

# Critique of the Millennial Elements of the Third Reich

Antoniu Alexandru FLANDORFER

PhD Candidate

“*Stefan cel Mare*” University of Suceava, Romania

[tony\\_flandorfer@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tony_flandorfer@yahoo.co.uk)

## Abstract

*The totalitarian regimes installed in Europe during the last century, besides the myriad of victims they produced, they alternatively implemented a highly refined coercive system with ideological usages. The latter aimed at installing terror in order to consolidate its absolute power by transforming the collective mind. In this respect, in a first process of alienation, the totalitarian utopias condensed the society, and then they were present in the atomization of each individual. The human archetype became the societal prototype ideologically reported to both the new man preached by Marxism and fascism and also to the Übermensch created by the National Socialism.*

*Within the totalitarian political imaginary, we can detect an immutable hypostasis aloof from human condition, under the auspices of the laws of nature inherent to Neo-Darwinism in the case of fascism and National Socialism, and also of the laws of History when we refer to the communist Marxism. Both paradigms are expressed as pretexts for the totalitarian manipulation, demagogically shown as “ideological recipes” (Hannah Arendt) generating evolution and progress. The collective imaginary shaped by the totalitarian myth was reproduced from the aspiration of modernism, according to Roger Griffin, transgressing the cultural dimension into a bio-political one, in Bolshevism and in fascism and Nazism as well. Thus, the cleavage between the two dimensions, the cultural and the socio – political one, will be done through the millennial myth expressed in the collective mind by means of utopian endeavour of creating a “new world”.*

**Keywords:** *totalitarianism, National Socialism, utopia, millenarianism.*

Rising from the playfulness of ideas or deriving from the eternal human aspiration to represent a divine dimension as an ideal type of a better world than the one we experience our existential anguish in, utopia, in all its forms (such as eutopia, anti-utopia, dystopia, psychotopia, etc.), belong to the same *topos*. As a consequence of its paradigmatic conceptualization, utopia trespassed the literature

and developed new hypostases at the level of social imaginary by means of the myths insertion.

Utopia shows an immutable character during history, as it is situated, from a theological viewpoint, in the lapse between Genesis and Eschaton, and, from an ontological viewpoint, from the birth of the human race to the end of history and/or that of humankind. We also notice its entropic character, which determines the frequency of its occurrences, as well as the variety of the hypostases it takes, which project it to the level of the *id*, in Freudian terms, as a form of nostalgia that was inherited from the proto-fathers.

The foundations of utopia lay within the imaginary and are set, axiologically, according to two coordinates: space and time. The notion of space is obvious in the etymology of the term, i.e. *the place that does not exist*, but it is something to pursue and seek while the human being oscillates between experimentation and failure. Time is justified as ideal or, in the case of the primary utopological form, i.e. *eu-topia*, as a vector of the *Golden Age* that becomes a constant of the archetype, immutably reiterated at the proper moment, or the *tempora opportuna*, while the imaginary preserves the two inherent coordinates and causes their cleaving by means of the transcendent factor that acts upon the subject as an intelligible expression through demythologization. The elements of utopia are subject to the coercion of a program that addresses the human being and its habituality. A certain form of ethics is inherent to such a program. The failure of utopia is due to the fact that the imposed ethics exceeded human standards. It is, after all, a flawed imitation of the transcendent model, which the human beings tried to retrospect to in a holistic manner and to substitute by their own value scale, i.e. the parts that compose it will take different values imposed by human nature, so their sum will not equal the whole they are parts of. This sets the stage for the atomization of human being.

In a utopia, the human being is required not to find his own self, unless it is in the form of alterity, by means of relating to an artificial value system. That is why the utopian ideal was compromised, leaving only some constitutive elements that were erroneously implemented at a mundane level.

To a smaller or larger extent, any event in human history is marked by elements of utopia. Alongside the unveiled history an ucronia appears, in which the plans for the future are plotted, which would eventually become parts of history itself. That is why the major events that are bound to change the course of history are recurrent, that means, those scenarios that did not became reality at a

certain point in history, will protrude in the same context at a later moment, which is erroneously viewed as predictable.

