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KLARA HITLER'S SON: READING THE LANGER REPORT ON HITLER'S MIND

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Abstract

This essay is a spin-off from my book on psychological warfare in the Melville Revival, 1919-1999. Unbelievably, leading scholars in the twentieth-century "revival" of Herman Melville (1819-1891) read their subject as a bad Jew; bad because, like the abolitionists and other radical puritans, he thought Judeo-Christian morality ought to be lived out in everyday life and could not be compromised in the interests of "expediency." Such rigorous and consistent moralism was viewed as wild-eyed zealotry or monomania by the pragmatic moderate men who intervened between readers and Melville's texts, annexing Melville's art and the lessons of his bumpy career to their own corporatist agendas. The same scholars (Dr. Henry A. Murray, Charles Olson, and Jay Leyda) who frowned upon Melville/Ahab the Hebraic moralist were simultaneously involved in the creation of propaganda during the Roosevelt administration. Neither antisemitism in the Melville Revival nor Murray's Jungian reading of Hitler's soma and psyche can be understood without reference to the Tory response to Hebraic radical puritanism as it surfaced in the English Civil War. With Herman Melville and Captain Ahab on his mind, Dr. Henry A. Murray and his Harvard colleague Walter Langer suggested to FDR that Nazi evil was drawn from Jewish blood, applying racial theory to the long-distance psychoanalysis of Hitler. Of course, Murray and Langer did not profess antisemitism; quite the contrary. Such a deficit in self-understanding was the inevitable outcome of conservative Enlightenment.

[A Melville Scholar:] No precedents can be cited of a poet choosing a people he considers wronged in history as his symbol of Evil in a work devoted to that history. Can one conceive of this parallel situation—that a creative writer appalled at the fate of the Jews under the Nazis should choose the Jew as his symbol of Evil in a work dealing with that genocide? The theory that Melville did the equivalent of this has no real basis.¹

Lockean constitutionalism, “leveling” republicanism, and species-unity composed the elements of Enlightenment that were denounced as sentimental bourgeois culture by displaced aristocratic elites. Nietzschean romantic conservatives have argued that popular sovereignty—jacobin fanaticism, bad taste, a bad smell, history as written by the plebs, a.k.a. “mass culture”—accounted for the rise of Hitler and the decline of the West.² The Harvard psychologists and their humanist collaborators were assiduous adherents to conservatively enlightened progress and expertise; they and the class whose interests they serve (while proclaiming their “autonomy”), routinely make decisions affecting the state of our planet.³ Such immense authority is justified because as moderate men, they are held to be more rational and intelligent, more independent, ecologically aware and socially responsible than “the people” or “the masses” they represent, overawe, instruct, and control. As philosophical idealists and cultural relativists, their friendliness to “multiplicity” and “pluralism” is displayed in their hostility to the history written by their competition, the radical liberals. In this article, I will draw out the consequences for public policy when materialism (the epistemology of the radical Enlightenment) is erased in favor of Jungian psychohistory (the servant of conservative Enlightenment).

My subject is the 1972 best-seller published by Basic Books in response to the perceived protofascism of 1960s Romantics: Dr. Walter Langer’s *The Mind of Adolf Hitler: The Secret Wartime Report*, ostensibly the replica of his 1943 report for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Nowhere are the strange, wandering

and broken spirits of the moderate men more evident to the naked scanner of events than in the Langer report, yet it has been praised for its prescience in the popular press, even by the sophisticated British *New Statesman*. Langer actually leaned heavily on Dr. Henry A. Murray’s already existent views on Hitler’s psyche as stated both in his Harvard seminar worksheets for “civilian morale” (1941) and in his classified report to FDR (October 1943); this indebtedness was concealed by Langer.⁴ Langer, Murray and other theorists of psychological warfare may have been swept away by the apocalyptic sublime—the conservative vision that constitutes the terror-gothic style in art, in life, and in the writing of modern history.

In 1972 Basic Books touted the Langer report with Barnum-esque hyperbole:

Here is the secret psychological report written in 1943 for “Wild Bill” Donovan of the OSS, which correctly predicted Adolf Hitler’s degeneration and eventual suicide. This fascinating work, the most remarkable attempt ever made by a government intelligence agency to apply psychoanalytic insight to warfare, was classified as a secret for almost a quarter of a century. Yet among those few historians and scholars who have ever seen it, it is regarded as a masterpiece of “psychohistorical reconstruction,” whose judgments concerning the personality and probable behavior of the Third Reich’s Evil Genius are, in the light of what we know today, uncanny in their accuracy.

By combining a careful study of documents and other writings available at the time with personal interviews arranged by the OSS with informants who had known Hitler before the war, Dr. Walter Langer inquired into Hitler’s troubled family background, his sexual pathologies, death fears, Messiah complex, vegetarianism, and other characteristics. Drawing on his clinical knowledge of psychiatric patients with similar traits, Dr. Langer was able to foretell Hitler’s increasing isolation, his frequent rages, and the general deterioration of his mental condition.

What effect did this astounding secret document have on Allied war policy? That is not yet known. But in the words of Robert G. L. Waite, the distinguished historian, Dr. Langer's *The Mind of Adolf Hitler* is, in itself, "fascinating...a significant and suggestive interpretation which no serious student of Hitler will ignore.

The jacket blurb was followed by a photo of elderly Dr. Langer, seated in an inexpensive lawn chair, dressed informally, relaxed, gazing at the viewer with an attentive smile. He looks composed, but forthright and open to whatever life may have in store: the knees are spread, his clasped hands rest mostly on his right thigh. Hans Gatzke has shown, however, that the claim to have published the original OSS report was a misrepresentation. Even without Professor Gatzke's comparison of the two publications, the alert reader might have suspected that broad strokes of docudrama had replaced high fidelity to primary sources, for instance in this folksy rendition of a conversation between Donovan and Langer:

"What we need," the General said, "is a realistic appraisal of the German situation. If Hitler is running the show, what kind of person is he? What are his ambitions? How does he appear to the German people? What is he like with his associates? What is his background? And most of all, we want to know as much as possible about his psychological makeup—the things that make him tick. In addition, we ought to know what he might do if things begin to go against him. Do you suppose you could come up with something along these lines?" (10).

