "is always a historical-social project: in it is projected what a society and its ruling interests intend to do with men and things". Towards a Rational Society, Heinemann, London, 1971, p. 82.

resolution."³ Only in the last 150 years, however, have Western men felt that their animosities, hatreds, and prejudices, their will to rule, intrude, and conquer, to dominate, oppress and exploit needed "scientific" explanations and sanctions.

Before science lost its innocence as a "neutral instrument for the advancement of mankind", its proclaimed goal was "to augment and order human experience."⁴ Now its "latest theoretical advances have brought it to the point of negating itself while its perfected technology threatens the globe itself with destruction."⁵ What is it that has changed this motivation for scientific endeavour from a desire for understanding to a need for domination and destruction? The discrepancy between the original claims and goals of science and its present position has been interpreted as being the result of an internal development which science itself has undergone in the few centuries of its history. A change and development which is - as Russell saw it - "not yet completed" and which he summed up as "the passage from contemplation to manipulation."⁶ Gradually science changed from a "science as knowledge" to a "science as power." Science gave power in succession over inanimate nature, "power over plants and animals" and in

³Hannah Arendt. The Origin of Totalitarianism, Harcourt Brace, Janovich Inc., New York, 1951, p. 471.

⁴Hannah Arendt. Between Past and Future, The Viking Press, New York, 1976, p. 267.

⁵Albert Camus. Neither Victims nor Executioners, World Without War Publication, Chicago, Illinois, 1972, p. 19.

⁶Bertrand Russell. The Scientific Outlook, W.W. Norton & Comp., New York, 1962, p. 261.

the end "power over human beings."⁷ And although each power holds its own kind of dangers, it is perhaps - as Russell observed - "the dangers involved in power over human beings" that are the greatest.⁸ Science in its twentieth century manifestation has not only become manipulative, proud and dictatorial but even worse, it has become perverted and sadistic because it is not only concerned with power but with maximization of power.

The nineteenth century, the century which in the view of many scholars was in more than one way "the curtain raiser for the disasters of our own age"⁹ was as well the century in which science first achieved its highest esteem. This conjecture has driven many writers, intellectuals and scholars¹⁰ in ever increasing numbers to re-examine this earlier period. Because, looking from the vantage point of the twentieth century, it is now possible to discover scientific and philosophical (ideological) trends which can be seen as forerunners in the realm of ideas relating to those events which were actually taking place in the realm of action, particularly under Imperialism,¹¹ in the colonial setting. They were, however, scantily noticed at the time if

⁷Russell, Ibid, p. 185.

⁸Russell, Ibid, p. 185.

⁹George Lichtheim, The Concept of Ideology, Random House, New York, 1967, p. 239, 240.

¹⁰To name but a few: Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, op. cit., Karl Löwith, From Hegel to Nietzsche, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1964, Frank H. Tucker, The White Conscience, Frederick Ungar, New York, 1968, Jacques Barzun, Darwin, Marx, and Wagner, Doubleday Anchor, New York, 1958, Ernst Cassiner, The Myth of the State, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1946.

¹¹Imperialism - refers to the politics and policies of European expansionism in the late nineteenth century and the colonial rule associated with it.

they were noticed at all. It seems that the twentieth century has "clarified and made explicable the ideas and events of the nineteenth"¹².

The dependence of thought on actual discoveries in the natural sciences and the subsequent emergence of new philosophies and world views led by them, modelled after them, and even "forced into prescribed directions by each of them in turn",¹³ has been pointed out and been examined by many writers and philosophers; for instance by Ernst Cassirer, Hannah Arendt, and Karl Mannheim in our own time. These changes in ideas and philosophies are part of the wider "History of Ideas", or "History of Philosophy", or "History of Science". However, this relationship of dependence is not entirely one-sided, it is rather a relationship of interdependence, resulting in a kind of intellectual cross-fertilization. Thought does not exist in a vacuum. This is not only true for social, political, economical, or philosophical thought, but it is equally true for scientific thought. Even in a discipline so unquestionably part of the natural sciences as biology, thought not only affects but is also affected by the social situation, the politics and policies of the time. This seems no more evident than in the nineteenth century. The manifold and intricate interweavings of philosophy, political theory and ideology with biology - the new emerging and in the second half of the nineteenth century dominating natural science - deeply influenced the intellectual and political discourse.

¹²Löwith, Ibid, p. vi.

¹³Ernst Cassirer. An Essay on Man, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1946, p. xi.

The scientific knowledge of the two preceding centuries - mathematics in the 17th century, physical sciences in the 18th century - was in the nineteenth century further enlarged by inroads into two other fields of the natural sciences: geology and biology. Both fields introduced the theory of evolution, both dealt with matter, time, and development. Old explanations and philosophies no longer held. "The earth acquired age as geological strata and successive forms of life were revealed in the rocks."¹⁴ Time no longer was "the medium through which oscillated a self-adjusting and eternal world machine under a 'natural' government."¹⁵ Nor did the past have any longer "the static or cyclic quality of the classical Greco-Roman conception nor by contrast the six thousand years ephemeral duration" which orthodox Christians accorded to it. Time now became "open to scientific examination."¹⁶

Subsequently as well the evolution of the species, of plants and animals became debatable and open to scientific investigation. Biology took its time from geology and physics, forcing those fields into an ever lengthening time frame in order to date the past, because "evolutionary biology relied for change upon infinitesimal variation acted upon by natural selection through long time periods."¹⁷ Then man began to examine his own time scale, to trace his own origin and

¹⁴Loren Eiseley. Darwin's Century, Anduer Books, Doubleday & Comp., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1958, p. 170.

¹⁵Eiseley, Ibid, p. 332.

¹⁶Eiseley, Ibid, p. 237.

¹⁷Eiseley, Ibid, p. 237.

pedigree and discovered with "almost morbid fascination" as Eiseley describes it, that he was an animal.¹⁸ That man is an animal, a contemporary of Darwin exclaimed, is "the great and special discovery of natural science in our generation."¹⁹

It is at this point that what seems to be almost a reversal in perception and anticipation from the eighteenth century occurred. A change in man's view of himself - of his self-understanding - and of his surroundings took place. Man greatly reversed his anticipation of the possibility of a qualitative and substantial improvement not only of his own society but of the wider world. The belief in the possibility of more justice, more equality, more compassion, more cooperation was virtually abandoned.

In eighteenth century France, the philosophes of the Enlightenment believed that man's most outstanding characteristic was his power of reason and the capacity to apply this reason to the task of improving his environment. They believed that reason was linked to human responsibility and tolerance. This was what progress meant. Progress was a moral concept.²⁰ A century later, natural and social scientists diagnosed man as being driven and governed by instinct. In particular, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a "retreat from

¹⁸Eiseley, Ibid, p. 237.

¹⁹Eiseley, Ibid, p. 345.

²⁰In the understanding of the 18th century reason and progress were not yet divorced from each other. Reason meant "committed reason", with "sensibility to the evils of the world" and the belief in "man's talent for adult-autonomy". Jürgen Habermas, Theory and Practice, Beacon Press, Boston, 1973, p. 258, 259.

Reason was still to be understood in its ethical meaning as "right reason". Kant, for instance, distinguished between practical reason (Vernunft) whose function it was to recognize what should be done, while

reason in an age of science."²¹ It gave way to what might be called a "biological" philosophy.

Selfishness and greed, social and political ills, such as poverty, conquest, war, and domination were now explained on the basis of instinct and the survival of the fittest. To seek a rational removal of these social ills was to "oppose instinct", to interfere with "primeval nature". It meant to hinder the natural course of things, to interfere in the "evolutionary process and the inscrutable selective wisdom contained in the struggle for existence."²² The future-oriented belief in man's perfectability, in his potential "moral beauty", became more and more displaced and superceded by evolutionary biology, which provided the rationalizations for abandoned visions, "for things undone and dreams defeated."²³

The loss of faith in the enlightening power of reason for all mankind found expression in a parallel development. During the century of the Enlightenment the belief in man's perfectability through education and knowledge reflected man's attitude towards himself and his own society, but the notion as such included all of mankind.²⁴ The eighteenth century, to use de Tocqueville's admirable precise phrase

theoretical reason (Verstand) permitted the recognition of what is.

Progress was not merely understood as an extension of knowledge in terms of a "progressus in indefinitum". The definition of progress always incorporated - apart from its quantitative element - a qualitative stipulation.

²¹Eiseley, op. cit., footnote, p. 348.

²²Eiseley, Ibid, p. 348.

²³Eiseley, Ibid, p. 345.

²⁴The philosophes of the Enlightenment believed that differences among human beings were the result of differences in the "social environment" and could be "corrected" through education. This view came

"believed in a variety of races but in the unity of the human species",²⁵ and Goethe wrote: "Only all of mankind together makes the true man."²⁶ By the end of the nineteenth century, this trust in the essential moral and spiritual quality of mankind was no longer shared - it had given way to the naturalist theory of human inequality.

While earlier scientists, social thinkers, and voyageurs in their encounters and contacts with more simple people and more primitive societies still thought of "barbarians as educatable",²⁷ basing this belief on their observation and experience, the natural scientists of the late nineteenth century in their encounters with more primitive people and their societies no longer shared these views. They held that these people were "lying fixed biologically, upon levels inferior to Western man", as "mentally frozen, so to speak, at various stages of the human past."²⁸ They claimed to have expelled the myth of natural equality among races and rejected the belief in the efficacy and the universal remedy of education as a harmful illusion engendered by the theorists of pure reason. "In the savage races of the present day," a writer in the *Contemporary Review* of 1871²⁹ observed, "we seem to find

under attack by social scientists in the second half of the nineteenth century. They came to insist on the "heredity of mental characteristics", according to which some races were more intelligent than others. Differences among human beings thus had a certain permanence.

²⁵Hannah Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, op. cit., p. 177.

²⁶Werner Stark. *The Sociology of Knowledge*, London, 1958, p. 343, footnote quotation.

²⁷Eiseley, op. cit., p. 339.

²⁸Eiseley, *Ibid*, p. 264.

²⁹Notwithstanding that the influence of the moral and ethical beliefs of the Enlightenment had recently brought about the abolition of slavery

the human faculties, not in their fresh virgin state, tending to develop into something better, but arrested and benumbed by long acquiescence in grovelling habits. Therefore, I think, we are justified in regarding these races as the swamps and backwaters of the stream of noble humanity, and not as the representatives of the fountainhead from which it has been derived."³⁰

The "noble savage" concept of the earlier century which perceived of the tribesmen as "the unspoiled member of mankind", living in a simple state of nature, was swept away by the new scientific certainty of their permanent inferiority. The admiration of him as the "representative of the childhood of man" gave way to the uncompromising scientific theory that they were the "missing link."

Far from possessing the yet unrealized potentialities of a child, the members of primitive societies were now seen as "living fossils", "destined to be swept away in the struggle for existence" because of their "feeble and archaic intellect."³¹ The Mongol and Negro were not only held to be but "human saurians who reached long ago ... their full development", but were also now "moral fossils."³²

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the earlier concerns about man as an individual and mankind as a unity encompassing all

in America and the abolition of the African slave trade by Britain, it can be clearly seen that with the emergence of the new scientific notions in the biological sciences a harsher view of the developmental possibilities of primitive man and his society were crystallizing.

³⁰Eiseley, op. cit., p. 300, 301.

³¹Eiseley, Ibid, p. 311.

³²Eiseley, Ibid, p. 264.

members of human societies, had dissipated. Science had established the idea as a scientific fact - as the truth - that man was an animal, driven by instincts, and that the degree of these instincts was decisive for his survival. Man's mind, reason, and consciousness were looked upon as a "by-product of evolution, late in coming and negligible in effect."³³ The purpose of life was to survive. The struggle for survival through the elimination of the weaker by the stronger was the categorical imperative, not only for the individual but for whole races; it was the manifestation of "natural selection."

"From the war of nature", Darwin wrote, "from famine and death, the most exalted object of which we are capable of conceiving, namely the production of higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life ..."³⁴ Thus the favoured races were those that survived; they assured progress. Under the impact of these "scientific facts", mankind became divided into "higher and lower breeds", into "master races and slave races", into "civilized societies and arrested societies."

Conflict, war, and domination - at an earlier century still perceived as the regrettable manifestation of a not yet emancipated reason³⁵ - now came to be explained on biologic-scientific grounds. Antagonism, whether individual, national, or racial was inbred and war was seen as a mechanism of improving the species. When war ceases, so it was argued, mankind will no longer progress.

³³Barzun, Jacques. Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 11.

³⁴Barzun, Ibid, p. 15.

³⁵The philosophical theory on which the Enlightenment based itself held, that "as man develops reason will prevail over imagination, prejudice and passion". Collingwood, The Idea of History, Oxford

The decades before the close of the nineteenth century and those following the turn of this century saw Western scientists - both natural and social - preoccupied with the working out and perfection of racial theories. Race struggle and racial determinism, finally became regarded by them and others as the "key to history" and as such also the justification for the "new" Imperialism, for conquest and domination.

Another "key to history" perceived of class struggle as the motivating force in history, as the determining factor in the progress of mankind.

Developed simultaneously - yet independently from the theory of natural evolution and race struggle - Marx's theory of social evolution and class struggle was, however, firmly imbedded in the predominant evolutionary conceptions of the time. Here also, the notions of struggle, historical evolution, and progress were combined into an evolutionary, that is scientific whole.³⁶

According to this scientific interpretation of history all societies follow certain laws of development. They all have to pass through the same evolutionary stages: ancient, feudal, bourgeois, then socialist and finally communist. These successive stages are characterized by particular "relations in production" which determine the "modes of production" and vice versa. These laws of development

University Press, 1956, p. 76.

³⁶It is noteworthy that Darwin's book The Origin of Species, Marx's book Das Kapital and Gobineau's book Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines, were all published in an interval of a few years, i.e. 1859, 1859, 1853. These three books were at the centre of intellectual, political, economic and social discourse for the next hundred years.

were deemed to apply to all societies.³⁷

According to this scientific theory, social change or progress occurs when these forces get into conflict, i.e. when the relations in production no longer coincide with the forces of production. At that particular stage an abrupt change occurs - a revolution - ending with the overthrow of the previous governing class (now obsolete, as being unprogressive). The new emerging class after this "revolution", the superseding class, is by definition the stronger, more innovative, more progressive one at that particular point in time. In this theory, conflict and progress are built into the economic system and find their expression in class struggle and class antagonism. Both operate independently of individual will, consciousness,³⁸ or reason, because the stages and processes in the social and economic evolution of society are historic forces, i.e. historical necessities, and stages cannot be skipped.

³⁷This theory was later on modified when it became obvious that this evolutionary scheme only recorded the European evolutionary experience and did not account for the evolutionary reality - or the lack thereof - of two-thirds of the world. The theory was then changed to incorporate a period prior to the "ancient stage". The so-called "Asiatic stage" with its "oriental mode of production" came to be seen as preceding the "ancient stage".

³⁸It is necessary at this point to clarify, however, that in this evolutionary theory man is not without consciousness and reason. Man's essence and existence are closely linked. By creating and improving his environment and his tools, man creates and improves himself. But at any stage of development his consciousness is determined by the historic-economic reality in which he lives, thus his consciousness is bound to his collectivity, that is his class. His consciousness is a collective affair.

Since progress - initiated and developed by man - reflects his consciousness, it can be argued, that in this theory the consciousness of a nineteenth century African tribeman, for example, lies at a lower stage of development than that of a nineteenth century European working class man or a nineteenth century European bourgeois. Because essence and existence in this theory cannot be seen independently from each

Capitalism³⁹ - the mode of production and social organization of the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century - was therefore in this evolutionary scheme, no historical accident. As an economic and social system, capitalism was superior to its predecessor, the feudal system. It was not only a source of unprecedented wealth and progress for this class and the wider society, but both fulfilled at the same time their "historical mission" and found thus their "historical justification."

The human misery, the poverty and suffering produced by capitalism, however abhorrent, were thus time- and production-specific. The manifestations, the form and the degree of social ills, were determined by the economic system, which in its turn is related to the respective evolutionary stage of society.

Rational intervention⁴⁰ in order to ameliorate social ills was also in this nineteenth century deterministic theory rejected. It was rejected because the "logic" or the "dialectic" of the economic system had to work itself out. Social reforms therefore might hinder, so it was argued, this process thus delaying progress, because poverty, and

other, in fact are closely interwoven, and because the tribeman's environment and his tools were inferior to the nineteenth century European society and technology - his development was also here perceived as being "arrested" and his society as being "stagnant". His existence was therefore often treated with similar contempt. The basic assumptions between this evolutionary "social theory" and the evolutionary "race theory" - although different at the outset - to some extent converge at this point.

³⁹Nineteenth century colonialism (Imperialism) explained as a manifestation of nineteenth century capitalism was consequently seen as historically necessary and progressive and European colonial expansion was accepted as a "brutal but necessary step towards the victory of socialism", the next higher stage after capitalism. S. Aveneri, Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization, Doubleday, New York, 1968, p. 12.

⁴⁰In the theory of natural evolution and race struggle, rational intervention to eliminate misery and poverty was rejected because of its interference with "instinct" and "natural selection". In the theory of

particularly industrial poverty, and the consciousness thereof was seen as a catalyst. Industrial poverty might aggravate class antagonism and speed up the impending class confrontation culminating in the overthrow and the elimination of the obsolete bourgeois class, thus opening the way for the establishment of the next higher, more progressive stage of society.

Human history thus reveals that struggle for life is general and universal and class struggle in particular is historically necessary and progressive.

Also in this evolutionary theory, "the individual counts for nothing, has no original purpose of his own."⁴¹ He only counts as a member of a class - bourgeois, worker, or peasant - and his mind and consciousness are epi-phenomena of the class struggle. He is seen and evaluated as a member of that specific class, and according to the historical circumstances and sequence as either descendant and regressive, or ascendent and progressive. His position is always determined "by the forces of production operating at a given time and place."⁴²

Man in this historical theory thus becomes a historical object, an abstraction, whose subjective mind and consciousness are relevant only in the context of his class and whose individual joys and sorrows, his

social evolution and class struggle rational intervention was dismissed because of the logic inherent in the economic system. Both theories thus saw intervention as detrimental to progress - however each from a different perspective.

⁴¹Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 11.

⁴²Barzun, Ibid, p. 11.

feelings and sufferings are inconsequential.

Under the impact of evolutionary science and the scientific interpretation of history as either race struggle or class struggle, man - who at one time was considered to be the centre of the universe, the summit and culmination of life - was displaced into the position of the most accidental and superfluous creature on this planet. He became the victim of World Wars, Revolution, and Imperialism - all of which had been explained as scientific mechanisms for the advancement of mankind. According to the circumstances and events, man became defined as "race enemy", "class enemy", or non-human. Buttressed by one or the other or both dominant scientific ideologies, millions of human beings were considered as being dispensable and disposable, as being "in the way of progress", as being a "by-product of history", or as being just "human raw material." "From violence and death and the sacrifice of Man", so it was argued, "better men and better life would evolve."⁴³

The then prevailing evolutionary teachings were highly influential as justifications for the two World Wars and the Revolution of the twentieth century, but more so they were crucial for the growth of Imperialism in the late nineteenth century. They introduced an element of detachment and fatalism, an "element of ruthlessness and immorality that was most characteristic for that whole time period and movement."⁴⁴

⁴³Barzun, Ibid, p. 99.

⁴⁴Michael Banton. Race Relations, Camelot Press, London, 1965, p. 48.

Imperialism Old and New

In order to establish the historical and political background for this investigation it seems necessary at this point to give some general information about Imperialism/Colonialism and to define what is meant by it, in answering the following questions:

What are the distinguishing features between the "Old" and "New" Imperialism?

What are the "explanations" given to account for the large scale imperialist movement of the second half of the nineteenth century, in particular that movement which came to be known as the "Scramble for Africa"?⁴⁵

The International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences uses "imperialism"⁴⁶ as a theoretical term to "denote a specific form of aggressive behaviour on behalf of certain states against others; the concept refers primarily to attempts to establish or retain formal sovereignty over subordinate political societies."⁴⁷ European imperialism of the late nineteenth century - of nations such as Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, and Italy, particularly during the "Scramble for Africa" - has shown such a "specific form of

⁴⁵The expression "Scramble for Africa" was first popularized in an article in The Times on September 15, 1884. It describes the feverish annexation of foreign territories, mainly in Africa, by most of the European nations. It covers the time period approximately from 1880 to World War I.

⁴⁶After World War II the term often became equated "with the exercise of any form of political control or influence by one political community over another" - Imperialism without colonies - Russian and American Imperialism - Neo-Colonialism. Hans Daalder, Imperialism, in International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, David L. Sills, ed. The McMillan Company & The Free Press, Vol. 7, p. 101-108.

⁴⁷Daalder, Ibid, p. 101-108.

aggressive behaviour", in that they invaded and annexed vast foreign territories, especially in Africa.

In order to illustrate, however, the general character of this period and the scope of these annexations it is necessary to bear in mind that during that time period, i.e. approximately from 1880-1910, Great Britain alone annexed thirty-nine separate areas, comprising some three and three-quarter million square miles. France, like Great Britain, adding to older colonial holdings, extended her empire by an area of more than three and a half million square miles. Germany, starting her imperialist career in 1884, brought approximately one million square miles under her colonial domination. Italy, also a newcomer to imperialism, annexed territories mainly in East Africa; Portugal annexed large districts of Angola on the Congo Coast and a large strip of East Africa, while Belgium, under King Leopold II, annexed a huge territory of the Congo, which later became known as the Congo Free State.⁴⁸

The enormity of the colonial holdings and acquisitions in terms of surface areas acquired and populations subjugated to colonial rule is much more concretely understood when a comparison is made between the sizes and the populations of the imperial nations and the sizes and the populations of their colonies. In the early twentieth century, Great Britain, with a mother country of 120,979 square miles and a population of 40,559,954 ruled 50 colonies with an area of 11,605,238 square miles and a colonial population of 235,222,239. France, with a mother country

⁴⁸J.A. Hosbon. Imperialism, The University of Michigan Press, 1965, p. 18-22.

of 240,092 square miles and a population of 38,517,975 ruled 33 colonies with 3,740,756 square miles and a colonial population of 56,401,860. Germany, with a mother country of 208,830 square miles and a population of 52,279,901 ruled 13 colonies with 1,027,120 square miles and a colonial population of 14,687,000. Portugal, with a mother country of 36,038 square miles and a population of 5,049,729 ruled 9 colonies with an area of 801,100 square miles and a colonial population of 9,148,707. Italy, with a mother country of 110,646 square miles and a population of 31,856,675 ruled 2 colonies with an area of 188,500 square miles and a colonial population of 850,000. Belgium,⁴⁹ with a mother country of 11,783 square miles and a population of 5,520,000 ruled one colony with an area of 194,575 square miles and a colonial population which was estimated between 20,000,000 and 40,000,000.

Denmark, Spain, and the Netherlands did not participate in this "new" colonial expansion. The extent of their colonial holdings, dating from the "old" colonialism is, however, interesting insofar as it reveals some of the same discrepancies of the mother countries to their colonies, either in terms of surface areas and/or population. According to a table of colonization compiled from the Statesman's Year Book from 1900,⁵⁰ Denmark, with a mother country of 15,289 square miles and a population of 2,185,225 ruled 3 colonies with 86,634 square miles and a

⁴⁹Although the Belgian acquisition were the personal property of the Belgian King Leopold II, Belgium as a nation should be included among the imperialist nations. Leopold II was responsible for unequalled atrocities committed in the Belgian Congo, the blackest page in the history of Africa, which left after twenty years of colonial rule only a population of 8,500,000.

⁵⁰Hobson, Imperialism, op. cit., p. 23.

colonial population of 114,229. Spain, with a mother country of 197,670 square miles and a population of 17,565,632 ruled 3 colonies with 243,877 square miles and a colonial population of 136,000. The Netherlands, with a mother country of 12,648 square miles and a population of 5,074,632 ruled 782,862 square miles and a colonial population of 35,115,711.

The division of the world into formal colonies or spheres of influence by the great - and also smaller - European powers was by the turn of the century complete, resulting in an almost global monopoly of rule and domination.

To recapitulate then: Imperialism in its late nineteenth century manifestation was thus the annexation of vast foreign territories and the establishment and/or maintenance of "rule over alien people, that is, separate and subordinate to the ruling and controlling power."⁵¹

This "new" imperialism was rather distinct from the "old" imperialism; a colonialism that was associated with the term "colonization" and which involved the "settlement abroad of people from a mother country, as in the case of ancient Greek colonies or the Americas."⁵² Almost the whole of this "new" imperialist expansion consisted of annexation and absorption of tropical or subtropical regions, where it was understood that Europeans were not going to settle with their families. Imperialism therefore became identified with "rule

⁵¹R. Emerson. Colonialism: Political Aspects, in International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, David L. Sills, Editor, The McMillan Company & The Free Press, Vol. 3, p. 1.

⁵²Emerson, Ibid, p. 1-5.

over peoples of different race inhabiting lands separated by salt water from the imperial centre."⁵³

There were, however, other new important features which distinguished this form of Imperialism/Colonialism from earlier forms of expansion, conquest and rule of empires. Racism⁵⁴ was such a new discriminating factor. The assertion of racial and cultural superiority by the imperialist nations and their insistence that this racial and cultural superiority was "scientifically" established gave them the right to this expansion and conquest and entitled them to rule over "inferior" or "subject" races.

Colonial racism, according to Memmi, is "built from three major ideological components: the gulf between the culture of the colonist and the colonized, the exploitation of these differences for the benefit of the colonist, and the use of these supposed differences as standards of absolute fact."⁵⁵

Racism in the colonial setting not only meant subordination of the native people to the colonial power, it went beyond that. It was stressed that this rule should be unrestricted - total - without any

⁵³Emerson, Ibid, p. 1-5.

⁵⁴The term "racism" is used to denote those actions and attitudes which support the exclusion, subjugation and exploitation of people who are defined as inferior based on their racial characteristics. Fanon defines racism as "the systematic oppression of a people", Towards the African Revolution, New York, 1967, p. 34. It is significant that racism was part of colonialism regardless of which European nation participated in it. Racism in the colonial system is not "superimposed". It is built into the very system, through all institutions and in every human contact.

⁵⁵Albert Memmi. The Colonizer and the Colonized, Beacon Press, Boston, 1967, p. 35.

limitations. A British colonial administrator defined this rule as having "no obligations to man-made laws,"⁵⁶ and if necessary being ready for "administrative massacres."

None of the European nations applied the political principles of their own country to the indigenous people in their colonies. "In no case were they disposed to apply the administrative and political systems of their own country to the government of backward populations."⁵⁷ None of the European nations extended the legal freedoms and protections which were enjoyed by the people of the mother countries to their colonies. Colonies were ruled by decree, which is by its very nature completely arbitrary, temporary, and constantly changing, according to the wishes and needs of the ruling, that is colonial, power. Rule by decree is characterized by the very absence of any constitutional constraints.

This is best exemplified by the procedures, measures, and particular policies implemented by the European nations in order to establish and consolidate their colonial domination, such as:

the expropriation of the native land,

the expulsion of the population, their resettlement in working camps or "compounds",

the exploitation of both the natural resources and the native population,

the annihilation and/or planned extermination⁵⁸ of those natives who resisted these measures,

⁵⁶Arendt, The Origin of Totalitarianism, op. cit., p. 215.

⁵⁷Arendt, *Ibid*, p. 131.

⁵⁸One of the most striking aspects when examining questions about colonialism is that there are no numbers or statistics about the victims of Western Imperialism, not even for the period of the period of the

the imposition of hut- or labour taxes to force the native population into colonial service, and

the enforcement of these impositions⁵⁹ through measures such as slave labour, forced labour, or indentured labour.

In summary, it might be said that the "new" imperialism not only comprised the original act of aggressive annexation of territory by European nations, it also encompassed "the organization of domination after the conquest."⁶⁰

Imperialism describes a particular type of reality. It denotes a relationship. More specifically, it denotes "the relationship of a ruling and controlling power to those under its domination,"⁶¹ and colonial racism "sums up and symbolizes this fundamental relationship"⁶² in the systematic oppression and objectification of the

"new" Imperialism and thereafter, although these events are part of the "Neuzeit".

Only in footnotes a very dedicated student of colonialism might find occasional incomplete references - for example - the decimation of the Congo population from 20-40 Million reduced to 8 Million by the Belgian King Leopold II during the "Scramble for Africa" or about the 10 Million victims of a drought in India where the British colonizer even shipped away the remaining food in order to assure that the whole population died.

