

Influential Darwinists Supported the Nazi Holocaust

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Abstract

The writings of leading early twentieth-century, German biologists reveal that most of them actively supported Nazi race policies. They believed that the human gene pool could be improved by using selective breeding similar to the manner in which farmers breed superior cattle. In formulating their racial policies, Hitler's government relied heavily upon the works of Darwinists, including such prominent

spokesmen as Chamberlain, Spencer, and Haeckel. Consequently, the development and implementation of government policies designed to evolve a "superior race" had widespread support from the scientific community. This philosophy culminated in the extermination of approximately six million Jews and four million other people who belonged to what German scientists labeled as "inferior races."

Introduction

The critical influence of the replacement of the Judeo-Christian-Islam creationist worldview by Darwinism on Nazi race policies has been well documented (Bergman, 1999; Jones, 1988; Chase, 1980). Riley called Hitler's Nazism "nothing other than the philosophy of evolution in action" (1941, p. 3). It is known widely that the Nazis were influenced profoundly by Darwinism, but it is somewhat less well known that the Nazis enjoyed widespread support from most of the scientific community, especially biologists (Stein, 1988; Tobach et al., 1974; Jackel, 1972; Haas, 1995; Haller, 1971; Clark 1958; Beyerchen, 1977; Sime, 1996). Darwin's heavy influence on Nazi policy can be evaluated by an examination of the writings of leading early twentieth-century German biologists and scientists. Keith (1946, p. 230) concluded that the Nazi treatment of Jews and other "races" then believed to be "inferior" was largely a result of the widespread belief among biologists that Darwinism provided profound insight which could be used to improve humankind significantly. In short, Nazism

was based on Charles Darwin's doctrine of the survival of the fittest, following which Herbert Spencer argued that those better adapted to the conditions of life prevailed not only in nature but in human society as well. Thus, from Darwin's doctrine, the racists concluded that the strong and victorious were also in the right (Yahil, 1990, p. 37).

The core of the philosophy driving the Nazis holocaust was that just as breeders could raise superior strains of horses and dogs,

so it would be possible to enhance the human race by attaining a fine breed of "Aryans." According to this ideology race was the factor that governed men's lives. It was because of their race that they acted for good or bad and tended toward survival or extinction. When citizens were corrupted by the rule of an inferior race, government was corrupted. When they were governed by a positive and lofty race—endowed with the right, the will, and the ability to rule—they enhanced humankind, its society, and its culture. Hence, the reform of government was possible only by improving the race (Yahil, 1990, p. 37).

As Stein (1988) shows, this view was shared widely by Darwinists of the time.

The first language into which Darwin's writings were translated—only a year after *The Origin* was published—was German (Tenenbaum, 1956). Darwinism was championed not just in Germany, but it did have more influence on German state policy than in any other country (Bergman, 1999; Lifton, 1986). As Gasman noted: "In no other country...did the ideas of Darwinism develop as... the total explanation of the world as in Germany..." and as a result the "literal transfer of the laws of biology" as interpreted by evolution was applied to the social realm (1971, xiii). So important was evolution that the Nazi goal was a vision of absolute control over the evolutionary process, over the biological human future. Making widespread use of the Darwinian term "selection," the Nazis sought to take over the functions of nature (natural selection) and God (the Lord giveth and the

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Lord taketh away) in orchestrating their own “selections,” their own version of human evolution. In these visions the Nazis embraced ... a newer (nineteenth- and twentieth-century) claim to “scientific racism.” Dangerous Jewish characteristics could be linked with alleged data of scientific disciplines, so that a “mainstream of racism” formed from “the fusion of anthropology, eugenics, and social thought.” The resulting “racial and social biology” could make vicious forms of anti-Semitism seem intellectually respectable to learned men and women (Lifton, 1986 p. 17).

So pervasive was biological evolution in the Nazi ideology that Lifton suggested the Nazi state could be called a “biocracy.”

