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Generic Fascism Revisited: Attitudes Toward Technology in Germany and Italy, 1919-1945

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For decades historians of fascism have debated whether the German and Italian variants represented the generic core of a wider socio-political phenomenon. Modernization theory, whose death has been widely reported[1] and greatly exaggerated, is one of many competing tools which researchers have used in attempting to answer these questions. In particular, it is the relationship of fascism to the process of modernization that continues to attract widespread scholarly attention. Outside the Marxist literature for Germany, which typically has protrayed Nazism as the tool of finance capital and thus nearer the "modern" end of the historical continuum, there is a widespread agreement — unanimous until very recently — that Hitler and his henchmen thought essentially in anti-modern terms. According to this traditional view, the Nazis originally desired to turn the clock back to a *petit bourgeois* dream world devoid of urban metropolises, industrial complexes, banking empires, parliamentary corruption, and Jews.[2] The difficulty with

1. Gilbert Allardyce, "What Fascism is Not: Thoughts on the Deflation of a Concept," *American Historical Review* 84 (April, 1979), pp. 370-376; MacGregor Knox, "Conquest, Foreign and Domestic, in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany," *Journal of Modern History* 56 (March, 1984), pp. 3-4.
2. Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York, 1941); Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair* (Berkeley, California, 1961); George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology* (New York, 1964); Ernst Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism* (New York, 1966); David Schoenbaum, *Hitler's Social Revolution* (New York, 1966), pp. 275-

this interpretation has always been the reality of the Third Reich, replete as it was with cities that grew larger, not smaller, and an industrial-military establishment that came to assume vast proportions. Some historians, most notably Schoenbaum and Turner, have sought a way out of this paradox by arguing that Nazism only temporarily accommodated itself with industrial society in order to overturn the verdict of Versailles. Technology and Big Business were needed, in other words, to win the war. Once dominant in Europe again, the Nazis would have had a final, brutal reckoning with the modern world they despised.

Many of the same writers have drawn similar conclusions for Italy in presenting the case for generic fascism. The reaction from historians of Italian fascism has been unsympathetic to say the least. An international battery of scholars has blasted the concept that Italian fascism was backward-looking and anti-modern.[3] This may have been the case for Germany, it is argued, but not for Italy. Most adamant in this regard is Renzo De Felice, who maintains the fascist movement of the early 1920s was a product of forward-looking elements from the middle and lower-middle class who sought a genuine participation in government and a modernization of the nation's economy, neither of which had been realized by

288; Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (New York, 1969); Henry A. Turner, "Fascism and Modernization," in Henry A. Turner, ed., *Reappraisals of Fascism* (New York, 1975), pp. 117-139; Wolfgang Sauer, "National Socialism: Totalitarianism or Fascism?" in Turner (above), pp. 93-116. For those works rejecting the backward-looking nature of Nazism, see Horst Matzerath and Heinrich Volkmann, "Modernisierungstheorie und Nationalsozialismus," in Jürgen Kocka, ed., *Theorien in der Praxis des Historikers* (Göttingen, 1977), pp. 95-100; Werner Abelshauser and Anselm Faust, *Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik: Eine nationalsozialistische Sozialrevolution?* (Tübingen, 1983), pp. 116-118; Detlev Peukert, *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde* (Cologne, 1982), pp. 42-47; Hans-Dieter Schäfer, *Das gespaltene Bewußtsein: Deutsche Kultur und Lebenswirklichkeit 1933-45* (Munich, 1981), pp. 114-162; and the general discussion of the literature in Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship* (London, 1985), pp. 37, 137-138.

3. Renzo De Felice, *Interpretazioni del Fascismo* (Rome, 1969); *idem.*, *Intervista sul fascismo* (Rome-Bari, 1975); James Gregor, "Fascism and Modernization: Some Addenda," *World Politics* 26 (April, 1974), pp. 370-384; Edward R. Tannenbaum, "The Goals of Italian Fascism," *American Historical Review* 74 (April, 1969), pp. 1183-1204; Roland Sarti, "Fascist Modernization in Italy: Traditional or Revolutionary?" *American Historical Review* 75 (April, 1970), pp. 1029-1045; Alexander Galkin, "Capitalist Society and Fascism," *Social Sciences: USSR Academy of Sciences* 2 (1970), pp. 128-138; Mihaly Vajda, "The Rise of Fascism in Italy and Germany," *Telos* 12 (Summer, 1972), pp. 12-35; Alan Cassels, *Fascism* (New York, 1975); Allardyce (see note 1 above).

Italy's liberal regimes. "Mussolini the revolutionary" led this reforming vanguard and, although forced to make concessions and accommodations as the movement became regime, retained his modernity. Not surprisingly, these historians debunk the theses of those who see Italy and Germany as generically similar.

It is undoubtedly time, as MacGregor Knox argues, for more exhaustive and painstaking comparative analysis. But rather than attempt a comprehensive, global comparison, as he does, it may be advisable to offer thematic analyses and concentrate on "new interpretive categories,"[4] as Francesco Perfetti suggests. In this way we can probe specific issues deeply and begin to assemble a set of case studies. The present article focuses on leading Nazi and Italian Fascist attitudes toward technology. Fascism claimed to be a "third wave," an alternative to capitalism and Communism during the turbulent 1920s and precarious Great Depression years. Was technology central or alien to this new vision? Because widespread machinofacture and the technical, scientific culture surrounding it were relatively recent phenomena in the early twentieth century whose consequences, positive and negative, were hotly debated by contemporaries, a survey of the ideological preferences of Nazis and Fascists with regard to the technological society cannot help but shed some light on the modern or anti-modern nature of these movements and regimes. The results of this preliminary comparison reflect the complexities of the Italian and German cases, and as such, underscore the need to move beyond competing general hypotheses and grope our way toward the more qualified arguments that usually emerge from such hard-fought scholarly debates.

I

Jeffrey Herf's recent monograph on technology and culture in Weimar and the Third Reich provides an appropriate starting place, for, although its focus is Germany, the author believes his findings have wider implications for the study of European fascism.[5] Building on observations made by Henry Turner and Alan Cassels, Herf dubs the Nazis "reactionary modernists" who rejected

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4. Francesco Perfetti, *Il dibattito sul fascismo* (Rome, 1984), p. 24. For Knox, see note 1 above, p. 4.
5. Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1985), pp. 46-48, 234-235.

capitalism, liberalism, and many other aspects of western life, *but not technology*. Nazi leaders assimilated this selective acceptance of modernity from conservative literati, academicians, and engineers outside the party in the 1920s. Thus Oswald Spengler warned of the evil influences of a "circulation" capital that restricted technology's Faustian drive to subdue nature. He urged his readers to free technology and submit to its forces, but worried that Germans would fail in this and decline in power *vis à vis* the non-European world. Ernst Jünger, who glorified the machines of a war he had witnessed firsthand, was confident that the new German worker-soldier of the big city would be up to the task. Unlike the flabby bourgeois and Jewish elements which had mismanaged Germany's technological talents in the Great War, Jünger's new Spartans would assume a totalitarian control of technology, drive up production to new heights, and defeat Germany's enemies. Werner Sombart, perhaps the most prominent personality examined here, rejected "Jewish" capitalism, but, like Spengler, praised the truly productive capacity of the "German" entrepreneur.