⁵⁹Forced labour was abolished in the French colonies only after the Second World War (Constitution of October 1946). In the British colony of Kenya forced labour became illegal after the First World War. During the Second World War, however forced labour was reintroduced in Kenya. Compulsory labour was, however, employed by all colonial powers. In the Belgian Congo the last administrative forms of forced labour were only abolished in 1954.

⁶⁰Fanon. Towards the African Revolution, op. cit., p. 83.

⁶¹George Lichtheim. Imperialism, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1971, p. 4.

⁶²Memmi, op. cit., p. 70.

colonized people.

The Theories of Imperialism

There have been numerous theories put forward to explain the "causes" of this new Imperialism.

Some writers simply said that Imperialism was just "in the air" and that it therefore coloured the whole mentality of the period, its actions, politics, ideas, opinions, statements, and propositions. Other theorists of Imperialism, overwhelmed by the "complexity of the numerous phenomena" that have been subsumed under this term, suggested therefore that the term Imperialism be dropped altogether.⁶³ They felt it to be an empty concept and thought it to be doubtful whether a satisfactory theory of Imperialism could ever be developed.

Such a suggestion seems quite reasonable when first looking at the varieties of "causes" which have been put forward to account for the new Imperialism. Among those most frequently mentioned to explain "the rapid growth of imperial holdings" at that time are:

- the businessmen's desire for quick and great profits;
- the psychological drive for power and mastery;
- the need, presumed or real, for raw materials and markets;
- the rise of the labour movement; imperialism as a reaction to and diversion of domestic unrest;
- the naval tradition (this factor, however, for Britain only);
- strategic and diplomatic considerations based upon the emerging sense of geopolitics;

⁶³Daalder, Imperialism, op. cit., p. 101-108.

a spirit of adventure (individuals as primary agents of Imperialism - Great Britain: Cecil Rhodes; Germany: Carl Peters); the rise of an inexpensive, sensation-seeking press; the growth of a bureaucratic civil service; the desire to save souls; and the conviction of having a mission to 'civilize' the world."⁶⁴

Of course, these factors do not have an equal degree of importance, but there can be no doubt that they were all present.

In the meantime, however, these different theories and explanations of imperialism and their alleged "causes" had been assembled into "broad schools of thought." They have been challenged and regrouped or rearranged under the impact of such challenges. They have, however, all one factor in common: they emerged post facto. It was only in 1902, at the zenith of European Imperialism that the first study of "Imperialism" was published by J.A. Hobson. His book Imperialism dealt mainly with British Imperialism -- yet a great number of features and factors which he identified as relevant for British involvement in the new Imperialism were applicable also for French and German Imperialism. His book became very influential, so influential indeed, that it was returned to again and again by others, in order to confirm, refute, modify, or expand on his analysis.

Some Marxist theorists, such as Rosa Luxemburg, Rudolf Hilferding and Lenin and non-Marxist, such as Hobson himself, have emphasized that economic criteria and considerations were the only or main reason for

⁶⁴Daalder, Ibid, p. 101-108.

Imperialism, although they differed substantially in details of their analysis. They gave rise to questions whether Imperialism was triggered because of the need to export surplus capital from Europe - as Hobson and others thought - or whether it was a function of "increasing international competition leading to an intensive search for protected markets and for access to vital raw materials and minerals"⁶⁵ or whether imperialism was a special stage of capitalism and as such the expression of the monopoly stage of capitalism, as Lenin described it to be.

Other theorists pointed out that Imperialism was the result of the prevailing racial doctrines and cultural expansionism, a manifestation of the "Darwinian struggle between nations and races",⁶⁶ while again other theorists insisted that Imperialism had little or nothing to do with these factors or with economic necessities or with capitalism as such. They felt that Imperialism was the result of nationalism and an international power struggle.

Those theorists who favoured a political approach to Imperialism saw it therefore as a power play, in which the rivalries within Europe were acted out outside of Europe, and they have therefore suggested that "the scramble" started in Europe when new competing expansive nations entered the area of "Weltpolitik." They emphasized that especially the unification of Germany and Italy resulted in a "new assertive nationalism in these countries", that France was tempted "into colonial

⁶⁵Roger Owen, Studies in the Theory of Imperialism, Longman, London, 1972, p. 2.

⁶⁶Emerson, op. cit., p. 1-5.

adventures in order to regain a sense of glory and grandeur after her defeat by Prussia",⁶⁷ that the "continued expansion of Russia towards Constantinople, Persia, India, and the Far East" increasingly threatened "long established British Imperial interests" and that Britain therefore "could not remain aloof from formal annexation when others threatened to move in, threatening the foundation of splendid isolation and of traditional balancing policies."⁶⁸ It seems, however, that any attempt to clearly divide politics and economy in the domestic or international sphere is rather unrealistic and naive. Politics are constantly influenced by economic conditions and considerations and the economy in its turn is influenced by political decisions. A monocausal relationship never exists in either one or the other direction. Nor can the social and racial doctrines and ideologies which accompanied and buttressed these politics and events be understood independently of each other, because they were their ideological underpinnings. They were modes of justifying the empire-building process on the one hand and the existing power relations in the domestic, inter-European, and particularly in the colonial sphere on the other hand by presenting them as part of what seemed to be the natural and just order of things.

The discussions between rival theories have therefore often produced greater confusion than clarity. This is, of course, partly due to the different political positions from which the various theorists, historians and economists viewed the imperialist phenomenon in general

⁶⁷Daalder, op. cit., p. 101-108.

⁶⁸Daalder, Ibid, p. 101-108.

and their own subject matter in particular. However, the general Eurocentricity of both the theories and the theorists might have been a further predicament for a fuller more comprehensive understanding of the imperialist movement in that the theorists based their analysis almost exclusively on European developments and concerns, be they in the domestic, inter-European or international sphere. This remains true even for those theorists who in the light of decolonization and the colonial liberation movements in the various colonies in the 1950's had to look back at a world that had been lost for Europeans. Witnessing the dismantling of the imperial structures they often had to reassess earlier theories and certainties. Yet by doing so they often became the creators of a new form of explanation or justification for Colonialism and colonial rule in that they tried to demonstrate that the character of this rule depended largely on which European country owned a colony. D. K. Fieldhouse in his book The Colonial Empire refers to this claim when he writes: "There is a much cherished myth that the character of modern colonies differed widely according to which European state owned them: that some empires were good, others bad; that some fostered independence in their tropical dependencies, others tried to prevent it". This distinction, according to Fieldhouse, "flattered national vanities and was underlined by contrast in style reflecting divergent European traditions and colonial situations. Yet fundamentally such distinctions were unimportant."⁶⁹

The difficulty in establishing a satisfactory and more inclusive

⁶⁹David K. Fieldhouse. The Colonial Empire, Wiedenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1966, p. 374.

theory of Imperialism might also be explained by the fact that European theories left out a whole range of characteristics of Imperialism, which came to be defined as the "colonial relationship" or the "colonial situation". Theorists concerned with this "colonial relationship" therefore looked more at the effects of European imperial policies on colonial societies and the native population rather than how and when these policies were made. Third World Theorists who came into the forefront of the discussion on Imperialism in post-1945 such as Fanon, Senghor, Memmi, Cesaire, came to investigate and illuminate in particular these aspects of colonialism.

They were not - or were only marginally - interested in problems with which Western writers - both Marxist and non-Marxist - had been preoccupied for more than half a century. They were not concerned with the pro's and con's of respective theories, e.g. whether Imperialism was primarily the outcome of economic competition or the result of "inherent malfunctions" in the capitalist system, or whether Imperialism was the result of an inter-European affront against the political status quo, initiated by the nationalism of new emerging European nations. Nor were they interested in the question whether European expansion overseas could be used to deal with social tensions at home or whether strategic considerations relating to Africa brought about the "epoch of Imperialism".

These theorists emphasized the speed and universality of European expansion and conquest and that European nations co-operated with each other and "used their superior technology and military power to enslave and subjugate non-European peoples for their own enrichment".⁷⁰

⁷⁰Thomas Hodgkin. African and Third World Theories of Imperialism

As early as 1885 the Lagos Observer commented on the imperial partition of the world after the Berlin Conference by stating:

The world has perhaps never witnessed until now such high-handed robbery on so large a scale, Africa is helpless to prevent it ...⁷¹

These theorists clearly understood the wider implications of these events - as al-Afghani did for example - when he insisted on the definite correlation between "political and military power and the mastery of modern science and technology". In his "Lectures on teaching and learning", al-Afghani pointed out that

the Europeans have now (1882) put their hands on every part in the world. The English have reached Afganistan; the French have seized Tunesia. In reality this usurpation, aggression and conquest has not come from the French or the English. Rather it is science that everywhere manifests its greatness and power.

... In reality, sovereignty has never left the abode of science ... Science is the true ruler.⁷²

The fusion of technology and domination, but also the violence of the conqueror towards the conquered, the inequality between the colonizer and the colonized, which were at the basis of the colonial system and which found expression in the establishment of organized colonial systems were clearly perceived and diagnosed by Third-World Theorists. Those among them who had experienced colonialism in action and consolidation defined more clearly than Western theorists the general strategy of the imperial powers and the process through which

in *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*, Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe, ed., London, 1972, p. 100.

⁷¹Hodgkin, *Ibid*, p. 99.

⁷²Hodgkin, *Ibid*, p. 97.

they established colonial rule and subsequently the "colonial situation". They gave a much more accurate and inclusive summation of features and characteristics that comprised the colonial experience:

The loss of sovereignty of existing states and stateless societies,

the eventual defeat of movements of military and political resistance,

the physical removal, by deportation, imprisonment, execution, etc. of resisting and non-collaborating rulers,

the continual process of 'pacification', i.e. of military operations against primary resistance movements,

the imposition by degrees of a colonial administrative network,

a hierarchy of salaried officials drawn from the metropolitan bourgeoisie, enjoying a very wide spectrum of powers in relation to the indigenous population,

the development of a parallel system of control over commercial and cultural life through extraterritorial companies, missions, etc.,

the construction of a framework of institutions (e.g. the Indigenat in French territories) designed to preserve European dominance for an indefinite period,

the organization of a system of collaborating groups, drawn from chiefs, marabouts, elements of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie (where they existed),

the blocking, as far as practicable, of precolonial channels of communication across colonial frontiers,

the elaboration of an ideology of imperialism designed to explain and justify the new structure of social and political relationship and the new forms of European power, and

the feeding back of this ideology and the racist attitudes associated with it, into the colonizing

societies.⁷³

Among the most substantial contributions of Third World Theorists and writers was their illumination of many aspects of colonialism to Western theorists of Imperialism, which these theorists had never investigated.

While Western theorists were preoccupied with economic theories, establishing balance sheets about the profitability or non-profitability of colonial ventures while they investigated colonialism against the background and preestablished political and economic theories; while they searched through diplomatic cables and conference memoranda to establish what event brought about the "new" Imperialism; while they worked out a "scientific" defence of Imperialism: in the colonies a new system of abuses, a new form of government was established and solidified. Afro-Asian theorists and writers were the ones who first saw the structural and functional correlation between colonialism and fascism. They pointed to the "impressive interlinkages of European Imperialism, Racism and Totalitarianism".⁷⁴ It was they who spoke of the "burden of the white men" on the Afro-Asian societies and people, and of the crimes committed by Europeans around the world.

Again it was these Afro-Asian theorists who examined the psychological effects of racism, terror and domination on the colonized (Fanon) and further had seen the repercussions of these measures on the psyche of the colonizer. They understood the fundamental reciprocity of human interaction: that it is impossible to brutalize and degrade

⁷³Hodgkin, Ibid, p. 99.

⁷⁴Jawaharlal Nehru commented on this connection when he said that the "Indians' own experience were enough to teach us what these (Fascist) principles and theories of life and state ultimately led to. For our

another human being without brutalizing or degrading oneself. And this reciprocity applied not only to individuals, but also to nations.

By analysing the colonized they analysed by inference the colonizer. By looking at the life of the "coloured man" they saw the world of the "white man". By listening to the thoughts of the victim, they learned about the ideas and ideologies of the victimizer.

people had been the victims for long of those very principles and methods of government". Frank Tucker, The White Conscience, Frederick Unger, New York, 1968, p. 20.

CHAPTER TWO

KARL MANNHEIM ON IDEOLOGY AND WELTANSCHAUUNG

"The discussions of every age are filled with issues on which leading schools of thought differ. But the general intellectual atmosphere of the time is always determined by the views on which the opposing schools agree. They become the unspoken presuppositions of all thought, the common and unquestioning accepted foundation on which all discussion proceeds".¹

This observation by Hayek made in his book The Counter-Revolution of Science, touches upon an interesting and important intellectual phenomenon; a phenomenon also encountered when trying to explain or to account for the intellectual movements and ideologies that have accompanied the imperialist movement during the late nineteenth century. It appears that at one point or another these different and diverse ideas and ideologies seem to have become part of or contributed to the rationalization and justification for the imperialist movement.

It is comparatively easy to discern intellectual trends, developments and assumptions of an earlier age or of a different era when these ideas are no longer shared. This is different of course with regard to ideas underlying thought of a more recent time and even more so for ideas of the present.

Here "we are frequently not yet aware of the common features, which the opposing systems of thought share". For that very reason, ideas

¹F.A. Hayek, The Counter-Revolution of Science, Collier-Macmillan Ltd., London, 1955, p. 191.

might have "crept in almost unnoticed" and might have "achieved their dominance without serious examination".² This is of course very important. It is important, because - as Hayek by quoting Bernard Bosanquet points out - "extremes of thought may meet in error as well as truth".³ The danger of this is obvious. Sometimes such errors "become dogma merely because they were accepted by the different groups"⁴ even if these groups differ and are divided on many other life issues. A case in point might be the different, i.e. apparently diverse ideologies which justified the imperialist movement.

In general conservative, liberal and socialist ideologies - and the groups behind them as carriers of these ideologies - are not perceived as sharing the same values and goals regarding the political, economical and social organization of a society, nor do they normally seem to advocate the same policies, be they domestic or international. These ideologies are often understood as being fundamentally different "Weltanschauungen"⁵ world views - based on a different perception and interpretation of the social and political reality and on essentially different "Weltwollen", i.e. projections and desires of how the world can be or ought to be.

To therefore find these ideologies in general agreement regarding the desirability or necessity of imperialism seems in the first instance

²Hayek, Ibid, p. 191.

³Hayek, Ibid, p. 191.

⁴Hayek, Ibid. p. 191.

⁵Weltanschauung - meaning the way the world presents itself to its members and the members to the world.

quite startling.

How can such a striking intellectual phenomenon be accounted for? Karl Mannheim was one of the first social scientists who addressed himself in a systematic way to some of these intellectual problems and intellectual issues and his work can be applied to throw light on some of these questions.

In this classical and pioneering study Ideology and Utopia, published in 1929 in Germany, and in his Sociology of Knowledge⁶ - as developed by him - Mannheim dealt with a wide range of these intellectual problems, for instance, with the role of ideas in political and social movements, how the "interests and purposes of certain social groups come to find expression in certain theories, doctrines and intellectual movements" and how "these ideas then are consciously promoted by these social groups in order to disseminate them among wider sections of society."⁷

He examined the role and function of ideology but he also examined the emergence of counter-ideologies - which he called "utopias" - and

⁶Karl Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, Brace and World, Inc., New York, 1958.

The Sociology of Knowledge - as understood by Mannheim - is both a discipline and a method.

As a discipline it "explores the functional dependence of each intellectual standpoint on the differentiated social group reality behind it. It sets itself the task of retracing the evolution of these various standpoints. As a method to "seeks to analyse the relationship between knowledge and existence.

As historical-sociological research it seeks to trace the forms which the relationship has taken in the intellectual development of mankind". Kurt W. Wolff, From Karl Mannheim, Oxford University Press, Inc., New Jersey, 1971.

⁷Louis Wirth, Ideology and Utopia, preface, op. cit., 1956, p.

their goals and functions.

He pointed to the distorting influence of ideological thinking - which he defined as both "interest-thinking" and "wish-thinking" - on the perception and assessment of problems and the limitation ideological thinking imposes on solution and alternatives - conceptually and practically.

He investigated the social ties which exist among different ideologies,⁸ theories and modes of thought⁹ and the social milieu out of which they emerged - the social strata behind them. Mannheim thought that these ideologies, theories and doctrines could not be adequately understood as long as their social-historical origins were obscured. This is essential because different epochs develop distinct world-views and within these historical settings the socially dominant group (or groups) creates modes of thought which are in structure and content bound to their interest.

In Mannheim's view it was the task of the Sociology of Knowledge to illuminate this situation and to investigate these connections. For him it was therefore "not impoverishment but infinite enrichment when we see ever more clearly a difficulty in life and thought. It is not bankruptcy of thinking when reason looks ever more deeply into its own

⁸Ideology - in this investigation - will be defined as "consisting of selected or distorted ideas about a social system or a class of social systems when these ideas purport to be factual and also carry a more or less explicit evaluation of the "facts". Harry M. Johnson, Ideology: Ideology and the Social System, International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, David L. Sills, Editor, The Macmillan Company and The Free Press, vol. 7, p. 76-84.

⁹Nietzsche - although not a sociologist of knowledge - ascribed different modes of thought to "aristocratic" and "democratic" cultures.

structure, not incompetence, when an immense enlargement of vision demands a revision of the basis. Thinking is a process that is carried by real forces, continuously calls itself in question, and pushes towards correcting itself."¹⁰

Mannheim was one of the most innovative thinkers of our time. His thought and writing "cuts across much of modern history, politics, philosophy and psychological theory."¹¹

Karl Mannheim was born in 1893 in Budapest, where he grew up, graduated from the humanistic gymnasium and began his university studies. Later he studied at the universities of Berlin, Freiburg, Heidelberg and for a shorter period in Paris. In 1925 he habilitated as a Privatdozent in Heidelberg, which was at that time still "the major intellectual center of the German academic world".¹² In 1929, Mannheim became professor of sociology at the University of Frankfurt. In 1933 - with the coming to power of the National Socialists in Germany - Mannheim left for London, England. Here he lectured in Sociology at the London School of Economics. In 1941 he became a professor of education at the University of London. This position he held until his death in 1947. Shortly before his death in January 1947, Mannheim was "nominated director of UNESCO, a position he could no longer accept."¹³

There are two major phases in Mannheim's work, corresponding

¹⁰Kurt H. Wolff, From Karl Mannheim, op. cit., pg. xvii.

¹¹Quoted on the book jacket of From Karl Mannheim.

¹²Wolff, op. cit. p. xi.

¹³Wolff, Ibid, p. xi.

approximately to his careers in Germany and Britain. Mannheim moved from "Soul and Culture" (1918) to "democratic planning" in the 1940's.

He moved from "problems of interpretation, epistemology, knowledge - knowledge in general and particular kinds of knowledge (e.g. historical knowledge, conservative knowledge) - and social processes impinging on knowledge (of generations, of intellectual competition, of economic ambition)"¹⁴ to problems of social policy from 1933 onward. Under the impact of National Socialism and the emergence of a mass society in Germany and his resettlement in Britain with its democratic tradition, he addressed himself to questions of Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, to a Diagnosis of Our Time and finally to Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning.

Mannheim's work is "deeply marked" by two components, which synthesize his Sociology of Knowledge. According to Wolff these two components are: "genetically Idealism and Marxism; systematically Spirit and Society".¹⁵

In his Sociology of Knowledge, Mannheim started from the premise that thought is socially determined (seinsverbunden). He spoke of the existential determination of thought (Seinsverbundenheit).¹⁶

He challenged the idealist German school of thought which proceeded as if knowledge "arose out of an act of purely theoretical

¹⁴Wolff, Ibid, p. xii.

¹⁵Wolff, Ibid, p. xiii.

¹⁶It is extremely important for the understanding of much of Mannheim's writing to realize that the English translation of "Seinsverbundenheit" into "existential determination" is utterly misleading, because it "prejudges the relation as one of determination" and therefore has given rise to much misunderstanding of Mannheim's work. Determination is not a mechanical cause - effect sequence. The

contemplation"¹⁷ and which insisted on the "conception of intellectual history as an autonomously developing sequence of ideas".¹⁸

Philosophers have been too long preoccupied with their own thinking - with "thought as such". But this type of thinking, "as it appears in the textbooks on logic", is applicable, Mannheim pointed out, "only under quite special circumstances" or in "quite special fields of knowledge, such as mathematics and physics" because it only "refers to a specific dimension of existence."¹⁹

In contrast to the "ideal school of thought", Mannheim claimed that the process of thinking and the process of knowing does not develop in accordance with "immanent laws"; that it is not driven by an "inner dialectic"; nor does it follow from "pure logical possibilities"; but rather that it is influenced both in form and content by what he termed social (existential) and extra-theoretical factors.²⁰ Thought - according to Mannheim - must be comprehended "in the concrete setting of an historical social situation out of which it emerges" and where

"spirit" of the German word "seinsverbunden" might better captured by translating it into "existence-related". The noun "Seinsverbundenheit" is - according to Wolff - an untranslatable term, which might sometimes be well rendered as "existentiality". "Seinsverbundenheit" is a key term in Mannheim's writing on the Sociology of Knowledge, perhaps even coined by him (Wolff, op. cit. iii, footnote).

When Mannheim speaks of "thought" he speaks of "existence-related" thought, that is, historical, political, everyday thought and thought in the social sciences and the humanities (Wolff, op. cit., p. 1ii).

¹⁷Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., 1956, p. 31.

¹⁸Edward Shils, Karl Mannheim in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, David S. Sills (ed), The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, vol. 9, p. 557-562.

¹⁹Mannheim, Ideology, op. cit., p. 1.

²⁰Mannheim considered, for instance, competition and generational change as such "extra-theoretical factors" which influence thought and ideas. "The so-called dialectical form of evolution and change in

diversely organized groups act with and against one another and "while doing so they think with and against one another."²¹

The same proposition applies to ideas, theories and doctrines which according to Mannheim do not "emerge out of a self-contained intellect which evolves by and from itself". Because when examining all the possibilities of human thought - and consequently all ideas and theories - it becomes evident that there have been "numerous alternative paths which could have been followed".²²

In the context of Imperialism and Ideology - the wider framework of this investigation - and following Mannheim's proposition it becomes evident and it can be argued that, for instance, Darwin's evolution theory did not need to be interpreted - as it was - in terms of "social Darwinism", propagating the survival of the fittest individual, the fittest nation, the fittest race. Liberalism did not follow an "inherent logic" when it merged with or into capitalism by linking liberty and property together and later associating itself with social Darwinism; Socialism - to use a more recent example - did not follow "pure logic" when it became "national socialism" with its insistence on "racial purity" and "national self-assertion" - again, in association with social Darwinism.

Marxism did not need to become "Stalinism", insisting on

mental life", Mannheim wrote, "can be traced back to two very simple structural determinants of social character, to the existence of generations and the existence of the phenomenon of competition". Ideology, Ibid, p. 270.

²¹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 4.

²²Mannheim, Ibid, p. 9.

totalitarian control and leadership, in order to establish "socialism in one country".

According to Mannheim's axiom, thought is not only socially and existentially rooted but it is also directed in accordance with what a particular social group wishes and/or expects. "In actual life", Mannheim noted, "it is always some volitional centre which sets thought going; competition, victory and the selection based upon it, largely determine the movement (and direction) of thought".²³ By explaining intellectual movements and doctrines in political terms one runs far less risk in going astray, then "if one takes the opposite course and from a purely theoretical attitude projects a merely contemplative, internal, theoretical thought pattern on to the concrete, actual life process".²⁴

Although Mannheim maintained that "the interests and purposes of certain social groups find expression the certain theories, doctrines and intellectual movements" this did not lead him to believe, in contrast to Marx,²⁵ that the whole "superstructure" can be exclusively explained in terms of interest, but rather "that concrete groups organized around certain dominant interests are 'committed' to a certain style of thinking and feeling not derived from those interests as such

²³Mannheim, Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon, in Kurt Wolff, From Karl Mannheim, op. cit., p. 244.

²⁴"It is not intended to give the impression that mental life as a whole is a purely political matter," Mannheim wrote, "we merely want to direct attention to the vital and volitional element in existentially determined thought, which is easiest to grasp in the political sphere", Ibid, p. 244.

²⁵The similarities and differences in the thought of Marx and Mannheim are that both maintain that ideas emerge from social relationships. But Marx's theory, in contrast to Mannheim's, was rather

but associated with them".²⁶

Different ideas and different doctrines were for Mannheim a reflection of the general competition that operates in society. He saw competition as a "cultural phenomenon", not only observable in economic life - although in this realm most visible and therefore noticed much earlier.

"When the Physiocrats and Adam Smith demonstrated the important role of competition in economic life", Mannheim wrote in his essay Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon, "they were in fact only discovering a general social relationship in the particular context of the economic system".²⁷ He drew attention to the fact that competition also operates in mental life, in the sphere of ideas and that therefore "theoretical conflict" is often related to "social conflict". Those involved in this mental competition are "competing for the possession of the correct social diagnosis (Sicht)".²⁸ The competing parties are struggling to influence, what Heidegger called, "the public interpretation of reality".²⁹

monogenetic, in that he insisted that ideas spring from production-relations only, that "the class which is the ruling material force in society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force" and that therefore "the ruling ideas are nothing but the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships". Karl Marx, The German Ideology, International Publishing, New York, 1976, p. 64.

²⁶Mannheim used concepts such as "immediate interest" (unmittelbare Interessiertheit) and "mediated involvement" (mittelbares Engagiertsein). David Kettler, Structures of Thinking: Karl Mannheim, Routledge and Regan Paul, London, 1982, p. 273.

²⁷Mannheim, Competition, op. cit., p. 227.

²⁸Mannheim, Ibid, p. 228.

²⁹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 228.

Every piece of knowledge, Mannheim maintained, be it historical, ideological or sociological is "clearly rooted in and carried by the desire for power and recognition of particular social groups who want to make their interpretation of the world the universal one".³⁰ The different interpretations of the world "for the most part correspond to the particular position various groups occupy in their struggle for power".³¹

It has been argued when trying to "explain" the feverish expansionism of the European imperialist nations and the general acceptance of imperialism by almost all segments of these societies,

³⁰Mannheim insisted that the social and cultural sciences are no exception to this observation. They also battle for the "universal acceptance of a particular interpretation of reality". This battle is now carried on with "modern scientific weapons". The process in the course of which the "scientific interpretation" gained ascendancy in modern society, "emerged and exists in exactly the same way as pre-scientific modes of orientation, i.e. as a function of the interplay of vital forces".

"Even the 'correct' scientific interpretation, did not arise out of pure contemplative desire for knowledge", Mannheim argued, "but fulfilled the age-old function of helping some group find its way about in the surrounding world", Ibid, p. 229.

Thomas S. Kuhn in his book The Structure of Scientific Revolution, second edition, The University of Chicago Press Ltd., Chicago, 1970, pg. 8, - dealing here with the natural sciences - argues along similar lines when he writes that "the early developmental stages of most sciences have been characterized by continual competition between a number of distinct views of nature, each partially derived from and roughly compatible with the dictates of scientific observation and method", and that "an apparently arbitrary element, compounded of personal and historical accident" (what Mannheim called social, existential and extra-theoretical factors) "is always a formative ingredient of the beliefs espoused by a given scientific community at a given time" (p. 4). "Competition", Kuhn argues a few pages later, "between segments of the scientific community is the only historical process that ever actually results in the rejection of one previously accepted theory or in the adoption of another".

³¹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 230.

that imperialism was just in the air" and therefore influenced the whole mentality of that period.

Such a superficial "explanation" would be unacceptable to Mannheim, who pointed out that sociological analysis shows, "that the public interpretation of reality is not simply 'there', nor on the other hand is it the result of a systematic 'thinking out'; it is the stake for which men fight".³² He maintained that the public interpretation of reality comes into being "just like any other objective cultural product", namely "through the intermediary of social relationships and processes".³³

Mannheim saw four kinds of social processes as generating factors through which the public interpretation of reality can come about:

on the basis of consensus, a spontaneous co-operation between individuals and groups

on the basis of a monopoly position of one particular group

on the basis of competition between many groups, each determined to impose on others their particular interpretation of the world (atomistic competition)

on the basis of a concentration round one point of view of a number of formerly 'atomistically' competing groups, as a result of which competition as a whole is gradually concentrated around a few poles which become more and more dominant.³⁴

³²The public interpretation of reality might even be enforced by police and military power.

In the present political setting two super-powers - the USSR and the USA - are competing over the power to "interpret the reality" for the whole globe and are prepared to destroy mankind in defence of their claim.

³³Mannheim, Ibid, p. 230.

³⁴Mannheim, Ibid, p. 230.