In the case of the Nazi biocracy, the divine prerogative was that of cure through purification and revitalization of the Aryan race.... Just as in a theocracy, the state itself is no more than a vehicle for the divine purpose, so in the Nazi biocracy was the state no more than a ... means to achieve “*a mission of the German people on earth*”: that of “*assembling and preserving the most valuable stocks of basic racial elements in this [Aryan] people?*” (Lifton, 1986, p. 17 emphasis in original).

A major effect that Darwinian evolution had upon German society was a thorough “destructiveness of cosmic purpose” which was so revolutionary that it “heralded a break with teleological, anthropomorphic, and religious explanations in the organic sciences” (Gasman, 1971, p. xxi). No longer could the universe be seen as created, and existing according to Divine plan. But now, according to “Darwin’s theory, nature changed and sometimes ‘progressed’ by accidental and wholly unprepared random variations—which, of course, implied that there is neither finality nor purpose in nature” (Gasman, 1971, p. xxi). Although Adolf Hitler and his associates, and not the biological theorists were the Nazi rulers, in Lifton’s opinion the difference was “far from absolute” because among the biological authorities recruited

to articulate and implement “scientific racism”—including physical anthropologists, geneticists, and racial theorists of every variety—doctors inevitably found a unique place. It is they who work at the border of life and death, who are most associated with the awesome, death-defying, and sometimes death-dealing aura of the primitive shaman and medicine man. As bearers of this shamanistic legacy and contemporary practitioners of mysterious healing arts, it is they who are likely to be called upon to become biological activists (Lifton, 1986, p. 17).

The inequality doctrine—although an integral part of German philosophy for years—reached its apex only under the Hitler regime, obtaining its chief intellectual sup-

port from Darwinism and especially from Darwin’s major disciple, Ernst Haeckel (Weiss 1988; Aycoberry 1981).

Ernst Haeckel

Ernst Haeckel (1834–1919), “a respected professor of zoology” at the University of Jena, was one of Darwin’s leading proponents. Haeckel was trained as a physician and graduated in 1859, shortly before the publication of Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, a book

that dramatically changed his life. Here, he thought, was the answer to everything he had been seeking in science, philosophy, ethics, religion, politics—a unified, or monist, view of the world. His own fanaticized version of evolution became an obsession and guiding passion, with Darwin his greatest hero (Milner, 1990, p. 205).

Haeckel was a committed Christian and creationist until he was exposed to Darwinism. After studying Darwin, however, he came to “detest” organized religion and adopted “quasi-mystical” naturalistic beliefs (Simmons, 1997, p. 424). Haeckel first forcefully presented his Darwinian views at the 1863 Congress of German Naturalists where his speech commenced his four-decade-long role as “Darwin’s chief apostle” (Stein, 1988, p. 54). Haeckel soon became a pivotal scientist who helped shape German biological research along Darwinian lines, expanding its range into

embryology, morphology, and cell theory. He also raised and discussed many issues which are still alive today and coined the term *ecology*, which he defined as the scientific investigation of the relationship between organism and environment. Stephen Jay Gould has recently documented his extensive historical significance, and some years ago Erik Nordenskiöld could write that “there are not many personalities who have so powerfully influenced the development of human culture—and that, too, in many different spheres—as Haeckel (Simmons, 1997, pp. 421–422).

Haeckel was especially active and successful in promoting the application of Darwinian theory to social policy. He felt “social Darwinism” explained why some civilizations advanced while others remained primitive (Haeckel 1900; 1916; 1925). As Gould has concluded, Haeckel made important contributions in many areas of science but his

greatest influence was, ultimately, in another, tragic direction—national socialism [Nazism]. His evolutionary racism; his call to the German people for racial purity and unflinching devotion to...his belief that harsh, inexorable laws of evolution ruled human civilization and nature alike, conferring upon fa-

vored races the right to dominate others.... His brave words about objective science—all contributed to the rise of Nazism. The Monist League that he had founded and led...made a comfortable transition to active support for Hitler (Gould, 1977, pp. 77–78).

