

AFTER THE CATASTROPHE¹

400 This is the first time since 1936 that the fate of Germany again drives me to take up my pen. The quotation from the *Voluspö* with which I ended the article² I wrote at that time, about Wotan "murmuring with Mimir's head," pointed prophetically to the nature of the coming apocalyptic events. The myth has been fulfilled, and the greater part of Europe lies in ruins.

401 Before the work of reconstruction can begin, there is a good deal of clearing up to be done, and this calls above all for *reflection*. Questions are being asked on all sides about the meaning of the whole tragedy. People have even turned to me for an explanation, and I have had to answer them there and then to the best of my ability. But as the spoken word very quickly gives rise to legends, I have decided—not without considerable hesitations and misgivings—to set down my views once again in the form of an article. I am only too well aware that "Germany" presents an immense problem, and that the subjective views of a medical psychologist can touch on only a few aspects of this gigantic tangle of questions. I must be content with a modest contribution to the work of clearing up, without even attempting to look as far ahead as reconstruction.

402 While I was working on this article I noticed how churned up one still is in one's own psyche, and how difficult it is to reach anything approaching a moderate and relatively calm point of view in the midst of one's emotions. No doubt we should be cold-blooded and superior; but we are, on the whole,

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² [See previous paper.]

much more deeply involved in the recent events in Germany than we like to admit. Nor can we feel compassion, for the heart harbours feelings of a very different nature, and these would like to have the first say. Neither the doctor nor the psychologist can afford to be *only* cold-blooded—quite apart from the fact that they would find it impossible. Their relationship to the world involves them and all their affects, otherwise their relationship would be incomplete. That being so, I found myself faced with the task of steering my ship between Scylla and Charybdis, and—as is usual on such a voyage—stopping my ears to one side of my being and lashing the other to the mast. I must confess that no article has ever given me so much trouble, from a moral as well as a human point of view. I had not realized how much I myself was affected. There are others, I am sure, who will share this feeling with me. This inner identity or *participation mystique* with events in Germany has caused me to experience afresh how painfully wide is the scope of the psychological concept of *collective guilt*. So when I approach this problem it is certainly not with any feelings of cold-blooded superiority, but rather with an avowed sense of inferiority.

403 The psychological use of the word "guilt" should not be confused with guilt in the legal or moral sense. Psychologically, it connotes the irrational presence of a subjective feeling (or conviction) of guilt, or an objective imputation of, or imputed share in, guilt. As an example of the latter, suppose a man belongs to a family which has the misfortune to be disgraced because one of its members has committed a crime. It is clear that he cannot be held responsible, either legally or morally. Yet the atmosphere of guilt makes itself felt in many ways. His family name appears to have been sullied, and it gives him a painful shock to hear it bandied about in the mouths of strangers. Guilt can be restricted to the lawbreaker only from the legal, moral, and intellectual point of view, but as a psychic phenomenon it spreads itself over the whole neighbourhood. A house, a family, even a village where a murder has been committed feels the psychological guilt and is made to feel it by the outside world. Would one take a room where one knows a man was murdered a few days before? Is it particularly pleasant to marry the sister or daughter of a criminal? What father is not deeply wounded if his son is sent to prison, and does he not feel injured in his

family pride if a cousin of the same name brings dishonour on his house? Would not every decent Swiss feel ashamed—to put it mildly—if our Government had erected a human slaughter-house like Maidenek in our country? Would we then be surprised if, travelling abroad with our Swiss passports, we heard such remarks at the frontier as “*Ces cochons de Suisses!*”? Indeed, are we not all a little ashamed—precisely because we are patriots—that Switzerland should have bred so many traitors?

404 Living as we do in the middle of Europe, we Swiss feel comfortably far removed from the foul vapours that arise from the morass of German guilt. But all this changes the moment we set foot, as Europeans, on another continent or come into contact with an Oriental people. What are we to say to an Indian who asks us: “You are anxious to bring us your Christian culture, are you not? May I ask if Auschwitz and Buchenwald are examples of European civilization?” Would it help matters if we hastened to assure him that these things did not take place where we live, but several hundred miles further east—not in our country at all but in a neighbouring one? How would we react if an Indian pointed out indignantly that India’s black spot lay not in Travancore but in Hyderabad? Undoubtedly we’d say, “Oh well, India is India!” Similarly, the view all over the East is, “Oh well, Europe is Europe!” The moment we so-called innocent Europeans cross the frontiers of our own continent we are made to feel something of the collective guilt that weighs upon it, despite our good conscience. (One might also ask: Is Russia so primitive that she can still feel our “guilt-by-contagion”—as collective guilt might also be called—and for that reason accuses us of Fascism?) The world sees Europe as the continent on whose soil the shameful concentration camps grew, just as Europe singles out Germany as the land and the people that are enveloped in a cloud of guilt; for the horror happened in Germany and its perpetrators were Germans. No German can deny this, any more than a European or a Christian can deny that the most monstrous crime of all ages was committed in his house. The Christian Church should put ashes on her head and rend her garments on account of the guilt of her children. The shadow of their guilt has fallen on her as much as upon Europe, the mother of monsters. Europe must account for herself before the world, just as Germany must before Europe. The European

can no more convince the Indian that Germany is no concern of his, or that he knows nothing at all about that country, than the German can rid himself of his collective guilt by protesting that he did not know. In that way he merely compounds his collective guilt by the sin of unconsciousness.