Mannheim considered these four types of social processes "pure types". In modern societies several of these pure types are to be found to co-exist or blend together. One type will, however, predominate. This will be "the 'dominant pattern of interpretation' of the society in question".³⁵

For this investigation, only a few aspects of Mannheim's very detailed and thorough exposition and analysis will be selected and summarized.³⁶

According to Mannheim, thought based on consensus - the first type of thought - is characteristic for primitive, archaic societies, where all its members are able to grasp "the wisdom handed down by tradition and to adapt it to changed conditions". This type of thought never disappears. Even in modern societies this type of thought can be found in groups which have been able to keep "themselves aloof from the overpowering dynamic of the modern era".³⁷

The second type of thought - based on the monopoly position of one

³⁵Mannheim, Ibid, p. 231.

³⁶Competition as a Cultural Phenomenon is regarded by many scholars as an exemplary piece of research and an outstanding example of how to proceed in an analytical step by step fashion in order to show how the Sociology of Knowledge can be fruitfully applied to illuminate many aspects of spirit and society.

He deals in this essay with types of thought, their social basis, and the types of societies which are representative for certain types of thought. He discusses the different styles of thought at various times and the social groups and institutions (churches and universities) which are associated with these styles, he shows how the different approaches and perspectives influence the perception of problems, how concepts change in their meaning when they are transferred from one social group and are taken over by another, etc.

³⁷Mannheim, Ibid, p. 231.

group - was characteristic for medieval society, where the clergy had the power to secure the ecclesiastical interpretation of the world. This power was built on both "intellectual and non-intellectual instruments of power".³⁸

With the breakdown of the ecclesiastical monopoly the religion-based interpretation of the world was challenged and increasingly replaced by a secular interpretation of the world. Many social groups insisted on participating in thinking and judging leaving "no dogma, no authority untouched". Descarte's method was "paradigmatic in this respect" in that it put a "premium on epistemology".³⁹ With the increasing "democratization" of thought - as Mannheim called this process - it became apparent not only that "people actually did not think along the same lines"⁴⁰ - a fact no one had contemplated before - but that "every concrete group had its own perspective, different from others, each aspiring to become the universally accepted frame of reference".⁴¹

This form of "atomistic" competition brought about and made evident still another feature: "new facts" could no longer be integrated into a "pre-existent ordo" as this was the case in medieval society. Now any "externally" given "ordo" was radically rejected resulting in a situation in which there existed "no universally accepted set of axioms,

³⁸Mannheim, Ibid, p. 233.

³⁹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 237.

⁴⁰Mannheim, Ibid, p. 237.

⁴¹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 238.

no universally recognized hierarchy of values - nothing but radically different ontologies and epistemologies", leading to "multi-polar conceptions of the world".⁴²

It is at this point, and as a reaction to the increasing fragmentation "brought about by atomistic competition", the fourth type of competition - dominant in our era - developed. Mannheim called this the stage of "concentration". It is through this process of concentration that the antagonisms of various schools of thought or concrete groups are "gathered into major intellectual currents" (Geistesstroeme).⁴³ The function of these "Geistesstroeme" is to bring about more "uniformity", thus enabling "spatially separated groups of structurally analogous positions to coalesce, by giving currency to ways of life and attitudes". All other groups "beset by similar problems will tend to adopt the basic attitude in question". On the other hand, groups whose experience, attitudes or interests are not represented by these major 'Geistesstroeme' will be "impelled to project their antagonistic attitude by creating or joining doctrinal counter-currents" (geistige Gegenstroeme).⁴⁴ As this process of concentration goes on it becomes increasingly easier to identify a certain attitude as "liberal", "conservative" or "socialist".

Related to the concept of "concentration" is - according to Mannheim - that of "selection", where within the different types of

⁴²Mannheim, Ibid, p. 239.

⁴³There are always more than one current of thought operating at a given time.

⁴⁴Romanticism, for instance, was such a nineteenth century counter-current. It was a European phenomenon because it emerged at approximately the same time in all European countries "as a reaction to

orientation - identified as liberal, conservative or socialist - a further "condensation" takes place. Mannheim cites as a concrete example the formation of a political platform of the German Conservative Party. From "a variety of beliefs and impulses of competing groups" - such as old feudal circles, certain literary groups, representatives of bureaucracy, certain university circles etc. - each of them having already a particular ideology,⁴⁵ only certain features and elements are to be "selected" and retained. Before an ideological platform can be completed many decades will have to pass. This is mainly due to the difficulties encountered before such an agreement can be reached, because "each faction, each individual group wants to have its particular point of view as the official creed of the party".⁴⁶

More interesting for the course of this investigation is, however, Mannheim's example of the genesis of the Marxist platform of the socialist movement, which also shows the volitional basis of this theory.

Socialism, the ideology of the working-class, was along with Liberalism, the ideology of the bourgeoisie, one of the most potent ideological forces in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century and it was a serious contender in the strife for the power to be the

identical circumstances and problems presented by a capitalist world". It was a reaction against the rational-bourgeois thought style and the "values" it represented. Ibid, p. 137.

⁴⁵"When a particular definition of reality comes to be attached to a concrete power interest, it may be called an ideology", Berger and Luckman, The Social Construction of Reality, Doubleday Company, Inc., New York, 1966, p. 113.

⁴⁶Mannheim, Ibid, p. 245.

"universal interpreter" of the public reality.

Mannheim's observation regarding the programme formation of socialism therefore deserves a fuller quotation:

That the official programme of Socialism finally was couched in 'dialectic' terms, that it completely rejected the mental attitude corresponding to the eruptive anarchistic way of acting and made short shrift of the anti-historical, eschatological view according to which anything may happen at any moment - this intellectual event is merely the reflection, in the logical sphere, of the massive political fact that Marx's faction was victorious over that of Bakunin.

The victory of the logical category of dialectic as the key to the interpretation of history over a non-historical, eschatological doctrine which recognizes no definite articulation in history and hence has no use for the concept of evolution⁴⁷ but considers revolution as possible and necessary at any instant - this doctrinal victory reflects the victory of one faction over another, the success of one competitor in the struggle over the question of whose philosophy will serve as the party's official interpretation of reality.⁴⁸

Apart from intellectual and theoretical competition and the selection of certain philosophical standpoints within different groupings, Mannheim saw the same process occurring among the larger ideological contenders - such as Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism - leading to the stage of concentration. Mannheim called this the stage of "synthesis". In this synthesis "under the simple law of competition

⁴⁷Marx's socialism shared the concept of "evolution" with many other intellectual currents of his time. The concept was paradigmatic for the natural sciences of the 19th century, such as biology and geology, but also for political and philosophical positions, such as positivism, liberalism and idealism. The concept of evolution was part of the "Zeitgeist" ("spirit of the time").

⁴⁸Mannheim, Ibid, p. 245, 246.

on the basis of achievement", groups take over "the modes of thought and intellectual achievements of their adversaries".⁴⁹ "Even in socially-differentiated thought and thought-processes" the opponents are "ultimately forced to adopt those categories and forms of thought which are most appropriate for orientation in a given type of world order".⁵⁰

The principle of competition and the related principle of selection can therefore be found, Mannheim suggests, "to furnish the most natural explanation for certain facts recorded by the history of ideas".⁵¹ Out of originally diverse and often seemingly irreconcilable ideas and theories certain elements are selected or "sifted out" in order to become incorporated in dominant currents of thought and over time into the public interpretation of reality. They become - in political terms - part of the "justifying ideologies".

Mannheim's proposition throws some light on questions raised earlier in this chapter. It was said that the different ideologies seemed to have become part of or contributed to the rationalization and justification for the imperialist movement. Mannheim's analysis shows not only why different ideologies - conservative, liberal and socialist - differ in their interpretation of the world, but even more surprisingly, why they often have certain elements in common and why they share certain concepts and views. Mannheim summed up the process

⁴⁹Mannheim draws here analogies to economic life, where one competitor is forced "to catch up with the technological advances of the others", Ibid, p. 254.

⁵⁰Mannheim, Ibid, p. 254.

⁵¹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 257.

of selection by suggesting that finally "a certain residue separates itself from the mass of problematical material around which the main struggle was conducted, and is incorporated almost unnoticed into the outlook and primary orientation of all parties"⁵² and so becomes part of the "Weltanschauung", the "total ideology", as Mannheim called it, of an age or era.

This proposition might help to explain the phenomenon of nineteenth century Imperialism: why there could be observed such a widely shared "consensus" and why Imperialism as a national policy could be explained, promoted and justified by the various groups from the most diverse - even contradictory - viewpoints: as a "right" and as a "duty", as in the name of "progress" and as in the name of "mankind", as a "civilizing mission" and as the "white man's burden".

Mannheim's analysis also seems to make it possible to explain why Imperialism was a European phenomenon. By suggesting that "spatially separated groups of structurally analogous positions" will tend "to adopt the basic attitudes and ideas from each other", Mannheim helps to throw light on the question: why Imperialism was defended by the various groups within the European nations on rather similar lines. Barzun, in a somewhat different context, touches upon this same phenomenon, when he makes the following observation: "... in every European country between 1870 - 1914, there was a war party demanding armaments, an individualist party demanding ruthless competition, an imperialist party demanding a free hand over backwards peoples, a socialist party demanding the

⁵²Mannheim, Ibid, p. 257.

conquest of power and a racialist party demanding internal purges against aliens."⁵³

Barzun gives here a rather accurate description of the political and ideological factions of that time but he captures well the more general weltanschauung of that era.

Mannheim in his writings on the Sociology of Knowledge addresses himself at some length to these very questions: the general Weltanschauung - the "total" ideology - of a time, the "particular" ideologies which flourish at that given period, and the dialectical relationship between them. Mannheim distinguished between these two conceptions of ideology as having distinct and separable meanings.

The "particular" conception of ideology is implied when the ideas and representations of opponents are "regarded as more or less conscious disguises"⁵⁴ of a particular interest, or of the "real nature of situation" which should not be revealed. These disguises and distortions might "range all the way from conscious lies to half-conscious and unwitting disguises, from calculated attempts to dupe others to self-deception".⁵⁵

⁵³Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 94.

⁵⁴This aspect of thought and thinking, that is the "ideological contamination of thinking" is the proper field of analysis of the "theory of ideology" - the "Ideologielehre". There is a rather clear distinction between the social determination of thinking and the ideological determination of thinking. The Sociology of Knowledge deals with the formation of specific world-views, while the "Ideologielehre" - a subdivision of the Sociology of Knowledge - deals with its deformation. Stark, W., The Sociology of Knowledge, Routledge and Regan Paul, London, 1958, p. 54.

⁵⁵Mannheim, Ideology, op. cit., p. 55, 56.

The "total" conception of ideology refers to the "global outlook" (Weltanschauung) of an age or era.⁵⁶

Here the question is raised: why, how and in what form did the world present itself to its observers at that particular historical time in that specific manner?⁵⁷ This conception of ideology is both more neutral and more inclusive. Neutral in so far as it tries to understand and comprehend (verstehen)⁵⁸ the "mentality" of a given period or of a given stratum in society.

Also in this conception of ideology there is a certain presupposition that there is a "correspondence" between a given historical "perspective" or point of view and a social situation, yet it is not implied from the outset that an "unmasking" of conscious or unconscious distortions or interests is imperative.

The "total" ideology encompasses, however, more than the "political Weltanschauung" of a given time, finding expression in the various ideologies and doctrines of political and non-political groups. The overarching "total" ideology in which the "political Weltanschauung" and its particular ideologies are imbedded and therefore effective, is made

⁵⁶The influence of Hegel and Dilthey on Mannheim's thought is evident here. Both thinkers postulated historical periods as distinctive and successive.

⁵⁷Max Scheler, for instance, studied "the interrelationships between the hierarchical medieval world of communal estates and the medieval conception of the world as a hierarchy culminating in God". He also studied the relationship between the rise of mechanistic models of thought and the rise of bourgeois, Gesellschaft types of society". Coser, Lewis A. Sociology of Knowledge, International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, The MacMillan Company and the Free Press, David S. Sills, Ed., Vol. 8, p. 428-435.

⁵⁸The German word "verstehen" has - apart from its translation into "to understand", "to comprehend" - another, a "deeper" more encompassing meaning. In the context of the "verstehen" of the "mentality" of a

up and molded, however, by various other cultural fields, such as economics, religion,⁵⁹ art, philosophy, science, etc.

In order to grasp the "spirit" or the "mentality" of an era, the totality of these interrelationships - of the intellectual and cultural formations - must be elucidated and interpreted.

"In analysing the mentality of a period or of a given strata in society", as Wirth maintained, "it is not only necessary to concern oneself merely with ideas and modes of thinking that happen to flourish, but with the whole social setting within which this occurs".⁶⁰

The interpretation⁶¹ of *Weltanschauung* is possible through "documentary interpretation". "We understand the whole from the part", Mannheim wrote, "and the part from the whole, the spirit of an epoch from documents and documents from the spirit of an epoch".⁶² Mannheim

given time, "verstehen" means the "intuitive penetration of a world-view".

⁵⁹Max Weber's classical work The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1958, is an excellent example of the interrelationship between "spirit and society", that is the interrelationship - both in theory and praxis - of the various cultural and social fields. The interrelationships and cross-fertilizations of various cultural fields are well known: science and politics; religion and art; art and politics; economics and science; politics and philosophy (ideology); science and ideology; etc.

⁶⁰Wirth, op. cit., p. xxviii.

⁶¹In his essay on The Interpretation of Weltanschauung (1921) in Kurt Wolff, ed., From Karl Mannheim, op. cit., p. 56, Mannheim wrote; "Interpretation does not make causal explanation superfluous. It refers to something different, and consequently there is absolutely no rivalry between the two. Interpretation serves for the deeper understanding of meanings; causal explanation shows the conditions for the actualization or realization of a given meaning".

⁶²Wolff, Ibid, p. xx.

thought that the "spirit" of an epoch could and should be even more penetrated through the contributions of the various other cultural fields. Even deeper insights into the successive world views and their interlinkages would thus be possible. The various ways of looking at the same "totality" by examining distinct cultural fields - their different perspectives - were seen by Mannheim as a means of "enlarging" and "refining" the dimension of understanding of a given period and its world view.

Mannheim's insistence on the "interpretation" of Weltanschauung, that is, the "comprehensive explanation of historical phenomena", makes it evident that he had no "atomizing empiricism" in mind. The interpretation of Weltanschauung "does not offer mere positivist explanations", it does not claim "causal necessity for the relationships it uncovers".⁶³ It hopes to give "an understanding of the social factors as a 'constellation';⁶⁴ a constellation which renders the intellectual and cultural formations and phenomena of a given era possible.

Mannheim's insistence on an "interdisciplinary effort" to gather the "scattered items of documentary meaning" and unite the findings and results of the various cultural fields in a common effort of "clarification" and "synthesis" was influenced also by his awareness of what he called "the present era of disintegration and dissolution". He thought, that only at special historical moments, "things become

⁶³David Kettler, op. cit., p. 17.

⁶⁴Kettler, Ibid, p. 17.

transparent" and that at these moments "history almost unveils its formative elements and structures".⁶⁵ But at these moments "thinking" had to be at the height of the situation, for "it is not impossible that all too soon - as this has been the case in history more than once already - this transparence disappears and the world congeals into a single picture".⁶⁶

For Mannheim it was therefore no accident that the "problem of the social and activistic roots of thinking" had emerged in his generation. Nor did he think it accidental that the unconscious which "has hitherto motivated our thought and activity has been gradually raised to the level of awareness"⁶⁷ Historically and sociologically speaking this awareness is not possible in every epoch. It cannot arise in a society "where social stability underlies and guarantees the internal unity of a world-view".⁶⁸

This awareness can only arise in an age and in a society which are characterized by intensive horizontal and vertical mobility and where this mobility undermines traditional views of the world, in a society where a "democratic" diffusion of knowledge gives rise to competing world-views and where these world-views then are used by political and social groups as weapons in their struggle for power. Politics, according to Mannheim, became "fundamentally significant only when it

⁶⁵Wolff, op cit., p. 1xvi.

⁶⁶Wolff, Ibid, p. 1xvi.

⁶⁷Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 6.

⁶⁸Mannheim, Ibid, p. 8.

infused its aims with a kind of political philosophy, with a political conception of the world".⁶⁹

This was achieved approximately in the middle of the nineteenth century when efforts were made to "lift" the "interest struggle" and the political power struggle to a spiritual plane. Liberalism first, followed by Conservatism and finally Socialism made of their political aims and goals a "philosophical credo", a world-view "with established methods of thought and prescribed conclusions"⁷⁰ and the political parties - emerging in the second half of the nineteenth century - therefore all strove "to incorporate rational and if possible scientific arguments in their systems of thought".⁷¹ Parallel to this effort towards "systematization" of world-views and the infusion of political conflict with philosophical and scientific foundations went however another attempt. An attempt that aimed at the destruction of the theories of social and political opponents in the hope that a destruction of their theories also helped to undermine their social and political position. This attempt to destroy opposing theories took the form of "unmasking", that is the "unmasking of those unconscious motives which bind the group existence to its theoretical arguments".⁷² The

⁶⁹Mannheim, *Ibid*, p. 36.

⁷⁰These aspects will be more closely examined in a later chapter together with the political Weltanschauung of the second half of the nineteenth century, in conjunction with Liberalism and Marxism as "particular" ideologies of that time. Other intellectual currents, such as positivism, will also be investigated.

⁷¹Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 36.

⁷²Mannheim, *Ibid*, p. 39.

social-situational roots of thought and the unconscious collective motivation that guided these thoughts therefore became first revealed in political struggle.

Mannheim credited Marx for having been the first to have seen these connections, that is the conscious concealment of interests in groups and their ideologies. It was Marx who first "unmasked" the unavowed motives and interests behind bourgeois thinking and their ideology and the transfiguration of these narrow bourgeois ends and interests into ostensible universalization.⁷³

But the relationship between truth and ideology, that is the conscious deception of opponents because of interests, was brought into a "deeper" focus by Mannheim. In his Ideology and Utopia he goes beyond the proposition that ideology is solely a deception of antagonists. For him the concept of ideology "reflects the one discovery which emerged from political conflicts, namely that ruling groups can in their thinking become so intensively interest-bound to a situation that they are simply no longer able to see certain facts which would undermine their sense of domination".⁷⁴ Implicit in the word ideology was therefore for Mannheim the insight "that in certain situations the collective unconscious of certain groups obscure the real condition of society both to itself and to others and thereby stabilize

⁷³Although Mannheim ascribed to Marx and Marxist ideas a "singularly penetrating quality" he criticized Marxism for having failed to see the social-historical determinateness of its own position and of never having applied the method of "unmasking" in checking "its own desire to be absolute", The Utopian Mentality, op. cit., p. 250.

⁷⁴Mannheim, op. cit., p. 40.

it".⁷⁵

Mannheim incorporates here an additional element into the concept of ideology. Besides the element of deception he adds that of self-deception. Ideology becomes thus both interest-thinking and wish-thinking. The role of ideology as an instrument of explanation - preferably "scientific" explanation becomes through the element of self-deception also an instrument of justification. Ideology is therefore rational as well as rationalizing.

Mannheim considered the rationalizing type of ideological thinking and the mentality that corresponds to it the "cant mentality", a mentality that is "characterized by the fact that historically it has the possibility of uncovering the incongruence between its ideas and its conduct, but instead conceals these insights in response to certain vital - emotional interests".⁷⁶

But Mannheim saw "ideological distortion" not only operating in "ruling groups"; groups that have already to defend a power-base in society and therefore cannot or do not want to see the real condition of society. Mannheim maintained that also groups aspiring to political power - those who want to translate their own political world-view (their utopia) into political praxis are "incapable of correctly diagnosing an existing condition of society".⁷⁷ Because these groups are intellectually so strongly interested in the destruction of the old

⁷⁵Mannheim, Ibid, p. 40.

⁷⁶Mannheim, The Utopian Mentality, op. cit., p. 195.

⁷⁷Mannheim, Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 40.

order and so committed to action, i.e. the transformation of that society, they "unwittingly see only those elements in the situation which tend to negate it".⁷⁸ In utopian groups and in their aspiration the collective unconscious is directed by a "wishful representation of the situation". Here the will to action will make them hide from themselves certain aspects of reality which would shake their belief or paralyse their wish to change things.

The utopian version of thinking is therefore, like ideological thinking, characterized by interest-thinking and wish-thinking. But in contrast to ideological thinking which is both interest-thinking and status-quo-thinking, utopian thinking is interest-thinking that transcends the reality of a given situation - utopian-thinking is future-oriented.

Having revealed the social determination of thought, the existence-related roots of thought, Mannheim cautioned, however, in the end, that this connection did not mean to imply "that mind and thought are nothing but the expression and reflex of various locations in the social fabric" and that there "exists only quantitatively determinable functional correlations and no potentiality of 'freedom' grounded in the mind".⁷⁹ Mannheim felt, however, that he had to show that "even within the sphere of the intellectual there are processes amenable to rational analysis", and that it would be an "ill-advised mysticism" not to bring these processes to "rational cognition".⁸⁰

⁷⁸Mannheim, Ibid, p. 40.

⁷⁹Mannheim, Competition, op. cit., p. 260, 261.

⁸⁰Mannheim, Ibid, p. 260, 261.

On the other hand, Mannheim was deeply concerned about the disappearance of utopia in modern society. While the objectivity that comes from unveiling of ideologies brings "self-clarification to the whole society", he wrote, "the disappearance of utopia brings about a static objectivity in which man himself becomes a thing".⁸¹ One might speculate on the question whether Mannheim had Marxism in mind, a nineteenth century utopia that turned into a twentieth century ideology. Or whether he thought of Liberalism in its early utopian form and its transformation in conjunction with social Darwinism into a nineteenth century ideology, when he wrote: "There would arise the greatest paradox imaginable, namely, that the man of the most rational mastery over things would become the man of impulses".⁸²

⁸¹Mannheim, The Utopian Mentality, op. cit. p. 262, 263.

⁸²Wolff, op. cit., lxvi,

CHAPTER THREE

THE "SCIENTIFIC" FOUNDATIONS OF THE IMPERIAL IDEA

In his book The Structure of Scientific Revolution, Thomas S. Kuhn maintained "that each scientific revolution¹ alters the historical perspective of the community that experiences it".²

Such a change in perspective has ramifications which go beyond the specific scientific discipline that experiences the "revolution". Also other scientific fields might be forced to reinterpret earlier certainties and they might even be forced to discard assumptions which are no longer tenable in the light of new scientific insights. Yet beyond the scientific disciplines and the scientific communities as such, the new knowledge has repercussions for the wider community or society because each scientific revolution changes at the same time the world-view of the society at large impelling and compelling a reconceptualization of the existing order and a reinterpretation of the prevailing ideas and ideologies - thus influencing the mental climate of that specific era.

In order to explain change in science - especially in the natural sciences - Kuhn introduces the concept of "paradigm" and "paradigm shift". A paradigm³ according to Kuhn is "what the members of a scientific community share, and, conversely, a scientific community

¹Major scientific revolutions are associated with Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, Einstein, Kuhn, op. cit., p. 180.

²Kuhn, Ibid, p. ix.

³Kuhn has been criticized for having used the concept of paradigm in many - often contradictory - ways. In the 1969 postscript to the second edition of his book, he indicates that the term "paradigm" is used in

consists of men who share a paradigm".⁴ A paradigm thus governs "not a subject matter but rather a group of practitioners".⁵ A shift in paradigm induces therefore a shift in "the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on" that are "shared by the members of a given community".⁶

Such a shift in paradigm is not necessarily a sudden event, because "novelty for its own sake is not a desideratum in the sciences"⁷ nor are scientists as a group in general less conservative in the acceptance of change and innovation than their non-scientist contemporaries. A shift in paradigm is often preceded by an extended transition period in which competing new insights can no longer be fitted into the "accepted" paradigm of that given period thus making it more and more unsatisfactory and problematic, and finally altogether untenable. A scientific revolution is finalized with the general acceptance of the new paradigm, which then in turn becomes the "dominant" paradigm for a given epoch or period until replaced by another one.

Although Kuhn deals primarily with the "hard" sciences, he uses his concepts in a way that bears resemblance to Mannheim's terminology. When Kuhn speaks of "competing paradigms", of "shifts in paradigms", of

"two different senses". On the one hand, it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community", on the other hand it refers to "exemplary past achievements", p. 175.

⁴Kuhn, Ibid, p. 176.

⁵Kuhn, Ibid, p. 180.

⁶Kuhn, Ibid, p. 173.

⁷Kuhn, Ibid, p.

"dominant paradigms" and of "successive paradigms" Mannheim's concepts - as used for analysis in his Sociology of Knowledge - come to mind, concepts such as "competing Weltanschauungen", "changes in Weltanschauungen", the "dominant Weltanschauungen" or the "total Ideology" of a given time period and the "succession of Weltanschauungen". Paradigms change in science and so do Weltanschauungen, but paradigm changes in science do effect the Weltanschauungen, the whole mental climate of that epoch.

Earlier in this investigation the affinity between scientific discoveries and the emergence of new philosophies and world-views has been touched upon, as well as the attempt of particular political and social groups to incorporate scientific - or at least rational - arguments into their respective political ideologies and Weltanschauungen.

Here then the question arises: What was the "total Ideology" of the late nineteenth century? How did the world present itself to its members? What vital and scientific insights emerged at that particular time and how did these factors enter into the political ideology of late nineteenth century Liberalism and late nineteenth century Marxism, and finally find their way into the explanation and justification of European imperialist policies?

World-views are composed of and influenced by various intellectual and scientific currents of their time. Intellectual currents are not self-contained entities running like rivers in a river-bed. Intellectual currents spread and while doing so absorb at the same time elements from other currents, resulting frequently in a mutual

interpenetration. This makes it sometimes difficult to present a clear cut division of which element belongs to the one or the other current.

This is no more evident than in the nineteenth century when various intellectual currents are merging, separating, with earlier ones resurfacing and reemerging. For the purpose of this investigation particularly two intellectual streams will be touched upon as far as they are relevant here: Positivism - both as a methodology and as a "general science of society", and biology as the dominant natural science of that century. Both provided the impetus for much of the evolutionary and biological assumptions and speculations that determined the intellectual climate of that period, attempting to achieve a thorough rationalization of the world.

Positivism dominated the spirit of the nineteenth century and remained predominant far into the twentieth century. Positivism may be described as "as philosophy acting in the service of natural science, as in the Middle Ages philosophy acted in the service of theology".⁸ It was a philosophical system that refused to claim the title of philosophy, instead insisting only on being scientific. It was a philosophy that claimed "that science was the only kind of knowledge, that existed or ever could exist" and its theory "limited intellect to the kind of thinking characteristic of the natural sciences".⁹ Positivism, according to Collingwood, was in fact nothing "but the methodology of the natural sciences raised to the level of universal

⁸R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History, Galaxy Books, New York, 1956, p. 126.

⁹Collingwood, Ibid, p. 134.

methodology: natural science identifying itself with knowledge".¹⁰

Positivism thus operating with a certain concept of empiricism was convinced "that human knowledge can be complete without metaphysics¹¹ and ontology".¹²

Not only does positivism stand for a particular philosophical attitude in regard to human knowledge, limiting the name of knowledge only "to those operations that are observable in the evolution of modern sciences of nature"¹³ but it is at the same time "a collection of rules and evaluations" regarding human cognition. Positivism denies "cognitive value to value-judgements and normative statements". Only that which is manifest in experience and can be recorded is valid and useful knowledge. And since experience "contains no such qualities of men, events or things as "noble", "ignoble", "good", "evil",

¹⁰Collingwood, Ibid, p. 134.

¹¹In his article The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge, in Kurt H. Wolff in From Karl Mannheim, op. cit., p. 75, Mannheim pointed out, that "a doctrine which hypostatizes certain paradigmatic methods, and the reality sphere corresponding to them as "absolutely" valid, thereby becomes a metaphysic itself - albeit a particularly limited one". "The intellectual conception of science underlying positivism is itself rooted in a definite Weltanschauung and progressed with definite political interests".

Mannheim considered, however, positivism as a "genuine" expression of the fact that for contemporary man the centre of experience had shifted from the spiritual and religious to the economic-social sphere; this is "the 'this-worldly' orientation of positivism". Substantively, positivism has performed the essential turn toward a way of thinking adequate to the contemporary situation, systematically and methodologically however, it did not rise above a relatively primitive level".

¹²Mannheim, Ibid, p. 75.

¹³Leszek Kowalowski. The Alienation of Reason, Doubleday & Company Inc., New York, 1968, p. 9.