Ernst Haeckel was so important to Darwinism that he was referred to as the father of German evolution (Norden-skiöld, 1935). It was he who eventually convinced his influential countrymen that

they must accept their evolutionary destiny as a “master race” and “outcompete” inferior peoples, since it was right and natural that only the “fittest” should survive. His version of Darwinism was incorporated in Adolf Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* (1925), which means “My Struggle,” taken from Haeckel’s translation of Darwin’s phrase, “the struggle for existence” (Milner, 1990, p. 207).

Haeckel’s conclusions from his study of evolution of races soon became German policy. And “the morphological differences between two generally recognized species—for example sheep and goats—are much less important than those...between a Hottentot and a man of the Teutonic race” (Haeckel, 1876, p. 434). Especially important in Nazi policy was the belief that the Germans had evolved the “furthest from the common form of apelike men [and outstripped]...all others in the career of civilization” and would be the race to raise humankind to a “new period of higher mental development” (1876, p. 332). Haeckel’s beliefs expanded on the widely held nineteenth-century theme (found in the English naturalist Alfred Wallace, though not as specifically in Darwin) that each of the major races of humanity can be considered a separate species. Haeckel believed the various

races of mankind are endowed with differing hereditary characteristics not only of color but, more important, of intelligence, and that external physical characteristics are a sign of innate intellectual and moral capacity. He, for instance, considered “wooly-haired” Negroes to be “incapable of a true inner culture and of a higher mental development.” And the “difference between the reason of a Goethe, a Kant, a Lamarck, or a Darwin, and that of the lowest savage...is much greater than the graduated difference between the reason of the latter and that of the most ‘rational’ mammals, the anthropoid apes.” Haeckel went so far as to say, concerning these “lower races,” that since they are “psychologically nearer to the mammals (apes and dogs) than to civilized Europeans, we must, therefore, *assign a totally different value to their lives*” (italics added). The Auschwitz self could feel a certain national-scientific tradition behind its harsh, apocalyptic, deadly rationality (Lifton, 1986, pp. 441–442).

This superiority of civilized Europeans was assumed to be true not only mentally, but also physically, because evolution achieves a “symmetry of all parts, and equal development which we call the type of perfect human beauty” (Haeckel 1876, p. 321). Haeckel also concluded that “no woolly-haired nation has ever had an important history” (1876, p. 10). The races that he believed were inferior and worthless included “the lower races—such as the Veddahs or Australian Negroes” (1905, p. 390). Haeckel also concluded that the most evolved “race” was “the Indo-Germanic race, which has far surpassed all the other races of men in mental development.” He concluded from his research that this race separated at a very early period in evolution into “two diverging branches” (1925, p. 431).

Stein noted that these views were **not** minority or extreme; rather Haeckel was viewed as a mainline “respected scientist.” The views of his followers, however, often were more extreme (Stein, 1988, p. 56). Haeckel also fought hard to convince the world that his former belief, the Jewish creation legend, was wrong. His reasoning for its rejection was partly because creationism taught that all races came from an original human couple, and therefore all races were equal.

[The]...five races of men, according to the Jewish legend of creation, are said to have been descended from “a single pair”—Adam and Eve—and in accordance with this are said to be varieties of one kind or species. If, however, we compare them without prejudice, *there can be no doubt that the differences of these five races are as great and even greater than the “specific differences” by which zoologists and botanists distinguish recognized “good” animal and vegetable species....* The excellent palaeontologist Quenstedt is right in maintaining that, “*if Negroes and Caucasians were snails, zoologists would universally agree that they represented two very distinct species, which could never have originated from one pair by gradual divergence*” (Haeckel, 1925, pp. 412–413, emphasis mine).

Lifton concluded that the contribution of the quintessentially German Ernst Haeckel to biology was great, and that after his conversion to Darwinism he ardently advocated romantic nationalism, racial regeneration, and anti-Semitism. He was to become what Daniel Gasman has called the recognized spokesman of Darwinism in Germany, Germany’s major prophet of political biology, and his name is synonymous with materialism, naturalism, and, of course, Darwinism (1971, p. xiv, xxii). Simmons (1997, p. 424) claimed Haeckel’s last years were not happy and that he was especially upset by the war between his country, Germany, and Darwin’s home, England.