These authors and the handful of other academicians and engineers analyzed in the central chapters of Herf's work divorced technology from its western tradition of *Zivilisation* (reason, calculation, intellect, democracy) and merged it instead with a German *Kultur* (emotion, intuition, romanticism, authoritarianism) more palatable to radical nationalists. Technology was not seen as the product of a rational socio-economic response to society's needs, but rather as an autonomous power infused with spirit and sout (*Geist* and *Seele*). If not abused by alien traditions, they argued, technology could become a vital and positive force for the German *Volk*.

The National Socialists were aware of the reactionary modernists from the early 1920s. This irrational combination of autonomous technology and racism quickly became the more pervasive component of Nazi ideology, displacing *völkisch* nationalism with its more traditional animus agains industrialism. The break with pastoral, anti-technological resentments was complete by 1936, and by 1939, according to Herf, one finds Goebbels espousing reactionary modernism. "Modern skeptics believed the deepest roots of the collapse of European culture lay in [technology]," Goebbels stated, "[but] National Socialism understood how to take the souless framework of technology and fill it with the rhythm and hot impulses of our time."[6]

6. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 196.

Crucial to the entire process of assimilation was the reactionary modernism of Hitler himself. "At no time" did the Führer share a *Blut und Boden* hostility to technology; rather, he "built the highways and then started the war that was to unify technology and the German soul."[7] Rearmament, Four-Year Plan, and *Blitzkrieg* do not represent a betrayal of Nazi ideology; rather they were consistent with it.

Herf is strongest in analyzing the reactionary modernists themselves. The separate chapters on Spengler, Jünger, Sombart, and the radical engineers are good intellectual history and represent a major contribution to the history of interwar Germany. The author is weakest, unfortunately, in his culminating chapter on reactionary modernism and the Nazis, for there is a dearth of supporting evidence for his thesis that his brand of thought "became a constituent component of Nazi ideology from the early 1920's."[8] There is no examination of the implications of the Nazi program or intraparty views concerning it, nor does one find analysis of the party press or private correspondence and official papers that would document the alleged process whereby reactionary modernism was adopted. The possibility that modernist, anti-modernist, and reactionary modernist factions might have shared the party stage is also omitted from the discussion. The only tempting pieces of evidence supporting the existence of reactionary modernism in the party before 1933 are (1) a brief reference in *Mein Kampf* about Aryan culture's synthesis of Greek spirit and Germanic technology and (2) a phamphlet commissioned by Gottfried Feder in 1930. The tract, written by Peter Schwerber, claimed that National Socialism was dedicated to the liberation of technology from the domination of money and the fetters of Jewish materialism.[9] 1930 was an election year, however, that saw the party trying to broaden its appeal by systematically courting all occupational groups including engineers and white-collar employees. Schwerber's views mirrored reactionary modernism, but this is what one would expect from a party which cleverly and opportunistically tailored its propaganda to the psyche of each distinct audience, even to the point, as Thomas Childers has shown, of distributing different leaflets in different neighborhoods

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 194, 47.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-194.

within a single town.[10] Herf cites numerous reactionary modernist statements from leading Nazis after 1933, including the Goebbels quote above, but all such material from the 1930s can be used with equal effectiveness to buttress the older thesis that the movement made only a temporary truce with Big Business after coming to power. Without the comparable documentation from the 1920s, in other words, the argument falls apart. Herf's assertion that the Nazis largely neglected technological improvement in World War II, assuming that "will" could overcome all opposition, is cited to demonstrate that they paid dearly for attaching themselves to this irrational combination of *Technik* and *Kultur*.[11] Once again, however, the same facts could be offered in support of the rival viewpoint that the Nazis never genuinely reconciled themselves with the tools of modern industry. We are left in the last analysis with the scintillating, yet unsubstantiated, hypothesis that the "real" mentality of Nazism reflected the thoughts of the reactionary modernists.

A closer examination of intraparty trends reveals a more complex division of opinion over the curses and blessings of modern technological society. Beyond anti-Semitism and Hitler's personality, which may have provided some unity, it is possible to identify three distinct, though often overlapping, schools of thought that coexisted with a probable fourth, the reactionary modernist. All require additional research and clarification. One "leftist" faction around Otto and Gregor Strasser was very hostile to the machine culture of the early twentieth century, advocating an alteration and far-reaching reduction of it. The need for national defense and a fairly comfortable standard of living prevented the Strassers from any serious consideration of totally dismantling industry. Most propagandists of "blood-and-soil" propagated an even more drastic technophobia, never really reconciling themselves to the industrial scene responsible for urban culture. Hitler represented a category unto himself, exhibiting more practical support for technology than either of these two viewpoints, but combining elements of both in his thinking. He was extremely reluctant, however, to enforce strict ideological conformity on the movement, with the result that these sub-ideologies continued to exist in the Third Reich. Each of these four categories deserves separate treatment here.[12]

10. Thomas Childers, "Who Indeed, did vote for Hitler?" *Central European History* 17 (March, 1984), pp. 46-48.
11. Herf (note 5 above) pp. 213-216.
12. Examples and documentation follow with each discussion below.

   The Nazi left wing wanted to help German workers by granting employees and governments at various levels partial ownership of large enterprises. Advocacy of these reforms was often couched in populist rhetoric which betrayed a lower-middle class hostility toward the wealthy and powerful. Anti-capitalism and technophobia are two distinct phenomena, but animosity toward the machine was also part of the leftist agenda. Written in 1931, Otto Strasser's oft-ignored work, *Building German Socialism*, was a direct assault on the social and technological reality of the second industrial revolution. He believed that the acceleration of production during World War I, followed by the postwar rationalization, had had "a disastrous effect upon the bodily [health] and still more upon the mental health of Germans."[13] The worker desired a renewed communion with nature and questioned whether the "nerve-destroying giant towns," the "murderous giant factories," and "industrial work with its murderous monotony"[14] really improved the quality of life. Germany needed to move toward a "re-agrarianization" and a "disintegration of titanic enterprises."[15] It was time for Germans "to end the tyranny of technique,to overthrow the dominion of the machine, and to make technique and the machine once more servants instead of masters — for their domination has been an unmitigated curse."[16] This could be done by nationalizing and decentralizing production, developments made possible by "the distant transmission of gas and electricity and by local use of internal combustion engines."[17] Germany's industry would produce much less, but workers would have more spare time and consumers become happier once they were liberated from the artificial needs created solely by advertising. In their dispersed pattern, moreover, vital defense plants would be relatively immune from air and poison-gas attacks.
   Strasser's break with Goebbels, his brother, and Hitler by 1930 makes it difficult to determine how extensively these views were held in Strasser's wing of the party. It seems unlikely, however, that his irreverence toward "the idols of mechanical technique"[18] was not shared by many on the left. For instance, the Strasser