"beautiful", "ugly", reflections and discussions of these matters are seen as unproductive and purely verbal in character. Nor can - according to the positive premise, "any experience oblige us, through any logical operations whatever, to accept statements containing commandments or prohibitions, telling us to do something or not to do it".¹⁴

For positivism there are no values "in themselves". Values have to be seen in relation to something. On logical grounds judgements can be made in terms of the effectiveness of the means employed to reach a certain goal, but because evaluations of this kind are of a more technical (scientific) nature, they can be answered or qualified in terms of "true" or "false".

Metaphysical questions of every kind and all reflections that either cannot find their conclusions on empirical data or formulate their judgements in such a way that they can never be contradicted by empirical data are pure speculation and thus irrelevant.¹⁵

"The positive mind" - according to Kolakowski - "presupposes a deterministic interpretation of phenomena - not in the sense that it believes in the existence of metaphysical causes, but in the sense that it seeks to determine the universal laws governing every observed phenomena. It is convinced that these laws, or rather regularities, in observed phenomena, encompass the totality of the world".¹⁶

¹⁴Kolakowski, Ibid, p. 7.

¹⁵Kolakowski, Ibid. p. 9.

¹⁶Kolakowski, Ibid. p. 57.

"The devotion of an ideal of narrow exactitudes"¹⁷ - as Mannheim called it - the confinement to the goal of finding and formulating the interdependence of phenomena without ever penetrating deeper into their "hidden natures", the reduction of everything "to a measurable or inventory-like describability",¹⁸ the exclusion of nearly every significant formulation of a problem, of everything that can only be "meaningfully intelligible", all these abstentions mark the intellectual asceticism so typical of positivism.

"Suffering, death, ideological conflict, social clashes, antithetical values of any kind - all are declared out of bounds, matters we can only be silent about, in obedience to the principle of verifiability".¹⁹

Positivism - apart from being a specific philosophical doctrine - is often linked with the name of August Comte, the author of The Law of Human Progress or The Law of Three Stages, and the Hierarchy of the Sciences. It was Comte who coined the term "positive philosophy", which in the shorter form of "positivism", lasted down to our time.

In his writings - particularly in The Law of Three Stages - Comte

¹⁷"It would be reactionary with reference to the fruitful development of science", Mannheim wrote, "to deny the cognitive value of simplifying procedures, which are easily controllable and which are applicable with a high degree of probability, to a great mass of phenomena". However, it is "one thing to test a fruitful line of investigation and another to regard it the only path to the scientific treatment of an object".

... "it is already clear today that the formal approach alone does not exhaust what can be known of the world and particularly of the physic life of human beings". Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 18.

¹⁸Mannheim, Ibid, p. 18, 19.

¹⁹Kolakowski, op. cit. p. 210.

tried to establish a naturalistic science of society - "social physics" - and to formulate a general law of social growth and the development of societies. This science of society would be able to explain not only the past development of mankind but would make it also possible to predict the future.²⁰ There are "laws governing the development of the human race as definite as those determining the fall of a stone",²¹ Comte wrote as a young man to a friend, and he therefore set out "to discover through what fixed series of successive transformation the human race, starting from a state not superior to that of the great apes, gradually led to the point at which civilized Europe finds itself today".²²

The result of this scientific investigation²³ was the famous Law of Three Stages, according to which the growth of mankind, that is the evolution and development of the human mind, has to pass through three major successive stages, stages that are historically inevitable: the Theological or factitious, the Metaphysical or abstract and the Scientific or positive.

In the Theological state the human mind supposes that all phenomena are produced "by the immediate action of super-natural beings", while in the Metaphysical state the human mind assumes that all phenomena are produced by abstract forces, personified abstractions. It is in the

²⁰Savoir pour prévoir et prévoir pour pouvoir.

²¹Hayek, op. cit. p. 178.

²²Lewis Coser, Masters of Sociological Thought, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., New York, 1971, p. 7.

²³Only a very condense and simplified account of some selected writings of Comte can be given here. Comte's writings are a very intricate historisophic synthesis - drawing on the ideas and notions of

final positive (scientific) state that - according to Comte - the human mind has finally "given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and the causes of phenomena, and applies itself to the study of their laws - that is their invariable relations of succession and resemblance".²⁴

Each successive stage in this development of the human mind emerges out of the preceding one.²⁵ "The constitution of the new system cannot take place before the destruction of the old", that is before all "the potentialities of the old mental order have been exhausted".²⁶

Closely related to the Law of Three Stages is Comte's second best known theory, that of the Hierarchy of the Sciences.

According to this theory - similarly to the development of the human mind which passes through stages from the simple to the more complex - science passes through stages of development in a linear order of decreasing generality and increasing complexity.

Each of these sciences was building upon the results of the

those pre-revolutionary writers such as Turgot, Condorcet and Rousseau, but particularly also on those of Saint Simon whose secretary Comte was for several years. Comte was also the co-editor of Saint Simon's Journal.

²⁴Coser, Ibid, p. 18.

²⁵Although - according to Comte - all of mankind must pass in a single uniform manner through these stages, Comte held, that it was obvious that different populations "have attained extremely unequal degrees of development". He therefore encouraged comparative studies of primitive societies, hoping to find "the different co-existing stages of human society in the various parts of the world". Comte believed, that since these societies and states were completely independent of each other, it would therefore be possible, to observe the different stages of evolution all at once. Coser, Ibid, p. 6.

²⁶Similarity to Marx.

preceding science while adding those elements characteristic for its own field, starting with mathematics, leading to astronomy, physics, chemistry and biology and leading finally to the science of "social physics" - or sociology - a science which Comte thought he had "instituted" but which he said was not yet "constituted".

It was "the extraordinary complexity of social facts" that required "that the science dealing with them should come last".²⁷

Sociology was logically dependent on the other sciences, particularly on biology, its immediate scientific predecessor, not only "because social facts occur in a biological determined reality"²⁸ but also because biology demonstrated a complexity and interrelationship between biological organisms and their specific functions which were similar to the interrelationships and complexities of the "social" organism - society. Comte rejected the individualistic doctrines of his time, insisting instead that the "individual" is a "mental construct" and that society is the "primordial reality".

Therefore "the organic and rational society must be based on science, the principle of its organization will be scientifically elaborated and all its members must adopt scientific modes of thinking. What this scientific mode of thinking should be can only be determined by studying the history of science".²⁹

Comte lived and wrote in the period after the French Revolution, in

²⁷Kolakowski, op. cit., p. 62.

²⁸Kolakowski, Ibid, p. 52.

²⁹Kolakowski, Ibid, p. 52.

a France that was tormented by political and social disorder. During his lifetime, Comte lived through seven political regimes, through many uprisings, popular revolts and insurrections. But he also lived at a time in which recent discoveries in the sciences - particularly in geology and biology - seemed to make it possible to think in terms of a new synthesis.

The theory of evolution and notions such as reason, rationality, progress and the belief in science and technology as means for the advancement of mankind, had been already the great ideals and the hope of the Enlightenment. These notions had found expression in the writings of Turgot and Condorcet and other philosophers of the Enlightenment. In Comte's writing all these factors and currents came together, in a new synthesis, but they took on a very Comteian character.³⁰ The political and social anarchy of his time made him insist on an "organic" society, highly structured and hierarchical. The watchwords of positivism "order and progress" lend themselves both to political and to scientific imperatives.

In Comte's complex blueprint for the "positive" society of the future, this society was to be - as mentioned earlier - presided over and directed by scientists, bankers and the leaders of industry. But it fell upon the scientists to be the moral guides of society. It was their superior knowledge that would entitle them to remind men of the duties and obligations towards one another and towards society. Their scientific insights would furthermore enable them to judge the abilities of different men thus assigning them their place in society.

³⁰Comte and his writings could serve as a prototype for sociological analysis according to Mannheim's propositions in his Sociology of Knowledge. In Comte's writing many of the elements which Mannheim had

The "positive" society was to be a society in which - through the guidance of scientists - men would sternly be held to their collective duties and any subversive ideas as to "inherent rights" would be suppressed.³¹

The new positive society and its order was to have - according to Comte's formulae - "Love as its Principle", Order as its Basis", and "Progress as its Aim".³²

Comte left a huge body of writings,³³ elaborate descriptions and prescriptions on positive sociology, and future sociological research but also on his visions of how the future society should be organized according to the tenets of science - because science needs what society needs and vice versa, namely "the ability to predict events and to

identified as entering into thought can be observed here: the socio-historical determination of thought (the French Revolution and its aftermath), the extra-theoretical factors which enter into ideas and theories (his adoration for Clothilde de Vaux which enters into his vision of the role of women in the future society), the thinking further of what others have thought before, (the influence of thinkers of the Enlightenment), the selection of certain elements and ideas out of earlier and contemporary intellectual currents (the rejection of the notion of the individual as the unit of importance in society, the incorporation of scientific - in this case biological analogies, into the vision of the future society), the new ordering of ideas and notions in order to achieve a new synthesis (the projection of the future based on scientific imperatives).

³¹These highly hierarchical, inegalitarian and anti-individualistic features give to Comte's doctrine its noted authoritarian/totalitarian character. Comte envisioned a society, "in which the individual was conceived as firmly subordinated to society". Coser, op. cit., p. 98.

³²Coser, Ibid, p. 13.

³³Comte left six volumes of his Course of Positive Philosophy, Elementary Treatise on Analytic Geometry, Discourse on the Positive Spirit, The Positive Policy, Positive Catechism, Subjective Synthesis or Universal System of Ideas Concerning the Normal State of Humanity.

influence them practically".³⁴

After Comte's death in 1857, Emile Littré, Pierre Lafitte, G. Wyrouboff, as members of the "Positivist Society"³⁵ became the official spokesmen of Positivism in France and they should be quoted at some length. They summed up quite precisely not only what positivism represented as a method and as a philosophical doctrine but they also formulated the task of sociology as a science of society and as an agent to bring about such a scientific society.

Positivism - according to Lafitte was -

a general doctrine providing common and universal rules for the direction of the world, man and society ...

a doctrine which comprehends all that it is given to us to know, and which in its totality contains parts so well connected and so consonant with each other, and so complete, that nothing is left to chance, no problem is left without solution and everyone knows in all circumstances what he must think.³⁶

In 1871 Littré in his inaugural lecture from the chair of History at the Ecole Polytechnique had the following to say:

History ... means research into the conditions which bring about the succession of one social state after another in a determined order.

Events, therefore, play only a secondary role; being products of the passions and interests driving peoples and their leaders, they sometimes obstruct it, but, taken all in all, ... they are dominated by this movement.

³⁴Kolakowski, op. cit., p. 52.

³⁵The "Positivist Society" was founded in 1840 by Comte and his followers with the goal to disseminate the "demonstrable faith" of his "positive" philosophy.

³⁶W.M. Simon. European Positivism in the Nineteenth Century, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, p. 45.

It was a 'progressive movement' that brought societies 'from an inferior to a superior state'.

When I speak of evolution and progress, I affirm a natural phenomenon, I am not merely spellbound by optimism ... And since it is a natural phenomenon, chance must be excluded.³⁷

Since sociology was a "science" - or at least on its way to becoming one - Littré "deduced with entire logic" when he wrote that:

the time will come when the decisions formulated by it (sociology) will be carried out without the need for consulting the crowd any more than the crowd is consulted on decisions in astronomy, physics or chemistry.³⁸

G. Wyruboff, a young emigré Russian scientist, and another disciple of Comte and co-editor of Littré's journal, *La Philosophie Positive*, even formulated more decisively when he purported that:

as M. Comte said, there is no freedom of conscience in the sciences, in the sense that the mind is not free to refuse assent to what has been proved. Therefore, as that which has been proved grows in scope, society undertakes to teach it, without worrying whether it violates private or subjective freedom of conscience. I protest against a freedom of conscience which permits error except as an individual whim. In philosophy, evil is called error.³⁹

The influence of Comte on writers, historians and scientists in the later years of the nineteenth century has been substantial even if his over-all scientific "project" for society and mankind and his rather absurd speculations regarding a "religion of humanity" with scientists

³⁷Simon, *Ibid*, p. 30.

³⁸Simon, *Ibid*, p. 35.

³⁹Simon, *Ibid*, p. 35.

as their high-priests and with its authoritarian principles and implications did not necessarily find an immediate whole-hearted embrace.⁴⁰

But those aspects of his writings, which might be called the "scientific aspects" or the "scientific features" became incorporated into the larger reservoir of positivist thought, as for instance, "the faith in the essential unity of science, the rejection of metaphysics, the ideal of reducing knowledge to a single universal formula, and the interpretation of knowledge as ultimately of practical value or nothing".⁴¹

These "scientific" features came to constitute the paradigm for the scientific community and determined their approach to science and society. They built the basis for much of the scientific reasoning and discourse in the century to come.

The quest for a thorough rationalization of the world found further confirmation with the publication of Darwin's book The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life in 1859, in which he developed his theory of evolution through natural selection. The book represented a new "scientific" landmark bringing about a new "Revolution" in science, in that it presented a synthesis - much in the way Comte's writing had done - of earlier eighteenth century evolutionary speculations and propositions.

⁴⁰Certain aspects of Comte's assumptions and prescriptions found, however, their realization in twentieth century Fascism.

⁴¹The supreme status of scientists in modern society and their unaccountability towards society at large - even in democratic societies - has been mystified through the pretension of science as being

The evidence of evolutionary processes in geology, zoology and biology proper had been accumulating long before Darwin published his version of evolution. "The force of accumulated ideas" - as Barzun points out - "always transcends the power of the man to whom they are ultimately ascribed".⁴² The list of eighteenth century scientists and scientist-philosophers (Naturphilosophen) who speculated on or dealt with these matters is therefore long and illustrious. Only a very few can be mentioned here: Charles Bonnet, the first who used the word "Evolution", and who established a scale of organized beings; Buffon, who first established a complete theory of biological evolution, and who - like Bonnet - studied embryology, the mechanism of heredity which seemed to be obviously the "mysterious" link not only between change from parent to offspring but also of change in species.⁴³ Then there is Lamarck, the botanist and geologist, who compiled the "most elaborate and scientific system of evolution of his time",⁴⁴ and of course, Erasmus Darwin, Darwin's grandfather - a contemporary of Lamarck, - he also had shared ideas of evolution.

The scientific community was therefore quite familiar with the evidence of evolution - including the evidence of the evolution of man - because these ideas had occupied both the sciences and the enlightened

"value-free".

⁴²Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 42. This "force of accumulated ideas" might explain the coincidence of Alfred Russel Wallace having an identical theory to that of Darwin - both hitting on the same idea simultaneously.

⁴³Barzun, *Ibid*, p. 42.

⁴⁴Barzun, *Ibid*, p. 42.

public for almost a century.

Also the other feature of Darwin's evolution theory, the one pointing to "struggle" and "competition" as the mechanism for survival had been observed and commented upon earlier.

For instance, the French botanist de Candolle had observed that "all the plants of a given country are at war with one another".⁴⁵ They first establish themselves by chance in a particular spot and by the mere occupancy exclude others. By gradually making themselves the master of the ground the smaller are choked and destroyed by the larger. Lyell, the English geologist - a contemporary and a strong supporter of Darwin - by quoting de Candolle - and generalizing the latter's view of the "war between plants", argued in his own writings for a "universal struggle for existence" in which the "right of the strongest" eventually prevails.

But even earlier than Lyell, the Scotch sceptic, David Hume, had been speculating not only on the "survival of the fittest"⁴⁶ but also on the unity of the species in his Dialogues on Natural Religion, written in 1750. About the same time, the French Encyclopedist, Diderot, had presented his doctrine of the survival of the fittest as well as his views on the "development of the species through long ages"⁴⁷ in his Thoughts for Interpreting Nature, and in the latter part

⁴⁵Eiseley, op. cit. p. 101.

⁴⁶The phrase "survival of the fittest" was actually coined by the sociologist Herbert Spencer before Darwin's Origin. Darwin knew Spencer and held him in high esteem. He even had called him "my superior". Spencer was a "social" Darwinist before the expression became popular. Darwin substituted Spencer's phrase, however, for one of his own: the "preservation of favoured races".

⁴⁷Barzun, op. cit. p. 42.

of the eighteenth century, the economist, Thomas Malthus, similarly had discerned "competition" and "struggle" as mechanisms for the survival of the strongest. In his Essay on Population, Malthus had examined population pressures against food resources and had found that these pressures were having a "pruning" effect on life, resulting in a "struggle for existence". Those individuals who were better equipped and stronger tended to survive, while those ill equipped and weak often perished⁴⁸ - a "natural selection" though not yet in name, among human beings.

What then were the features which made Darwin's evolution theory in the eyes of his contemporaries "more" scientific and thus more "revolutionary", considering that most of his theory and the specific aspects of it, such as "struggle for life", "natural selection" and "preservation of favoured races" - although not necessarily in the same terminology - had been observed among plants, animals and humans and had been written about long before him by his fellow scientists?

The reason might lie in the fact that in earlier biological theories evolution and change was linked to a "perfecting" agent. In Lamarck's theory, for instance, this agent was "need". Lamarck had assumed that change in plants and animals occurred through adaptation to new environments and needs. The new characteristics developed through adaptation would then be passed on to the offspring. Through this "inheritance of acquired characteristics" evolution was thought to proceed. This assumption of purpose in Lamarck's theory gave it, however, a "teleological", a "metaphysical" character.

⁴⁸Darwin acknowledged his indebtedness to Malthus and his population theory, which provided him with the clue to see in "struggle" the mechanism for change and perfection. It seems quite interesting that

In another theory, evolution was linked to the principle of vitalism - a life-force in plants and animals - which "willed" - so to speak - improvement. Vitalism was perceived as an "immanent perfecting principle" - of all living beings. Research into the nature of living cells had, however, not surfaced any evidence of vitalism. The theory became untenable and had to be abandoned. A "superadded life-force", in living beings⁴⁹ was found to be non-existent - nothing but matter was left.⁵⁰

Thus once the "mysterious", "metaphysical" or "controlling" power (God or nature) was removed, "mere physical and chemical units remained behind"⁵¹ and the idea of "purely biological change" was adopted. Everything could now be explained in "positive", that is "scientific" terms. This criteria was met by Darwin's theory of "natural selection" - and beyond this by claiming that natural selection was the "sole" agent of change. Not only did Darwin's evolution theory not perceive of any "immanent perfecting principle", his theory on the contrary stressed

Darwin, the biologist, should draw his inspiration not so much from the observation of nature, but rather from the writings of the economist Malthus, a "social scientist" who had observed the society of his time. The observation of life as an ongoing struggle, was by Darwin, transposed - so to speak - from the "social" to the "natural" realm.

This brings up another point. Earlier in his investigation it was pointed out, that not only science influences political and social philosophies and doctrines but that the reverse is equally valid. Social and political doctrines also influence science and the milieu in which science and scientific investigations are carried out has certainly a bearing on the conclusions drawn for its applicability and relevance.

⁴⁹Or a soul in human beings.

⁵⁰Barzun, Ibid, p. 52.

⁵¹Barzun, Ibid. p. 52.

the "accidental" character of change. Only subsequently did changes turn out either to be useful or harmful. According to his theory the useful changes were inherited and in this way the best adapted plants, animals, individuals or human populations - adapted as the result of accidental variations however - would survive in the struggle for existence.

Doomed to extinction were those which "had happened to have acquired harmful characteristics".⁵² Within this schema, the survival of the human species could be accounted for and specifically human characteristics such as "moral motivations and codes, religious beliefs, intelligent actions" could be "interpreted in terms of biological usefulness, as instruments of efficient adaptation that had secured for mankind such overwhelming superiority in the over-all ecology of the planet".⁵³

In answering the earlier question, why Darwin's theory of evolution was more scientific and more revolutionary than those of his predecessors it might be said, that primarily his theory met the demands of positivism and the sciences of his time: it was anti-metaphysical, it discerned a single universal organizing principle - "natural selection", it confirmed one mechanism for development and progress - "struggle".

Moreover Darwin's theory of development and evolution through struggle supplied a scientific underpinning to the social reality of his

⁵²Kolakowski, op. cit. p. 99.

⁵³Kolakowski, Ibid, p. 90.

time. The age recognized itself in his theory because it seemed to confirm as scientific those theories and doctrines of Liberalism that had accompanied the rise of the bourgeoisie and the rise of capitalism as its economic system.

Liberalism as the eighteenth century philosophy of freedom and equality had already left its "utopian" state and been successfully transformed into the ideology of Liberalism by linking freedom to property and equality to the assertion of self-interest.

Laissez-faire - the economic parts of the liberal ideology - was proclaiming freedom of conscience in business, and non-intervention not only in the enjoyment of wealth but also in the methods for its acquisition. No arbitrary limitations - it was said - should prevent a man from fully exploiting his possibilities.

The appalling social and economic conditions created by early capitalism for the great majority of the people - a huge emerging working class was created by the new factory system - were justified in the name of progress and poverty was seen as self-inflicted or as the objectification of an "inherent" inferiority in those individuals afflicted by it.

The publication of the Origin of Species did not only present a milestone in scientific inquiry, it also was to become a landmark in social and political ideology. It not only summed up the preoccupation of the age but particularly the preoccupation of the bourgeoisie of that time.

The title of Darwin's book alone - the references to "natural selection", "struggle for life", "preservation of favoured races"

compressed all the essential notions of liberal ideology and ethics, because "all repeated the same idea of strife with tangible rewards for the winners".⁵⁴

In particular the reference to the "preservation of favoured races" was to become the basis for a view of "racial determinism" in the evolution of civilization, a view which came to govern political discourse and political action, the essence of which might be summed up by two dicta of Disraeli: "All is race; there is no other truth"⁵⁵ and before the British House of Commons in 1849 he declared: "Race implies difference, difference implies superiority, and superiority leads to predominance".⁵⁶

Race and race-struggle became seen as the "key to history", a view that came to be dominant for almost a century. The year 1859 seems "in retrospect a pivotal year".⁵⁷ It not only saw the "revolutionizing" publication of Darwin's Origin of Species but also the "revolutionizing" publication of Marx's Critique of Political Economy, which later became incorporated into the first chapter of Das Kapital.

Independently from each other both authors - Darwin, the biologist, and Marx, the philosopher and social scientist - had in their work identified "struggle" as a principle of progress⁵⁸ - the mechanism for

⁵⁴Barzun, op. cit. p. 28.

⁵⁵In his novel Tancred, 1847.

⁵⁶Michael Biddis, Images of Race, Holmes & Meyer Publications, Inc., New York, 1979, p. 12, 16.

⁵⁷Barzun, op. cit., p. 20.

⁵⁸Both authors seem to have had, however, a common source of inspiration: Thomas Malthus and his Essay on Population, published some sixty years before.

the advancement of mankind. But for Marx it was not just any struggle - it was class struggle.

The inevitability of human progress on the one hand, and the method of natural sciences as applicable to the interpretation of history on the other, had been already axiomatic for positivist thought. In Marx's theory these two aspects seem also to come together: for Marx the "inevitable" evolution of history was based on class-conflict. Also Marx, in his theory of "historical materialism" - that is the theory of progress and historical necessity - attempts to find a law of universal validity. His theory tried to trace "the basic course of human events from the first community to the classless society".⁵⁹ He - like other thinkers of the nineteenth century - tried to enclose the world in a single, rational conceptual system. A system in which the past and the present could be "scientifically" explained and the future anticipated according to established laws of historical necessity.

In Marx's evolutionary theory, all societies have to pass through determined evolutionary stages, stages he called ancient, feudal, bourgeois followed by - as a future projection - the socialist and finally the communist stage. These stages were at the same time "progressive epochs in the economic formation of society"⁶⁰ - stages could not be skipped.

Each of these stages was characterized by a particular kind of property relationship and economic organization, that is the relation

⁵⁹Leszek Kolakowski. Main Currents of Marxism, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1978, Vol. I, p. 352.

⁶⁰Kolakowski, Ibid, p. 336.

in production and the forces of production.

At a certain stage of their development, that is when the development of the forces of production have outgrown the relations in production, these forces come into conflict, ultimately resulting in a social revolution in which the previous but now further progress hindering class is overthrown and superseded by a new more inventive and progressive class. A revolution of this kind can however, only erupt and succeed at these specific moments in history, because - according to Marx - "no social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed, and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the older society".⁶¹

Capitalism - the mode of production of the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century, was therefore no historical accident. It was not only the most efficient and wealth producing system in history up to that point, but it was at the same time historically justified, because of its historical, progressive mission - whatever the features. Nevertheless the decline and final collapse of the capitalist system was equally inevitable because of the contradictions imbedded in the capitalist system and the bourgeoisie would be overthrown by the industrial working class - the proletariat. Marx projected as "scientific" that after the overthrow of capitalism and the bourgeoisie by the proletariat, socialism would emerge. A system based on the common ownership of the means of production and a transitional "dictatorship" of the proletariat ultimately evolving into communism characterized by a class-less society, in which historical conflict was

⁶¹Kolakowsky, Ibid, p. 336.

dissolved because the common ownership of the means of production had eliminated class struggle.

Leaving aside this last "utopian" notion of Marx's "scientific" theory, it might be said that in his theory conflict and class struggle are built into the economic system.⁶² Class struggle is the motor-force of history and evolution while the economic system builds the "core" around which the struggle manifests itself. According to Marx - "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles".⁶³

Marx called his evolutionary theory "dialectic", a term he had taken over from Hegel. Hegel had earlier presented his own evolutionary theory,⁶⁴ according to which history was the evolution of the notion of freedom. Dialectic in Hegel's system was - according to Mannheim - "the course in which the mind creates and resolves contradictions through its successive phases of self-realization." Since thought in his system was "identified with reality, and the evolution of the mind with the historical process", dialectics were governing both "emergent thought and the tangible course of universal history."⁶⁵

⁶²Similarly to the accounts of Comte's and Darwin's theories, also Marx's evolutionary theory is presented here in a very condensed form, by only concentrating on those features which are relevant for this investigation.

⁶³Karl Marx. The Communist Manifesto, Penguin Books, Middlesex, England, 1971, p. 79.

⁶⁴Hegel's evolution theory might be seen as the German equivalent to the Comteian idea of evolution. Both thinkers perceived of the evolution of mankind as resulting "primarily from the evolution of ideas or the human spirit". Coser, Masters, op. cit., p. 44.

⁶⁵Karl Mannheim, Essays on the Sociology of Culture, Routledge and Regan Paul Ltd., London, 1956, p. 38.

In Hegel's theory of evolution, mankind had passed from the oriental world, in which only one person is free, to the classical period, the Greco-Roman world, in which some people are free, to the modern world, in which all men are free. Hegel's evolution of freedom was linked to the evolution of the state, that is, "governmental forms were central to the understanding of history."⁶⁶ Marx claimed to have "turned" Hegel on his feet when he rejected Hegel's notion that ideas are the prime-movers of history. Marx considered ideas as only being the reflection of material interests of the ruling class at any given time in history. He insisted that the departure has to be taken from the material conditions of men, that is, from the way in which they gain their livelihood. In Marx's view, therefore, it was not "thinking" or "thought" that was the essential human characteristic that distinguished man from animals, but the fact that man was a tool-maker, the creator of "technology" as it would be called now.

Marx's synthesis was - similarly to that of Comte and Darwin - achieved through the utilization and "selection" of many aspects, concepts, ideas and theories elaborated by earlier and contemporary writers, thinkers and theorists.⁶⁷ It has been said, that the main-influences on Marx came from three sources: German idealism - particularly in its Hegelian version - French socialist tradition and

⁶⁶Coser, Masters, op. cit., p. 72.

⁶⁷Barzun charges both Darwin and Marx for being "intellectual imperialists who absorbed and made their own the holdings of others" by pretending of having come to the leading ideas of their systems entirely by themselves. Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 170.

British political economy.⁶⁸

From Hegel Marx took over - apart from the concept of dialectic - the view of history constructed on evolutionary lines as well as Hegel's "holistic approach", regarding society as a structurally interrelated whole.

Particularly strong "in rounding out his own views of history and the social order"⁶⁹ is Marx's indebtedness to Saint Simon and the Saint Simonians as well as to "bourgeois" historians, such as Guizot and Thierry from whom he took over features of his theory of class struggle. It is to Saint Simon that Marx owes the notion of human history as being largely "the history of wars between classes", because classes were the "key" to Saint Simon's philosophy of history, in that he explained the historical process entirely in these terms.⁷⁰

Also the ideas of property relations as "central to an understanding of history" rather than governmental forms - as Hegel had propounded - are derived from Saint Simon. "Class struggle, the crucial importance of the working class in the modern industrial world, the emphasis on industry and labour, and above all, the emphasis on an activist social philosophy that called not only for interpreting the world but for changing it - all these elements of Marx's synthesis were stimulated through the reading of French socialist and near-socialist doctrines".⁷¹

⁶⁸Corresponding roughly in this order to the three countries of Marx's sojourn. Coser, Masters, op. cit., p. 76.

