Rebuilding the Rainbow Bridge

A study	of the	historical	develop	oment c	f Nordicism	and its	evolving
		rela	tionship	with M	odernity		

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Abstract - Rebuilding the Rainbow Bridge

Nordicism is more than a historical term that should be assigned to a marginal group of northern European and American racist thinkers of the early twentieth century. It is a living, evolving and highly ambivalent cultural myth rooted in the idealization of the 'noble savage' during the late-Enlightenment and Romantic periods. This later developed into a powerful racial fantasy, through fusion with the emerging field of racial science and eugenics. 'Rebuilding the Rainbow Bridge' attempts to shed fresh light on the nature and evolution of Nordicism and its relationship with modernity by examining it as a societal phenomenon which, in its variant forms, came into being as a source of psychological rootedness and grounded reality with which to counter the disembedding, disenchanting impact of an ever-changing and accelerating state of modernity. Its conceptual framework draws on Roger Griffin's model of modernism as a reaction to the corrosive phenomenological impact of modernization, and Zygmunt Bauman's parallel theory of the existential and socio-political dilemmas posed by reality's increasing liquefaction under the impact of 'modernity'. By using these perspectives to re-examine Nordicism, through the Norse metaphor of the Rainbow Bridge as a countervailing force to this erosion of established values and traditions, the thesis reveals its nature as a set of complex but coherent mythic strategies for establishing a sheltering 'home', a refuge from 'the storm of progress', throwing into relief the deep structural linkages between the 'light' and 'dark' currents of Nordicist myth. It also highlights the persistence of these traditions in various modern forms, whether as Viking 'kitsch' or the malignant offshoots of White Supremacism.

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Introduction - The Rainbow Bridge, Nordicism, Myth and Modernity

Haven't you heard that the Gods built a bridge from the earth to the sky and it is called Bifrost? You will have seen it, and possibly call it the rainbow. It has three colours and great strength, and it is made with more skill and knowledge than other constructions. Sturdy though it is, it will break when the sons of Muspell ride over it.¹

In the Prose and Poetic Eddas, both of which were set down by Icelandic scholars during the thirteenth-century, $Bifrost^2$ or the Rainbow Bridge³ was a causeway, used by the $\mathcal{E}sir$, to cross the great rivers between $Asgar\delta r$, the realm of the Gods, and $Mi\delta gar\delta r$, the realm of Man and the Giants, forming a vital connection between mankind and the Norse pantheon. In Gylfaginning, the opening chapter of the $Prose\ Edda$, Snorri Sturluson⁴ described how the Bridge (also called $Asbr\acute{u}$), was built by the $\mathcal{E}sir$, who rode across it each day, while $P\acute{o}rr$ (Thor) waded through the waters, to reach their place of judgement at the $Holy\ Well\ of\ Urd$.⁵ Snorri⁶ also described how the temples, halls and palaces of $Asgar\delta r$ were protected from its enemies by a burning band of fire on the outer band of the rainbow.

The red you see in the rainbow is the burning fire. The frost giants and the mountain giants would scale heaven if Bifrost could be travelled by all who wanted to do so. There are many beautiful places in heaven and everything is divinely protected.⁷

Bifrost was also guarded, where it reached Asgarðr at Himinbjorg, by the god Heimdallr who, with his great eyesight and hearing, kept a constant vigil with his horn Gjallarhorn against attack from the Giants of Jotunheimr and the inevitable approach of Ragnarok, the shattering of the bridge by the Sons of

¹ Sturluson, Snorri (Trans. Byock, Jesse) (2005) *The Prose Edda*. London: Penguin. p.21.

² Throughout this work I will use the spellings of proper nouns proposed by Rudolf Simek in the *Dictionary of Northern Mythology.* Cambridge: D.S. Brewer. I will use modern and adapted versions where quoting other works.

³ Possibly from bil or bif meaning 'fleeting', 'shimmering' and 'röst' a stream or path.

⁴ Snorri Sturluson (1179 -1241), author of the *Prose Edda* was an Icelandic historian, poet, and politician. Snorri's study of Norwegian Kings entitled *Heimskringla* is a key primary source. ⁵ Ibid. 1, p.25.

⁶ As the name Sturluson is patronymic, scholars frequently abbreviate his name to Snorri. ⁷ Ibid. 1. p.26.

Múspell and the prophesized destruction of *Asgarðr* by the enemies of *Oðinn's* pantheon.

For centuries, the *Poetic and Prose Eddas* have been amongst our most significant primary sources on Norse mythology. The former contains a number of poems that have been preserved from pre-conversion oral tradition and provide us with an authentic insight into ancient Norse culture and mythology. The *Prose Edda* of Snorri was based, in part, on this earlier source and represents Snorri's attempt to systematize ancient Norse mythology within a Christian cultural context⁸ and is therefore limited but nonetheless useful as a source of information about pagan culture. The verses contained in the *Poetic Edda* were deeply rooted in the oral tradition of ancient Nordic tribes who communicated their tales of the gods and the ancient cosmos from generation to generation, adapting and developing their narrative according to their needs, on an individual and collective level, to understand their world and maintain a sense of connection with the gods who created their cosmos and influenced their lives. The significance of *Bifrost*, as a path to the Gods and its eventual destruction at Ragnarok, represents the central theme of this work, that of the search, since the nineteenth century, in Northern Europe and America to rediscover and rebuild a lost sense of cultural and spiritual Nordic rootedness. This entailed restoring a connection with the original Nordic heaven over an increasingly shimmering but ever more transient and insecure bridge of cultural energy still emanating from the collective memory of Northern Europe's pre-Christian, pagan myths and legends. This search produced ambivalent, contradictory phenomena that came to be known collectively by historians and cultural anthropologists as Nordicism.

This study aims to shed new light on the historical development and dynamics of Nordicism by analysing it through a framework of sociological

⁸ This is particularly evident in his euhemerized introduction to his work in which he accounts for ancient Norse mythological beliefs as an historical mistake.

theory, one that focuses on the role played by myth⁹ creation (mythopoeia) in protecting the individual and society from the challenges of an ever-changing state of modernity which is characterized by ceaseless flux and endless liminality, denying the possibility of a dynamically but relatively stable, homogeneous and unitary culture of the sort that characterizes pre-modern times with limited dealings with 'other' cultures. My initial research objectives are to investigate how Nordicism has evolved since its emergence in the nineteenth-century and the role of the Romantic Movement in laying the foundation for this development through its idealization of the Nordic race as a time where life's dramas could still be lived out simply, powerfully and heroically. On the basis of this historical enquiry I intend to explore what fresh light can be thrown on Nazism's contrasting use of Nordic mythology as the rationale for the 're-Aryanization' of Germany and the purging of Europe of its non-Aryan heritage. In both cases, the extent to which the process of mythcreation will be approached as the manifestation of an innate human need to retain a sense of spiritualty and 'sacrality' to cope with and form a refuge from, the disorientating effects of an ever-changing state of modernity that denies permanence or a sense of rootedness, and where, to quote Karl Marx, 'all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sombre senses, his real conditions of life.' 10 A concluding theme is the way that fragments of the failed project of Nordicism, both Romantic and Nazi, are manifested in contemporary society as part of our current society's eclectic appropriation of the mythic materials of past cultures.

This study therefore combines two fields of research. Firstly, the history of Nordicism which, until now, has been treated as a series of discreet episodes in the revival of Nordic myth, with the main focus either on Romantic or on racist revivalism. Secondly, a new inter-disciplinary field of investigations into modernity which focuses on modernism as a bid to restore meaning and the sacred to modern society, not just through artistic innovation, but in both socio-political and cultural initiatives of renewal, both spiritual and

⁹ By myth I refer both to the creation of a narrative concerning the early history of a people defining its characteristics and explaining its evolution.

¹⁰ Marx, Karl, Engels Friedrich (1967) *The Communist Manifesto*. London: Penguin. p.83.

societal. On the premise of this approach, existing studies of Nordicism in its three major manifestations (nineteenth-century romanticism, Nazism and post-war identity politics) will be studied to create a continuous narrative and integrated history of Nordicism. The socio-historical dynamics of Nordicism will be studied in the light of a burgeoning secondary literature that relates modern revivals of myth and 'de-secularization' since the nineteenth-century to the human need to counteract the secularising, demystifying impact of modernization and rationalization. In this way the discreet episodes in the history of Nordicism will be shown as rooted in a common set of historically conditioned socio-cultural and psychological needs.

Locating this investigation into Nordicism within existing research

This study thus builds primarily on two fields of research, modernity and Nordicism, and as such combines two areas of academic endeavour, which often remain distinct within their respective disciplines of history and sociology. To develop a deeper understanding of the history and dynamics of Nordicism I intend to draw on these complementary fields to examine its development both in Northern Europe and the USA. This syncretic approach will encompass a range of primary and secondary historical sources examined through a theoretical framework drawn from the work of contemporary political, sociological and anthropological theorists who have analysed the impact of modernity on society and the individual. It will also examine the way its 'disenchanting' impact on traditional culture constantly stimulates the countervailing force of mythopoeia to restore a sense of transcendence and narrative arc to human existence.

Within the field of historical research, Nordicism has often been examined as a component of nineteenth-century new religions, racial science, eugenics, neo-paganism and Nazi occultism, but less frequently as the single focus of a work concerned with it as a single entity with its own historical narrative and socio-cultural dynamics. This study draws on a number of primary and secondary sources covering these areas to present a

chronological series of case studies that represent the development and evolution of Nordicism from early to contemporary modernity. Notable in the limited research into the relationship between Nordicism and Modernity is the research of Professor Christopher Hutton whose valuable work has been cited herein. The intention of this study is to shed new light on the strand of Nordicism within these areas, by applying existing scholarship to a particular matrix of social theory, and so re-interpret it as a distinct point in a cluster of reactions by the individual and society to modernity. In this way the inner cohesion and narrative continuity of Nordicism as a historical phenomenon, as well as its place in modern history, can be grasped more completely than has been possible hitherto.

In order to establish a theoretical matrix of analysis for the development and evolution of Nordicism as an aspect of modernity, I intend to firstly apply the theories of modernism of Roger Griffin (Modernism and Fascism, 2007) whose analysis of society's interaction with modernity draws, in part, on the sociological and anthropological theories of Victor Turner (*The* Ritual Process, 1969), Anthony F.C. Wallace (Mazeway resynthesis; a biocultural theory of religious inspiration, 1956), and Peter L. Berger (The Sacred Canopy, 1969). I will later 'dovetail' Griffin's analysis with the concept of 'liquid modernity' proposed by Zygmunt Bauman (Liquid Modernity, 2000), to examine how fragments of Nordicism can still be identified in our fast-paced contemporary society. Their work on the relationship between the individual, society and the endlessly shifting dialectic between the culture-fragmenting impact of modernity and the culture-recreating force of modernism, forms a useful matrix of social theory for the analysis of the dynamics of Nordicism as more than a historical strand of marginal political, religious and scientific thought. Instead it emerges as a social phenomenon which is present even in today's modern, increasingly secularized society, and represents a significant strand of the constant struggle of human beings to re-imbue human life with some transcendent and even universal significance.

This work will also consider the development of our understanding and reception of ancient Norse culture and its transformation during the twentieth

century. This reappraisal continues as enhanced scientific techniques, applied to the field of archaeology, provide us with fresh insights into this period, which has hitherto remained misunderstood or romanticized. This has led to a flourishing revision of this period, through interdisciplinary research in fields such as literature, history, anthropology, linguistics and archaeology, to create an increasingly realistic picture of daily life and consequently our overall perception of ancient Norse culture. In *The Vikings* (1991),¹¹ Else Roesdahl highlights the inaccuracies of early histories, describing them as 'historical novels rather than accurate accounts' due to a lack of real historical evidence, methodology and the cultural perspectives of many Christian authors who sought to emphasize the barbaric nature of what they termed the 'Dark Ages'¹².

It is often impossible, therefore, to distinguish pure fiction from an embellished version of an event, and improvements and additions to make the story more coherent, from what was once objective reality. The writers themselves were clearly not always sure which was the most accurate version and in any case their perception of 'historical truth' was quite different from the one most people have today.¹³

This historiographical development in our perspective of ancient Norse culture is vital to our understanding of the origins of the emergence of Nordicism during the nineteenth-century, since much of the perceived image of the Nordic race at the time was based on semi-fictionalized and biased accounts, written with an authority that had transformed it into historical fact. This lack of factual knowledge and empirical evidence allowed myth and history to be merged, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to create an idealized image of the Nordic race which Nordicists perceived to be worthy of protection and in need of regeneration as a reaction against the eroding and deracinating effects of modernity.

¹¹ Originally published in Danish as *Vikingernes verden* by Gyldendal (1987).

 $^{^{12}}$ Many modern scholars now consider that, in the light of modern research, this term fails to describe the cultural, social and economic development of this period.

¹³ Roesdahl, Else (1998) *The Vikings.* London: Penguin Books. Kindle edition. p.370.

This thesis is therefore based on an interdisciplinary, syncretic approach drawing on the complementary fields of history, literature, anthropology and sociology and can be situated in the historiographical cluster of research which has surfaced in recent years, into the development of various social, political and religious movements, which have emerged since the nineteenth-century, in the form of revitalization movements, seeking to re-establish a sense of rootedness and spiritual meaning in an everchanging setting of modernity.

Recasting Nordicism

Before examining the historical development and dynamics of Nordicism as a socio-cultural phenomenon in its own right, I intend to establish a working definition which distinguishes it from the various movements which have influenced our current perception of the term and which I will examine in more detail in later chapters. Since the late nineteenth-century, movements such as National Romanticism, Aryanism, nationalism and Nazism have all interacted at various levels with Nordicism and, through this association, certain conceptual 'baggage' has accumulated which can often confuse any definition seeking to express the core of the movement and which is applicable to its evolving manifestations since the nineteenth-century. Recent scholarship by academics such as Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke and Christopher Hutton has done much to disentangle and differentiate the concepts of Pan-Germanism, Aryanism and Nordicism during the Third Reich, but in Hutton's own words 'a considerable communication gap exists between specialist studies on Nazi Germany and the wider academic public.' ¹⁴

The problematic nature of analysing any form of historical ideology lies in the issue that we are often faced with what could be termed a 'composite definition'. This composite is formed from the actions and theories of notable personalities associated with a belief system and the reactions of the movement to a range of significant historical events and influences. In this context, ideologies take on what could be termed an 'existential' nature

¹⁴ Hutton M. Christopher (2005) *Race and the Third Reich.* Cambridge: Polity Press. p. 3.

defining themselves and being defined by observers and commentators, according to the various forms they have taken throughout history and the ideas, events and actions with which they have become associated. The result is a 'composite definition', a multi-layered ideological construct whose identity has developed and evolved over time and which, in many cases, is still in the process of being defined and revised by social and historical commentators.

A related factor, which further complicates any fixed definition of an ideological movement, is the fusion of convergent and divergent shades of opinion within a movement at any given moment, even within totalitarian regimes. These elements create an ideological concept which is at the same time homogenous and heterogeneous, composed of a multi-point cluster of individual but generally compatible world-views bound together by a core ideal. A key question raised by this issue of convergence and divergence within a movement is the extent to which any individual or group must conform to some or all of the definitional criteria of an ideology to qualify for inclusion in a movement. This is a problematic factor in any form of classification and a possibly irresolvable academic debate between essentialism and non-essentialism which I will not attempt to discuss here but which has a significant bearing on any definition of Nordicism as an independent phenomenon and my subsequent identification of those considered Nordicists.

As a starting point in establishing a working definition of Nordicism I will consider some recent definitions, which have been proposed to describe the terms 'Nordicism' and 'Nordicists'. *The Oxford English Dictionary* sums up Nordicism briefly as a historical term used to describe 'the doctrine of or belief in the cultural and racial supremacy of the Nordic people' and a Nordicist as 'a person who believes in the supremacy of the Nordic people' Another, more detailed description, proposed by A. James Gregor in the *Phylon* journal in 1960, focuses on the elements of biological and cultural supremacy to establish his definition, but includes the important element of social

¹⁵ The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (2002) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

deterioration linked to the decline of the Nordic people as a hegemonic race, which he sees as a fundamental element of historical manifestations of Nordicism.

Nordicism involves the belief that men of the "Nordic Race" – tall, slender, fair skinned, blond, blue-eyed, narrow-faced, narrow-nosed, long-headed individuals – are qualitatively superior to the remainder of mankind. They are the creators of civilization, and their passing marks the passing of civilization.¹⁶

This definition appears to draw much from the polemic works of writers such as American Nordicist Madison Grant whose 1916 publication, *The Passing of the Great Race*, lists Nordic characteristics as 'blondness, wavy hair, blue eyes, fair skin, high, narrow and straight nose, which are associated with great stature, and a long skull'. A further description, proposed by historian Geoffrey G Field in 1977, offers a definition based on the evolution of the concept, as he describes Nordicism in interaction with other contemporary schools of thought, which were prominent during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Nordicists argued that their achievement was to place the study of race upon a firm, unassailable basis, validated by careful research and free from the mystical yearnings and heavy-handed polemic pre-War writers. In fact, they largely tailored the already well-established Aryan myth to the circumstances of post 1918 Europe. Their thought was extremely derivative; often, they merely buttressed the standard shibboleths of romantic, völkisch ideology with more sophisticated "proofs" and data. 18

This definition offers more of a historically three-dimensional perspective by describing the development of Nordicism in Europe as a process of merging modern myth making, nationalism and emerging scientific theories. Field's definition demonstrates how the 'conceptual baggage' of Aryanism, Romantic Nationalism and Germanism/Aryanism impacted on the development of the movement and consequently our composite definition of the term. Another interesting definition focusing on the historical development of the term can be

¹⁷ Grant, Madison (1916) *The Passing of The Great Race*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons. Kindle edition. pp. 167-168.

¹⁶ Gregor, A James. 1961. 'Nordicism Revisited,' Phylon, 22 (4): 351

¹⁸ Geoffrey G. Field. 1977. 'Nordic Racism,' *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 38 (3): 524.

found in the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (1973), in which the term Nordic is presented as almost interchangeable with the terms Aryan and Germanic. From its nineteenth-century sociological origins, Nordicism is described as a generic form of racism, which became so deeply embedded in Nazi ideology that it could be considered synonymous.

(Nordicism is) a variety of racism; a pseudoscientific theory based on the assertion that the northern (Nordic), or Aryan, race is superior to other human races. The French sociologists J. A. Gobineau and G. Lapouge are considered the founders of Nordicism. Apologists for Nordicism equate the northern race and the "Germanic," asserting that the latter constitutes the "highest" race, to which humanity owes all the achievements of civilization. Nordicism was used as a weapon by the "theorists" of German fascism, who made it the official ideology of Hitlerite Germany. ¹⁹

These definitions collectively illustrate how Nordicism has evolved as a composite definition, with an emphasis on its definition as a doctrine of racial supremacy, which fused with that of Nazi Aryanism, a definition which has for many years stood as the established, but largely implicit 'ideal type' of Nordicism. It is interesting to note, however, that even the more recent of these definitions tend to suggest, through the omission of any post-war reference, that Nordicism's evolution ended as a concept, and subsequently became fixed as a definition, at the fall of the Third Reich. This approach fails to consider that ideologies do not disappear overnight but may continue in residual pockets for years even after they have become discredited by mainstream thought, often re-emerging in adapted or resynthesized forms as marginal strands of extremism such as in many northern European and American individuals and groups which will be examined in this work.

Since these definitions were proposed, considerable work has been carried out in the fields of anthropology, sociology and political theory, which has shed new light on the rise of many forms of nineteenth and twentieth-century ideology as responses to the impact of modernity on traditional

¹⁹ Prokhorov. A. M. and Waxman, M. Macmillan (eds.) (1973) *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*. New York: Macmillan. Source:

http://www.smartdefine.org/nordicism#!/nordicism/definitions/1826028 (Accessed 2/11/12).

society, and it is certainly time to reconsider the established definitions of Nordicism in the light of this recent scholarship. This research has examined a number of political and religious movements, which have emerged as a reaction to a sense of social deterioration and disorientation caused by the erosion or destruction of traditional forms of society in the West. These 'revitalization movements' have sought to regenerate or replace these eroded traditions and identities and thus combat the growing sense of crisis experienced as the degeneration or demise of civilization.

I intend to apply to this study a description of the phenomenon of Nordicism, with the aim of shedding new light on its nature and evolution. It is with an emphasis on revitalization, rather than racial superiority, that I propose the following generic definition of Nordicism:

Nordicism is a political, cultural or scientific movement that emerged during the nineteenth-century and had peaked in its influence by the mid-1940s, based on the belief that it is possible to historically empathize with Nordic culture (Romantic Nordicism) or biologically identify and regenerate a pure Nordic type, based on scientific principles of taxonomy and eugenics (racial Nordicism). This racial type was founded on an imagined, idealized sense of superior physical, cultural and spiritual beauty and purity of the Nordic ethnos or race. Whether as a literary, cultural, political or racial revitalization movement, Nordicism seeks to combat the disenchanting and deracinating forces associated with modernity by presenting, to individuals who can identify with it, a vision of transcendence and rootedness located within their perceived, reconstituted Nordic identity.

In conclusion, the recasting of Nordicism in a way which focuses on the concept of revitalization rather than just racial superiority, as the driving force behind this movement, is designed to enable this research to shed new light

on the dynamics, development and continuity of Nordicism throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and up to the present. My aim in recasting the existing definitions of Nordicism is an attempt to view this phenomenon from a new angle, bringing to light new facets which only a shift in perspective will allow, and above all, enabling Nazi Nordicism, the most notorious exploitation of Nordic myth, to be located within the longer and more diverse narrative of Nordicism 'as a whole', and within a broader mythic response to the impact of modernity on the human need for transcendence and rootedness.

Roger Griffin's theory of modernism

The theory that modernism should be redefined to embrace a wide range of phenomena emanating from the need to maintain or invent a sense of meaning, transcendental values and *communitas* in the face of an atomising modernity was developed by Roger Griffin in *Modernism and Fascism* (2007). In this work, he analysed modernism through the prism of what he terms a 'primordialist definition'²⁰ proposing that modernism is a multi-faceted set of reactions, from the mid-nineteenth-century onwards, to the rapid modernization of Western society and the concomitant loss of cultural homogeneity and sense of 'centre'.

Their common denominator lies in the bid to achieve a sense of transcendent value, meaning, or purpose despite Western culture's progressive loss of a homogenous value system and overarching cosmology (nomos) caused by the secularizing and disembedding forces of modernization. The modernists' rejection of or revolt against contemporary modernity was shaped by innate predispositions of the human consciousness and mythopoeic faculty to create culture, to construct utopias, to access a suprahuman temporality and to belong to a community united by a shared culture.²¹

In his analysis of modernism, Griffin referred to Berger's concept of the 'sacred canopy' as a societal shield against the terror of a meaningless state and applied the terms 'nomos' and 'anomie', originally proposed by sociologist

²⁰ See Chapter 4. Griffin, Roger (2007) *Modernism and Fascism – The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

²¹ Griffin, Roger. *Modernism and Fascism.* p.116.

Emile Durkheim, to describe two distinct states of the human condition in relation to a constantly shifting landscape of modernity. According to Griffin's theories, modern society has an innate need to maintain a sense of shared cultural rootedness and sense of transcendence to avoid being pulled into an anomic state of existence devoid of meaning. One reaction has been the attempt to re-create lost connections through a process of more or less conscious myth-construction (mythopoeia) through which individuals or segments of a society seek to regenerate their sense of identity and unity through the construction of new forms of faith, rooted in the past but adapted to be relevant and compatible with the contemporary situation. In his work, Griffin analysed these revitalization movements through Anthony FC Wallace and Kenneth Tollefson's concept of the socio-cultural 'mazeway'.

Kenneth Tollefson talks of cultural revitalization as 'an adaptive social response whereby the past and present values, customs, and beliefs – which produce dissonance arising from the distortions that exist between them – are analyzed and recombined into a new synthesis, a new mazeway, or a new Gestalt'.²²

This concept of 'mazeway resynthesis' defines how a society reacts to a changing state of modernity, when past and present become misaligned, by creating new adapted belief systems, which allow them to maintain a viable sense of rootedness and transcendence between the sacred and the profane. Griffin also referred to the work of French ethnographer Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957) who proposed the concept of 'liminality', which was refined and further developed by anthropologist and fellow ethnographer Victor Turner (1920-1983) in his work on rituals and rites of passage. ²³ In Gennep's thesis 'liminality' represents an intermediate phase between two states of being which are often accompanied in both primitive and modern societies by a variety of rites of passage, which differ greatly in form and meaning but which perform the function of marking the transition into a new state of being. In his work Griffin quotes a definition of this process established by sociologist Mathieu Deflem in an article written for the *Journal for the Scientific Study of*

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²² Tollefson. Kenneth quoted in Griffin, Roger *Modernism and Fascism.* p.106.

²³ Notable works include *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure Foundations of Human Behavior* (1969) and *Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (1967).

Religion in 1991. In his work Deflem described three distinct phases of liminality.

(1) separation or the *pre-liminal* (after *limen*, Latin for threshold), when a person or group becomes detached from an earlier fixed point in the social structure or from an earlier set of social conditions; (2) margin or the *liminal*, when the state of the ritual subject is ambiguous; he is no longer in the old state and has not yet reached the new one; and (3) aggregation or the *post-liminal*, when the ritual subject a new stable state with its own rights and obligations.²⁴

These three stages of liminality, applied to the disembedding processes of modernity, define how rapid change forces man to break away from eroded traditions and belief systems leaving both society and the individual in a disorientated state of 'limbo' which, if prolonged, can lead to a collective state of societal anxiety (anomie). To avoid such a condition, social groups must periodically undertake a process of 'mazeway resynthesis' to regenerate and restore a sense of social order and meaningful existence, even if the condition of modern precludes any permanent mythic solution to the problem of anomie.

In the context of this study of the development of cultural, biological and political Nordicism as a reaction to modernity, I intend to draw together these strands of sociological and anthropological theory to create the following framework of analysis, through which I will analyse a series of historical case studies which highlight how Nordicism has emerged as a complex and ambivalent forms of regenerative revitalization movements in reaction to specific events and aspects of modernity which have eroded the sense of the universe being imbued with meaning and sacrality: in other words as attempts to reconstruct a Rainbow Bridge for our times using building blocks from the mythicized fragments of a past age of Norse culture.

To summarize these introductory reflections and methodological premises: Nordicism has emerged at distinct points in modern history when groups of individuals in Western society, who identify with their Nordic roots,

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²⁴ Deflem, Mathieu. 1991. 'Ritual, Anti-structure, and Religion: A discussion of Victor Turner's processual symbolic analysis,' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 30 (1): 9. Quoted by Griffin, Roger in *Modernism and Fascism*. p.102.

have perceived that the continuance of their biological and cultural heritage has become threatened by phenomena associated with the unstoppable momentum of modernity. The erosion of shared traditions, belief systems and their perceived racial purity has driven them to attempt to reconstruct their mythical and biological origins, in forms compatible with the evolving social landscape, in order to maintain a sense of social order and collective transcendence without which they fear the terror of a prolonged anomic state of liminality and the eventual loss of their biological and cultural identity. Through this work, I intend to integrate into a single, composite history, the various narrative strands that constitute Nordicism as a constitutive element of modern culture by underlining their common genesis as a modernist reaction to the disenchantment of reality.

Building the Bridge

In chapter one, this study will examine the roots of Nordicism as they emerged from the National Romantic Movement's progressive appropriation, during the late nineteenth-century, of the Nordic cultural revival as a nationalist ideological construct, notably in Germany and North America. Chapter two will examine the concurrently developing field of racial science and how this became entwined with the National Romantic Movement's mythologization of the Nordic people, to develop into an agenda of biological Nordicism. This chapter will focus on the emergence of this phenomenon, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries, as a new form of programmatic political, cultural and biological ideology and examine its impact on both immigration legislation and its interaction with the developing international eugenics movement, with a particular emphasis on Germany and the USA. These case studies, and those in the following chapters, will analyse the evolution of Nordicism, from a conceptual ideology, into a political and scientific reality though the application of positive and negative Nordicist inspired eugenics policies in these countries. Chapter three will focus on the assimilation of Nordicist beliefs into the racial ideology of Nazism, with a particular focus on Himmler's SS and their role in applying Nordicist theories through a programme of industrial scale genocide. It will also examine the

eventual demise of Nordicism in the collapse of Nazi Germany and consider how Nordicism has become fixed as a term of historical reference.

In my fourth and concluding chapter, I intend to shed new light on our understanding and interpretation of Nordicism by applying my working definition to link the historical narrative I have constructed to a series of recent and contemporary case studies in Nordic myth's survival into the post-Nazi era. These are intended to demonstrate the continued evidence of aspects of Nordicist belief both as a part of a benign, populist cultural trend and as a malignant form of racist ideology. The latter form will be examined through the cultural and political activities of right-wing groups and individuals, in Northern Europe and the USA, who seek to protect and regenerate what they perceive to be the purity and innate superiority of the Nordic race against the threat of globalization and ethnic groups who they judge to be biologically and culturally inferior. It will also consider the extent to which our enduring need of myth, in our state of rapidly evolving 'liquid modernity', is reflected in our current reception of Norse history and culture and the impact of this on the enduring phenomenon of Nordicism.

Chapter One

New foundations – Nationalist and Romantic visions of Nordic revival in Northern Europe and America.

Nationalism, Romanticism, Myth and Modernity

And now the mythless man stands eternally hungry, surrounded by all past ages, and digs and grubs for roots, even if he has to dig for them in the remotest antiquities. The tremendous historical need of our unsatisfied modern culture, the assembling around one of countless other cultures, the consuming desire for knowledge - what does all this point to, if not to the loss of myth, the loss of the mythical home, the mythical maternal womb?²⁵

Friedrich Nietzsche 'The Birth of Tragedy' 1872

This chapter opens this historical study of Nordicism by considering the emergence of the National Romantic Movement in Northern Europe and America during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a cultural and political movement that became, in certain countries, a foundation for the subsequent development of Nordicism. Nietzsche's image of the anomic state of the 'mythless man', digging and grubbing for roots in the ancient past for lost forms of mythology and identity, articulated the need for modern man to re-establish and maintain a sense of cultural rootedness and an overarching nomic identity as a reaction to the seemingly unstoppable advancement of rationalist, secularising modernity.

On 14th July 1789, the iconic storming of the Bastille in Paris marked the eruption of a growing European social and ideological crisis, which manifested itself in the French Revolution. These pivotal events and the subsequent ebb and flow of revolution and counter-revolution which followed

²⁵Nietzsche, Freidrich (Trans. W. Kaufmann) (1967) *The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner*. New York: Random House. p.135.

sent a series of political and cultural shock waves across Europe, which inspired, and in many cases demanded, new perceptions of our place in society and the cosmos, and prompted the search for renewed forms of collective and individual identity. Many revolutionary thinkers and artists were inspired by the radical philosophies of thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) whose seminal works, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men), 1755, and *Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique* (Of The Social Contract, Or Principles of Political Right), 1762, presented his influential theories of the 'natural man'. It also described the corrupting effect of the civilization that had enslaved him, and a blueprint for future social regeneration based on the fundamental principles of freedom and equality.

Rediscovering national roots in Northern Europe and North America

The significant political, academic and cultural changes which were taking place, and which were reflected in National Romanticism, stimulated the need to seek out new national roots and mythology through a process of rediscovery and resynthesis of national history and culture. Out of this need for new, adapted forms of nomos, academics and artists across Europe began to seek out 'home grown' subjects, which represented and promoted their perceived national identity in order to create a new sense of national rootedness for their imagined community, giving rise to powerful blends of literary, historical and scientific fantasy reifying the nation or race until it became, for some, a sacralised entity with an organic life of its own to be celebrated in poetry, monuments and rituals. In *Nationalism* (1984), Hutchinson and Smith described this mission of the National Romantic thinkers to re-create appropriate national roots and unity in both cultural and territorial terms.

The people must be united; they must dissolve all internal divisions; they must be gathered together in a single historic territory, a homeland; and they must have legal equality and share a single public culture. But which culture and what territory? Only

a homeland that was 'theirs' by historic right, the land of their forebears; only a culture that was 'theirs' as a heritage, passed down the generations, and therefore an expression of their authentic identity.²⁶

In *The God of Modernity* (1994), Josep R Llobera also defined the National Romantic Movement's retrospective standpoint that brought about a new form of historiography. This no longer had as its sole aim the acquisition of knowledge, but the mission of seeking out periods of national prominence and iconic historical and mythological figures who were, through the work of historians, politicians and artists, transformed into symbols of national identity and greatness.