Utopias, as fictional manifestations that randomly appear across history, have determined the appearance of a specific criticism. Jean-Jacques Wunenburger has classified its types of argumentation in two categories: on the one hand, those that belong to the anti-utopian paradigm, that underline the incapacity of utopia to circumscribe to the present moment as it escapes the tactical and strategic compromises inherent to the political sphere and become the expression of an imagination act that transgresses reality and loses contact with empiric history. On the other hand, utopia is regarded not so much as a dissolution of reality, but as a deficit of an imagination that is contaminated by a mono-dimensional and overwhelming reason, while the supposed function as a *dream about an alternative society* is suppressed by the lack of the capacity to become detached from stereotypes and prosaic canons.<sup>1</sup>

The paroxysmal forms of utopia that transited the history of humanity were the totalitarian regimes: fascism, National Socialism and communism. National socialism, of all, embraces the most diverse forms of utopia, even if the other ones also “[...] relate to a mythical past according to which it is constructed by an imaginary future”<sup>2</sup>, and “between the fabulous past and the ideal future, present does not have a value of its own. [...] The recent past represents the enemy, the present lacks importance, everything is subordinated to the eschatological future, to the supreme goals.”<sup>3</sup>

We may affirm that the ontological force which generates new myths within the imaginary that is inherent to any utopian form is situated within the myth itself, which acts as a rotary mechanism. According to Roland Barthes, the myth is a double system within which occurs a sort of ubiquity, and the starting point resides in the constitution of a meaning. For the French semiotician, the significance of a myth is characterized as a “[...] revolving door that keeps spinning, alternating the meaning of the signifier and its form, an object-language and a meta-language, a conscience that is purely signifying and a conscience that is purely imagining; such alternation is somewhat summed in one concept that uses it as an ambiguous signifier, both intellective and imaginary, arbitrary and motivated.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, due to

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Viața imaginilor* (Cluj-Napoca: Cartimpex, 1998), 161.

<sup>2</sup> Alain Besançon, *Nenorocirea secolului: despre comunism, nazism și unicitatea „Soah”-ului* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2007), 71.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>4</sup> Roland Barthes, *Mitologii* (Iași: Institutul European, 1997), 251.

the ubiquity of the signifier that is inherent to the myth, an alibi is produced within it as a space term, which allows the coexistence of the full and the void, connected through a negative relationship that determine the characteristics of signification. Moreover, we need to specify that *reality* succeeds in stopping the rotary mechanism of the myth. Barthes considers that myth cannot be subjected to the axiological test, because is a value that can act as a permanent *alibi* that enables its signifier to have two sides in order to resort to *somewhere else* whenever necessary. Its meaning is always here to present the *form*, which, on its turn, sets a distance on the *meaning* in order to avoid a contradiction, a conflict or a break between them.<sup>5</sup>

While Jean-Jacques Wunenburger asserts that “[...] utopian images have not only altered social imagination, but they also allowed the mimicking or the simulation of a political rationality that did not always succeed in freeing itself from the chain of idealized expectations”<sup>6</sup>, Jean-Luc Nancy considers that by disassembling the myth logic one can identify that moment in history when the *end of the myth* will occur.

*Whether we lament the exhaustion of mythical power or the will of such power acts against humanity, everything leads us towards a world that lacks any mythical resources. Rethinking our world based on this “lack” might turn out to be an indispensable mission.*<sup>7</sup>

This is a condition that appears in times when the myth is widely present within the social mentality and penetrates the societal institutional structures; it develops a catalytic function within ideologies, as happened with Nazism. Georges Bataille considers this state of affairs as a *myth absence*, while Nancy characterized it as an *interruption of the myth* that consists in its absence (“*from its own meaning, on its own meaning, by its own meaning*”).<sup>8</sup> In other words, if myth develops an operational power, its own characteristics are destroyed; such a power is viewed by Schelling as a generative operation, and by Lévy-Strauss as exchange and distribution. Therefore, the myth needs to be self-significant, as it converts its own fiction into the establishment and inauguration of meaning itself in the form of a symbolic language that is perceived beyond allegory, i.e. tautological.