If we are to believe our eyes as we read the book jacket to *The Mind of Adolf Hitler*, and then the text and sub-text beneath the covers, Walter Langer and his unnamed collaborators (Henry A. Murray, Bertram Lewin and Ernst Kris) had, at best, an attenuated relationship to the real fact of "the final solution" to "the Jewish problem," although Hitler had always advertised himself as the saviour of "nature" (i.e., aristocratic culture), the good father (or, better, the good peasant son) doing the work of the Lord/Master (*Herren*) to save the planet from Jewishly instigated

degeneration. In 1939, Hitler had threatened revenge against all of European Jewry, the real agents of war, in his warning to the Western democracies. Millions of Jews had been killed by the time the Langer report was filed with the OSS in the late summer of 1943, yet only in the context of predicting Hitler's responses to military defeat did the idea of a "complete extermination" even come up:

...4. *Hitler may be assassinated.* Although Hitler is extremely well protected there is a possibility that someone may assassinate him. Hitler is afraid of this possibility and has expressed the opinion that: "His own friends would one day stab him mortally in the back...And it would be just before the last and greatest victory, at the moment of supreme tension. Once more Hagen would slay Siegfried. Once more Hermann⁵ the Liberator would be murdered by his own kinsmen. The eternal destiny of the German nation must be fulfilled yet again, for the last time." This possibility too, would be undesirable from our point of view inasmuch it would make a martyr of him and strengthen the legend.

It would be even more undesirable if the assassin were a Jew, for this would convince the German people of Hitler's infallibility and strengthen the fanaticism of the German troops and people. Needless to say, it would be followed by the complete extermination of all Jews in Germany and the occupied countries (210, my emphasis).

Even if the word "complete" indicates that the writers were aware that two million Jews were known to have been killed by 1943, since the subject of genocide had not been mentioned elsewhere in the book, the sentence suggests that only an assassination by a Jew would provoke such revenge. Perhaps the Langer team did not mention the Holocaust already in progress because it was more interested in another issue: Hitler's uncanny insight into the psychology of other little men, as these parallel passages indicate:

[Murray and Allport, 1941:] What are the strengths and weaknesses of Nazi ideology as an instrument for world conquest?

[Murray, 1943:] Hitler has a number of unusual abilities of which his opponents should not be ignorant. Not only is it important to justly appraise the strength of an enemy but it is well to know whether or not he possesses capacities and techniques which can be appropriated to good advantage. Hitler's chief abilities, realizations, and principles of action as a political figure, all of which involve an uncanny knowledge of the average man, are briefly these:....⁶

[Langer:]...It can scarcely be denied that [Hitler] has some extraordinary abilities where the psychology of the average man is concerned. He has been able, in some manner or other, to unearth and apply successfully many factors pertaining to group psychology, the importance of which has not been generally recognized and some of which we might adopt to good advantage. [63].

Twenty-seven "factors" follow; those which "we might adopt" are not specified. These passages become even more gripping in light of the Langer report's conclusions:

It is Hitler's ability to play upon the unconscious tendencies of the German people and to act as their spokesman that has enabled him to mobilize their energies and direct them into the same channels through which he believed he had found a solution to his own personal conflicts. The result has been an extraordinary similarity in thinking, feeling, and acting in the German people. It is as though Hitler had paralyzed the critical functions of the individual Germans and had assumed the role for himself. As such he has been incorporated as a part of the personalities of his individual supporters and is able to dominate their mental processes. This phenomenon lies at the very root of the peculiar bond that exists between Hitler as a person, and the German people and places it beyond the control of any purely rational, logical, or intellectual appeal. In fighting for Hitler these persons are now unconsciously fighting for what appears to them to be their own psychological integrity (206).

The Murray-Allport worksheets (1941) had directed a national constituency concerned with "civilian morale" to

Quote passages from the original unexpurgated edition of *Mein Kampf*, in which Hitler expresses his cynical contempt of the masses, and the necessity of deceiving them. Quote him in order to prove that he planned the war and devised the tactics. Ridicule *Mein Kampf* as a Bible, contrasting paragraphs from the two sources.

Jewish blood was the source of brilliant insights, emotional disturbance, and the Big Lie.⁷ Internalized antisemitic stereotypes of switching Jews subverted Langer's attempt at "a realistic appraisal of the German situation." The witch-hunters, to a man, will extrude the unpredictably dirty materialism of Isabel for the limpid regularity of crystals. A fragment from the 1930s provides the bridge to the Langer report; it marks Sergei Eisenstein's flight from romanticism and montage to the cult of personality, from the sensibility associated with popular revolution to neoclassicism, from endless agitation to the final solution. In 1936, the year that future Melville scholar Jay Leyda left the Soviet Union, rejected by his mentor, Eisenstein repudiated the extremes of cold, dry didacticism and ravings of the insane:

It is not accidental that precisely at this period, for the first time in cinematography, there begin to appear the first finished images of personalities, not just any personalities, but of the finest personalities: the leading figures of leading Communists and Bolsheviks. Just as from the revolutionary movement of the masses emerged the sole revolutionary party, that of the Bolsheviks, which heads the unconscious elements of revolution and leads them toward conscious revolutionary aims, so the film images of the leading men of our times begin during the present period to crystallise out of the general-revolutionary-mass-quality of the earlier type of film. And the clarity of the Communist slogan rings more definitely, replacing the more general-revolutionary slogan...(*New Theater*, April 1936, p.13).