From the perspective of Nationalism, the nostalgia for the past took the form of looking back to a period in the history of a nation when it achieved literary fame, political success or had flourished culturally. Romantic historiography, whether to uncover the past of a forgotten country or to celebrate the past of a powerful nation was an unavoidable stage forming episodes through which all countries went.²⁷

This nostalgic mission of Romantic historians to rediscover lost national roots, which would help to forge a common consensus on the mythic importance of key symbols of national pride and identity, led to a revival in Britain, Germany, Scandinavia and the United States, of the study of ancient Nordic culture. Facing both shared and individual challenges brought about by this new phase of modernity in Europe, certain influential groups of thinkers in these nations sought to appropriate what they perceived to be the cultural and political greatness of the ancient Nordic peoples. Initially this was intended to generate a renewed sense of national rootedness, but progressively it became entwined with the search to justify European and North American ascendency as dominant forces in the progress of civilization and thus, in certain conditions, developed into forms of Nordicism in which the Nordic became a signifier of national, and even racial superiority.

²⁷ Llobera, Josep R. (1994) *The God of Modernity - The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe.* London: Bloomsbury. p.172.

²⁶ Hutchinson, John and Smith, Anthony D (1994) *Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.5.

To understand the development of Nordicism out of the foundation of Romantic historians' interpretation and reconstruction of ancient Nordic culture, it is essential to consider the basis on which it was developed and the permeability of the membrane that separated the antiquarian and academic search for national roots and the idealization of these as part of political and biological agendas. National Romanticism's historical representation of the ancient Nordic heritage of northern Europe was based largely on the study of primary and secondary texts, which by contemporary standards, would be considered unreliable and biased, and the often-inaccurate interpretation of historical sites and occasionally unearthed artefacts. In *The Vikings* (1991), Else Roesdahl²⁸ commented on the way in which distorted, often idealized images of the ancient Scandinavian peoples and their culture were created on the basis of evidence that was originally flawed.

The classic image of the Vikings, appearing on foreign shores in their ships, sword in hand, performing bloody deeds, plundering churches, extorting money, engaging in battle, murder and abductions, is a one-sided picture created originally by contemporary clerics in Western Europe, who tended to record only violent events, and elaborated by medieval story-tellers and historians, among them the Icelandic saga writers, in their search for a dramatic national identity.²⁹

Roesdahl quotes Snorri's *Heimskringla*, "The Circle of the World' (c. 1230), Dudo of Saint-Quentin's *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae Ducum* (c. 1020), and Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum* (c1200) as key sources which Enlightenment historians, and later Romantics, drew on to develop their representations of the Nordic people. Roesdahl comments that the writings of these medieval scholars should not be considered as 'attempts to reproduce historical reality in the modern sense¹³⁰ but rather that they expressed the concerns and interests of their own age. These sources therefore did not attempt to reconstruct objective reality in modern historiographical terms, but to create suitably adapted national narratives and personalities for national posterity. Another significant point is the narrative perspective of the writers who tended to be from outside Scandinavia, or who wrote retrospectively,

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²⁸ Else Roesdahl, professor of medieval and Renaissance Archaeology, University of Aarhus, Denmark.

²⁹ Ibid.13. p.292.

³⁰ Ibid 13. p.370.

sometimes hundreds of years after the events. On the basis of this often inconsistent and unreliable historiography, certain Northern European writers progressively created the image of the Viking as a representative symbol of ancient Nordic culture, an image, which became increasingly radicalized and, in Germany and North America, became a source of later Nordicism.

In the following sections this study will examine this phenomenon across Scandinavia, Britain, Germany and parts of North America and compare the way in which these nations sought to define their national identity by looking back into their past to create new future political and cultural identities and explore how the prevailing state of modernity in certain countries, notably Germany and North America, led to the emergence, in the late nineteenth century, of early forms of Nordicism.

Growing apart together - Scandinavian Romanticism and Nationalism

National Romanticism in Scandinavia was more than a reflection of the political, religious and social revolutions which were transforming Europe; it was an expression of the concerns and aspirations of Denmark, Norway and Sweden as a collective and, more significantly, as independent nations with inter-related but distinct national identities. The final dissolution of the *Kalmarunionen* (Kalmar Union) in 1523, which had united Scandinavia³¹ since 1397, brought to the fore the existing rivalry and differing interests of these nations, notably between Denmark³² and Sweden, who both sought a more prominent role and higher status in Northern Europe. Central to this rivalry, was the political and economic importance of control of the Baltic Sea, which was a significant military and trade route. This, together with disputes over territory, sovereignty and international alliances led to a series of mutually destructive wars between these competing nations such as the Northern

³² Following the collapse of the Union, Norway and Denmark created a personal union with varying degrees of autonomy, which lasted until 1814 when Denmark was forced to cede Norway to Sweden. A personal union unites a number of nations under the same monarch whilst their borders, laws and individual interests remain distinct.

 $^{^{\}rm 31}$ Including Finland, Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands.

Seven Years' War (1563-70), the Kalmar War (1611-13), the Torstenson War (1643-45), the Dano-Swedish Wars (1657-60), the Scanian War (1675), the Great Northern War (1700-21) and the later conflicts between 1808-1809 and 1813-14 which formed part of the Napoleonic Wars. Due to their strategic position as gateway to the Baltic the Scandinavian countries became embroiled in this European conflict, which resulted in the attack on 2nd April 1802 led by Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson on the Danish-Norwegian fleet, anchored off Copenhagen. This was followed by a further attack between 16th August and 5th September 1807 during which the city of Copenhagen was bombarded and attacked for two nights leaving the largely wooden city badly damaged and many dead. External disputes over national territory also resulted in a further weakening of the Scandinavian states as Sweden was forced to cede Finland to Russia in 1809 and Denmark lost the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein firstly in 1848-50 and finally in 1864 when the territory was finally lost to Germany.

Economic and industrial modernization was also slow to emerge in Scandinavia as the nations lacked the technology, capital and resources to move from rural to industrial activity. For instance in Denmark, agriculture still represented fifty per cent of the nation's commercial production until 1870.³⁴ This lack of development, together with a significant increase in population³⁵ and economic hardship led many to leave their homelands,³⁶ notably for America, to seek an improved standard of living. In *Scandinavia and the Great Powers* (1997), Patrick Salmon described this process commenting that 'the symptoms of stagnation and rural overpopulation were evident in the massive emigration of Swedes and Norwegians to North America.' ³⁷

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 $^{^{\}rm 33}$ Jespersen, Knud J.V. (2011) A History of Denmark. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan. Kindle edition. p.570.

³⁴ Jespersen, Knud, J.V. *A History of Denmark* p.2975.

³⁵ Between 1820 and 1920 the population increased from 2.58 million to 5.90 in Sweden, 1.10 million to 3.28 in Denmark and 0.97 million to 2.65 in Norway, not including the large numbers who emigrated during this period. (See next footnote) Martinsson Örjan, 'Population of Scandinavia'. Tacitus.nu http://www.tacitus.nu/historical-atlas/population/scandinavia.htm (Accessed 15/07/13).

³⁶ Ibid. 34. p.656.

³⁷ Salmon, Patrick (1997) *Scandinavia and the Great Powers.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.22.

It is against this historical backdrop of inter-Scandinavian rivalry, loss of territory, diminished international status and late industrial development, that National Romanticism emerged more as a reaction to the modernity of surrounding nations than its own. During this period Scandinavia needed, in many respects, to re-invent itself away from the image of the heathen barbarian and its recent loss of international standing, to create a renewed sense of national pride and identity. This led to a revival in interest in establishing a shared sense of national history, which promoted the historical and cultural uniqueness of each nation, its natural beauty and its status within European culture.

In *Thor - Myth to Marvel*, Martin Arnold describes the evolution and causes of this revival of interest in ancient Nordic culture, which progressively became more and more radicalized into political and symbols of national identity.

This was a process of gradual, then increasingly rapid, recovery of the beliefs and customs of the ancient Scandinavians, played out against a background of widespread political and religious turmoil throughout Europe, during which the framework for a rebirth of Nordic culture was established. The scholarly interest in Old Norse myths and legends that persisted in Scandinavia beyond the retrospective fascinations of medieval writers was no more a matter of nostalgia for heathendom than it had been for Snorri Sturluson. Rather it was partly a case of patriotism and cultural pride, often defensively asserted in the face of those who considered the northern territories to be barbaric and culturally impoverished, and partly a case of continuing political rivalries between the Scandinavian countries.³⁸

In his study of the reception of Nordic history and literature during this period Arnold also examined the 'cross fertilization' of interest in ancient Nordic culture in Northern Europe which was appropriated by certain groups, within the National Romantic Movement, to form the basis of a regenerated national identity. As part of this study, he considered how rivalries between the Scandinavian states and their collective need to reaffirm their status in Europe, expressed itself in the search for historical sources with which they could revise and reaffirm their collective and individual national identities. Arnold referred to the impact in Europe of the seminal works of Swiss-born Paul

³⁸ Arnold, Martin (2011) *Thor – Myth to Marvel.* London: Continuum Books. p.77.

Henri Mallet (1730-1807) who, as professor of French, at the Academy of Arts in Copenhagen, was commissioned by Danish King Frederick V to produce a new history of Denmark. Mallet originally published this research in French³⁹ in 1755, as the Introduction à L'histoire du Dannemarc où l'on traite de la religion, des moeurs, des lois, et des usages des anciens Danois, together with his 1756 publication entitled Monuments de la mythologie et de la poésie des Celtes, et particulièrement des anciens Scandinaves. In these works Mallet drew on the work of Tacitus⁴⁰ and Saxo Grammaticus⁴¹ as well as a the previous work of a number of Icelandic and Danish scholars such as Arngrímur Jónsson (1568-1648), 42 Thormodus Torfæus (1636-1719), 43 Ole Worm (1588-1655), 44 Peder Hansen Resen (1625-1688) 45 and Thomas Bartholin (1616-1680), ⁴⁶ to present a study of the social, religious, military and legal customs of the ancient Danish people and their mythological traditions. In this work, Mallet attempted to revise and demystify previously written histories of the state of Denmark rejecting the image of a cultural wilderness inhabited by pagan barbarians, to present an early form of 'social history' in which he describes a primitive but well-ordered societal structure with a distinct ethnic culture.

In his attempt to create a new history of Denmark, distinguishing between fact and fiction, Mallet was critical of previous histories, which bridged a lack of evidence with varying degrees of fiction and assumption. In

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³⁹ During this period it was common for French to be spoken in the Danish Royal Court, state officials used German, and Danish was used primarily by the population of rural communities. The subsequent movement during the nineteenth century to generalize the use of Danish was a significant affirmation of Danish national identity.

 $^{^{40}}$ Publius (or Gaius) Cornelius Tacitus (56 AD – 117 AD) was a senator and a historian of the Roman Empire, whose work *De origine et situ Germanorum - Germania* described the ancient Teutonic and Nordic races encountered by the Romans.

⁴¹ Saxo Grammaticus (c.1150 - 1220) Danish historian, author of Gesta Danorum.

⁴² Arngrímur Jónsson's works include *Brevis commentarius de Islandia* (1593) and *Crymogæa sive Rerum Islandicarum* (1609).

⁴³ Thormodus Torfæus' works include *Historia Vinlandiæ Antiquæ* (1705); *Grænlandia Antiqua* (1706); and *Historia Rerum Norvegicarum* (1711). In 1682 he was appointed Royal historian of Norway.

⁴⁴ Also known as Olaus Wormius, his key works include *Fasti Danici* (1626), *Runir seu Danica literatura antiquissima* (1636), *and Danicorum Monumentorum* (1643).

⁴⁵ Peder Hansen Resen is best known for his comprehensive study of Denmark the *Atlas Danicus* (1677).

⁴⁶ Thomas Bartholin published many scientific works during his lifetime but is also known for his study of the Danish spirit in *Antiquitatum Danicarum de Causis Contemptae a Danis adhuc Gentilibus Mortis*, (1689).

his work he quoted Torfæus' comments on Icelandic scholars' fusion of history with fiction to present interesting and coherent narratives.

For, in the first place, the Icelandic writers have left us a great number of pieces, which evidently show that their taste inclined them to deal in the marvellous, in allegory and even in that kind of narrations, in which truth is designedly blended with fable. Torfæus himself confesses that that there are many of their books in which it is difficult to distinguish truth from falsehood, and that there are scarce any of them, but what contain some degree of fiction.⁴⁷

Mallet was however, like any historian past or present, a product of his time. As an academic, he had limited tools of historiography at his disposal and would arguably have been influenced by the rise in National Romanticism and the political agenda of the Danish state that commissioned his work.

In 1763, Mallet published a six-volume edition of his work in which he revised much of his material and approach. In his analysis of this work Arnold commented that 'it is from these latter volumes that the romance of the Old North can be properly dated, the enthusiasm for which spread beyond both the confines of Scandinavia and the provinces of scholarship. 48 Arnold identified what he described as the 'emerging principles of pre-romanticism' and suggested that this influence came from the publication of works such as Montesquieu's⁴⁹ De l'Esprit des Lois (1748), Edmund Burke's influential A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful in 1756 and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Discours sur l'origine des fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes (1754). In his work, Mallet quoted Montesquieu's L'Esprit des Lois describing how the cold, harsh northern climate developed admirable characteristics of strength and independence in the Nordic people.⁵⁰

But how came these men to preserve themselves in so great a degree of liberty? This was owing to their climate and manner of life, which gave them such strength of

⁴⁷ Mallet, Paul Henri (Trans. Percy, Thomas, et al.) (1847) Northern Antiquities. London: Henry G. Bohn. p.76.

⁴⁸ Ibid.40. p.88.

⁴⁹ Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de Montesquieu (1689 –1755) French social and political commentator.

⁵⁰ Many later Nordicists focused on the role of the Northern climate in creating physical and moral strength in the 'Nordic Race'.

body and mind as rendered them capable of long and painful labours, of great and daring exploits.⁵¹

This association of the northern climate with resilient physical and psychological attributes prefigures Romanticism's and later Nordicism's fascination with the Nordic people's vital relationship with their natural environment and the need to re-establish and maintain this innate attachment as a reaction to modernity. In *The Norse Muse* (1998), Margaret Clunies Ross and Lars Lönnroth discussed the significance of Romanticism's concept of 'natural man' and in particular, the concept of 'the sublime', on writers such as Mallet. Sublime art celebrated the awe-inspiring creative and destructive power of natural phenomena and the impact of this defining force on the human condition. According to Clunies Ross and Lönnroth, this literary and artistic mood laid the foundations on which writers such as Mallet could imbue their presentations of ancient Nordic literature with a primordial sense of the sublime, a concept that had considerable resonance for a society seeking to rediscover its national roots.

Sublime too was the barbaric and ancient poetry of wild and primitive people not yet tamed, domesticated, and corrupted by modern civilization. It was this new aesthetics that made it possible for Mallet and his followers to present Old Norse poetry as particularly sublime. ⁵²

J-J Rousseau's pre-Romantic concept of the noble savage, uncorrupted by modernity and living in harmony with his environment, had a significant influence on literary and artistic thought in Europe, enabling Mallet and his followers to attract increasing European interest to their attempts to rehabilitate Old Norse verse and culture.

Arnold commented that the publication of Mallet's work was received with both hostility and enthusiasm in northern and Western Europe but

⁵¹ Mallet, Paul Henri, Percy, Thomas et al. *Northern Antiquities*. p.125.

⁵² Clunies Ross, Margaret and Lönnroth, Lars. 1998. 'The Norse Muse' *International Research Project* (9): 3-28. http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~alvismal/9muse.pdf (Accessed 20/03/13).

suggests that it was nonetheless 'extraordinary in its effect'⁵³ and had a significant impact on the revival in interest in ancient Nordic culture in Britain, Germany, and Scandinavia. Mallet's work was translated into English as *Northern Antiquities* (1770) by Thomas Percy and translated into German between 1765 and 1769. Clunies Ross and Lönnroth describe the impact of Mallet's work both in terms of general public interest and as a basis on which writers developed their nations' sense of national identity.

In Germany and Britain the works of Mallet and Resen were chief sources for the reading public's knowledge of Old Norse poetry and myth, and Mallet provided, in addition, a holistic interpretative framework against which ordinary readers and creative writers could assimilate this new exotic primitivism to which they could claim an ancestral relationship.⁵⁴

Mallet's work could therefore be considered significant in providing both a 'home grown' form of mythology and cultural origins in an attempt to rival the predominant Greek and Roman classicism of the period. This offered an attractive cultural heritage for the subsequent emergence of National Romantic writers in Denmark, as well as in Northern Europe and North America, who sought to appropriate the ancient Nordic culture to provide new sources of national identity and symbols of historic national predominance.

Another influential literary figure that contributed to this Nordic renaissance in Scandinavia and Germany was Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), a leading German romantic poet who, on the invitation of Frederick V, moved to Copenhagen in 1751 where he lived until 1770, before returning to Germany where he completed his major work *Der Messias* in 1773. Klopstock sought to create a form of poetry and culture that was inherently German and which celebrated the beauty of the German language, countryside and its people. During the 1760's he became an enthusiastic follower of Scottish poet James Macpherson (1736-96), whose *Ossianic* poetry was creating a sensation in Europe following the publication of his *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland* in 1760,

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⁵³ Ibid. 38. p.91.

⁵⁴ Ibid. 52. p.16.

Fingal in 1762, and *Temora* in 1763.⁵⁵ It was during this period that Klopstock came into contact with Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg (1737-1823), a former Danish cavalry officer from the Duchy of Schleswig, who published *Gedicht eines Skalden* (Poem of a Skald) in 1766. This was a romanticized interpretation of *Voluspá*, (The Seeress's Prophecy) from the *Poetic Edda* and according to Klopstock's correspondence of the time,⁵⁶ it was this work that attracted him to draw on ancient Norse mythology as a source of national culture and sense of rootedness.

Notable amongst the literary circle frequented and inspired by Klopstock and Gerstenberg was the patriotic Danish poet and dramatist Johannes Ewald (1743-81) whose operatic poem *Balders Død* (The Death of Baldr), based on Saxo Grammaticus' *Gesta Danorum*, was premiered in the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen in 1778. This dramatic work comprised many features of early Romanticism in its portrayal of heightened passions and the struggle between good and evil, as in this dramatic verse from the concluding act, in which *Pórr* (Thor) laments the loss of his brother as the Gods approach the apocalypse of *Ragnarǫk*.

Thor

Gods of battle stern and glory

Weep ye o'er the hero slain

Balder, thou art the Aser's glory!

Love, base love, has prov'd thy bane.⁵⁷

In his analysis, Martin Arnold interpreted the nationalist elements of this work, in the encoded political messages with which Ewald expresses his early Pan-Scandinavian⁵⁸ sentiment through symbolism and the figure of *Þórr* (Thor) as

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⁵⁵ See section on Romanticism and the Viking in Georgian and Victorian Britain. Both Klopstock and Gerstenberg were inspired to find their own Germanic version of Macpherson's work. ⁵⁶ Ibid. 40. p.103.

⁵⁷ Ewald Johannes (1889) (Trans. Borrows George) *The Death of Balder*. London: Jarrold & Sons. Source: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/13879/13879-h/13879-h.htm (Accessed 20/07/13). ⁵⁸ Pan-Scandinavianism emerged during the late eighteenth century and was at its height in the mid-nineteenth century. As an ideology it promotes cooperation between the Scandinavian nations.

redeemer of the Scandinavian people.

In effect, Ewald's depiction of the Scandinavian past functions as a metaphor for the Scandinavian present, divided by ancient rivalries, oblivious of its shared destiny and on course for disaster. Yet, in Ewald's example of the conciliatory Thor, there is the possibility that such divisiveness could be set-aside in the recognition of common values and common cause. ⁵⁹

In 1778 Ewald added to his accomplishments as a nationalist artist when his work *Fiskerne* (The Fishermen) was staged at the Royal Theatre on the birthday of King Christian VII. This work celebrated the heroics of Danish sailors during the wars against Sweden in the 17th and 18th centuries and, in 1780, the first verse, "*Kong Christian stod ved højen mast*" (King Christian stood by the lofty mast), was adopted as the Royal Anthem. Ewald's contribution to the renewal of Danish poetry, both in artistic and political terms, was significant in laying the foundations for nineteenth century Romantic writers such as Adam Oehlenschläger (1779-1850) who promoted their ancient Nordic heritage as a form of national identity and rootedness.

Oehlenschläger was influenced both by Ewald and by the guidance of Norwegian-born Danish philosopher, scientist, and poet Henrik Steffens (1773-1845), whose studies and academic posts in Germany brought him into contact with notable literary and philosophical figures such as Friedrich von Schelling (1775-1854), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), and Friedrich Werner (1768-1823), whose influence inspired Oehlenschläger to develop his own form of nationalism which was specifically Scandinavian. In 1803, he published *Guldhornene* (The Golden Horns), in which two highly decorated drinking horns, discovered in 1639 and 1734 in Jutland, but which had been stolen from Copenhagen in 1802, ⁶⁰ were transformed into a symbol of Denmark's separation from its ancient roots This opening verse portrayed the poet's sense of decay and abandonment of the past.

⁵⁹ Ibid. 38. p.100.

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 $^{^{60}}$ Although they were never recovered, copies of these horns are on display at the Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen.

Upon the pages
Of the olden ages,
And in the hills where are lying
The dead, they are prying;
On armour rusty,
In ruins musty,
On Rune-stones jumbled,
With bones long crumbled.⁶¹

Over the next twenty years, Oehlenschläger continued his considerable contribution to the revival of ancient Nordic literature, establishing himself as one of Scandinavia's leading Romantic poets⁶² through notable works such as *Thors Reise til Jotunheim* (Thor's Journey to Jotunheim, 1806), *Hakon Jarl* (Earl Hakon, 1807), *Baldur hin Gode* (Baldr the Good, 1808), *Helge* (1814) and his major work, published in 1819, *Nordens Guder: et episk digte* (Gods of the North: An Epic Poem). In 1835 he was honoured by the nation when his patriotic poem *Der er et yndigt land* (There is a Lovely Land), written in 1819, was adopted as the state national anthem.

There is a lovely land

Where broad beeches grow

Near the salty eastern beach

It winds itself through hills and valleys

Its called old Denmark

And it is Freya's hall

There, in ancient times

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 ⁶¹ Oehlenschläger, Adam (Trans. Borrow, George) (1913) *The Golden Horns, Act III.* London: Wise. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/29124/29124-h/29124-h.htm (Accessed 21/07/13).
 ⁶² In 1829 Oehlenschläger was publicly crowned with laurels and celebrated as The Nordic King of Poetry and Song by the notable Swedish poet Bishop Esaias Tegnér.

The armour-suited warriors sat

Rested from conflict

Then they set out for the foe

Now their bones rest

Behind the mound's menhir⁶³

Oehlenschläger's verses, imbued with Nordic mythology, ancient history and its relationship with the natural beauty of the Danish landscape epitomizes, in many respects, the artistic focus of Scandinavian National Romanticism and its political aspirations during this period of European nation building and identity politics.

Another notable follower⁶⁴ of Henrik Steffens, who sought to revive and resynthesize ancient Norse mythology, was the theologian, historian, poet, educationalist⁶⁵, Lutheran minister and politician, N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872). Grundtvig's writings were prolific and wide-ranging, covering a range of liberal reformist, Lutheran, political and educational issues of the day which were, at the same time, forward-looking and grounded in the need to establish a sense of 'Danishness' based on Denmark's ancient history, traditions and mythology, against the dominant Latin and Catholic culture of Europe. Notable amongst his plentiful works on Norse mythology, including many translations⁶⁶ and commentaries, was his major work Nordens Mythologi eller Sindbilled-Sprog, historisk-poetisk udviklet og oplyst (The Mythology or Symbolic Language of the North, a historical and poetic exposition and explanation, 1808, revised and expanded 1832). This work represented a new study of the Eddas and challenged the primacy of Latin classicism as a cultural foundation for Northern Europe. Through this work Grundtvig sought to present ancient Norse mythology as a framework for the growing sense of nationalism, which

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⁶³ Oehlenschläger, Adam. *Der er et yndigt land (1819).* 'Not one but two national anthems.' Denmark.dk http://denmark.dk/en/quick-facts/national-anthems/ (Accessed 23/07/13). ⁶⁴ Grundtvig was also Steffen's cousin.

⁶⁵ Grundtvig was a key figure in the Folk High School movement. The first school opened in Rødding, Jutland in 1844.

 $^{^{66}}$ Grundtvig published his Danish translation of Beowulf in 1820. See section on the Vikings in Georgian and Victorian Britain.

was growing in Scandinavia as a response to its loss of territory and international standing.

The myths of the eddas are not just used to frame Grundtvig's argument - peppered as it is with references to Old Norse mythological personages and events - they are his argument, for what he perceives in northern myth is the symbology of a contemporary battle against all that is deleterious to the probity and power of the North, all that is alien to it.⁶⁷

Although Denmark was arguably a significant driving force behind the Nordic revival of Scandinavian National Romanticism, this movement had its counterparts in Sweden and Norway, who also strove to establish their own national identities and relationship with ancient Norse culture and Mythology.

In Sweden, National Romanticism began to emerge in the early nineteenth century through competing schools of nationalist thought, who aimed to elevate and promote Sweden's historical heritage. In 1811 the *Götiska Förbundet* (Gothic League) was founded as a literary and social society for Swedish academics drawn to the revival of ancient Norse mythology and the spirit of Olaus Rudbeck's *Gothicismus*⁶⁸ movement under the leadership of antiquarian Jakob Adlerbeth (1785–1844). ⁶⁹ This society established the publication *Iduna* as the vehicle for its poems, translations, articles and reviews by notable literary and historical figures such as, Esaias Tegnér (1782–1846), Erik Gustaf Geijer (1783–1847), Arvid August Afzelius (1785-1871), Karl August Nicander, Pehr Henrik Ling and Gustaf Vilhelm Gumaelius (1789–1877).

In this journal, Esaias Tegnér, a founder member of the society published his most famous work, drawn from the original Icelandic poem, *Frithjof's Saga*. This paraphrase in verse was first published in *Iduna* in 1820, a work which he published in full in 1825 and which went on to make him

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⁶⁷ Ibid. 38. p.112.

⁶⁸ Gothicismus or Gothicism was a patriotic Swedish movement claiming the historical primacy of Sweden and their ancient links to the Geat tribe (cf. *Beowulf*) and the Goths. The origins of this movement can be found in the work of Johannes Magnus (1488-1544) author of *Historia de omnibus gothorum sueonumque regibus* (1554) and his brother Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) who published *Carta marina et Descriptio septemtrionalium terrarum ac mirabilium rerum in eis contentarum, diligentissime elaborata Anno Domini 1539 Veneciis liberalitate Reverendissimi Domini Ieronimi Quirini* (1539) and his *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (1555).

famous throughout Europe as the saga was translated into numerous languages throughout Europe, notably in Britain and Germany where the saga was a popular success.

Another founding member of the *Götiska Förbundet*, historian, poet and composer Erik Gustaf Geijer who, together with Tegnér, made a considerable artistic and historical contribution to the emerging national identity of Sweden, published, in *Iduna*, one of his most famous poems, *Vikingen* (The Viking). In this poem, Geijer recounted the Romantic tale of a fifteen-year-old, living in cramped conditions with his family who ran away to become a heroic Viking traveller and warrior, bravely conquering new lands. His historical works, which traced the development of the Swedish people and the origins of its national culture, included *Svea rikes häfder* (Of the Records of Sweden) (1825) and *Svenska folkets historia* I-III, (The History of the Swedish People) (1832-36).

In 1807, Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom (1790-1855) established *MUSIS Amici* (The Friends of the Muses), renamed a year later as *Auroraförbundet* (The Aurora Society) and published much of his literary work and articles in the periodical *Fosforus*. Atterbom admired the work of Adam Oehlenschläger and was particularly influenced by the work of German Romantic poet Friedrich Schelling after they met during his stay in Germany and Italy between 1817 and 1819.⁷⁰ In his writings, Atterbom sought to raise the standing of ancient Nordic mythology to that of the Greek, Hindu and Judeo-Christian faith systems and to create a form of Romantic poetry, which was distinctively Swedish. Martin Arnold describes Atterbom's publication of *Skaldarmål* (The Speech of the Poet) in 1811, as 'a tribute to Scandinavian myth and legend, a repudiation of the declining standards of modernity, and a plea for a national Swedish poetry based on indigenous Scandinavian models.⁷¹

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⁷⁰ 'Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom.' Poethunter.com http://www.poemhunter.com/per-daniel-amadeus-atterbom/biography/ (Accessed 23/07/13).

⁷¹ Ibid. 38. p.110.

In Norway, National Romanticism emerged somewhat later than in Denmark and Sweden and is generally dated from the 1840s. It was during this latter part of the nineteenth century that the nationalist movement began to find its momentum with Norway finally gaining its full independence from its union with Sweden after a national referendum in 1905. Notable literary figures whose work contributed to the development of a revised Norwegian identity and sense of cultural rootedness, away from that of Viking barbarianism and dark mystic paganism, were Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812-1885) and Jørgen Engebretsen Moe (1813-1882). These writers and academics travelled around Norway to gather together a considerable number of folk tales, which they edited and adapted for popular readership as Norske Folkeeventyr (Norwegian Folk Tales). 72 This collection was first published in 1842-43, followed by a second volume in 1844 and a new expanded edition in 1871. Their work contributed not only to the cultural enrichment of Norway but also to the linguistic heritage of the Norwegian language⁷³ through the preservation of local dialects and is comparable in many ways to the work of the Brothers Grimm⁷⁴ in Germany, Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75) in Denmark, Elias Lönnrot (1802 - 1884) in Finland⁷⁵ and Jón Árnason⁷⁶ in Iceland.

Another key literary figure was Bjørnstjerne Martinius Bjørnson (1832-1910), whose poems and dramas brought him considerable national acclaim.⁷⁷ Much of his early work centred on the lives of the Norwegian peasantry and his major work was the poetic trilogy *Sigurd Slembe* (Sigurd the Bad), based on the twelfth century Norwegian pretender to the throne, published in 1862. In 1859, Bjørnson published the verses entitled "*Ja, vi elsker dette landet*" (Yes, We Love This Land), which were adopted as the

⁷² Sir George Webbe Dasent first translated the tales into English. His version of the collection was called *Popular Tales from the Norse* (1859). See section on the Vikings in Victorian Britain. ⁷³ Significant in this field was the work of Ivar Andreas Aasen (1813 –1896) who developed *Nynorsk* to provide a Norwegian alternative to the Danish language, which was commonly written in Norway at the time.

 $^{^{74}}$ Jacob (1785–1863) and Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859). See section on German National Romanticism.

⁷⁵ Elias Lönnrot compiled the *Kalevala*, the national epic of Finland from national folk tales, first published in 1835. *The Kalevala* played an instrumental role in the development of the Finnish national identity and its linguistic breakaway from Swedish.

⁷⁶ Jón Árnason (1819-88), author of *Íslenzk Æfintýri* (Icelandic Folktales) published in 1852.

 $^{^{77}\}mbox{ In }1903\mbox{, Bjørnson}$ was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

national anthem after 1864 when it was first performed at an event celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Norwegian constitution.⁷⁸

Yes we love this country
as it rises forth,
rugged, weathered, above the sea,
with the thousands of homes.

Love, love it and think
of our father and mother
and the saga night that sends
dreams to our earth.

This country Harald united
with his army of heroes,
this country Håkon protected
whilst Øyvind sung;
upon the country Olav painted
with his blood upon the cross,
from its heights Sverre spoke
up against Rome.⁷⁹

These first two verses form an interesting comparison with the opening of Oehlenschläger's *Der er et yndigt land* in the celebration of their countries' natural beauty and glorious past. In his second verse Bjørnson celebrates Norway's ancient kings and their achievements which founded the nation, such as the unification of Norway by Haraldr Hálfdanarson (c 850-932), the

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⁷⁸ 'Norway' Nationalanthems.info http://www.nationalanthems.info/no.htm (Accessed 24/07/13).