Houston Chamberlain

The next most influential person responsible for spreading Darwin's ideas in Germany was Houston Chamberlain, son of a British admiral and a German woman. Chamberlain was one of the first popular German writers to use Darwinism to argue that the Germans were innately *biologically* superior to all other races and peoples, including the Persians, Greeks, and especially the "parasitic Semites" whom he branded as a "race of inferior peoples." In 1899 he published a book, *The Foundations of the 19th Century*, in which he concluded that Darwinism had proved the Germans superior to all other peoples (Weinding, 1989).

Chamberlain believed Germans were the "foundation" of modern society because they led the industrial revolution and the enlightenment. Chamberlain quoted extensively from Darwin, who stressed that the brain is of far more importance than any other body structure in measuring human evolutionary progress. It was widely believed at the time that the larger the brain, the higher the person's intelligence.

Darwin himself interpreted the evolutionary success of *Homo sapiens* as being the result principally of brain improvements, as shown by the much larger brain case typical of higher primates (and especially by the apex of brain evolution found in humans). Chamberlain seized upon this idea and concluded that human racial differences were reflected in the skull (primarily its shape and size), but also in all of those traits that historically have been used to identify human races (skin color, nose, lip, and eye shape, among others). He utilized as evidence for his theory not only the findings and assumptions of physical anthropology and Darwinian evolution theory, but also the then-fashionable "science" of phrenology (Davies, 1955).

Phrenology is the now-discredited science of determining personality traits by measuring the shape and size of various skull bumps and contours (Jacquard, 1984). The phrenologists reasoned that certain traits were located in specific parts of the brain, and if one had developed some trait to an exceptional degree, a "bump" would exist in the appropriate location on the skull. Lastly, they concluded that the brain configuration and other physical traits could be used both to distinguish humans from monkeys and to rank the human races from less to more advanced. This idea received widespread support from the German academic and scientific communities and helped to

prepare the way for national socialist biopolitics.... Beginning in the 1890s with the work of Otto Ammon on cephalic indexes and other such scientific proof of Aryan superiority, much German anthropology, especially the most scientific branch, physical anthropology... [concluded] if humankind evolved through natural selection ... then it was obvious that the races of

humankind must be arranged hierarchically along the ladder of evolution. ...there is little doubt that the anthropologists who discovered all the measurable divergent physical, psychological, and mental characteristics of the various races thought they were scientific. And so did the general public (Stein, 1988, p. 57).

Chamberlain's work (and that of his contemporaries) still is influential today.

Chamberlain's racial explanation for human history was only one of the many intellectual syntheses produced in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Most of the isms which have profoundly influenced the twentieth century have their genesis in these decades (Schleunes, 1970, p. 30).

Joseph Mengele

The scientist who presided over the race program at Auschwitz, Josef Mengele, was a highly respected and published researcher who earned a Ph.D. from the prestigious University of Munich and an M.D. from the University of Frankfurt (Astor, 1985). While still in his residency for his medical degree, Mengele read an article by Otmar von Verschuer which claimed that "Hitler is the first statesman who has come to recognize hereditary biological and race hygiene and make it a leading principle" of statesmanship. Von Verschuer and others who advocated incorporating Darwinism into social policy concluded: "specialists of race hygiene are happy to have witnessed that the work normally associated with the scientific laboratories or the academic study room has extended into the life of our people" (as quoted in Astor, 1985, p. 23). These ideas had a profound influence on Mengele—the man who later became one of the chief architects of Nazi policy.

