

## Introduction (+Nothing)

What is not supposed to be my concern! M' "any people Jmve asked me how I feel about the fact, ~at. *The*

*F ountoinlieod* has been in print for twenty-five years.

The research to be reported in this volume was guided by the following major hypothesis: that the political, economic, and social convictions of an individual often form a broad and coherent pattern, as if bound together by a “mentality” or “spirit,” and that this pattern is an expression of deep- lying trends in his personality.

*Negative Dialectics* is @ phrase ~ outs tradition.

lrT IS proper for more reasons than the most obvious one that

11 I should open this series of Chades R. Walgreen Lectures by quoting a passage from the Declaration of Independence .

The major concern was with the *potentially fascistic* individual, one whose structure is such as to render him particularly susceptible to anti- democratic propaganda. I cannot

say that I feel anything in particular. except a kind of quiet

satisfaction. We say “potential” because we have not studied individuals who were avowedly fascistic or who belonged to known fascist organizations. At the time when most of our data were collected fascism had just been defeated in war and, hence, we could

not expect to find subjects who would openly identify themselves with it; yet there was no difficulty in finding subjects whose outlook was such as to indicate that they would readily accept fascism if it should become a strong or respectable social movement.

The passage has frequently been quoted, but, by its weight and its elevation, it is made immune to the degrading effect of the excessive familiarity which breeds contempt and of misuse which breeds disgust. In this respect, my attitude toward my writing

is best expressed by a statement of Victor Hugo: "If a writer

wrote merely for his time. I would have to break my pen and

throw it away."

In concentrating upon the potential fascist we do not wish to imply that other patterns of personality and ideology might not profitably be studied in the same way. As early as Plato, dialectics meant to achieve something positive by means of negation; the thought figure of a "negation of negation" later became the succinct term. It is our opinion, however, that no politico-social trend imposes a graver threat to our traditional values and institutions than does fascism, and that knowledge of the personality forces that favor its acceptance may ultimately prove useful in combating it.

Certain writers, of whom I am one, do not live, think or

write on the range of the moment. A question may be raised as to why, if we wish to explore new resources for combating fascism, we do not give as much attention to the "potential antifascist." "We hold these truths to be self-evident,

that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." The answer is that we do study trends that stand in opposition to fascism, but we do not conceive that they constitute any single pattern. First and foremost the good cause, then God's cause, the cause of mankind, of truth, of freedom, of humanity, of justice; further, the cause of my people, my prince, my fatherland; finally, even the cause of mind<sup>3</sup> and a thousand other causes. Novels, in *the proper* sense

of the word, are not written to vanish in a month or a year. It is one of the major findings of the present study that individuals who show extreme susceptibility to fascist propaganda have a great deal in common. That most of them do. *today*. (They exhibit numerous characteristics that go together to form a "syndrome" although typical variations within this major pattern can be distinguished.) The nation dedicated

to this proposition has now become, no doubt partly as a consequence of this dedication, the most powerful and prosperous

of the nations of the earth, that they are written and *published* as if they were magazines, to fade as rapidly. is one of

the sorriest aspects of today'. This book seeks to free dialectics from such affirmative traits without reducing its determinacy. The unfolding of the paradoxical title is one of its aims.

Individuals who are extreme in the opposite direction are much more diverse. The task of diagnosing potential fascism and studying

its determinants required techniques especially designed for these purposes; it could not be

Does this nation in its maturity  
still cherish the faith in which it was conceived and  
raised? /

Only *my* cause is never to be my concern. asked of them that they serve as well for various other patterns. Neverthe- less, it was possible to distinguish several types of personality structure that seemed particularly resistant to antidemocratic ideas, and these are given due attention in later chapters.

Does it still hold those “ truths to be self-evident” ~ literature,  
*and* one of the clearest

indictments of its dominant esthetic philosophy:  
concretebound,

journalistic Naturalism which has now reached its dead

end in the *inartistic* sounds of panic. If a potentially fascistic individual exists, what, precisely, is he like? What goes to make up antidemocratic thought? About a generation ago, an American diplomat could still say

that’ ‘the natural and the divine foundation of the rights of man , is self-evident to all Americans,” What are the organizing forces within the person? ‘Shame on the egoist who thinks only of himself!’

If such a person exists, how commonly does he exist in our society?  
Longevity-predominantly, *though* not exclusively-is the prerogative of a literaryachool which is virrually non-existent .

today: Romanticism. And if such a person exists, what have been the determinants and what the course of his development? What would be the foundation, according to the dominant view of philosophy, will here be developed long after the author has discussed things of which that view assumes that they grow out of a foundation. These are questions upon which the present research was designed to throw some light. *This is not the place for a dissertation on*

the *nature* of Romantic fiction, so let me state-for the record

and for the benefit of those college students who have never

been allowed to discover it-only that Romanticism is the *conceptual*

school of art. Though the notion that the potentially antidemocratic individual is a totality may be accepted as a plausible hypothesis, some analysis is called for at the start. In most approaches to the problem of political types two essential conceptions may be distinguished: the conception of ideology and the conception of underlying needs in the person. At about the same

time a German scholar could still describe the difference between German thought and that of Western Europe and the United States by saying that the West still attached decisive importance to natural right, while in Germany the very terms “natural right” and “humanity” “have now become almost incomprehensible, , , and have lost altogether their original life and color.” It deals, not with the random trivia of the day, but with the timeless, fundamental,

## universal problems

and *valueg* of human existence. Though the two may be thought of as forming an organized whole within the individual, they may nonetheless be studied separately. While abandoning the idea of natural right

and through abandoning it, he continued. German thought has' 'created the historical sense," and thus was led eventually to unqualified relativism.' It does not record or photograph; it creates and projects. Let us look and see, then, how they manage *their* concerns, they for whose cause we are to labour, devote ourselves, and grow enthusiastic.