⁶⁹Coser, Masters, op. cit., p. 75.

⁷⁰Coser, Ibid, p. 75.

⁷¹Coser, Ibid, p. 75.

Many other aspects which went into Marx's critique of political economy were built on pre-existing economic notions and concepts.

It was from the "classical" economist Adam Smith that Marx derived the notion of the "labour theory of value", and it was from Malthus that he learned that "the contradictions in capitalist production were inherent in the 'system' itself".⁷²

It was from the Swiss economist Sismondi⁷³ that Marx took over the term "proletariat" which Sismondi had coined and used to "describe the increasing population of urban workmen" as well as the concept "mieux value" - Mehrwert - which Sismondi had used "as a means of analysing the industrial exploitation of the worker".⁷⁴ It was Sismondi again, who in the 1830's was the first to state the fact of "overproduction", and it was he who saw "what is the now familiar paradox of "starvation in the midst of plenty".⁷⁵

From Moses Hess, Marx took over "the theory of the concentration and centralization of capital, the theory of increasing misery" as well as "the doctrine of the collapse of capitalism as inevitable" ... theories which Hess had formulated in his essay of 1847 The Consequences of Revolution of the Proletariat.⁷⁶

⁷²Barzun, Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 151.

⁷³Barzun suggests that in many ways Sismondi "bears to Marx the same relations that Lamarck bears to Darwin. He stands in the background, receiving mention, when lucky, as the walker-on before the king". Barzun, *Ibid*, p. 148.

⁷⁴Barzun, *Ibid*, p. 148.

⁷⁵Barzun, *Ibid*, p. 150.

⁷⁶Coser, Masters, op. cit., p. 74.

Marx (and Engels) mostly denied their indebtedness to other writers and theorists, particularly to the French socialists, such as Saint Simon, Fourier, Proudhon, Babeuf, etc., whose ideas Marx had used so deliberately without acknowledgement and who he came to denounce as "utopians" or "petty bourgeois", contrasting them unfavourably with his own "scientific" version of socialism. It was particularly Proudhon who suffered Marx's denunciation and scorn because he and the other "utopians" insisted in their version of socialism on co-operation rather than force and revolution as a means to bring about change in society. They had seen the destruction and chaos of a revolution and they knew the high price in human life and suffering and the effects of moral disintegration.

It was not that they were unaware of or overlooked class struggle but they did not see in it a principle of progress. Rather than waiting for the "laws of economy" or the "laws of history" to take their course - as demanded by a laissez-faire scientific socialism - they favoured social legislation to ameliorate the present poverty and suffering of the working-class. They had a high regard for individuals and they feared equally an overriding state capitalism together with "any proposed dictatorship of a class".

Proudhon⁷⁷ particularly wanted - instead of being embittered in a class position and to seek "mass power in a spirit of

⁷⁷It was through Proudhon's influence that the "Truth, Justice, and Morality" clause in the statutes of the First International was retained, a clause which read: "All societies and individuals connected with the association acknowledge truth, justice and morality as the basis of their behavior among themselves and toward all their fellow-men without regard to color, creed or nationality" Marx allowed these words "truth, justice and morality" to remain in a context "where they would do no harm". Barzun, op. cit., p. 176.

self-righteousness",⁷⁸ to transcend class ideas. He also felt that communism was not the solution to the property problems of society. In his Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?, Proudhon rejected both individual property and communism as being tyrannical, hoping that another way could be found. One was in his view, the tyranny of the strong, the other the tyranny of the weak. "The injustices of communism", he wrote, "are irreparable, it does violence to sympathies and repugnances, it puts free choice under an iron yoke, it exercises moral torture on the conscience, it plunges society into apathy (atonie) - in a word it enslaves in a stupid and gaping uniformity, the free active, reasoning, unsubmissive, personality of man".⁷⁹

Marx without doubt helped to crush "utopian" socialism. A socialism that had been characterized by a radical criticism of the existing order in society, but which knew and never forgot the fact, that in any improved society man must work together in harmony. Moreover the "utopians" knew that socialism was above all "a moral notion, a value-concept, the highest expression of man's eternal longing for freedom and justice" while for those, who promoted "scientific" socialism, it presented primarily "a coherent theoretical system by which the whole of history could be comprehended and its events reduced to a single schema".⁸⁰

The philosophy of socialism was by the end of the nineteenth

⁷⁸Barzun, Ibid, p. 176.

⁷⁹Barzun, Ibid, p. 205.

⁸⁰Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism, Vol. 2, op. cit., p. 35.

century turned into an ideology of socialism - into a deterministic, scientific world-view. Socialism had become Marxism.

The later part of the nineteenth century saw science triumphant and evolution became "in a very real sense the science of sciences",⁸¹ it was an entire world-view, it was in fact the "total ideology" of that age.

"Evolution could now be used" - as Collingwood stated - "as a generic term covering both historical progress and natural progress. The victory of evolution in scientific circles meant that the positivistic reduction of history to nature was qualified by a partial reduction of nature to history".⁸² Two images of the world became dominant. In one image of the world all situations in human life could be reduced to biological situations, and all institutions created by man could be reduced to instruments of biological survival. In the other image, all human life situations and human institutions were seen as so many manifestations of the economic organization operating in society as well as being the expression of the interests of the respective ruling classes at different epochs.

The theory of evolution "immensely strengthened, and, so to speak, added a substructure to an essential tendency that had been inherent in the positivist style of thought".⁸³ Both Liberalism - as the ideology of the bourgeoisie - and Marxism - as the ideology of the proletariat -

⁸¹Barzun, op. cit., p. 52.

⁸²Collingwood, op. cit., p. 129.

⁸³Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason, op. cit., p. 90.

in the nineteenth century were characteristic of this style of thought.⁸⁴

When Darwin postulated "struggle" and not a teleological principle as the mechanism through which the evolution of the species could be explained and Marx - independently from him - had identified the same mechanism as accounting for progress in society and not an evolving life spirit, all answers to the riddle of life and history seemed to have been found. It seemed that there was no riddle, the key to history was struggle. Struggle was universal. It was both the law of nature and the law of history. It prevailed among individuals, groups, nations and races, as well as among classes and in classes.

Up to a certain point Darwin's and Marx's observations were extremely realistic, since struggle and natural selection actually operated in nature and society and also class struggle was a well known fact and a realistic description of the social reality in which they found themselves. But these observations and facts became "ideological" when both thinkers tried to make struggle the basis of a theory, that is the evolution theory, and turned the fact of struggle into a cause of progress.⁸⁵

⁸⁴Mannheim in his essay on Conservative Thought in Wolff, From Karl Mannheim, op. cit., p. 151, 152 makes the following observation: "The proletarian mentality is strictly rational and fundamentally related to the positivist trend of bourgeois philosophy. This positivist basis is clear in the way in which the proletarian philosophy of history derives the dynamic of events from the social and economic spheres and interprets and movement of ideas in term of a social movement centred round the economic organization of society. At this point, proletarian thought therefore embodies the gradually developed bourgeois concept of the primacy of the economic sphere".

⁸⁵Another observation of Mannheim in this context seems to be very pertinent, when he writes "To recognize actual antagonisms is, however, not the same as to postulate their dominance and continuous evolution

When Darwin's "natural - selection - theory" with its postulate of the "survival of the fittest", came to provide liberal ideology in the nineteenth century with a "scientific" foundation it did not only confirm liberalism's older economic convictions of competition and laissez-faire as progressive features of a "rational" society but it also became an incentive and justification for further action. The wide range of application to which Darwinism lent itself in the interpretation and justification of both social and political reality and social and political action only became fully evident when through the politics of imperialism the struggle for survival took on a global dimension - when it became a race-struggle and war and conquest were seen as the mechanism to assure the survival of the fittest race through the elimination of the unfit races.

The justification of struggle and the propagation that to "eliminate" the opponent, the rival, the class-enemy through words and action meant to act in the name of science and historical necessity was also the premise of Marxian ideology.

The final goal to assure the victory of the international working-class through the elimination of the international bourgeoisie also made this version of struggle large-scale. Also in this deterministic world-view a final victory could only be perceived on a global scale. Weltpolitik became an imperative, and it remained so.

The scientific simplification of world-views through the perception of history as either race-struggle or class-struggle and the

throughout history". Essays in the Sociology of Culture, op. cit., p. 38.

transformation of politics into science - Realpolitic being the positivistic manifestation of politics so perceived - these features lead to a glorification of expansionism and power. They might be summed up with Cecile Rhodes' exclamation at the height of Imperialism: "Expansion is everything. I would annex the stars if I could."⁸⁶

⁸⁶Arendt, Totalitarianism, op. cit. p. 124.

CHAPTER FOUR

RACE, SCIENCE AND IMPERIALISM

"Civilized man", Ernst Cassirer observed in his book The Myth of the State, "is subject to the most violent passions, and when these passions reach their culmination point he is liable to yield to the most irrational impulses. Yet even in this case he cannot entirely forget or deny the demand of rationality. In order to believe he must find 'reasons' for his belief; he must form a 'theory' to justify his creeds".¹

This observation of Cassirer not only characterizes certain aspects of Comteism, Darwinism and Marxism - as examined earlier - but it is equally applicable to certain aspects of the writings of Gobineau, particularly in his Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines", published in four volumes between 1853 - 1855.

In this work, Gobineau attempted to prove that the key to history was to be found in race, that history and civilization were the record and the creation of the white race only, particularly the Aryan race.

This conviction became the cornerstone of Gobineau's theory of "the radical diversity of human races".² According to Gobineau only the white race "had the will and power to build up a cultural life", while the black and yellow races were without life, without will, without energy of their own. "They were nothing but dead stuff in the hands of

¹Ernst Cassirer. The Myth of the State, Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn. 1946, p. 280, 281.

²Cassirer, Ibid, p. 226.

their masters - the inert mass that has to be moved by the higher races".³

Gobineau thought that his task was to establish order where chaos reigned. He objected to the arbitrariness with which the various political factions of his time approached the question of history.

In his view, their attempts were nothing but "a conglomerate of subjective thoughts" based on "wishful thinking" rather than on "a coherent and systematic theory".⁴

Gobineau sought to change all this, being convinced, like others of his time, that "history follows a definite and inexorable law".⁵ For Gobineau it was therefore a question "of making history join the family of the natural sciences, of giving it ... all the precisions of this kind of knowledge".⁶

Since science is inconceivable without determinism, Gobineau - like his contemporaries - became convinced of and obsessed with deterministic historical explanations in terms of one single idea or one single principle. For Gobineau this principle was race. Racial dynamics explained human civilization and history.

"I was gradually penetrated by the conviction", Gobineau wrote in the Dedication of his Essai,

that the racial question overshadows all other
problems in history, that it holds the key to them

³Cassirer, Ibid, p. 226, 227.

⁴Cassirer, Ibid, p. 225.

⁵Cassirer, Ibid, p. 225.

⁶Cassirer, Ibid, p. 225.

all, and that the inequality of the races from whose fusion a people is formed is enough to explain the whole course of its destiny ... I convinced myself at last that everything great, noble and fruitful in the works of man on this earth, in science, art and civilization, derives from a single starting-point, is the development of a single germ and the result of a single thought, it belongs to one family alone, the different branches of which have reigned in all civilized countries of the universe.⁷

Also Gobineau's work presented a new synthesis. Like other "system-builders" of his time he also drew on many ideas and notions of earlier writers and contemporaries for his own work. But also many "extra-theoretical" factors⁸ - as Mannheim called it - that is, existential factors, entered into his writings.

Gobineau wrote in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the European Revolutions of 1848. He was very concerned about the future of Europe in general and the future of France in particular. He was appalled by the corruption, mediocracy and the materialism of his time, the rejection of "true nobility", and the conveyance of power "into the irresponsible hands of the middle and lower classes in the name of democracy, liberalism and socialism".⁹

Gobineau himself was a member of the French aristocracy and naturally might have felt displaced by the political claims and political developments initiated by the "lower classes". But still -

⁷Michael D. Bissis. Gobineau and the Origins of European Racism, Jonathan Cape, Thirty Bedford Square, London, 1970, p. 25.

⁸Mannheim's proposition regarding the "social situational roots of thought" comes to mind as well as his observation regarding the historical and social genesis of an idea, emerging out of temporal and social conditions and affecting both content and form.

⁹Biddis, Ibid, p. 18.

this seems only half the answer to the obvious question, why would his work be expressed in racial terms?

Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, the French aristocracy had adopted the theory of a French nobleman, the Comte de Boulainvilliers,¹⁰ according to which the older inhabitants of France, the Gaules, were conquered by people of Germanic origin, the Franks, who settled down as the ruling class and whose supreme rights were based on the "rights of conquest" and the necessity of "obedience always due to the strongest".¹¹

Although both groups spoke a common language, "they neither had common rights nor common origin".¹²

"The true French", wrote one of Boulainvilliers followers, "is incarnated in our day in the nobility and its partisans are the sons of free men, the former slaves and all races alike employed in labour by their masters are the fathers of the Third Estate".¹³

Boulainvilliers' ideas had great influence on the French nobility and he became representative for many nobles who did not regard themselves as representatives of the nation but as the separate ruling caste.

Gobineau adopted this eighteenth century doctrine of

¹⁰"The doubtful honour of composing the first racist treatise has been ascribed to various writers: to Boulainvilliers, to Kames, to Herder". M. Banton, Race Relations, Tavistock Publications, London, 1967, p. 28.

¹¹Hannah Arendt. The Origin of Totalitarianism, op. cit., p. 162.

¹²Cassirer, op. cit., p. 229.

¹³Cassirer, Ibid, p. 229.

Boulainvilliers about the origin of the French people without reservation - the bourgeoisie as descendants of Gallic-Roman slaves and the aristocracy of Germanic origin. Moreover this form of racial historiography continued into the early nineteenth century in the writings of other French historians, such as August Thierry, and Ernest Seilliere who continued to make associations of Class and Race.¹⁴

When Gobineau declared the "Aryans"¹⁵ the "race of princes", he not only explained his own "race-roots" but implied as well that if an individual was "well-bred", this superior origin would imply superior rights: How could there be a universal law since there is no universal man?

But Gobineau projected the question of race beyond the Class-Race dichotomy of French society - of two people on one soil. When he wrote his Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races he projected these ideas of human differences to a universal scale. He brought together into a gigantic synthesis all the prevailing notions, ideas and speculations of earlier and contemporary writings.

The ideas of race, for instance, as an important factor in human history was general knowledge. So was the awareness that different forms of culture were built by different races and that there were great variations - both in character and value - among these cultures. Even the influence of climatic conditions on the formation of civilization had been studied earlier by Montesquieu in his Esprit des Lois, published in 1748 and speculations on the Aryans as a particular branch

¹⁴Biddis, Gobineau, op. cit., p. 19.

¹⁵Later on in the century the discourse about "Aryanism" (in the form of Anglo-Saxionism and Teutonism) became increasingly part of the political lingo. R. Hartman in Kein Urvolk (1876) exclaimed: "The

of the white race were also quite familiar notions. Gobineau drew inspiration from all these factors as well as from the discoveries of sciences, such as anthropology, ethnology and prehistorical archaeology, in conjunction with zoology¹⁶ and geology, all of which had "devoted much of their energy to divining the racial groupings of man",¹⁷ and which Gobineau then synthesized into his own version of "white supremacy", or more particularly into that of "Aryan supremacy".

The diffusion of the belief in Aryanism had fastened on the European mind ever since 1789, when Sir William Jones, established "a connection between Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Persian, Celtic and Germanic languages and their common indebtedness to an 'Aryan' mother tongue", leading to the belief that corresponding to this linguistic family must be a single racial family. Thus the Aryan myth was born.

Closely connected with the speculations about the Aryans, were the attempts of anthropology and ethnology to establish a more general classification of mankind. But these attempts in classification invariably took the form of the establishment of a hierarchy of races.

Aryans are an invention born in a scholar's cell and not an 'original people'. The pathologist R. Virchow in 1889, made the plain statement: "The typical Aryan such as theory postulates him has not yet been found" (quoted in Barzun, Race: A Study in Superstition, New York, 1965, p. 103.)

¹⁶The identification of culture with race was first made by the zoologist Cuvier in 1817. Cuvier held that race determined culture: The Caucasian race had created the most civilized nations and exercised dominion over other; the Mongolian race had formed mighty empires in the East but its civilization was stationary; the hordes of Negro races had always remained in a state of complete barbarism". M. Banton, Race Relations, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁷Biddis, M. Gobineau, op. cit., p. 20.

Firmly linked to this notion became the inference of innate racial characteristics. The insistence on innate racial differentiations often went so far as to completely deny "the humanity of certain portions of mankind", thereby denying these groups "any capacity for moral judgement".¹⁸

Gobineau also went that far when he declared it to be impossible that members of the yellow or black race could belong to the same family as the white race: "Can we admit" he asked, that "these beings draw their origin from the same source as the white races? How can the Negroes, who in some respect are far below the animals belong to the same class as the members of the Aryan family, these demigods?"¹⁹ "The superior races", Gobineau wrote, "can only know what they are and what they are worth by comparing themselves with those other races that are crouching servilely at their feet".²⁰

Civilization, according to Gobineau, was "incommunicable", and this not only to "savages" but also to "more enlightened nations". He felt that this fact had been established by the colonial efforts of France in Algiers, of England in India and by the Dutch in Java. According to Gobineau, "there are no more striking and conclusive proofs of the unlikeness and inequality of races".²¹

The existence of old cultures, such as the Chinese for instance,

¹⁸Biddis, *Ibid*, p. 26.

¹⁹Cassirer, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

²⁰Cassirer, *Ibid*, p. 234.

²¹Biddis, Gobineau, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

were in Gobineau's view not the work of the Chinese people, but had to be regarded as the product of foreign tribes, emigrated from India.²² Wherever there was culture in the world, it was somehow connected to the white race.

"We must not infer", Gobineau wrote, "from the traces of civilization existing among barbarious people,²³ that it has ever been civilized. It has lived under the domination of another tribe, of kindred blood but superior to it, or perhaps, by merely living close to the other tribe, it has feebly and humbly, imitated its customs. The savage races of today have always been savage, and we are right in concluding, by analogy, that they will continue to be so, until the day when they disappear".²⁴

The humanitarian and egalitarian ideals of the eighteenth century seemed utterly absurd to Gobineau and so seemed universal ethical standards and values. For Gobineau "universality meant vulgarity".²⁵

"The members of the Aryan²⁶ race knew very well that a man is not honorable by virtues of individual qualities but by the inheritance of

²²The Indo-Germanic tribes or the Aryans were thought to have originated in Northern India. The lighter skinned people of this area, the Bramahns, were held in high esteem by Gobineau, because they seemed through their strongly enforced caste-system to display a consciousness of their race superiority and were therefore the embodiment of an unmixed aristocratic race.

²³In the writings of the nineteenth century yellow men of the East were seen as associated with "barbarism" while "savagery", the lowest condition of human existence was reserved for the Negro .

²⁴Biddis, op. cit., p. 133.

²⁵Cassirer, op. cit., p. 236.

²⁶Gobineau had accepted "an etymology of the term 'Aryan' according to which this term originally meant nothing but 'honorable'. Cassirer, Ibid, p. 236.

his race". "A man is great, noble, virtuous not by his action but by his blood".²⁷ Virtue is not a thing that can be acquired, it is "a gift from the earth, from the physical and mental qualities of the race".²⁸

"It is foolish in a man to deny or to resist the power of his race", Gobineau declared, "just as foolish as if a material particle should attempt to resist the forces of gravitation".²⁹

In Gobineau's view "to speak of members of the lower races as 'moral' or 'rational' beings" proved "a very low sense of morality". "The beasts of prey", Gobineau said in his description of the black race, "would seem too noble stuff to serve as a point of comparison with these hideous tribes. Monkeys would suffice to give an idea of them physically, and morally one feels obliged to evoke a resemblance to the spirits of darkness".³⁰

In contrast to other writers of his time - particularly those of Darwinian cast - Gobineau was not an evolutionist-positivist in the way

²⁷Cassirer, Ibid, p. 236.

²⁸Cassirer, Ibid, p. 247.

²⁹According to Biddis, Gobineau had been influenced, among others, by Disraeli's views of race. Disraeli had "repeatedly stressed his belief in races and race-superiority as the determining factor of history and politics". Disraeli believed in British race superiority in general and Jewish race superiority in particular. He proclaimed that "the Semitic principle represents all that is spiritual in our nature", that "the vicissitudes of history find their solution - all in race", which is "the key to history", regardless of language and religion, for there "is only one thing which makes a race and that is blood", and there is only one aristocracy, "the aristocracy of nature", which consists of "an unmixed race of first-rate organization". Arendt, Totalitarianism, op. cit., p. 73, 183.

³⁰Cassirer, op. cit., p. 237.

it was understood then, that is in terms of progress, natural selection, survival of the fittest. Gobineau on the contrary was utterly pessimistic about the fate of the white races, and the Aryans in particular. While according to him, history and civilization only sprang from contact of the white races, the fulfilment of their historical mission entailed their own destruction. Since rule and organization of the world were impossible without close contact to "lower" peoples, such a situation proved disastrous for the higher races.

"Cooperation between different races means cohabitation, cohabitation means blood mixture, and blood mixture means decay and degeneration.³¹ It is always the beginning of the end. With the passing of purity of the race,³² its strength goes and its organizing

³¹In Gobineau's view "the white race originally possessed the monopoly of beauty, intelligence and strength. By its union with other varieties, hybrids were created, which were beautiful without strength, strong without intelligence, or, if intelligent, both weak and ugly". Biddis, Gobineau, op. cit., p. 139.

Karl Pearson in his National Life from the Standpoint of Science, published 1901, held a similar view when he wrote: "The superior race must reject the inferior, or mixing with it or even along-side of it, degenerate itself", Barzun, Race: A Study in Superstition, op. cit., p. 184.

³²The need for eugenic policies in Europe became a focal point of discussion in scientific and pseudo-scientific circles in the later part of the nineteenth century. The need for breeding an Anglo-Saxon "imperial race" was particularly stressed by Francis Galton, a biologist the founder of the "science of eugenics". Galton was a cousin of Darwin, and convinced as early as 1865 that it would be possible "to breed a race mentally and morally much superior to anything known in the contemporary world", Biddis, Images of Race, New York, 1979, p. 55, 56.

About eighty years later, in the 1930's "race-purity" became legislated through "positive" law in Nazi-Germany, where inter-marriage between Aryans and non-Aryans became illegal.

In many states of the United States intermarriage between black and white people became in the 1920's forbidden by law and enforced until rather recently.

Similar laws, prohibiting "race-mixture" are still enforced in countries such as South Africa where marriage between black and white

power."³³

The "determinism" of Gobineau's race theory - whether couched in terms of "ascending races" or "descending races" - his insistence on race as the one and only factor and force in history, his repudiation of all other forces as being inconsequential, as having no independent meaning or value, his denial of moral standards other than those "given" by "blood" and "inheritance", all these conclusions in his theory made him one more representative of the nineteenth century scientism and its ensuing fatalism.

Because Gobineau also thought of himself as a scientist and claimed his theory to be based on natural science, he therefore thought of his deductions as infallible.

Gobineau's writings, according to Banton, "opened a Pandora's box for the coming generations".³⁴ His ideas exercised a pervasive influence over Western (especially German and French) politics, literature, history and intellectual history".³⁵ ³⁶

people is still illegal and in Israel, where intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews is prohibited by law.

³³Cassirer, op. cit., p. 245, 246.

³⁴M. Banton, Race Relations, op. cit., p. 32.

³⁵Ernest Seilliere, an ardent adherent of Gobineau, felt that Gobineau's theory was one to which "the lungs of the twentieth century will have to adopt themselves" (quoted in Arendt, Totalitarianism. op. cit. footnote, p. 174).

Princess Carolyn von Sayn-Wittgenstein told Gobineau: "You consider yourself a man of the Past. I am firmly convinced that you are the man of the Future." Quoted in Barzun, Race: A Study in Superstition, op. cit., p. 70.

³⁶Banton, op. cit., p. 32, 33.

Gobineau's conservative and aristocratic dogma, his glorification of conquest and domination, his "might is right" doctrine together with the Darwinian bourgeois dogma - which arose at almost the same time - with its worship of the "survival of the fittest", natural selection and the natural right of the strongest and its tendency to judge morality almost exclusively "in terms of its contribution towards improving the chances for survival"³⁷ fused into one gigantic scientific view of racial determinism and white supremacy.

The 1850's were the great period of racist publications and since that time race-thinking became international.³⁸ In endless repetition the same views were proclaimed: The Scottish anatomist, Robert Knox, according to Curtin, "the founder of really thorough going pseudo-

³⁷Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p. 20.

³⁸If the pervasiveness of race-thinking seems unduly stressed in this investigation, it is not because there were no critiques at all of these concepts or that there were no alternative views stated. For instance, J.S. Mill, in his Principles of Political Economy, wrote: "Of all the vulgar modes of escaping from the consideration of the effect of social and moral influences on the human mind, the most vulgar is that attributing the diversities of conduct and character to inherent natural differences" (quoted in Biddis, Images, p. 115).

The most admirable and touching rejection of Gobineau's views are found in the letters which Tocquille wrote in 1953 to Gobineau: "Your doctrine is a kind of fatalism, of predestination if you wish ... culminating in a vast limitation, even a complete abolition, of human liberty ... Do you not see inherent in your doctrine all the evils engendered by permanent inequality, pride, violence, scorn of fellow man tyranny and abjection in all their forms"?

And referring to the hopes of the Enlightenment, he wrote: "Once we believed we could do everything; today we think we can do nothing, regarding struggle and effort as henceforth useless and our blood, muscles and nerves as always stronger than our will and capabilities. This is truly the great sickness of our time". (quoted in Biddis, Gobineau and the Origins of European Racism, op. cit., p. 178, 180).

But reservations, such as those of Mill and Tocquille were not part of the "dominant ideology" of that time. On the contrary, such critical views were often belittled as "philanthropic" or as "unscientific". To be "unscientific" at that time was - and became increasingly - utterly distasteful.

scientific racism"³⁹ in Great Britain, in a series of lectures, published under the title Races of Men (1850) and described by Banton as "one of the most articulate and lucid statements of racism ever to appear", elaborated the same sentiments: "With me", Knox declared, "race or hereditary descent is everything: it stamps the man".⁴⁰ He believed his theory to be grounded in biological evidence when he lectured his medical students: "That race is in human affairs everything is simply a fact, the most remarkable, the most comprehensive which philosophy has ever announced. Race is everything; literature, science, art in a word, civilization - depends on it"⁴¹ Also Knox thought, that "warfare was inevitable, for varying degrees of antagonism were inbred". "I think", he declared, "there must be a physical and, consequently a psychological inferiority in the dark races generally". "Further removed by nature from the Saxon race, the antipathy between these races is greater than that between any other".⁴² Knox described his theory as "transcendental anatomy".⁴³

In the United States, Nott and Gliddon started to publish Types of Mankind (1854), to which Nott, Gliddon and the notable zoologist Agassiz contributed. A work in which again, human progress and race war were seen as inter-connected:

Human progress has arisen mainly from the war of

³⁹Phillip Curtin. The Origin's of the White Man's Burden, The Listener, XXXLVI, Sept. 21, 1961, p. 44.

⁴⁰Banton, op. cit., p. 29.

⁴¹Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p.12.

⁴²Banton, op. cit., p.29.

⁴³The influence of Knox was seen as considerable. Banton cites Knox's biographer as stating: "Previous to his time, little or nothing was heard about Race in the medical schools: he changed all this by his

races. All the great impulses which have been given to it from time to time have been the results of conquest and colonizations ... those groups of races heretofore comprehended under the generic term Caucasian, have in all ages been the rulers; and it requires no prophet's eye to see that they are destined eventually to conquer and hold every foot of the globe where climate does not impose an impenetrable barrier ... Dark-skinned races, history attests, are only fit for military government ... the superior races ought to be kept free from all adulterations, otherwise the world will retrograde, instead of advancing, in civilization.⁴⁴

With the establishment and growth of Ethnological Societies in Paris, London, New York as well as the establishment of Anthropological Societies in the second half of the nineteenth century (Paris: 1859, London: 1863) opinions and discussions about race differences became "expressed in institutional form" and race-determinism predominated the "scientific discourse" of their members. The members of the Anthropological Society in London⁴⁵ felt that "anthropology should make its contribution to political discussions by popularizing its discoveries".⁴⁶

Dr. James Hunt, the founder of the Anthropological Society in London, in his presidential address On the Negro's Place in Nature concluded in the following way:

Saturday's lectures, and Race became as familiar as household words to his students, through whom some of his novel ideas became disseminated far and wide, both at home and abroad". Banton, Ibid, p. 30.