Mengele's zeal in implementing the holocaust was based squarely on accepted mainline Darwinism, not on sadistic or psychopathic impulsiveness as often alleged (Posner and Ware, 1986). His biographer concluded that:

Race purity and the contaminant threat of Jews became gospel in lower and higher education. When Mengele began his college studies at the University of Munich, anti-Semitism had already sprouted in the sciences.... The impressionable young man....soaked up writings like those of a German oriental scholar, Paul de Lagarde, who despised "those who out of humanity defend these Jews, or who are too cowardly to trample these usurious vermin to death.... With trichinae and bacilli one does not negotiate, nor are trichinae and bacilli to be educated. They are exterminated as quickly and thoroughly as possible" (Astor, 1985, p. 21).

Posner and Ware added that when Mengele was in college, one of his major interests was anthropology and pale-

ontology, specifically genetics and evolution which “a growing number of German academics found so attractive” and which coincided with the developing belief in academia that “some human beings afflicted by disorders were unfit to reproduce, even to live.... *His consummate ambition was to succeed in this fashionable new field of evolutionary research*” (1986, p. 29, emphasis mine). The goal of the Nazis eventually became to totally exterminate all inferior peoples, especially Jews “in all lands,” so that “no germ-cell would remain...” and consequently they could never again pollute the pure Aryan race (Goldhagen, 1966, p. 414).

The Level of Support for Nazi Policies

Gould, in a discussion of a book on German biology and the war by biologist and president of Stanford University, Dr. Kellogg, said that Kellogg was appalled, above all, at the justification for war and German supremacy advanced by “[the high level] officers, many of whom had been university professors before the war.” They not only proposed an evolutionary rationale, but advocated a particularly crude form of natural selection that was defined as an inexorable, bloody battle (Gould, 1991, p. 424). Kellogg’s report of the beliefs of these German generals follows:

Professor von Flussen is Neo-Darwinian, as are most German biologists and natural philosophers. The creed of the *Allmacht* [“all might”] of a natural selection based on violent and fatal competitive struggle is the gospel of the German intellectuals; all else is illusion and anathema.... This struggle not only must go on, for that is the natural law, but it should go on, so that this natural law may work out in its cruel, inevitable way the salvation of the human species. By its salvation is meant its desirable natural evolution. That human group which is in the most advanced evolutionary stage... should win in the struggle for existence, and this struggle should occur precisely that the various types may be tested, and the best not only preserved, but put into position to impose its kind of social organization—its *Kultur*—on the others, or, alternatively, to destroy and replace them. This is the disheartening kind of argument that I faced at Headquarters.... Add ... the additional assumption that the Germans are the chosen race, and German social and political organization the chosen type of human community life, and you have a wall of logic and conviction that you can break your head against but can never shatter... (Kellogg, 1917, p. 28–30).

The schools also taught and used evolution in developing social policy. Grunberger noted:

Since Nazi ideology leaned heavily on Darwinist notions, the Party’s educational pioneers—like

Baldur von Schirach or Robert Ley—liked to talk of the Adolf Hitler Schools institutionalizing the principle of continuous selection. Having been pre-selected during their second year in the *Jungvolk*, potential Adolf Hitler pupils were racially examined and sent to a fortnight’s youth camp for a final sifting. A main criterion of selection was physical appearance; after acceptance, Adolf Hitler scholars were largely evaluated according to qualities of leadership (1971, p. 298).

Support of Academic Journals for Nazi Programs

German scientists were not superficial in their science that became known as “racial hygiene.” Prior to 1933, German scientists published 13 scientific journals devoted primarily to racial hygiene and established over 30 institutions, many of which were connected with universities or research centers devoted to “racial science” (Proctor, 1988). In the Nazi era, close to 150 scientific journals, many of which still are highly respected today, covered racial hygiene and allied fields (Weinding, 1989). Enormous files of data were kept on the races, many of which were analyzed and used for research papers published in various German and other scientific journals. The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Genetics, and Eugenics was established in 1927.

German eugenicists relied heavily upon work completed in Britain and America. Franz Bumm, president of the Reich Health Office, noted that “the value of eugenics research had been convincingly demonstrated in the United States, where anthropological statistics had been gathered from two-million men recruited for the American Armed Forces” (Proctor, 1988, p. 40).