405 Psychological collective guilt is a *tragic fate*. It hits everybody, just and unjust alike, everybody who was anywhere near the place where the terrible thing happened. Naturally no reasonable and conscientious person will lightly turn collective into individual guilt by holding the individual responsible without giving him a hearing. He will know enough to distinguish between the individually guilty and the merely collectively guilty. But how many people are either reasonable or conscientious, and how many take the trouble to become so? I am not very optimistic in this respect. Therefore, although collective guilt, viewed on the archaic and primitive level, is a state of *magical uncleanness*, yet precisely because of the general unreasonable-ness it is a very real fact, which no European outside Europe and no German outside Germany can leave out of account. If the German intends to live on good terms with Europe, he must be conscious that in the eyes of Europeans he is a guilty man. As a German, he has betrayed European civilization and all its values; he has brought shame and disgrace on his European family, so that one must blush to hear oneself called a European; he has fallen on his European brethren like a beast of prey, and tortured and murdered them. The German can hardly expect other Europeans to resort to such niceties as to inquire at every step whether the criminal's name was Müller or Meier. Neither will he be deemed worthy of being treated as a gentleman until the contrary has been proved. Unfortunately, for twelve long years it has been demonstrated with the utmost clarity that the official

406 If a German is prepared to acknowledge his moral inferiority as collective guilt before the whole world, without attempting to minimize it or explain it away with flimsy arguments, then he will stand a reasonable chance, after a time, of being taken for a more or less decent man, and will thus be absolved of his collective guilt at any rate in the eyes of individuals.

407 It may be objected that the whole concept of psychological collective guilt is a prejudice and a sweepingly unfair condemna-

tion. Of course it is, but that is precisely what constitutes the irrational nature of collective guilt: it cares nothing for the just and the unjust, it is the dark cloud that rises up from the scene of an unexpiated crime. It is a psychic phenomenon, and it is therefore no condemnation of the German people to say that they are collectively guilty, but simply a statement of fact. Yet if we penetrate more deeply into the psychology of this phenomenon, we shall soon discover that the problem of collective guilt has another and more questionable aspect than that merely of a collective judgment.

408 Since no man lives within his own psychic sphere like a snail in its shell, separated from everybody else, but is connected with his fellow-men by his unconscious humanity, no crime can ever be what it appears to our consciousness to be: an isolated psychic happening. In reality, it always happens over a wide radius. The sensation aroused by a crime, the passionate interest in tracking down the criminal, the eagerness with which the court proceedings are followed, and so on, all go to prove the exciting effect which the crime has on everybody who is not abnormally dull or apathetic. Everybody joins in, feels the crime in his own being, tries to understand and explain it. Something is set aflame by that great fire of evil that flared up in the crime. Was not Plato aware that the sight of ugliness produces something ugly in the soul? Indignation leaps up, angry cries of "Justice!" pursue the murderer, and they are louder, more impassioned, and more charged with hate the more fiercely burns the fire of evil that has been lit in our souls. It is a fact that cannot be denied: the wickedness of others becomes our own wickedness because it kindles something evil in our own hearts. The murder has been suffered by everyone, and everyone has committed it; lured by the irresistible fascination of evil, we have all made this collective psychic murder possible; and the closer we were to it and the better we could see, the greater our guilt. In this way we are unavoidably drawn into the uncleanness of evil, no matter what our conscious attitude may be. No one can escape this, for we are all so much a part of the human community that every crime calls forth a secret satisfaction in some corner of the fickle human heart. It is true that, in persons with a strong moral disposition, this reaction may arouse contrary feelings in a neighbouring compartment of the

mind. But a strong moral disposition is a comparative rarity, so that when the crimes mount up, indignation may easily get pitched too high, and evil then becomes the order of the day. Everyone harbours his "statistical criminal" in himself, just as he has his own private madman or saint. Owing to this basic peculiarity in our human make-up, a corresponding suggestibility, or susceptibility to infection, exists everywhere. It is our age in particular—the last half century—that has prepared the way for crime. Has it never occurred to anybody, for instance, that the vogue for the thriller has a rather questionable side?

409 Long before 1933 there was a smell of burning in the air, and people were passionately interested in discovering the locus of the fire and in tracking down the incendiary. And when denser clouds of smoke were seen to gather over Germany, and the burning of the Reichstag gave the signal, then at last there was no mistake where the incendiary, evil in person, dwelt. Terrifying as this discovery was, in time it brought a sense of relief: now we knew for certain where all unrighteousness was to be found, whereas we ourselves were securely entrenched in the opposite camp, among respectable people whose moral indignation could be trusted to rise higher and higher with every fresh sign of guilt on the other side. Even the call for mass executions no longer offended the ears of the righteous, and the saturation bombing of German cities was looked upon as the judgment of God. Hate had found respectable motives and had ceased to be a personal idiosyncrasy, indulged in secret. And all the time the esteemed public had not the faintest idea how closely they themselves were living to evil.

410 One should not imagine for a moment that anybody could escape this play of opposites. Even a saint would have to pray unceasingly for the souls of Hitler and Himmler, the Gestapo and the S.S., in order to repair without delay the damage done to his own soul. The sight of evil kindles evil in the soul—there is no getting away from this fact. The victim is not the only sufferer; everybody in the vicinity of the crime, including the murderer, suffers with him. Something of the abysmal darkness of the world has broken in on us, poisoning the very air we breathe and befouling the pure water with the stale, nauseating taste of blood. True, we are innocent, we are the victims, robbed, betrayed, outraged; and yet for all that, or precisely because of

it, the flame of evil glowers in our moral indignation. It must be so, for it is necessary that someone should feel indignant, that someone should let himself be the sword of judgment wielded by fate. Evil calls for expiation, otherwise the wicked will destroy the world utterly, or the good suffocate in their rage which they cannot vent, and in either case no good will come of it.