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13. Otto Strasser, *Aufbau des Deutschen Sozialismus* (Leipzig, 1932), p. 28.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

publications of the late 1920s were strewn with positive references
to such technophobes as Arthur Moeller van den Bruck. The draft
program which Gregor Strasser and Joseph Goebbels produced in
1925 also possessed a strong bias for small shop production and anti-
technological institutions like the guilds.[19] During the subsequent
years before 1933, Gregor Strasser consistently attacked the liberal,
capitalist, Marxist, rationalist, "mechanical-materialist"
consequences of the modern era, while equally consistently
advocating an autarkical return to agriculture.[20] By remarking in
1932 that "Nazism is the opposite of what exists today,"[21] he surely
included the "giant towns" and "murderous factories" so offensive
to his brother.

     These views may also have spread into the ranks of the S.A.
Ernst Röhm was a supporter of Gregor Strasser's brand of
revolutionary socialism,[22] while eastern SA boss Walther Stennes,
an ally of Otto Strasser, called for a "resettling of the industrial
proletariat which is still capable of making a living on the land."[23]
Little is known of the views of the rank and file, but if Conan
Fischer is correct with his argument that skilled and semi-skilled
workers comprised the bulk of the SA,[24] its ranks can be expected to
have responded favorably to neo-Luddite arguments against the
technological progress which had displaced or was threatening to
displace these workers from their jobs.

     Hitler exhibited great tolerance for the views of Strasser and
Röhm, attitudes he shared in part, trying as late as June, 1934 to
prevent a party split over these issues. Only when intriguers

     19.   Max A. Kele, *Nazis and Workers. National Socialist Appeals to German
Labor 1919-1933* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: 1972), pp. 135-136; Reinhard Kühnl, *Die
nationalsozialistische Linke 1925-1930* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1966), pp. 66-67, 83.
     20.   Gregor Strasser, *Kampf um Deutschland* (Berlin, 1932), contains most of his
important speeches from 1924 to 1932. See especially, pp. 52, 131, 153, 177, 214, 281, 304,
315, 384.
     21.   Gregor Strasser, *Das wirtschaftliche Aufbauprogramm der NSDAP*
(Berlin, 1932), p. 7.
     22.   Hermann Mau, "The 'Second Revolution' — June 30, 1934," in Hajo
Holborn, ed., *Republic to Reich. The Making of the Nazi Revolution* (New York,
1972), pp. 231-232.
     23.   From the September 1931 issue of Stennes' newspaper, cited in Conan
Fischer, *Stormtroopers: A Social, Economic and Ideological Analysis 1929-35*
(London, 1983), p. 193.
     24.   See *ibid.*, pp. 148-159, 193-194. See also Richard Bessel, *Political Violence and
the Rise of Nazism. The Stormtroopers in Eastern Germany 1925-1934* (New Haven,
Connecticut: 1984), who maintains that the SA was predominantly lower-middle
class.

convinced the Führer that Strasser and Röhm were disloyal *to him*
did Hitler move against them. But, consistent with this ideological
tolerance, leftist hostility to technology was not suppressed. In fact
it may have lived on unimpeded in the person of Joseph Goebbels.
The co-author of the anti-technological program of 1925 had no
liking for the "asphalt desert"[25] of the city, often joining blood-and-
soil advocates like Alfred Rosenberg and SA technophobes like
Stennes in assaulting a modern urban life which he hated.
Goebbels had read the works of one reactionary modernist, Ernst
Jünger, but was not impressed. Far from glorifying the industrial
worker as a modern soldier, Goebbels saw him as a pitiful,
dehumanized being, "a machine, a number, a gear in a factory
devoid of understanding or comprehension."[26] Well after Stennes
and Strasser were expelled, moreover, he continued to urge Hitler
to be more radical ideologically with regard to Big Business. And
later, during World War II, Goebbels attacked the large
concentrations of industry under the loose direction of Armaments
Minister Albert Speer, thus echoing earlier criticisms of the
Strassers. The Propaganda Minister was even willing to sabotage
Speer's industrial establishments in 1944-1945. He called for a mass
conscription of industrial workers into the army in an effort to give
will, not technology, an opportunity to triumph. In contrast to
Herf's argument, therefore, it seems likely that Goebbels paid no
more than propagandistic lip service to reactionary modernism in
order to boost the Four Year Plan or please particular audiences,
while his real feelings remained consistently negative.

The blood-and-soil wing of the movement was closely allied in
spirit with the Nazi left wing.[27] However, whereas many leftists
retained hope for ameliorating industrial conditions by dispersing

25. Quoted in Klaus Bergmann, *Agrarromantik und Großstadtfeindschaft*
(Meisenheim am Glan, 1970), p. 326. For the remainder of this paragraph, see
Goebbels' diary entries of November 28, 1925, February 6, 1926, and June 30, 1926, in
Helmut Heiber, ed., *The Early Goebbels Diaries 1925-1926*, translated from the
German, (New York, 1963), pp. 50, 65, 93; Peter Merkl, *The Making of a Stormtrooper*
(Princeton, New Jersey: 1983), p. 179; Viktor Reiman, *Goebbels* (New York, 1976), pp.
127-128; Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, translated from the German (New
York, 1970), pp. 122-123, 397, 419; Rudolf Semmler's diary entries of January 4, 15, 18,
20, 26, and 29, 1943 and February 13, 1943, in Rudolf Semmler, *Goebbels: the Man next
to to Hitler*, translated from the German, (London, 1947), pp. 63-69.
26. Cited in Henry A. Turner, Jr., *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler*
(New York, 1985). p. 65.
27. For the following two paragraphs, see Bergmann (note 25 above), pp. 315-
360; and Michael H. Kater, "Die Artamanen — Völkische Jugend in der Weimarer
Republik," *Historische Zeitschrift* 213 (December, 1971), pp. 577-638.

and decentralizing industry, the agrarian wing advocated a more radical exodus from the cities. Alfred Rosenberg, editor of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, was the intellectual leader of this faction of Nazis in the 1920s. His articles were filled with a pathological hatred for large metropolises and the entire "Jewish" process of technological modernization which had created them. Other influential anti-urbanites in the early years were Richard Walther Darrè, author of *Blut und Boden* (1929), and Hans F.K. Günther, whose books attempted to demonstrate the superiority of Nordic man. Both warned against "unfolding technological and spiritual forces"[28] in cities which only a systematic, dictatorial de-urbanization could cure.