 $^{^{79}}$ 'National anthem lyrics - Ja, Vi Elsker Dette Landet' Lyrics on demand.com https://www.lyricsondemand.com/n/nationalanthemlyrics/norwaynationalanthemlyrics.html (Accessed 24/07/13).

prevention of civil war by Håkon Haraldsson (c. 920–961), the introduction of Christianity by Olaf II Haraldsson (995 –1030) and the opposition to Rome of Sverrir Sigurðarson (c. 1145-1202).

The revival of literary interest in ancient Nordic mythology as well as folklore and culture in Norway was also reflected in the work of one of Norway's most notable playwrights and poets, Henrik Johan Ibsen (1828-1906), who published *Kjæmpehøjen* (The Warriors Barrow) in 1850, *Hærmændene på Helgeland* (The Vikings at Helgeland) in 1858 and *Peer Gynt* in 1867.

This period, during which Norwegian academics sought to establish a national identity, saw the emergence of what became termed The Norwegian Historical School. This interpretation of Norway's prehistory was founded by professor at the Royal Frederick University in Kristiania, Oslo, Rudolf Keyser (1803-1864) and one of his students Peter Andreas Munch (1810-1863). Their theories suggested that the original Sami inhabitants of Norway had been displaced, firstly by Celtic tribes, who brought with them the Bronze Age, and secondly by Germanic tribes who founded the Iron Age. This theory therefore suggested that Norway was a diffusion point of a superior culture and technology founded by ancient Germanic tribes. This interpretation fitted with current theories of Germanic racial superiority and Scandinavian settlement of thinkers such as Swedish academics Andreas Retzius (1796-1860) and Sven Nilsson (1787-1883). In Measuring the Master Race: Physical Anthropology in Norway 1890-1945 (2015) historian Jon Røyne Kyllingstad discussed the role played by a small but influential group of Scandinavian anthropologists in the later development of Nordicism. Kyllingstad argues that the emerging concept of Nordic racial superiority in Europe became a means of defining their own national standing in both a Scandinavian and international context.

Among Scandinavians themselves, the idea of Nordic racial superiority has a significant impact upon notions of national identity, and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Scandinavian scholars played an important part in creating and perpetuating the concept of a Nordic race. By imbuing the idea of the Nordic race

with scientific legitimacy, these scholars also advanced its international recognition and standing.80

In his work Kyllingstad argued that Norway's struggle for independence and the recovery of its national identity and standing in the international community led some thinkers, such as Rudolf Keyser, to seek to locate the nation's greatness in a mythical era of Germanic greatness, an association disputed by many contemporary thinkers⁸¹ but which nonetheless had a significant influence on a marginal group of later Nordicists in Scandinavia who sought to regenerate a mythical former greatness within their respective countries.

Keyser's theory implied that, despite the weak state of present-day Norway, the forefathers of the Norwegians had once dominated Scandinavia and were the true originators of the ancient Norse Culture [...] Keyser's narrative implied that the present-day Norwegian state embodied the reawakening of ancient Germanic traditions and modern ideas of liberty and democracy.82

In the visual arts, National Romanticism was reflected across Scandinavia in much the same way as its literature, in what came to be termed Den danske guldalder (The Danish Golden Age). In her analysis of this period, In Another Light (2007), Patricia G. Berman comments on the political motivations of these artists stating that the 'instability of this period gave rise to a consolidated effort in the visual arts to stabilize and magnify a sense of Danish identity'. 83 The proliferation in nationalist art during this period spanned a range of styles and media reflecting the European trend from neo-classicism through Romanticism towards realism.

The romanticized neo-classic images of Norse mythology reflected the revival of interest in Norse mythology as a rival to Greco-Latin subjects. depicting stunning scenes from the Eddas. Notable works were *Tors strid med*

83 Berman, Patricia G. (2013) In Another Light - Danish Painting in the Nineteenth Century. London: Thames and Hudson p.17.

⁸⁰ Kyllingstad, Jon Røyne (2015) *Measuring the Master Race: Physical Anthropology in Norway* 1890-1945. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers. p.207.

⁸¹ Kyllingstad comments that that by the time that Much and Keyser had died in 1863 and 1864 respectively, their theories were losing academic ground.

⁸² Kyllingstad, Jon Røyne Measuring the Master Race. p.806.

jättarna (Thor's Battle with the Giants, 1872), 84 by Swedish painter Mårten Eskil Winge (1825-1896), Asgårdsreien (The Wild Hunt, 1872) by Norwegian painter Peter Nicolai Arbo (1831-1892) and the numerous illustrations of Danish artist Lorentz Frølich (1820-1908), (see figure 6). Another more popular strand of Romantic art was the development of landscape painting during this period, which depicted the beauty of the countryside, often featuring the rural population, but also frequently featuring historical buildings, menhirs and burial mounds as a reminder of the enduring presence of the ancient past. Notable works of this genre include Denmark's Christen Købke's Frederiksborg Castle in the Evening Light (1835), The Transept of Arhus Cathedral (1830), Johan Thomas Lundbye's Landscape at Arresø (1838), Dolmen at Raklev (1839), (see figure 3), and the leading artist in this movement, Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg's, (1783 –1853), stunning depiction of the bombing of Copenhagen by the British Navy. In Norway this school of art was represented by Johan Christian Claussen Dahl (1788 – 1857) who became the leading painter of the Norwegian Golden Age with stunning landscapes such as Megalithic Tomb in Winter, (1824-25), (see figure 2), Shipwreck on the Coast of Norway, (1832) and Stalheim (1842).

In their creative work, the literary and visual artists of Scandinavia encoded the nationalist agenda of the period, reflecting the duality of their shared roots and overlapping interests as well as their individual struggles for independence as separate nations. What emerges strongly from this period is their need to establish a sense of national identity, rootedness and unity as a reaction to a European modernity, which was undermining their culture and national status. The Scandinavian Nordic revival was however, hugely influential in Northern Europe and the eastern states of America, providing inspiration and new sources from which many National Romantic writers and artists, and later racial ideologists in these countries were to develop their own variants of this phenomenon, some of which could be considered early forms of cultural and biological Nordicism.

84 See Figure 4.

Romanticism and the Viking in Georgian and Victorian Britain

In Britain, interest in Nordic culture was limited during the first half of the eighteenth century remaining in the main, antiquarian, literary or linguistic. This trend coincided with what has come to be termed the Celtic Revival, a literary and cultural movement which, in many respects, took a similar and often convergent path into the developing field of nationalist identity politics.

In 1703-5 George Hickes provided the first translation into English of Norse poetry entitled *Linguarium veterum Septentrionalium thesaurus grammatico-criticus et archæologicus* which became an important source of future scholarship. The influence of Paul-Henri Mallet's vision of ancient Scandinavian culture and society in *L'histoire du Dannemarc* was conveyed to a Georgian society through its translation, published in 1770 by Bishop Thomas Percy, ⁸⁵ as *Northern Antiquities*. Prior to this, in 1763, Percy had published his *Five pieces of runic poetry translated from the islandic language*, in which he presented his translations of Old Norse poems by Olaus Verelius ⁸⁶, Olaus Worm, Johan Peringskiöld ⁸⁷ (1654-1720) and Thomas Bartholin. These poems were imbued with dramatic tales of battle, revenge, courage, love, death and camaraderie, which plunged the reader into a primordial pagan world, free of the constraints, conventions and complications of modern society.

In *The Vikings and the Victorians* (2002), Andrew Wawn describes the vibrant, emotive themes of Percy's work in which 'readers could relish the zest for life, the sensuous thrill of battle, and the clear sighted way in which death is confronted'. Wawn adds, however, that the public reception of Percy's work was 'by no means ecstatic'⁸⁸ and that it was his 1770 publication of *Northern*

⁸⁵ Thomas Percy (1729-1811).

⁸⁶ Olaus Verelius (1618-1682) was a Swedish scholar of ancient Nordic culture; he published a number of Icelandic sagas and, in 1675, a handbook on Swedish runes.

⁸⁷ Johan Peringskiöld (1654-1720), a notable Swedish antiquarian who translated numerous texts from Icelandic also listed and made drawings of rune stones, hill forts, graves and other prehistoric monuments.

⁸⁸ Wawn, Andrew (2002) *The Vikings and the Victorians; Inventing the Old North in Nineteenth Century Britain.* Cambridge: DS Brewer 2002. p.25.

Antiquities that had a more significant impact on British interest in ancient Nordic culture. In this work Percy revised and corrected many aspects of Mallet's earlier work and provided the most scholarly, comprehensive study available at the time, a work which future scholars such as J.A. Blackwell built on in his revised edition of *Northern Antiquities*, published in 1847, which became 'a central work amongst old northern enthusiasts throughout the nineteenth century.'⁸⁹

Notable amongst British poets who drew inspiration from translations of eddic poetry was Thomas Gray (1716-71) who, in 1768, published *The Fatal Sisters* and *The Descent of Odin*, which were enhanced with illustrations in subsequent editions by both William Blake (1757-1827) and Swiss-born artist Henry Fuseli⁹⁰ (1741-1825). In this work, written in the emerging Gothic style of the period, Gray presented a dark, menacing, mythical world, as in this verse where *Oðinn* rides on his horse *Sleipnir* into *HeI*, the realm of the dead, which is guarded by the monstrous wolf *Fenrir*. In *HeI*, *Oðinn* is to learn, from the prophetess, of the future fate of his son *Baldr* and the approaching events of *Ragnarǫk*.

Uprose the king of men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed:
Down the yawning steep he rode,
That leads to Hela's drear abode.
Him the dog of darkness spied:
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,
While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,
Foam and human gore distill'd:⁹¹

This Gothic treatment of Nordic subjects was also reflected in the field of the visual arts. The striking style developed in Fuseli's representation of Norse mythology offered dramatic, awe-inspiring images of the Norse pantheon, adding significant momentum to Romanticism's idealized portrayal of Norse

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⁸⁹ Wawn, Andrew *The Vikings and the Victorians.* p.26.

 $^{^{90}}$ Born as Johann Heinrich Füssli, spent much of his working life in Britain where in 1799 he was appointed professor of painting at the Royal Academy, and keeper of the Academy in 1804.

⁹¹ Gray, Thomas (1821) *The Descent of Odin - The Poetical Works of Thomas Gray.* London: John Sharpe. Source: Google books. (Accessed 14/03/13). p.37.

culture and mythology. Notable amongst Fuseli's works are his famous *The Nightmare* (1781), and *Thor Battering the Midgard Serpent*, which he completed in 1790, (see figure 5). In this work, Fuseli's image of the naked God fused the established neo-classical style, usually associated with the portrayal of Greek and Roman gods, with Norse myth to create a stunning representation of *Pórr's* final battle with *Jormungandr* during the cataclysmic events of *Ragnarok*, (see figure 4). This example of early Romantic artists joining poets and novelists in depicting dramatic, heroic scenes drawn from translations of Icelandic sagas was to be followed by a number of British artists such as W.G. Collingwood (1854-1932) and Sir Frank Dicksee (1853-1928), whose works contributed to the formulation of this romanticized vision of the Nordic people and their culture, (see figure 7).

Published in 1796, Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, a travel narrative and personal autobiographical memoir, by writer and early advocate of woman's rights, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), was a popular success which brought Scandinavia and the natural beauty of its countryside to public and literary attention. This work covered a range of social, economic and personal reflections, notably the relationship between society and individual subjective experience and inspired many to travel to Scandinavia to experience the sublime relationship with the beauty of the Nordic landscapes depicted in her work.

Another significant early influence on the Nordic revival in Britain and Europe which emerged from the concurrent interest in reviving ancient Celtic literature and culture was the publication, in 1760, of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and Translated from the Gaelic or Erse Language* and in 1763 of *Fingal* by Scottish poet, James Macpherson. Collectively these works became known as *The Poems of Ossian* and had a considerable impact on both the scholarly and popular readership in Britain and Europe. In these verses, which Macpherson claimed to have translated from ancient manuscripts, a blind bard named Ossian tells of the barbaric sea-borne raiders from Scandinavia, who settled on the Orkney Islands and

worshipped their pagan God Loda. In this verse Fingal comes across Viking chiefs Swaran and Starno in a clearing in the woods, whilst they are consulting their God before attacking Fingal's men.

Three stones, with heads of moss, are there; a stream, with foaming course: and dreadful, rolled around them, is the dark-red cloud of Loda. High from its top looked forward a ghost, half-formed of the shadowy smoak. He poured his voice, at times amidst the roaring stream. Near, bending beneath a blasted tree, two heroes received his words: Swaran of lakes and Starno foe of strangers. On their dun shields, they darkly leaned: their spears are forward through night. Shrill sounds the blast of darkness, in Starno's floating beard. ⁹²

The success of Macpherson's dark, atmospheric tales had an influence extending beyond Britain and was subsequently translated into twenty-six languages. ⁹³ Arnold also suggests that Macpherson's work did much to stimulate subsequent artistic, literary and public interest in northern literature, notably in the work of Henri Mallet, as well as promoting the cause of Scottish Nationalism. Collectively these early-Romantic visions of ancient Norse culture set the scene for the later Victorian fascination with ancient Norse culture, a relationship with a romanticized distant past which shaped what came to be known as the Viking era.

The enduring popular image of the Viking as a 'noble savage' owes much to the Victorian idealization of this period, which built on late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Romanticism to establish what could be termed a 'historical caricature' of ancient Nordic culture. In his study of the Victorians' relationship with the Vikings, Andrew Wawn commented that 'in many ways, the Victorians invented the Vikings' and that it was during this period that the term and its time span became defined. Wawn points out that the term first appeared, in its current form, ⁹⁵ in the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1807⁹⁶ and

 $^{^{92}}$ Macpherson, James (1801) *The Poems of Ossian.* Vienna: R. Sammler. Source: Google books. (Accessed 16/04/13).

⁹³ Ibid. 38. p.92.

⁹⁴ Wawn, Andrew The Vikings and the Victorians. p.3.

 ⁹⁵ Previous versions of the term had existed and Wawn provides an interesting account of the various etymologies that have been proposed although none as yet have proved conclusive.
 96 In his work Wawn also provides a fascinating account of the linguistic evolution of the term Viking.

that it was during this period of rapid industrial growth and concomitant social change, that many academics and the general public sought to embrace their Nordic roots. This resulted in a proliferation of literature, both academic and aimed at a broad public readership, including children, in which the term Viking became associated with a plethora of idealized characteristics. Wawn comments that:

The ubiquity of the term 'Viking' masks a wide variety of constructions of Vikingism: the old northmen are variously buccaneering, triumphalist, defiant, pious, relentlessly jolly, or self-destructively sybaritic. They are merchant adventurers, mercenary soldiers, pioneering colonists, pitiless raiders, self-sufficient farmers, cutting-edge naval technologists, primitive democrats, psychopathic berserks, ardent lovers and complicated poets.⁹⁷

This complex composite image of the Viking was developed by Victorian visual and literary artists and appealed to a Victorian society seeking to establish a sense of connection with an exciting and untamed cultural past which was depicted as noble, bold and adventurous; all aspirational qualities of this period of international rivalry, conflict and empire building.

Public interest in the Viking during this period produced an increasing division between academic research and popular literature aimed at a exploiting the burgeoning publishing market for the novel. It was also attractive to academics in the developing fields of comparative literature, linguistics, anthropology and philology, which sought to interpret the early medieval Icelandic texts and the runic inscriptions, whilst historians and archaeologists sought evidence of ancient Nordic culture in Scandinavia and of the Viking occupation in Britain.

In academic circles the publication in 1835-7 of the first translation into English of the Anglo-Saxon *Nowell Codex* manuscript, which came to be known as *Beowulf*, provided a new source of scholarly research. The text, which has been dated to between the eighth and early eleventh centuries.⁹⁸

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⁹⁷ Ibid. 88. p.4.

⁹⁸ Bates, Catherine (2010) *The Cambridge Companion to the Epic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.64.

had remained neglected for many years and its first appearance in 1563 was as part of a collection of the 15th century antiquarian Laurence Nowell (c.1515-c.1571). The manuscript later came into the possession of Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1570/1-1631), antiquarian and founder of the Cotton Library. This text was originally translated into Latin, in 1815, by Icelandic scholar Grímur Jónsson Thorkelín (1752-1829), whose research was commissioned by the Danish government, and subsequently translated into Danish by NFS Gruntvig⁹⁹ in 1820. In 1835-7 John Mitchell Kemble (1807-1857) published the first full English edition making this previously neglected work available to a broader public.

The *Beowulf* poem was set in pre-Viking¹⁰⁰ Scandinavia and recounts the tale of a heroic Geat¹⁰¹ warrior who crosses the sea to Denmark, where he rids the Danes of a grotesque man-eating demon called Grendel. Beowulf must subsequently battle the mother of the beast and later in life, a fire-breathing dragon, which eventually inflicts a fatal wound on him. This poem is imbued with a fusion of Christian and Pagan beliefs and values, depicting a newly established Christian society where, in times of difficulty, the people still fell back on their old pagan Gods for guidance. *Beowulf* is presented as an almost super-human hero, synthesizing Christian virtues with the courage and humanity of *Pórr* who undertakes sensational, heroic trials in his battle against evil.

The scholarly and public interest generated by *Beowulf* is evident in the numerous re-editions and new translations, which were published during this period. J.M. Kemble added to and improved his original translation in editions published in 1835 and 1837, and further translations were subsequently published by A. Diedrich Wackerbarth in 1849, Benjamin Thorpe in 1855 and 1875, Thomas Arnold in 1876, Lieut.-Colonel H. W.

⁹⁹ Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783- 1872). See previous section on Scandinavia. ¹⁰⁰ Prior to recorded Viking raids on the east coast of Britain at the end of the eighth century, notably the raid on Lindisfarne in 793 AD.

¹⁰¹ The Geats were an ancient tribe occupying southern Sweden.

¹⁰² An authoritative analysis of the reception history of *Beowulf* is provided by Shippey, Tom A. (1998) *Beowulf: the critical history.* London: Routledge.

Lumsden in 1881 and 1883, and John Earle in 1892, 103 together with numerous translations into other European languages. Our enduring interest in Beowulf was evident in the popular reception of director Robert Zemeckis' modern CGI interpretation of Beowulf (2007).

Victorian society's fascination with its Viking past was particularly evident in the public response to the 1861 publication of *The Story of Burnt* Njal¹⁰⁴ by Sir George Webbe Dasent (1817–1896). Dasent's pre-publication sales of a thousand copies 105 indicated a readership eagerly awaiting his latest work¹⁰⁶ and Wawn comments that is was through this tale of ancient Icelandic honour codes and prolonged blood feuds 'that Dasent won his Victorian celebrity.'107 Contemporary reviews described his work as 'unequalled in European poetry' and 'unsurpassed by any existing monument in the narrative department of any literature, ancient or modern, '108 and his work was regularly republished.

Another popular Victorian work was Friðþjófs (Thrithiof's) saga hins frækna, which was first translated into English in 1833 by Rev. William Strong. This Icelandic saga, about the son of a Norwegian King, was subsequently republished in sixteen different versions 109 during the Queen's reign and its themes of dark magic, love, treachery, perdition, violence and adventure must have appealed to a Victorian readership as a form of entertaining escapism. On a secondary level, it also invites the reader to empathize with its hero and to connect on an emotional level with an ancient Nordic experience. The concluding Christian redemption of its hero must have also appealed to the moral sensibilities of a Victorian society who could enjoy a feeling of Viking

¹⁰³ See Tinker, Chauncey B. (2008) The Translations of Beowulf - A Critical Biography. Connecticut: Yale University http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25942/25942-h/25942-h.htm (Accessed 03/03/13).

¹⁰⁴ This was a translation of Brennu-Njáls saga.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.88. p.142.

¹⁰⁶ Dasent's previous publications included translations of *The Prose Edda* (1842), Rask's Grammar of the Icelandic or Old-Norse Tongue (1843), and Popular Tales from the Norse (Norske Folkeeventyr) by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe (1859). ¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 88. p.148.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 88. p.157. Wawn quotes *The Guardian* and *Saturday Review*.

¹⁰⁹Wawn, Andrew. 'The Viking Revival' BBC History

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/revival_01.shtml (Accessed 11/04/13).

kinship whilst still celebrating their sense of civilization and morality through Christ. Its popularity as a literary work and its idealization of the Viking was enhanced by the illustrations, added in 1910 by Thomas Heath Robinson (1869-1950) whose stunning artwork contributed to the image created by Romantic historicism of the Viking warrior-figure wearing horned helmets attacking from their terrifying ships of war, (see figure 8) which became engrained in the Victorian collective imagination as an 'ideal type.' Other notable publications during this period include William Morris' *The Saga of Gunnlaug Worm-Tongue* and *Grettis Saga* in 1869 and the *Story of the Volsungs and Niblungs* in (1870), Rider Haggard's *Eric Brighteyes* (1891), J.F. Hodgetts' *The Champion of Odin* (1885) and *Kormak the Viking* (1902).

In the emerging discipline of history, the nineteenth century saw many developments such as the foundation of The British Archaeological Association in 1843, whose aims were to support and disseminate quality research in their fields and The Viking Society for Northern Research, founded in London in 1892, as a group dedicated to the study and promotion of the ancient culture of Scandinavia. History as a social science was, however, still defining its approach to knowledge, its role and its methodology and was often forced to bridge a lack of factual evidence with varying degrees of assumption. Archaeology or antiquarianism, in particular, become a fashionable field of research across Europe and many ancient grave sites were opened and areas of Viking occupation were excavated in order to recover evidence of this period and understand more about their everyday lives. Scandinavia and particularly Iceland became sites of interest for British historians and artists who wished to immerse themselves in Nordic culture and seek out historical evidence of the heroic sagas, recover artifacts and study the runic inscriptions which appeared on standing stones, buildings and personal objects throughout Scandinavia. Notable in this field was the work of George Stephens (1813-1895), an archeologist and philologist, who conducted research in Scandinavia, especially on interpreting runic inscriptions. His works included The Old-Northern runic monuments of Scandinavia and England, 4 volumes (1866–1901), Old Norse fairy tales (1882), and The runes: whence came they (1894).

The relationship between Victorian society and the Vikings is a complex one. Despite early descriptions of Vikings, in sources such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, as primitively brutal and violent invaders, the depiction of the Viking became progressively 'domesticated' to suit Victorian sensibilities. This image, created by a burgeoning market in popular literature, came to dominate the public imagination and over-shadow serious academic research. Through this process, which Martin Arnold describes, as 'a bourgeois populism bordering on what might be called 'Viking kitsch,'¹¹⁰ the public embraced this ennobled image of the Viking as a source of national identity and pride. On the final page of R.M. Ballantyre's *Erling the Bold: A Tale of Norse Sea-Kings*, published in 1869, the author expressed his belief in the virtues that the British had inherited from their Viking ancestors with a sense of heightened nationalist fervour that could be considered an early expression of cultural and biological Nordicism.

'Yes, there is perhaps more of Norse blood in your veins than you wot of, reader, whether you be English of Scotch; for these sturdy sea-rovers invaded our lands from north, south, east and west many a time in days gone by, and held it in possession for centuries at a time, leaving a lasting and beneficial impress on our customs and characters. We have good reason to regard their memory with respect and gratitude, despite their faults and sins, for much of what is good and true in our laws and social customs, much of what is manly and vigorous in the British Constitution, and much of our intense love of freedom and fair play, is due to the pith, pluck and enterprise, and sense of justice that dwelt in the breasts of the rugged old sea-kings of Norway!'111

In 1873, George Dasent described the perceived ancestral bond between the Viking and the Victorian in similar terms, expressing what could be considered early elements of Nordicism through its belief in the superior nature of Viking culture and its biological transmission through the Vikings' 'blood relatives' in Victorian Britain.

They (the Vikings) were like England in the nineteenth century: fifty years before all the rest of the world with her manufactories, and firms and five and twenty before them with her railways. They were the foremost in the race of civilization and progress; well started before all the rest had thought of running. No wonder, then, that both won.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid.38. p.127.

¹¹¹ Ibid. 109.

 $^{^{\}rm 112}$ Ibid. 88. p.176 Wawn quotes Dasent 1873.

This was a period of national prosperity and international power during which Britain sought to export its culture to its expanding colonies. A strong sense of national cultural and religious identity had previously been established, notably during the Tudor period and patriotism was promoted as an essential social value throughout Georgian and Victorian society. This sense of 'Britishness' centred on the nation being an island race, which through absorbing Celtic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Viking and Norman influences, had already established a sense of rootedness and stability, which acted as a cultural and biological foundation for the British people. 113 This cultural mix also meant that there was no particular group or ethnie within Britain that sought to lay claim to a pure Nordic heritage. This established sense of rootedness provided a stable nomos against the eroding forces of modernity and there was therefore no apparent need to establish a relationship with an ancient Nordic past other than for scholastic interest and public entertainment. The Romantic vision of the Viking and his kinship to the British, which endured into the early twentieth century, tended therefore to remain either populist or academic and did not have a significant influence on mainstream political thought in Britain at the time. These conditions meant that, apart from a few isolated cases, the Victorians' relationship with their Viking heritage did not become radicalized or politicized as in Germany and America during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century, and therefore although traces of early cultural and biological Nordicism can be identified, they did not evolve into any significant form biological political and cultural agenda.

Born in the USA - The Vinland Myth

The Declaration of Independence of 4th July 1776 and the ensuing war, which lasted from 1775 to 1783, marked the political rupture of the thirteen east coast British colonies, ¹¹⁴ from the rule of Britain's George III. It also established the basis of a new Republican social order, whose rationale was epitomized in Thomas Jefferson's proclamation that that 'all men are created

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¹¹³ O'Donoghue, Heather (2008) From Asgard to Valhalla. London: I.B.Tauris. p.131.

¹¹⁴ Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts Bay, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness'. These iconic words became the founding principles of the new nation, which sought to cast off established institutions of class, monarchy and nobility to embrace the revolutionary spirit of National Romanticism that was sweeping across western civilization. The act of severing the links with the Mother Country and the Old World also inaugurated an era in which the newly formed state was forced to achieve its own sense of independent cultural identity.

Many oppressed Europeans considered the newly established American nation a 'land of plenty' and looked across the Atlantic to the promise of a new homeland away from the corruption, hardship and disorienting impact of modern European industrialization and urbanization. During the nineteenth century, the United States spread rapidly westwards as the result of state railroad expansion, ¹¹⁶ and opened its doors to mass immigration as increasingly large passenger liners made international travel accessible to a much wider public. European immigrants left their countries of origin for a range of social, religious, political and economic reasons, attracted by the promise of land, enterprise, social equality and religious tolerance.

Settlers from Northern Europe had created communities in areas such as New England since the early seventeenth century, notably the large group of German immigrants who settled in the Pennsylvania area between the 1680s to 1760s and who, by 1775, constituted about one-third of the population of the state. Immigration increased rapidly during the nineteenth century as America offered unprecedented opportunities for new settlers and between 1820 and 1870 German immigrants accounted for a third of the 7.5 million immigrants from Northern and Western Europe who poured into America to the escape the political turmoil and economic hardship of their

 $^{^{115}}$ The American Declaration of Independence, written by Founding Father Thomas Jefferson (1743 –1826) 'The Declaration of Independence' US history.org

http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document (Accessed 01/06/13).

¹¹⁶ The Pacific Railway Act of 1862 created the first transcontinental railroad and opened America to increased settlement across the nation.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 115.

native countries.¹¹⁸ By 1890, an estimated 2.8 million German-born immigrants lived in the United States many of whom were located in the 'German triangle,' between Cincinnati, Milwaukee, and St. Louis¹¹⁹ and it is estimated that by 1894 about 800 German-language journals were being printed in the United States.¹²⁰

The Homestead Act of 1862 provided a considerable stimulus to this immigration by offering free land to any settler who cultivated and developed an allocated plot for a period of five years. During this period, immigration from Scandinavia also increased significantly as overcrowding, the scarcity of land, a number of crop failures and subsequent economic hardship caused Danish, Norwegian and Swedish citizens to emigrate from Scandinavia, many to the United States. These settlers set up home primarily in the Midwest, often clustered in communities across states such as Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Iowa and Illinois and had an increasing impact on the development of American culture.

The creation of a new unified nation out of the expanding socioeconomic and multicultural melting pot of the United States also required the creation of a sense of national rootedness and cohesion through the construction of a shared history and traditions. The history of the nation, through the lens of National Romanticism provided heightened, inspirational portrayals of the nation's founding, its natural beauty, the lives of early settlers, and their struggle for independence. American Romantic literary and visual artists expressed the sense of renaissance, optimism and individualism, which was spreading across the nation, the search for new unifying spiritual roots and the sense of the sublime inspired in them by the untamed beauty of the

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¹¹⁸ Ibid. 115.

¹¹⁹ Source: 'German Immigration to the USA', Library of Congress Online.

http://www.loc.gov/rr/european/ (Accessed 25/03/18).

¹²⁰ Ibid. 119.

¹²¹ Source: 'The Homestead Act', Ourdocuments.gov

http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=31 (Accessed 15/06/13).

122 Figures show: 1,000 000 Swedes (1868-1914), 800 000 Norwegians (1825- 1925) and 300,000 Danes (1820-1920) 'Scandinavian Immigration', Harvard University Library Open collections. http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/immigration/scandinavian.html (Accessed 15/06/13).

American landscape. 123 One of the most influential elements of this movement was the Hudson River School, inspired by the work of its founder Thomas Cole (1801-1848) and influenced by the Düsseldorf Academy where many of them had trained. The work of this group reflected the American experience of discovery, exploration and settlement, showing humans, notably native Americans, living in harmony with nature. In this context the Hudson River School associated Rousseau's 'noble savage' with the Native American portrayed in realistic but romanticized representations of America's unspoilt natural wilderness. The work of Thomas Cole, in particular, expressed the pastoralist view that the spread of settlers across America would ultimately lead to the devastation of its natural beauty and native population. Between 1833 and 1836, Cole created his powerful five-part series of paintings entitled *The Course of Empire* in which he depicted the same landscape over generations from its untouched savage state to its civilization, decline and eventual destruction.

Within this search for national roots and identity many first and subsequent second-generation Germanic and Scandinavian Americans became increasingly attracted to their own 'foundation myth', that of Vínland and the original discovery of American soil by Leifr Eríksson around the year 1000 AD. This mythologizing of Vínland originated in scholarly interest in the *Vínland Sagas* during the eighteenth century and progressively took on an increasingly political and cultural dynamic as it spread to a much wider public during the nineteenth century.

These sagas, entitled the *Grœnlendinga saga* (The Saga of the Greenlanders) and *Eiríks saga rauða* (Eirik the Red's Saga) were originally written in Iceland during late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries and represent a composite account of the discovery and colonization of Greenland, the subsequent discovery of America and attempts by early Norse settlers to inhabit this new land. Collectively, the sagas recount the discovery and

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 $^{^{123}}$ In 1872 artist John Gast painted a popular scene of people moving west that captured the mood of Americans at the time. Called "Spirit of the Frontier." In many respects this work could be consider to embody the sprit of the American National Romantic Movement.

settlement of Greenland by Eiríkr rauði, ¹²⁴ the first accidental sighting of the American coast by Bjarni Herjólfsson, Leifr Eríksson's first expedition, and subsequent exploration and attempts to settle the new lands by Leifr's brother Thorvald, Þorfinnr karlsefni (Thorfinn Karlsefni) and Freydís Eiríksdóttir (Eirik's daughter). These accounts originated from a range of Icelandic sources and were recopied and edited over centuries until they reached their established form, as Icelandic scholar Magnus Magnusson pointed out in his introduction to the sagas. ¹²⁵

It must always be borne in mind that the Icelandic sagas were never museum pieces, embalming for all time a literary act; they were living things, and later generations thought nothing of adapting or rewriting them to suit changing tastes. 126

The sagas developed as organic literary works, a process that reflected the aspirations and concerns of their successive writers as much as it reflected the reality of the original expeditions. Although an 'imperfect history, the sagas stimulated considerable scholarly interest, as evidence of the early Norse discovery and attempted settlement of America. Leifr's discovery and naming of the rocky Helluland, ¹²⁷ the wooded Markland, ¹²⁸ and the land where they remained for the winter which he named Vínland ¹²⁹ became a focus of interest as historians and enthusiasts attempted to identify these regions as a Nordic promised land where wild grapes grew, the rivers teemed with Salmon and where the climate was so mild that there was no winter frost and livestock could graze all year round. ¹³⁰

These texts were opened to European scholarship by the publication of a Latin paraphrase of the sagas in *Historia Vinlandiæ Antiquæ* (1705) by Icelandic historian Þormóður Torfason (Thormodus Torfæus).¹³¹ In 1837.