The same ideological trends may in different individuals have different sources, and the same personal needs may express themselves in different ideological trends.

The term ideology is used in this book, in the way that is common in current literature, to stand for an organization of opinions, attitudes, and values-a way of thinking about man and society. It is concerned-in the words of

Aristotle-not with things as they are. ' but with things as they

might be and ought to be. We may speak of an individual's total ideology or of his ideology with respect to different areas of social life: politics, economics, religion, minority groups, and so forth. What was a tolerably accurate description

of German thought twenty-seven years ago would

now appear to be [ruc: of Western thought in general. Ideologies have an existence independent of any single individual; and those which exist at a particular time are results both of historical

processes and of contemporary social events. And for the benefit of those who consider relevance to one's

own time as of *crucial* importance, I *will* add, in regard to

our age,' that never has there *been* a time when men have so

desperately needed a projection of things as they ought *to be*'. These ideologies have for different individuals, different degrees of appeal, a matter that depends upon the individual's needs and the degree to which these needs are being satisfied or frustrated.

This implies a critique of the foundation concept as well as the primacy of substantive thought-a thought of whose movement the thinker becomes aware only as he performs it... I do not mean to imply that I knew, when I wrote it, that

'Ic would

not be the: firS t time thaR a nation, defeated on the: battlefield

:I od, as it were, annihilated as a political being. There are, to be sure, individuals who take unto themselves ideas from

more than one existing ideological system and weave them

into patterns that are more or less uniquely their own. *The*

**Fountai~head** would remain *in* print for twenty-five years; | has deprived

its conquerors of the most sublime fruit of victory by imposing

on them the yoke of its own thought. It can be assumed, however, that when the opinions, attitudes, and values of numerous individuals are examined, common patterns will be discovered. What it needs

is secondary under the rules of the intellectual game, which always remain applicable. These patterns may not in all cases correspond to the familiar, current ideologies, but they will fulfill the definition of ideology given above and in each case be found to have a function within the over-all adjustment of the individual. I did not *think* of any specific time period. The present inquiry into the nature of the potentially fascistic individual began with anti-Semitism in the focus of attention. Whatever might be true

of the thought of the American people, certainly American social science has adopted the very attitude toward national right which, a generation ago, could still be described, with some plausibility, as characteristic of German thought. The authors, in common with most social scientists, hold the view that anti-Semitism is based more largely upon factors in the subject and in his total situation than upon actual characteristics of Jews, and that one place to look for determinants of anti-Semitic opinions and attitudes is within the persons who express them. I knew only that it

was a book that *ought* to live. Since

this emphasis on personality required a focusing of attention on psychology rather than on sociology or history-though in the last analysis the three can be separated only artificially-there could be no attempt to account for the existence of anti-Semitic ideas in our society. The

majority among the learned who still adhere to (he principles of the Declaration of Independence interpret these principles not as expressions of natural right but as an ideal, if not as an ideology or a myth. The question was, rather, why is it that certain individuals accept these ideas while others do not?

A methodology of the author's material works is not all there is to this book; no continuum exists between those works and it, according to the theory of negative dialectics. *It did.* And since from the start the research was guided by the hypotheses stated above, it was supposed (1) that anti-Semitism probably is not a specific or isolated phenomenon but a part of a broader ideological framework, and (2) that an individual's susceptibility to this ideology depends primarily upon his psychological needs. But that I knew it over twenty-five years ago—that Present-day American social science, as

far as it is not Roman Catholic social science, is dedicated to the proposition that all men are endowed by the evolutionary process or by a mysterious fate with many kinds of urges and aspirations, but certainly with no natural right. The insights and hypotheses concerning the antidemocratic individual, which are present in our general cultural climate, must be supported by a great deal of painstaking observation, and in many instances by quantification, before they can be regarded as conclusive. You have much profound information to give about God, and have for thousands of years 'searched the depths of the Godhead', and looked into its heart, so that you can doubtless tell us how God himself attends to 'God's cause', which we are called to serve. I knew

it while *The Fountainhead* was being rejected by twelve publishers,

some of whom declared that it was "too intellectual,"

"too controversial" and would not sell because no audience

existed for *it*-*that* was the difficult part of its history; difficult :

for me to bear. And you do not conceal the Lord's doings either. How can one say with assurance that the numerous opinions, attitudes, and values expressed by an individual actually constitute a consistent pattern or organized totality? Nevertheless, the need for natural right is as evident today

as it has been for centuries and even millennia, I mention it here for the sake of any other .

writer of my kind who might have to face the same battles

a reminder of the fact that it can be done. The most intensive investigation of that individual would seem to be necessary. To reject nat u ~

ral right is tantamount to saying th at all right is positive right, and this means that what is right is determined exclusively by the legislators and the courts of the various countries.

How can one say that opinions, attitudes, and values found in groups of people go together to form patterns, some of which are more common than others? I will not retell here the story of the publication of *The Fountainhead*.

*Fountainhead*. Now it is obviously meaningful , and sometimes even

necessarily, to speak of "unjust" laws or "unjust" decisions, There is no adequate way to proceed other than by actually measuring, in populations, a wide variety of thought contents and determining by means of standard statistical methods which ones go together.

To many social psychologists the scientific study of ideology,