⁴⁴Banton, Ibid, p. 31, 32.

⁴⁵The Ethnological Society and the Anthropological Society of London united in 1871 as the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland.

⁴⁶Banton, Ibid, p. 34.

1. That there is as good reason for classifying the Negro as a distinct species from the Europeans, as there is for making the ass a distinct species from the zebra; and if, in classification, we take intelligence into consideration, there is a far greater difference between the Negro and the European than between the gorilla and the chimpanzee. 2. That the analogies are far more numerous between the Negro and the ape, than between the European and the ape. 3. That the Negro is inferior intellectually to Europeans. 4. That the Negro becomes more humanized when in his natural subordination to the European than under any other circumstances. 5. That the Negro race can only be humanised and civilized by Europeans. 6. That European civilization is not suited to the Negro's requirement or character.⁴⁷

The idea that black races if not made for outright slavery were happiest in servitude or if not happy at least owe servitude to the white man, had been proclaimed earlier by the historian Thomas Carlyle in his essay On the Nigger Question, published in 1849 in which also he proclaimed the Negro as an inferior human being, "just above the domestic animals", to whom "the beneficent whip should be applied if he should not be willing to work for the white man". Carlyle had written in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies where labour shortages now plagued the white plantation owners. Carlyle portrayed the "typical Negro" as "poor Quaschees" who were "sitting yonder with their beautiful mussels up to the ears in pumpkin ... while the sugar crops rot round them uncut".⁴⁸ He demanded that not "a square inch of soil of those fruitful Isles, purchased by British blood" should be held by a black man "to grow pumpkins", "except on terms fair

⁴⁷Banton, Ibid, p. 34.

⁴⁸Banton, Ibid, p. 25.

to Britain".⁴⁹ Fair to Britain, was according to Carlyle, to accord to the State "so many appointed days of service".⁵⁰ Instead of emancipating the slaves, Carlyle insisted that they should be forced to pay a certain sum to buy themselves free. "If the poor Black cannot by forethought, industry, self-denial, accumulate his sum, he has not proved the actual 'freedom' of his soul to a fair extent".⁵¹ For Carlyle it was certain that the white race was "born wiser" than the black and thus to emancipate the Negroes was to deprive them of their "god-given masters". In his view, the Negro "was born to be a servant" and in fact was useful in God's creation only as a servant.⁵²

The "innate inferiority" of the "lower races" on the one hand and "racial antipathy" as "instinct in man" on the other hand, was also reiterated in Charles Mackay's article⁵³ The Negro and the Negrophilist, published in 1866 in the Periodical, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine.

With "scientific impartiality", Mackay proclaimed that "philosophy may talk as it will of the natural equality of the whole human race, but

⁴⁹T. Carlyle. On the Nigger Question, Meredith Corporation, New York, 1971, p. 30, 31.

⁵⁰In Africa the demand for native labour was solved by European colonizers in a way similar to that suggested by Carlyle through the imposition of money-taxes in the form of hut and land-taxes compelling the natives to work for the colonizers. When these measures turned out not to be sufficient, because not enough labour could be recruited in that manner, forced labour and indentured labour was imposed. The imposed money taxes were frequently also used to dispossess the natives of their land.

⁵¹Carlyle, Ibid, p. 26.

⁵²Carlyle, Ibid, p. 32.

⁵³Mackay was a novelist (Revolt of the Saxons, 1841) but he had also worked for several years for the Illustrated London News. He reached the height of his influence as a special correspondent of The Times in

there is an instinct in man" which "proves itself stronger than the most faultless reasoning",⁵⁴ and this instinct is "antipathy of race, against which all arguments are powerless".⁵⁵ The racial antipathy of the Anglo-Saxon⁵⁶ was, according to Mackay, strongest against people "of a different colour from his own", an antipathy which was rooted in the first place in a "desire to rule and to possess".⁵⁷

"The savage aborigines of every continent and island which he has invaded in order to colonize and retain the land, have been invariably persecuted with relentless ferocity".⁵⁸ The red man of America who at one time possessed the continent between the Atlantic and the Pacific

New York.

⁵⁴Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p. 101.

⁵⁵"Even in our little isles, where we are all white, there is a repugnance between the Irish and the Anglo-Saxon", Mackay pointed out, a repugnance, that prevails "even when the same races are transplanted to America" (Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p. 102)

According to Biddis, "perhaps the most striking feature of contemporary comment on the Irish was a constant hinting at their resemblance to the ape, whose relevance to racial debate had been so suddenly accentuated by the controversy surrounding Darwin.

In 1860, during his visit to Sligo, Charles Kingsley, eminent British historian and Rector of Eversley, wrote as follows: "I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw along that hundred miles of horrible country ... To see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much" (Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p. 30).

⁵⁶The idea of racial antipathy as a natural phenomenon was also proclaimed by Sir Arthur Keith, Dean of British anthropologists, Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons and internationally known writer on science, who in his speeches and books stressed "the value of race-prejudice in modern life" and who urged "the necessity of conflict among races as a means of improving the species" (Barzun, Race: A Study in Superstition, op. cit., p. 5).

⁵⁷Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p. 102.

⁵⁸Biddis, Ibid, p. 102.

had all but disappeared. "As they could not be made to work, the Anglo-Saxons resolved to exterminate them". "The race was", according to Mackay, "too proud, too wild, too independent, too lazy, in all respects too worthless to be enslaved".⁵⁹ Mackay felt that "the inferior race provokes aggression, even if the superior would gladly do no more than banish it beyond the boundaries of civilization".⁶⁰

The black race did not fare better in Mackay's description: "It will be admitted", he wrote, "that in his native Africa the Negro has never emerged out of primitive barbarism".⁶¹ In all the records of history, he had been the same:

He has remained in Africa, fastened like a limpet to his rock, and given no sign of improvement in the long interval, or shown the least capacity for self-advancement. He is as unchanged as the beaver, the bee, and the monkey. As he was four thousand years ago, so he is now. Had he not been discovered by the European races, and forcibly removed from his own habitat, like the horse, to be made available as a labourer in a country which knew him not, he never of his own accord would have sought his fortune, or been impressed with the remotest desire of seeking it elsewhere than in his own tropical fields and jungles.⁶²

Mackay discerned a new problem emerging in America after the abolition of slavery - the question of "free labour", which was the "great and paramount law of civilization"⁶³ and to which the "free

⁵⁹Biddis, Ibid, p. 102.

⁶⁰Biddis, Ibid, p. 102.

⁶¹Biddis, Ibid, p. 97.

⁶²Biddis, Ibid, p. 97, 98.

⁶³The alleged connection between hard work and civilization was also made by Francis Galton (later Sir Francis Galton) in his Hereditary Talent and Character, published in 1865 in Macmillan's Magazine, where

negro must conform himself".⁶⁴ "Like the white man, the free Negro must work or die. He cannot be allowed to lounge about great cities, doing nothing but beg. He cannot be permitted to possess Southern lands, and suffer them to go out of profitable cultivation. He cannot be suffered to breed up a race of paupers to prey on the industry of better man. He

he stated: "The most notable quality that the requirements of civilization have hitherto bred in us, living as we do in a rigorous climate and on a naturally barren soil, is the instinct of continuous steady labour. This is alone possessed by civilized races, and it is possessed in a far greater degree by the feeblest individuals among them than by the most abled-bodied savages" (Biddis, *Ibid*, p. 68).

The "civilizing mission" of Western colonizers was often termed in a similar way, in that it was their "duty" to teach the natives how to work - a duty often enforced through kidnapping, torture and other inhuman means.

George Valmor in his book Les Problemes de la Colonisation, (1909) shared this view when he wrote: "The civilized person has the task of facilitating the evolution of the primitive through work and the task of elevating him to the heights of a man conscious of his obligation and of his dignity, rather than abandoning him to his base inclinations by a sort of stupid philanthropy". Valmor - like many others in theory and praxis - considered even forced labour as appropriate to civilize the native populations (quoted in Raymond Betts, Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory: 1890-1914, New York, 1961, p. 144).

Also J. Chamberlain, thought to advance the cause of civilization when he declared in a debate in the House of Commons in 1901, when the question of labour in British African colonies was debated, that "in the interest of the natives all over Africa we have to teach them to work ..." and "... we shall have done the best for them as well as for ourselves", when the natives are taught "industry" (quoted in Robert O. Collins, Problems in the History of Colonial Africa, 1860-1960, op. cit., p. 247).

Charles Dilke, saw the role of the British and the division of function and labour between the native and the English in the following way: "Nature seems to intend the English for a race of officers, to direct and guide the cheap labour of the Eastern peoples" (quoted in Richard Faber, The Vision and the Need, London, 1966, p. 62).

In Africa at least, "the civilizing mission", or the white man's burden" of the European colonizers led to a situation in which the native population was the only one that actually worked.

The notion of "mission civilisatrice" found expression in the mystification of colonialism as "Dominer pour servir".

⁶⁴Biddis, Images of Race, op. cit., p. 111.

cannot be tolerated to form hotbeds of filth and fever in the great cities, nor to become either a moral or physical burden upon the community".⁶⁵

Mackay saw only two solutions left if the "stupendous difficulty" of the "free labour" problem, intensified by "racial repugnance" could not be solved through "a system of apprenticeship to labour or some modified form of serfdom". The first of the remaining solutions was the one "which had been adopted with regard to the aborigines of America - Extermination, gradual but sure".⁶⁶ The second solution was "the establishment of a Poor-Law that shall act upon the essential axiom that no able-bodied man is entitled to live on the charity of the community" and that "refractory paupers" might ultimately "be organized into labour-companies,⁶⁷ and compelled to earn their subsistence".⁶⁸

The belief in racial determinism characterized by a constant association of physical features and qualities with the overall capacity of peoples for moral, intellectual and cultural achievement can also be found in Frederic William Farrar's⁶⁹ paper Aptitudes of Race. This paper also seems to comprise all the features, ideas and claims which came to govern the scientific and lay mind and the public discourse on matters of race-inferiority and race-superiority for at least the next eighty years.

⁶⁵Biddis, Ibid, p. 111.

⁶⁶Biddis, Ibid, p. 111.

⁶⁷Biddis, Ibid, p. 111.

⁶⁸Biddis, Ibid, p. 111, 112.

⁶⁹Federic William Farrar was a clergyman "whose appointments included the Headmastership of Marlborough and the Deanery of Canterbury. Darwin, an admirer of his essay on the Origin of Language (1860)

Farrar was Classical Master at Harrow when he read his paper in 1866 to the Ethnologists (Transactions of the Ethnological Society, 1867) in which he divided mankind into three broad race-categories: "the irreclaimable savage", comprising mainly the black stock, the "semi-civilized", exemplified by the brown and yellow peoples, of which the "utilitarian mediocrity" of the Chinaman was the prototype and "finally the Semitic and Aryan breeds who share between them the credit for all the great achievements of human civilization".⁷⁰

"The savage is not a stately, free, noble creature, presenting the happy spectacle of unsophisticated innocence and primeval liberty", Farrar explained to his audience, but he is "too generally a wretch, depraved, hideous, and sanguinary; his body equally disgusting to the eye and the nose, and his grotesque existence divided between a mistrust of life and a still greater mistrust of death, which he dreads like fire". Many tribes live "in the lowest mud of barbarism".⁷¹

Farrar cites Darwin, who as he points out, "unlike the whole company of those who have romanced about them" (the savages) "had the opportunity of personally inspecting them". Darwin, according to Farrar, described these peoples as men "whose very signs and expressions are less intelligible to us than those of the domesticated animals; men

successfully nominated him for Fellowship of the Royal Society" (Biddis, Ibid, p. 141).

In 1874 some 550 of Farrar's Marlborough students underwent anthropological measurement, as Farrar wished to assist Francis Galton in his efforts to collect such data.

⁷⁰Biddis, Ibid, p. 141.

⁷¹Biddis, Ibid, p. 147, 148.

who do not possess the instinct of animals, but yet appear to boast of human reason, or at least of acts consequent of that reason. I do not believe it possible to describe or paint the difference between savage and civilized man. It is the difference between a wild and tame animal".^{72 73}

Also Farrar - like others before and after him - described the "irreclaimable savage" as being "without a past⁷⁴ and without a future", doomed "to a rapid, an entire and perhaps for the highest destinies of mankind, an inevitable extinction".⁷⁵

"If I be asked", Farrar told his learned audience, "what is the history of these races, the answer is extremely simple:

They have no history.
They have not originated a single discovery; they have not promulgated a single thought; they have not established a single institution, they have not hit upon a single invention. ... the features of these tribes are invariable and expressionless, and their minds characterized by a dead and blank uniformity. Among them generation hands on no torch to generation, but each century sees them in the same

⁷²That intellectual faculties differed widely among the various races of men, was also Darwin's conviction. In his Descent of Man, published in 1871, he wrote: "The American aborigines, Negroes and Europeans are as different from each other in mind as any three races that can be named". John S. Hallar, Jr. Outcasts from Evolution, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1971, p. 87.

⁷³Biddis, Ibid, p. 148.

⁷⁴Farrar seemed to refer to Gobineau's theory, whom he quoted in another context, when he claimed: "Of the seven or eight civilizations which the world has seen, not one, if we except the Egyptian - which has been grossly exaggerated, which was probably due, such as it was, to Semitic and Aryan influences, and which was deeply marked by the Negritian stains of cruelty and Fetichism, - not one has been achieved by the black race", (Biddis, Ibid, p. 148).

⁷⁵Biddis, Ibid, p. 148.

condition as the last, learning nothing, inventing nothing, improving nothing, living on in the same squalid misery and brutal ignorance; neither wiser nor better than their forefathers of immemorial epochs back, mechanically carrying on only a few rude mechanical operations as the bee continues to build her waxen hexagon, and the spider to spin his concentric web; but in all other respects as little progressive, and apparently as little perfectible, as the dogs which they domesticate, or the monkeys which chatter in their woods.⁷⁶

So utterly "irreclaimable" was the "irreclaimable savage" in Farrar's view, that even when he adopted the "externalities of civilization", he seemed "with terrible and fatal facility" to adopt "the worst vices of civilization". He seemed to be destined to wither away "with a kind of weary nostalgia, a pining sickness, a deep-seated despair, and an inevitable decay".⁷⁷

Similarly hopeless was in Farrar's view the prospect for change or advancement for the "second stage or stratum of humanity", because here again differences in aptitude seemed to "prove a radical, permanent and an original difference of race".⁷⁸ The Chinese - "the most advanced and eminent family" of the Mongolian races - seemed to furnish for Farrar the best example of that "arrested development", that "mummified intelligence", "that stopping short at a certain stage" that was so characteristic for the "earliest civilizations", as was the "absolute immobility" for the black and red races. Everything in Chinese civilization seemed to attest to their "ingenious but imperfect", their

⁷⁶Biddis, Ibid, p. 148.

⁷⁷Biddis, Ibid, p. 148.

⁷⁸Biddis, Ibid, p. 152.

"arrested development". "They invented writing", Farrar conceded, in a long description of their cultural, moral and physical shortcomings,

but it stopped at ideography and hieroglyphies; their art had no perspective and no ideality; their science no progressiveness, their religion no enthusiasm; their literature no warmth; their administration no vigour.

Everything in them is marked with the plague-spot of utilitarian mediocrity; they reduce everything to the dead level of vulgar practical advantage, and hence the inventions, which they possessed centuries before the Europeans, stop short at the lowest point. Their compass is but a plaything; their ships painted tubs; their sculpture only grotesque; their architecture a repetition of children's toys; their painting found its consummation in a 'grimacing activity'; their gunpowder mere pyrotechny; their printing only by wooden blocks; their very language a petrified fragment of primeval periods - flexionless, monosyllabic, and infinitely awkward. The unmarked features, the serene, blandly-smiling face, the tendency to physical obesity and mental apathy, the feeble, tranquil, childish, glutinous sensuality, mark the race.⁷⁹

The vastness of gulf between "the stolid unprogressiveness of the Mongol" and the races, which represented - according to Farrar, "the highest stratum, the Tertiary deposit of humanity", the Semites and the Aryans, could only be imagined when contrasted with the achievements of these two races. "A pure religion, iconoclasm, monotheism and probably writing", belonged "pre-eminently" to the Semitic populations, among whom "the greatest and noblest religions of mankind" - Judaism, Christianity and Islam originated.⁸⁰

To the Aryans, however, belonged "science, philosophy, and art" to his race, in Farrar's words, belonged:

⁷⁹Biddis, Ibid, p. 153.

⁸⁰Biddis, Ibid, p. 153, 154.

Homer, Aristotle, Cicero, Charlemagne, Da Vinci, Columbus, Shakespeare, Newton, Goethe, Kant. To him and the Semite belong every single discovery that has adorned, every single thought that has ennobled, every single influence that has elevated and purified our race. To them we owe writing, coinage, commerce, navigation. To them belong the steam-engine, the printing-press, the ship, the light-house, the electric telegraph. To them belong all that is ideal and exquisite in painting, poetry, and sculpture.

To them are due discovery and colonization. Vast islands and continents like New Zealand and America, where before their arrival for untold ages, unalterable and degraded savages, black and red, had been miserably living on the pupae of the wood-ant, or on each other.⁸¹

"Can any single step, can one single discovery be named in the mental and religious progress of mankind", Farrar asked his audience, "that did not originate with the Aryans and the Semites"?⁸²

Farrar claimed to have "marked" the "primordial differences of aptitude in salient representatives of the great stages of mankind".⁸³ He thought to witness the fast vanishing of the savages, both black and red, and he felt "that signs are not wanting" indicating that even the brown and yellow⁸⁴ races, "may in turn give way", races, whose only "institutions and inventions" were "cannibalism", "fetichism" and "depotism". Because of their "administrative formalism, placid sensuality, and unprogressive decrepitude", these races could not ever hope to be contenders "in the great struggle for existence with that noblest division of the human species, whose intelligent energy and

⁸¹Biddis, Ibid, p. 154.

⁸²Biddis, Ibid, p. 154.

⁸³Biddis, Ibid, p. 155.

⁸⁴Later on in the nineteenth century and particularly around the turn of the twentieth century he notion of the "withering-away" theory of the "yellow" race turned into its opposite.

indomitable perseverance" had won them "so wide an empire and so unapproachable a rank".⁸⁵

At the end, Farrar assured his audience that he did "believe in the future of humanity" but that he was certain - led to by all testimony of the past - that the future of mankind would not be promoted by the lower races, since not all of them were "equally gifted" nor did all descend "from a common pair".

Through the constant repetition of these same arguments brought forward by men such as Farrar, these ideas and notions took on over time a "factuality" which they did not have in fact, although many scientists treated them as such.

Much of the "latest in science" in the writings and pronouncements of that time by the academic leaders and scientists would today be considered "hate-literature". It seems necessary to stress the importance and significance of this fact because a great number of the students who were exposed to these ideas and views later often became colonial administrators and often translated these beliefs into colonial praxis. In colonized Africa race arrogance and brutality towards "lower breeds without the law" often went hand in hand.

There emerged at the heights of imperialism the vision and the fear that the "yellow" race might outnumber the "white" race at a future point in history, thus casting doubt as to which race might be the strongest after all. "Race-struggle" seemed - at least in theory - no longer absolutely one-sided. In Europe and North America the slogan of the "yellow peril", "die gelbe Gefahr" captured the public imagination and the political discourse. Heinz Gollwitzer, in his Die Gelbe Gefahr Geschichte eines Schlagwortes, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Goettingen, 1962, particularly investigated this aspect of imperialist thought.

⁸⁵Biddis, op. cit., p. 155.

That nineteenth century science had "justifiably attacked the eighteenth century notion of liberty and equality of mankind" was also the view of Ernst Haeckel, a medical doctor and a famous zoologist in Germany, who felt that there existed now "very different weapons" for the definitive destruction of these ideas and notions and that these weapons were to be found in science, "in the arsenal of comparative physiology and evolution".⁸⁶

Haeckel was an admirer of Gobineau and a follower of Darwin. In his book The History of Creation, published in 1876, Haeckel wrote that "the lower races of mankind are nearer to animals than to the higher races".⁸⁷ "The unprejudiced and critical inquirer when carefully comparing the species of men cannot rid himself of the conviction that the morphological differences between them are much more important than those by which, for instance, the various species of bears, wolves or cats are distinguished"⁸⁸ The great differences in the stages of civilization and in the mental life of the lower and higher races had consequently to imply different values of life. Haeckel concluded that "woolly haired Negroes were incapable of true inner culture and of a higher mental development" and noted that "no woolly haired nation has ever had an important history".⁸⁹

Haeckel in the 1880's and 1890's became a strong popularizer of

⁸⁶Daniel Gasman. The Scientific Origins of National Socialism, MacDonald London and American Elsevier, Inc., New York, 1971, p. 47.

⁸⁷Gasman, Ibid, p. 39.

⁸⁸Gasman, Ibid, p. 39.

⁸⁹Gasman, Ibid, p. 39.

Darwinism. He visited Darwin on different occasions in England and he became an ardent promoter of German Imperialism. He deplored that the Germans were in their thinking too much influenced by the eighteenth century belief of the equality of mankind.⁹⁰ "The view on the subject" (of race differences) "by European nations which have large colonies in the tropics and have been in touch with the natives for centuries", he wrote, "are very realistic and quite different from the ideas that prevail in Germany".⁹¹ The Germans could have been much more successful in gaining colonies, if they had ceased to be bound by the "idealistic notions" of the existence of an "abstract ideal man", whose personality did not at all "tally with the facts". "Only when there was general recognition of the 'low psychic life of the natives' could Germany's empire really 'flourish throughout the world'".⁹²

Ideas about racial inferiority and racial superiority antedated Darwinism, but after Darwin's publication of the Origin of Species and approximately a decade later with the publication of Descent of Man

⁹⁰There was hardly a writer at that time who - when writing about race and evolution - did not renounce human equality, either in the preamble of his writings or in the conclusions of his writings.

Walter Bagehot in his Physics and Politics, published in 1872 declared that the study of evolution had convinced him "that human equality was a myth and that no such a thing as natural law existed" and he found that "the individual and humanity were of little importance in the evolutionary process" (quoted in William L. Strauss, Joseph Chamberlain and the Theory of Imperialism, New York, 1971, p. 177).

Charles Regismanset in his Questions Coloniales, 1900-1912 declared that "humanitarianism was the 'reigning superstition', 'a strange disease issued forth from the false idealism of 1789'" (quoted in Betts, Assimilation and Association, op. cit., p. 193).

⁹¹Gasman, op. cit., p. 27.

⁹²Gasman, Ibid, p. 27.

these views acquired scientific status.

What were beliefs, assumptions and speculations earlier now increasingly seemed to become certainties, because science and evolutionary theory seemed to establish "scientific facts" and evidence seemed to be pouring in from many other fields of research.

Jacques Barzun in his book Race: A Study of Superstition, however, rightly observed:

No system of race-belief stays within its original limits. If it is a historical system, it drags in science or pseudo-science, if it is scientific, it leans on historical or pseudo-historical facts; if philological, it relies on the two other disciplines. The proofs of any system are proofs only by assuming the truth of other 'facts', themselves assumed in a field beyond the one where the investigator originally bade you to look.⁹³

But even when examined on a theoretical level, evolutionary Darwinism lent itself to and operated with two different models - "dynamic Darwinism" and "static Darwinism".

The evolutionary, dynamic model seemed to be operative only for the white race. Here race-progress could be observed and witnessed and the possibilities for even further advancement seemed limitless. The white race was physically and mentally fit for survival, not only capable of "shouldering the burdens of complex society" but able and willing to shoulder the additional burden of governing the lesser breeds.

The static model of Darwinism proclaimed the racial inferiority of certain races - arrested at various points of development - as permanent - allowing no longer for any evolutionary progress on their part -

⁹³Jacques Barzun. Race: A Study in Superstition, op. cit., p. 204.

because, so it was argued, failure in earlier stages of evolution had prevented further progress. "Evolution had already come to an end among the lower races, making them unfit for future development".⁹⁴ In the case of the lower races environmental factors were perceived as no longer or only marginally operative. The lower races were seen as mere "survivals" from the past. They seemed to be locked into various evolutionary stages, adapted to them by innate dispositions, by temperament, "by habit of body and constitution of mind". They were - so to speak - "outcast from evolution".

As a result of this reasoning, it appeared that roughly two-thirds of mankind fell under this "static" law and were defined as inferior and/or arrested. These races were - in the views and estimates of evolutionists and racial determinists - sooner or later doomed to extinction, be it through the "active" extermination by the stronger white race, following "the natural law of the survival of the fittest" or - nature running her course - through the innate weakness, "the weary nostalgia, the pining sickness, the deep-seated despair or the inevitable decay" of the lower races themselves.

The "active" approach rather than the "withering away" theory of the lower races was projected as likely by Darwin, who in his Descent of Man wrote: "At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace the savage races throughout the world".⁹⁵

Thirty years later, when even more "scientific" evidence - this

⁹⁴Haller, op. cit., p. ix.

⁹⁵Robert C. Bannister. Social Darwinism - Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1979, p. 180.

time genetic evidence - was accumulated to prove the "innate inferiority" of the black races, Karl Pearson, a Student of Francis Galton, Professor at London University, and Fellow of the Royal Society, in his book National Life from the Standpoint of Science (1901), stated that Negroes were from a genetic point of view "poor stock", and "if you want to know whether the lower races of man can evolve a higher type, I fear the only course is to leave them to fight it out among themselves".⁹⁶ Pearson felt that "the continual progress of mankind is the scarcely recognized outcome of the bitter struggle of race with race"⁹⁷ and he asserted that the superior race could ensure its own efficiency "chiefly by way of war with inferior races". "When the struggle for existence between races is suspended", Pearson feared, "great problems may be unnaturally postponed".⁹⁸ He - like almost all natural and social scientists of that period - came to feel and to propagate that moral principles could be no guide, that scientific and evolutionary laws had to run their course and they often willingly contributed to the disintegration of those ideas and ideals that had characterized the age of Enlightenment.

That pre-scientific and scientific methodology can come to the same conclusions seems no more evident than on the question of race-superiority and race-inferiority. There was hardly an issue in the nineteenth century science that was more vehemently discussed than the

⁹⁶Banton, op. cit., p. 40.

⁹⁷Banton, Ibid, p. 40, 41.

⁹⁸Banton, Ibid, p. 40, 41.

related question whether mankind was one species, that is whether "humanity descended from a monogenistic type or whether humanity had distinct polygenistic ancestors".⁹⁹ "The controversy between the monogenists and polygenists" became - according to Haller "the longest of the internicine battles among the scientists of man".¹⁰⁰

Most of the writers cited earlier in this chapter, writers such as Gobineau, Knox, Hunt, Nott, Gliddon and Farrar, were explicitly or implicitly polygenists, which testifies to the persistence of polygenist thought sometimes even in post-Darwinian writings.

There existed, however, not only a division in views between the "monogenists" and the "polygenists" but further differences in view subdivided these two schools of thought and science, views which are interesting in the context of this investigation.

The monogenists were subdivided in "Adamites", "rational monogenists", and "transformists". The "Adamites" held to the view expounded in the Bible, taking literally the story of the creation of Adam and Eve as well as the story of the Deluge and the survival of the eight people emerging out of Noah's Arch on Mount Ararat. In the biblical explanation of race differences, the Negro "was the result of the curse of Ham",¹⁰¹ his inferior status therefore was god-given and rather permanent. The Adamites were - and remained - rather untouched by "scientific" claims and explanations.

⁹⁹Haller, op. cit., p. 69.

¹⁰⁰Haller, Ibid, p. 69.

¹⁰¹Haller, Ibid, p. 71.

The "rational monogenists" to which counted eminent scientists such as Linnaeus, Buffon, Cuvier, Blumenbach, James Bowles Prichard, and de Quatrefage, held that there was only one human species and that race varieties were due to "the existing diversities of climate". The "rational monogenists" thought that "man had been created somewhere between the Caucasus and the Hindu Kush", that the earth was much older than the six thousand years orthodox Christians accorded it, and that the differences in man could be explained in climatic and other environmental conditions, that had "acted upon the waves of migration leaving this original homeland".¹⁰² For the "rational monogenists", race differences, such as colour, inferior physiological development and intelligence - were explained as stemming "from a scientific belief in degeneracy".¹⁰³ ¹⁰⁴

For the "transformists" - the third school of thought and science - a school which comprised such men as Bory de Saint Vincent, Lorenz Oken and Charles Lyell (before Darwin), "species passed through successive transformation or divergence". They had developed "from a small number of primordial germs or monads, the offspring of spontaneous generation". "Men, the offspring of slow transformation of apes were isolated

¹⁰²Haller, Ibid, p. 70.