¹²⁴ Also known as Eirīkr Þōrvaldsson (Erik Thorvaldsson) (950 – c. 1003).

 $^{^{125}}$ This introduction provides a useful account of the Sagas' evolution as literary texts.

¹²⁶ Magnusson, Magnus (1965) (Trans.) *The Vinland Sagas*. London: Penguin Books. Kindle edition. p.48.

¹²⁷ Now identified as Baffin Island.

¹²⁸ Now identified as Labrador and Newfoundland.

¹²⁹ Although alternative suggestions have been put forward, scholarly consensus accepts Vinland as meaning the 'land of the grape vine'.

¹³⁰ Magnusson, Magnus, (Trans.) The Vinland Sagas. p. 83.

 $^{^{131}}$ In 1667 Torfason was appointed royal antiquary of Iceland, and in 1662 King Christian V of Denmark appointed him Royal Historian of the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway. His other major

Danish antiquarian Carl Christian Rafn (1795-1864), published his account of early Viking expeditions to *Vinland* entitled *Antiquitates Americanae*. This work, published in Latin and Danish, provided translations and notes on the sagas and a commentary in English on a range of ancient sites and artefacts, which Rafn presented as evidence of early Norse occupation of the eastern States. Notable amongst Rafn's archaeological evidence was his claim that the Newport Tower on Rhode Island, a stone tower resting on eight archways, was part of a Church built by early Norse settlers. Rafn also suggested that the Dighton Rock, a large boulder, originally located in the riverbed of the Taunton River at Berkley, Massachusetts, bore ancient Norse inscriptions. His identification of these artefacts attracted, however, considerable criticism from academics in Europe and America.

Rafn's work, however, provided one of the first scholarly works on early Norse settlement on American soil and generated considerable interest in America and Northern Europe. The reception of *Antiquitates Americanae* was mixed, both in terms of criticism of its methodology and its challenge to the foundation story of Christopher Columbus. Rafn's work was, however, of particular interest amongst those seeking evidence of a Viking heritage in the United States and who continued to present, throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a considerable number of now discredited artefacts as authentic evidence of a Viking past and the geographical location of Vínland. Noteworthy amongst these finds was the Kensington Runestone, found in 1898 in Solem, Douglas County, Minnesota and Thorwald's Rock in Hampton, which was claimed 133 to mark the burial site of Þōrvaldr Eirikssonr (Thorwald Eirikson), brother of Leifr.

In 1832, the discovery of a skeleton with metal, bark and fabric artefacts in Fall River, Massachusetts attracted considerable attention and a

works include *Grænlandia Antiqua* (1706) and *Historia Rerum Norvegicarum* (four volumes, 1711).

¹³² Geraldine Barnes provides an analysis of the reception of this work in her 2001 work *Viking America - The First Millennium*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.

¹³³ In 1902 by Charles A. Lamprey, District Court Judge whose family had owned the site since the 1600's. Source: Craig, David V. 'Thorwald's Grave: Fact or Legend?' Lane Memorial Library Online. http://www.hampton.lib.nh.us/hampton/history/parks/thorvald/thorwaldsgrave.htm (Accessed 22/06/13).

range of theories as to its origin. This find inspired Romantic poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-82)¹³⁴ to publish *The Skeleton in Armor* in 1841, in which the ghost of a Viking tells of his life in Norway, his love for a Norwegian princess and their journey to America.

Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to lee-ward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I this lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward. 135

In *Longfellow and Scandinavia* (1970), Andrew Hilen examines Longfellow's relationship with Scandinavia and suggests that he had planned a heroic poem about the Norse discovery of America for some time and that the discovery of this skeleton, together with a recent visit to the Newport Tower provided him with the ideal material to compose this ballad. The poem enjoyed considerable public success, which according to Hilen, 'reemphasized the fact, for Longfellow, that ancient Scandinavian history and tradition offered fresh and diverting subjects for romantic poetry.' 136

Longfellow was a well-travelled scholar who became significantly influenced by European National Romantic movement, and who developed a keen interest in Nordic literature and culture, notably during his stay in Copenhagen in 1835. During this two-week trip he studied the works of Johannes Ewald, Adam Oehlenschläger and N.F.S. Grudtvig and came into contact with a circle of Danish academics, including Carl Christian Rafn who was working on his *Antiquitates Americanae*. Andrew Hilen describes how

¹³⁴ Longfellow was part of a group of popular New England poets which included William Cullen Bryant, John Greenleaf Whittier, James Russell Lowell, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. and who became known as the 'Fireside Poets'.

¹³⁵ Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. 'The Skeleton in Armor,' University of Pittsburgh. http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/longfellow.html#skeleton (Accessed 22/06/13). ¹³⁶ Hilen, Andrew (1970) *Longfellow and Scandinavia, A study of the Poet's Relationship with the Northern Languages and Literature.* Hamden, CT: Archon Books. p.93.

they developed a close working relationship as Rafn saw Longfellow as a 'likely representative in America.' ¹³⁷

In 1863 Longfellow published a series of poems based on Norse history and mythology as part of his *Tales of a Wayside Inn.* In *Thor - Myth to Marvel,* Martin Arnold suggests that many of these poems were inspired by his reading of Samuel Laing's 138 1844 translation of Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*, notably his series of poems, published in 1863, based on episodes of the late tenth century Norwegian King Olaf Tryggvason. 139 Amongst these narrative poems, *The Challenge of Thor* became one of his best known works in which Þórr confronts Christ challenging him to combat.

Force rules the world, still Has ruled it, shall rule it; Meekness is weakness, Strength is triumphant, Over the whole earth Still it is Thor's Day!

Thou art a God too
O Galilean!
And thus single-handed
Unto the combat,
Gauntlet or Gospel,
Here I defy thee!

Martin Arnold also suggests that the themes of Longfellow's *Challenge of Thor* convey the *Zeitgeist* of the era as Northern European immigrants sought to adapt to a new nation whilst still seeking to create their own sense of national identity, mythology and rootedness.

Taken by itself, the Challenge of Thor could also be read as a compound metaphor for the mixed feelings of US-Scandinavian immigrants, whereby, on the one hand, the redemptive image of Christ correlates with the immigrant's hopes for a better future in the US, while on the other, the ancient claims of Thor correlate with their nostalgic yearnings for their homeland.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Ibid. 136. p.24.

¹³⁸ Samuel Laing (1780 – 1868), a Scottish travel writer. He travelled in Scandinavia and northern Germany and published descriptions and political comments on these countries.

¹³⁹ Ibid. 38. p.140.

¹⁴⁰Longfellow, H.W. (1864) *The Challenge of Thor - Tales of a Wayside Inn.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields. Google Books. (Accessed 23/06/13).

¹⁴¹ Ibid. 38.

This creation of a Northern European 'foundation myth', based primarily on the Vinland Sagas, but increasingly disseminated through literature and popular history. 142 challenged the established history of the discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus. Through a process of Romantic historicism, Vinland became transformed into what Martin Arnold terms 'an imagined space', a mythologized homeland for Germanic and Scandinavian Americans, and 'a stage setting for a wide range of contemporary concerns for over a hundred and fifty years: politics, race, religion, and gender'. 143 The debate over the first European to set foot on American soil intensified during the nineteenth century, and took on political and religious overtones raising in particular the issue of cultural, religious and physical differences between Northern and Southern European immigrants. This debate became increasingly polemic in the years leading up to the Columbus guarter centenary in 1892 producing works such as America Not Discovered by Columbus (1874) by Ramus Anderson¹⁴⁴ whose fundraising and campaigning, with the support of the 'Fireside Poets', made a considerable contribution to the creation of a bronze statue of Leifr Eríksson in Boston which was unveiled in 1887. This debate became increasingly intensified through the work of a marginal but increasing number of influential scholars, attracted to the racial theories of Gobineau, 146 who proposed the Nordic type as the apex of the European race, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

As the nineteenth century progressed, those of Anglo-Saxon, German and Scandinavian descent became less comfortable with the idea of Columbus as the founding father for two main reasons: first, Columbus was a Catholic (...) and second according to the Gobineau-style race theories cherished by some Anglo-Nordic

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¹⁴² Longfellow's 'Fireside Poets' also contributed to this interest in Nordic themed literature. JG Whittier published *The Norsemen* in 1841 and JR Lowell published *A Voyage to Vinland* in 1869. In *Viking America* Geraldine Barnes points out that, unlike Britain, American novelists were slow to take up Nordic culture as a subject. Barnes suggests that the 'prose fictional impulse' was directed into popular history. p.118.

 $^{^{143}}$ Arnold, Martin. 'Imagining Vinland: George Mackay Brown and the Literature of the New World.' (2013).

¹⁴⁴ Professor of Scandinavian Languages at the University of Wisconsin from 1875-1883.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 135. In this work Barnes suggests that this was largely a promotional venture on the part of Anderson and the associated artists. p.66

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau published his major work on racial science, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races) between 1853 and 1855.

Americans, Columbus' Italian origin meant that he belonged to a lower caste of Europeans. 147

This growing belief in the concept of Nordic racial primacy, which was concentrated in influential pockets, such as the New England States, progressively developed the 'imagined space' of *Vínland* into an idealized land of racial superiority and purity. Martin Arnold concludes that underlying the debate over America's foundation was a fundamental religious, cultural and racial divide, 'which among New Englanders usually meant pro-Puritan and which could also signify Teutonic racial supremacy'.¹⁴⁸

This growing racial element within the American Nordic revival is evident in the works of Ottilie Liljencrantz (1876-1910), the most successful American writer of Nordic fiction, who published a highly popular trilogy of fiction works based on the Vinland sagas entitled The Thrall of Leif the Lucky (1902), The Vinland Champions (1904) and Randvar the Songsmith: A Romance of Norumbega (1906). Liljencrantz's work differed from previous Scandinavian historical fiction in America and Victorian Britain, through her interest in the developing field of racial science. This element was discussed by Geraldine Barnes who commented that her stories 'are informed by an ideology very different from the popular imperialist ideals of the superiority of Northern efficiency, masculinity, and race that underpin the Vínland fiction of the late Victorian and early twentieth century British writers'. 149 There is a striking contrast in her work between the primitive baseness of the native inhabitants of Vinland and the physical and moral beauty and strength of the Christian Nordic settlers, an element which Barnes suggests was influenced by the racial Aryan views of British academic and writer Charles Kingsley, 150 indicating that Kingsley is listed as a source of inspiration in the 'Note of Acknowledgement' of *The Thrall of Leif the Lucky*. 151

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¹⁴⁷ Ibid. 38. p.139.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. 38. p.144.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 135, p.137.

 $^{^{150}}$ Charles Kingsley (1819 –1875), was greatly interested by the concept of race and natural selection and was a friend and correspondent with Charles Darwin. 151 Ibid. 132. p.135.

The *Vinland* foundation myth of the National Romantic movement attempted to place Northern Europeans at the heart of their new homeland's history. Through this process the *Vinland Sagas* and the concomitant 'imagined space' of *Vinland* were progressively appropriated as an element of the National Romantic movement, as evidence of Nordic primacy and national identity in America.

Just as Bjarni Herjólfsson and Leifr Eríksson found themselves off course in territory west of Greenland in *Grænlendinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða*, so the *Vínland sagas* were removed from their Scandinavian provenance and stranded on the cultural map of America, on whose physical landscape Vínland was erratically positioned. ¹⁵²

Through this process of displacement, the initial search for national roots, mythology and worship emerged as a form of National Romanticism during the early nineteenth century. This became increasingly radicalized as it merged with religious, cultural and racial concerns of the day and progressively formed the foundation for the emergence of American Nordicism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Establishing a home-grown mythology - German Romanticism, myth and national unity

The emergence of interest in ancient Nordic culture in Germany during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a significant strand of National Romanticism which was later appropriated by certain Nazi ideologists as a rationale for their racial political agenda. As in Scandinavia, Britain and North America, National Romanticism in Germany was more than just a reflection of the Romantic Movement that was flourishing throughout Europe. It was an individual response to the concerns and aspirations of a nation seeking unification, a new sense of collective identity, rootedness and spirituality, as it progressively transformed itself over a century from a fragmented collection of small territories, through confederations of states, into a unified, powerful, modern, industrialized nation.

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¹⁵² Hilen, Andrew Longfellow and Scandinavia. p.58.

As a result of the disunity and lack of a centralized government to develop cohesive national economic policies during the first half of the nineteenth century, German industrialization lagged behind that of Great Britain. From the middle of the century onwards, Germany experienced a phase of rapid industrial and economic growth, which, by the 1900s, placed it amongst Europe's leading industrial nations. This was accompanied by considerable population growth, which rose from 22.4 million in 1816 to 67 million in 1913¹⁵³ and a marked shift from rural to urban living. In the industrial Ruhr valley the population in 1831 numbered some 200,000, increasing dramatically to nearly 3,000,000 by 1910. Small towns such as Duisburg, Dortmund, Bochum and Essen were transformed into large cities. 154 The population of Berlin also grew from 412,000 in 1849 to 1.84 million in 1914 making it Europe's most densely populated city. 155 This 'growth spurt' transformed the German nation pushing it, within two generations, into the heart of European modernity. This rapid evolution confronted the population with a dramatic shift in the political, economic, social and cultural landscape, the upheaval of which was described by George L Mosse in his analysis of the growth of völkisch movements during this period in The Crisis of German Ideology (1964).

Stimulated or shocked - depending upon one's partisanship - by the recurring revolutions in France, surrounded by an encroaching industrial society, men and women looked for a deeper meaning in life than the transitory reality of their present condition. The rapid process of European industrialization was indeed bewildering to them, accompanied as it was by the dislocation of the population, by the sudden obsolescence of traditional tools, crafts, and institutions, and by social maladjustment and political upheaval. 156

In his analysis of the religious dynamics of Nazism, in *National* Socialism and the Religion of Nature (1986), Robert Pois discussed the extent

¹⁵³ Martinsson Örjan, 'Population of Scandinavia'. Tacitus.nu http://www.tacitus.nu/historicalatlas/population/scandinavia.htm (Accessed 31/07/13).

¹⁵⁴ Griffin, Emma (2010) Short History of the Industrial Revolution. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁵⁵ Schnurr, Eva-Maria. 'The late nineteenth century saw the birth of Berlin'. Spiegel Online http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-late-19th-century-saw-the-birth-of-modernberlin-a-866321.html (Accessed 31/07/13).

¹⁵⁶ Mosse, George L. (1964) *The Crisis of German Ideology - Intellectual origins of the Third Reich*. New York: Howard Fertig. p.13.

to which the idealisation of Germany's past was built on the mythical foundations of a romanticised rural society that had existed prior to industrialisation. Pois pointed out a that number of studies have established that the concept of close knit large pre-industrial families and communities was based more on romantic musings that reality.

All in all, the notion of the pre-industrial family, at least in Germany, being a warm-hearted collectivity in which individuals could attain fulfilment is seen to be an absurdity [...] Thus that worshipping of presumed 'vanished solidarities of the past - a shared tendency, albeit for different respective reasons, of the left as well as the right - must be seen as romanticism, in the worst possible sense. ¹⁵⁷

Drawing on theories published by Mircea Eliade in *The Myth of the* Eternal Return (1949) Pois proposed that this idealisation of the past stemmed from what he terms 'a terror of history'. In this context, Pois defined history as a process of change in which human beings are constantly recreating themselves to keep up with the increasingly relentless pace of changes brought about by modernity. Pois proposed that, in comparison with earlier primitive societies in which archetypes played an important role, modern society, faced with constantly destabilising change, could be considered as 'being virtually paralysed by the 'terror of history'. 158 As a reaction to this 'terror of history', Pois proposed that both the individual and society attempt to annul the past and recreate their own history through a process that he described in Eliade's own words as the 'periodic abolition of time and collective regeneration.'159 Pois also discussed Eliade's division of the 'time of history' into 'profane' and 'sacred'. According to this theory, 'profane' time signifies the chronological time in which we lead our daily lives, whereas 'sacred' time is a timeless space in which totems and archetypes, which give meaning to our lives, are rooted. In this context, Pois proposed that religious belief functions as a means by which 'harassed moderns, deprived of comforting archetypes and repetitions, can escape, or at least

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¹⁵⁷ Pois, Robert (1986) *National Socialism and the Religion of Nature.* London and Sydney: Croom Helm. pp. 41-42.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. 157 p.141.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. 157 p.142.

minimise the terrors of temporal life.' Pois applied this theory to the Nazi project of national regeneration and the creation of a unified, timeless *Volksgemeinschaft* to reveal what he considered an attempt to abolish the 'terror of history' during the inter-war years in Germany. He also pointed out that an essential element of this sense of community was the depiction of the Jew as 'a deracinated element which threatened the whole panoply of of archetypes central to a mythological past' and the need to eliminate this element from the community.

It is obvious, though, that in the National Socialist religious revolution, we can see an effort to escape from the 'terror of history' by essentially abolishing it. the very real terror necessitated by such an action was not of crucial significance since it would be directed against those who stood in opposition to the emergence of 'sacred' time within that 'profane' time over which it must inevitably triumph. 162

The physical creation of this 'sacred' time and space can be seen in impressive national monuments such as the *Walhalla* monument in Bavaria (1842) and the *Kyffhäuser* monument in Thuringia (1896). It is also apparent in the Nazi regime's later creation of national monuments to Nazi ideology such as the *Feldherrnhalle* in Munich and ceremonies such as the annual ritual of the *Blutfahne* (Blood Flag) at the Nuremberg rallies whose pseudoreligious qualities created a sense of transcendence and national mythology, far away from the everyday concerns and struggles of life in Germany following the defeat of World War One.

In religious terms, Germany had been divided since the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, led by Catholic monk, priest and professor of theology Martin Luther (1483 - 1546). Luther's publication of *Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiarum* (The Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences) in 1517 and his first complete translation of the Holy Bible into German in 1534, represented a significant attack on the integrity and practices of the Roman Church and an early

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. 157 p.142.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 157 p.142.

¹⁶² Ibid. 157 p.142.

attempt to create a form of Christian worship which was accessible and relevant to the German people. The Reformation, which spread across many other Northern European countries, notably Britain and Scandinavia, constituted a spiritual and political break with Rome and became an early element of nationalist thought in these countries.

It was against this turbulent political and social backdrop of progressive national unification, rapid industrialization and international rivalry that the National Romantic Movement in Germany defined its mission of creating a new sense of German cultural identity, mythology and sense of rootedness. Emerging from the earlier literary movements of Sturm und Drang (Storm and Stress) and Weimarer Klassik (Weimar Classicism) of the second half of the eighteenth century, Romanticism emphasized humanism, subjectivity and emotions in reaction to the constraints of Enlightenment rationalism and secularization and Germany became one of the driving forces of the National Romantic movement in Northern Europe. Notable thinkers such as Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832), Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813) and Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) defined the movement's early nationalist agenda of celebrating and promoting the German language as a shared national heritage. This became increasingly relevant as a reaction against the growing cultural and political predominance of French across Europe. Linguistics became the contested ground and a vital source of national identity and cohesion for academics such as Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) and Herder whose early psycholinguistic theories proposed that language determined thought and hence both self and national identity.

Published in 1772, Herder's Über den Ursprung der Sprache (On the Origin of Language) became fundamental to the development of linguistics and philology as academic disciplines in Germany. In his poetry, Herder also called for the Volk to regenerate its sense of national identity and pride through language as in these patriotic and Francophobic lines from *An die Deutschen* (To the German People).

And you German alone, returning from abroad, Wouldst greet your mother in French?

O spew it out, before your door Spew out the ugly slime of the Seine Speak German, O you German! 163

Herder's focus on language and cultural traditions, as the essential historical links that create and bind a nation, also included folklore, dance, music and art. In his analysis of Herder's work and nationalist aspirations *Herder and Modern German Nationalism* (1976), Robert Ergang suggests that both the Ossianic poetry of James Macpherson and the publication of Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) had a direct influence on Herder, inspiring him to explore the potentially rich stock of German culture encoded in the folklore, customs and traditions of the German Volk. 164
Herder's work was published in two volumes as *Volkslieder* (Songs of the People) between 1778 and 1779 and was a possible source of inspiration for Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm in their collection of German folk tales, initially published in 1812 as *Kinder-und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Household Tales), a literary project which they continued to develop throughout their writing careers.

In her analysis of the nationalist mission of Herder and his contemporaries, in *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition* (2010), Zeev Sternhell concluded that, within Herder's circle there was a sense of 'a special mission to accomplish in history'. For Herder, this futural project lay in the idea of Germany as a young nation from which a generation of unified Germans would bring about the fulfillment of the nation's destiny. In her analysis, Sternhell argued that it was Herder who 'invented the idea of a "young people" that would appropriate the heritage of other peoples who were exhausted. Sternhell guotes Herder's *Letters for the Advancement of*

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¹⁶³ Herder, Johann Gottfried. *An die Deutschen* quoted by Oakes, Leigh (2001) *Language and National Identity - Comparing France and Sweden.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins. p.22.

¹⁶⁴ Ergang, Robert Reinhold (1976) *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism*. New York: Octagon Books. p.202.

¹⁶⁵ Sternhell, Zeev. (Trans. David Maisel) *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition.* New Haven, London: Yale University Press. p 301

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. 165 p. 301.

Humanity in which he expressed his optimism in the nation's potential to achieve greatness and eclipse the others European nations whose culture and civilisation were in decline. In this work, he described the German nation as 'latecomers on the scene' with a renewed sense of national energy and unity 'while other nations enter into their rest, having produced all they can.' This sense of renewal and national awakening was later to become a central theme of Nazism's project of national regeneration.

Alongside this development in what could be termed linguistic and literary nationalism, the National Romantic movement in Germany also sought to establish a 'home grown' mythology to create a truly Germanic form of rootedness, nomos and collective transcendence. This led many National Romantic philosophers and writers to seek out relevant and authentic forms of Germanic faith predated Christianity. In 1796, G.F.W. Hegel (1770-1831) expressed this growing anti-Christian mood and the need to find and regenerate a mythology from what he perceived as the subjugated collective memory of the Volk in an essay entitled *The Positivity of the Christian Religion*.

Christianity has emptied Walhalla, felled the sacred groves, extirpated the national imagery as a shameful superstition, as a devilish poison, and given us instead the imagery of a nation whose climate, laws, culture, and interests are strange to us and whose history has no connection whatever with our own ... all that we have is the remains of an imagery of our own, lurking amid the common people under the name of superstition. ¹⁶⁸

Hegel's references to the ancient Norse 'Hall of the Dead', the Sacred Groves and the superstitions of the *Volk* reflect what was becoming a growing movement in Germany which sought to reestablish the legends of the ancient Norse and Germanic Gods as a source of 'home grown' spirituality and rootedness in a culture which was distinctly Northern European. The challenge facing this movement was to locate and develop a national mythology which, whilst drawing on a virtuous and inspirational Germanic past to create a sense of national cohesion and spirituality, also corresponded with

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. 165. p. 301.

¹⁶⁸ Hegel G.W.F. quoted by Williamson, George S. (2004) *The Longing for Myth in Germany*. Chicago: Chicago University Press. p.72.

the prevailing state of modernity, which was spreading across Germany creating a liminoid state of transition, as industrialization and urbanization rapidly eroded traditional ways of life, communities and social cohesion.

Undaunted by the paucity of sources, they attempted to recover the traces of a lost Germanic mythology, translating the medieval epics, gathering folk songs and fairy tales, excavating pagan burial mounds, and reinterpreting the Nordic gods in such a way that they became evidence of an earlier pre-Christian religion. 16

In The Longing for Myth in Germany, George S. Williamson provides a detailed analysis of the development of the diverse elements of this movement and describes what he terms 'a publication mania' 170 as academics and artists searched for evidence of a lost Germanic culture from which a new mythology could be constructed. This search through Germany's Vorzeit 171 for the scattered fragments of Germany's cultural and mythical essence became a form of 'mazeway re-synthesis' as scholars and romantic writers sought to select and rewrite elements of ancient German mythology, which predated the material and political complications of the modern era, but which were still relevant and appealing to modernity. This Vorzeit represented both a romanticized 'sacred space', 'mythic home' or 'óðal' outside the fragmented and deracinating contemporary world and a new path of national identity, cohesion and spirituality in the modern era which was uniquely German and corresponded to the aspirations of a new nation.

In the Vorzeit, it was maintained, the German heroic myth had supplied a psychological substrate, filling each phase of life with religious significance. Since then, however, it had split into a thousand fragments, which were now scattered across the German landscape. Each scrap of evidence was a potential piece of the lost mythology and thus worthy of collection and preservation. 172

The rediscovery, during the eighteenth century, of the previously lost and neglected fragments of medieval manuscripts recounting the Nibelungenlied

¹⁷² Ibid. 169. p.76.

¹⁶⁹ Williamson George S. *The Longing for Myth in Germany*, p.73.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. 169. p.76.

¹⁷¹ The term Vorzeit generally refers to the period from antiquity through to the reformation, or what has been termed the pre-modern era in German history.

(The Song of the Nibelungs) had a significant impact on this search for sources of national myth. This epic poem, written during the 13th century, was considered a truly Germanic epic, which fused aspects of the ancient Norse legend of Sigurdr Fáfnisbani (Sigurd the dragon slayer), Brynhildr (Brynhild the outcast Valkyrie), *Guðrún* (Gudrun) and *Hogni* from the Icelandic sagas, with the medieval Germanic geographical and historical context of the fall of the kingdom of Burgundy in the fifth century. The Nibelungen Saga was turned into a major play by Friedrich Hebbel and was first performed in 1861. This was especially appealing to the growing number of thinkers who were attracted to the concept of 'Rittermythologie', a knightly mythology, through which writers, such as A.W. Schlegel, sought to rehabilitate what they considered the noble, heroic era of medieval Germany, as a resynthesized form of national rootedness and spirituality. In Über das Mittelalter (1803), A.W. Schlegel described his vision of the greatness of this *Rittermythologie*, which fused native German attributes with the spread of Christianity to form a synthesis through which Catholicism would experience a rebirth in modernity.

The knightly spirit emerged from the combination of the robust and honest bravery of the German North with a completely spiritual greatness coming from the Orient -Christianity, an occurrence that was not just brilliant but truly enchanting, and hitherto without parallel in human history. 174

Schlegel's attempted rehabilitation of the era of knightly Christian values, which was intended to displace the secularizing impact of the French Revolution and the dominance of French language and culture in Europe, met with a mixed reception and provoked considerable debate. Writers, such as Joseph Görres, were inspired by this concept to publish, in 1807, a number of popular stories and folk tales from the sixteenth century entitled *Die teutschen* Volksbücher. Others, such as Jacob Grimm, rejected the concept of Rittermythologie, believing that the actual origins of a national Vorzeit and mythology lay further back in time, during the early period of migration of the Germanic people from the east to northern and central Europe.

¹⁷³ See Gruener, Gustav. 'The Nibelungenlied and Sage in Modern Poetry', PMLA 11 (2): (1896):

¹⁷⁴ Schlegel, A.W. Quoted by Williamson George S. The Longing for Myth in Germany, p.77.

Grimm insisted that the Nordic myths stood closer to the original Indo-Germanic sources than the Christian-Jewish myths emanating from the Orient, which he described as "distorted" and "torn" from their original context.¹⁷⁵

The rediscovery of works such as *Parzival*¹⁷⁶ the *Nibelungenlied* and the subsequent emergence of this school of romantic medievalism became, as George S. Williamson describes, 'quite fashionable in the salon culture of Berlin'¹⁷⁷ and the *Nibelungenlied* was republished a number of times in popular editions in the early nineteenth century. It was however, as he continues, 'poorly suited for the role it was chosen to play in German history'¹⁷⁸ in that being neither explicitly pagan nor Christian, it presented a spiritually ambiguous epic 'in which greed, lust, and treachery predominate and God is strangely absent'.¹⁷⁹

The expanding search for suitable material amongst the fragmented and scarce sources on German territory led academics to broaden their definition of the Germanic to include the Scandinavian countries, which, like Germany, had resisted the spread of Roman influence and Christianity. Philology had established the shared linguistic roots of a Germanic/Scandinavian culture spreading from the East into Northern Europe and Romantic Nationalism developed this concept to broaden the geographical extent of their cultural search. In *Wagner and the Volsungs* (2003) Árni Björnsson describes the influence of philosopher and nationalist Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762 –1814), who, in a series of speeches delivered in 1808 entitled *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (Addresses to the German Nation), defined the German people, (and therefore by implication Germanic territories), as those that had remained culturally and linguistically untouched by the influence of Roman rule and the Latin language.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. 163. p.109.

¹⁷⁶ *Parzival* is a medieval German romance written by the poet Wolfram von Eschenbach dated to the first quarter of the 13th century which became the source for Wagner's *Parsifal*, first produced at the second Bayreuth Festival in 1882.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. 169. p.86.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. 169. p.84.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. 169. p.84.

He was followed by poets and scholars such as Ernst Moritz Arndt and the brothers Grimm, who may be regarded, more than any others as the inventors of pan-Germanism. According to this theory, all Nordic peoples and Norse culture could be counted as parts of the Germanic cultural heritage. 180

The Pan-German cultural perspective of these writers broadened the geographical scope of academics and writers who sought a sense of rootedness and national identity in the contemporary interest in Scandinavian history. This interest was also emerging in Britain, Scandinavia and the Northern states of the USA and drew on sources from the recently published translations and commentaries of early medieval Icelandic sagas. The publication of Mallet's Introduction à l'histoire de Dannemarc and its translation into German in 1765 by Gottfried Schütze had a significant impact on the work of early Romantic writers such as Herder and Klopstock and offered a new source of inspiration for those seeking to create a new national mythology founded on Pan-Germanism. This interest in incorporating Scandinavian myth and culture into the search for Germanic rootedness progressively took on a momentum and dynamic of its own. In 1811, Wilhelm Grimm published his account of ancient Danish tales and ballads in Altdänische Heldenlieder, Balladen und Märchen (Old Danish heroic songs, ballads and fairy tales), and, in 1815, the brothers published Lieder der alten Edda (Tales from the Old Edda). In Aryan Idols - Indo-European Mythology as Ideology and Science (1968), Stefan Arvidsson discussed the cultural and political significance of the brothers' investigations of rural Germanic folklore.

The purpose of their famed project of collecting folktales from the German peasant population was primarily to (re-) create a strong German culture that could free itself from dependence of "foreign "cultures. One step in this project was to show that there existed a rich "German" mythology that could successfully compete with classical and Judeo-Christian traditions.¹⁸¹

In 1819, Jacob Grimm, developed his linguistic analysis of Northern European folklore, to publish the first of his three-part philological study of the

¹⁸⁰ Björnsson, Árni (2003) Wagner and the Volsungs - Icelandic Sources of Der Ring des Nibelungen. London: Viking Society for Northern Research. p.90.

¹⁸¹ Arvidsson, Stefan (2006) *Aryan Idols - Indo-European Mythology as Ideology and Science.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p.131.

German language, *Deutsche Grammatik*. This was a groundbreaking comparative linguistic analysis of Germanic, Anglo-Saxon and Norse texts, in which Grimm presented his evidence to support the theory that the Scandinavian languages were rooted in an ancient Germanic *Ursprache* or prehistoric root-language. The methodology established by this work, had a significant influence on the progressive fusion of Germanic and Nordic mythology by later Pan-Germanic scholars. The essence of this work was the theory that became known as 'Grimm's Law' whereby the similarities and differences between Germanic and Latin/Greek language were analysed to reveal their historic relationships and shared origins. The application of this theory, by subsequent scholars made a considerable contribution to the emerging field of racial science and the development of Aryanism and Nordicism by providing a linguistic rationale for emerging Pan-Germanist theories.

In developing his theory, Grimm was influenced by the research of Danish scholar and philologist Rasmus Christian Rask (1787-1832) through its analysis of the historic connections between Nordic/Germanic languages and their relationship with the Classical and Eastern languages. In 1809, he completed his first work the *Introduction to the Grammar of the Icelandic and other Ancient Northern Languages*, which he published in Danish in 1811. In 1814, he completed an essay, which he submitted to the Danish Academy of Sciences entitled *Investigation of the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language*, in which he presented his evidence linking Old Norse with other Germanic and Slavic languages which he further linked to ancient Latin and Greek. During his career he also published a number of European grammars including a *Spanish Grammar* (1824), a *Frisian Grammar* (1825), an *Italian Grammar* (1827), a *Danish Grammar for the use of Englishmen* (1830), and collaborated on the English translation of his *Anglo-Saxon Grammar* by Benjamin Thorpe (1830). 182

In his analysis of Grimm's work in *A Revolution Reconsidered:*Mythography and Mythology in the Nineteenth Century (2005), Tom

¹⁸² Benjamin Thorpe (1782-1870) was an English scholar of Anglo-Saxon.