The various eugenic institutes also researched the “persistence” of various “primitive racial traits” in certain races in and outside of Germany. Eugenicists soon found much evidence of the “Cro-Magnon racial type in certain races, and presumably also Neanderthal.” Like their American and British counterparts, the various German racial hygiene institutes, and the researchers at various universities, began to discover genetic evidence for virtually every human trait from criminality to hernias, including even divorce and “loving to sail on water.” The scientists saw their work as a noble effort to continue “Darwin’s attempts to elucidate the origin of species” (Proctor, 1988, p. 291).

Beliefs of Scientists Influenced Nazi Leaders

Many of Hitler's top aides, including Bormann and Hoess, held similar Darwinian beliefs. Hoess read extensively about racial theories, heredity, and ethnology. His racial views guided his policy in the concentration camps that he administered, including Auschwitz (Hoess, 1960). The result was that he converted this former forced-labor camp into an evolution laboratory where inmates were no longer persons but "simply goods to be processed in the gigantic death-factory he had organized" (Rudorff, 1969, p. 240). Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS and the architect of the final solution, believed (in harmony with Darwinism) that history has consisted of "a constant, merciless struggle among races for survival" and that as a result of this struggle German and Nordic races were "above all others" (Breitman, 1991, p. 35).

Caring for the weak, sick, lame, old, or poor ran counter to the chief driving force of evolution—the survival of the fittest and non-survival of the unfit. This meant that the weak must be eradicated for the benefit of the race as a whole. The Nazi regime did not view these policies as wrong, or even inhumane, but instead openly prided itself on its advanced scientific ideology and modern view of the world (Gasman, 1971). Given the Nazis' wholesale acceptance of Darwinism, their race and determinism ideas may well have been inescapable (Barzun, 1958, p. xx).

The Nazis reasoned that race pollution reduces the caliber of the potential leaders, and should thus be condemned. The writings and work of many anthropologists including those in America supported this conclusion. Examples include Dr. Hooton of Harvard, one of the first physical anthropologists who trained virtually every physical anthropologist in America for generations, and Carlton Coon, whose books openly advocated a polycentric view of evolution, the view that the races evolved separately (Wolpoff and Caspari, 1997; Hooton, 1941). From this idea it was logical to conclude that the races are not equal, and that some are more primitive than others. Consequently interbreeding has the potential of mixing races to the detriment of the offspring.

The justification for these programs was that the "leading biologists and professors" advocated these programs. According to Wertham (1966, p. 160), Carl Brandt felt that since the learned professors were in support, the program must be valid, and who "could there be who was better qualified [to judge it] than they?"

Support for Darwinism by Medical Doctors

The negative influence of Darwinism on German physicians also is well documented (Kershaw, 1999; Röder, et

al., 1995). One German doctor, who was from a medical family traceable back to the early seventeenth century, was involved as a child with all forms of animal life and was most interested in biology. As he grew older, he began to read

Bölsche and Haeckel. Ernst Haeckel, a towering figure in German biology and an early Darwinian, was also a racist, a believer in a mystical *Volk*, and a strong advocate of eugenics who "can be claimed as direct ancestor" of the Nazi "euthanasia" project. Wilhelm Bölsche was a literary critic who became a disciple and biographer of Haeckel and was known to have provided Hitler with "direct access to major ideas of Haeckelian social Darwinism" (Lifton, 1986, p. 125).

After an extensive study of the "natural selection" homicides committed in German institutions, Wertham (1966) concluded that the psychiatric and medical professions were among the most enthusiastic supporters of Nazi race programs. They not only implemented Nazi policy willingly, but often went well beyond what the law required. Wertham also related the activities of numerous eminent psychiatrists and physicians who were teaching in leading German universities (many still are quoted today in the literature as experts) and who not only supported the Nazi policy of "artificial evolution," but eagerly put it into effect. Highly respected scientific works published in Nazi Germany and elsewhere openly advocated elimination of those judged "below the level of beasts" or a "foreign body in human [meaning Aryan] society."