¹⁰³The anthropological argument for evolution was, according to Eiseley, "neatly inverted", by the degenerations. For them "man had not arisen from savagery; he had sunk to it, particularly in those regions most peripheral to Europe" (Eiseley, Darwin's Age, op. cit. p. 301).

¹⁰⁴Haller, op. cit., p. 71.

extremities of the branches and boughs of the organic kingdom".¹⁰⁵ ¹⁰⁶

Monogenists did not believe in "pure" races, but rather in the "relative permanence of marked varieties suited to different regions and gradually produced by the inheritance of acquired variations through the influence of external, environmental conditions, 'fixed' (but not absolutely) through centuries of close breeding".¹⁰⁷

The insistence on man's "single origin" did not, however, lead the monogenists to believe in egalitarianism.

As races were seen as having developed and acquired during the many centuries of their formation and environmental adaptation characteristics which were perceived as profoundly different, it was argued that these factors had established an inequality "impossible to deny".

Quatrefage, for instance, in his The Natural History of Man (1875), pointed out that "the Negro had never been equal to the white". "Does it follow", he wrote,

that, because all the races of dogs belong to one and the same species, they all have the same aptitudes? Will a hunter choose indifferently a setter, or a bloodhound to use as a pointer or in the chase? Will he consider the street-cur as of equal value with either of these pure-breed? Certainly not. Now we must never forget that, while superior to animals and different to them in many respects, man is equally subject to all the general laws of animal nature.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵Monogenists of a more orthodox belief, such as Cuvier, rejected these notions, and often ridiculed them.

¹⁰⁶Haller, Ibid, p. 71.

¹⁰⁷Haller, Ibid, p. 71, 72.

¹⁰⁸Haller, Ibid, p. 73.

Monogenists, in Haller's view, "had drunk deep of the effects of environmentalism and saw no reason to conclude that the Negro was anything but inferior. In fact, rather than to deny inequality, one could argue, that the theory of monogenism grew out of an a priori belief in degradation from the original prototype".¹⁰⁹

The polygenist school - similarly to that of the monogenists - was "neither monolithic nor overly consistent" in its theoretical assumptions.

One polygenist division, the neotraditionalists, tried to "reconcile the Scripture with polygenism". Franz Broca, for instance, argued that there "existed along with the Adamite family" other peoples, with whom, however, "the sacred writer had no concern".¹¹⁰ Other scientists, men like Louis Agassiz, Lord Kames and Karl Vogt who had in a certain way "prepared the groundwork for Darwin by showing modification of types through creative changes", did not find however, any indication "from paleontology of evolution from a single protoplast or change within geological periods".¹¹¹ The neotraditionalist school held that "men and animals were created essentially where they were found, which meant multiple creation".¹¹²

Another polygenist school was accepting a variation of the Lamarckian theory. They held that the different races of men were the

¹⁰⁹Haller, Ibid, p. 73.

¹¹⁰Haller, Ibid, p. 74.

¹¹¹Haller, Ibid, p. 74.

¹¹²Haller, Ibid, p. 74.

result of modification "of some antecedent species of ape - the American from the broad-nosed Simians of the New World, the African from the Troglodyte stock, the Mongolian from the Orangs".¹¹³ They thought of geological barriers as too great an obstacle to permit "migration from a single center", and they found it more acceptable "to derive the American Indian, African, and European within regional limits and from different species of apes", and to see both the Negro and the American Indian as "true autochthons of their respective continents".¹¹⁴

The concept of "species" was a term that found application in the attempt of earlier theorists of polygenism to explain their views on the diversity of man. Later in the nineteenth century the term "species" was more or less abandoned for the term "race".

Species were "fixed" in the definition of the polygenists. Species did not "naturally cross with other species, except under artificial conditions". "Hybrids" the offspring of the crossing of two species - be they animal or man - were perceived as being condemned to infertility. In the general scientific view the offspring of Caucasian and Negro or of Caucasian and North American Indian (each being a different species) were "hybrids" and "characterized by either sterility or reduced fecundity", thus tending towards extinction.¹¹⁵

In the views of the polygenists "none of the species originally formed were extinct", nor was there any "link between the Old and the New World" and "any appearance of similarity was far outweighed by the

¹¹³Haller, Ibid, p. 75.

¹¹⁴Haller, Ibid, p. 76.

¹¹⁵Polygenists became very influential in nineteenth century English thought. Denying any relationship between human "races", they forcefully prevented intermarriage in the colonies and promoted

multitude of physical, moral and mental differences".¹¹⁶

"The different branches of mankind", were according to Agassiz, "founded upon different plans of structure, and for that reason have embraced from the beginning representatives between which there could be no community of origin".¹¹⁷ Broca formulated a similar scientific view when he said:

Despite the unity of the fundamental type, man presents numerous profound varieties based on external physiological, anatomical, intellectual, and moral characters ... there still exist pure races ... and statistical measurements can alone demonstrate whether a race is progressing, stationary or decadent.¹¹⁸

Both in Europe and in America "almost the whole of scientific thought" accepted race inferiority of non-European people, regardless of whether the scientists who proclaimed it were monogenists or polygenists, that is whether they believed in the monogenist degeneracy

discrimination against people of mixed origin. In the view of the polygenists these people were "not true human beings; they belonged to no single race, but (were) a kind of monster whose 'every cell is the theatre of a civil war'", Arendt, The Origin of Totalitarianism, op. cit., p. 174.

The influence of scientific views - polygenism and/or evolutionism - on French colonial theory has been examined by Raymond Betts in French Colonial Theory 1890-1914. Betts point out that the eighteenth century idea of assimilation was later on in the nineteenth century abandoned. Effects of intermarriage between "divergent races" were now analysed as "unhealthy, perhaps disastrous". Fouille in his Le caractère des races humaines et l'avenir de la race blanche, (1894) as quoted by Betts, wrote as follows: "Unite a Bushman with a European woman and the struggle of antagonistic elements, instead of existing among diverse individuals, will be transported to the character of the one and same individual. You would have a personality divided against itself, incoherent" (p. 63,64).

¹¹⁶Haller, Ibid, p. 76.

¹¹⁷Haller, Ibid, p. 77.

¹¹⁸Also for Broca progress in civilization depended on race, a principle which he asserted repeatedly. Judging the aptitudes of races for progress, he concluded - like other scientists of his time - "that

theory or in any variety of the polygenist theories. Whatever their scientific view, the position of non-whites - but particularly that of the Negro - were perceived as being rather permanent. Even the monogenists, although insisting on environmental change through time, were not really more favourable when it came to the Negro, except maybe in their "remote theoretical stance". "For all practical purposes monogenists accepted the known race stocks as 'fixed' as the result of centuries of in-breeding". Change ... "if it were to take place, would require undetermined generations and influences".^{119 120}

the whites as a whole are superior to the blacks as a whole". What this meant - coming from an eminent scientist - in an age of colonialism and imperialism - can be easily imagined, Barzun, Race: A Study of Superstition, op. cit., p. 125, 126.

¹¹⁹A similar view was often held particularly by colonial theorists and administrators.

At the Congres Colonial National of 1889 in Paris, for instance, the discussion concerning the education of the natives centered around the arguments: Whether the natives were at all capable of education; whether education of the natives would not divert them from labour profitable to the metropolis, whether education would not 'frightfully' lower the natives morality and - if education at all - what kind of education should be made available to them, since it was pointed out "that the kind of instruction applicable to civilized men is not at all applicable to half-civilized man". Dr. Poitou-Duplessy, a physician of the French navy, had cautioned the Congres that "just as the stomach requires food appropriate to its age and kind, so the brain required nourishment suitable to the degree of development which it has attained". In his view, the "brain of orientals", for instance, was not yet capable "of partaking of our intellectual nourishment without cerebral indigestion". (He did, however, not think, that natives are not "educatable" at all).

Gustave le Bon, one of the most influential and greatly respected personalities among colonial theorists of his time, had opened the Congres with a report On the Influence of Education and European Institutions on the Indigenous Populations of the Colonies, in which he cited a recent anthropological study which had proved "as settled" the impossibility of educating the Negroes and any attempt to do so was "pure abberation". He spoke of the "organic incapacity" of some races for education. Lewis, Martin D., One Hundred Millions Frenchmen; Comparative Studies in Society and History, IV, 1962, p. 129-149.

¹²⁰Haller, op. cit., p. 77.

"To see racial prejudices in their scientific robes", Haller points out, "is to understand, why, despite later conceptual changes in evolution and methodology attitudes of racial inferiority have continued to plague Western culture".¹²¹

The long-standing controversy between monogenists and polygenists came more or less to an end with Darwin's publication of Origin.

Darwin's hypothesis, Thomas Huxley, argued, "gathered together monogenists and polygenists on a far different plane of understanding", and that "the premises of both schools could be accepted" without necessarily accepting their "respective conclusions". "Admit that Negroes and Australians, Negritos and Mongols are distinct species, or distinct genera, if you will", he wrote, "and you may yet, with perfect consistency, be the strictest of monogenists, and even believe in Adam and Eve as primeval parents of mankind".¹²²

Huxley felt that too much time had been wasted, and he urged his fellow-scientists to start research "in the classification of races through cranial, hair and skin measurement".¹²³ And indeed the rest of the nineteenth century was preoccupied with the assignment of racial categories and with the perfection of racial theories.

The period from 1859 - 1914 was, according to Barzun, "given over to materialistic and mechanistic anthropology".¹²⁴ Anthropology was no

¹²¹Haller, Ibid, p. xi.

¹²²Haller, Ibid, p. 78, 79.

¹²³Haller, Ibid, p. 79.

¹²⁴Barzun, Race: A Study in Superstition, op. cit., p.116.

longer primarily characterized by observation and description, but it became increasingly preoccupied with measuring, counting and grouping. It was the dawn of mass-statistics.

Anthropology, as the science of man, became the "science of measuring parts of the human body"¹²⁵ primarily the skull, because it was presupposed that skull-shape not only helped to identify "unmixed" racial types but also that "skull-shape carried cultural qualities", that it was connected to intellectual power. But apart from skull-shape and brain-weight, features such as nose, eyes, jaw, pelvis, limb, color and hair were measured and grouped. Needless to say, that scientists of craniology and comparative anatomy found "anatomical evidence"¹²⁶ for inferiority in races other than the whites. Signs of race inferiority were found in - among others - "principal traits" such as

Simplicity and early union of the cranial sutures
Presence of the frontal process of the temporal bone
Wide nasal aperture,
Prominence of the jaws,
Recession of the chin
Early appearance, size, and permanence of "wisdom"
teeth
Unusual length of the humerus
Continuation of the "heart" line across the hand
Obliquity (narrowness) of the pelvis

¹²⁵Barzun, Ibid, p. 116.

¹²⁶It is not the intention of this investigation to criticize the genuine curiosity and the enthusiasm of scientists to investigate the origin of man and races, but it is rather the conclusion drawn on their findings, which are so objectionable. Conclusions which were established on the most flimsy evidence. It is mainly the lack of caution and responsibility - even of the most outstanding scientists of that period - who often let political and social prejudices not only infiltrate their perception, but also their conclusion. Because of their prestige their "scientific pronouncements" not only coloured the "Weltanschauung" of that time, but they affected and afflicted the most tragic way the lives of millions of human beings, both in Europe, America and in the colonies.

It seems that with length of colonialism and imperialism the "scientific" judgements of "inferior races" became increasingly harsher,

Elongation of the heel¹²⁷

These features were "characteristics bearing affinity to the anthropoid apes" and where they "existed among the living races" became "criteria for judging race graduation as well as aptitude for progress".¹²⁸

"The races of man", wrote Brinton,¹²⁹ "depending upon their stage of culture or somatic growth, progressed at varying rates - from simple arithmetical progression of the savage, to geometrical progression of the half-cultured, to saltatory progression (permutation) of the enlightened races".¹³⁰

and additional "traits" of their inferiority were added to the old ones. In 1939 in the Southern Medical and Surgical Gazette, Professor Porot, Professor for Psychiatry on the Faculty of Algiers had this to say: "Primitivism is not a lack of maturity or a marked stoppage in the development of the intellectual psychism. It is a social condition which has reached the limit of its evolution; it is logically adopted to a life different from ours". "This primitivism is not merely a way of living which is the result of a special upbringing; it has much deeper roots. We even consider that it must have its substratum in a particular predisposition of the architectonic structure, or at least in the dynamic hierarchization of the nervous centers. We are in the presence of a coherent body of comportment and of a coherent life which can be explained scientifically. The Algerian has no cortex: or, more precisely, he is dominated, like the inferior vertebrates, by the diencephalon. The cortical functions, if they exist at all, are very feeble, and are practically unintegrated into the dynamic of existence." F. Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, Grove Press, Inc., New York, 1963, p. 301.

¹²⁷Haller, op. cit. p. 115.

¹²⁸Haller, Ibid, p. 115.

¹²⁹D.G. Brinton was Professor of Ethnology and Archaeology at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia and later (1886) Professor of American Linguistics and Archaeology at the University of Pennsylvania.

¹³⁰Haller, Ibid, p. 116.

That apart from the "enlightened races" none of the others had been "empire builders" of any "significant duration" showed - in Brinton's view - that "the law of 'thus far shalt thou go and no farther' tells the story of most of the failures of races and people". Even "in the forms of their highest governments, those of the Aztecs, Mayas, and Peruvians", he wrote, "we see repeated on a large scale the simple and insufficient model of rude hunting tribes of the plains. This is also true of the black race in Africa. The powerful monarchies which at times have been erected in that continent over the dead bodies of myriads of victims have lasted but a generation or two ..." They fell and failed - according to Brinton - because of their "mental inability to succeed". "The limitations of the racial mind were such that a complex social organization was impossible for them".¹³¹

That the mind of the "primitive races" was not only "limited" but was also fundamentally different from that of the "civilized races" was the conviction and claim of the French anthropologist Levy-Bruhl in his Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures, published in 1900 in Paris. He maintained that the "mentality of the primitives and that of people living in modern Occidental civilization, differed not in nuance or degree, but rather in kind."¹³²

The earlier belief - as expounded by Descartes - that "reason is whole and entire in each man" and that "where individuals of the same species are concerned, there may be degrees in respect of their accidental qualities, but not in respect of their forms and

¹³¹Haller, Ibid, p. 117.

¹³²Jean Caseneuve, Levy-Bruchl, Lucien, International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, David L. Sills, Editor, The MacMillan Company and the Free Press, vol. 9, 1968, p. 263-265.

natures",¹³³ this "charter of universalism" was overthrown by the scientific claim, that "the primitive man's very reasoning process" differed from that of the white man. The earlier animist schools of anthropology had held that primitive people think and reason like civilized people "although they may reason from mistaken premises".¹³⁴ Levy-Bruhl thought not only that the primitive man's reasoning process totally differed from that of the white man, but also that mysticism pervaded all his perceptions, that his mind was not governed by "our" "laws of logic", that his mind did not "shrink from violating especially the laws against contradiction"¹³⁵ and that "the underlying principle of primitive thinking was impervious to experience".¹³⁶

Between the "mystical mind", that is the "primitive mind" and the "rational mind", that is the "civilized mind", Levy-Bruhl found a small area of common ground - intermediate stages - (this is why his theory was considered "evolutionist") but he "took care to state that the mystical and prelogical mentality is never completely supplanted by the undisputed reign of logic"¹³⁷

¹³³Aimé Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1972, p. 35.

¹³⁴Caseneuve, op. cit., p. 263-265.

¹³⁵Caseneuve, Ibid, p. 263-265.

¹³⁶Werner Stark, The Sociology of Knowledge, op. cit., p. 96.

¹³⁷A similar view was held by Raoul Allier, who wrote in his book The Mind of the Savage: "We should define the former (the civilized individual) as a human being, who, while not incapable of any belief in magic, is not dominated by it, but is able to reflect, deliberate and draw conclusions as though it were non-existent; and the latter (the uncivilized man) as the human being in whom the belief in magic determines the essentials of his inner life" (quoted in O. Mannoni, Prospero Caliban - The Psychology of Colonization, Frederick Praeger, New York, 1956, p. 148).

Levy-Bruhl's views both in respect to sources ¹³⁸ and to the claims of his theory became over the years increasingly invalidated by his critics. That both "mystical mentality" and "logical mentality" are to be found in all human beings was the view of the phenomenologist van der Leeuw, who saw the mystical mentality and the logical mentality as "two permanent structures of the human mind".¹³⁹ He saw in primitive

¹³⁸Levy-Bruhl's views provoked objections by other scientists. Evans-Pritchard for instance, argued that he had "taken his examples from the books of travellers and missionaries, whose observations had not been made in conformity with best ethnographical methods", to which Levy-Bruhl replied, that "it sufficed for him if the mentality of the peoples studied had been well understood". Under further pressure from Evans-Pritchard he conceded that he "sometimes made savages appear more irrational than they actually are" (Caseneuve, op. cit., p. 264).

Thirty years of colonial rule later, Levy-Bruhl was honest enough to question his own theories when he wrote: "From a strictly logical point of view, no essential difference is to be noted between a primitive mentality and our own" (Betts, op. cit., p. 188).

The notion that the primitive mind "was totally different from the civilized one", that it was "impenetrable and unassimilable" found however expression in French colonial theory and praxis, when the earlier "assimilation theory" was rejected as "unscientific" and replaced by a theory of "association". It now was argued, that an Annamite, a Negro, an Arab could never become a Frenchman by the adoption of certain European habits, the knowledge of the language and literature. The record of the avowed "mission civilisatrice" of France - impossible without education - was therefore rather poor: In 1956 80% of Algerians were still illiterate - after 130 years of French colonial presence - and this in spite of Algeria's status as "une terre française". "It would not have mattered", wrote Satre in Le colonialisme est un system, "if we would have forbidden them the use of our language" (Les Temps Modernes, March/April 1956, p. 1371-1385).

Hubert Deschamps in France in Black Africa and Madagascar, in History of Politics of Colonialism, 1914-1960, Cambridge, 1969 gives the following data concerning the education of school-aged populations at the end of the colonial period in the 1960's: Madagascar 20%, Cameroun 15% (mainly mission schools), Dahomey 7%, French Equatorial Africa 6%, Senegal 4%, less than 1% in Niger.

Access to secondary education was extremely limited. There were two Lycees in Tanarive and two for the whole of French Africa (one in St. Louis and one in Dakar). The majority of their pupils were Europeans.

¹³⁹Caseneuve, op. cit., p. 263-265.

man the first to dominate, while in civilized man it was the reverse, or - as Stark formulated it - "the primitive has reserved a wider area in his mind for metaphysics than the modern rationalists". This was, however, "a difference in degree and not in kind".¹⁴⁰

Gleaned from a variety of sources and statements, which could be extended and endlessly multiplied from the literature of the period, it might be said that almost every branch of science - be it biology, anatomy, physiology, anthropology, psychiatry and psychology - and later the social sciences - made its own specific contribution to the notion of race-inferiority of non-Europeans and - by implication - postulated the race superiority of the white race.

Leading anthropologists, paleontologists, physicians, educators, sociologists, historians and scholars, men who "formulated" and disseminated the intellectual ideas of that period not only "sought to acquaint society with the 'truths' of evolution and the new evolutionary methodology"¹⁴¹ but also to apply those "truths" to the study of man, races and societies. A great number of them - although believing themselves to be scientifically irrefutable - let all too often preconceived notions - or extra-theoretical factors - enter into their perception and perspective. While claiming "scientific objectivity" they lent their increasing "scientific prestige" to the shunning of non-scientific ideas and ideals by declaring them "metaphysical".

In their own work and in that of their numerous disciples, race-

¹⁴⁰W. Stark, op. cit., p. 162.

¹⁴¹Haller, op. cit., p. viii.

inferiority was often "at once assumed and 'proven' within the context of their framework" or it was an essential element which formed "the foundation of their larger intellectualization".¹⁴²

"The connection between race-thinking and scientific method", Barzun observed, "is especially paradoxical. One would think that the so-called scientific habit of thought would encourage care in dealing with details and differences. It would seem as though the object under consideration, be it man or a group, would be looked at from all sides, seen as it really is. The very opposite has happened. The inclination is to lump individuals together on the most superficial, unverified grounds of similarity and describe them en masse".¹⁴³

Particularly tragic because of their devastating consequences, were the "scientific" views on race-inferiority of the Negro - even denying him the notion of humanity - because it was Africa as a continent and the Negro as its indigenous population who were taking the brunt from the 1880's onwards of the new politics of Imperialism.

Europeans parcelled out among themselves the African continent and, although at home divided by national rivalries, were united in certainty and solidarity in Africa in the notion of their absolute racial superiority.

Imperialism came to be both - postulated as the "politics of science" and celebrated as the "predominance of race".¹⁴⁴

¹⁴²Haller, Ibid, p. ix.

¹⁴³Barzun, Race: A Study of Superstition, op. cit., p. 15.

¹⁴⁴Lord Rosebery: "What is Empire but the Predominance of Race".

And although - as Max Weber observed - "not ideas but material interest, directly govern men's conduct" - and this is especially true for the politics of imperialism - "very frequently the 'world-images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamics of interest".¹⁴⁵

At this point it might be necessary to inquire into the views and attitudes of Marxism regarding questions of Colonialism/Imperialism.¹⁴⁶

That "extremes in thought and ideas might meet in truth or error" seems nowhere more evident than in the explanation of imperialism as a "politic of science", both from the liberal Darwinian and the Marxian perspective. Although the "dominant" liberal Darwinian ideology and the Marxian counter-ideology start from a different theoretical premise they seem to come to a similar conclusion.

The "Scramble for Africa", the new wave of imperialist expansion and the wider context of this investigation, started in the 1880's - almost at the end of Marx's life. Marx never wrote anything particularly dealing with colonialism in Africa, but his views on colonialism in general and on British colonialism in India in particular are very interesting. For this reason it might be inferred that his views regarding the African situation would not have been substantially different: Marx would have endorsed the "Scramble for Africa" as a step towards the fulfilment of mankind's destiny - although he might have had

¹⁴⁵H.H. Gerst and C. Wright Mills, eds. From Max Weber - Essays in Sociology, New York, 1946, p. 280.

¹⁴⁶Only few aspects of Marx's very interesting thoughts and writings on colonialism - those relevant for this investigation - will be touched upon.

some reservations about the manner in which the colonies were acquired.

In general Marx's views on "stagnant" societies and their "barbarian" people do not strike the observer as fundamentally different from the views held by other writers and scientists of his time.

Also in Marx's views oriental societies - India and China, for example - had no history. "Indian society", he wrote in 1853, "has no history at all, at least no known history. What we call its history, is but the history of the successive invaders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society".¹⁴⁷

Also Marx's description of Indian society and its people, in cultural, moral and religious terms, does not differ greatly from the accounts of writers, such as Farrar or Gobineau, as quoted earlier in this chapter. In an article on "The British Rule in India" (1853) Marx wrote:

... we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies. We must not forget the barbarian egotism which, concentrating on some miserable patch of land, had quietly witnessed the ruin of empires, the perpetration of unspeakable cruelties, the massacre of the population of large towns, with no other consideration bestowed upon them than on natural events...

We must not forget that this undignified, stagnatory, and vegetative life, that this passive sort of existence, evoked on the other part, in contradiction, wild, aimless, unbounded forces of

¹⁴⁷Avineri, Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization, op. cit., p. 9.

destruction, and rendered murder itself a religious rite in Hindostan. We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances instead of elevating man to be the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalizing worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Hanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow.¹⁴⁸

These views, although compatible with the "dominant" world-view¹⁴⁹ of the period, had their own specific rational in Marx's scheme of the evolution of human history and its eventual evolution into world-history.

It will be recalled that in Marx's evolutionary theory, all societies have to pass through determined evolutionary stages. In the Manifesto, published in 1848, Marx called these stages: the ancient, the feudal and the bourgeois stages. Each of these successive stages stand both historically and conceptually "in a dialectic relationship to the one preceding it", making "no sense except in that particular context".¹⁵⁰ "It is a central theme in Marx's theory of history", Avineri points out, "that feudalism grows out of the internal tensions of the ancient slaveholding society, just as Marx devotes a great amount

¹⁴⁸Avineri, Ibid, p. 8, 9.

¹⁴⁹How similar the descriptions and assessments of non-Europeans were among liberal social Darwinists and socialists of that time becomes evident also in a description by Bukarin who - although in a slightly different context - spoke of the "... primitive barbarianism of the Chinese masses, with their total lack of any idea of human protest, of all instinct of liberty, with their habit of servile obedience" (quoted in Lichtheim, Imperialism, op. cit., p. 97).

¹⁵⁰Averini, Ibid, p. 5.

of historical study to show how capitalism emerged out of the womb of the internal disintegration and structural change of feudalism: and socialism, too, is to Marx a consequence of the inner mechanisms of the capitalist system".¹⁵¹

Yet in 1859 in the Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, Marx had added another stage: the Asiatic stage with its specific Asiatic mode of production. "In broad outline", Marx wrote, "we can designate the Asiatic the ancient, the feudal and the modern bourgeois methods of production as so many epochs in the progress of the economic formation of society".¹⁵²

It seems that the Asiatic stage was almost a theoretical after-thought, when it became obvious that Marx's theory of economic development was "applicable to the West alone". Yet the Asiatic mode of production - the mode of production particular to Asian societies, such as India and China - did not actually fit into Marx's systematic exposition. Nowhere did Marx imply in his writings, according to Avineri

that the Asiatic mode of production is integrated into the dialectic series of the mother modes; obviously the ancient mode did not grow out of the Asiatic, nor does Marx show how the Asiatic mode develops internally into any of the other ones. Despite the explicit dynamism of Marx's dialectical model, it seems to be an uneasy combination of two sets of disparate elements; a sophisticated, carefully worked out schema describing the historical dynamism of European societies, rather simple-mindedly grafted upon a dismissal of all non-European forms of society under the blanket

¹⁵¹Avineri, Ibid, p. 4, 5.

¹⁵²Avineri, Ibid, p. 4.

designation of a mere geographic terminology of the 'Asiatic mode of production', which appears static, unchanging, and totally non-dialectical.¹⁵³

Similar to the Darwinian framework with its "static" and "dynamic" components, Marx seems to be confronted with a comparable dilemma. While in the Darwinian interpretation of evolution the dynamic and developmental component only seemed to apply to the white race, and the static component to the non-white races, Marx's evolution theory in terms of historical developmental stages seems equally only applicable to the white, European societies, while the stagnant, non-dynamic "Asiatic stage" seems to be characteristic for non-European societies.

Without being particularly concerned with the obvious inconsistency of Marx's theory of history and the claim to its 'universal' applicability it might be said that Marx's writings on India and China disclose that he thought that Oriental society had no internal mechanism of change. Marx's various points as to the reasons for his Oriental stagnation - absence of private ownership of land etc. - are not important for this examination. Marx, through the constraints of the framework of his own theory is therefore compelled to envision change in non-European societies only through intervention from outside leading him to the view that imperialist expansion is desirable and necessary.

Since Oriental society does not develop internally, it cannot evolve toward capitalism through the dialectics of internal change; and since Marx postulates the ultimate victory of socialism on the prior universalization of capitalism, he necessarily arrives at the position of having to endorse European colonial expansion as the brutal but necessary step toward the victory of socialism.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³Avineri, Ibid, p. 5.

¹⁵⁴Averini, Ibid, p. 12.