411 When evil breaks at any point into the order of things, our whole circle of psychic protection is disrupted. Action inevitably calls up reaction, and, in the matter of destructiveness, this turns out to be just as bad as the crime, and possibly even worse, because the evil must be exterminated root and branch. In order to escape the contaminating touch of evil we need a proper *rite de sortie*, a solemn admission of guilt by judge, hangman, and public, followed by an act of expiation.

412 The terrible things that have happened in Germany, and the moral downfall of a "nation of eighty millions," are a blow aimed at all Europeans. (We used to be able to relegate such things to "Asia!") The fact that one member of the European family could sink to the level of the concentration camp throws a dubious light on all the others. Who are we to imagine that "it couldn't happen here"? We have only to multiply the population of Switzerland by twenty to become a nation of eighty millions, and our public intelligence and morality would then automatically be divided by twenty in consequence of the devastating moral and psychic effects of living together in huge masses. Such a state of things provides the basis for collective crime, and it is then really a miracle if the crime is not committed. Do we seriously believe that *we* would have been immune? We, who have so many traitors and political psychopaths in our midst? It has filled us with horror to realize all that man is capable of, and of which, therefore, we too are capable. Since then a terrible doubt about humanity, and about ourselves, gnaws at our hearts.

413 Nevertheless, it should be clear to everyone that such a state of degradation can come about only under certain conditions. The most important of these is the accumulation of urban, industrialized masses—of people torn from the soil, engaged in one-sided employment, and lacking every healthy instinct, even that of self-preservation. Loss of the instinct of self-preservation can

be measured in terms of dependence on the State, which is a bad symptom. Dependence on the State means that everybody relies on everybody else (= State) instead of on himself. Every man hangs on to the next and enjoys a false feeling of security, for one is still hanging in the air even when hanging in the company of ten thousand other people. The only difference is that one is no longer aware of one's own insecurity. The increasing dependence on the State is anything but a healthy symptom; it means that the whole nation is in a fair way to becoming a herd of sheep, constantly relying on a shepherd to drive them into good pastures. The shepherd's staff soon becomes a rod of iron, and the shepherds turn into wolves. What a distressing sight it was to see the whole of Germany heave a sigh of relief when a megalomaniac psychopath proclaimed, "I take over the responsibility!" Any man who still possesses the instinct of self-preservation knows perfectly well that only a swindler would offer to relieve him of responsibility, for surely no one in his senses would dream of taking responsibility for the existence of another. The man who promises everything is sure to fulfil nothing, and everyone who promises too much is in danger of using evil means in order to carry out his promises, and is already on the road to perdition. The steady growth of the Welfare State is no doubt a very fine thing from one point of view, but from another it is a doubtful blessing, as it robs people of their individual responsibility and turns them into infants and sheep. Besides this, there is the danger that the capable will simply be exploited by the irresponsible, as happened on a huge scale in Germany. The citizen's instinct of self-preservation should be safeguarded at all costs, for, once a man is cut off from the nourishing roots of instinct, he becomes the shuttlecock of every wind that blows. He is then no better than a sick animal, demoralized and degenerate, and nothing short of a catastrophe can bring him back to health.

414 I own that in saying all this I feel rather like the prophet who, according to Josephus, lifted up his voice in lamentation over the city as the Romans laid siege to Jerusalem. It proved not the slightest use to the city, and a stone missile from a Roman ballista put an end to the prophet.

415 With the best will in the world we cannot build a paradise on earth, and even if we could, in a very short time we would

have degenerated in every way. We would take delight in destroying our paradise, and then, just as foolishly, marvel at what we had done. Moreover, if we happened to be a "nation of eighty millions" we would be convinced that the "others" were to blame, and our self-confidence would be at such a low ebb that we would not even think of shouldering the responsibility or taking the blame for anything.

416 This is a pathological, demoralized, and mentally abnormal condition: one side of us does things which the other (so-called decent) side prefers to ignore. This side is in a perpetual state of defence against real and supposed accusations. In reality the chief accuser is not outside, but the judge who dwells in our own hearts. Since this is nature's attempt to bring about a cure, it would be wiser not to persist too long in rubbing the noses of the Germans in their own abominations, lest we drown the voice of the accuser in their hearts—and also in our own hearts and those of our Allies. If only people could realize what an enrichment it is to find one's own guilt, what a sense of honour and spiritual dignity! But nowhere does there seem to be a glimmering of this insight. Instead, we hear only of attempts to shift the blame on to others—"no one will admit to having been a Nazi." The Germans were never wholly indifferent to the impression they made on the outside world. They resented disapproval and hated even to be criticized. Inferiority feelings make people touchy and lead to compensatory efforts to impress. As a result, the German thrusts himself forward and seeks to curry favour, or "German efficiency" is demonstrated with such aplomb that it leads to a reign of terror and the shooting of hostages. The German no longer thinks of these things as murder, for he is lost in considerations of his own prestige. Inferiority feelings are usually a sign of inferior feeling—which is not just a play on words. All the intellectual and technological achievements in the world cannot make up for inferiority in the matter of feeling. The pseudo-scientific race-theories with which it was dolled up did not make the extermination of the Jews any more acceptable, and neither do falsifications of history make a wrong policy appear any more trustworthy.