One of the authors of a work titled *Destruction of Life Devoid of Value* (Leipzig, 1920) was a psychiatrist who argued in favor of killing persons "whose death is urgently necessary [namely]...those who are below the level of beasts [such as Jews and Negroes]." Hans F. K. Gunther, a professor of "race science" at the University of Jena, wrote numerous books on racism which espoused various policies that later were adopted by the Nazis. His books sold extremely well and were generally favorably reviewed by biologists (Gallagher, 1999).

Although the justification for extermination programs included a desire to eliminate "hereditary diseases" that were a drain on the German resources, most of those murdered did not have hereditary conditions (Stein, 1988, p. 56). Nazism believed that the state had a duty to provide "redemption from evil" in the form of a quick and painless drug to those judged inferior (Haeckel, 1905, pp. 118–119).

These ideas were not opposed by the scientists, but rather ...most members of the scientific and academic communities... did very little to oppose the rise of Hitler and national socialism, and in many cases lent their considerable prestige as scientists to the support of the ideas of the national socialist

movement [the Nazis]. It is simply true historically that German academics and scientists did, in fact, contribute to the development and eventual success of national socialism, both directly through their efforts as scientists and indirectly through the popularization or vulgarization of their scientific work (Stein, 1988, p. 57).

The support of doctors was critically important in allowing what occurred in the camps to occur to the extent that:

In Auschwitz, Nazi doctors presided over the murder of most of the one million victims of that camp. Doctors performed selections—both on the ramp among arriving transports of prisoners and later in the camps and on the medical blocks. Doctors supervised the killing in the gas chambers and decided when the victims were dead. Doctors conducted a murderous epidemiology, sending to the gas chamber groups of people with contagious diseases and sometimes including everyone else who might be on the medical block. Doctors ordered and supervised, and at times carried out, direct killing of debilitated patients on the medical blocks by means of phenol injections into the bloodstream or the heart (Lifton, 1986, p. 18).

Lifton added that doctors were actively consulted about how best to carry out the process of selecting inmates for various tasks such as

how to burn the enormous numbers of bodies that strained the facilities of the crematoria. In sum, we may say that doctors were given much of the responsibility for the murderous ecology of Auschwitz—the choosing of victims, the carrying through of the physical and psychological mechanics of killing, and the balancing of killing and work functions in the camp.... As one survivor who closely observed the process put the matter, “Auschwitz was like a medical operation,” and “the killing program was led by doctors from beginning to end” (Lifton, 1986, p. 18).

In the late 1970s, Lifton interviewed a German doctor who was a fierce anti-Semite during the Nazi era. Note how the doctor used Darwinism to explain both the failure of Nazi beliefs about Jews and the enormous success of Jews in the West. The doctor, upon learning that Lifton was Jewish, declared unctuously:

The Jewish question became our tragedy and your tragedy.” He explained that it was initiated “by the flood [of Jews] from the East, and by Darwinian principles enabling Jews to become especially able “through such a hard selection during these two thousand years” to take so many medical positions that German doctors were excluded from; but he added, “Nowadays we know that all of us, Jews and Germans, belong to the same cultural community”

and must stand together against the “adverse cultural community,” including China and Russia but especially the expanding numbers of the people of Islam ... Except for rearranging his cast of characters, Dr. S. had not changed much. Racially, he practiced what he preached, and had an enormous family: “I have always believed that those who are fit should have as many children as possible, and those who are unfit should have as few ...as possible” (1986 p. 131).

Conclusions

Even though Germany had been the leader both in the Protestant and enlightenment reformations, Darwinian ideas advocated by its leading scientists rapidly replaced this world view (Kershaw, 1999). German society rapidly adopted a thoroughly secular world view, relying on science and materialistic philosophy for values and morals. Ironically, the churches, Bonhoeffer wrote, “lost their heads and their entire Bible” including Genesis and even

before Hitler came to power, as his ascendancy became increasingly probable, the editors of....[many] Christian papers brought their already virulently antisemitic rhetoric into closer concord with that of the Nazis. They did so unbidden, entirely voluntarily, and with unmistakable passion and alacrity (Goldhagen, 1996, p. 108).