I think that now, with the approach of the sixteenth year of our cinematography, we are entering a special period. These signs, to be traced today also in parallel arts as well as found in the cinema, are harbingers of the news that Soviet cinematography, after many periods of divergence

of opinion and argument, is entering its classical period, because the characteristics of its interests, the particular approach to its series of problems, this hunger for synthesis, this postulation and demand for complete harmony of all the elements from the subject matter to composition within the frame, this demand for fullness of quality and all the features on which our cinematography has set its heart—these are the signs of the highest flowering of an art... (*New Theater*, June 1936, p.29).⁸

In Dr. Henry A. Murray's publications as in his correspondence with Melville scholars, a Nietzschean *amor fati* slipped out to contradict Progressive social optimism and faith in the power of the will. Although Murray rebelled against his horoscope in 1927, perhaps he, along with the more conservative Melville critics, did not believe in the possibility of human amelioration, other than through "management" of conflicts generated by unruly archetypes, or in the eternal combat between good and evil or the (*laissez-faire*) individual and (corporatist) society. This is one strategy to absolve the self of responsibility for having expelled the bad Jewish-androgyne-Indian within, the troublesome presence demanding a reconfiguration of social life and human possibility, activating compassion by connecting self-awareness to social awareness. Such self-cleansing is advocated and performed by conservatives, in the interest, they say, of human solidarity and a functional non-Jewish Anglo-American identity: 'a *je ne sais quoi* achieved through pluralism-without-dissenting individuals and anthropology-without-history.

Langer's 1972 Introduction to the "secret wartime report" matched the manipulative approach to treatment promoted by Murray in his 1935 unveiling of the Thematic Apperception Test.¹⁰ Through free association, Langer explained, the neurotic patient exposes and spews forth his unconscious fears and fantasies. The analyst then interprets for the patient, penetrating and weakening his defense mechanisms, bringing up ever earlier memories "to throw light on the unsound premises or misconceptions that are the basis of his subsequent adjustments" (14,15).

For these chiropractors of the psyche there is nothing structurally weak or contradictory about institutions that would lead to emotional difficulties; neither need they fear irrationality within themselves: they have stared the devil down.

For Langer, the disordered family with its flawed or glistening genetic inheritance is the sole source of Hitler's behavior. The brutal father, the masochistic mother, the weak child are common enough; they are not peculiar to Hitler's childhood. In such environments the child is spoiled by over-indulgent mothers who have engaged in sex-play with the boy, as Hitler's mother is supposed to have done (150). Hence the asocial impulses are not conquered in early childhood. Like Vienna, with its lower class and oversexed dirty Jews (185), these families are houses of incest, manufacturing revolting children, stirring the cauldron of war. Peaceful, well-ordered families with humane gentleman at the head (kindly and consistent role-models like FDR), deflecting their wives' libido away from the sons, will prevent disastrous social movements in the future. Here is a good king masquerading as a western hero: "Wild Bill" Donovan (Columbia, class of 1912), OSS chief, introduced to us as brilliant, broadly imaginative, independent in judgment, and foresighted. In tandem with psychoanalysts, other Donovans will use their expertise to study the irrational processes that dominate society, the better to psych out the adversary and anticipate resistance to the draft, hence to build morale: to stomp out "smouldering" "sentiments" that ignite antiwar movements (5). Indeed, at the urging of fellow-scholars (24,25), and in the interest of preventive politics, Langer explained, the report had been declassified to point the way toward further collaborations between psychologists and historians:

I may be naive in diplomatic matters, but I like to believe that if such a study of Hitler had been made earlier, under less tension, there might not have been a Munich; a similar study of Stalin might have produced a different Yalta; one of Castro might have prevented the Cuban situation; and one of President Diem might have avoided our deep involve-

ment in Vietnam. Studies of this type cannot solve our international problems. That would be too much to expect. They might, however, help to avoid some of the serious blunders we seem to have made because we were ignorant of the psychological factors involved and the nature of the leaders with whom we were negotiating. I am not naive enough, however, to believe that even a well-documented study would completely offset the tendency of many policy makers to set their course on the basis of what they want to believe, rather than on what is known (23).¹¹

One wonders if Langer was proposing other studies relying on theories of national and ethnic character to predict the behavior of antagonistic elites. At times Langer adheres to Lockean environmentalism, patiently reconstructing interactions between individuals and their culture (as in a reference to "the formative years of [Hitler's] life," 18), but hereditarian thinking pops out to overwhelm his analysis. For instance, in the view of Hitler as a poor physical specimen, "Professor Max von Gruber of the University of Munich, the most eminent eugenicist in Germany" is quoted:

It was the first time I had seen Hitler close at hand. Face and head of inferior type, cross-breed; low receding forehead, ugly nose, broad cheekbones, little eyes, dark hair. Expression not of a man exercising authority in perfect self-command, but of raving excitement. At the end an expression of satisfied egotism (44).

Hitler's genetic inheritance was brought up several times. Langer notes the mental and physical weakness of Hitler's siblings and other relatives, mentioning a hunchback, a child with a speech impediment, an imbecile, a high-grade moron, and a predisposition to cancer. All are attributed to Klara Hitler's "constitutional weakness," a possible "syphilitic taint...One has grounds to question the purity of the blood" (105, 106). But worse, these investigators took seriously Hitler's fantasy that he was one quarter Jewish.¹² They would like to verify the rumors that Hitler's father's mother, Maria Anna Schicklgruber, was impregnated by the Baron Rothschild or another Rothschild in the household in

which she was a maid (101-102). Some informants argued that the Jewish [genes] would account for Alois Schicklgruber's "intelligence," "ambitiousness and extraordinary political intuition" that were atypical of "Austrian peasant families," but "in harmony with the Rothschild tradition." More: "...it would be peculiar for Alois Hitler, while working as a customs official in Braunau, to choose a Jew named Prinz, of Vienna, to act as Adolf's godfather unless he felt some kinship with the Jews himself."¹³ Langer left the door open to the possibility of Hitler's Jewishness and underlined its potential explanatory character, while asserting the superior rigor and discretion of his methodology:

This is certainly a very intriguing hypothesis, and much of Adolf's later behavior could be explained in rather easy terms on this basis. However, it is not absolutely necessary to assume that he has Jewish blood in his veins in order to make a comprehensive picture of his character with its manifold traits and sentiments. From a purely scientific point of view, therefore, it is sounder not to base our reconstruction on such slim evidence but to seek firmer foundations. Nevertheless, we can leave it as a possibility that requires further verification (102-103).