The simple lessons of these agrarian fanatics resonated in the Artam League, an amalgam of youth organizations largely sympathetic to the Nazis by the late 1920s. Members were generally the sons and daughters of lower middle class urban families victimized by the economic dislocation of World War I and the immediate postwar years. Frustrated machinists, draftsmen, clerks, and teachers lashed out at the arrogant, heartless capitalists and their technological automatons. One Nazi "Artamaner" put these emotions into verse (to which translation does no justice):

> Alles wissen sie in der grossen Stadt
> Alles können sie deuten, zergliedern, ergründen,
> Ihre laute hochmütige Sprache hat
> Worte, Worte, das Stillste zu künden.
> Sie füllen ihr Hirn mit Zahlen und grellen Bildern,
> Schubkästen ordnen sie ein mit selbstbewußt protzenden
>   Schildern,
> Sie zeugen aus kaltem Blute Stahl u[nd] Stein u[nd] Erz,
> Doch in ihren gigantischen Werken klopft kein Herz.
> Als hätten Beton u[nd] Eisengerüst u[nd] Turbinen
> Sie selbst gezeugt, feinschwingende Nervenmaschinen,
> Großstadtschemen, der Großstadt zu dienen,
> So kreisen sie unrastig, seelenmatt,
> Sinnlos getrieben im sinnlos getriebenen Rad

28.   Cited in Bergmann (note 25 above), p. 341.

Outside the city, however, lay farmland, "God's country," rejuvenating with its "brilliant sunshine."[29] Urban dwellers could find temporary work on Germany's eastern farms, and, thus strengthened through manual labor, eventually lead a massive crusade to reconquer farmland in eastern Europe. Technology played no part in this violently romantic vision.

Hitler began to court the Artam League and make greater room for Rosenberg, Darrè, and Günther in the late 1920s. In 1930 the party even amended its program to please return-to-the-soil enthusiasts, while in 1933, Darrè became Minister of Agriculture. The Führer took these steps in part to attract rural votes, in part out of conviction. Thus after 1933 the Artam League was coordinated, Darrè and Rosenberg shunted aside, and industrial cities allowed to grow under the Four Year Plan. It should not be forgotten, on the other hand, that the regime nearly achieved agricultural self-sufficiency under the same plan while continuing to extol the virtues of country life. These themes were stressed particularly heavily in film, art, and elementary education. An entire generation was being inculcated with the image of a prosperous and happy peasant tilling the soil behind a sturdy plough horse, "apparently unknowledgeable," as one author describes it, "of agricultural technology and agra-chemistry."[30]

If the decade after 1933 saw the fall of some blood-and-soil fanatics, moreover, it also witnessed the rapid emergence of others — in the SS.[31] Former members of the Artam movement like Rudolf Höss and Wolfram Sievers rose quickly within Heinrich Himmler's empire, attracted by its elitism, aggressive agrarianism, and anti-capitalism. The Reichsführer SS was himself a former Artam functionary whose plans for carving farms out of Poland and European Russia for hundreds of millions of German *Wehrbauer* are well-known. Himmler also possessed a deep hatred for industrial "hyenas" and little appreciation for technology in general. The idea of feeding Germans by simply acquiring more

29. Maria Kahle, "Gottes Erde in Artam," in Josef Ackermann, *Heinrich Himmler als Ideologe* (Göttingen, 1970), p. 197 note 14.
30. Cited in Bergmann (note 25 above), p. 335.
31. For this paragraph, see Kater (note 27 above), pp. 629-638; Ackermann (note 29 above), pp. 195-231; Bergmann (note 25 above), p. 359; Reinhard Vogelsang, *Der Freundeskreis Himmler* (Göttingen, 1972), pp. 57, 60; Peter R. Black, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, *Ideological Soldier of the Third Reich* (Princeton, New Jersey: 1984), p. 202; Albert Speer, *The Slave State: Heinrich Himmler's Masterplan for SS Supremacy*, translated from the German, (London, 1981), pp. 76-84.

land — as opposed to developing existing farms more intensively — was itself anti-technological, while SS wartime enterprises and postwar industrial blueprints emphasized extensive use of slave-labor, not engenious devices. Nor was this a coincidence, for SS ideologues were afraid that extensive reliance on technology after the war would ruin small businessmen, drain labor from farming, lead to unrestrained urbanism with its accompanying biological contamination of the *Volk*, and create autonomous technological forces which the state could not control. It is difficult to find a place for modernism of any sort in the SS mentality.

Hitler grew to adulthood in a rapidly industrializing Central Europe. His own experience probably created an exaggerated sense of the speed of this transformation, moving from the small provincial town of Linz to Vienna in 1908, then to Munich, a "red" city with even more industry, in 1913. An avid, opinionated observer of his changing environment, Hitler acquired a fairly consistent philosophy concerning modern technology, the engine of industrialism. It was an attitude which combined an awareness of technology's potential dangers with a tempered enthusiasm for its practical benefits. Thus Hitler could praise "Germanic technology"[32] while simultaneously attacking the "Judaized" large firm, the dangerous "infection of materialism" which flowed from technological advance, the passing of "Aryan" harmony which characterized the relationship between master and man in small shops, and factories where workers tended machines but had only "wretchedness and misery" themselves.[33] He scoffed at backward-looking *völkish* nationalists who raved about "old German heroism, about days of old, stone axes, spear and shield,"[34] but paid homage himself in early speeches to personal forces like will, hate, and fanaticism that would be as crucial as modern weapons to Germany's restoration to world power. And undoubtedly Hitler believed this, seeing himself as the daring soldier who had come through one scrape after another at the front, overcoming obstacles with personal resourcefulness in the face of superior British firepower.[35] The Führer neither underestimated nor glorified the machines of war.

        32.   Cited in Herf (note 5 above), p. 195.
        33.   Speeches of April 12, 1922, September 18, 1922, and April 24, 1923, in Eberhard Jäckel, ed., *Hitler: Sämtliche Aufzeichnungen 1905-1924* (Stuttgart, 1980), pp. 624, 692, 912.
        34.   For instance, Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Munich, 1935), p. 396.
        35.   For his remarks of April 10, 1923 and February 26, 1924, see Jäckel (note 33 above), pp. 880, 1068. For his remembrances of World War I, see Speer (note 25 above), p. 120.