While analyzing the structure of primitive religions, in which totemism and tribal affiliation are connected to the worshiping of the ancestors, Ernst Cassirer

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, 252.

<sup>6</sup> Wunenburger, *Viața imaginilor*, 169.

<sup>7</sup> Jean-Luc Nancy, *Comunitatea absentă* (Cluj-Napoca: Idea Design & Print, 2005), 73.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, 79.

reaches the conclusion that there is no radical difference between mythical and religious thinking.

*They both originate in the same fundamental phenomenon of the human life. One cannot set a point in the development of human culture where myth ends and religion begins. During the entire history of humankind religion remains inseparably linked to and defined by mythical elements. On the other hand, even in its rawest and most rudimentary forms, myth contains certain motifs that anticipate, in a certain way, the higher religious ideals to come. From the very beginning, myth is a potential religion.<sup>9</sup>*

The utopian dream that would be compromised by the totalitarianism of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when it was confiscated and corrupted in order to create a secularized religion that pointed to a false place that was supposedly inherent to a transcendentality that was de-sacralized by its own imaginary character, had previously materialized in the Augustinian negative pattern that completely revealed the face of this world, as in *civitas terrena sive diaboli*. While the *uomo universale* of Renaissance was placed above all things, freed from the coercions of the Church, responding only to God and endowed with demiurgic potential derived from his own creation, the *Übermensch* of the National Socialism resides *beyond good and evil*, or, as Meister Eckhart puts it, in a *God beyond God*, in a transcendence that is not inherent to any Tradition (which is possible due to the syncretism of different concepts extracted from various religions and accompanied by collective imagination). While in Renaissance the syncretism consisted in the Christianization of other imported traditions, such as Judaism (see Giordano Bruno or Marsilio Ficino), the National Socialism amalgamated certain visions from Christian mystique (see Meister Eckhart or Joachim of Fiore) with Nordic mythology, Brahmanism and Vedism, German Romantic philosophy, scientism, evolutionism and anti-Semitism. It succeeded in creating a *political religion* that replaced the traditional Christian one, based both on the organization of the Roman Catholic Church (the Nazis appreciated the discipline of the organization and the ascetic rigors imposed to his order by Ignatius of Loyola), and on its hieratic character that would provide it with symbols materialized in the architectural sumptuousness (Christian Gothic and ancient Greek were used during the Third Reich), the uniform as a form of psychological impact on the masses, and the heraldry for a mandalic purpose. The millenarian discourse, largely taken from Joachim of Fiore, was transformed by Hitler into a *political liturgy*.

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<sup>9</sup> Ernst Cassirer, *Eseu despre om. O introducere în filosofia culturii umane* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1994), 124.

In order to make the project of the Third Reich more credible, Hans Günther, one of the most famous theoreticians of eugenics, recommended Plato's vision on a state that is to be founded on the selection of aristocratic dynasties. "Certainly, as an idealist, Plato wants a selection that is conditioned not by the free choice of spouses, but by the idea and the purpose to engender the physical and spiritual model of the perfect man of pure breed... After Plato, a state that only protects the frontiers, the culture and the welfare is no longer considered as good enough unless it also protects racial purity."<sup>10</sup> The theory of racial purity, put into practice, on scientific bases, by the Nazi program called *Lebensborn* (*Fount of Life*), led to the hegemonic concept of *Lebensraum or vital space*, which determined the mixture of elements from the utopian ideology and geopolitics in which the *Übermensch*, coined by Friedrich Nietzsche as an archetype of the human victory against divinity, becomes the prototype of the *perfect man*, a *uomo universale* multiplied and reified as the superior Aryan race that is entitled to rule the world.