A few pages later, Langer accepted Reinhold Hanisch's description of Hitler in Vienna in 1910, a time when he was "not a Jew-hater," because some of his best friends were Jews. In fact,

...During this time Hitler himself looked very Jewish. Hanisch writes:

Hitler at that time looked very Jewish, so that I often joked with him that he must be of Jewish blood, since such a large beard rarely grows on a Christian chin. Also he had big feet, as a desert wanderer must have (119. In the Afterword, 232, Robert Waite says Hitler never looked like that.).

Langer has given us two nearly identical sentences that state Hitler looked very Jewish. Should there be any doubt in our minds that Langer believed Hitler carried Jewish blood, and that his Jewishness accounted for astonishing feats of statesmanship and

duplicity? Perhaps this was the source of his Jewish perversion, which he then had to disown and destroy in others. But first, Langer established his own attitude toward dirt, laziness, and homosexuality:

Hitler's life in Vienna was one of extreme passivity in which activity was held at the lowest level consistent with survival. He seemed to enjoy being dirty and even filthy in his appearance and personal cleanliness. This can mean only one thing from a psychological point of view, namely that his perversion was in the process of maturation and was finding gratification in a more or less symbolic form. His attitude during this period could be summarized in the following terms: "I enjoy nothing more than to lie around while the world defecates on me." And he probably delighted in being covered with dirt, which was tangible proof of the fact [His probable delight proves what fact?]. Even in these days he lived in a flophouse that was known to be inhabited by men who lent themselves to homosexual practices, and it was probably for this reason that he was listed on the Vienna police record as a 'sexual pervert' (182).

On the next page, Langer seemed to lose his temper. First he offered his explanation for the onset and growth of Hitler's anti-Semitism: Hitler's disgusting perversion (the desire to have women defecate and urinate upon him) was projected onto the Jews, and

the Jew became a symbol of everything that Hitler hated in himself. Again, his own personal problems and conflicts were transferred from within himself to the external world where they assumed the proportions of racial and national conflicts.

With words that leap off the page, Langer scolded Hitler:

Forgetting entirely that for years he not only looked like a lower class Jew but was as dirty as the dirtiest and as great a social outcast, he now began to see the Jew as a [sic] source of all evil.

Even were Langer to be arguing for a little Christian charity, he was admitting that "lower class" Jews are as bad as Hitler says they are. Therefore, it was rational for Hitler to blame them for soiling society, but he should have blamed himself, too, for being like them.

Next, Langer continued to ignore the role played by the European Right in the formation and transmission of anti-semitic attitudes; Christian Socialism must be the sole cultural source of Jew hatred:

The teachings of [Christian Socialists] Schoenerer and Lueger helped to solidify and rationalize his feelings and inner convictions. More and more he became convinced that the Jew was a great parasite on humanity who sucked its life-blood and if a nation was to become great it must rid itself of this pestilence...The greater the demands of his perversion became, the more he hated the Jews and the more he talked against them (183-184).

The projection of the perversion was formative: "Here was his political career in an embryo state." This in turn stimulated selective reading habits:

He read only in order to find additional justification for his own inner feelings and convictions and to rationalize his projections...he never forms a rational opinion in the light of the information but only pays attention to those parts that convince him he was right to begin with. [184. Cf. Langer's brother William: in the 1930s "the world was threatened by irrational and demonic forces," vi].

Curiously, Hitler's method resembled the Langer team approach in selecting *their* data:

A survey of the raw material [just described as not "first hand," as "superficial and fragmentary"], in conjunction with our knowledge of Hitler's actions as reported in the news, was sufficient to convince us that he was, in all probability, a neurotic psychopath. With this diagnosis as a point of orientation, we were able to evaluate the data in terms of

probability. Those fragments that could most easily be fitted into this general clinical category were tentatively regarded as possessing a higher degree of probability—as far as reliability and relevance were concerned—than those which seemed alien [Jewish facts?] to the clinical picture. Each of the collaborators screened the raw material from this point of view, and there was considerable agreement on what was probably pertinent to our study and what was not (16,17).¹⁴

One wonders if the common identification of the Jew with Bolshevism/finance capital got screened out, along with other more rational interests, but these are absent. For the Langer team, “Jew” connoted either sex and disease (lower-class Jew-type) or “ambitiousness and extraordinary political intuition” (Rothschild-type).

Bereft of history and politics, Langer attempted to explain the total transformation of Hitler’s character from lazy pervert to imperial genius. The defeat of Germany in 1918 caused a crisis and a revolution in his psyche: the scourging of Germany by the Allies tested himself and the German people. Hitler somehow realizes that, as Klara Hitler’s son, he has mistakenly identified with his mother’s passive and masochistic humanity, which he boots out:

In their place we find what Hitler’s warped mind conceived the supermasculine to be: ‘...if a people is to become free it needs pride and will-power, defiance, hate, hate, and once again hate’ (193).

Hitler hears voices assuring him he is the chosen one, and leader of the chosen people (190-191). Perhaps Langer believed that the cunning, commanding Rothschild genes have asserted themselves over the fawning and coprophageous ghetto hippie Jewish ones displayed in the meek, defeated, forgiving, ignoble, feminized Christ (193). Hitler, at the nadir of his career, suddenly Identifies with the Aggressor, and treats others the way he fantasizes “the victors” (the Jews?) would like to treat him (193-196).

In his treatment of the Jews we see the “Identification with the Aggressor” mechanism at work. He is now practicing on the Jews in reality the things he feared the victors might do to him in fantasy. From this he derives a manifold satisfaction. First, it affords him an opportunity of appearing before the world as the pitiless brute he imagines himself to be; second, it affords him an opportunity of proving to himself that he is as heartless and brutal as he wants to be (that he can really take it); third, in eliminating the Jews he unconsciously feels that he is ridding himself, and Germany, of the poison that is responsible for all his difficulties; fourth as the masochist he really is, he derives a vicarious pleasure from the suffering of others in whom he can see himself; fifth, he can give vent to his bitter hatred and contempt of the world in general by using the Jew as a scapegoat; and sixth, it pays heavy material and propagandistic dividends (195, 196).