Shippey,¹⁸³ described Grimm's research as a 'paradigm shift'¹⁸⁴ in attitude and theory, in the field of humanities, which created the new discipline of comparative philology. In his work, Shippey analysed the significant impact of this shift, which transformed the field of linguistics and, through the elaboration of Grimm's research, the growing interest in the discovery and creation of national mythology.

In 1835, Grimm extended this theory and methodology in another seminal work, *Deutsche Mythologie*, in which he undertook the comparative study of Classical and Northern European deities in the search to discover and reconstruct a lost Germanic national mythology compatible with Germany's search for a unifying sense of national identity and transcendence.

A notable feature of this work is Grimm's attempt to connect traditional Germanic folklore with ancient Indo-European oral tradition predating Christianity, which had suppressed and eroded ancient pagan mythology and traditions. Through his research, Grimm attempted to discover traces of an ancient 'golden age' of Germanic mythology, inherited from the nobility of the Aryan, that he could resynthesize into a mythological model capable of providing a truly Germanic creation myth for the developing nation.

Tom Shippey discussed this nationalist, political dimension of Grimm's research, which attracted much criticism of his work at the time and which still does even today. In his analysis, Shippey placed Grimm's work in the sociopolitical and cultural context of the progressive creation of the German nation state and the role of Grimm in creating a scientific rational for the development and promotion of Pan-Germanism.

When Grimm wrote the *Deutsche Grammatik* and the *Deutsche Mythologie*, there was no political entity known as *Deutschland*, only the many independent Germanspeaking states. For such an entity to be formed, an idea of "Germanness" had to be

¹⁸³ Thomas Alan Shippey (born 9 September 1943)^[1] is a British scholar of medievalism and former President of the International Society for the Study of Medievalism.

¹⁸⁴ 'A Revolution Reconsidered: Mythography and Mythology in the Nineteenth Century', in Tom Shippey (ed.) *The Shadow-Walkers: Jacob Grimm's Mythology of the Monstrous*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies Volume 291, (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005) p.1.

created, and Grimm, born in 1787 and profoundly affected by the weakness of the German states during the Napoleonic wars, set himself to do it, in ways which were contested at the time (notably by Scandinavian scholars) and have been more so ever since. 185

Shippey also discussed the opposition of a number of Scandinavian and German scholars such as N.F.S. Gruntvig¹⁸⁶ and Johann Ludwig Uhland (1787-1862)¹⁸⁷ to what they perceived to be Grimm's Pan-Germanic appropriation of Nordic culture and its potential implications as a hidden political agenda to create a greater Germanic empire. This was a particularly sensitive issue to the Danish people, whose military conflict with Germany over the Schleswig-Holstein territories concluded in 1864, with the loss of territory in Southern Jutland. In *Thor - Myth to Marvel*, Martin Arnold highlighted Grimm's nationalistic views towards his Scandinavian neighbours, by quoting the address he made in 1848, during the first phase of the Schleswig-Holstein conflict, to the Frankfurt National Assembly in which he declared that 'other nations would not tolerate even a sod to be taken off the dwelling place of their renowned ancestors.¹⁸⁸ Hence, Jacob Grimm was increasingly at odds, both politically and culturally, with his Scandinavian counterparts who viewed his appropriation of the Old North with some suspicion, as discussed by Shippey in this analysis of the reaction to Grimm's often ambiguous use of the term 'Deutsch'.

Grimm wanted above all to have a mythology, which was specifically German or Deutsch. Unfortunately for him, most of the surviving sources were not German but Scandinavian, written in Old Norse and preserved in Iceland. He tended therefore to use *deutsch* to mean (a) German, but (b) Germanic, a term which included all the Scandinavian languages as well as the Low German ones (Dutch and English among them). Scandinavian scholars especially saw this as a "takeover bid", which implied furthermore that German was, so to speak, the central or master-form of all the Germanic languages.¹⁸⁹

Grimm's appropriation of Nordic culture as a strand of a greater Germanic literary and mythological foundation threatened both the cultural and political

¹⁸⁵ Shippey, Tom. A Revolution Reconsidered. p.8.

¹⁸⁶ See my earlier section on Scandinavia.

¹⁸⁷ Johann Ludwig Uhland was a German poet, philologist and literary historian.

¹⁸⁸ Arnold Martin *Thor - Myth to Marvel*. p.119.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid 185 p.11.

ambitions of surrounding nations whose scholars opposed Grimm's theories.

An example of European scholarship's opposition to this 'takeover' of Nordic culture by Pan-Germanists was expressed in the work of George Stephens (1813-1895) who, in 1878, published Thunor the Thunderer, carving on a Scandinavian font of about the year 100. The first yet found God-figure of our Scando-Gothic forefathers, a work based on the discovery of ancient inscriptions and carvings on a font found in the ruins of an old church at Ottrava in Våstergotland, Sweden. In his analysis of his work, Martin Arnold discussed how Stephens' passionate presentation of *Þórr* constituted a statement of ownership of the Norse god as an ever-present defender of the people against evil. Arnold quoted Stephens' poetic presentation of *Þórr* as 'the dread of every Bug and Ogre; the 'Bani tröll-quenna', the relentless slayer of Troll and Hag and Witch-quean, whether tripping winsome in guise of Lightangel fair, or stiffly striding with scowling fire-red balls and matted snake-hair, her crooked fingers grasping the torch and dagger of destruction and despair.' Arnold suggested that Stephens was aware of the cultural and political significance of defending and gaining possession of Northern Europe's mythological roots against the advance of the 'crooked fingers' of Pan-Germanism.

In short, what Stephens saw in the Thor font was a racial, moral and political ideology that united the northern peoples, among whom he included the English, and from which he excluded the Germans. The Thor font spoke for pan-Scandinavianism and against pan-Germanism, and when Stephens rails against the 'crooked fingers' of trolls, he is signaling, among other things, German ambitions to arrogate the heritage of the Old North and political ascendancy over its inheritors along with it. 190

The philological research of Jacob Grimm could therefore be considered a fundamental turning point whereby cultural interest in the literature and mythology of the Old North was progressively incorporated into the nationalist agenda of Pan-Germanist thinkers and into what could be interpreted as early forms of cultural and political Nordicism. Through the influence of the Grimm brothers, the field of comparative philology became a significant element of the field of racial science as philologists attempted to locate the original

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¹⁹⁰ Ibid 188 p.117.

homeland of the prehistoric Indo-Germanic/Nordic descendants of the original Aryan people.

In his analysis of this period, George S. Williamson considered that, despite continued academic debate concerning the validity and relevance of sources, the basic foundations of a national mythology had been reestablished in Germany by the 1830's amongst the educated classes and, to a lesser extent, in a popular context.

An epic literary tradition had been uncovered, the folktales were widely read, and the outlines of a Germanic pantheon had been reconstructed. Artists had begun to produce paintings, songs, and stories based on the *Kaiser* legends, the oak tree, and the *Nibelungenlied*. Moreover the elements of this mythology had been connected to the geography of Germany: The Rhine River, the Teutoburg Forest, and the North Sea.¹⁹¹

This cultural 'solidification' of a national mythology in the visual and literary arts fused Norse mythology with the eclectically reassembled elements of traditional Germanic folklore, which had been rediscovered, to create a cohesive framework for the development of a national *völkisch* creation myth, which would bind together the fragmented German nation. This was particularly evident in the emergence of a number of thinkers at the end of the nineteenth century who sought to develop new forms of religion as a reaction what they considered to be the failing project of modernity.

In the visual arts, as in the field of literature, there was a significant degree of cultural interaction and influence with the emerging schools of National Romantic art in Scandinavia, Britain and America. The Düsseldorf School of painting, a group of painters who taught or studied at the Düsseldorf Academy in the 1830s and 1840s, and who drew inspiration from earlier National Romantic artists such as Caspar David Friedrich (1774 –1840), included many Scandinavian artists such as Peter Nicolai Arbo (1831 –1892), Mårten Eskil Winge (1825 –1896) and Hans Dahl (1849 –1937) who trained at

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¹⁹¹Ibid. 169. p.112.

¹⁹² See Figure 1.

the academy and who made a significant impact on what has been termed the 'Golden Age' of Scandinavian Romantic art. The Düsseldorf School had a considerable influence on National Romantic art throughout the nineteenth century depicting dramatic, idealized landscapes of the German countryside. This visual expression of nationalist aspirations included ruins of medieval buildings, images from the *Nibelungenlied* and, as the influence of the Pan-Germanic cultural movement developed, prehistoric Scandinavian features such as dolmens and figures from Norse mythology, many of which were inspired by scenes from the works of Richard Wagner.

The culmination of this movement, in an artistic and cultural sense, was epitomized in Der Ring des Nibelungen (The Ring of the Nibelung) of Richard Wagner (1813-1883). This epic operatic work, composed between 1848 and 1874, combined the literary, visual and musical arts to create a Gesamtkunstwerk¹⁹³ which synthesized Germanic and Nordic elements, to create a monumental visual, musical and lyrical interpretation of Germany's Vorzeit. Der Ring des Nibelungen follows the struggles of gods, heroes, and mythical creatures over a powerful magic ring that grants domination over the entire world and was first performed, in its entirety, over three days at the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876. At this acclaimed première, Wagner created a visual and auditory 'sacred space' imbued with Nordic mythology that transported the audience into a highly stylized romantic world of the Norse pantheon. In 1872, Friedrich Nietzsche published Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik (The Birth of Tragedy), in which he celebrated Wagner's 'total work of art' based on Nordic sagas, which he saw as supplying the heroic myth that modern man desperately needed. 194

The stage costumes designed by artist Carl Emil Doepler (1824–1905), created an enduring image of the Norse gods that emphasized their powerful warrior image, (see figure 9) and which influenced popular representations of the Norse pantheon throughout the twentieth century up to modern times, notably the character of Thor created by Stan Lee for Marvel Comics in 1962,

¹⁹³ A total work of art bringing together a range of artistic media and staging techniques.

http://notesonnotes.org/2013/02/14/wagner-nietzsche-a-gesamtkunstwerk-relationship/

(see figure 10). The four phases of this epic opera, *Das Rheingold* (*The Rhine Gold*), *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*), *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* (*Twilight of the Gods*) collectively represent in many ways the most enduring and influential cultural fusion of the Germanic and the Nordic in a spectacle that still attracts audiences today.

In Wagner and the Volsungs, Árni Björnsson analysed Wagner's use of sources from the Eddas, Volsunga saga, Þiðreks saga, the Heimskringla, Egil's saga, Gísla saga and the Nibelungenlied, which stemmed from his readings of heroic legends by historian Franz Josef Mone (1796 - 1871). Björnsson quotes Wagner's acknowledgement of Mone's influence in his autobiography Mein Leben (1911) in which Wagner described his growing attraction to Nordic mythology as a source of inspiration for his artistic work.

I now tried to get to know the Eddas as well as the prose fragments comprising the basis for large parts of these legends. Viewed in the light of Mone's comments, the Wälsunga saga exerted a decisive influence on the manner in which I began to form my material for my own purposes. The consciousness of the close primeval kinship of these old myths, which had been shaping within me for some time, thus gradually gained the power to create the dramatic forms, which governed my subsequent works. ¹⁹⁶

Building his influential opera on the historical and literary foundations of earlier National Romantic writers and their evolving cultural Pan-Germanism, Wagner created a powerful national myth, which expressed both National Romanticism's search for national identity and unity and the cultural aspirations of the newly founded German nation following the reunification of 1871. In this socio-political context, Wagner's work represents a significant threshold between German National Romanticism's attraction to Nordic mythology and the later emergence of Nordicism as a cultural, political and scientific movement during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

After Wagner's reworking of Old Northern myth and legend, spotted with prejudice and elitism, and composed in tribute to the glory of the German Volk and their history, whatever previous analyses of the gods of Nordic antiquity there had been, soon

¹⁹⁶ Wagner, Richard quoted by Björnsson, Árni *Wagner and the Volsungs - Icelandic Sources of Der Ring des Nibelungen* p.99.

¹⁹⁵ Thor first featured in a Marvel publication in *Journey into Mystery* #83 (Aug. 1962).

became fodder for the appetites of German national self-assertion. So it happened that an increasingly powerful Germany, a politically enfeebled Scandinavia, a theory of linguistic purity, and a proposition regarding Germanic origins that hinted at supremacism were gradually articulated under a single heading: *völkisch*. ¹⁹⁷

Many analyses of Wagner's work have underlined the anti-Semitic, Pan-Germanic and elitist themes and their influence on early Nordicist and völkisch thought, a movement which was to include one of Wagner's most significant and influential supporters, Adolf Hitler, who admired and promoted Wagner's opera as a source of national identity, unity and prominence in his Third Reich. Wagner's work was significant in providing for future generations a powerful artistic composite of the spirit of National Romanticism, which consolidated and solidified the appropriation of Nordic culture within a larger pan-Germanic cultural context, which in turn was later appropriated and integrated into the fields of racial science and politics.

Notable amongst other Pan-Germanists seeking to establish homegrown forms of national mythology in which to root the growing *völkisch* movement was Austrian journalist, playwright, novelist and occultist, Guido von List (1848-1919), who became one of the principal founders of what came to be termed the Ariosophy movement in Germany and Austria. List and his influence on later Nazi occultism, notably within Heinrich Himmler's SS, was the subject of Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke's influential work *The Occult Roots of Nazism* (2004). In this work, Goodrick-Clarke described how List rejected his catholic upbringing to claim that the ancient Germanic tribes of Northern Europe had practiced a gnostic faith system, which he termed Armanism and Wotanism. In formulating a modern resynthesis of this ancient religion, List drew on a number of recently republished works from twelfth and thirteenth century Icelandic scholars together with the burgeoning Pan-Germanic literature of the period to develop a resynthesized form of new religion rooted in native Northern European mythology.

He called this religion Wotanism after the principal god in the Germanic pantheon. His basic sources for the ancient religion were the Edda and the runes. The Old Norse poetry of Iceland painted the colourful mythology of its pagan inhabitants,

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¹⁹⁷ Ibid. 188. p.130.

whom List regarded as Wotanist refugees from Christian persecution in early medieval Germany. 198

List developed the thesis that, prior to the spread of Christianity throughout Northern Europe, there had once been a culturally unified German civilization that had been spread across much of Europe, which had been eroded and divided by the spread of Christianity. Persecuted for their pagan beliefs by Christian civilization, the original Wotanists had sought refuge in Scandinavia, where they continued and preserved their ancient traditions and customs. List was also influenced by current thought from the emerging fields of racial science and philology, linking these ancient Germanic tribes with the once superior Aryan race that had migrated from the east.

Goodrich-Clarke described List as disenchanted with modernity, proposing an alternative futural vision based on a reconnection with what he perceived to be the spirituality of the ancient Germanic tribes.

It is evident that List's description of contemporary Austria amounted to a fundamental devaluation of the present. The entire industrial-urban complex together with its emergent social and political institutions was utterly condemned. List followed the apocalyptic model even further by claiming that this situation was due to the domination of evil powers. The dissolution of traditional social practices and institutions posited, in List's view, a simpler and more conscious agent of change than the play of market forces, social circumstances, and structural changes of the economy. ¹⁹⁹

Goodrick-Clarke considered List a 'cultural pessimist' who rejected what he perceived to be the failed project of modernity, which had eroded the nomos of local traditions and communities, and allowed foreign influences to destroy the unity and spiritual essence of the Germanic people. In List's view, this loss of Germanic spirituality and *communitas* was the essence of the malaise of the era.

The Ariosophists were cultural pessimists. An obvious link exists between their fantasies and the grievances of German nationalists in the Habsburg Empire of

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 $^{^{198}}$ Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas (2009) *The Occult Roots of Nazism.* London: Tauris Parke. p.49. 199 Ibid. 198. p.83.

Goodrick-Clarke further stated his view that the significance of occultism in the doctrine of ariosophists such as List was 'principally explicable as a sacred form of legitimation for their profound reaction to the present and their extreme political attitudes'. ²⁰¹ In this context, the emergence of Ariosophy during the late nineteenth century constituted a marginal but significant strand of a multi-point cluster of reactions against modernity and its deracinating, secularizing impact on society prompting the reconstruction of an ancient belief system, which could be aligned with current political and social conditions.

Together with the emerging Pan-Germanist movement, which in Austria sought the incorporation of the country into a greater Germanic nation, List was influenced, in part, by the theories of the growing Theosophical Society, which was officially formed in New York City, United States, in November 1875 by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and an influential group of her followers, notably Colonel Henry Steel Olcott²⁰² and William Quan Judge.²⁰³ This movement sought, through the study of comparative religion (notably eastern religions), philosophy, and science, to explore the basis of human development and spirituality. Blavatsky originally set down the basic principles of this movement in her major work entitled *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), in which she attempted to reconcile ancient eastern esoteric wisdom with modern science. According to Goodrich-Clarke, List also drew on the writings of German Theosophist Max Ferdinand Sebaldt von Werth (1859-1916), who combined Theosophy with his own interpretations of Germanic mythology, racial theories and its application to the emerging field of eugenics. Werth claimed, in his 1897 publications, Wanidis and Sexualreligion, that the sexual religion of the ancient Aryan tribes was based on a sacred practice of positive

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 198, p.2.

²⁰¹ Ibid. 198. p.2.

²⁰² Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907) was an American military officer, journalist and lawyer.

 $^{^{203}}$ William Quan Judge (1851-1896) was a commercial lawyer with a profound interest in spirituality and the occult.

eugenics, a selective breeding ritual designed to maintain and strengthen the purity of the race and its superior physical and mental traits.²⁰⁴

One of the key elements of List's developing thesis lay in his belief that the foundations of Wotanism lay in the runic alphabet, believing that they could be deciphered by linking these letters with particular runic spells contained in the Old Norse Hávamál. 205 In his work, Goodrick-Clarke described how in 1902, List suffered an eleven-month period of blindness during which his occult insight revealed to him the linguistic and spiritual meaning of runes. Following this experience, List produced a manuscript which he later published, in 1908, as Das Geheimnis der Runen, detailing what he regarded to be a proto-language of the Aryan race, in which he claimed to be able to interpret the letters and sounds of both runes and glyphs found on ancient inscriptions. This interpretation, based on a runic alphabet, which was partially invented by List himself, became the foundation of his later Ariosophical beliefs. List referred to these runes as the *Armanen* Futharkh, a series of 18 runes, closely based on the historical Younger Futharkh. In his de-coding of the runes, List revealed the significance of these sacred runic symbols of the Aryan faith such as swastika, sun and eagle that were to feature prominently in later Nazi iconography and SS occultism.

The "ar," the "urfyr" (primal fire, god), the "sun," the "light" will destroy spiritual as well as physical darkness, doubt, and uncertainty. In the sign of the Ar the Aryans- the suns of the sun-founded their law [Rita], the primal law of the Aryans, of which the earn, or eagle [Aar], is the hieroglyph.²⁰⁶

List termed the re-synthesized belief system that he expounded,
'Armanism' after the Armanen; an elite group of high-ranking priests of the
ancient Aryo-Germanic nation who, according to List, worshipped the sun and

²⁰⁴ Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *The Occult Roots of Nazism.* p.51.

²⁰⁵ The Words of the High One. In this work, contained in the Icelandic Codex Regius, together with the Prose Edda, are the verses describing how Odin hung suspended on a tree, wounded with a spear to gain the runes and knowledge of their mystical powers.

²⁰⁶ Von List, Guido (Stephen E Flowers ed.) (1988) *The Secret of the Runes.* Vermont: Destiny Books. p. 56.

who collectively formed the Armanenschaft. According to List's theories their religious belief and its transmission functioned on two levels. The esoteric doctrine (Armanism) contained secret spiritual knowledge and was reserved for the initiated elite, while the exoteric doctrine (Wotanism) took the form of popular myths and traditions intended for the lower social classes. List's theories, however marginal and esoteric, had considerable resonance amongst Pan-Germanists both within and outside Austria, who were disenchanted with the progress of nineteenth century modernism and rationalism. These romantic thinkers rejected Enlightenment thought and its culture eroding forces, to seek out new forms of mythology at the end of the nineteenth century, a period which notable historian George L. Mosse described in his 1964 work *The Crisis of German Ideology*. In this work, Mosse examined the emergence of the mystic strand within National Romanticism in Germany as a reaction to the disenchanting conditions of modernity, which had provoked a state of spiritual crisis during which 'romantics sought to find the larger, all encompassing unity outside the prevalent social and economic condition of man²⁰⁷

Bewildered and challenged, men attempted to re-emphasize their own personality. But, since the rate of industrial transformation, as well as its effects, seemed to evade the grasp of reason, and men could not easily make themselves part of the new social order, many turned from rational solutions to their problems and instead delved into their own emotional depths.²⁰⁸

Significant amongst Pan-Germanic thinkers who were influenced by the work of Guido von List was Austrian political and racial theorist Lanz von Liebenfels²⁰⁹(1874-1954), who promoted and developed the Ariosophical theories of List and together with an influential group of supporters, founded the *Guido-von-List-Gesellschaft* (Guido von List Society) in 1908. A former Cistercian monk who was influenced by earlier *Rittermythologie*, notably the Knight's Templar, Lanz left the order in 1899 to develop the principles of his religio-scientific theory of 'Theozoology' which he published fully in 1905 as *Theozoologie oder die Kunde von den Sodoms-Äfflingen und dem Götter-*

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 $^{^{207}}$ Mosse, George L. (1964) *The Crisis of German Ideology - Intellectual origins of the Third Reich*. New York: Howard Fertig. p.14.

²⁰⁸ Mosse George L, *The Crisis of Germany*, p.13.

²⁰⁹ Also known as Adolf Josef Lanz or Jörg Lanz.

Elektron (Theozoology or the Lore of the Sodom-Apelings and the Electron of the Gods). This synergic work fused his interpretations of recent developments in the fields of the humanities and natural sciences with nationalist politics, neo-paganism and occultism that Goodrick-Clarke described as a form of 'radical theology, an idiosyncratic view of history and abstruse scientific speculation'. ²¹⁰

In his major work, Lanz developed his theory that ancient Aryan tribes had diluted their superior gene pool through interbreeding with love-dwarves (Buhlzwerge), reared for sexual pleasure and that the gods, an earlier superior form of life, had possessed advanced sensory organs for the reception and transmission of electrical signals, giving them the power of omniscience and telepathy. 211 According to Lanz, the miscegenation of this once superior race could be restored to its blond, blue-eyed, Northern European, Aryan origins through a process of segregation, selective breeding in eugenic convents and an enforced programme of sterilization. In 1905 Lanz founded the magazine Ostara or Ostara, Briefbücherei der Blonden und Mannesrechtler (Ostara, newsletter of the blonde and masculists) in which, together with like-minded collaborators, Lanz wrote a number of articles concerning the classification of racial types, sex, women and prostitution, the spiritual and physical comparisons between blonds and darks, religion and the occult.²¹² Although it is difficult to determine the actual publication figures or readership of this publication it is reasonable to conclude that it was an influential but marginal element of the melting pot of romantic nationalist, pseudo-scientific and religious 'New Age', thought which was emerging at the time. To support and promote his philosophy Lanz founded his own esoteric organization, the *Ordo Novi Templi* (Order of the New Templars) in 1907.²¹³

Amongst List's other influential admirers was nationalist politician Theodor Fritsch who, together with fellow followers of List and Pan-

²¹⁰ Ibid. 198. p.51.

²¹¹ Ibid. 198. p.95.

²¹² Ibid. 198. p.51.

 $^{^{213}}$ The same name would be appropriated by the Nordicist terrorist Anders Breivik for his imaginary sect of militant racists 100 years later.

Germanists, founded the List-inspired *Germanenorden* (Germanic Order) in 1912, a *völkisch* anti-Semitic secret society set up to monitor Jewish activity, support *völkisch* occultist research and promote the concept of Pan-Germanic supremacy. According to Goodrick-Clarke, application forms for the Order requested details of the applicants' hair, eyes and skin colour and information regarding their parents and grandparents. The subsequent selection process favoured the ideal Nordic type and excluded the physically handicapped or those deemed 'unpleasant looking'. 214 The Order also used an early form of the swastika (with curved arms superimposed on a cross), which was displayed, from 1916, on the front cover of its official newsletter Allgemeine Ordens-Nachrichten. This symbol was also used, together with designs incorporating runic inscriptions, on a number of völkisch personal items such as jewellery, which were advertised in the newsletter. 215 Another völkisch religious society, which used the swastika as a sun-symbol²¹⁶ with a superimposed Mjöllnir (Thor's hammer) in its publications, was the Germanische Glaubens - Gemeinschaft (Germanic Faith Society) founded in 1907 by writer and artist Ludwig Fahrenkrog (1867-1952), (see figure 11).

The swastika was also notably used to represent the *Thule-Gesellschaft* (Thule Society) established in Munich by Rudolf Freiherr von Sebottendorff (1875 -1945?) in 1917. This offshoot of the *Germanenorden* took its name from the legendary island in an unknown far-northern location, featured in classical European literature and cartography, which Sebottendorff believed to be Iceland. As its main emblem the society used the powerful image of a vertical long dagger surrounded by oak leaves superimposed over a radiating swastika sun symbol, (see figure 12). The society also used the eagle and List's ar-rune as symbols of their Aryan origins.²¹⁷ The Thule Society was significant in the development of the later Nordicist element of

²¹⁴ Ibid. 198. p129.

²¹⁵ Ibid. 198. p129.

²¹⁶ The Sun Cross, a vertical cross within a circle is a symbol that has been identified on ancient Norse petroglyphs, and was appropriated by occultist and Nazi inspired movements such as Quisling's Nasjonal Samling between 1933-45 as emblems of their organizations.

 $^{^{217}}$ Described in a speech by Sebottendorff quoted by Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas. *The Occult Roots of Nazism.*

Nazi ideology through the involvement of this society with the early *Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, later reorganized by Adolf Hitler into the National Socialist German Workers' Party. Although historians have debated the actual membership role of the Thule Society, it is generally agreed that many founder members of the NSDAP and Nazi ideologues had been associated, to varying degrees, with the group as members, speakers or guests. In his biography of Hitler, Ian Kershaw described the membership of the Thule Society as a 'Who's Who of early Nazi sympathizers and leading figures in Munich.' ²¹⁸

Another disciple of List who was associated with members of the Thule Society was Rudolf John Gorsleben (1883 -1930),²¹⁹ who founded the *Edda-Gesellschaft* (Edda Society) in 1925, an Aryan mysticism study group, which published the journal *Deutsche Freiheit* (German Freedom), later renamed *Arische Freiheit* (Aryan Freedom). Gorsleben was one of a number of List's followers, who in the years following the First World War, founded his own new religion, a belief system described by Goodrick-Clarke as based on 'Social Darwinism and eulogies of the Aryan type', elements which later emerged in strands of Nazi ideology.

He claimed that the Aryans were 'the sons of the sun, the sons of the gods, the supreme manifestation of life' and described their world-view as heroic, inasmuch as the Aryans sacrificed individual benefit for the good of the world. Indeed their vocation was the settlement and conquest of the whole world. ²²⁰

Nordic culture, fused with the mythical concept of the Aryan was an integral component of the Ariosophy movement inspired notably by the work of Austrian occultists and Pan-Germanic nationalists Guido von List and Lanz von Liebenfels. The term Ariosophy, coined by Liebenfels in 1915, described knowledge of the mythical ancient Aryan civilisation and became an important part of his political/religious doctrine during the 1920s. This movement This nationalist strand of the numerous new religions that emerged in Germany

²¹⁸ Kershaw, Ian (2000) *Hitler 1889-1936: Hubris*. London: Penguin Books. pp. 138-139.

²¹⁹ According to Goodrick-Clarke, Gorsleben delivered a speech to the Thule Society on 18th December 1920 entitled 'The Aryan Man'. *The Occult Roots of Nazism*, p.156. ²²⁰ Ibid. 198. p.157.

and Austria at the end of the nineteenth century, fused the National Romantic movement's appropriation of ancient Nordic culture and mythology with a developing nationalist and racial agenda out of which early forms of Nordicism began to emerge, promoting the protection and future regeneration of the Nordic race which I will examine in more detail later in this study. In his analysis of the Ariosophy movement, Goodrick-Clarke describes it as politically marginal but nonetheless influential through a process of the transmission of their cultural and religious beliefs into the field of racial politics by those early Nazi party members whose interests straddled the fields of religion and politics.

As romantic reactionaries and millenarians, the Ariosophists stood on the margin of practical politics, but their ideas and symbols filtered through to several anti-Semitic and nationalist groups in late Wilhelmian Germany, from which the early Nazi Party emerged in Munich after the First World War.²²¹

The progressive appropriation of Nordic mythology by German National Romanticism, as a basis for its reconstruction of the nation's *Vorzeit*, was significant in forming an idealized Pan-Germanic foundation for the later emergence of Nordicism within Nazi ideology. This development and elaboration of a heroic and inspirational foundation myth responded to the need to bring together a fragmented collection of *Länder* into a new modern nation state adapted to the wave of modernity spreading across Europe. In this context, the Romantic Movement, which had initially emerged as a reaction to the secularizing and deracinating impact of Enlightenment thought, progressively became the cultural basis of a modern unified German state and, through its fusion with the developing field of racial science, the foundation of the later emergence of Nordicism.

In *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition* (2010) Zeev Sternhell argued that the rejection of the Enlightenment by the Romantic movement stemmed from a 'revolt' against rationalist thought that emerged during the late eighteenth century. Sternhell described this as an alternative modernity, lasting from the

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²²¹ Ibid. 198. p.5.

second half of the eighteenth century to the age of the cold war, during which rationalist thought was constantly challenged. Sternhell proposed that by the turn of the twentieth century, the 'cultural victory of rationalism was eliciting a violent response and that a different political culture was emerging.'²²² Sternhell proposed that the term *Gegen-Aufklärung* (Anti-Enlightenment) was probably coined by Freidrich Nietzsche who she described as the 'greatest enemy that Enlightenment thought ever had'²²³ and that the term was in common use at the turn of the twentieth century in Germany. She further agued that 'at the beginning of the twentieth century, a comprehensive attack upon the essence of the Western rationalist and universalist tradition was coming to maturity.'²²⁴ In her concluding comments Sternhell assessed the later emergence of Fascism in Europe as 'an extreme expression of the Anti-Enlightenment tradition' and Nazism as 'a total assault on the human race' through its rejection of universal values and humanism.²²⁵

Conclusion - National Romanticism as a foundation for Nordicism

The Nordic cultural revival of the late eighteenth-century, which became a significant strand of the National Romantic Movement in Northern Europe and North America, took comparable but progressively divergent paths through the varying states of modernity in these nations. This divergence reveals how early forms of Nordicism, as modern forms of nationalist myth-making, emerged as a response to the distinctly unique conditions and aspirations of certain nations as they adapted to the prevailing forces of modernity, which were transforming Europe's cultural, political and social landscape. It also reveals the cultural nostalgic core from which Nordicism began to proliferate into its variant forms of benign and malignant Nordicism, fragments of which are still present in today's society.

²²² Sternhell, Zeev. (Trans. David Maisel) *The Anti-Enlightenment Tradition.* New Haven, London: Yale University Press. p.1.

²²³ Ibid. 222 p 344

²²⁴ Ibid. 222 p 441

²²⁵ Ibid. 222 p 441

In Scandinavia this revival became the inspiration for national regeneration away from established European preconceptions of a heathen, barbarian North, and the assertion of the inter-related but distinct cultural and political identities of the individual states of Norway, Denmark and Sweden. In Britain, which already had an early multi-cultural sense of its national heritage and which was a driving force in the age of Industry and Empire, Victorian society transformed the Viking into an expression of the bold, adventurous but noble spirit of the expanding influence and territorial expansion of Britain around the world. In fin-de-siècle Austria, notably in Vienna, the occultist revival drew on a Pan-Germanic political agenda that appropriated ancient Nordic culture, notably runes and the belief that Nordic culture contained the remnants of Aryan civilisation. It was, however in Germany and Northern America that the Nordic revival grew into a significant dimension of more radicalized forms of nationalism, rooted in ancient Nordic culture, as these nations sought to establish suitably adapted foundation myths onto which they could 'graft' the future development of their rapidly developing modern nations. This required the appropriation of ancient Nordic mythology to form the basis of 'home grown' national mythologies and a sense of Nordic biological identity, which corresponded to the individual needs of these nations to generate their own sense of nation rootedness and collective spirituality.