Propelled by the logic of his scientific theory of history and with the detachment of a scientist, Marx can therefore state

England, it is true, in causing a social revolution in Indostan, was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in the manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about the revolution.¹⁵⁵

It might be assumed that the imperialist expansion into Africa in the 1880's would also have been endorsed by Marx and that he might have reasoned, in a similar fashion, that European colonial expansion would have been perceived as the only impetus for change in that continent and that European bourgeois civilisation would have been the essential external agent for such a change. Engels had already in 1848 considered the French occupation of Algeria as "an important and fortunate fact for the progress of civilization".¹⁵⁶

The brutalities of conquest and the impact of colonization on the colonized were dismissed as functions of an overall process, they were in the Marxian scheme of history insignificant. The possibility of colonial rebellion and indigenous liberation movements only scantily entered Marx's analysis. If his remarks in the Taiping Rebellion in 1862 could be taken as an indication of his thinking, he might not have seen any "positive social aims, let alone historical consciousness" in the colonial liberation movements. Since Marx had postulated that human

¹⁵⁵Avineri, Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁵⁶Avineri, Ibid, p. 13.

consciousness was related to and dependent on the historical and economic stage of a given society, "underdeveloped" countries would not have been considered capable of judging "objectively" their situation in the overall scheme of "historical development" and "historical necessity". Colonial alienation therefore did not enter the scientific perspective of Marxism. The horrors of colonialism were "dialectically necessary for the world revolution of the proletariat since without them the countries of Asia (and presumably also Africa)" would "not be able to emancipate themselves from their stagnant backwardness".¹⁵⁷ ¹⁵⁸

Marxian laissez-faire advocated the thorough and fast destruction of the old stagnant societies in order to establish "a scientific domination of natural agencies",¹⁵⁹ because it was apparently not suspected "that history might have thrown up social forms which were not necessarily reducible to a single pattern".¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷Avineri, Ibid, p. 12.

¹⁵⁸This "scientifically" limited perspective may explain in part the general reluctance evident in the European Marxists' failure to participate or demonstrate "active" solidarity with the liberation movements in the colonies after 1945.

¹⁵⁹Avineri, Ibid, p. 13.

¹⁶⁰Avineri, Ibid, p. 12.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

"A civilization that proves incapable of solving the problem it creates is a decadent civilization. A civilization that chooses to close its eyes to its most crucial problems is a stricken civilization. A civilization that uses its principles for trickery and deceit is a dying civilization".¹

These are the penetrating opening statements of Aimé Césaire's Discourse on Colonialism, published in 1955. They are an indictment of European, that is, Western civilization and their troubling insights have not lost relevance - even after 30 years. On the contrary they seem to have further gained in relevance in the intervening three decades, finding Western civilization now in a state of "swaying between atomic and spiritual disintegration".²

Césaire wrote his Discourse in the aftermath of two World Wars, in the aftermath of the worst excesses of "scientific imperialism" and "scientific racism", while at the same time witnessing further bloodshed, torture, imprisonment and racism in the "deroulement" of de-colonization and colonial wars. Europe - he found - was "unable to justify itself either before the bar of 'reason' or before the bar of 'conscience'".³

¹Aimé Césaire. Discourse on Colonialism, op. cit., p. 9.

²Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, op. cit., p. 311.

³Césaire, op. cit., p. 9.

Surveying Western history and civilization of the last one hundred and fifty years, Césaire detected "a law of progressive dehumanization". A law that had been applied by Europeans to non-Europeans for the longest time, consisting of hatred, lying, and conceit, of violence, corruption and barbarism. Charging European nations with hypocrisy in their attempt to protest Hitler's World War II expansionism, domination and cruelty as an "aberration" of European culture and of European political conduct, by renouncing Fascism⁴ and Nazism as un-European, uncivilized German barbarism, Césaire on the contrary insisted, that Nazism was only "the inversion of colonialism".⁵ He maintained that before Europeans were its victims, they were its accomplices, that they tolerated Nazism "before it was inflicted on them, that they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because until then", Césaire maintained, "it had been applied only to non-European peoples".⁶

What Europeans cannot forgive Hitler was, in Césaire's view, "not crime in itself, the crime against man, it is not the humiliation of man

⁴Albert Memmi in his The Colonizer and the Colonized, held a similar view when he said: "What is fascism if not a regime of oppression for the benefit of a few. The entire administrative and political machinery of a colony has no other goal. The human relationships have arisen from the severest exploitation, founded on inequality and contempt, guaranteed by police authoritarianism", op. cit., p. 62.

⁵Hannah Arendt in The Origins of Totalitarianism, op. cit., also maintained that there are profound similarities, both in theory and practice between Imperialism and Fascism. She considered Hitler's expansionism "continental imperialism". She also pointed to the "lawlessness of a race-society", a feature found both in Nazism and Imperialism - particularly in Africa in the later nineteenth century. She saw further a parallel in the unaccountability and secrecy of imperialist-bureaucracy and its fascist counterpart.

⁶Césaire, Discourse on Colonialism, op. cit., p. 14.

as such, it is crime against the white man, the humiliation of the white man, and the fact that he applied to Europe colonialist procedures which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs in Algeria, the coolies in India, and the blacks of Africa".⁷

Césaire's Discourse on Colonialism is the account of "the white man's burden" and his "civilizing mission",⁸ only reversed, perceived from the position of the colonized. It is the account of the "black man's burden" and the process of his "thingification" under colonial rule, as Césaire called it. Because between the colonizer and the colonized - in the "colonial situation" - there is only a relation of domination and submission, "there is room only for forced labour, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory

⁷Césaire, Ibid, p. 14.

⁸Césaire particularly rejects the common equation that colonization is - or brings - civilization. Colonization is - in his view - "the negation of civilization". Citing a few examples from the "history of colonial expeditions", his point becomes clear.

Colonel de Montagnac, one of the conquerors of Algeria: "In order to banish the thoughts that sometimes besiege me, I have some heads cut off, not the heads of artichokes but the heads of men".

Count d'Herrison: "It is true that we are bringing back a whole barrelful of ears collected, pair by pair, from prisoners, friendly or enemy".

Saint-Arnaud: "We lay waste, we burn, we plunder, we destroy the houses and the trees".

Marshal Bugeaud: "We must have a great invasion of Africa, like the invasions of the Franks and the Goths".

General Gerard about the capture of Ambike: "The native rifleman had orders to kill only the men, but no one restrained them; intoxicated by the smell of blood, they spared not one woman, not one child ... At the end of the afternoon, the heat caused a light mist to arise; it was the blood of the five thousand victims, the ghosts of the city, evaporating in the setting sun".

Loti on the taking of Thuan-An and the massacre of the Annamese: "Then the great slaughter had began. They had first fired in double-salvos! and it was a pleasure to see these sprays of bullets, that were so easy to aim, come down on them twice a minute, surely and methodically, on command ... We saw some who were quite mad and stood up seized with a dizzy desire to run ... They zigzagged, running every

crops, contempt ..."⁹

A similar observation was made by Memmi, when he stated: "To observe the life of the colonizer and the colonized is to discover rapidly that the daily humiliation of the colonized, his objective subjugation, are not merely economic".¹⁰ Almost always will the distance which exists between the colonizer and the colonized be seen as not great enough by the colonizer. He therefore will devote himself to a "systematic devaluation" of the colonized.

One of the aspects most typical and most frequently encountered in the degradation of the colonized is his "depersonalization". The colonized must live with, he must "contend with the shadow of the collective image".¹¹ Césaire, Fanon and Memmi - all of them stressed this aspect of the "colonial situation", in that the colonized "is never characterized in an individual manner", that he carries, so to speak, "the mark of the plural", that he is "entitled only to drown in an anonymous collectivity".¹² - (Aren't they all the same? They are all lazy. They are unpredictable. You cannot rely on them. You cannot

which way in this race with death, holding their garments up around their waists in a comical way ... and then we amused ourselves counting the dead, etc." Césaire, *Ibid*, p. 18, 19.

Lichtheim in Imperialism, op. cit., p. 84 cites British officers as having stated: "We hold court-martials on horseback, and every nigger we meet with we either string up or shoot".

⁹Césaire, op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁰Albert Memmi. The Colonizer and the Colonized, op. cit., p. 66.

¹¹Memmi, *Ibid*, p. 85.

¹²Memmi, *Ibid*, p. 85.

tell them apart any way, they all look alike, etc.). Paraphrasing Fanon's observation: if they are degraded, they must be coloured, if they are coloured, they must be degraded.

Progressing - or better, declining - from one consequence to another, after the "depersonalization" of the colonized the next step will be that of his "dehumanization". The colonizer "will get into the habit of seeing the other man" - the colonized - "as an animal, he will accustom himself in treating him like an animal", and in doing so, he will "tend to transform himself into an animal".¹³

This is the "boomerang effect of colonization",¹⁴ that in the end it even dehumanizes the most civilized man. Césaire set out to show how colonization works to

decivilize the colonizer, to brutalize him in the true sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, to covetousness, violence, race hatred, and moral relativism; and we must show that each time a head is cut off or an eye put out in Vietnam and in France they accept the fact, each time a little girl is raped and in France they accept the fact, each time a Madagascan is tortured and in France they accept the fact, civilization acquires another dead weight, a universal regression takes place, a gangrene sets in, a center of infection begins to spread, and that at the end of all these treaties that have been violated, all these lies that have been propagated, all these punitive expeditions that have been tolerated, all these prisoners who have been tied up and 'interrogated', all these patriots who have been tortured, at the end of all the racial pride that has been encouraged, all the boastfulness that has been displayed, a poison has been instilled into the veins of Europe and, slowly

¹³Césaire, op. cit., p. 20.

¹⁴It was the conservative Edmund Burke, who earlier had perceived of such a connection when he stated: "The power of the House of Commons ... is indeed great; and long may it be able to preserve its greatness ... and it will do so, as long as it can keep the breaker of law in India from becoming the maker of law in England". Arendt, The Origin of Totalitarianism, p. 183 footnote. H.J. Mackinder, while teaching

the continent proceeds toward savagery.¹⁵

It is this aspect of human interdependence, the chain that binds together colonizer and colonized, oppressor and oppressed, conqueror and conquered, victor and victim, which makes it evident that in the long run one cannot dehumanize another human being without dehumanizing oneself. This, however, became only understood - or might it be better to say, again understood - in the aftermath of colonialism and fascism - after the catastrophe.

But then it might be asked: How could it have been different? Ideas, doctrines and ideologies not only have roots - as Mannheim had pointed out - but they also have consequences when translated into action, they are realized in specific practices. For almost eighty years Europeans had been raised on the "scientific" certainty of their absolute racial superiority - and by equally explicit pronouncements of the racial inferiority of non-whites. They had become accustomed to seeing themselves as members of a racial aristocracy, as members of a master race - "Herrenrasse" - as the Nazis were to call it -, as "Lords of Mankind", or as the "Masters of the World", as the British saw themselves.

geography at Oxford, had pondered a connected question, when he thought that "democracy was incompatible with imperialism", though "'even democracies are compelled to annex empires'". He suggested "that British democracy and imperialism could co-exist because of the 'intervening ocean'". Still in 1924 he thought "that the separation of the tropical Empire from the European island", had the advantage, "that 'imperial rule in the dependencies has not corrupted freedom at home'". Lichtheim, Empire and After in *The Concept of Ideology*, op. cit., p. 113.

¹⁵Césaire, op. cit., p. 13.

"Natural rights" and human equality were declared a myth, an "unscientific" sentimentality, an anachronism from a pre-scientific age. But - as Biddis points out - "with the premise of equal human rights and dignity once denied, with that of racial inequality once accepted, a perilous journey begins and it is a foolish man who believes that it will be easy to halt short of the horrific terminus. For racism is too much a matter of absolutes. Eventually racism must pose directly the uncompromising question as to who shall be killer and who victim - the ultimate political question beyond which further questions, even if they exist, are certainly not political in nature".¹⁶

Karl Mannheim - as quoted earlier in this investigation - had asserted that "we understand the whole from the part, and the part from the whole, the spirit of an epoch from documents, and documents from the spirit of an epoch". It seems that the spirit of the epoch was one of great ruthlessness and fatalism. "No one who has not waded through some sizable part of the literature of the period 1870 - 1914",¹⁷ Barzun wrote, "has any conception of the extent to which it is one long call for blood, nor of the varieties of parties, classes, nations and races whose blood was separately and contradictorily clamoured for by the enlightened citizens of the ancient civilization of Europe".¹⁸

Whoever - individual, class, nation or race - was to survive these

¹⁶Biddis, op. cit., p. 32.

¹⁷Barzun in Race: A Study in Superstition, op. cit., surveyed the writings of European scientists, scholars and journalists of that time period in the context of "scientific racism". It might be legitimate to add another twenty to thirty years without distorting his observation.

¹⁸Barzun. Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit. p. 92.

various universal contests, the struggles for existence or the struggles for survival, had stood the test of nature and science. Nothing was going to stop them, survival of the fittest had become "an integral part of ethics when ethics became a science".¹⁹ External success was a sign of intrinsic value.²⁰

Under the applause of imperialist European nations, Kipling had poetically pronounced what Darwinists had scientifically established: You'll win the world without anyone caring how you did it: you'll keep the world without anyone knowing how you did it. This in the end remained not true. The colonized, who according to the established evolutionary time-table were either permanently arrested or were expected - following the different "necessary" stages - to take centuries²¹ to evolve to "the level of rational human beings" revolted, talked back and accused Europe - Western civilization - of being "responsible before the human community for the highest heap of corpses

¹⁹Bannister. Social Darwinism - Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought, op. cit., p. 205.

²⁰It might be said, that Cecil Rhodes was the prototype in spirit and action of the beliefs of the era. He was the promoter of the interests of the "Nordic race", and "the" man of imperialism in South Africa. He expected to be remembered for at least four thousand years", and for whom a man "no matter what individual qualities or defects he may have, once he entered the maelstrom of an unending process of expansion ... will cease to be what he was and obey the laws of the process", because becoming "the incarnation of such a dynamic trend", he "could indeed do nothing wrong, what he did became right. It was his duty to do what he wanted". It is obvious that there is for a man who is an agent of such a force of expansion "no obligation to man-made laws". "The only law he has to obey is the law of expansion and the only proof of the 'lawfulness' is success". Arendt, The Origin of Totalitarianism, op. cit., p. 214, 215.

²¹That the "liberation movement" of the colonies in many cases surprised the colonial nations testifies to Mannheim's observation, that "ruling groups can in their thinking become so intensively interest-bound to a situation that they are simply no longer able to see

in history".²²

They pointed to the European moral bankruptcy and called upon each other to "leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them, at the corner of every one of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe. For centuries they have stifled almost the whole of humanity in the name of a so-called spiritual experience. Look at them today swaying between atomic and spiritual disintegration".²³

Imperialism has been called "the character school of modern politics", and Imperialist policies and methods might be seen as manifestations of this character. It was in Africa in particular that the "new imperialist consciousness of the fundamental superiority of man over man, the decisive stage of the division of mankind into master-races and slave-races, into higher and lower breeds, into coloured people and white people"²⁴ was clearly established. It was in Africa in particular that crime exploded and where - without any social restraint - human exploitation and degradation reached a new, a modern, dimension. It was here that "Realpolitik" changed first into "Machtpolitik".

Imperialism glorified national self-assertion, expansion and accumulation, a process that seemed endless and limitless. Imperialism

certain facts which would undermine their sense of domination".

²²Césaire, op. cit., p. 24.

²³Fanon. The Wretched of the Earth, op. cit., p. 311.

²⁴Arendt. The Origin of Totalitarianism, op. cit., p. 151.

aspired to global rule. "Before the imperialist era", Hanna Arendt pointed out, "there was no such a thing as world politics and without it, the totalitarian claim to global rule would not have made sense".²⁵ The drive for limitless expansion as exemplified in Cecil Rhodes' nineteenth century exclamation that "Expansion is everything! I would annex the stars if I could", seems not only to portray the mentality of his time but might be of almost prophetic significance with regard to the power politics of our time - exactly a century later, when science and space technology have put such an annexation into the realm of possibility.

It might be said, that in general, however, the word "expansion" has disappeared from the political vocabulaire. Now euphemisms such as "extension of influence" or "sphere of interest" are used to describe expansionist politics. Nor would any nation now justify expansion as "the white man's burden", nor base domination and control of other nations on the "scientific" prerogative of the "right of the strongest". Further it is no longer popular to defend domestic, national and international politics or policies on Darwinian principles - as the manifestation of the survival of the fittest.

Also the nineteenth century notion of the "iron law of history" strikes the contemporary observer as exaggerated and outdated. History seen as the manifestation of race-struggle or class-struggle, as a deterministic sequence of processes and events has ceased to be scientifically respectable.

²⁵Arendt, Ibid, p. xix.

In particular the racial theory²⁶ of history - which has brought so much suffering and death to millions of human beings - is recognized today as an excuse for national pride, national hatred and as a pretext for the justification of power. "The idea" - wrote Collingwood - "that there is a European race whose peculiar virtues render it fit to dominate the rest of the world, or an English race whose innate qualities make imperialism a duty, or a Nordic race whose predominance in America is the necessary condition of American greatness, and whose purity in Germany is indispensable to the purity of German culture, we know to be scientifically baseless and politically disastrous".²⁷

Beyond the fact that these ideas, notions and doctrines are now perceived as being "scientifically baseless" and "politically disastrous", they nevertheless characterized the Weltanschauung of a large part of the nineteenth century and were even prevalent far into the twentieth century. That they were shared and acted upon by the majority of the European nations and within these nations by almost all groups and classes in one way or another, testifies to Mannheim's observation, that ideologies and the Weltanschauung they create have a unifying power over large distances.

²⁶The historical record of those who believed in the notion of class-struggle and "scientific socialism", is equally devastating. They organized their own apocalypse. Millions of people - the estimate goes up to twenty million - were killed during the Russian Revolution, its aftermath and in the decades to come as class enemies or enemies of progress (for instance more than five million kulaks) who had "to be brought by death and deportation" within the "scientific" pattern of socialist development. A. Camus, The Rebel, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1956, p. 213.

²⁷R. Collingwood. The Idea of History, op. cit., p. 91, 92.

It might be seen as a test of the universality of these world-views that phrases and categories which seem to sum up their content, have become part of the language of everyday life. Phrases and categories which were at the same time key notions of science and as such perceived as scientific imperatives: "struggle for existence", "survival of the fittest", "natural selection", "race-struggle", "class-struggle", "dialectic materialism", "scientific socialism", "historical determinism".

These phrases seem to state the obvious and in doing so testify to the beliefs, judgements and commitments incorporated in them. Already in their terminology they reveal both notions of power, violence and force and the acceptance of a mechanical, deterministic view of processes and events. They testify to a scientific, positivistic approach to "social reality" without any reliance on metaphysical representations. But they also exemplify the scientific and historical fatalism²⁸ that was so characteristic for these world-views and the time.

Earlier in this investigation it was pointed out that many aspects - or components - of the ideologies and world-views which were "dominant" at the end of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century are now no longer shared and are now perceived as out-dated and scientifically baseless. This acknowledges Mannheim's view that ideas and ideologies can be dated. "We can see from most of the concrete assertions of human beings", Mannheim wrote, "when and where they arose, when and where they were formulated". This evidences

²⁸"Fatalism" - according to Mannheim - may assume various forms; it appears successively as theological, scientific and historical fatalism". Conservative Thought, op. cit., p. 168.

their socially and historically rootedness.

On the other hand, ideologies change; they have a dynamic component which proceeds to adapt itself to the new social and historical reality, while at the same time discarding elements which are no longer tenable in the light of new insights and knowledge. Social Darwinism, for instance, has today at best very little scientific and ideological prestige, although certain elements of the doctrine might emerge from time to time in a new context and in a new form.

When speaking of a "dominant ideology" or a "dominant world-view" of a certain period or era, this does not - of course - imply that beside the "dominant" views, other views did not exist. For instance, in an age of Imperialism and Science there might still have been individuals or groups who believed in human equality or in brotherly love and practised these convictions, but their views were certainly not part of the "dominant ideology" and the "dominant practice" which on the contrary insisted on a "scientific" view of "human inequality" and translated this conviction into action.

In order to "diagnose an epoch" it seems therefore necessary to concentrate the attention upon the task "of determining which of all the ideas current are really valid in a given situation".²⁹ Mannheim, who was very concerned with the establishment of a method which would help to guarantee a rather accurate account of an epoch and the world-view which characterized it, thought that such a method would make "a selection and accentuation of certain aspects of (the) historical

²⁹Karl Mannheim. Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 94.

totality"³⁰ necessary. Such a selection and accentuation might be "regarded as the first step in the direction which ultimately leads to an evaluative procedure and to ontological judgement".³¹

The nineteenth century has frequently been referred to as the "Century of Ideology", as the "Century of Science" and as the "Century of Imperialism".

These three characteristics of one century - each of them outstanding enough in its own right - seem to be, however, interrelated and interwoven in philosophy and action, in theory and praxis, in politics and ethics. The purpose of this investigation has been to illuminate these connections.

Many twentieth century intellectuals, writers and scholars felt that there emerged in the nineteenth century developments in terms of ideas, beliefs and practices that set precedents, which in turn had a significant influence and impact on twentieth century perceptions and events. It is for this reason that they have come to examine this period from their various fields of expertise and from different standpoints and perspectives.³²

The impact of science on ideologies and world-views which science started to have from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards certainly added a new manifestation, in that these ideologies strove - as stated earlier - "to incorporate rational and if possible scientific arguments in their systems of thought". They strove for a

³⁰Mannheim, Ibid, p. 94.

³¹Mannheim, Ibid, p. 94.

³²Hannah Arendt's work was already mentioned earlier, so were those of Jacques Barzun, George Lichtheim, Ernst Cassirer, Karl Mannheim, Albert Camus - to name but a few.

"systematization" of their world-views "with established methods of thought and prescribed conclusions".

Apart from this aspect, the natural sciences themselves became more absolute in their claims. In the course of the nineteenth century and even more so in the twentieth century, science became in Russel's words "proud and dictatorial". It turned from a "science as knowledge" to a "science as power".

Darwin's biological evolution theory had "acted as a test case for freedom of scientific inquiry"³³ and this both in clerical and civil courts. But over time this freedom of scientific inquiry, this quest for unlimited intellectual freedom turned more and more into "freedom for scientists", characterized by scientific immunity based on guilt-free ethics. "Everything in heaven and earth without restriction" was according to Barzun, given "over to them".³⁴

In particular the close relationship which exists now between science and politics was first established in the later nineteenth century, a relationship that has become increasingly problematic in our time because it has led to a situation in which scientists have become unaccountable for their work and in their work to the wider society. This development started when science in the nineteenth century came to provide "ideological weapons" in forms of scientific theories and scientific pronouncements about the worth of some and the worthlessness of other human beings and races, and these theories were translated into

³³Barzun. Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 65.

³⁴Barzun, Ibid, p. 65.

political praxis by men even less cautious and responsible than some scientists. Men who insisted that their politics and policies were based on science and scientific imperatives.

The "detachment " of science from the consequences of its work and its findings is rooted to a certain extent in its methodology and in the claim that science is value-free. According to Habermas, "the methodology of the empirical sciences is tacitly but effectively rooted in a technical cognitive interest that excludes all other interests; consequently all other relations of life-praxis can be blocked under the slogan of ethical neutrality or value-freedom".³⁵

By now almost every branch of science - be it the natural sciences or the social sciences - has accepted these methodological imperatives and operates under the same assumptions. Both fields have increasingly placed the results of their work into the service of governments or are involved in government sponsored research in the first place. It is estimated, for example, that at this point in time over sixty percent of all scientists in the world are involved in government sponsored research in the field of weapon technology and other related fields of political and social control. This development might account for, what Habermas termed, "the peculiar fusion of technology and domination, of rationality and oppression".³⁶

Developments in this direction slowly took shape from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, when science first seemed to become a

³⁵Habermas. Theory and Practice, op. cit., p. 264.

³⁶Habermas. Towards a Rational Society, op. cit., p. 85.

part of the growing "conspiracy of civilization against man", when it started to insist on identifying "rationality with measurability", reducing "everything to quantities", excluding "qualitative differences from the scope of knowledge"³⁷ and limiting "intellect to the kind of thinking characteristic of the natural sciences".

Historically these "categorical" limitations were not always given or set that strictly. The positivist approach and the positivist doctrine - rooted as they are in the Enlightenment - were at that time truly liberating forms and forces. It was only over time that they acquired their absolutist character, which might testify to Hegel's observation that there exists in the history of ideas a pattern according to which once great and liberating ideas inevitably turn into suffocating straight jackets.

Also Mannheim's observation might be recalled here, when he stated: "Substantially, positivism has performed the essential turn toward a way of thinking adequate to the contemporary situation, systematically and methodologically, however, it did not rise above a relatively primitive level". "It is one thing", he wrote, "to test a fruitful line of investigation and another to regard it the only path to the scientific treatment of an object". Mannheim maintained, and others with him or after him, that "the intellectual conception of science underlying positivism is itself rooted in a definite Weltanschauung and progressed with definite political interests". (emphasis added)

Parallel to and intrinsically related to the increasingly

³⁷Leszek Kolakowski. Main Currents of Marxism, 3. The Breakdown, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1981, p. 361.

methodological rigidity of positivism went a change in the definition of progress. Both the form and content of progress moved away from its humanistic origins in the Enlightenment. In its earlier stipulation progress was perceived as a moral concept, as a human "project", based on man's good will, his reason and his responsibility.

This "utopian" vision and commitment to progress, in both its earlier liberal and socialist versions, under the influence and impact of the stricter tenets of evolutionism evolved into an "ideological" "march of progress". In this deterministic and uncompromising form progress became perceived as a scientific historical and social process with a momentum all of its own. This process made man's will and intentions insignificant and by carefully isolating reason from responsibility this process evolved towards a "Zerstörung der Vernunft". Progress - a concept that once comprised a project of man for man was thus transformed into a project against man. Under both the liberal and the socialist interpretation of history and progress there emerged a view that human beings were perceived as standing "in the way of progress". Under the liberal concept of "race struggle" and the socialist concept of "class struggle" human beings ultimately were declared as being dispensable and disposable.

In order to diagnose the *Weltanschauung* of an era or an epoch, Mannheim maintained, as earlier pointed out, that it is necessary to try to capture its "mentality". He thought that this might be achieved through a concentration on those ideas which were really valid at that time and furthermore through the "selection and accentuation of certain aspects of the historical totality".

Mannheim felt, that "such a method of diagnosing an epoch, will necessarily assume an evaluative position". "Though it may begin non-evaluatively" it "will not long remain so". "We shall be forced eventually", Mannheim wrote, "to assume an evaluative position. The transition to an evaluative point of view is necessitated from the very beginning by the fact that history as history is unintelligible unless certain of its aspects are emphasized in contrast to others".³⁸

In this investigation the "concentration" and "accentuation" lay on Science, Ideology and Imperialism, three aspects of the nineteenth century historical situation, which gained in their intelligibility and sharpness through three major intellectual currents which characterized that epoch: Positivism, Liberalism and Socialism.

Each of these ideational and intellectual currents could have been investigated in their own right, which would have been certainly interesting enough, or in a number of constellations by concentrating, for instance, on Ideology and Liberalism, or on Positivism and Imperialism, or on Science and Socialism etc. These various possibilities of juxtapositions testify to the almost inexhaustibility of interpretations of the social and ideational reality of a given time, but they also show clearly, that "facts and ideas do not occur separately from each other".³⁹

Mannheim in his propositions regarding the illumination of the Weltanschauung of a given period, had maintained that the last question

³⁸Karl Mannheim. Ideology and Utopia, op. cit., p. 93, 94.

³⁹Jacques Barzun. Darwin, Marx, Wagner, op. cit., p. 6.

must always be: What were the ethics or the ethical precepts of that era?

This aspect of the Weltanschauung of the late nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century has not been dealt with explicitly in this investigation, although certainly often by implication. The ruthlessness, the fatalism and the irresponsibility comprised in the doctrines and ideologies of that era and the translation of these beliefs into praxis has been pointed out at various occasions in the course of this investigation.

The opening question of this investigation - Has man's stature qua man increased or diminished over the past 150 years? Or to pose the question more definitively: has science increased or diminished man's stature over this time period? - in view of the apparent evidence must therefore be answered in the negative. There is not much reason to believe that the value of human beings is now more highly rated than one hundred years before.

Science in conjunction with politics, and politics in conjunction with science seem as willing as before to sacrifice man for ideological reasons, as they did during the era of Imperialism and during the two World Wars, in the effort to impose their "specific" or particular interpretation of reality. Nuclear technology gives to these aspects a new dimension and the number of human beings which are perceived as being dispensable in terms of "calculated risks" goes into the millions. Scientific fatalism seems to be the most costly fatalism.

"The history of our times", wrote Paul Levin, "is a melancholy catalogue of what we have done to others, what we have allowed others to

do in our name, what others have done to us, and what we have done to ourselves".⁴⁰

Erich Fromm diagnosed the situation in the following way: "If mankind destroys itself it will not be because of the intrinsic wickedness of man's heart; it will be because of his inability to wake up to the realistic alternatives".⁴¹

⁴⁰Paul Levin. Divisions, CBC Publication, Toronto, 1975, p. 1.

⁴¹Erich Fromm. The Heart of Man, Harper and Row, New York, 1964, p. 183.

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