If we want to establish the exact position of the national socialist *Weltanschauung* within the social imaginary, we need to point out its entropic behaviour, which is apparently ideologically contradicted, as a source for new myths. "Nazism was a German Apocalypse [...]"<sup>11</sup>

The fusion between utopia and revolution was done by millenarianism, which, in the case of National Socialism, took a Gnostic form. According to Alain Besançon,

*Nazism focused on the Marcionistic version of Gnosticism. It accepted, formally and temporarily, a 'German' Christianity that invoked another God than Abraham's one. It persecuted the faithful Christians. It tried to accumulate diverse elements from the esoterism and occultism of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It intended to revive the neopaganism of the ancient German gods, another of their manipulations which was an offense to the honourable and beautiful corpus of Germanic mythology and to the elements it has in common with Homeric mythology.*<sup>12</sup>

We need to notice here the reference to Marcion of Sinope's heretical vision (approx. A.D. 80-155), as representing a mytheme in the evolution of national socialist anti-Judaism, as early as Jakob Wilhelm Hauer. According to Mircea Eliade:

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<sup>10</sup> Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Omul politic între mit și rațiune. O analiză a imaginariului puterii* (Cluj-Napoca: Alfa Press, 2000), 61.

<sup>11</sup> François Furet, Ernst Nolte, *Fascismul și comunismul* (Bucharest: Grupul Editorial ART, 2007), 63.

<sup>12</sup> Besançon, *Nenorocirea secolului*, 104.

*Marcion professes the essential Gnostic dualism without professing its apocalyptic implications. His dichotomous system counterposes Law and Justice, instituted by the demiurgic God of the Old Testament, to the Love and Gospel revealed by the benevolent God. The latter sends his son Jesus Christ to free humanity from the domination of the Law. Jesus chooses a body capable of feeling and suffering, even though that body is immaterial. In his teachings, Jesus exalts the benevolent God, but avoids showing that it is not about the God of the Old Testament. Besides, Yahweh finds from the teachings of Jesus that there is a transcendent God. He takes revenge as he delivers Jesus into the hands of his persecutors. But death on the cross brings salvation, as Jesus, through his sacrifice, redeems humanity from the demiurgic God. Nevertheless, the world remains under Yahweh's domination, and the believers will be oppressed until the end of time. This is when the benevolent God will make himself known: he will welcome the faithful in his Kingdom, while the rest of the people, along with the matter and its creator, will be brought to nothing.*<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, we notice that the elements which are immanent in utopias and millenarian movements are antinomic, but, at the same time, due to the ideological connection, they give the impression of a *coincidentia oppositorum* that is able to underline the extra-mundane feature of National Socialism that has a mesmerizing effect on the level of collective mentality. It is precisely this ideological dysfunction that intrigued numerous researchers regarding such a powerful manipulation of the masses. "The millenarian activism is mainly based on a paroxysmal perception of disorder and evil; for it is only the excess of tragedies and suffering that can constitute the precedential sign that generates change in the epoch that is circumscribed to the prophecy of the millennium."<sup>14</sup> In this context, the vitalist concept applied to the masses becomes a purging *catharsis* that implies the manifestation of the revolution as a first mechanism for their mobilization. Tribulation acts as a catalyst in the state of ebullition caused by the conjugation between historicity and collective mentality, both for the outburst of the revolution and after the fulfillment of the petty goals of the so-called Saviour, which, by the way, would not determine any change towards social welfare, as it promised, and the miraculous would not be revealed. The recrudescence of masses condition following the instauration of utopian forms at a socio-political level is due to the alienation of the human being in the context of the imaginary that aliments hope. Servier remarks that

*[...] the millenarian movements stand in opposition to the utopias they were so many times mistaken, to the fabulous cities effortlessly discovered or founded outside any*

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<sup>13</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Istoria credințelor și ideilor religioase. De la Gautama Buddha până la triumful creștinismului*, vol. II (Bucharest: Editura Științifică și Pedagogică, 1986), 364-365.

<sup>14</sup> Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Imaginariile politicului* (Bucharest: Paideia, 2005), 75.

*historical process and without the fulfillment of a divine promise. The kingdom millenarianisms aspire to a different from the utopian *topos*, as it represents the promise of perpetual bliss, the use of all the goods in this world, while utopia is moderation, a scarce life that is strictly regulated. [...] Utopia is in a closed city, while millenarianism is a storm that is supposed to wash away the sins of humankind by the will of God and to offer the conjured brethren the inheritance of earthly goods. The opposition between millenarianism and utopia can only emphasize the difference of social origin between the authors of the utopias and those messiahs who led the millenarian movements and their chosen followers.*<sup>15</sup>