417 This spectacle recalls the figure of what Nietzsche so aptly calls the "pale criminal," who in reality shows all the signs of hysteria. He simply will not and cannot admit that he is what

he is; he cannot endure his own guilt, just as he could not help incurring it. He will stoop to every kind of self-deception if only he can escape the sight of himself. It is true that this happens everywhere, but nowhere does it appear to be such a national characteristic as in Germany. I am by no means the first to have been struck by the inferiority feelings of the Germans. What did Goethe, Heine, and Nietzsche have to say about their countrymen? A feeling of inferiority does not in the least mean that it is unjustified. Only, the inferiority does not refer to that side of the personality, or to the function, in which it visibly appears, but to an inferiority which none the less really exists even though only dimly suspected. This condition can easily lead to an hysterical dissociation of the personality, which consists essentially in one hand not knowing what the other is doing, in wanting to jump over one's own shadow, and in looking for everything dark, inferior, and culpable in others. Hence the hysteric always complains of being surrounded by people who are incapable of appreciating him and who are activated only by bad motives; by inferior mischief-makers, a crowd of submen who should be exterminated neck and crop so that the Superman can live on his high level of perfection. The very fact that his thinking and feeling proceed along these lines is clear proof of inferiority in action. Therefore all hysterical people are compelled to torment others, because they are unwilling to hurt themselves by admitting their own inferiority. But since nobody can jump out of his skin and be rid of himself, they stand in their own way everywhere as their own evil spirit—and that is what we call an hysterical neurosis.

418 All these pathological features—complete lack of insight into one's own character, auto-erotic self-admiration and self-extenuation, denigration and terrorization of one's fellow men (how contemptuously Hitler spoke of his own people!), projection of the shadow, lying, falsification of reality, determination to impress by fair means or foul, bluffing and double-crossing—all these were united in the man who was diagnosed clinically as an hysteric, and whom a strange fate chose to be the political, moral, and religious spokesman of Germany for twelve years. Is this pure chance?

419 A more accurate diagnosis of Hitler's condition would be *pseudologia phantastica*, that form of hysteria which is character-

ized by a peculiar talent for believing one's own lies. For a short spell, such people usually meet with astounding success, and for that reason are socially dangerous. Nothing has such a convincing effect as a lie one invents and believes oneself, or an evil deed or intention whose righteousness one regards as self-evident. At any rate they carry far more conviction than the good man and the good deed, or even than the wicked man and his purely wicked deed. Hitler's theatrical, obviously hysterical gestures struck all foreigners (with a few amazing exceptions) as purely ridiculous. When I saw him with my own eyes, he suggested a psychic scarecrow (with a broomstick for an outstretched arm) rather than a human being. It is also difficult to understand how his ranting speeches, delivered in shrill, grating, womanish tones, could have made such an impression. But the German people would never have been taken in and carried away so completely if this figure had not been a reflected image of the collective German hysteria. It is not without serious misgivings that one ventures to pin the label of "psychopathic inferiority" on to a whole nation, and yet, heaven knows, it is the only explanation which could in any way account for the effect this scarecrow had on the masses. A sorry lack of education, conceit that bordered on madness, a very mediocre intelligence combined with the hysteric's cunning and the power fantasies of an adolescent, were written all over this demagogue's face. His gesticulations were all put on, devised by an hysterical mind intent only on making an impression. He behaved in public like a man living in his own biography, in this case as the sombre, daemonic "man of iron" of popular fiction, the ideal of an infantile public whose knowledge of the world is derived from the deified heroes of trashy films. These personal observations led me to conclude at the time (1937) that, when the final catastrophe came, it would be far greater and bloodier than I had previously supposed. For this theatrical hysteric and transparent impostor was not strutting about on a small stage, but was riding the armoured divisions of the Wehrmacht, with all the weight of German heavy industry behind him. Encountering only slight and in any case ineffective opposition from within, the nation of eighty millions crowded into the circus to witness its own destruction.

420 Among Hitler's closest associates, Goebbels and Göring stand

out as equally striking figures. Göring is the good fellow and *bon vivant* type of cheat, who takes in the simple-minded with his jovial air of respectability; Goebbels, a no-less-sinister and dangerous character, is the typical *Kaffeehausliterat* and card-sharper, handicapped and at the same time branded by nature. Any one partner in this unholy trinity should have been enough to make any man whose instincts were not warped cross himself three times. But what in fact happened? Hitler was exalted to the skies; there were even theologians who looked upon him as the Saviour. Göring was popular on account of his weaknesses; few people would believe his crimes. Goebbels was tolerated because many people think that lying is inseparable from success, and that success justifies everything. Three of these types at one time were really the limit, and one is at a loss to imagine how anything quite so monstrous ever came to power. But we must not forget that we are judging from today, from a knowledge of the events which led to the catastrophe. Our judgment would certainly be very different had our information stopped short at 1933 or 1934. At that time, in Germany as well as in Italy, there were not a few things that appeared plausible and seemed to speak in favour of the regime. An undeniable piece of evidence in this respect was the disappearance of the unemployed, who used to tramp the German highroads in their hundreds of thousands. And after the stagnation and decay of the post-war years, the refreshing wind that blew through the two countries was a tempting sign of hope. Meanwhile, the whole of Europe looked on at this spectacle like Mr. Chamberlain, who was prepared at most for a heavy shower. But it is just this extreme speciousness that is the peculiar genius of *pseudologia phantastica*, and Mussolini also had a touch of it (kept within bounds, however, while his brother Arnaldo was alive). It introduces its plans in the most innocent way in the world, finding the most appropriate words and the most plausible arguments, and there is nothing to show that its intentions are bad from the start. They may even be good, genuinely good. In the case of Mussolini, for instance, it might be difficult to draw a definite line between black and white. Where *pseudologia* is at work one can never be sure that the intention to deceive is the principal motive. Quite often the "great plan" plays the leading role, and it is only when it comes to the ticklish question of