In America, increasing levels of immigration from nations around the world, notably from Latin and Eastern countries, together with rapid industrialization and expansion to the West, threatened the perceived primacy of the Germanic and Nordic settlers of the original thirteen Eastern colonies and their claim to be the descendants of the founders of the American nation. This progressively led to the transformation of their sense of Nordic heritage and rootedness into a biological political agenda that later interacted with that of Germany in the early twentieth century. In Germany, the search for national unity against the backdrop of rapid industrialization, social turmoil, religious division and cultural and political rivalry with the French led to the appropriation of ancient Nordic culture as the foundation of a romanticized *Vorzeit*. This resynthesized past represented the end product of the National Romantic search for the cultural greatness of Germany's past and opened the

path to the transformation of this historically orientated cultural movement into a futural political and racial agenda of national identity and racial predominance which was later to be appropriated as a rationale for Nazi racial policies. From its origins as a national cultural phenomenon, its mutation into the murderous modernist ideology of the twentieth century became a reality through its interaction with the concurrently emerging fields of racial science and eugenics, during the late nineteenth century. These scientific and, in cases, pseudo-scientific fields provided a scientific rationale and eventually the means to transform Nordicist theory into practice.

Chapter Two

Regenerating Miðgarðr - Racial science, eugenics and the emergence of Nordicism

Lo I teach you the Superman!

The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall be the meaning of the earth! (...) Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, and therewith also the blasphemers. To blaspheme the earth is now the dreadfulest sin, and to rate the heart of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth!²²⁶

Friedrich Nietzsche 'Thus spoke Zarathustra' (1883).

Descending from his ten-year retreat in a mountain cave, Nietzsche's prophet Zarathustra arrived in the nearby town to announce, to a largely indifferent crowd gathered in the market place, that God was dead and that the true meaning of life in earth now lay in humanity's mission to surpass his current state to evolve into a spiritually higher level of humanity, the Superman. Nietzsche had already announced his belief in the death of the Christian God both as a real, living entity and as a meaningful myth, in his 1882 work *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (The Gay Science), but it was through the testimony of his *alter ego* Zarathustra that he proposed his philosophy of man as 'a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman - a rope over an abyss'. Without God and the constraints of the Christian creationist belief system, modern man was free to perceive his condition as a liminal, developmental phase in which mankind could aspire to an ultimate stage of human development, that of a supreme being 'beyond man'. The rationalist project of scientific enquiry, initiated by the Enlightenment phase of early-

²²⁶ Nietzsche, Friedrich (Trans. Thomas Common) (1917) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* New York: The Modern Library. p.6.

The term 'Superman' is translated from the Nietzsche's original German, Übermensch. Other translations of this have been 'Beyond-man' (Tille, 1896), 'Superman' (G.B. Shaw, 1903) and 'Overman' (Kaufmann, 1954).), and, more recently the 'Higher Self' (Miner, 2011).] Robert Miner 'Nietzsche's Fourfold Conception of the Self', *An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 54, 4 (2011): 337-360.

²²⁸ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. p.7.

modernity, had progressively challenged and eroded the role of God as the omniscient, omnipotent creator and master of all in the cosmos to such an extent that, by the end of the nineteenth century, Nietzsche deemed *homo sapiens* ready to be made aware of his transitory state in nature, and through this awakening, strive for greater heights of existence. Nietzsche was arguably anticipating the academic and popular response to his modernist vision through his description of the indifferent reaction of the market place to Zarathustra's prophecy but was, nevertheless, announcing both the emergence of a new deracinating, nihilistic phase of modernity and the solution in a new vitalistic form of ethics and attitude to life. This period was to present an increasingly godless society with the challenge of defining a renewed sense of purpose and meaning to its existence, that of understanding its own creation and potential to control its own evolution and destiny through the transcending of the present phase of history and the inauguration of a new, heroic nomos.

Against the countervailing 'culture-regenerating' background of the Nordic revival of the late eighteenth century, strands of which were progressively appropriated by certain nationalist elements in Northern Europe and the USA, this chapter will examine how Nordicism emerged from the fusion of this cultural and later political movement with the concurrent development of the racial science²²⁹ to offer an alternative, purportedly more 'rational' and empirically grounded nomos to the Nietzschean 'Higher Self', but no less heroic and life-asserting. It will then examine its relationship with the developing eugenics movement through which nations sought to improve and perfect the human race by encouraging the reproduction of 'valuable' human types whilst purging it of elements that they considered degenerate and detrimental to the future development of mankind. It will also focus on the complex relationship between Nordicism and modernity as Northern European ethnies sought to regenerate the mythical purity of their historical racial origins as a reaction to what they perceived to be the modern era's neglect of superior races. It will also continue to examine the extent to which

 $^{^{229}\,\}text{In}$ this work I will use the term 'racial science' rather than the more contemporary but pejorative label 'scientific racism'.

this project was a modernist reaction expressing man's need to establish new forms of meaning and purpose to his existence to fill what philosopher Blaise Pascal²³⁰ described in *Pensées* (1670) as the 'infinite abyss'²³¹ caused by the absence of God in the consciousness of modern western society as Enlightenment rationalism eroded the foundations of the Christian belief system.

The Genesis question - The word of God and human diversity

And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the foul of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

It was through the developing scientific fields of philology and anthropology that early Enlightenment thinkers sought to align the word of the Bible with the evident diversity of human beings which had, throughout history, been the source of conflict, segregation and domination of one people over another. According to the word of the Old Testament, God had created 'Man' in his own image to rule over the world and early scientific thought attempted to investigate and explain how mankind could be so diverse whilst remaining, according to the Biblical paradigm, an image of God. European culture had progressively established the figure of Adam as a white European, an image epitomized by Michelangelo's iconic representation of the birth of mankind in *The Creation of Adam* on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in 1501. From this vital and fundamental question emerged two fields of thought, those of monogenism and polygenism. These two schools of academic thought drew on anatomical observations, early philology and biblical sources to determine how man had evolved and become diversified.

Monogenists drew largely on the creation myths of the Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to propose the theory of a single, common point of human creation and the subsequent metamorphosis of this

²³² Genesis 1.26 The Holy Bible, King James Version. Cambridge University Press. 2012.

 $^{^{230}}$ Blaise Pascal (1623-1662). French mathematician, physicist, inventor, writer and Christian philosopher.

²³¹ Pascal, Blaise (1995) *Pensées.* London: Penguin. p.425.

original human type through a process of geographical dispersal into a range of formative climactic conditions. This Biblical model was supported by early academics such as Robert Morton (1627-1691), Robert Boyle (1627-1691), John Mitchell (1711-1768), author of *An Essay upon the Causes of the Different Colours of People in Different Climates,* and J.A.L. Montriou who described the linguistic division and subsequent geographical dispersal of Adam and Eve's descendants into geographically and hence racially developmental zones in his 1787 work *Elements of Universal History*.

Noah's descendants multiplied greatly, and attempted to build the stupendous tower of Babel as a monument of their power, and a safe retreat in case of any new inundation, 2247 BC. God punished their presumption by producing diverse languages amongst them: they spoke, yet they no longer understood each other; whereupon they parted, and dispersed over the whole earth: Japhet settled in Europe, Shem in Asia, and Ham in Africa, about 2287 BC.²³⁵

This monogenist interpretation of creation and the subsequent linguistic dispersal of the original human race was popular amongst those who attempted to defend the teachings of the Church against the eroding forces of early modernity. This spread of rationalism was based on reason and physical evidence to support its theories rather than accepting the established nomos of Christianity.

Polygenists posited the theory that instead of originating from a single source, that of Adam, mankind originated from a range of geographical origins that had determined, through a process of adaptation, the diversity of human races in interaction with varying climactic conditions. This theory marked for many a significant point of departure from the acceptance of Abrahamic and particularly Christian doctrine as an unquestionable literal source of knowledge and understanding of the human condition. Initially criticized by many, notably the Catholic Church, as a form of heresy, polygenism threatened deep-rooted creationist beliefs of Christian society. In response to

²³³ Robert Boyle (1627–1691). An Anglo-Irish natural philosopher, chemist, physicist, and inventor.

²³⁴ John Mitchell (1711-1768). Scientist and American colonial doctor.

²³⁵ Montriou, J.A.L. British historian and author. (1786-7) *Elements of Universal History.* London: Fry and Couchman. Chapter 4 Noah. No page numbers shown. https://books.google.co.uk/books (Accessed 28/02/15).

this growing division between the field of science and the word of God, many Christian scientists adopted natural theology²³⁶ as a belief system that reconciled their personal Christian beliefs with the emerging contradictions between science and the word of the Bible.

Taxonomy - Measuring and classifying a race

Within this on-going debate over the origins of human diversity, the emerging scientific field of taxonomy sought to establish an empirical basis on which these differences in mankind could be identified, compared and potentially explained. During the eighteenth century, the work of Swedish physician, botanist and zoologist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) was fundamental to the development of racial science by creating an analytical framework for studying the variety of life on the planet and their complex inter-relationships, research which was to form the basis of modern taxonomy. 237 Linnaeus' research into biological classification was to become the core of his major works Systema Naturae (1735)²³⁸ and Species Plantarum (1753). In these works Linnaeus developed a standardized binomial²³⁹ order for animal and plant species, a system that formally categorized plant and animal life on the planet for the first time. A Christian monogenist, Linnaeus believed in the biblical paradigm of a single source for mankind and was an early supporter of the theory that geography played a vital role in racial determination. He also believed in the 'fixity of species', the theory that God had created the animal world in its existing form and that 'Unitas in omni specie ordinem ducit', 240 (the invariability of species is the condition for order), although he later revised

²³⁶ Natural theology is a belief system that enquires into the existence and attributes of God without referring or appealing to any divine revelation basing its conclusions on observation and physical evidence.

²³⁷ Taxonomy is the science of defining groups of biological organisms on the basis of shared characteristics and naming those groups.

²³⁸ Throughout his career Linnaeus continued to revise his *Systema Naturae*, which grew from a slim pamphlet to a multivolume work. It was first published in 1735 and updated throughout his career in subsequent editions up to his last expanded publication in 1766-68.

²³⁹ The term 'binomial' describes a system for naming plants and animals by means of two Latin names: the first indicating the genus and the second the species to which the organism belongs. ²⁴⁰ Linnaeus, Carl. (1740) Systema Naturae (2nd edition) Stockholm. p. 67.

these beliefs as he saw evidence of plant hybridization.²⁴¹ In this work, Linnaeus linked mankind to the animal world²⁴² and divided humans into five human taxa,²⁴³ or races based mainly on variations in skin colour and what he perceived as behavioural characteristics, a system of classification which was to have a significant influence on the development of racial science and later forms of racist ideology, such as Nordicism. Linnaeus used skin colour and geographical origin to determine and classify human *taxa*. He also applied descriptors to each race that were to become a prominent feature of later works on racial science. Linnaeus stated that the *Asiaticus* were 'yellow-skinned, avaricious, and easily distracted', whereas the *Africanus* were 'black-skinned, relaxed, and of negligent character' while the *Europeanus* were 'white-skinned, of gentle character, inventive mind, and bellicose.'

Linnaeus' racial descriptors placed the *Europeanus albus* at the apex of the human species with superior intellect, beauty and leadership qualities that reflected thought of the period supporting the concept of a white Adam and Eve and therefore the innate superiority of the European race providing a scientific rationale both for colonialism and the flourishing slave trade.

Linnaeus believed that God had created the world in a divine order with mankind at the apex and his purpose in creating his taxonomical system was arguably as much a religious as a scientific work. In his preface to a later edition of *Systema Naturae* Linnaeus stated that: '*Creationis telluris est gloria Dei ex opere Naturae per Hominem solum*' (The purpose of Creation is the glory of God, as can be seen from the works in nature by man alone).²⁴⁵
Linnaeus believed that God had created a biological order in nature and that it was the role of the naturalist to discover and reveal this act of divine creation for worship.

²⁴¹'Carl Linnaeus' ucmp.berkeley.edu.

http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/linnaeus.html (Accessed 15/03/15).

²⁴² Linnaeus caused some considerable controversy by classifying man and monkeys within the same category, *Anthropomorpha*, meaning manlike.

²⁴³ These five taxa were: *Europæus albus* (white European), *Americanus rubescens* (red American), *Asiaticus fuscus* (brown Asian) and *Africanus Niger* (black African). Linnaeus later added *monstrosus* for wild and deformed humans and other unclassified groups.

²⁴⁴ Linnaeus, Carl. (1758) Systema Naturae (10th edition) Stockholm. pp. 20-21. Source: https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/10277#page/26/mode/1up Accessed 10/07/18

²⁴⁵ Ibid. 244. p.3.

Another significant contribution to racial science was the research of Swedish professor of anatomy, anthropologist and polygenist Anders Retzius (1796-1860) who is credited with the development of the cephalic index.²⁴⁶ The cephalic system measured the dimensions of the heads of mammals to establish a means of categorizing the diversity of animal species. Through its application to the question of determining and explaining the diversity of human races and their origins the cephalic system divided humanity into either dolichocephalic (long headed), mesaticephalic (moderate headed), or brachycephalic (short headed). This system, which is still used in modern medicine and particularly in the field of animal breeding, provided another scientific means, for naturalists and anthropologists, of recording and analysing the variations in human anatomy. This system was later used by racial prehistorians to determine the physical characteristics and development of racial diversity and complimented the field of philology by establishing a scientific means of identifying and linking the origins of the Aryan and Nordic races with their modern descendants. Retzius' system of racial classification was highly influential and shaped racial thought throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The work of American racial theorists William Z. Ripley (1867-1941) and Madison Grant (1865-1937) was based on the cephalic index and later Nazi scientists adopted this system in to determine racial origins and various degrees of Nordic racial purity. Retzius' theory proposed that the measurements of the skull from different races indicated different levels of cerebral development, which in turn could be used to establish the intellectual superiority of certain races over others.

According to Retzius, it was a 'universally acknowledged fact' that Celtic and Germanic peoples possess the strongest intellectual facilities. This corresponded to their low, narrow and long skulls, with their strongly protruding occipital,²⁴⁷ and was in contrast to the inferior Slavs and Lapps with their broad skulls and weakly developed occiput [...] Short-skulled peoples had more primitive brains and more primitive cultures than long-skulled peoples.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ The cephalic index created categories by measuring the maximum width of the head of an organism (human or animal) multiplied by 100 divided by its maximum length.

The occipital lobe is one of the four major lobes of the cerebral cortex in the brain of mammals.

²⁴⁸ Kyllingstad, Jon Røyne (2015) *Measuring the Master Race: Physical Anthropology in Norway* 1890-1945. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers. p.585.

Through his conclusions, Retzius laid a significant foundation on which future linguists and anthropologists developed their theories on the racial superiority of the Nordic/Germanic race and the theories of subsequent Nordicists who perceived that the greatness of their prehistoric superiority needed protection and eventual regeneration.

One of the most significant scientific breakthroughs that impacted on the developing field of the science of race, largely through its appropriation and distortion to align with racial and nationalist agenda's during the early nineteenth century, was the research of evolutionists, notably the work of Charles Darwin (1809-1882). Theories concerning the evolution and transmutation of species, and in particular mankind, were gathering pace amongst academics during the eighteenth century. This became a significant strand of enquiry emerging from the debate between traditionalist monogenists and polygenists, who agued that the diversity of the human race was a result of adaptation over time to a range of formative geological locations and climatic conditions which had produced differing physical and behavioural characteristics. These theories of evolution had, however, never been fully explored due not only to a lack of evidence and scientific methodology but also to the fact that they directly opposed the established creationist doctrine of Christianity. Notable amongst these early thinkers was French naturalist and taxonomist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) who posited the theory that later became termed Lamarckism in his work Philosophie zoologique (1809). In this work, Lamarck established what he considered to be two principal laws of nature: firstly, that environmental changes effect the biological functions of an animals anatomy, and hence their size and secondly that these characteristics were inheritable producing a continuous and gradual evolutionary process.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ 'Jean-Baptiste Lamarck' ucmp.berkeley.udu http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/history/lamarck.html (Accessed 31/03/15).

The evolution of the races - The impact of Darwinism

Darwin's landmark publication, in 1859, of *On the Origin of Species* in which he first developed his theory of evolution through the process of natural selection and *The Descent of Man* (1871), which applied this theory to humankind, were both seminal works which collectively had an immense impact on 'Man's' perception of his place within nature by scientifically establishing that all species had evolved and that *homo sapiens* had developed from primates. Before its publication, Darwin was aware that his work would cause considerable academic and public controversy. In a frequently quoted letter to J.D. Hooker of 11th January 1844, he discussed the potential impact of his work.

I have read heaps of agricultural and horticultural books, and have never ceased collecting facts – at last gleams of light have come, and I am almost convinced (quite contrary to the opinion I started with) that species are not (it is like confessing a murder) immutable. [...] I think I have found out (here's presumption!) the simple way by which species become exquisitely adapted to various ends.²⁵⁰

Darwin was aware that the publication of his evolutionary theory would constitute a significant erosion of the word of the Bible. The naturalist's inner conflict, between his personal Christian beliefs²⁵¹ and the evidence of evolution that was confronting him, is expressed in his feelings of 'confessing a murder'. Darwin's empirically-grounded research was hugely influential and effectively repositioned humankind in relation to the cosmos established by Old Testament doctrine, which had for centuries provided the nomos of Christian society, arguably contributing powerfully to the part played by natural science in what Nietzsche described later in the century as the 'death of God'.

Although Darwin alluded to the possible application of his work to *homo* sapiens in this work, it was not until the publication of *The Descent of Man* in

(Accessed 03/04/15).

 $^{^{250}}$ 'Letter from Darwin to Hooker.' University of Cambridge Digital Library. http://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-DAR-00114-00003/4 (Accessed 01/04/15). 251 'Darwin and the Church.' https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/darwin-and-the-church-article

1871 that he took the step of applying his developing theories to humans and the nature of different races. In this work, Darwin asserted that differing races shared a common ancestry and that the differences between people of varying geographical origin should be considered part of a continuum of human variation rather than separate races or species.²⁵²

Through his work, Darwin scientifically established natural laws, those of natural selection, or the 'survival of the fittest'.²⁵³ This process of evolution was appropriated and distorted by later academics and nationalists to support, legitimize and promote their claims of Northern European, Nordic supremacy. Darwin's research also had a significant impact on the emergence of the eugenics movement, as certain scientists sought to apply Darwinian evolutionary principles to the improvement of mankind and later to the refinement and protection of the superiority of the northern European, Nordic/Germanic race.

From Genesis to racial science

A lasting consequence of the Darwinian revolution²⁵⁴ the Genesis Question; the debate between monogenists and polygenists and later between creationists and evolutionists defined modernity's challenge to the traditions and teachings of established religion and is still active today. Although many academics within this debate did not intend to contribute to nationalist claims of European racial superiority, the field of racial science later eclectically appropriated much of their work to support developing racial theories. This modernist project of establishing the origins of man contributed to the progressive erosion of traditional Christian beliefs consolidating a new era of

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 $^{^{\}rm 252}$ Darwin, Charles $\it The \, Descent \, of \, Man. \, (2004)$ New York: Barnes and Noble. p.151.

²⁵³ Although Darwin used this phrase, it was in fact coined by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) English philosopher, biologist, anthropologist and sociologist, who first used the phase in his work, *Principles of Biology*, published in 1864. Source: 'Herbert Spencer.' Encyclopedia Britannica Online http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/559249/Herbert-Spencer#ref145509 (Accessed 03/04/15).

²⁵⁴ Ruse, Michael. 2009. 'The Darwinian revolution: Rethinking its meaning and significance', *PNAS* 106 (Supplement 1): 10040-10047

rationalism summed up by Charles Morris²⁵⁵ who, at the turn of the century, criticized the impact of what he described as the misleading man-made narrative of Genesis in *Man and his Ancestor - A study in Evolution* (1900).

It might have been better for civilized mankind if the opening pages of Genesis had never been written, since they have played a potent part in checking the development of thought. As the case now stands, the cosmological doctrines they contain can no longer claim even a shadow of divine authority, since they have distinctly traced back to a human origin.²⁵⁶

By the end of the nineteenth century, the outcome of the Genesis Question had liberated many influential thinkers from the academic constrictions of creationism, placing man within nature, establishing that man could arguably be classified into different racial types and could potentially take control of his biological destiny. This process, however, also negated the creation myth of the Bible, a sense of origin that had provided western society with a sense of identity and destiny. This established creation narrative, based on Scripture and revelation, had been replaced with the narrative of natural selection based on scientific rationalism and empiricism, part of the process whereby modernity's thirst for material progress and knowledge progressively secularized society, causing a sense of deracination from time-honoured traditions and perceptions of the cosmos. Entwined with the development of the cultural and political movement of European National Romanticism, the field of racial science provided a significant source of legitimation in support of emerging racial theories of Aryan and northern European primacy.

The Aryan and the Nordic

Alongside the rapidly developing fields of biology, taxonomy, anthropology, history and archaeology, the field of philology became a significant element in the later development of Nordicism through its thesis of

²⁵⁵ Charles Morris (1833-1922) was an American professor journalist and author of popular historical textbooks.

²⁵⁶ Morris, Charles (1900) *Man and his Ancestor - A Study in Evolution.* London: MacMillan. Kindle Edition. p.2.

an Aryan 'Superrace', ²⁵⁷ which later became fused in pseudo-scientific and popular thought with the ancient tribes of northern Europe through a process which will be examined in this section. The origin of the concept of the Aryan race has generally been credited to orientalist and philologist Sir William Jones (1746-94). In an address for the Third Anniversary Discourse to the Asiatic Society of 2nd February 1786, Jones put forward his theory of a linguistic and therefore historic relationship between ancient Indian Sanskrit and European languages.

The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and the Celtic, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanskrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family, if this were the place for discussing any question concerning the antiquities of Persia. 258

In his speech Jones expressed his belief in a common source of European languages, notably Latin and Greek and the language of the ancient Aryan²⁵⁹ people. This seminal speech was to have a significant impact on the issue of the origins and subsequent dispersal of Adam's offspring, a point that was central to the division between monogenists and polygenists. Although Jones initially made only a somewhat slender connection between the Aryan and the Northern European peoples he had nonetheless opened up a debate that was to be incorporated, later during the nineteenth century, into the nationalist

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²⁵⁷ Poliakov, Leon (1974) *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe.* (New York: Basic Books).

²⁵⁸ Sir Jones, William address for the Third Anniversary Discourse to the Asiatic Society of 2nd February 1786. http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/lrc/books/read01.html (Accessed 02/04/15).

²⁵⁹ The English word 'Aryan' is borrowed from the Sanskrit word *ārya*, meaning 'noble' or 'one who does noble deeds', which already, by 1845, was being linked by German philologists with the word *Ehre* (honour) as a non-Jewish quality. During the nineteenth century this term was used to designate a historic tribe from the Near-East and the language of their supposed descendants including the Romans, Greeks and Germans. Aryanism developed as a movement of those who believed in the historical predominance of this ancient people.

agendas of a number of European states²⁶⁰ out of which Nordicism evolved as a claim of Northern European supremacy notably in Germany and the USA.

Applying the biblical model, Jones in identifying a linguistic connection between European languages and Sanskrit, had also suggested a historical affinity between the speakers of those languages. This statement, canonized in the context of a rising comparative and historical science of language, posed a profound set of questions for European intellectuals, concerning the nature of linguistic affinity and the original homeland of the Aryan people. The debate about the Aryans became a debate about the original locus and essence of the Europeans, and their relation to other peoples and territories.²⁶¹

In his authoritative work documenting the origins and development of the racial dynamics of Nazism and Nordicism and their relationship with modernity, Race and the Third Reich (2005), Christopher M. Hutton analysed the significance of Jones' application of the biblical paradigm of Noah's descendants and the Tower of Babel described by J.A.L. Montriou in his 1787 work *Elements of Human History*. According to the narrative of Genesis, Noah's descendants who all spoke a common tongue were given different languages by God as a punishment²⁶² and dispersed to live in different lands. Japheth and his descendants were sent to 'the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.'263 According to the interpretation of Catholic scholars, Japheth's group travelled and settled in prehistoric Asia and Europe founding both an early form of Indo-European language and what became defined by academics, such as Jones, as the Aryan race. In this academic context Japhet became the original Aryan²⁶⁴ and the term 'Japhetic' was used during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to describe languages belonging to the Indo-European linguistic group as it came to be defined.

The emerging field of philology attempted to resolve the question of race through the process of comparative linguistics associating the concept of

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²⁶⁰ Italian fascism was late to adopt Aryanism officially, but the Manifesto of Race of 14th July 1938, signed by a number of influential Italian scientists, and approved by Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) declared that the Italians were direct descendants of the Aryan race and discussed the exclusion of inferior races such as the Jews.

²⁶¹ Hutton, Christopher M. *Race and the Third Reich* p,84.

²⁶² God punished the descendants of Noah for their attempt to build a city and tower to reach heaven.

²⁶³ The Holy Bible. King James Version. Genesis 10.5 (2012).

²⁶⁴ Ibid. 261. p.84.

race with language. This causal link was, however, progressively contested by the field of racial anthropology, which posited physical and behavioural characteristics as indicators of race. This engendered an enduring debate amongst scholars of the period as to the most appropriate indicator of race. In his work, Christopher Hutton outlined the significance of this debate, concluding that despite scholars accepting the distinction between racial and linguistic identities 'the assumption was generally made that, at the point of origin, racial and linguistic identity had been congruent.'²⁶⁵

A founding figure of the emerging field of comparative philology was Jacob Grimm whose influential works *Deutsche Grammatik* (1819) and *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835), had a significant impact on the question of language and race by proposing, through the study of rural Germanic folklore, that commonalities between Northern European texts and classical Latin and Greek could, at their source, be historically linked to the Eastern oral tradition of the once noble Aryan. This theory was fundamental to later scholars who argued, for both political and cultural reasons, that the original dispersal point of Aryan civilization in Europe was Northern Germany. In his work, Grimm, whose mission was arguably as political as it was scholarly, set forward the hypothesis that the field of philology provided scientific proof of the onceprominent role of Germanic culture in a pagan Europe predating the spread of the foreign belief system of Christianity.

In A Revolution Reconsidered: Mythography and Mythology, Tom Shippey compared the impact of Grimm's work on the humanities with that of Charles Darwin in the life sciences, noting that both researchers based their theories on a mass of recorded observations and provided theoretical models (comparative and evolutionary) which were hugely influential, in their fields, and were later appropriated by subsequent scholars into the field of racial science. He also observed how both theories challenged the established biblical paradigm of creation and human dispersal.

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²⁶⁵ Ibid. 261. p.85.

With Darwin, why were animal species different? And what did the fossils of strange creatures prove? To this the only answer before him had been the story of Noah's ark. With Grimm, the questions were, why did people speak different languages, and why did languages change? To which the answer, equally unsatisfactory, was the story of the tower of Babel [...]. ²⁶⁶

The development of, what came to be termed 'Grimm's Law', mapping fundamental phonetic changes in the transition from Sanskrit to Germanic word formation was fundamental in providing a methodology with which to analyse and discover the ancient origins of the German language and therefore the lost prehistoric national roots of the Germanic *Volk*. This principle became fundamental to later thinkers seeking to centre the dispersal point of Aryan culture in Germany and therefore claim a historic primacy of the Germanic people.

A notable synthesis of the competing fields of racial enquiry was attempted by French aristocrat, writer and racial theorist, Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau (1816 –1882), 267 whose *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races), published between 1853 and 1855 had a significant impact, both in academic and popular circles, on the interpretation of the term Aryan and the study of the perceived physical, intellectual and moral differences between races. Writing in the historical context of his defence of the *Ancien Régime* against republican beliefs in the equality of man, 269 and drawing on evidence from the fields of religion, history, anthropology and linguistics, Gobineau supported the school of monogenism arguing that racial differences were permanent stating that 'Adam is the ancestor of the white race. The scriptures are evidently meant to be so understood, for the generations deriving from him are certainly white'. 270

²⁶⁶ Shippey, Tom. A Revolution Reconsidered: Mythography and Mythology in the Nineteenth Century. Contained in The Shadow-Walkers: Jacob Grimm's Mythology of the Monstrous (Tom Shippey Ed.) Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies Volume 291. Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. (2005), p. 6.

²⁶⁷ Although a French national De Gobineau was taken to Germany by his mother to be educated in the gymnasium system and had a strong affinity to the German nation.

²⁶⁸ This was was the social and political system established in France from approximately the 15th century until the Revolution.

²⁶⁹ Gobineau was writing in the historical context of the Revolution of 1848.

²⁷⁰ Compte de Gobineau, Joseph Arthur (Trans. A. Collins) (1915) *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races.* London: William Heinemann. Google Books. (Accessed 20/04/16). p117

From this foundation of the biblical paradigm, Gobineau argued that the question of racial differences was a fundamental component of the dynamics of history. Dividing humanity initially into three major groupings of white, yellow and black, Gobineau placed the ancient Aryan race at the apex of the superior white race arguing that there is no true civilization, among the European peoples, where the Aryan branch is not predominant.'271

Miscegenation - The racial crisis of Aryanism

Central to Gobineau's thesis of the decline of civilizations was the concept of inter-breeding or miscegenation²⁷² between the races, which he described as dégénération (the loss or corruption of the genus), a process that had eroded the superior qualities of Northern Europe's social and biological elite.

The word degenerate, when applied to a people (as it ought to mean) that the people have no longer the same blood in its veins, continual adulterations having gradually affected the quality of that blood. In other words, though the nation bears the name given by its founders, the name no longer connotes the same race; in fact, the man of a decadent time, the degenerate man properly so called, is a different being, from the racial point of view, from the heroes of the great ages.²⁷³

Gobineau perceived the nineteenth century, and particularly this renewed period of social upheaval following the 1848 revolution, as a decadent time during which the pure Aryan race was becoming adulterated beyond the point of recognition and comparison with its pure-blooded founders, the sons of Noah. In this context Gobineau further argued that although inter-breeding improved certain races, it was always to the detriment of the superior people.

It would be unjust to assert that every mixture is bad and harmful. If the three great types had remained strictly separate, the supremacy would no doubt have always

²⁷¹ Compte de Gobineau, Joseph Arthur. Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races, p.211. ²⁷² The term 'miscegenation' emerged during the nineteenth century to describe the mixing of races

²⁷³ Ibid. 261. p.24.

been in the hands of the finest of the white races, and the yellow and black varieties would have crawled for ever at the feet of the lowest of the whites.²⁷⁴

Within his thesis of Aryan supremacy in which he presented his theories on the historic dispersal of the Aryan race, Gobineau founded a significant link between the Aryan and Germanic people that was to have a meaningful impact on the later development of Nordicism. In his work, Gobineau described how ancient Germanic tribes had progressively regenerated vital elements of the Aryan race to create a superior European civilization.

Our civilization has been created by the mingling of the Germanic tribes with the races of the ancient world, the union, that is to say, of pre-eminently male groups with races and fragments of races clinging to the decayed remnants of ancient ideas. The richness, variety and fertility of invention for which we honour our modern societies, are the natural, and more or less successful, result of the maimed and disparate elements which our Germanic ancestors instinctively knew how to use, temper, and disguise. ²⁷⁵

Concluding that where 'the Germanic element has never penetrated, our special kind of civilization does not exist', ²⁷⁶ Gobineau had sown the seeds of what later thinkers were to consider the scientific legitimation for their claims of Pan-Germanic racial superiority. Following its publication in France between 1853 and 1855, Gobineau's work was translated into English in 1856 as *The Moral and Intellectual Diversity of Races* by Henry Hotze, and into German as *Versuch über die Ungleichheit der Menschenrassen* by Ludwig Schemann²⁷⁷ in 1897. Through these publications, Gobineau's work arguably had a considerable influence on a number of contemporary and later racial theorists in Europe and America who built on his theories.

In his analysis of the development and impact of Gobineau's life and works in *Father of Racist Ideology* (1970), Michael D. Baddiss described Gobineau as part of an emergence of social and racial pessimism at the end of the nineteenth century, one of a number of extremist Northern European

²⁷⁵ Ibid. 261. p.92.