Surely the mention (almost a “by the way”) of the rational core of Hitler’s behavior, the “material and propagandistic dividends” should not have been the last item in Langer’s description of, and explanation for, the dynamics of Hitler’s psyche. He should have examined the antidemocratic discourse of Western conservatives: the deicidal, legalistic, carnal, crazy, hypercritical Jew had been its Other for nearly two thousand years.¹⁵ Besides the obvious benefits to professional rivals and looters of Jewish property, antisemitism provided an indispensable vocabulary to ruling classes in an age of mass politics and burgeoning socialist aspirations. Langer should have started with the class interest that the purges protected and enhanced; he would have seen the pervasiveness of “sadism” and “masochism” (perhaps structured responses to the class tasks of middle management) that Langer applies to the “neurotic psychopath” Hitler and his dragon crew, the German people. But of course that would have undermined the sharp distinctions that Langer *must* protect to please his clients: light vs. dark, rational vs. irrational, good geniuses vs. evil geniuses, democracy vs. autocracy: distinctions that may not be blurred by comparisons between the institutions, ideologies, and social practices of capitalist societies with societies held to be antithetical.¹⁶

Walter Langer's portrait of Hitler's personality and its achievements framed his published study. It is patently a warning to the 1972 reading public to beware of the flower children in their midst, who, like Hitler, may suddenly expel their long-suffering feminine/Jewish components, with similar effects:

Hitler, clearly, was more than the crazy paperhanger depicted in popular prints. Up until the age of twenty-five he manifested many of the characteristics that we now associate with the "hippies" of the 1960s. He was shiftless, seemed to lack any sense of identity, appeared to have no real sense of direction or ambition, was content to live in filth and squalor, worked only when he had to, and then sporadically, spent most of his time in romantic dreams of being a great artist, was anti-Establishment and vocal on the shortcomings of society, but was short on deeds. Even his war record bears testimony to a certain incompetence. After spending four years in a regiment that had suffered heavy losses, he had never been promoted to a rank above Lance Corporal. Nevertheless, this apparently insignificant and incompetent ne'er-do-well was later able, in the course of a relatively few years, to talk his way into the highest political offices, hoodwink the experienced leaders of the major powers, turn millions of highly civilized people into barbarians, order the extermination of a large segment of the population, build and control the mightiest war machine ever known, and plunge the world into history's most devastating war (10, 11).

In Langer's characterizations of Hitler and his followers, we have glimpsed typical conservative images: Dionysus sneaked in through the ear: *talking, hoodwinking, turning, ordering, controlling, plunging*. Stealthily ousting Apollonian fathers and only apparently civilized, the possessed Nazis were bloodthirstily reverting to type, surpassing all previous tyrannies in destruction and cruelty. How did they do it? Better than we aristocratically-educated American consultants to the OSS, Hitler, himself immersed in Americanized mass culture,¹⁷ Jewishly psychod out the hidden feminine and masochistic character of the German masses. Through mass hypnosis achieved through his eroticized flashing phallic eyes (father's) and falsetto voice (mother's), then

mutual engorgement at the speeches and rallies, Hitler and the audience re-enacted the transformation from feminized and depressed Jekyll to brutal and excited Hyde. Hitler's gimlet eye bore its way into the German psyche, subliminally persuading it to act out his drama of purification and vicarious masochistic identification with the Jewish victims of Nazism. But the false self created in these erotic transactions could not be maintained: every defeat would require more and more brutal action to maintain the aura of invincibility. The German people, in short, would behave as Ahab and his mesmerized crew in the ecstatic final chapters of *Moby-Dick* [my leap, not Langer's].

Langer's exasperation was understandable: Hitler, the uppity Austrian peasant and crypto-Jew, should not have tried to pass himself off as a world leader, rational and respectable like the rest. If he had been as rational as Langer *et al*, he would have seen that his politics were *determined* by his inner life: specifically that he had been behaving like a Jewish victim turned Jewish upstart. If Langer had treated him, perhaps Hitler could have been persuaded that he was overindulged by his mother, that his family failed in not motivating him to conquer the asocial impulses that led him to sexual perversion. He would have known that brutal, selfish and distracted fathers (defined against FDR the gentleman, 148-149) abandoning their sons to mysterious mothers (who are either too clean or too dirty, cf. Horace Walpole's play "The Mysterious Mother": who either pray or love too much) are at the root of his evil behavior. And therefore, freed from responsibility for his perversion, Hitler could have blamed mother and father for transmitting their unsound premises, hence he would have been immune to the appeals of the Christian Socialists of Vienna (whose anti-Semitism was brand new to him). And he would have understood that there are no real irreconcilable class and national conflicts in the world, only projections. So, even in the modern world where ambitious and extraordinarily talented Jewish politicians are at large, there are happy endings when families are reformed in the interest of a strong "sense of (rooted) identity."

The crypto-Catholic good father cure persists in popular culture: it resolves the double bind that Melville identified in his sarcastic description of "virtuous expediency."¹⁸ In the 1956 movie, *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*, the tycoon Ralph Hopkins (played by Fredric March), founder of the gigantic United Broadcasting Corporation, discovers too late that his self-regarding obsessive ambition, his lust for power and money, has forced him to neglect his family; catastrophically, his wife has raised the children by herself, explaining perhaps why his only son was killed in World War II (because his womanish idealism required that he sign up as an enlisted man?), and father's neglect has made his eighteen-year old daughter a ne'er-do-well and a nihilist: a spoiled brat, positively bored by her responsibilities as the steward of great wealth and preferring marriage to a parasite suggestively named Byron.