With the onset of his march to power in the late 1920s, Hitler began to articulate a more elaborate aversion to the unrestrained dynamism of modern technology. For over half a century, he argued, Germany had rejected territorial increase as a means to sustain the *Volk*, opting instead to build up industrial production for export to earn food and raw materials. A special danger inherent in supporting more industry than was needed for German consumption lay in the fact that it increased population and created a "concentration of people in work centers which look less like cultural centers, and rather more like abscesses in the national body which all evil, vices, and diseases seem to unite."[36] With the loss of World War I another great opportunity was lost to acquire "hundreds of thousands of square kilometers"[37] in the East, redistribute this land to Germany's fighters for agricultural colonization, and restrain factory production. Instead Germany continued even farther down the false path of rapid technological progress and exaggerated industrialization for export purposes. "Methods in industry and in factories had been improved, especially on the scientific and theoretical sides, with vast ingenuity on account of the war, and armed with these new methods men rushed into this great void, began to remodel their works, to invest capital, and under compulsion of this invested capital, sought to raise production to the highest possible extent."[38] This process, he felt, could not continue indefinitely. Within a decade the "increase in productive capacity" had outrun the "possible consumption market". The unemployment resulting from overproduction increased government taxes for poor relief, which in turn raised business costs, stimulated more cost-cutting technical progress, and made matters worse. Thus the unemployment lines grew longer — and the Bolshevik appeal strengthened. Implicit in this reasoning was the realization that even a Germany returned somehow to Great Power status would have to shackle technological growth and urbanization if the regime were to prevent the racial decline of the *Volk*.

Neither before nor after 1933, however, did Hitler favor as drastic a reduction of the industrial base as the Strassers or the most

36. Quoted in Hitler's unpublished 1928 manuscript, *Hitlers Zweites Buch*, Gerhard L. Weinberg, ed., (Stuttgart, 1961), pp. 61-62.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
38. This and the following quote are from Hitler's speech before the Düsseldorf Industry Club, January 27, 1932, in Max Domarus, ed., *Hitler Reden und Proklamationen 1932-1945*, (Munich, 1962), 1: pp. 76, 79.

extreme blood-and-soil advocates wanted. Otto Strasser recalled trying repeatedly to convince Hitler of the need for just this,[39] finally earning a stern reprimand from the Führer: "Do you think me crazy enough to want to ruin Germany's great industry?"[40] During the Four Year Plan Hitler expressed pride in the "gigantic factories" which were springing from the earth to produce oil, rubber, and steel for the army[41] and later praised "the most up-to-date technological methods"[42] which were facilitating German victories. But it bears repeating that Hitler rarely overestimated the military value of machines. Referring in early 1941 to the disadvantages of German trade with the Balkans — but undoubtedly with an eye on Lebensraum in the East — the Nazi leader noted that it was easier to do without machinery, which Germany had, than without food and raw materials which Germany did not.[43] Although he was conscious of America's technological lead and considered American infantrymen the best-armed,[44] Hitler cavalierly declared war on the U.S., trusting in his belief that America had entered World War I too late to steel its soldiers for the strains of combat. Americans were also said to be mixed-breeds, enfeebled by democracy, who would run after the first fire-fight.

People, not machines, won wars. Thus the Führer distrusted submachine guns because they allegedly made soldiers cowardly by eliminating hand-to-hand combat. Similarly, jet fighters flew too fast for real fighting. This respect for the valor of individual soldiers came forth quite clearly at the end of the war. Although Hitler was aware of the need for miracle weaponry, he also backed Goebbels' plan for a *levee en masse* that would gut the factories expected to produce such weapons.[45]

39. Otto Strasser, *Hitler and I*, translated from the German (Boston, 1940), p. 83.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
41. Speech references of September 12, 1936 in Adolf Hitler, *My New Order*, translated from the German (New York, 1941), p. 401; and April 28, 1939, in Domarus (note 38 above), 2: p. 1178.
42. Hitler's remarks of June 3, 1942, cited in Henry Pickler, ed., *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier 1941-42* (Bonn, 1951), p. 162.
43. Speech of May 4, 1941, in Domarus (note 38 above), 2: p. 1699.
44. Speech references of February 20, 1938 in Hitler (note 41 above), p. 433; and April 28, 1939, in Domarus (note 38 above), 2: pp. 1177-1178; and remark of July 21, 1942, in Pickler (note 42 above), p. 112.
45. Speer (note 25 above), pp. 121, 306, 419; and Speer (note 31 above), p. 83.

Hitler's plan for the postwar period illustrate a commitment, consistent in his thinking since the 1920s, toward what should perhaps be labeled postindustrialism, implying a higher or more refined stage of economic development. In 1932, for example, he told one of his economic advisers, Otto Wagener, that industrialization had placed individuals "in bondage to capital and the machine." National Socialism would lead Germans "back to individuality [by] radically abolishing all the specious results of industrialization and restoring this development to the service of mankind and individualism."[46] Consistent with this thinking, the Führer's wartime plans avoided any return to simpler, pastoral days of the pre-industrial period. He wanted to put "the great geniuses in German business"[47] to work on a host of technical assignments. The vast eastern regions had to be exploited economically, gargantuan super-railways constructed to link Russia with the Reich's heartland, and new highways built along which simple, standard automobiles manufactured from interchangeable parts would travel.[48] "Think of all the creative work that will have to be done!" he told one gathering of businessmen in 1944. "[W]hen I tell you that after this war German business will experience its greatest boom, perhaps of all times, then you must take these words as a promise that will one day be redeemed."[49] But the new Germany would be devoid of those aspects of the industrial process which Hitler found so objectionable. Joining the new Berlin, with its neo-classical architectural style, would be scores of similarly reconstructed cities, including other large industrial centers like Düsseldorf, Cologne, and Saarbrücken. The eastern conquests would possess equally awesome administrative sites surrounded for miles by quaint peasant villages where ten million German colonists would settle in the first postwar decade alone. The Russians — and factories producing much of Germany's needs — would exist far outside these Teutonic rings. Such a massive migration and relocation of production would not only uncrowd postindustrial German cities, but empty many factories as well. Such plans were

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46. Cited in Henry A. Turner, ed., *Hitler aus nächster Nähe* (Berlin, 1978), pp. 267-268.
47. Hitler's speech of June 26, 1944, cited in Speer (note 25 above), p. 360.
48. Hitler's remarks of April 9, 11, and 27, 1942 in Pickler (note 42 above), pp. 72, 139-140, 147.
49. Hitler's speech of June 26, 1944, cited in Speer (note 25 above), p. 360.

consistent with his pre-1933 criticisms of Germany's oversized export economy and uncontrollable technological growth.[50] One wonders, therefore, how long it would have taken before Big Business's "greatest boom" yielded to a "stable state" economy. Elimination of millions of Jews and other alleged subhumans from Europe would further reduce the need for productive capacity for export within Germany. This was obviously a postindustrial vision of the most pathological sort.