bringing this plan into reality that every opportunity is exploited and any means is good enough, on the principle that "the end justifies the means." In other words, things only become dangerous when the pathological liar is taken seriously by a wider public. Like Faust, he is bound to make a pact with the devil and thus slips off the straight path. It is even possible that this is more or less what happened to Hitler—let us give him the benefit of the doubt! But the infamies of his book, once it is shorn of its *Schwabinger*³ brand of bombast, make one suspicious, and one cannot help wondering if the evil spirit had not already taken possession of this man long before he seized power. Round about 1936, many people in Germany were asking themselves the same question; they expressed fears that the Führer might fall a victim to "evil influences," he dabbled too much in "black magic," etc. Clearly these misgivings came much too late; but even so, it is just conceivable that Hitler himself may have had good intentions at first, and only succumbed to the use of the wrong means, or the misuse of his means, in the course of his development.

421 But I should like to emphasize above all that it is part and parcel of the pathological liar's make-up to be plausible. Therefore it is no easy matter, even for experienced people, to form an opinion, particularly while the plan is still apparently in the idealistic stage. It is then quite impossible to foresee how things are likely to develop, and Mr. Chamberlain's "give-it-a-chance" attitude seems to be the only policy. The overwhelming majority of the Germans were just as much in the dark as people abroad, and quite naturally fell an easy prey to Hitler's speeches, so artfully attuned to German (and not only German) taste.

422 Although we may be able to understand why the Germans were misled in the first place, the almost total absence of any reaction is quite incomprehensible. Were there not army commanders who could have ordered their troops to do anything they pleased? Why then was the reaction totally lacking? I can only explain this as the outcome of a peculiar state of mind, a passing or chronic disposition which, in an individual, we call hysteria.

423 As I cannot take it for granted that the layman knows exactly what is meant by "hysteria," I had better explain that the "hys-

³ [Schwabing is the bohemian quarter of Munich.—EDITORS.]

terical" disposition forms a sub-division of what are known as "psychopathic inferiorities." This term by no means implies that the individual or the nation is "inferior" in every respect, but only that there is a place of least resistance, a peculiar instability, which exists independently of all the other qualities. An hysterical disposition means that the opposites inherent in every psyche, and especially those affecting character, are further apart than in normal people. This greater distance produces a higher energetic tension, which accounts for the undeniable energy and drive of the Germans. On the other hand, the greater distance between the opposites produces inner contradictions, conflicts of conscience, disharmonies of character—in short, everything we see in Goethe's *Faust*. Nobody but a German could ever have devised such a figure, it is so intrinsically, so infinitely German. In *Faust* we see the same "hungering for the infinite" born of inner contradiction and dichotomy, the same eschatological expectation of the Great Fulfilment. In him we experience the loftiest flight of the mind and the descent into the depths of guilt and darkness, and still worse, a fall so low that *Faust* sinks to the level of a mountebank and wholesale murderer as the outcome of his pact with the devil. *Faust*, too, is split and sets up "evil" outside himself in the shape of Mephistopheles, to serve as an alibi in case of need. He likewise "knows nothing of what has happened," i.e., what the devil did to Philemon and Baucis. We never get the impression that he has real insight or suffers genuine remorse. His avowed and unavowed worship of success stands in the way of any moral reflection throughout, obscuring the ethical conflict, so that *Faust's* moral personality remains misty. He never attains the character of reality: he is not a real human being and cannot become one (at least not in this world). He remains the German idea of a human being, and therefore an image—somewhat overdone and distorted—of the average German.

- 424 The essence of hysteria is a systematic dissociation, a loosening of the opposites which normally are held firmly together. It may even go to the length of a splitting of the personality, a condition in which quite literally one hand no longer knows what the other is doing. As a rule there is amazing ignorance of the shadow; the hysteric is only aware of his good motives, and when the bad ones can no longer be denied he becomes the unscrupu-

lous Superman and *Herrenmensch* who fancies he is ennobled by the magnitude of his aim.

425 Ignorance of one's other side creates great inner insecurity. One does not really know who one is; one feels inferior somewhere and yet does not wish to know where the inferiority lies, with the result that a new inferiority is added to the original one. This sense of insecurity is the source of the hysteric's prestige psychology, of his need to make an impression, to flaunt his merits and insist on them, of his insatiable thirst for recognition, admiration, adulation, and longing to be loved. It is the cause of that loud-mouthed arrogance, uppishness, insolence, and tactlessness by which so many Germans, who at home grovel like dogs, win a bad reputation for their countrymen abroad. Insecurity is also responsible for their tragic lack of civic courage, criticized by Bismarck (one need only recall the pitiable role of the German generals).

426 The lack of reality, so striking in Faust, produces a corresponding lack of realism in the German. He merely talks of it, boasting of his "ice-cold" realism, which in itself is enough to expose his hysteria. His realism is nothing but a pose, a stage-realism. He merely acts the part of one who has a sense of reality, but what does he actually want to do? He wants to conquer the world in spite of the whole world. Of course, he has no idea how it can be done. But at least he might know that the enterprise had failed once before. Unfortunately a plausible reason, that explains away the failure by means of lies, is immediately invented and believed. How many Germans were taken in by the legend of the "stab in the back" in 1918? And how many "stab in the back" legends are floating around today? Believing one's own lies when the wish is father to the lie is a well-known hysterical symptom and a distinct sign of inferiority. One would have thought that the bloodbath of the first World War would have been enough, but not a bit of it; glory, conquest, and bloodthirstiness acted like a smoke-screen on the German mind, so that reality, only dimly perceived at best, was completely blotted out. In an individual we call this sort of thing an hysterical twilight-state. When a whole nation finds itself in this condition it will follow a mediumistic Führer over the rooftops with a sleep-walker's assurance, only to land in the street with a broken back.