²⁷⁴ Ibid. 261. p.207.

²⁷⁶ Ibid. 261. p.92.

²⁷⁷ Karl Ludwig Schemann (1852-1938) was a notable racial theorist who founded the Gobineau-Vereinigung in 1894 to promote the work of Gobineau in academic circles.

thinkers who felt increasingly alienated from the European civilisation that they considered to be in irreversible decline.

In common with many extremist thinkers, Gobineau reveals the symptoms of alienation and cultural despair frequently encountered among those whose status is devalued by social and economic change [...] Gobineau strove, in a society that progressively refused recognition to himself and his caste, for self-legitimation by stressing that it was not he but the bulk of his contemporaries who were de-based.²⁷⁸

Gobineau viewed the French Revolution as the destruction of the ruling aristocratic Aryan elite, by inferior social and racial classes. In his view, the revolutionary slogan of *Liberté*, *Égalité*, *Fraternité* represented the social, spiritual and biological overthrow of the *Ancien Régime* that had ordered society providing it with its sense of hierarchical structure and meaning. This growing sense of social crisis and alienation, prompted thinkers such as Gobineau to look back to the past in order to reconstruct and legitimise a mythologized 'golden age' of the northern European race's once noble origins that were becoming eroded and diluted.

Although Gobineau did not propose any programme of negative eugenics his work was arguably influential on later racial thought and theories of racial cleansing. In his concluding comments on the impact of Gobineau's work, Biddiss comments that the 'implications of depersonalization and dehumanization, eventually actualized in the concentration camps'²⁷⁹ were already present in the social and racial observations and theories of Gobineau.

Locating the homeland of the Aryan in the North

The myth of the Aryan race had considerable resonance across a northern European intelligentsia that reacted to the 'seismic' events of the French Revolution and its subsequent 'after-shocks' by fusing the emerging cultural and political movement of National Romanticism with the developing field of

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²⁷⁸ Biddiss, Michael (1970). *Father of Racist Ideology - The Social and Political Thought of Count Gobineau.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. p. 266.

²⁷⁹ Ibid. 278 p. 267

racial science, to establish evidence to support the myth of the prehistoric racial utopia of the Aryan. Within the active debates surrounding the concept of the Aryan race that flourished during the late nineteenth century emerged the important question of the original homeland or *Urheimat*²⁸⁰ of the Aryan tribe. This point became actively contested between academics that proposed a variety of differing points of origin for the Aryan race according to the evidence emerging in their respective fields of linguistics, anthropology, and archaeology and, notably, their own nationalist agendas. The impact of this debate was to become, in later years, central to the association of the Aryan and the Nordic and hence to the subsequent emergence of Nordicism as a cultural, political and scientific phenomenon.

Between 1859 and 1863, Swiss linguist Adolphe Pictet (1799-1875) published his major work *Les Origines Indo-Européenes ou les Aryans primitifs: Essai de paléontologie lingistique,* in which he drew on aspects of comparative linguistics to establish historical cultural links, a method he termed 'linguistic palaeontology'.²⁸¹ Through this method, he attempted to establish proof for the belief that the homeland of the Aryan was to be found on the Asian continent.²⁸² Although Pictet's thesis aligned broadly with current thought, many of his conclusions remained contested as a plethora of alternative sites were proposed by the increasing number of academics which became drawn into this contentious question.

In 1878, German American anthropologist and author Theodor Pösche (1824-1899) proposed a northern European homeland that provoked further debate. Drawing on evidence from the fields of history and physical anthropology he published *Die Arier, ein Beitrag zur historischen Anthropologie* (1878), in which he argued the case for supremacy of a blond,

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²⁸⁰ From German, meaning a prehistoric homeland.

²⁸¹ Pictet, Adolphe (1859) *Les Origines Indo-Européenes ou les Aryans primitifs: Essai de paléontologie lingistique*. Paris: Cherbulier. pp. V-VIII Source:

 $https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=3Twog10Wmm4C\&pg=PA27\&source=gbs_toc_r\&cad=3\#v=onepage\&q\&f=false\ Accessed\ 14/07/18$

fair-skinned, blue-eyed race centred on the Baltic region.²⁸³ Pösche argued that throughout history there was evidence of cultural domination by an Aryan race, whose current physical characteristics were most densely clustered in this region out of which the peoples had migrated south towards more temperate climates in southern Europe.²⁸⁴ This theory constituted a significant shift in the perceived homeland of the original Aryan tribe and provoked a debate that would continue until the end of the Second World War.

Engaging with this debate, the contribution of Austrian philologist and anthropologist Karl Penka (1847-1912), was to have a considerable impact on the later conceptual fusion of the Aryan, the Germanic and the Nordic. In his publications *Origenes Aricae* (Origins of the Aryans) of 1883 and *Die Herkunft der Arier* (The Descent of the Aryans) of 1886, Penka drew on the field of linguistics, archaeology and anthropology to posit the theory that Pösche had inaccurately centred the blond Aryan race in the Baltic and that the true centre of the distribution of the blond race lay in Scandinavia.²⁸⁵

[...] so there can be no doubt that only Scandinavia and especially the Southern and Central areas can be considered the homeland of the Aryan because this is the actual focal point of the distribution of the blond race. ²⁸⁶

Penka's theories met with a mixed reaction, such as that of Max Müller²⁸⁷ and Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville²⁸⁸ who rejected his evidence and maintained that Asia should be considered the original Aryan homeland. Another critic of the conclusions of both Pösche and Penka was English philologist, toponymist, and Anglican canon of York, Isaac Taylor (1828-1901) who in his work *The Origin of the Aryans* (1890) examined the on-going debate concerning the original homeland of the Aryans and suggested that the terrain of Scandinavia

²⁸⁵ Hehn, Victor (1885) *Cultivated plants and Domesticated Animals in their migration from Asia to Europe.* p xxii. Google Books. (Accessed 14/06/15).

²⁸³ Arvidsson, Stefan (2006) *Aryan Idols - Indo-European Mythology as Ideology and Science.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p.143.

²⁸⁴ Ibid 283.

²⁸⁶ Ibid. p xxii. Google Books. (Accessed 14/06/15). (My translation)

²⁸⁷ Friedrich Max Müller (1823 –1900) German born philologist and orientalist who argued that Aryan was a linguistic term and should not be applied to race.

²⁸⁸ Marie Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville (December 5, 1827 - February, 1910), a French historian and philologist applied linguistic paleontology to reject the proposition of a European Aryan *Urheimat*.

made it an unlikely homeland of the Aryan tribe, which he suggested, had originated in the Russian continent.

Penka has undoubtedly weakened his argument by the unnecessary contention that Scandinavia was the cradle of the whole Aryan race. It is difficult to believe that such a sufficiently extensive area for the growth of such a numerous people can be found in the forest-clad valleys of Norway and Sweden, which moreover are unadapted for the habitation of a nomad pastoral people, such as the primitive Aryans must have been.²⁸⁹

Others enthusiastically supported Penka's theories such as Gerald H. Rendall, who promoted Penka's theories amongst a popular British and American readership. In his presentation of the Austrian's work in *Cradle of the Aryans*, published in 1889, he described the physical superiority of the Nordic race, stating that the 'Norwegians not only retain the old physical characteristics, but exhibit the highest average structure, the most prolific productiveness, the lowest rate of child mortality, the highest average longevity of any European race'. ²⁹⁰ In support of Penka's theories, Rendall commented that 'the theory of the Asiatic origin of Aryan speech is devoid of solid evidence' and that 'Penka has gone far towards establishing an association between Aryan speech and the race of blond whites, whose central and immemorial home is found in Scandinavia. ²⁹¹

From Aryanism to Nordicism

In *Race and the Third Reich*, Christopher M Hutton discussed the significance of Penka's work describing him as a 'transitional figure between Aryanism and Nordicism' adding that 'Northern Europe offered an ideologically propitious site of origin' and 'the mountainous terrain of northern Europe, in the Romantic imaginings, could be seen as a pure realm, an abode of Gods', ²⁹² (indeed, Jotunheim, the name of the main mountain range in

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²⁸⁹ Taylor, Isaac (1890) *The Origin of the Aryans*. New York: Scribner and Welford. Source: Google Books (Accessed 18/06/15) pp. 46-47

²⁹⁰ Rendell, Gerald H. (1889) *The Cradle of the Aryan*. London: MacMillan and Co. pp.54-55. https://archive.org/stream/cradleofaryans00rend#page/n1/mode/2up (Accessed 14/06/15). ²⁹¹ Rendell. Gerald H. *The Cradle of the Aryan*. pp. 62-63.

²⁹² Hutton, Christopher M. *Race and the Third Reich*. p.108.

Norway, means 'the home of the gods'). This analysis identifies Penka's work as a significant point of convergence whereby the development of racial science became fused with the romanticized 'imperfect history' of the Nordic Revival that had been progressively appropriated by nationalist thinkers in Germany and the USA to support their theories of Nordic supremacy.

British born author and later son-in-law of the German composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883), Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927), could be considered a key figure in the transition between Aryanism and Nordicism. His works had a considerable influence on Pan-Germanic, *völkisch* and Nazi thought in Germany and the USA. Born in Hampshire, England, Chamberlain's continental education²⁹³ drew him towards Germanic culture and the eventual rejection of his British homeland in favour of his adopted German fatherland.²⁹⁴ Chamberlain was very much a product of the fusion of the literary and artistic romanticisation of the Nordic and Germanic people and racial science, which had created both the myth of Northern European predominance and a theoretical scientific framework to support it. Having attended the première and the following five performances of Wagner's *Parsifal* in Bayreuth during July 1882, Chamberlain became fascinated by the Germanic Romanticism of Wagner and his creative process.²⁹⁵

Chamberlain discussed this in a number of critical and biographical works and articles such as *Das Drama Richard Wagner's*. *Eine Anregung* (Vienna, May 1892), and *Richard Wagner* (Munich, 1896).²⁹⁶ Chamberlain was also influenced by the work of racial thinkers, such as Gobineau, whose theory of miscegenation reflected his own beliefs in the deterioration of the Nordic/Germanic race through historic and contemporary inter-breeding. In this context, Chamberlain was part of a generation of academics, intellectuals

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 $^{^{293}}$ As a child Chamberlain was educated by a Prussian tutor and became attracted to Germany's cultural heritage as it was presented at the time.

²⁹⁴ Chamberlain wrote numerous articles against Britain during World War One and became a German citizen in 1916.

²⁹⁵ Chamberlain became part of the inner circle of Wagner's admirers and in 1908 married the composer's daughter Eva von Bülow-Wagner.

²⁹⁶ 'Index of Chamberlain's publications on Wagner in the French and German Press'. http://www.hschamberlain.net/bibliography/bibliography.html (Accessed 21/08/2015).

and cultural commentators who considered modernity as not than just a socioeconomic or political process but also a biological struggle against the weakening of the human race through interbreeding, a process described by Hutton in his analysis of racial science and the development of Nazi ideology.

Races, peoples, social groups, languages, cultures that had been clearly distinct and identifiable, held separate by geography or the operation of social or 'caste' boundaries, were now merging and blurring into one another. The pre-modern 'ecology' or 'natural order', in which different racial and cultural variants had their own 'place', was breaking down. The pure essences of the past were being lost, and a bastardized, mongrel and degraded humanity was emerging from the cities and ports of modern civilization.²⁹⁷

In *Historicizing Race* (2018), Marius Turda and Maria Sophia Quine also point out the influence on Chamberlain's racial theories, of Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804) and the theories of race and white supremacy that he proposed in *Von den verschieden Racen den Menschen*, first published in 1775. In their discussion of Chamberlain's work, they work they argue that his appropriation of Kant's theories went beyond seeking to academically 'underpin' his own, it aimed to provide evidence that civilisation and culture had been created by the Teutonic race.²⁹⁸ For Chamberlain, the concept of race went beyond the objective reality of thinkers such as Gobineau to become an expression of biological unity and and spiritual transcendence.

For him, race was a subjective and higher entity, internal to the human mind and within people, which shaped their impressions and actions [...] Race for him was immaterial but real. It comprised those higher intuitions and experiences, propelled individuals to greatness, and elevated human beings to transcendental heights, close to the Gods of any religion. Chamberlain's race was the soul of the people.²⁹⁹

Turda and Quine argue that this metaphysical interpretation of race was characteristic of a fin-de-siècle modernist idealization of the Northern European race. This modernist reaction fused National romanticism and scientific method to create a myth of the potential transcendental elevation and biological supremacy of the Teutonic race.

²⁹⁷ Hutton, Christopher M. *Race and the Third Reich*. p.10.

²⁹⁸ Turda, Marius. Quine, Sophia Maria. (2018) *Historicizing Race*, London: Bloomsbury. p. 44. ²⁹⁹ Ibid. 298. p.44.

In 1899, on the cusp of the new millennium which, from the perspective of many racial theorists of the time, was to be an era dominated by the eroding forces of modernity, Chamberlain published his major work on the history of the Germanic people, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten* Jahrhunderts (The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century) in which he proposed the historic pre-eminence of what he defined as the Teutonic Race, its relationship to the Aryan people, and its fall from greatness. In his analysis of the development of Chamberlain's racial thought and the impact of his work in Evangelist of Race (1981), Geoffrey G. Field commented that Chamberlain's aim in writing this work was to substantiate two fundamental convictions. Firstly, that humanity could be divided into races that differed in their physical structure and their mental and moral capabilities and secondly that the struggle and interaction of these races was a main force behind the evolution of history and fundamental to understanding cultural, political and social development. Field concluded however that: 'His work was designed to show that the Germanic or Teutonic race as the main architect of modern European civilization'. 300 In Chamberlain's own words:

It was Teutonic blood and Teutonic blood alone (in the wide sense in which I take the word, that is to say, embracing the Celtic, Teutonic and Slavonic, or North European races) that formed the impelling force and the informing power. It is impossible to estimate aright the genius and development of our North-European culture, if we obstinately shut our eyes to the fact that it is a definite species of mankind, which constitutes its physical and moral basis. We see that clearly today: for the less Teutonic a land is, the more uncivilized it is.³⁰¹

The 'wide sense' of Chamberlains use of the term 'Teutonic' embraced a number of Pan-Germanic European identities including, amongst others, Scandinavian and through his application of the cephalic index, developed by Anders Retzius, Chamberlain defined and proposed the Teutonic or Germanic as the noblest and most civilized of the European and world races. In his work Chamberlain also linked the much-debated concept of the Aryan with the Teutonic asserting the superior nature of the Aryan people over other, non-

³⁰⁰ Field, Geoffrey G. (1981) *Evangelist of Race - The Germanic* Vision of Houston Stewart Chamberlain. New York: Columbia University Press. p.180.

³⁰¹ Chamberlain H.S. (Trans. Lees, John) (1910) *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century.* London: The Bodley Head. p.188.

Aryan races.

Certain anthropologists would fain teach us that all races are equally gifted; we point to history and answer: that is a lie! The races of mankind are markedly different in the nature and also in the extent of their gifts, and the Germanic races belong to the most highly gifted group, the group usually termed Aryan... Physically and mentally the Aryans are pre-eminent among all peoples; for that reason they are by right ... the lords of the world. 302

Chamberlain however, perceived the concept of the Aryan in his own terms, rejecting the theories of a nomadic tribe that had migrated from the East as impossible to determine as he rejected language as a reliable indicator of race. In a footnote to his work, he defined his interpretation of the concept of the Aryan as an innate sense of belonging, comparable with his own personal rejection of his Britishness and spiritual sense of belonging to the Germanic people.

When I use the word Aryan in this book, I take it in the sense of the original Sanscrit "ârya," which means "belonging to the friends," without binding myself to any hypothesis. The relationship in thought and feeling signifies in any case a homogeneousness.³⁰³

Chamberlain's definition of the Aryan drew on a romanticized sense of spiritual belonging rather than taking a position amongst the plethora of contemporary debates concerning the meaning and application of the term 'race' and the unreliability of both philological and anthropological methods to establish a clear identity and point of origin of the Aryan people in the East. In proposing his location of the original Aryans, Chamberlain was attracted to the strand of thought established by thinkers such as Penka who, by analysing physical characteristics, had situated the dispersal point of the Aryan people in Northern Europe.

Relationship of language is no conclusive proof of community of blood; the theory of the immigration of the so-called Indo-Europeans from Asia, which rests upon very slight grounds, encounters the grave difficulty that investigators are finding more and more reason to believe that the population which we are accustomed to call Indo-

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³⁰² Chamberlain H.S. *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century.* p.542.

³⁰³ Ibid. 301. p.266.

European was settled in Europe from time immemorial; for the opposite hypothesis.³⁰⁴

In his discussion of Chamberlin's work Geoffrey Field commented that 'at the time Chamberlain began the *Foundations*, one of the hottest issues in academic debates concerned the exact location of the ancestral home of the Germanic or Aryan peoples'. ³⁰⁵ Field further argued that after 1850 a growing number of academics supported the theory of a Northern European centre of dispersal of the Aryan race and that by the twentieth century, the term Nordic had progressively replaced the term Aryan in racial thought. ³⁰⁶

Supporting current theories of miscegenation and the need for selective breeding, Chamberlain highlighted the need to protect the Teutonic branch of the Aryan race from destruction through interbreeding with genetically inferior peoples precipitated by the process of modernity's erosion of traditional communities and socio-racial boundaries which was diluting pure races.

In the nineteenth century, as in all former centuries, but of course with widely different grouping and with constantly changing relative power, there stood side by side in Europe these "Heirs" — the chaos of half-breeds, relics of the former Roman Empire, the Germanising of which is falling off — the Jews — and the Germans, whose contamination by mixture with the half-breeds and the descendants of other Non-Aryan races is on the increase. No arguing about "humanity" can alter the fact that this means a struggle. Where the struggle is not waged with cannon-balls, it goes on silently in the heart of society by marriages, by the annihilation of distances which furthers intercourse, by the varying powers of resistance in the different types of mankind, by the shifting of wealth, by the birth of new influences and the disappearance of others, and by many other motive powers. But this struggle, silent though it be, is above all others a struggle for life and death. 307

Chamberlain's depiction of the potential destruction of the Aryan race, by the progress of modernity, as a silent on-going biological battle for racial survival was to form the core of Nordicist thought and later Nazi ideology, which sought to protect and regenerate the purity of the Nordic/Germanic type

³⁰⁵ Ibid. 300. p. 210.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. 301. p.264.

³⁰⁶ Ibid. 300. p.210.

³⁰⁷ Ibid. 301. p.577.

against the non-Aryan. Chamberlain did not accept, however, the pessimistic view that the process of miscegenation was irrevocable, stating his belief that a noble race, such as the Aryan could be re-established in favourable conditions, a futural vision of an alternate modernity, which became the nucleus of Nordicism.

A noble race does not fall from Heaven, it becomes noble gradually, just like fruit-trees, and this gradual process can begin anew at any moment, as soon as accident of geography and history or a fixed plan (as in the case of the Jews) creates the conditions.³⁰⁸

In his discussion of the battle against extinction of the Aryan people, Chamberlain identified the Jew as the racial enemy of the Germanic race. In their analysis of his anti-Semitism, Turda and Quine propose that it combined aspects of both biological and cultural racism. The former identified them according to their physical characteristics and the latter relied on a Christian view of their 'negative mentality' that could be seen in their cultural, moral and spiritual inferiority. 309 Turda and Quine propose that Chamberlain considered Christianity as a "moral revolt against decadence and degeneration," with modern Germans as the means of creating a new world order who would be the saviours of European culture and the creators of the modern mind. 310 In his analysis of this perceived battle for racial survival, Geoffrey Field described it as 'fundamentally Manichaean' conflict explaining the world 'in terms of a relentless combat between the forces of Good and Evil'. Field further argued that the existence of the Aryan, as synonymous with Good in the world, 'necessitated the presence of the destructive force of Evil', and that this concept of a malignant, destructive force of Evil, became increasing associated in nationalist circles as the Jew.311

Although Chamberlain's work received a mixed reaction in academic circles, it was a clear success in terms of its sales. In *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, William L Shirer described the publication of this work as

³⁰⁹ Ibid. 298. p.82.

³⁰⁸ Ibid. 301. p.264.

³¹⁰ Ibid. 298. p.83.

³¹¹ Ibid. 300. p.210.

'something of a sensation', 312 especially amongst the influential upper classes of German society. Shirer also described how one of its most enthusiastic readers was Kaiser Wilhelm II, who is reported as having written in a letter to Chamberlain; 'It was God who sent your book to the German people, and you personally to me. 313 In January of 1900, all 2500 copies of its first edition in Germany had sold out and, by March of 1904, further editions brought sales to 20,000 copies. In 1906, a popular edition (*Volksausgabe*) of the *Grundlagen* was published and 10,000 copies were sold within one week. By 1914, it had sold 80,000 copies and been translated into a number of European languages 314 and could therefore be considered a significant and influential element of the fusion of Romantic Nationalism and racial science which led to the emergence of Nordicism as an ideological movement.

Assessing the impact of Chamberlain's work, Turda and Quine concluded that Chamberlain succeeded in popularising a synthesis of Aryanism, Social Darwinism, eugenics, anthropo-sociology, anti-Semitism and German nationalism and provided an academic foundation on which many Nazi ideologues built their concept of Germanic/Nordic supremacism. 315

Another influential work that contributed, although somewhat indirectly, to the case of those who argued in favour of the Germanic states' predominance was published by American economist, sociologist and racial theorist William Z. Ripley (1867-1941) in the same year. *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* was an influential work in the field of racial taxonomy in which Ripley proposed a tripartite system and designed a number of maps based on racial characteristics that were adopted notably by Nordicists such as Madison Grant. Ripley divided Europeans into three racial groups: Teutonic (Northern European), Mediterranean (Southern) and Alpine (Central), basing his conclusions on a combination of geographical,

³¹² Shirer, William L. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. (London. Pan Books1964), p.141.

³¹³ Shirer, William L. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, p.141.

^{314 &#}x27;Publication Statistics of H.S. Chamberlain'. Source:

http://www.hschamberlain.net/timeline/timeline.html (Accessed 21/08/2015).

³¹⁵ Ibid. 298. p.46.

environmental, anthropometric³¹⁶ and cultural factors. Ripley's work however shows that many thinkers of the period were beginning to view Aryanism with increasing scepticism. Ripley rejected any reliable correlation between the field of physical anthropology and philology, describing the results as 'havoc'.³¹⁷ Ripley proposed that culture and tradition also had a significant role in merging the myth of tall blond Europeans with the Nordic/Germanic race, which became associated with light-skinned, high caste 'Aryan' inhabitants of Asia.

The first of these is that the 'Aryan race' was somehow blond, long-headed, and tall in other words, that the ancestors of the modern Teutonic type were the original civilizers of Europe. For civilization and Aryanism were indissolubly considered as one and the same; all plausible enough, to be sure, until you look the matter squarely in the face. It is easy to see how this gratuitous assumption of a tall, blond 'Aryan race' originated. The sacred books of the East suggested that the chosen people were 'white men.' This is not surprising, in view of the fact that the aboriginal inhabitants of India, among whom they came, were veritably then, as they are to-day, negroes.³¹⁸

Ripley was also critical of the theories of Karl Penka that situated the original dispersal point of the Aryan race in Scandinavia, arguing that archaeological evidence indicated that Scandinavia, Denmark, and the Baltic plain of Germany, throughout the prehistoric period was 'characterised by backwardness of culture'³¹⁹ compared with the rest of Europe. Ripley argued that any migration of tall, blond social groups came from the centre of Europe where the climate was more suited to human development.

What can Penka say to this in his positive affirmation that the original Aryans got up into Scandinavia, having followed the reindeer from central Europe to the north after the retreat of the ice sheet? The fact is, archaeologically speaking from the evidence furnished by the kitchen middens, that if they ever did this they left a fine country, where deer were plenty, to subsist upon shellfish on the foggy coasts of Denmark.³²⁰

Differentiating between the Aryan and Teutonic race, Ripley established his

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³¹⁶ Anthropometric data refers to a number of measurements of humans including use of the cephalic index.

³¹⁷ Ripley, William Z. (1900) *The Races of Europe - A Sociological Study*. London: Kegen Paul, Trench and Trübner and Co. 1900. p.456.

³¹⁸ Ripley, William Z. The Races of Europe, p.454.

³¹⁹ Ibid. 317. p.507.

³²⁰ Ibid. 317. p.511.

definition of the Teutonic race as tall, with a long face and narrow nose, blond hair and blue eyes, which he categorized as being synonymous, in contemporary terminology, with the 'Delicholepto, Reihengräber, Germanic, Kymric, Nordic and Homo Europaeus', highlighting the semantic confusion of the term in contemporary scholarship. Defining his perception of the Teutonic race and the established superiority of the tall, blond race that dominated prehistoric Europe, Ripley suggested a combined process of climate and 'artificial selection', whereby tall, blond, blue-eyed European people became associated with nobility and supremacy creating a prehistoric 'ideal type', which had been associated through scholarship with the myth of a once superior Aryan race and which had become a preferred characteristic for breeding.

But there is yet another reason why we may expect these Teutons to be notable even in their own latitude by reason of their blondness. It is this: that the trait has for some reason become so distinctive of a dominant race all over Europe that it has been rendered susceptible to the influence of artificial selection. Thus a powerful agent is allied to climate to exaggerate what may once have been an insignificant trait.³²²

A notable contemporary critic of Ripley and Nordicist beliefs was French anthropologist, racial theorist and cartographer Joseph Deniker (1852-1918). Following a number of publications in French entitled, *Les Races de l'Europe*, in which he catalogued and mapped the diversity of physical characteristics of the European peoples, Deniker broadened his racial scope in his 1900 publication, *Les Races et les Peuples de la Terre*, translated the same year into English as *The Races of Man*. In his work, Deniker disagreed with Ripley's tripartite system, suggesting six primary European racial types: the Nordic, centred in Scandinavia, Northern Germany, Frisia, the British Isles and the Baltic; the Littoral, from the Pyrenees and parts of Spain, western and southern France and north-western Italy; the Oriental, from Belarus, Ukraine and eastern Poland; the Adriatic, from France, Austria, Ukraine and Ciscaucasia; the Ibero-Insular from the Iberian Peninsula, western France, southern Italy and the Mediterranean islands; and the Occidental, a race

³²¹ Ibid. 317. p.121.

³²² Ibid. 317. p.469.

comprising the Palaeolithic inhabitants of Europe.

Although he differed from Ripley in his analysis of European racial composition, Deniker is comparable with Ripley through his scepticism concerning the concept of an Aryan race as the founders of the Germanic/ Nordic race. Deniker rejected the theories of philologists Max Müller and Jacob Grimm who had posited the theory of the existence of an Aryan race that had migrated from Asia based on linguistic grounds³²³ but was equally critical of the racial theories of anthropologists, such as Pösche and Penka, maintaining that their evidence was equally questionable.

As to the Asiatic origin of the Aryans, a somewhat rude blow was struck at this second hypothesis by Poesche and Penka, who, taking up the ideas of Linné and d'Omalius d'Halloy on the exclusive existence in Europe of fair-haired populations, identified these populations without any proof, it is true, with the Aryans.³²⁴

Within the field of archaeology, German linguist and professor of archaeology in Berlin, Gustav Kossina (1858 - 1931), contributed to this debate with his Pan-Germanist theories of national identity based on the ethnic categorization of ancient material culture. In this context, Kossina defined 'Kultur' as the material evidence designating the distinctive way of life of a particular people or race whose territory and central diffusion point could be identified by the distribution of associated finds. Kossina applied this principle to his research into the migration and settlement of Germanic, Celtic and Slavic tribes, which he identified as the descendants of the Aryan race. Associating the Linear Pottery Culture³²⁵ of central and northern Europe, centred on the Danube region, with an ancient ruling Nordic/Germanic tribe, Kossina formulated his influential theory that supported later Pan-Germanic claims for Germanic predominance and justification for territorial expansion. This theory was expounded notably in his 1914 publication *Die deutsche Vorgeschichte - eine hervorragend nationale Wissenschaft* (German

³²³ Deniker, Joseph (1900) *The Races of Man - An Outline of Anthropology and Ethnography*. London: Walter Scott Ltd. p.318.

³²⁴ Deniker, Joseph. The Races of Man. p.318.

 $^{^{325}}$ The Linear Pottery Culture refers to decorated pottery artefacts dating from 5500-4500 BC during the European Neolithic Period.

Prehistory: a Pre-eminently National Discipline) in which Kossina posited the *Kulturkreis*³²⁶ theory of an Aryan race superior to all peoples, the *Germani*, whose material culture was evidence of prehistoric Germanic domination of Europe. Kossina's nationalist agenda of promoting the regeneration of an expanded Pan-Germanic, Nordic race, which had considerable influence on later Nordicists, was clearly declared in his dedication to this work which reads 'To the German people, as a building block in the reconstruction of the externally as well as internally disintegrated fatherland'. ³²⁷ During the course of the 1920's, Kossina's 'building blocks' were to become the basis for later archaeologists, such as those tasked by Heinrich Himmler's *Ahnenerbe*, who applied his principles to their own archaeological research aimed at scientifically supporting the Nordic creation myth of those directing their work.

Out of this 'melting pot' of often-conflicting and evolving cultural, nationalist and scientific theories, the school of Nordicist thought emerged as a distinct form of modernist ideology, initially concerned with the historical primacy of the Nordic race and its deterioration through contact with the various migrant populations which history and modernity had brought together. By the late nineteenth century, Nordicism proposed a programmatic account of the root causes of the alleged degeneracy of contemporary society or at least implicitly how it could be overcome by reversing the degenerative process of miscegenation and racial decline. It later emerged as a strand within the eugenics movement that sought to develop the cultural and nationalist framework of Nordicist beliefs into a practical political and scientific project of racial regeneration. This modernist project was a reaction against the prevailing state of modernity, through which industrialization had eroded traditional values and communities, proposing an alternative future modernity based on resynthesized collective memories of national and ethnic predominance. In his analysis of the development of Nordicism from the Aryan hypothesis in *Race and the Third Reich*, Hutton identified the shift from

³²⁶ Kulturkreis (cultural circle or field) was a principle emerging from the field of German nineteenth century anthropology describing the diffusion of ideas and technology across territories.

³²⁷ Gustav Kossina quoted by Arnold, Bettina. (1990). 'The past as propaganda: totalitarian archaeology in Nazi Germany', *Antiquity* 64: pp. 464-478. http://karant.pilsnerpubs.net/files/Propaganda.pdf (Accessed 14/11/15).

Aryanism to Nordicism as 'a shift from linguistic to racial indices of identity and in the location of the ancestral homeland from the east to Europe, ³²⁸ providing a more 'home-grown' and accessible mythology of Northern European superiority than that of Aryanism which, by the turn of the century, had become both a semantic and conceptual point of contention amongst many scholars. This debate was to continue into the twentieth century as later Nazi ideologists and politicians struggled to reconcile theories of Aryanism and Nordicism with their concept of the Germanic *Volk*. Hutton also described how, by locating the site of original physical and mental perfection in Northern Europe, followers of the 'Nordic ideal' provided evidence for the view that the Nordic race were responsible for the achievements of known civilisations. ³²⁹

Hutton also linked the concept of Aryanism with the enduring remnants of the Biblical paradigm of eighteenth century monogenists who had posited a linguistic link between European languages and the original proto-Aryan language form of Japhet, whose people had migrated to the West following their banishment from Babel. Hutton suggested, however, that as the field of racial anthropology overtook the field of linguistics in the debate over racial identity and categorization, Nordicism emerged as the programme for establishing an alternative, healthy modernity, i.e. a modernist project that, whilst initially sharing many features of Aryanism, began to replace it as a more viable ideological movement with its own dynamics.

Both Aryanism and Nordicism were oriented towards a lost perfection and implied an ill-defined hope of the restoration of that unity within modernity. These were nostalgic formations, looking back to lost essences, and lamenting the fall of superior peoples or races into racial hybridity. Under the impact of racial anthropology, the notion of a superior Nordic race became in part a substitute for the historically over-complex and confused notion of the Aryan. 330

This distinction of Nordicism as an overlapping but discreet strand of Aryanism, governed primarily by racial anthropology is fundamental to our understanding of Nordicism as a cultural, and later political and scientific

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³²⁸ Hutton, Christopher M. *Race and the Third Reich*. p.106.