    None of this is to deny that there were reactionary modernists in the Nazi movement. Gottfried Feder would be a prime candidate from the early days. The 1920 party program, co-authored by Feder, contained many anti-modern demands, but technology was not among them.[51] The former engineer had no desire to restrain the productive capabilities of the nation, in fact, only to free them from the clutches of Jewish businessmen who allegedly stifled "new ideas and inventions . . . if their adoption would endanger the paying capacity of older plants."[52] Armaments Ministers Fritz Todt, Albert Speer, and many of the engineers later attracted to Nazism would probably qualify as well. Thus Speer himself praised the "outstanding technocrats" and the "cadre of engineers"[53] who created the highways and rearmed the nation after 1933. But Herf is inaccurate in depicting a rising tide of reactionary modernism that carried Hitler, and increasingly, the party, with it during the interwar years. For Nazism was a charismatic movement open and flexible enough for reactionary modernism, Strasserian technophobia, and *völkisch* agrarianism. Fanatical postindustrialism seems an appropriate label for the Führer's thinking. He neither glorified technology nor reified some mystical conception of it. In fact, he tended to glorify the actions of men, not the movement of machines, even possessing a bias against the social and economic consequences of rapid technological change. This does not mean that Hitler was a backward-looking neo-Luddite. He

    50. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177, 309, 534; Hitler's remarks of November 8-10, 1941, and May 12, 1942, in Pickler (note 42 above), pp. 46-47, 303; Turner (note 2 above), pp. 122-123, 137.
    51. Nolte (note 2 above), pp. 411-412, 415; for the text of the 1920 program, see Thomas G. Barnes and Gerald D. Feldman, eds., *Breakdown and Rebirth* (Boston, 1972), pp. 107-110.
    52. Gottfried Feder, *Hitler's Official Programme and its Fundamental Ideas*, translated from the German, (New York, 1971), p. 91. The pamphlet was first published in 1927. See also Nolte (note 2 above), pp. 411-412, 415.
    53. Speer (note 31 above), p. 4.

always thought of himself as a modern[54] and looked forward to a "reformed" world with a definite place in it for industry and machines.

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II

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It was not Herf's purpose to engage in a comparative analysis of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. He does feel, however, that less radical variants of reactionary modernism existed elsewhere in interwar Europe, especially among the Italian Futurists.[55] Indeed this school probably comes closest to Ernst Jünger's brand of thought. Led by the mercurial Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the Futurists celebrated the modernity of the Industrial Revolution, were captivated, as was Jünger, by the cement and steel of the modern city, and above all, deified the machine and the beauty of speed. Again like Jünger, they favored the rise of technocracy over western parliamentarism and viewed the Great War as a positive, purgative experience, performing a very definite aesthetic function in this sense. Nor did they revel in the daring exploits of individual soldiers. War integrated the masses into a bureaucratic, Prussianized fighting-machine that existed on another plane above that of the individual.[56]

In the case of Italy, in fact, it is easier to establish a connection between the Futurists and certain elements within Fascism. Marinetti himself, of course, supported the fascists as movement and regime, and Guiseppe Bottai, editor of *Critica fascista* and from 1926 to 1932 Minister of Corporations, also passed through the Futurist school and the veterans' movement to Fascism. Although it seems advisable not to identify this advocate of a rational Fascist doctrine and an accommodation with parliamentary liberalism too closely with the anti-rational, anti-parliamentary reactionary modernist tradition, Bottai nevertheless extolled the modern machine culture and the technocratic, managerial elite that he

54. Speer (note 25 above), pp. 42, 94-95, 96-97.
55. Herf (note 5 above), pp. 46-48, 234-235.
56. Mario Isenghi, *Il mito della grande guerra* (Bari, 1970), pp. 21-30; James Joll, *Three Intellectuals in Politics* (New York, 1963), pp. 133-184; James Gregor (note 4 above), pp. 373-374. On the Futurists, see also Enrico Cirspolti, *Il Mita della Macchina* (Trapani, 1969); Sergio Lambiase and G. Battista Nazzaro, eds., *Marinetti e i futuristi* (Milan, 1978); and Luciano De Maria, ed., *Marinetti e il futurismo* (Milan, 1981).

wanted to head modern society.[57] Massimo Bontempelli and other literati and artists in the "super-city" (*Stracittà*) and "1900" (*Novecento*) factions began their careers as Futurists too. *Stracittà* praised the cosmopolitanism of modern urban life and scorned the backwardness of the provinces; the anti-classical bias of the Futurists was abandoned, however, to make way for a neo-classical combination of modernity and Italy's Roman heritage.[58] As is well known, moreover, Mussolini himself worked very closely with Marinetti from 1915 until the seizure of power in 1922. Thereafter the Duce drifted away from the high priest of Futurism, but Mussolini never lost an enthusiasm for technology which may have been heightened by his early contacts with the Futurists.

Highly diverse and complex, Italian Fascism included other groups that were definitely modern and pro-technology, although organizationally and ideologically quite distinct from the Futurists. Enrico Corradini and Alfredo Rocco of the Nationalist Association strove to suppress the counterproductive class struggle of the labor movement and unleash the productive capacities of the nation. Like Bottai, they advocated a technocratic totalitarianism.[59] Fascist Syndicalists around Edmondo Rossoni and Filippo Corridoni agreed with the Nationalists' emphasis on technological advance, but wanted to perpetuate an autonomous labor movement that could reserve the right to strike for labor gains. The Syndicalists exerted a strong pull in turn on many Squadrist leaders like Dino Grandi, Augusto Turati, and especially Italo Balbo, who served as Minister of Aviation in the 1930s.[60] It must be bourne in mind, again, that we are dealing here with another separate and distinct element within Fascism.

57.   On Bottai, see Alexander J. De Grand, *Bottai e la cultura fascista* (Bari, 1978); Giordano Bruno Guerri, *Giuseppe Bottai un fascista critico* (Milan, 1976). For the concept of fascist technocracy, see Alberto Aquarone, "Aspirazione tecnocratiche del primo fascismo," *Nord e Sud* 11 (April, 1964), pp. 109-128; and Camillo Pellizzi, *Una rivoluzione mancata* (Milan, 1949).

58.   On Bontempelli, see his essays, *L'avventura novecentista* (Florence, 1938); and Luigi Boldacci, *Massimo Bontempelli* (Turlin, 1967); on *Novecento*, see Rossano Bossaglia, *Il "Novecento" Italiano* (Milan, 1979); on *Stracittà*, see Luisa Mangoni, *L'interventismo della cultura* (Bari, 1974), pp. 93-172; and Giuseppi Carlo Marino, *L'autarchia della cultura* (Rome, 1983), pp. 99-112.

59.   Tannenbaum (note 3 above), pp. 1196-1199; Gregor (note 3 above), pp. 374-375.

60.   For the influence of Syndicalism in Italian Fascism, see David S. Roberts, *The Syndicalist Tradition and Italian Fascism* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1979); Tannenbaum (note 3 above), pp. 1191-1195; and Gregor (note 3 above) pp. 375-376.