Hopkins is the tragic foil to his new employee Thomas J. Rath (played by Gregory Peck), a World War II veteran (a captain) who has had an idyllic but adulterous affair in Italy with a saintly young girl Maria. Rath, still traumatized by his experiences in the war, comes to understand through the indignant prodding of his wife Betsy (played by Jennifer Jones) and the example of Hopkins' sluttish daughter that he (Rath) must not compromise his integrity or his paternal duties for the sake of personal advancement. In fact, Hopkins' belated epiphany makes it possible for Rath to satisfy the demands of his long-suffering wife for both rectitude and career: Rath speaks his mind (criticizing the deficiencies of Hopkins' proposed speech to physicians designed to promote community mental health with "preventive" measures!) and his boss loves it; Hopkins has lost his taste for sycophants (an outcome that would have made Melville snort in disbelief), but Rath will never sell out; he refuses to play the substitute son for Hopkins if that means sacrificing his stabilizing presence at the helm of the family—one with three children rapidly succumbing to the hypnotic qualities of violence in early television westerns.

The same day that Rath makes his stand for integrity, he is informed by his former sergeant that Maria and Rath's love child are now destitute, indeed are being supported by the sergeant on his elevator operator's salary. Stricken by the revelation, Rath figuratively lobs a grenade at his wife (as he did so in the Pacific, accidentally killing his "best friend" and leaving himself in crazy denial). But Betsy, though furious and briefly floored on their front lawn, is strong enough to adjust; after a brief runaway in the family car, she agrees (off screen) that they must both support the love-child, filling the local Connecticut judge (a very principled, very stable man named Bernstein—always disturbed when he must choose between competing claims for justice—with awe and gratification: "As the poet said, 'God's in His heaven; all's right with the world.'" Judge Bernstein will assume the responsibility for sending \$100 per month to Maria and Child so that the father will not have to correspond directly with his Italian family. As the reconciled married pair drive off having survived two crises, Rath's last words to Betsy are "I worship you."

Tension is maintained throughout in a sustained color scheme, the colors of night-time combat: tigerish orange and red explosions contrast brilliantly with the dark blue-green foliage and rust-colored earth of the Pacific island where Rath is traumatized. Hence we feel the persistence of the horrible wartime incident that begins the movie, whether in Rath's drab suburban home, in Rath's inherited nineteenth-century mansion, during R&R in Italy, in the offices of United Broadcasting Corporation, Hopkins' apartment, or the elevator where Rath meets his former subordinate.

The décor of the judge's office carries through the same colors but they are now cooler in tone; suffused with the blessing of authority, in this case, the smile of a Jewish judge, the terror-gothic has lightened up.¹⁹

Notes

¹ Joyce Sparer Adler, *War in Melville's Imagination* (N.Y.U. Press, 1981): 127, defending Melville's Indian-hater episode in *The Confidence-Man* from charges of racism.

² See George Allen Morgan, *What Nietzsche Means* (Cambridge: Harvard U.P.: 1941); Morgan, a philosophy professor at Duke (the same Morgan as the consultant to the Psychological Strategy Board of the NSC, 1951-53?) masterfully decoded Nietzsche, showing that the ethical antinomy for the nineteenth century was not good Christian versus bad Jew, but austere ascetic (impossible?) Heraclitean Greek versus (feminized) Christian/Jew; (the latter were of course, originators of the slave rebellions that had toppled towering geniuses).

³ Barbara Ehrenreich, a leading feminist and social democrat, deplored the lack of autonomy of the professional-managerial class under Reagan, comparing its relative freedom prior to 1980 (KPFK radio broadcast, 10/2/89). This would be precisely the argument of the socially responsible liberals of the Committee For Economic Development and other corporatists discussed throughout my study.

⁴ See *American Historical Review*, April, 1973, 394-401; Oct. 1973, 1155-1163, for the dispute between Hans Gatzke and Walter Langer regarding the participation of Murray in the OSS report. Gatzke could have made a stronger case in his own defense. But an even more obvious influence was the worksheet on Hitler's personality devised by Murray and Gordon Allport for their Harvard seminar on Civilian Morale (1941), and designed for national distribution to private organizations concerned with consensus building before, during and after the looming conflict. The Harvard University Archives register for the Murray Papers states that Murray started work on his psychological profile of Hitler in 1938, after a request from the Roosevelt administration.

Two books from the 1980s contain conflicting reports regarding the inception of the Langer report. According to one account, Dr. Ernst "Putzi" Hanfstaengl, a former intimate of Hitler, was interrogated for many weeks. "The results were of great value to a psychiatric profile of Hitler which Donovan had commissioned." See Anthony Cave Brown, *The Last Hero: Wild Bill Donovan* (Random House Vintage Paperback, 1984): 211 (no sources given). But according to another researcher (in an obscurely written paragraph discussing German hopes for a separate peace), the Langer report was part of "a flood of rumors" concocted by the British and O.S.S. Morale Operations in 1944-45 "to spread the tale that the Nazis were trying to use atrocities to provoke the British and the Americans into retaining the policy of unconditional surrender so that the German people would continue to feel that there was no alternative but to fight on....It was the Chief of London M. O. Fred Oechsner who had the idea of preparing a psychological study of Hitler to guide his covert propaganda operations. The resulting work by Walter Langer, which was known in the O. S. S. as the "spiced-up" version and cost the organization \$25000 in

Langer's fees, was heralded after the war as an Allied intelligence project prepared to predict the course Hitler would follow as he approached his end. In fact, it was just another of M. O.'s wild schemes, using juicy tidbits from the Führer's life to addle the brains of the population of Central Europe." See Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors* (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1983): 276-77. Smith's sources are the British Foreign Office and the James Donovan Papers at the Hoover Institution. One problem with this bizarre scenario is that the Langer report was supposedly filed in 1943. Smith makes no connection between the Murray and Langer reports, but in a footnote p. 447, n14, refers to the 1943 Murray study of Hitler as utilizing Hanfstaengl as an informant, and claims that the report was black propaganda intended "to cause dissension in Nazi ranks" (205); moreover that the Murray report was a product of FDR's private intelligence team headed by John Franklin Carter. (Not that the Basic Books had also published what it said was the original 1943 Langer Report, the subject of my essay.)