427 Supposing we Swiss had started such a war and had thrown all our experience, all warnings and all our knowledge of the world to the winds as blindly as the Germans, and had finally gone to the length of establishing an original edition of Buchenwald in our country. We should no doubt feel very disagreeably surprised if a foreigner declared that the Swiss were one and all completely mad. No reasonable person would be surprised at such a verdict, but can we say it about Germany? I wonder what the Germans themselves think. All I know is that at the time of the censorship in Switzerland we were not permitted to say these things aloud, and now it seems we cannot say them out of consideration for Germany which is laid so low. When on earth, I should like to ask, may one venture to form an opinion of one's own? To my mind, the history of the last twelve years is the case-chart of an hysterical patient. The truth should not be withheld from him, for when the doctor makes a diagnosis he does so as part of his effort to find the remedy, and not in order to hurt, degrade, or insult the sufferer. A neurosis or a neurotic disposition is not a disgrace, it is a handicap, and sometimes merely a *façon de parler*. It is not a fatal disease, but it does grow worse to the degree that one is determined to ignore it. When I say that the Germans are psychically ill it is surely kinder than saying that they are criminals. I have no wish to irritate the notorious sensitiveness of the hysteric, but there comes a time when we can no longer afford to gloss over all the painful symptoms and to help the patient forget what has happened, merely in order that his pathological condition should remain undisturbed. I would not like to insult the healthy-minded and decent German by suspecting him of being a coward who runs away from his own image. We should do him the honour of treating him like a man and telling him the truth, and not conceal from him that our soul is cut to the quick by the terrible things that happened in his country and were perpetrated by the Germans in Europe. We are hurt and indignant and have no particular feelings of loving-kindness—nor can any amount of determination and will-power twist these sentiments into a Christian "love of your neighbour." For the sake of the healthy-minded and decent Germans one should not attempt to do so; they would surely prefer the truth to insulting forbearance.

428 Hysteria is never cured by hushing up the truth, whether in

an individual or in a nation. But can we say that a whole nation is hysterical? We can say it as much or as little of a nation as of an individual. Even the craziest person is not completely crazy; quite a number of his functions are still normal, and there may even be times when he himself is fairly normal too. This is even truer of hysteria, where there is really nothing wrong except exaggerations and excesses on the one hand, and weakness or temporary paralysis of normal functions on the other. In spite of his psychopathic condition the hysteric is very nearly normal. We may therefore expect many parts of the psychic body-politic to be entirely normal even though the over-all picture can only be described as hysterical.

429 The Germans undoubtedly have their own peculiar psychology which distinguishes them from their neighbours, in spite of the many human qualities which they share with all mankind. Have they not demonstrated to the world that they consider themselves the *Herrenvolk*, with the right to disregard every human scruple? They have labelled other nations inferior and done their best to exterminate them.

430 In view of these terrible facts, it is a mere bagatelle to turn the tables on the *Herrenvolk* and apply the diagnosis of inferiority to the murderer instead of the murdered, while remaining fully conscious that one is injuring all those Germans who suffered their nation's tribulation with open eyes. It does indeed hurt one to hurt others. But, as Europeans—a brotherhood which includes the Germans—we are wounded, and if we wound in return it is not with the intention of torturing but, as I said earlier, of discovering the truth. As in the case of collective guilt, the diagnosis of its mental condition extends to the whole nation, and indeed to the whole of Europe, whose mental condition for some time past has hardly been normal. Whether we like it or not we are bound to ask: What is wrong with our art, that most delicate of all instruments for reflecting the national psyche? How are we to explain the blatantly pathological element in modern painting? Atonal music? The far-reaching influence of Joyce's fathomless *Ulysses*? Here we already have the germ of what was to become a political reality in Germany.

431 The European, or rather the white man in general, is scarcely in a position to judge of his own state of mind. He is too deeply involved. I had always wanted to see Europeans through other

eyes, and eventually I was able, on my many journeys, to establish sufficiently close relationships with non-Europeans to see the European through their eyes. The white man is nervous, restless, hurried, unstable, and (in the eyes of non-Europeans) possessed by the craziest ideas, in spite of his energy and gifts which give him the feeling of being infinitely superior. The crimes he has committed against the coloured races are legion, though obviously this is no justification for any fresh crime, just as the individual is no better for being in a vast company of bad people. Primitives dread the sharply focussed stare in the eye of the European, which seems to them like the evil eye. A Pueblo chieftain once confided to me that he thought all Americans (the only white men he knew) were crazy, and the reasons he gave for this view sounded exactly like a description of people who were possessed. Well, perhaps we are. For the first time since the dawn of history we have succeeded in swallowing the whole of primitive animism into ourselves, and with it the spirit that animated nature. Not only were the gods dragged down from their planetary spheres and transformed into chthonic demons, but, under the influence of scientific enlightenment, even this band of demons, which at the time of Paracelsus still frolicked happily in mountains and woods, in rivers and human dwelling-places, was reduced to a miserable remnant and finally vanished altogether. From time immemorial, nature was always filled with spirit. Now, for the first time, we are living in a lifeless nature bereft of gods. No one will deny the important role which the powers of the human psyche, personified as "gods," played in the past. The mere act of enlightenment may have destroyed the spirits of nature, but not the psychic factors that correspond to them, such as suggestibility, lack of criticism, fearfulness, propensity to superstition and prejudice—in short, all those qualities which make possession possible. Even though nature is depsychized, the psychic conditions which breed demons are as actively at work as ever. The demons have not really disappeared but have merely taken on another form: they have become unconscious psychic forces. This process of reabsorption went hand in hand with an increasing inflation of the ego, which became more and more evident after the sixteenth century. Finally we even began to be aware of the psyche, and, as history shows, the discovery of the uncon-