They felt that forcing Jews and other “inferior races” into concentration camps was not cruel punishment, or even punishment at all, but was similar to quarantining the sick to prevent them from spreading their disease to the healthy. Conditions in the camps later deteriorated, but the main concern at first was simply to quarantine inferiors in order to prevent contamination of the Aryan gene pool.

Relatively few scientific studies exist that deal directly with Darwinism and Nazism—and many evolutionists today avoid the subject because evolution is inescapably selectionist. One of the best reviews of Darwinism and Nazism documents concluded that the Nazis felt confident that their extermination programs were based firmly on science (Mueller-Hill, 1988). Recently several popular magazines have published surprisingly candid and honest accounts of this topic (for example, see Gray, 1999). The source of the worst of Nazism was a result of Darwinism. To prevent a repeat performance, we must understand history because those who ignore the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them (Santayana, 1944).

Firmly convinced that Darwinian evolution was true, the German Darwinian scientists saw themselves as modern saviors of humankind believing that society someday would acknowledge that their work was responsible for bringing humanity to a higher level of evolutionary development. If eugenics is true, the Darwinists were our sav-

ior, and we have rejected good science and as a result, they believed, the human race will suffer grievously. If eugenics is not true, what the Darwinists attempted to do must be ranked among the most heinous crimes ever committed, and Darwinism must be considered as the source of one of the most destructive philosophies ever foisted on humankind.

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Book Reviews

The Day Behemoth & Leviathan Died by David Allen Deal Kherem YaYah Press, Vista, CA. 1999, 315 pages, \$20

Author Deal has pulled together a bizarre collection of ideas and claims. Among them are these: The earth once orbited the sun between Mars and Jupiter. An asteroid knocked the earth to its present location, where it captured the moon. At this time, dinosaurs living on the earth were destroyed. Deal also boasts his 1997 discovery of Noah's lost city Naxuan (not mentioned in scripture).

This book has many professionally done illustrations and charts, including two beautiful color foldouts of the ancient super-continent splitting apart. It lacks an index

and contains numerous spelling mistakes and other typographical/layout problems. This reviewer believes some of the evidence Deal uncovers merits further examination (i.e. Deep Sea Drilling Project) even if his scientific theories and Biblical interpretations are highly suspect, if not outrageous.

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Creation Rediscovered by Gerard J. Keane Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, IL. 398 pages, \$18

This is a refreshing book from a Catholic author and publisher. There is much creationist scholarship within conservative Catholicism that is less familiar to CRSQ readers. One example is the Catholic Origins Society which publishes *Watchmaker* magazine, named for William Paley.

This book is a clear overview of the creation position. It includes details such as pleochoric halos, black holes, living fossils, and Mount St. Helens events. A recent creation and a global Genesis Flood are promoted, including descriptions of the catastrophic plate tectonic and hydroplate theories. Author Keane has little patience with the progressive creation view of Hugh Ross (p. 270).

Keane exposes the theistic evolution errors of French priest and paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) in seven pages. Helpful comments also appear regarding Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Eugene Dubois, etc. With obvious deep respect for Pope John Paul II, Keane describes the Pope's apparent 1996 acceptance of evolution details. Keane suggests that Pope John was misled and

misinformed by his Pontifical Academy of Sciences, established in 1936 (pp. 202–205). This advisory Academy currently has 86 members, 20 of whom are Nobel prize winners, all favorable to evolution. One member is astrophysicist Stephen Hawking, some of whose writings promote non-Christian views. Keane explains that in Catholic belief, a Pope can be mistaken when expressing private, non ex cathedra opinions (p. 199).

In contrast, the author promotes the Catechism of the Catholic Church, officially adopted for Church teaching purposes in 1992. This strongly pro-creation document does not mention the word "evolution." Hopefully, the voice of Gerard Keane and others will have a growing impact in the Catholic world.

This is an excellent book to share with a Catholic friend. It contains an index and many further references.

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