⁵ Cf. Olson's name switch to Hermann in his article for *New Republic*, 9/8 and 9/15/52.

⁶ Dr. Henry A. Murray, "Analysis of The Personality of Adolph [sic] Hitler, With Predictions of His Future Behavior and Suggestions for Dealing With Him Now and After Germany's Surrender," October 1943, p. 211, ff. Murray's list of Hitler's skills are almost identical to those enumerated in the Langer report. It is curious that Gatzke did not mention this in his refutation of Langer's claim that Murray's report was not even read by his team before it was filed with the O.S.S. in 1943! However, there are important differences in interpretation between the two works; e.g. Murray, while giving credence to the Jewish blood, does not discuss Hitler's sex life as a central determinant, but attempts a class analysis and gives weight to the Romantic Hitler's reading and his life experience, the brutal lower-middle class father who opposed his son's ambitions to become an artist, etc. The Murray-Allport worksheets for their Harvard seminar on "Civilian Morale" (1941) do contain allusions to a deranged sexuality along with inferences drawn from Hitler's physiognomy, but "social milieu" is deemed more important ("Hitler The Man..." p. 11).

⁷ Hitler believed that the masses were feminine and irrational, but he does not present himself as a cynical swindler in *Mein Kampf*. He invariably paints himself as the good reliable father, protecting the gullible people against switching Jews, the Fifth Column. In both *MK* and *Table Talk*, he explains that Nazi propaganda must simplify, not falsify.

⁸ Sergei Eisenstein, trans. Ivor Montagu, "Film Forms, New Problems," *New Theater*, April-June 1936, pp. 13, 29; preserved in Leyda Papers, UCLA. Leyda told his psychiatrist that his real father worked in the circus.

⁹ Murray remarked to me that there were "differences between first, second and third-generation Jews."

¹⁰ See Henry A. Murray and Christiana Morgan, "A Method For Investigating Fantasies: The Thematic Apperception Test," *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 34, 1935. In the TAT, the subject is shown a drawing which he then

interprets in written form. The Progressive Murray of course believed he was rescuing the patient from such neuroses as the Icarus complex (social radicalism, itself irrationally motivated) when he concluded: "...the thematic apperception test is an effective means of disclosing a subject's regnant preoccupations and some of the unconscious trends which underlie them. The advantages of the test are that it is a simple procedure which may be completed in two hours or in an abbreviated form in half that time, and it may be performed in a casual and informal fashion. Since the subject is led to believe that it is a test of creative imagination, even when it is given in a clinic, he is unaware of the fact that he is revealing his innermost thoughts. The subject's attention is not on himself, and so in many instances he indirectly confesses to things which he would not be willing to mention directly. But more than this, he exposes latent tendencies of which he is entirely unconscious. For the fantasies being projected may be inwardly disclaimed and thus avoid complete repression...At the present time a young person who shows a few mildly neurotic symptoms or, like all inwardly developing young persons, is temporarily overburdened by mental conflict generally has, if he wants expert assistance, but two choices. He may be analyzed, or he may consult a psychiatrist with no experience in analysis...There are numberless young men and women who need the kind of help which perhaps only a trained therapist trained in psychoanalysis is in a position to give and yet who do not need, or want or cannot afford an analysis lasting a year or more. They need to confess and discuss their problems, to attain insight, but in most cases it is better not to impede their progressive efforts by having to revive and relive their past. It is in such cases that the thematic apperception test may provide the psychotherapist with the information necessary for the fulfillment of his function as a guide and healer of men."

¹¹ In his review of the Langer report, Robert Jay Lifton was worried about such extrapolations, but Charles Rotunda in the *New Republic* agreed with Langer.

¹² The charge that Hitler had Jewish blood was given credence by the antifascist muckraker George Seldes in *Facts and Fascism* (N.Y.: In Fact, 1943), in a classic example of petit-bourgeois radicalism (populism: the enemy is filthy lucre, not all forms of illegitimate authority): "Factual evidence shows that bankers, international or what-not, are without exception on the side of money; they always invest to make profits, and they are without exception on the reactionary or fascist side, no matter what church, nation, 'race' or 'blood' they belong to. When Wheeler, Coughlin, Hitler, Goebbels and others make statements to the contrary such statements are propaganda, if not plain falsehood. Curiously enough, no less an authority than Fritz Thyssen, the man who bought and paid for the Nazi Party, believes the rumor that Hitler is partly Jewish. Every official trace of evidence concerning Hitler's ancestry has now disappeared. It has been destroyed by order, just as were Mussolini's police record in Italy and his record for forgery in Switzerland (as well as his political ar-

rests). However, Thyssen writes: "According to the published records, Hitler's grandmother had an illegitimate son, and this son was to become the father of Germany's present leader." An inquiry by Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria "disclosed that the Feuhrer's [sic] grandmother became pregnant during her employment as a servant in a Viennese family...none other than that of Baron Rothschild." Thyssen insists that Hitler learned of this document and that it was one of the reasons [sic] for the murder of Dollfuss. Thyssen believes the British secret service has a copy. The original, he says, Hitler got from Chancellor Schuschnigg and destroyed. If Thyssen's rumors turn out to be fact, it would appear that the world's greatest anti-Semite, the greatest liar and the greatest propagandist of the "international bankers" myth, is himself a Rothschild" (156).

The irony of the last sentence is dependent on seeing that Hitler's Jewish blood would make him, in fact, "a Rothschild" of the domineering banker-type he, Hitler, appears to hate. Seldes' statement at first glance seems to be criticizing Hitler's racism in attributing Jewishness to all bankers instead of dealing with their class interests. By the time Seldes wrote his book, the myth of the Jewish banking conspiracy had been thoroughly exploded in the liberal press. But what did Seldes think he was doing by summoning Thyssen as a witness lending plausibility to a rumor that he, as a Nazi supporter, had every interest in suppressing, unless he, Seldes, at some level wished to muddy the waters regarding the links between international Jews and finance capital? And why does Seldes tell the reader that all bankers are evil profiteers, regardless of genetic inheritance, but then, in the third and fourth sentences, create a suggestive link between "Hitler's [possible part-Jewish] ancestry" and Mussolini's shameful crimes? Why mention Mussolini's cover-up at all? Don't all illegitimate rulers clean up their records? Has Seldes reverted, unconsciously perhaps, to the stereotyping he so furiously criticizes by connecting in a rapid-fire barrage of unsupported assertions, money, class, dirt (the shameful suppressed rumor), and hypocrisy? When the muckrakers raked, was their muck latently Jewish in content?