scious was a particularly painful episode. Just when people were congratulating themselves on having abolished all spooks, it turned out that instead of haunting the attic or old ruins the spooks were flitting about in the heads of apparently normal Europeans. Tyrannical, obsessive, intoxicating ideas and delusions were abroad everywhere, and people began to believe the most absurd things, just as the possessed do.

432 The phenomenon we have witnessed in Germany was nothing less than the first outbreak of epidemic insanity, an irruption of the unconscious into what seemed to be a tolerably well-ordered world. A whole nation, as well as countless millions belonging to other nations, were swept into the blood-drenched madness of a war of extermination. No one knew what was happening to him, least of all the Germans, who allowed themselves to be driven to the slaughterhouse by their leading psychopaths like hypnotized sheep. Maybe the Germans were predestined to this fate, for they showed the least resistance to the mental contagion that threatened every European. But their peculiar gifts might also have enabled them to be the very people to draw helpful conclusions from the prophetic example of Nietzsche. Nietzsche was German to the marrow of his bones, even to the abstruse symbolism of his madness. It was the psychopath's weakness that prompted him to play with the "blond beast" and the "Superman." It was certainly not the healthy elements in the German nation that led to the triumph of these pathological fantasies on a scale never known before. The weakness of the German character, like Nietzsche's, proved to be fertile soil for hysterical fantasies, though it must be remembered that Nietzsche himself not only criticized the German Philistine very freely but laid himself open to attack on a broad front. Here again the Germans had a priceless opportunity for self-knowledge—and let it slip. And what could they not have learned from the suet-and-syrup of Wagner!

433 Nevertheless, with the calamitous founding of the Reich in 1871, the devil stole a march on the Germans, dangling before them the tempting bait of power, aggrandizement, national arrogance. Thus they were led to imitate their prophets and to take their words literally, but not to understand them. And so it was that the Germans allowed themselves to be deluded by these disastrous fantasies and succumbed to the age-old temptations

of Satan, instead of turning to their abundant spiritual potentialities, which, because of the greater tension between the inner opposites, would have stood them in good stead. But, their Christianity forgotten, they sold their souls to technology, exchanged morality for cynicism, and dedicated their highest aspirations to the forces of destruction. Certainly everybody else is doing much the same thing, but even so there really are chosen people who have no right to do such things because they should be striving for higher treasures. At any rate the Germans are not among those who may enjoy power and possessions with impunity. Just think for a moment what anti-Semitism means for the German: he is trying to use others as a scapegoat for his own greatest fault! This symptom alone should have told him that he had got on to a hopelessly wrong track.

434 After the last World War the world should have begun to reflect, and above all Germany, which is the nerve-centre of Europe. But the spirit turned negative, neglected the decisive questions, and sought solutions in its own negation. How different it was at the time of the Reformation! Then the spirit of Germany rose manfully to the needs of Christendom, though the answer—as we might expect from the German tension of opposites—was somewhat too extreme. But at least this spirit did not shrink from its own problems. Goethe, too, was a prophet when he held up before his people the example of Faust's pact with the devil and the murder of Philemon and Baucis. If, as Burckhardt says, Faust strikes a chord in every German soul, this chord has certainly gone on ringing. We hear it echoing in Nietzsche's Superman, the amoral worshipper of instinct, whose God is dead, and who presumes to be God himself, or rather a demon "six thousand feet beyond good and evil." And where has the feminine side, the soul, disappeared to in Nietzsche? Helen has vanished in Hades, and Eurydice will never return. Already we behold the fateful travesty of the denied Christ: the sick prophet is himself the Crucified, and, going back still further, the dismembered Dionysus-Zagreus. The raving prophet carries us back to the long-forgotten past: he had heard the call of destiny in the shrill whistling of the hunter, the god of the rustling forests, of drunken ecstasy, and of the berserkers who were possessed by the spirits of wild animals.

435 While Nietzsche was prophetically responding to the schism

of the Christian world with the art of thinking, his brother in spirit, Richard Wagner, was doing the same thing with the art of music. Germanic prehistory comes surging up, thunderous and stupefying, to fill the gaping breach in the Church. Wagner salved his conscience with *Parsifal*, for which Nietzsche could never forgive him, but the Castle of the Grail vanished into an unknown land. The message was not heard and the omen went unheeded. Only the orgiastic frenzy caught on and spread like an epidemic. Wotan the storm-god had conquered. Ernst Jünger sensed that very clearly: in his book *On the Marble Cliffs* a wild huntsman comes into the land, bringing with him a wave of possession greater than anything known even in the Middle Ages. Nowhere did the European spirit speak more plainly than it did in Germany, and nowhere was it more tragically misunderstood.