We notice that the utopia which lacks a millenarian component remains mere literature and some of its elements can be used, at the most, in certain contexts within a political program. In its traditional form, utopia can be conceived as an existential space for a restrictive group of initiates, and is unconceivable in a social dimension. The introduction of the chiliastic element in the utopian program is justified by the purpose of directing the masses towards revolutionary violence that is supposed to bring, before the power hierarchy, the messiah who is inherent to any movement of social redemption. Even though the millenarian movements in history were defeated, their sustainability acted as an example for the future generations of the Apocalypse messengers, and we notice an evolution in the consistency of imaginary, due to the re-creation of new myths. Consequently, by the continuous amalgamation, up to fusion, of the theological and social levels, and to the *disenchantment of the world*, such beliefs gradually separate from the quest for the *New Jerusalem* in favour of a cyclical time of a primeval nature.

Capitalizing on certain ideas expressed by François Laplantine, Jean-Jacques Wunenburger identifies three ways in which the imaginary relates to reality; the latter is transformed and generates three types of imaginary.

The anarchist-ecstatic way produces an overthrow of the world, in which “[...] utopia manifests affinities to all sort of religious imaginaries that tended, alongside global society, to install alternative lifestyles [...]”<sup>16</sup> He exemplifies with the Essene community in ancient Israel or the Cathars as models for the anarchist groups in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or the alternative ones in modern days, in which the utopian scenery replaces extant reality.

A second way is the utopian-ecclesiastic one, in which the confrontation with the extant reality receives as a counterpart “[...] a model of alternation according to which the old order will make way, some undetermined day, for a

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<sup>15</sup> Jean Servier, *Istoria utopiei* (Bucharest: Meridiane, 2000), 276-277.

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Imaginarul* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2009), 65.

new order [...]”<sup>17</sup> and the mission to constantly perpetuate the threat is assigned to an ecclesiastic or sectarian organization.

But the way within which utopia interferes with millenarianism is the Messianic-revolutionary way, in which the first human aspiration is installed in a *historical calendar*, submitted to prophecy, and, according to Norman Cohn, the precognition of such a future amelioration of the human society or of the humankind itself is often confirmed by a messianic *persona* and justifies certain measures to be taken, including violence against a pre-established order, so that a better improved world be created.<sup>18</sup>

While the *topos* of the two models is similar, if we refer to *time* we notice that it is linear in a utopia, as it freezes in an ideally autistic space in the moment of the solipsistic fulfillment, whereas in millenarianism the cyclic nature of time is a status *quo* in a desirable space, and it is lived in a convulsive and hyperactive manner. Utopian time has ancestral values and components and it is relieved through ritual, while Chiliastic time is a permanent expectancy of the theophanic moment. During the wait it is only the *Chosen* one who controls and conditions a time with an entropic flow, whose hypostasis at a social level is the revolution. According to Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, consequently to the adhesion of millenarianism and messianism to utopia it can be fulfilled, as the utopian project is translated into a religious language that confers “[...] its progressist temporal dimension [...]”, while “[...] the sought-for space/time is inserted in a global interpretation of the world history and in a Christology [...]”<sup>19</sup> He also considers that this particular form is an *altercation utopia* with origins in the monotheistic prophetism of the Judeo-Christian temporal eschatology. Borrowed as a form of manifestation specific to the religious dimension, the attitude of the Chiliast, says Karl Mannheim, is of an ecstatic nature, and

*for this mentality, promises of a better world removed in time and space are like uncashable cheques their only function is to fix that point in the ‘world beyond the events’ of which we have spoken, and form which he, who is expectantly awaiting the propitious moment, can be assured of detachment from that which is merely in the process of becoming. Not being at one with whatever events transpire in the ‘evil’ here and now, he awaits only the critical juncture of events and the moment when the*

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, 66.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, 66.

<sup>19</sup> Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Utopia sau criza imaginarului* (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001), 114.