¹³ Cf. Murray on peasant stock vs. Hitler's Jewish blood in the Harvard worksheet "Hitler, The Man—Notes For A Case History." There is a mystery as to the grandfather: "The ancestors on both sides of the family were peasant people of the district of Waldviertel, highly illiterate and very inbred." Father's eyes were "small sharp, wicked"; he was a "harsh, stern, ambitious and punctilious man" (2). What are his relations to his mother? Hitler had "large melancholy thoughtful eyes" (2) and an "essentially feminine appearance." The eyes of "neutral grey tend to take on the colors of their surroundings" (4). Mother took his side in the dispute over Hitler's becoming an artist over father's objections (3). The brutal father caused him to be submissive, but he was boiling over. He was enslaved to mother, an attachment he never outgrew, so he perhaps harbored a deep unconscious rage against her. Failure added to other factors would unleash aggression (11). Discussing the sources of Hitler's antisemitism (consisting solely of a "morbid connection" between "Jews and

disease, blood disease, syphilis, and filthy excrescences of all sorts") Murray mentions that Hitler was a common Jewish name and he was teased about his Jewish appearance in Vienna (11). Murray speculates: "Now it is known that syphilophobia often has its roots in the childhood discovery of the nature of sexual congress between the parents. With a father who was illegitimate and possibly of Jewish origin [fn The name Hitler is Jewish as was pointed out] and a strong mother fixation, such a discovery by the child Adolf may well have laid the basis of a syphilophobia which some adventure with a Jewish prostitute in Vienna fanned to a full flame. Terrified by the fear of his own infection, all the hatred in his being is then directed toward the Jews...Hitler's personality structure, though falling within the normal range, may now be described as the paranoid type with delusions of persecution and of grandeur. This stems from a sado-masochistic split in his personality. Integral with these alternating and opposed elements in his personality are his fear of infection, the identification of the Jews as the source...and some derangement of the sexual function which make his relations with the opposite sex abnormal in nature." He has projected his inner conflicts onto the world.

Murray describes ambivalence: Hitler hates the Germans, so he uses "Jewish" tricks—"deceit, lying, violence and sudden attack both to subject the German people as well as their foes." International Jewish capital, etc. strangles and infects the mother. Father partly possesses her so Hitler destroys the Austrian State. But Hitler's aggression arouses protest from the other side, causing anxiety, panic, insomnia, and nightmares. Now he controls himself, because Fate controls his violence. Success assuages fear. When the limit of success is reached, "the personality may collapse under the weight of its own guilt feelings. It is, therefore, quite possible that Hitler will do away with himself at whatever moment German defeat becomes sufficient enough to destroy the fiction of Fate which has shielded him from the violence of his own guilt...." (11-14). The Murray Papers at Harvard University Archives contain materials relevant to his conflicted relations with Walter Langer, but they are closed to me as of this writing.

¹⁴ Gatzke objected to this procedure, but did not compare it to Hitler's. Also, if there was so much discussion, then agreement, why did the OSS report resemble Murray's earlier report for FDR, as Gatzke noted? (Langer said Murray opted out of the team almost immediately.)

¹⁵ See Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide* (N.Y.: Seabury Press, 1973). Ruether dates the onset of modern antisemitism with the writings of Patristic church fathers.

¹⁶ In an essay reviewing sixteen recent studies of the Holocaust (*NYRB*, 9/28/89), Istvan Deak, Professor of History at Columbia University, declared Marxist identifications of fascism with late capitalism passé; Deak, like other conservatives, apparently views the People, not the system, as the source of violence. For Deak, the mass murder committed by the Nazis is unique, and probably incomprehensible (here quoting Arno Mayer). Perhaps Nazi crimes

would not be so inexplicable were they not encapsulated with the excuse of historicism. For to insert Nazi violence into the continuum of permissible violence would reflect badly on the aristocratic paternalism which Deak and other elitists would like to protect; but worse, such comparisons (with child abuse, degradation of the environment, the cruelty of class education, the toleration of poverty and other unnecessary human suffering in an age of technology) would expose the fragility and novelty of the humanitarianism and science introduced during the Renaissance and Enlightenment—and their cooption and deformation by conservatives (another outdated 'Marxist' idea).

¹⁷ Murray mentions Hitler's reading of James Fenimore Cooper and Karl May (a popular German writer on American Indians), Worksheet on Hitler, p.3.

¹⁸ See Plinlimmon's pamphlet in *Pierre, or the Ambiguities* (1852). Ultra-conservatives have consistently identified Melville and his character Ishmael with Plinlimmon's amorality in the service of social cohesion.

¹⁹ This themes I have identified are suppressed in an H-Net Review (11-13-98) by Philip J. Landon of the History Channel's series on the 1950s: "The small-town scandals of *Peyton Place* are balanced by interviews with Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*, 1963) and Sloan Wilson (*The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, 1955), writers who chronicled the suburban domestic life of young businessmen climbing the corporate ladder and their wives, whose horizons have narrowed to children and kitchen appliances. Their discontents are illustrated primarily with scenes from the Hollywood adaptation of Wilson's novel, which focuses on the middle-class and upwardly mobile Rath family. While the Rathes may exemplify the disappointments awaiting those who achieve the American Dream, they are more 1950s myth than 1950s reality. Very few families ever enjoyed the Rath's material well-being. The discontents which haunted most families originated in their failure to share the Dream which advertising and the mass-media held up as the reward awaiting all deserving Americans. To many of us who grew up in the lower-middle and working-class families and came of age during the 1950s, the tribulations of the Rath family seemed both delicious and desirable."