Squadrism, however, was itself diverse and complex. One does not have to probe very deeply, in fact, to find contrasting traditions here. The Black Shirts' "don't-give-a-damn" attitude (*Menefreghismo*) was sometimes translated into a glorification of acts of individual heroism in war, a disdain for the Futurist concept of the megalithic war-machine, and a total rejection of machine-oriented, urban culture.[61] Roberto Farinacci may represent one such case. The Squadrist Ra of Cremona engaged in violent polemics with the technocrats in the 1920s and again with Marinetti and the advocates of modernism in the 1930s, praised the primitivism of the peasant life style, while somewhat contradictorily extolling Nazi military might — the war-machine *par excellence*.[62] In Curzio Malaparte we possess a better example. The Florentine Black Shirt was sickened by Futurism's high regard for the modern world of speed and machines, writing in 1923 that "Latin nations are inappropriate to modernity . . . they cannot become modern without losing their historic originality."[63] Although such reverence for the past moved him briefly to the *Novecento* camp in the mid-1920s, by 1929 he had swung clearly to the so-called "super-contryside" (*Strapaese*) movement around Mino Maccari.

Here Malaparte found the backward-looking, technophobic concepts that were more in keeping with his anti-modernist variety of Fascist revolutionsim.[64] Maccari's journal *Il Selvaggio* (The Wild Ones) had become the major *Strapaese* organ by the end of the decade, assaulting the brave new world as "bastardly, international, superficial, mechanical — a concoction manipulated by Jewish bankers, pederasts, war profiteers, and bordello owners."[65] Another writer in the same columns described the super-countryside vision quite succinctly: "[*Strapaese* desires] an

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61. Isnenghi (note 56 above), pp. 21-30.
62. Roland Sarti (note 3 above), p. 1040; Philip V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso* (Rome-Bari, 1975), pp. 63-64; Fernando Tempesti, *Arte dell Italia fascista* (Milan, 1976), pp. 214-250; Alexander De Grand, *Italian Fascism* (Lincoln, Nebraska: 1982), p. 140.
63. Curzio Malaparte, *L'Europa vivente* (Florence, 1923), p. 19.
64. For a discussion of Malaparte, see Mangoni (note 58 above), *passim*; for Maccari, see Giorgio Luti, *Cronache letterarie tra le due guerre* (Bari, 1966), pp. 153-166; and in general for the polemic between those fascists who favored industrial-capitalist development and those who opposed both capitalism and the machine culture, see Marino (note 58 above), pp. 114-117.
65. From *Il Selvaggio* (1927), cited in Luti (note 64 above), p. 154.

artisan people, a sea-faring people, an agrarian people — the secure
base of an aristocracy."[66] Not suprisingly, these thinkers abhorred
western influences in Italy, especially those of America, which was
regarded as the epitome of the modern machine culture and thus
the very antithesis of everything they stood for.[67]

The Mystical Fascists around Nicolo Giani and Gianni
Guizzardi represented yet another anti-modern tradition in
Fascism.[68] Based in Milan with strong ties to the youth movement
and the Ministry of Popular Culture in the 1930s, this group opposed
the idea that Fascist doctrine could have a basis in rational,
positivist philosophy. Instead, they extolled the virtues of faith and
blind obedience to the leader, ideals which had been lost in Europe,
they argued, since the Reformation and the French Revolution.
The Mystical Fascists' total embrace of irrationality led them to an
all-encompassing anti-modernist revolt that lashed out at
everything from western-style democratic pluralism and Marxian
Socialism to the "inanimate mechanical means"[69] and scientific
religiosity of the Industrial Revolution. Modernism had begun to
disintegrate in the "blood bath" of the Great War, setting the stage
for the ultimate clash between "the ancient Italy of the heroes" and
the "barbarians"[70] of modernity. The struggle between "antiquity
and modernity is taking place everywhere," Guizzardi wrote in
1940, "and the punches are hard . . . Men are forgetting reason, are
demanding faith: they invoke the myth."[71]

At the front of this confusing array of modern and anti-modern
forces, each vying for official favor, stood Benito Mussolini. The
Duce refused to shun or reject any of these elements totally, for this
would have led to an unnecessary and undesirable splintering of
the movement and loss of prestige for the regime. Nor could he
allow the contending forces to rise too high, beyond his grasp.
Accordingly, all of the schools and groups described above found
Fascism flexible and open to their views as long as ideological fervor
was not transmuted into political opposition to or personal rivalry
with the Duce.

66.   From *Il Selvaggio*, (1927), cited in Mangoni (note 58 above), p. 137.
67.   *Ibid.*, p. 180.
68.   For the Mystical Fascists, see Daniele Marchesini, *La scuola dei gerarchia*
(Milan, 1976).
69.   Gianni Guizzardi, "Dalla Ragione alla Fede," *Gerarchia* 19 (April, 1940), p.
197.
70.   *Ibid.*, p. 198.
71.   *Ibid.*, p. 198.

Of course Italian Fascism had to be open to the views of the leader too, and there can be little doubt that Mussolini was at heart a modernist of a very practical sort. It was to Dino Alfieri, a former Nationalist charged in 1932 with organizing an exhibit (*Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista*) to commemorate the March on Rome, that Mussolini said: "Make something contemporary, therefore very modern and audacious, without the sad memories of the decorative styles of the past."[72] The Duce's modernism was also seen very clearly in his attitude toward science and technology. In a speech before the National Council of Research in 1929, he praised the accomplishments of the isolated scientific genius, but criticized this approach as inadequate to the needs of a modern nation. The Council's task was to raise scientific research to a higher, more systematic plane. From food and fertilizers to aviation and maritime motors, researchers and producers had to work hand in hand. "Among the nations of the world," he observed, "the richest are those which understand what I have said."[73] Research was vital "for industry, agriculture, defense, and the economy of the nation."[74] The establishment of the National Council of Research illustrated a commitment to scientific advance so definite that even Antonio Gramsci recognized it as such. The imprisoned Communist also noted the obvious propaganda *coup* to the regime of coopting a scientific community headed by luminaries like Enrico Marconi.[75]

Mussolini announced his forward-looking preferences even more unequivocally in an unknown article written in 1933 exclusively for the Hearst newspaper chain in the United States:

I am not one who belongs to the category of worshippers of "Auld Land Syne" who hate machines. I believe that the machine, as much as anything else of modern days, helps for progress of this age. The world cannot turn backwards, no, not even to the Golden Age. We have learned too much and we have gained too much not to profit from the benefits machines have brought us. To return to purely muscular work would

72. Dino Alfieri and Luigi Freddi, eds., *Mostra della rivoluzione fascista* (Rome, 1933), p. 8.

73. Benito Mussolini, "Il Consiglio Nazionale Delle Richerche," February 2, 1929, *Opera omnia* 23: p. 287.

74. *Ibid.*

75. Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcera*, 2, *Gli intellettuali e l'organzzazine della culture* (Turin, 1966), pp. 46-47.

only set us farther back, the circle would eventually start again, and before many generations we would find ourselves back in the machine age. As I have said, I do not decry the machine, but encourage it . . . I have encouraged the machine in all branches of our economy. Despite the fact that Italy has a fairly average surplus population, we have not stopped technological progress and what science can add to the political-economic system we have always been ready gladly to accept. We have more and better machines in Italy now than ever. Our trains run faster. Our steamers are bigger than and as fast as anything afloat. Our seaplanes are considered by many as the best in the world; while our electrical equipment all over the country is the very latest developed. Our roads are built with machines. Land reclamation projects have meant the added use of all kinds of intricate dredgers, excavators, and special canal makers. For a country which one can say only recently emerged from the agricultural stage, Italy presents to the world a spectacle of marked technological progress in a very short space of time.[76]

That Mussolini wanted to discuss Italian technological progress before an American audience undoubtedly reflected the Italian identification of American civilization with the machine. Unlike the *Strapaese* critics, however, Mussolini saw this for the most part as an element of strength, not weakness, and was joined in this viewpoint by other prominent Fascists.[77] The politician who had started his career with the advocates of a technological Marxian utopia, worked intimately with the machine-worshipping Futurists, and more recently with the *Novecento* school in the arts, was not merely catering for diplomatic purposes to the technological preference of Americans.