*external concatenation of circumstances coincide with the ecstatic restlessness of his soul.*<sup>20</sup>

The error against humanity that was committed by the use of the national socialist *Weltanschauung* at a societal level is to be identified in its foundation on the elements of the classical fictional utopia and on those of millenarianism, and can be proved by the Bergsonian vision upon *static* and *dynamic religions* that are inherent, respectively, to *closed* and *open societies*. Classical utopia can be characterized in terms of a community that acts as a *closed society*, “[...] whose members are mutually connected, indifferent to the rest of the people, always ready to attack or defend themselves, ultimately to adopt a combative attitude.”<sup>21</sup> The millenarian movements aim at a global impact on humanity, as they axiologically restore the previous norms by means of the *vital impetus* (*élan vital*) which propels revolutions in order to transform the human being towards a spiritual revolution, progress (a mytheme that was borrowed from utopian imaginary) and instauration of a transcendent world at a mundane level. Therefore the same juncture can also define *open societies*, which, consequently to the finalization of creations, close the circle that was momentarily opened, and the *moral obligation*, as a constant directory force that ensures the cohesion of the group, consistent with the individual wills of its members, becomes social pressure, while “[...] some part of the new is poured into the molds of the old [...]”<sup>22</sup> Cassirer considered that, in conformity with Bergson’s views,

*[...] the moral life of man reflects the same metaphysical conflict between an active and a passive principle. Social life repeats and reflects the universal process we encounter in organic life. It is divided between two opposite forces. One of them tends towards the conservation and perpetuation of the present state of facts; the other struggles for new forms of human life that have never existed before. The former tendency is specific to the static religion, the latter characterizes the dynamic religion. The two tendencies could never be brought to a common denominator.*<sup>23</sup>

The *German Faith Movement* (*Deutsche Glaubensbewegung*) and the national socialist *Weltanschauung* had similar way of manifesting at the level of the collective psyche, but their impact was different, as it was a moment when a certain faction created inside, the so-called *Aryan Christianity*, entailed the radical wing of the Nordic paganism which completely rejected the Christian element of

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<sup>20</sup> Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia. An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1954), 196.

<sup>21</sup> Henri Bergson, *Cele două surse ale moralei* (Iași: Institutul European, 1992), 242.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, 243.

<sup>23</sup> Cassirer, *Eseu despre om*, 127.

the movement and replaced Christ with Wotan. While the former had all the characteristics of a tribal caste thinking that compelled a sectarian conduct, the latter was supposed to become a global manifestation that incorporated the fundamental elements preached by Jakob Wilhelm Hauer and the proselytes of his theological thinking, while representing subsidiary the pretences for the implementation of the forthcoming national socialist bioethics that would justify the expansionism and domination of the Third Reich *Übermensch*. The organization

*[...] tried to install a “German faith” based on the German and Nordic traditions and writings, among which those of Meister Eckhart and Goethe. This movement sought to combine a number of different, often incompatible, directions: some of its members adopted a “purified” form of Christianity, while others resisted not only any type Christianity, but any type of religion or God altogether. One of the general articles on faith that the movement introduced in 1934, claimed the religious rebirth of the nation on hereditary bases within the German race as a goal of the German Faith Movement.<sup>24</sup>*

On the apparently stable ground of the Christian morality, it was not the saint, but the *Übermensch* to be taken as a model, causing a *transvaluation of values* (Nietzsche). The mixture of racialism, which the ideologists of the Third Reich took from the thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the introduction of the Aryan race in the axiological context of the Nietzschean *Übermensch* originated the Nazi racism. In this respect, Alfred Rosenberg’s vision can be divided into three main interconnecting domains:

*[...] the racial conception on history, the political alternative that implied the recovery of a popular racial community, and, last but not least, the aspects concerning the territorial expansion that derived from the former two elements, synthesized in the Lebensraum principle.<sup>25</sup>*

Ideological extension from the anti-Judaism / Semitism, as developed in the *Jewish Question*, up to the vision of the *genetic conservation of the German people* in maintaining of control over the racial health and the extermination of the *undesirable others*, led to the concepts of “worthless life” or “life unworthy of living”, introduced in 1920 by Karl Binding, a specialist in criminal law, and by Alfred Hoche, a psychiatrist and professor. The etatization of the biological aspect has set biopolitics as a defining component of the national socialist Weltanschauung. Eugenics and its immediate punitive form, i.e. euthanasia,

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<sup>24</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Civilizația în tranziție* (Bucharest: Trei, 2011), 216.

