

BENITO MUSSOLINI: *On Myth* \*

The following statement is embedded in a speech delivered by Mussolini at Naples, October 24, 1922.

WE HAVE created our myth. The myth is a faith, it is passion. It is not necessary that it shall be a reality. It is a reality by the fact that it is a good, a hope, a faith, that it is courage. Our myth is the Nation, our myth is the greatness of the Nation! And to this myth, to this grandeur, that we wish to translate into a complete reality, we subordinate all the rest.

ADOLF HITLER: *Mein Kampf* †

*Mein Kampf* is the autobiography of Adolph Hitler (1889-1945), the son of a minor Austrian customs official who later became Führer of the National Socialist party in Germany and Chancellor of the Third Reich. The book was first published in two volumes, in 1925 and 1927.

JUST as little as Nature desires a mating between weaker individuals and stronger ones, far less she desires the mixing of a higher race with a lower one, as in this case her entire work of higher breeding, which has perhaps taken hundreds of thousands of years, would tumble at one blow.

Historical experience offers countless proofs of this. It shows with terrible clarity that with any mixing of the blood of the Aryan with lower races the result was the end of the culture-bearer.

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*Thus the highest purpose of the folkish State is the care for the preservation of those racial primal elements which, supplying culture, create the beauty and dignity of a higher humanity. . . .*

*The folkish State, through this realization, has to direct its entire education primarily not at pumping in mere knowledge, but at the breeding of absolutely healthy bodies. Of secondary importance is the training of the mental abilities. But here again first of all the development of the character, especially the promotion of will power and determination, connected with education for joyfully assuming responsibility, and only as the last thing, scientific schooling.*

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Thereby the folkish State has to start from the presumption *that a man, though scientifically little educated but physically healthy, who has a sound, firm character, filled with joyful determination and will power, is of greater value to the national community than an ingenious weakling.*

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*A view of life which, by rejecting the democratic mass idea, endeavors to give this world to the best people, that means to the most superior men, has logically to obey the same aristocratic principle also within this people and has to guarantee leadership and highest influence within the respective people to the best heads. With this it does not build up on the idea of the majority, but on that of the personality.*

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After my joining the German Workers' Party, I immediately took over the management of the propaganda. . . . Propaganda had to precede far in advance of the organization and to win for the latter the human material to be utilized. . . .

The psyche of the great masses is not receptive to half measures or weakness.

Like a woman, whose psychic feeling is influenced less by abstract reasoning than by an undefinable, sentimental longing for complementary strength, who will submit to the strong man rather than dominate the weakling, thus the masses love the ruler rather than the suppliant, and inwardly they are far more satisfied by a doctrine which tolerates no rival than by the grant of liberal freedom; they often feel at a loss what to do with it, and even easily feel themselves deserted. . . .

The great masses' receptive ability is only very limited, their understanding is small, but their forgetfulness is great. As a consequence of these facts, all effective propaganda has to limit itself only to a very few points and to use them like slogans until even the very last man is able to imagine what is intended by such a word.

ALFRED ROSENBERG: *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* \*

Next to Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, Alfred Rosenberg's best-selling *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1930) ranked as the most authorita-

\* From Alfred Rosenberg: *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*, pp. 1-2, 114-15, 117-18, 629. Copyright 1930 by Hoheneichen Verlag. My translation from the 1936 edition. The German interests in the United States Copyright in this work were vested in the Alien Property Custodian in 1942, pursuant to law. The use of this material is by permission of his successor, the Attorney General of the United States, in the public interest under License No. JA-1464.

tive expression of the Nazi world-view. Rosenberg (1893-1946) held important posts in the Nazi government and edited the leading Nazi newspaper and monthly magazine.

ALL the contemporary struggles for power are outward expressions of an inner collapse. All the state systems of 1914 have already fallen, likewise social, ecclesiastical, and philosophical world-views and values. No high principle, no lofty idea rules unchallenged the life of the peoples. Group struggles against group, party against party, national values against international precepts, benumbed imperialism against spreading pacifism. Finance ensnares with golden nets states and peoples, the economy is primitivized, life is uprooted.

The World War, which marked the beginning of a world revolution in all spheres, showed the tragic fact that while millions sacrificed their lives, this sacrifice profited powers different from those for which the armies were ready to die. The dead of the war are the sacrifice to the catastrophe of an epoch that had become valueless, but they are at the same time . . . the martyrs of a new day and a new faith.

The blood that died begins to come alive. Under its mystical sign a new cell-structure of the German soul develops. Present and past suddenly appear in a new light, and for the future a new mission is revealed. History and the task of the future no longer mean the struggle of class against class, ecclesiastical dogma against secular creeds, but the putting asunder of blood and blood, race and race, folk and folk. And this means: the struggle of soul-value against soul-value.

The racial interpretation of history is an insight which will soon become self-evident. Meritorious men already serve it. Draymen will in the not-very-far-future be able to complete the building of the new world-picture.

But the values of the racial *soul* which are the driving forces behind the new world-picture, have not yet come to full consciousness. *Soul means race seen from the inside. And contrariwise is race the outer side of a soul.* To awaken to life the racial soul means to recognize it as the highest value, and under its dominion to assign to the other values their organic place, in state, art, and religion; that is the task of our century: out of a new life-myth to create a new type of man. For this task courage is needed, the courage of each individual, the courage of the whole rising generation, yes, and of many generations to come. For chaos is never banished by cowards, nor has a new world ever been built by weaklings. Whoever wishes to go forward must therefore burn his bridges behind him. Whoever sets out upon a great journey must leave behind his old household furniture. Whoever strives for the sublime must leave behind the lesser ideal. And to all doubts and questions the

new man of the coming first *German Reich* knows only one answer: I am determined to do it!

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Today there awakens a new faith: the myth of blood, the belief that to defend blood is to defend the divine nature of man: the faith, embodied in clearest knowledge, that the nordic blood represents that mystery which has replaced and overcome the old sacraments.

. . . Germanic Europe presented the world with the brightest ideal of manhood: the teaching of the value of character as the foundation of all morality, the paean of praise to the highest values of the nordic nature, to the idea of freedom of conscience and honor. . . .

This knowledge is the foundation of a new world-view, of a new-old theory of state; it is the myth of a new feeling of life, which alone will give us the strength to overthrow the usurped rule of the lower order of men and to create a distinctive morality penetrating all walks of life.

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*The life of a race, a folk, is not a philosophy that develops logically nor a process unwinding according to natural law, but is the expression of a mystical synthesis, an activity of the soul which can neither be explained by rational processes, nor made comprehensible by the analysis of causes and effects. . . . In the final analysis every philosophy going beyond formal rational criticism is less a knowledge than an affirmation; a spiritual and racial affirmation, an affirmation of the values of character.*

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Neither history nor the weaknesses of our heroes ought to be hushed up, but the eternal mythical elements which transcend them should be discerned and made clear. Thus will arise a series of great spirits: Odin, Siegfried, Widukind, Frederick II (the Hohenstaufen), Eckhart, Vogelweide, Luther, Frederick the Great, Bach, Goethe, Beethoven, Schopenhauer, Bismarck. . . . To serve this new evaluation is the mission of the schools of the coming Reich. It is its greatest, if not its only task in the next decades to make this evaluation self-evident to all Germans. But the schools still await a great teacher of German history with the will to a German future. He will come when the myth has become life.