The Duce was careful, however, to issue a warning to ambitious technologists who, because they had done their job well, wanted to establish a technocracy. The body politic in modern society was too diverse "for one group to demand the direction in entirety of society."[78] The article also lambasted the concept of "economic man," a view too narrow to do justice to "the infinite complexity of

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76. Mussolini's article, "Technocracy," appeared in the February 4, 1933 issue of *The New York American*. The article was not printed in Italy and does not appear in the *Opera omnia*.

77. See Franco Ciarlantini, *Incontro col Nord America* (Milan, 1929), pp. 171-176; *idem.*, *Roma-Nuova York e Ritorno* (Milan, 1934), pp. 165-190; Margherita Sarfatti, *L'America, Ricerca della felicita* (Milan, 1937), pp. 276-293.

78. Mussolini (note 76 above).

motives"[79] which moved men. Here, perhaps, were the mandatory sops to all of those technophobic, anti-rational entities in Fascism.

But is was probably more that lip service, for on occasion Mussolini expressed his own disgust for the overcrowding of the big industrial cities, the gross materialism of capitalism and Communism, and, like Hitler, the unemployment that often came with technological progress.[80]

> We have heard so much about the great machines which have been constructed to displace labor. In order that the machine, and with it technical progress and scientific discovery, should *not* stand condemned, it must be applied so as to relieve human labor from consuming fatigue and also so as *not* to drive men to misery. Man must dominate the machine produced by his brain. The machine must be an instrument for dimunition of hours of work, not an instrument for creating unemployment and suffering.[81]

This goal could be achieved, he felt, by higher wages and reduction of the work-week to forty hours. The Duce's "new cities" program, which sought to establish a new relationship between city and countryside by founding light manufacturing and service centers of 50,000-100,000 people for the surrounding farm communities, was another definite sign that he wished to improve industrial society. If forced to choose between super-city and "super-town" (*Stravillagio*), Mussolini stated in charateristically diagonal, but revealing fashion in 1927, "I choose super-town."[82] The forty-hour week and this "rural urban policy" (*urbanistica rurale*),[83] as well as Mussolini's desire to create the new "Fascist Man," probably warrant attaching the label of postindustrialism to him as well.

79.   *Ibid.*
80.   Giovanni Battista Ottaviani, *La Politica Rurale Di Mussolini* (Rome, 1929), 84; Benito Mussolini, "Macchina e Donna," *Opera omnia* 26: pp. 310-311; Sarti (note 4 above), p. 1045.
81.   From Mussolini's untitled article in the July 15, 1934 issue of *The New York American*.
82.   From a speech of 1927, cited in Riccardo Mariani, *Fascismo e "città nuove"* (Milan, 1976), p. 59.
83.   The phrase was Bottai's. See his speech of April 5, 1937, in his *Politica fascista delle arti* (Rome, 1940), p. 98. On the "new cities" in general, see Mariani (note 82 above), *passim.*

III

The findings presented here are tentative. Definite conclusions certainly await more exhaustive research into the press, private correspondence, and official records of each movement. It seems evident, however, that there were many contrasting, competing attitudes toward technology within Nazism and Fascism, forcing both Hitler and Mussolini to remain tolerant on this matter of doctrine. Each movement possessed 1) reactionary modernists and technocrats, 2) technophobes and return-to-the-soil fanatics, and 3) charismatic leaders who reseved a place for the machine in a "reformed" postindustrial world.

The first tradition was probably stronger in Italy, represented by *Stracittà* and *Novecento* enthusiasts, Syndicalists, Nationalists, most Squadrists, and many Futurists. In Germany, reactionary modernism also found proponents in Gottfried Feder, Albert Speer, and many of the engineeers and industrialists who supported Nazism before and after 1933. The second (technophobic-agrarian) tradition was probably stronger in Germany as seen in the Nazi left wing, the Artam League, and especially the SS. Fascist Italy was not devoid of kindred spirits, however, witness the Mystical Fascists, *Strapaese* anti-modernists, and "don't-give-a-damn" Squadrists. Finally, in leadership circles, Hitler appears to have harbored more reservations about technology than Mussolini, but both envisioned an altered industrial landscape.

It seems pointless to debate, therefore, whether Nazism and Fascism were modern or anti-modern. Viewed solely from the standpoint of the machine, they were obviously both. Examination of other "interpretive categories" selected with attitudes toward modernity in mind will probably strengthen this impression of attitudinal diversity. Trends in art, architecture, film, and literature must have divided the Nazis and Fascists into similar modern and anti-modern factions, while general interpretations of history, or what the future held, could not have been less divisive.

These preliminary observations and speculations have some implications for the broader question of generic fascism. Although both parties were ideologically diverse, this was nevertheless a trait they held in common. The array of contrasting philosophies grouped together in the same movement, and later within the same regime, created a nearly identical internal dynamic in both cases, one which only the most gifted and clever politician could control. The closer this author examines Nazism and Fascism, in fact, the more difficult it becomes to identify exactly what held them

together. The "leadership principle" was emphasized so heavily, one suspects, because it had to be. Rabid anti-Semitism was not strong in Italian Fascism and, as recent research has shown, was surprisingly weak at all levels of the Nazi Party before and after 1933.[84] Nor could anti-Marxism provide much unity to movements divided over the more basic question of supporting radical reforms desired by non-Socialist workers. This process of elimination leads one, finally, to the extremely aggressive nationalism of the "loser" states in Europe during the interwar years, a factor emphasized in the theses of Ernst Nolte, William Sheridan Allen, and MacGregor Knox.[85] Here was the unifying, coalescing element *par excellence*, the centripedal force stronger than all forces tugging outwards. Here is a logical place to rest the case for generic fascism.

84. See Sarah Gordon, *Hitler, Germans and the "Jewish Question"* (Princeton New Jersey, 1984), pp. 53-67, 263-273.
85. Nolte (note 2 above); Knox (note 1 above); and William Sheridan Allen, "The Appeal of Fascism and the Problem of National Disintegration," printed in Turner (note 2 above), pp. 44-62.