<sup>25</sup> Ferran Gallego, *Oamenii lui Hitler. Elita național-socialismului (1919-1945)* (Bucharest: All, 2010), 293-294.

represented the coercive methods imposed by a totalitarian utopia built up around the concept of race as a projection of the people (*Volk*).

*Nevertheless, the term racism (if by race we mean a strictly biological concept) does not represent the most correct definition of the biopolitics in the Third Reich: it rather acts in a horizon where “life care” [...] becomes absolute and intermingles with the actual preoccupations for eugenics. In distinguishing between politics (Politik) and police (Polizei), von Justi assigns a purely negative task to the former (to fight against the inner and outer enemies of the state), and a positive task to the latter (to care for and improve the life of the citizens). We cannot understand national socialist biopolitics (and, subsequently, a large part of modern politics, even outside the Third Reich), if we do not understand that it implies the attenuation of the distinction between the two terms: the police becomes political, and life care coincides with the fight against the enemy.*<sup>26</sup>

The sanctity of life, as ensured by the projections of a perfect new human, created by eugenics and controlled by biopolitics, and viewed by the Nazis as indiscernible between people and race, has utopian values if we refer to More's Utopia, where suicide was acceptable only for the terminal patients in the blissful community, after the priests' decision. Such clerical deciders identify with the Total State.

*Racism, therefore, is linked to the functioning of a state that is forced to make use of race in order to exercise its sovereign power. The juxtaposition or, better still, the functioning by means of the bio-power of the ancient sovereign power of the death right implies the functioning, the instauration and the activation of racism. [...] Nazism, undoubtedly, is the paroxysmal development of the new mechanisms of power, which began to be implemented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century [...] The disciplinary power, bio-power: these are the ones that covered and fully supported the Nazi society (by taking over biology, procreation, heredity; also by taking over sickness and accidents). [...] Nazi state makes fully coextensive both the field of a life that itself sets up, protects, guarantees and cultivate from a biological viewpoint, and the sovereign right to kill anyone – not only the others, but also its own people.*<sup>27</sup>

The extermination of ‘the others’ that Foucault refers to, justifies the pan-national hegemony of the Third Reich, as expressed by the phenomenon concept of ‘Vital Space’ (*Lebensraum*), the ideal and purged space of the Suprahuman.

The interconnection that goes as far as the complete identification between the *Führer-totale* and the *Statt-Volk* represented the catalyst for the creation of the

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<sup>26</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer. Puterea suverană și viața nudă* (Cluj-Napoca: Idea Design & Print, 2006), 119.

<sup>27</sup> Michel Foucault, *Trebuie să apărăm societatea* (Cluj-Napoca: Idea Design & Print, 2009), 203-204.

*suprahuman*, essentially different from the *new man* preached by Marxism through communism, projected by the Stalinist vision upon the *homo sovieticus*. In this respect, Alain Badiou highlights the forms of *intramundane religions* (Voegelin) in which they set themselves in an egocentric position, acting as a transcendent pattern within each and any utopia in which they were created.

*Fascisms try to counterpose to the infinity of emancipation the sanguinary encumbrance of a predictable finitude and the enumerable properties of a conjectural substance (the Aryan, the Jew, the German...). “Communisms” experiment the antinomy (captured by Marx due to his ever present genius) between the finitude of the state and the infinity that is immanent in any truth, including – and especially – the political one. The mythical referential entities accompany the triumph of fascisms and seal implacably the defeat of “communisms”.*<sup>28</sup>

In the spectrum of *political religions* (Eric Voegelin), the Leader’s (Fuehrer) infallibility acted both as a prerequisite and as a consequence of the process of society’s atomization inherent to the national socialist totalitarian ideology. In front of masses, the totalitarian leaders have a soteriological position, their mission assuming transcendent grounds to their mission, with a cathartic function of purifying the world. The totalitarian mesmerism of the ideological manipulation deeply marked humanity, producing concentration camps along with the atomization process of the individual and of the society as a whole.

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<sup>28</sup> Alain Badiou, *Secolul* (Cluj: Idea Design & Print, 2010), 103.

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