436 Now Germany has suffered the consequences of the pact with the devil, she has experienced madness and is torn in pieces like Zagreus, she has been ravished by the berserkers of her god Wotan, been cheated of her soul for the sake of gold and world-mastery, and defiled by the scum rising from the lowest depths.

437 The Germans must understand why the whole world is outraged, for our expectations had been so different. Everybody was unanimous in recognizing their gifts and their efficiency, and nobody doubted that they were capable of great things. The disappointment was all the more bitter. But the fate of Germany should not mislead Europeans into nursing the illusion that the whole world's wickedness is localized in Germany. They should realize that the German catastrophe was only one crisis in the general European sickness. Long before the Hitler era, in fact before the first World War, there were symptoms of the mental change taking place in Europe. The medieval picture of the world was breaking up and the metaphysical authority that ruled it was fast disappearing, only to reappear in man. Did not Nietzsche announce that God was dead and that his heir was the Superman, that doomed rope-dancer and fool? It is an immutable psychological law that when a projection has come to an end it always returns to its origin. So when somebody hits on the singular idea that God is dead, or does not exist at all, the psychic God-image, which is a dynamic part of the psyche's structure, finds its way back into the subject and produces a condi-

tion of "God-Almightiness," that is to say all those qualities which are peculiar to fools and madmen and therefore lead to catastrophe.

438 This, then, is the great problem that faces the whole of Christianity: where now is the sanction for goodness and justice, which was once anchored in metaphysics? Is it really only brute force that decides everything? Is the ultimate authority only the will of whatever man happens to be in power? Had Germany been victorious, one might almost have believed that this was the last word. But as the "thousand-year Reich" of violence and infamy lasted only a few years before it collapsed in ruins, we might be disposed to learn the lesson that there are other, equally powerful forces at work which in the end destroy all that is violent and unjust, and that consequently it does not pay to build on false principles. But unfortunately, as history shows, things do not always turn out so reasonably in this world of ours.

439 "God-Almightiness" does not make man divine, it merely fills him with arrogance and arouses everything evil in him. It produces a diabolical caricature of man, and this inhuman mask is so unendurable, such a torture to wear, that he tortures others. He is split in himself, a prey to inexplicable contradictions. Here we have the picture of the hysterical state of mind, of Nietzsche's "pale criminal." Fate has confronted every German with his inner counterpart: Faust is face to face with Mephistopheles and can no longer say, "So that was the essence of the brutal!" He must confess instead: "That was my other side, my *alter ego*, my all too palpable shadow which can no longer be denied."

440 This is not the fate of Germany alone, but of all Europe. We must all open our eyes to the shadow who looms behind contemporary man. We have no need to hold up the devil's mask before the Germans. The facts speak a plainer language, and anyone who does not understand it is simply beyond help. As to what should be done about this terrifying apparition, everyone must work this out for himself. It is indeed no small matter to know of one's own guilt and one's own evil, and there is certainly nothing to be gained by losing sight of one's shadow. When we are conscious of our guilt we are in a more favourable position—we can at least hope to change and improve ourselves. As we know, anything that remains in the unconscious

is incorrigible; psychological corrections can be made only in consciousness. Consciousness of guilt can therefore act as a powerful moral stimulus. In every treatment of neurosis the discovery of the shadow is indispensable, otherwise nothing changes. In this respect, I rely on those parts of the German body-politic which have remained sound to draw conclusions from the facts. Without guilt, unfortunately, there can be no psychic maturation and no widening of the spiritual horizon. Was it not Meister Eckhart who said: "For this reason God is willing to bear the brunt of sins and often winks at them, mostly sending them to people for whom he has prepared some high destiny. See! Who was dearer to our Lord or more intimate with him than his apostles? Not one of them but fell into mortal sin, and all were mortal sinners." ⁴

44¹ Where sin is great, "grace doth much more abound." Such an experience brings about an inner transformation, and this is infinitely more important than political and social reforms which are all valueless in the hands of people who are not at one with themselves. This is a truth which we are forever forgetting, because our eyes are fascinated by the conditions around us and riveted on them instead of examining our own heart and conscience. Every demagogue exploits this human weakness when he points with the greatest possible outcry to all the things that are wrong in the outside world. But the principal and indeed the only thing that is wrong with the world is man.

44² If the Germans today are having a hard time of it outwardly, fate has at least given them a unique opportunity of turning their eyes inward to the inner man. In this way they might make amends for a sin of omission of which our whole civilization is guilty. Everything possible has been done for the outside world: science has been refined to an unimaginable extent, technical achievement has reached an almost uncanny degree of perfection. But what of man, who is expected to administer all these blessings in a reasonable way? He has simply been taken for granted. No one has stopped to consider that neither morally nor psychologically is he in any way adapted to such changes. As blithely as any child of nature he sets about enjoying these dangerous playthings, completely oblivious of the shadow lurk-

⁴ *Works*, trans. by Evans, II, pp. 18-19.

ing behind him, ready to seize them in its greedy grasp and turn them against a still infantile and unconscious humanity. And who has had a more immediate experience of this feeling of helplessness and abandonment to the powers of darkness than the German who fell into the clutches of the Germans?

443 If collective guilt could only be understood and accepted, a great step forward would have been taken. But this alone is no cure, just as no neurotic is cured by mere understanding. The question remains: How am I to live with this shadow? What attitude is required if I am to be able to live in spite of evil? In order to find valid answers to these questions a complete spiritual renewal is needed. And this cannot be given gratis, each man must strive to achieve it for himself. Neither can old formulas which once had a value be brought into force again. The eternal truths cannot be transmitted mechanically; in every epoch they must be born anew from the human psyche.