³²⁹ Ibid. 328. p.106.

³³⁰ Ibid. 328. p.107.

movement with its own dynamic, that of preserving and propagating the 'Nordic gene' against miscegenation with inferior races. Its synonymous use with the terms Germanic and Teutonic which led, and still can lead to considerable confusion in its analysis, are also indicative of its overlap and later appropriation by Pan-Germanist thinkers who sought to establish a new Germania to restore once again the ancient northern tribes who, according to their romanticized hypothesis, were once the source of European greatness.

Regeneration as a modernist belief system

The potential for the biological protection and regeneration of an increasingly pure-blooded future Nordic race, turning the racial theory and romanticized ideals of the nineteenth century into practice, was made possible through the development of the scientific field of eugenics. The emergence and subsequent development of eugenics in most modern nations, during the late nineteenth century, had a particular relevance to those who perceived the Nordic/Germanic people to be descendants of a once noble and superior race. The potential to control, select and manipulate the gene pool of the northern European race with the aim of purifying and thereby enhancing it, to the exclusion of other 'less worthy' racial groups, was the vital element required to transform Nordicism from a theoretical school of cultural and nationalist thought into a practical cultural, scientific and political reality.

Although the concept of improving the physical condition of man can be traced back throughout history to ancient times, the emergence of modern eugenics is generally credited to the work of Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911). This prolific Victorian polymath was the half-cousin of Charles Darwin, whose theory of natural selection, together with renewed research into Mendelian inheritance theory, 331 had a considerable influence on Galton's research into the application of his theory that, by controlling heredity, science could potentially enhance mankind as a species.

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³³¹ This theory of the genetic inheritance of traits and characteristics was initially proposed by Austrian Monk and scientist Gregor Johann. (1822-1884).

Galton's opposition to the established Christian creation myth took the form of a consuming belief in the possibility of controlling evolution, creating a physically and intellectually stronger human type, comparable with the Nietzschean '*Ubermensch*', through the selective social and biological process, which he introduced in his 1883 publication, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development*, as 'eugenics'. 332

Whenever a low race is preserved under conditions of life that exact a high level of efficiency, it must be subjected to rigorous selection. The few best specimens of that race can alone be allowed to become parents, and not many of their descendants can be allowed to live. On the other hand; if a higher race be substituted for the low one, all this terrible misery disappears. The most merciful form of what I ventured to call "eugenics" would consist in watching for the indications of superior strains or races, and in so favouring them that their progeny shall outnumber and gradually replace that of the old one. 333

Galton's rationale for controlling and manipulating the genetic pool of future generations to favour the stronger, 'higher race' was based on the intention of eliminating the human suffering of the 'low race' in its struggle for survival. In this context, man could become the new master of the process of natural selection or, as it had come to be termed, by the growing school of social Darwinists, 'the survival of the fittest'. This became such a humanist mission for Galton that he described it in religious terms as a potential new form of faith. As Darwin's theory of natural selection had liberated him from the 'ancient authorities' and 'a multitude of dogmatic barriers', 334 eugenics offered Galton an alternative belief system based on science, in which man became the creative and guiding force of human destiny and future fulfilment through continuous physical and intellectual improvement. Like Nietzsche's Zarathustra, descending into the market place to announce the death of God, declaring the Superman to be the new 'meaning of the earth', 335 Galton presented a paper to the Sociological Society in London, on 16th May 1904.

³³² Galton derived this term from the Greek linguistic stems *eu*, meaning good or well and *genos*, meaning race or type.

³³³ Galton, Francis. (1883) *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development.* London: Macmillan. p.199 http://www.galton.org. Accessed 14/08/15.

³³⁴ Galton, Francis (1908) *Memories of my Life*. London: Methuen and Co. pp. 287-88 Source: http://www.galton.org (Accessed (14/08/15).

³³⁵ Nietzsche, Friedrich (Trans. Thomas Common) (1917) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* New York: The Modern Library. p157.

Galton professed his belief in eugenics as a potential new form of futural religious faith that would empower mankind with the control of its own destiny replacing the worship of God with the secular belief of eugenic science and the obligation to fulfil humanity's potential as a race.

It must be introduced into the national conscience, like a new religion. It has, indeed, strong claims to become an orthodox religious, tenet of the future, for eugenics cooperate with the workings of nature by securing that humanity shall be represented by the fittest races. What nature does blindly, slowly, and ruthlessly, man may do providently, quickly, and kindly. As it lies within his power, so it becomes his duty to work in that direction. The improvement of our stock seems to me one of the highest objects that we can reasonably attempt. We are ignorant of the ultimate destinies of humanity, but feel perfectly sure that it is as noble a work to raise its level, in the sense already explained, as it would be disgraceful to abase it. I see no impossibility in eugenics becoming a religious dogma among mankind, but its details must first be worked out sedulously in the study.³³⁶

In this address, Galton shifted the task of improving humanity from God and nature to mankind who, equipped with the tool of scientific knowledge, could become the most powerful agent of human development. In this context eugenics became a modernist project, replacing established religious tradition and dogma with a new secular myth of human progress through scientism.

The potential of this progressive branch of scientific endeavour had considerable resonance amongst turn of the century pessimists, disillusioned with the state of modernity and what they perceived to be a concerning decline in the physical and psychological health of modernized nations due to the damaging consequences of urbanization and miscegenation which had weakened once-superior races. Galton's theories did however have, at their core, the concept of national regeneration, which he frequently expressed in terms of the preservation and enhancement of the nation's race. At a meeting of the Sociological Society on May 16, 1904, chaired by his most enthusiastic follower and collaborator Professor Karl Pearson (1857-1936), Galton referred to 'raising the average quality of our nation' and the 'national importance of

³³⁶ Galton, Francis. 1904 'Eugenics: Its definition, scope, and aims'.

The American Journal of Sociology. 10 (1): 1-25 Source: http://galton.org/essays/1900-1911/galton-1904-am-journ-soc-eugenics-scopeaims.htm (Accessed 15/08/15).

eugenics.' ³³⁷ In a published letter to the Times, dated June 16th 1909, Galton engaged in a debate raised at the Royal Societies Club concerning the supposed deterioration of the British race by agreeing that 'the bulk of the community is deteriorating, which it is, judging from results of inquiries into the teeth, hearing, eyesight, and malformations of children in Board schools, and from the apparently continuous increase of insanity and feeble-mindedness. ³³⁸

Most notable amongst the early European followers of Galton, who applied his eugenics theories to the question of preserving and regenerating the Northern European descendants of the ancient Aryan people, were Karl Pearson (1857-1936), Alfred Ploetz (1860 -1940), Herman Bernhard Lundborg (1868-1943) and Count Georges Vacher de Lapouge (1854-1936). Central to the work of these eugenicists was the mission of classifying the nation into healthy and unhealthy racial characteristics and the eventual perfection of the physical beauty of the Nordic race. In *Modernism and Eugenics* (2010) Marius Turda discussed these eugenicists' use of the concept of race as a means of regenerating a sense of national awakening and unity in a time of political and social change and upheaval.

The identity of any given race was delineated by the boundaries that separated those who belonged to the community from foreigners and outsiders who remained aliens or potential enemies. Prompted by the need to regenerate a powerful sense of cohesion and shared identity amongst its adherents in the wake of perceivably profound and structural social changes, eugenicists appealed to racial imagery in order to justify their biologisation of national belonging.³³⁹

These eugenicists defined race both in a broad pan-national sense, as peoples whose physical characteristics were comparable but also as noble biological and cultural characteristics that had developed within the boundaries of their respective political states. The racial descriptors that they developed, based on the measurements of physical features were also a

³³⁷ Ibid. 336.

³³⁸ Galton, Francis 'Letter to the Editor of *The Times of* 18th June 1909'. Source: www.galton.org (Accessed 07/11/15).

³³⁹ Turda, Marius (2010) *Modernism and Eugenics*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan. p.96.

means of identifying 'others' in a national community whose racial characteristics were deemed inferior.

In his work, *National Life from the Standpoint of Science* (1900), Karl Pearson, expressed his view that the rise of a great race such as the Aryans came from a vital combination of climate and the elimination of the weaker race through conflict and domination, a struggle that had defined the course of history.

History shows me one way, and one way only, in which a high state of civilization has been produced, namely, the struggle of race with race, and the survival of the physically and mentally fitter race. If you want to know whether the lower races of man can evolve a higher type, I fear the only course is to leave them to fight it out among themselves, and even then the struggle for existence between individual and individual, between tribe and tribe, may not be supported by that physical selection due to a particular climate on which probably so much of the Aryan's success depended.³⁴⁰

Responding to what he considered to be the breakdown in European and particularly French society following what he considered the 'stunning failure' of the French Revolution, 341 Vacher de Lapouge published *L'Aryen:* son rôle social in 1899. In this work he also described what he perceived to be a modern emergence of racial conflict that had defined and which would continue to define the course of history. Vacher de Lapouge defined the superior European racial type as the Aryan, dochilo-blond or *Homo Europaeus* 42, which he contrasted with the inferior central and southern races of the *Homo alpinus* and *Homo mediterraneus*. In his analysis of the modern descendants of the Aryan, Vacher de Lapouge expressed his belief in the superior social role of the Aryan as the leader and innovator of a European civilization emanating from the plains of Northern Europe to form the highest echelons of modern society.

³⁴⁰ Pearson, Karl (1901) *National Life from the Standpoint of Science*. London: Adam & Charles Black. pp.19-20

³⁴¹ 'La faillite de la Révolution est éclatante'. My translation from preface of Vacher de Lapouge. Vacher de Lapouge, G. (1899) *L'Aryen: son rôle social.* Paris: Thorin et fils.

https://archive.org/stream/LaryenSonRoleSocial/LAryenSonRoleSocial_Lapouge_594pgs51393 937_djvu.txt (Accessed 14/06/15).

 $^{^{342}}$ This term was originally defined by Swedish physician, botanist and zoologist Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778).

The social superiority of the Aryan is becoming more marked in any case. In Europe, he lives on the plains, leaving the high ground to the Alpinus. He flocks into towns and in centres of activity where decisiveness and energy are needed. The higher the social group, the more he can be found in great numbers. He dominates the arts, industry, business, science and letters. He is the great proponent of progress.³⁴³

Vacher de Lapouge was a significant influence on a growing number of Northern European eugenicists, who viewed eugenics as the practical solution to correcting faults in the process of natural selection that had resulted from racial miscegenation by controlling human procreation in favour of the superior, or in Lapouge's analysis, the Aryan or Nordic races.

Selectionism, as a practical doctrine, consists of correcting the undesirable consequences of natural selection and increasing the types that are recognised as the best and most beautiful.³⁴⁴

Vacher de Lapouge also built on a centuries-old tradition of European anti-Semitism to identify the Jew as the most threatening race to the Aryan. In his seminal work Vacher de Lapouge proposed that 'the only dangerous competitor of the Aryan, at present is the Jew,'³⁴⁵ describing a racial struggle for dominance and survival which was later to become a fundamental element of the Nordicist dimension of Nazi racial ideology.

Swedish physician and professor at the University of Uppsala, Herman Lundborg also had a significant impact on the development of eugenics both in his country and in the growing international forum of eugenicists. In 1921, together with a group of like-minded Swedish contributors, he published *The Swedish Nation in Word and Picture* in which he traced the history of the Nordic race back to a northern migration of a Teutonic race at the end of the glacial period, into what had become Scandinavia. Lundborg described the superiority of the Teutons as 'a race who has inscribed its name on many

344 Ibid. 341. p.544.

³⁴³ Ibid. 341. p.399.

³⁴⁵ Ibid. 341. p. 561.

pages of the history of civilisation'. ³⁴⁶ He also argued that miscegenation was detrimental to the potential of the Nordic race and that the noble racial qualities of any people could only continue to exist 'as long as the race in question keeps itself pure and unmixed'. ³⁴⁷ In this work, Lundborg and his contributors provided a detailed written and photographic description of the Swedish race, in its pure and variant forms, analysing its current racial composition and purity and praising its physical and psychological virtues.

In 1895, Alfred Ploetz, who later became an advisor on Nazi racial legislation and eugenics policies, 348 published *Grundlinein einer Rassen-Hygiene, Die Tuechtigkeit Unserer Rasse und der Schutz der Schwachen* (The Competence of our Race and the Preservation of the Weak), in which he promoted his concept of '*Rassenhygiene*' (racial hygiene) as a means of preserving both the physical superiority and the favourable Aryan characteristics of the German collective. To develop and diffuse his theories on racial hygiene Plötz founded, in 1904, the periodical "*Archiv für Rassenund Gesellschaftsbiologie*" (Archive for racial and social biology) and in 1905 he established the Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene (Society for Racial Hygiene).

The field of eugenics, which at an early conceptual stage had become merged with the developing field of racial science, quickly blossomed to become an established academic discipline at many universities across Europe, notably in France, Germany, Britain, Scandinavia and the USA. These institutions received considerable state and private funding to develop research into what was considered to be the solution to the decline in civilization. To promote and support the international development and application of the eugenics movement, organizations such as the Eugenics Education Society (est.1907), The American Eugenics Society (est.1921) and the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Anthropology, Human Heredity, and Eugenics

³⁴⁶ Lundborg, Herman (1921). *The Swedish Nation in Word and Picture*. Stockholm: Hasse W. Tullberg. p.11.

³⁴⁷ Ibid. 341. p.24.

³⁴⁸ Alfred Ploetz joined the Nazi Party in 1937 and became an influential racial expert.

(est.1927) were founded and three International Eugenics Conferences were organised in 1912, 1921 and 1932 to bring together the expertise of notable experts in the field.

Subsequently, many governments established research institutes and implemented eugenics policies designed to improve the gene pool of their individual nations. Such programmes often comprised both 'positive' measures, such as encouraging individuals deemed particularly fit to reproduce, and 'negative' measures such as marriage prohibitions and the forced sterilization of people deemed unfit for reproduction. Individuals considered unfit to reproduce often included people with mental or physical disabilities, people who scored in the lower ranges of IQ tests, criminals, sexual deviants, alcoholics and members of minority groups who did not serve the nation's interests. Now that Darwinism had shifted mankind's position in the cosmos from the apex of God's creations, fixed in his own image, to that of a species within the evolving animal kingdom, eugenicists and their proponents began to view man as a form of domesticated breeding stock as described in a private letter, dated 1913, from American President Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) to leading state eugenicist Charles Davenport (1866-1944).

I agree with you if you mean, as I suppose you do, that society has no business to permit degenerates to produce their kind. It is really extraordinary that our people refuse to apply to human beings such elementary knowledge as every successful farmer is obliged to apply to his own stock breeding. Any group of farmers who permitted their best stock not to breed, and let all the increase come from the worst stock, would be treated as fit inmates for an asylum.³⁴⁹

Within the wide-ranging scope of individuals and groups targeted for progressive elimination, the emerging school of Nordicist thinkers in the USA and Northern Europe, who considered themselves the hereditary gene bearers of the ancient Nordic people, saw in eugenics more than just the possibility of improving the nation's health but the potential to rekindle a mythical lost 'golden age' of racial purity and superiority.

³⁴⁹ 'Letter from President T. Roosevelt to C. Davenport dated January 3rd 1913'. Facsimile from the American Philosophical Society Library. Source: https://www.dnalc.org/view/11219-T-Roosevelt-letter-to-C-Davenport-about-degenerates-reproducing-.html (Accessed 11/11/15).

The field of eugenics has generated considerable scholarly attention and there is an abundance of literature tracing and analysing its evolution throughout the twentieth century. Within this field, a strand of academic work has focussed on the role of American eugenicists and the extent of the interaction and co-operation with their German and later Nazi counterparts, together with the financial involvement of notable private institutions such as the Carnegie Institution, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Harriman railroad. In an article, published in 1993 for the *American Journal of Human Genetics*, Jonathan Marks³⁵⁰ examined the historiography of the American eugenics movement describing American scientists' progressive phases of denial, marginalization and dismissal of eugenics as a pseudo-science arguing that far from being any of these, 'eugenics was actually a mainstream movement among professional biologists and geneticists'.³⁵¹

Eugenics as a form of programmatic modernism

Seeking fresh perspectives in his work, *Modernism and Eugenics* (2010), Marius Turda drew inspiration from recent scholarship, including the theories of Roger Griffin, on the impact of modernity in a range of historical and contemporary contexts, in his analysis of eugenics as a regenerative movement he argued that:

It is only recently that scholars have begun to approach eugenics as a cluster of diverse biological, cultural and religious ideas and practices that interacted with a variety of social, cultural and national contexts.³⁵²

Through the application of this new approach, Turda examined how the eugenics movement interacted with and influenced nineteenth and early twentieth century nationalist thinkers. This group formed what could be termed a 'consensus of pessimism', and sought to realise their forward-

³⁵⁰ American biological anthropologist at the University of North Carolina, USA.

³⁵¹ Marks, Jonathan. 1993. 'Historiography of Eugenics'. *American Journal of Human Genetics* 53 (6): 650-652

³⁵² Turda, Marius (2010) *Modernism and Eugenics*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan. p.2.

looking visions of ethnic regeneration in the form of political ideologies and potential models of racial and social engineering. Turda discussed how many thinkers, at the turn of the century, considered society to be in a state of social crisis, reacting against the contemporary state of European modernity and seeking, in eugenics, the potential to create a new beginning inspired by the vision of an alternative future modernity aligned with their nationalist and racial agendas.

By "being able to begin history anew," when troubled by the prospect of racial dissolution and national defeat, the individual and the community found in eugenics a persuasive strategy of how to protect the past from a dissatisfying present, and how to guide it into a redeeming future. 353

Turda further suggested that by the turn of the century, nationalist and Romantic thought, together with the emergence of racial science, had progressively transformed the concept of the nation, from a mere geographical and political body, into an organic entity focussed on the collective identity rather than the individual. A nation so constructed was in need of scientific intervention to maintain its physical and mental well-being. This was particularly evident in Germany's developing concept of the Aryan/Nordic people as a collective entity in need of protection and regeneration.

By the end of the nineteenth century, nations were increasingly being portrayed as living organisms, functioning according to biological laws, and embodying great genetic qualities symbolising innate racial virtues transmitted from generation to generation. After 1900, especially, this shifting relationship between the individual and the racial community to which he or she belonged contributed significantly to the emergence of a eugenic ontology of the nation. 354

This process that Turda defines as the 'biologisation of national belonging', ³⁵⁵ and the emergence of a 'eugenic ontology' had a considerable impact on the development of eugenics and particularly on its application to the protection of the Nordic race, notably in Germany and the USA during the period of social crisis following the First World War.

³⁵³ Turda, Marius. Modernism and Eugenics, p.7.

³⁵⁴ Ibid. 352. p.6.

³⁵⁵ Ibid. 352.p.6

In his work, Turda argued that previous interpretations of the history of nationalist eugenics had failed to reach what he considered to be the essential core of the matter, that of the impact of nineteenth-century pessimism towards what was perceived to be the failing project of modernity. Building on Peter J. Bowler's definition of eugenics as 'the original political expression of the ideology of genetic determinism' and Michael Burleigh's view that eugenics 'had evolved from primitive utopianism into a secular religion with scientific pretentions', 356 Turda suggested that we have now reached an academic point where we need to take these interpretations further by examining eugenics in the context of the history of European modernism shedding, in particular, new light on the dynamics of eugenics projects in Nazi Germany and other totalitarian regimes. In the context of Nazism, Turda describes the application of eugenics as 'the creation of a new man purged of degenerative characteristics and decadent tendencies'. 357 He underlined how turn of the century pessimism had stimulated, amongst Nazi eugenicists, the need to regenerate society by creating a racially pure and even enhanced Germanic/Northern European type based on what the Nordic cultural revival, National Romanticism and racial science had progressively determined to be the ideal Nordic type both in physical and psychological terms.

Conclusion - Nordicism as a solution to racial and cultural degeneration

By the end of the nineteenth century Nordicism had arguably become a conceptual entity in its own right, emerging as an interwoven cultural, political and scientific reaction to what was perceived to be a society in moral, physical and intellectual decline. This ideological and biological crisis was founded on the perceived destructive effects of miscegenation as modernity transformed the social and economic landscape, stimulated international economic

356 Ibid. 352. p.15.

³⁵⁷ Ibid. 352. p.93.

migration and eroded the bonds that had maintained traditional communities. Disenchanted with the negative spiritual, social and biological by-products of European and North American modernization, many pessimistic thinkers became attracted to the concept of regeneration, rooted in visions of a mythical past created by National Romanticism. The rapidly emerging scientific field of eugenics provided Nordicist theorists with the practical means of fulfilling their project of creating an alternative modernity rooted in ancient Nordic culture and the most desirable biological features of the Scandinavian type. Nineteenth century scientific progress, notably Darwinism, had de-centred God as the determining force of the future of man, a role later assumed by Galton's eugenics movement. For these scientists, the true meaning of life on earth, the new religion, now lay in man's secular mission to surpass his current state of social decline to evolve into a higher form of physical and spiritual humanity, or as Nietzsche proposed, man became conceived as 'a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman.'358 Through this process Nordicism evolved from National Romantic idealism into a practical cultural, political and scientific reality.

Having established the practical means, through eugenics, to reconstruct Miðgarðr as a resynthesized, mythical ancestral homeland, Nordicist ideologists attempted to create their own *Bifrost* to reach their final destination of racial perfection and world dominance. What was once, in ancient Norse society, the externalisation of metaphysical, mythical longings for an otherworldly paradise fit for heroes, had now become scientized and translated into the means to bring about the futural vision of a land fit for racially regenerated heroes. Created in this world through human agency, the once shimmering, evanescent Bridge was to be constructed with solid, sturdy superstructures of empirical science and racially enlightened policies of future states.

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³⁵⁸ Nietzsche, Friedrich (Trans. Thomas Common) (1917) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. New York: The Modern Library. p.7.

The next chapter will analyse how, under intense social conditions of rapidly evolving modernity and deeper socio-economic crisis in both Nazi Germany and the USA of the depression, Nordicism became radicalized into a significant element of state legislation and in Germany into an agenda of 'programmatic modernism' which would lead to the eventual genocide of millions to protect the Nordic health of the nation from those who were deemed inferior and to regenerate a mythical state of racial purity.

Chapter 3

Towards Ragnarok

Nordicism as a cultural, political and scientific reality

Brother will fight brother and be his slayer, brother and sister will violate the bond of kinship; hard it is in the world, there is much adultery, axe-age, sword-age, shields are cleft asunder, wind-age, wolf-age, before the world plunges headlong; no man will spare another..³⁵⁹

The Sibyl's Prophecy of Ragnarok, The Poetic Edda

In Norse mythology, the apocalyptic events of *Ragnarok*, foretold to *Oðinn* (Odin) by a *volva*, 360 prophesized the end of a mythical and temporal cycle, the demise of *Oðinn's* pantheon, the fall of *Asgarðr* and the destruction of life on earth, as fire and raging seas consume *Miðgarðr*, the realm of humankind. *Bifrost*, the Rainbow Bridge, shatters as the Sons of *Múspell*, led by *Sutr*³⁶¹, ride across it to join the final battle between the *Æsir* and their enemies that concludes this eschalogical cycle of the Norse cosmos. Out of this devastation, a new earthly and spiritual era is foretold, as the few remaining gods, *Víðarr*, *Váli*, 362 *Móði* and *Magni* 363 gather together at *Iðavollr* 364 where they are joined by *Hoðr* and *Baldr*, who have returned from their death in *Hel*, to discuss the past and the future which lies ahead of them. On earth, from the destruction of *Miðgarðr*, two surviving humans, *Lif* and *Lífthrasir* 365 emerge from their shelter into a green, replenished world where humanity can start anew. 366

³⁵⁹ Anon. (Trans. Larrington, C) (2008) *The Poetic Edda.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.10. ³⁶⁰ A seeress who communicates with the spirit world.

³⁶¹ Sutr was the ruler of the jotunn, a race of giants, banished by the Æsir to live in Jotunheimr. ³⁶² Sons of Oðinn (Odin).

³⁶³ Sons of Þórr (Thor).

³⁶⁴ Anon. *The Poetic Edda.* p12. Iðavǫllr was a mythical plain near Asgarðr, a meeting place of the Gods. See interpretations in Simek, Rudolf (2007) *Dictionary of Northern Mythology.* Cambridge: D.S. Brewer.

³⁶⁵ Meaning 'life' and 'the one seeking life' from Old Norse. Described in Vafþrúðnismál in the Poetic Edda.

³⁶⁶ Anon. (Trans Larrington, C) *The Poetic Edda.* p.12.

The events of *Ragnarǫk* vividly describe a total social and spiritual collapse and renewal in ancient Norse society. The prophecy foretells that, prior to the battles of the Gods, three continuous winters of hardship strike, called *Fimbulvetr*, during which violent battles broke out across *Miðgarðr* and social ties collapse as human society fell into ruin. Historians³⁶⁷ have frequently referenced Richard Wagner's interpretation of *Ragnarǫk* in *Götterdämmerung*, (Twilight of the Gods) in their descriptions of the dramatic intensity of the death of Hitler and the collapse of Nazism as Soviet troops encircled the *Führerbunker*³⁶⁸ in Berlin during April and May of 1945. In the context of this work, *Ragnarǫk* and the breaking of *Bifrǫst* also represent the downfall of Nordicism as a means of regenerating a lost connection with a mythological golden age of Nordic supremacy.

This chapter will examine the emergence of Nordicism as the basis of cultural politics and pseudoscientific social engineering firstly in the USA, through its immigration and eugenics policies of the 1920's and 30's, and then in northern Europe and in particular Nazi Germany, where Nordicism became an influential ideological driving force behind the Third Reich's racial and eugenics laws which eventually led to the genocide of the death camps and the final collapse of Nazism in the ruins of the Reich's Chancellery in Berlin.

Modernity and Preserving the Nordic American

From the earliest days of pilgrim migration in the seventeenth century, America had been a nation of immigrants who, for a range of political, religious and economic reasons, had left their homelands, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in search of a new life in the 'land of opportunity'. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the USA experienced waves of increased immigration³⁶⁹ which produced increasing

367 Notably William L Shirer (1959) *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, Joachim C Fest. (1973) *Hitler* and Albert Speer (1970) *Inside the Third Reich*.

369 See table 1.

³⁶⁸ This underground shelter was the final command post and residence of Hitler where, on 30th April 1945, he committed suicide with his wife Eva.

social and economic unrest amongst the existing population, notably those of British, German and Scandinavian origin who considered that these new immigrants threatened the Northern European culture and prosperity that they, and their ancestors, had established. A significant wave of immigration occurred from around 1815 to 1865 and the majority of these new arrivals came from Northern and Western Europe. Amongst these newcomers, approximately a third came from Ireland as a result of crop failures and famine, and in the 1840's almost half of America's immigrants were of Irish origin. This influx included tens of thousands of immigrants from Latin America, Australia and Asia who were attracted to the West Coast by the the California Gold Rush of 1848–1855.

Between 1880 and 1920, rapid industrialization, which demanded an increased workforce, and urbanization, attracted more than 20 million immigrants to the US. Between 1890 and 1900, the majority of these arrivals were from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe including some 600,000 Italians and by 1920, more than 4 million had entered the United States. In addition, Jews from Eastern Europe fleeing religious persecution also arrived in large numbers and between 1880 and 1920, it has been estimated that 2 million entered the United States.³⁷¹ A significant peak in immigration figures occurred in 1907 when over one million people entered the country in a single year.³⁷² During this year an estimated 1.25 million immigrants were processed through the Ellis Island Immigration Inspection Station in New York Bay, the nation's busiest immigration gateway. In the face of such surges in immigration, many existing Americans became critical of the Government's 'open door' policy that was allowing uncontrolled influxes of immigrants who were poor, illiterate and in many cases unskilled. Many newcomers were also Catholic and Jewish and therefore from different socio-cultural and political backgrounds to the descendants of the original settlers whose northern

 $^{^{370}}$ 'US Immigration before 1965'. History.com. http://www.history.com/topics/u-s-immigration-before-1965 (Accessed 03/01/16)

³⁷¹ Ibid. 370.

³⁷² 'US Immigration Statistics'. http://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/education/upload/statistics.pdf (Accessed 03/01/16). The actual figure shown is 1,004,756 based on annual reports from the Commissioner General of Immigration on immigration through the Ellis Island Immigration Station.

European origins were rooted in Protestantism, anti-Semitism and white supremacy. This increasing trend in immigration during the nineteenth century and its peak in 1907 is illustrated in the following graph that charts immigration into the USA between 1821 and 2010.

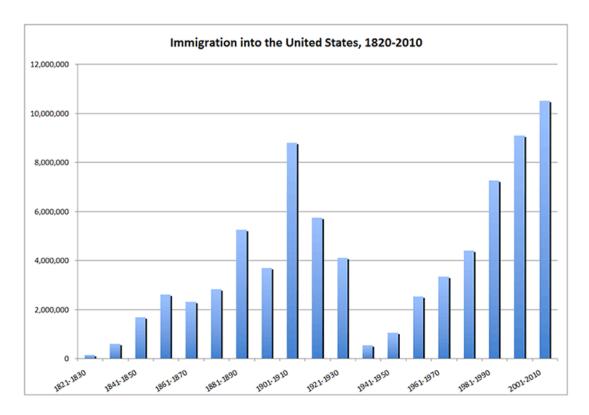


Table 1: US immigration graph 1821-2010.

Source: http://www.immigrationeis.org/eis-documents/us-demographic-history - (Accessed 15/10/16).

In the context of this surge in immigration native white Americans, as they considered themselves, began to feel increasingly threatened, at the turn of the century, by the intense periods of immigration into the United Stated by races that they considered biologically and socially inferior. In this context, Nordicism emerged as a reaction to the fast-paced change of nineteenth-century modernity as a distinct strand, within the spectrum of conservative thought in the United States, which sought to maintain Northern European primacy against the flood of immigrants who were pouring into the country. These newcomers brought with them a multi-cultural melting pot of national, religious and social thought which threatened the existing nomos of those who

considered themselves to be a community under attack from the rapidly changing forces of modernity which were transforming the national identity of the United States.

Against this background of increasing social and cultural turmoil, America was becoming a leading nation of the modernist project of eugenics to improve the quality of human life and develop its full potential. The centre for this research in America was the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Long Island, New York. Between 1910 and 1939, this laboratory was the base of the Eugenics Record Office of biologist Charles B. Davenport (1866 –1944) and his assistant Harry H. Laughlin (1880 –1943), two prominent American eugenicists of the period. As a reaction against the mass immigration that was taking place into the US, their research into the racial hygiene of the nation studied not only the most appropriate means of reducing heredity illness, insanity, criminality and sexual deviance, but also the most effective means of managing what they perceived to be the growing threat to the racial purity and primacy of their ancestors.

Madison Grant - from the theory to the practice of Nordicism the USA.

Prominent amongst these thinkers was Madison Grant (1865 –1937), a lawyer, writer, eugenicist and conservationist who emerged as a significant figure in the Nordicist movement both in the United States and in Germany. Born in New York City, Grant could trace his maternal line back to Jessé de Forest, the Walloon Huguenot who, in 1623, recruited the first group of colonists to settle on the East Coast in New Netherland. On his paternal side he could trace his American lineage back to Richard Treat, Dean of Pitminster Church in England, who became one of the first Puritan settlers in 1630. Amongst his descendants were Robert Treat, a colonial governor of New Jersey, Robert Treat Paine, a co-signatory of the Declaration of Independence and Grant's father, Dr. Gabriel Grant, a prominent physician and health commissioner of Newark, New Jersey, who was awarded the Medal of Honour during the American Civil War of 1861-65. In his

comprehensive analysis of Grant's life and works, *Defending the Master Race* (2009), Jonathan Peter Spiro, described how Northern European descendants such as Grant, considered themselves to be the upper echelon of American society.

For centuries his antecedents had been accustomed to wealth, power and deference, and in a country without a titled nobility they could lay as good a claim as any to being true American aristocrats.³⁷³

Grant was therefore part of the influential Northern European elite of American society who claimed racial and social primacy over the waves of immigrants arriving on American shores who, in their view, would destroy the established social, cultural and biological fabric of American society. In this context Grant can be aligned with the cultural and biological pessimists of the preceding century such as Gobineau, Chamberlain and Guido von List who described the degeneration of society and its nobility through miscegenation, the dilution of the Nordic gene pool with that of inferior racial types. Grant, like these previous thinkers, sought to apply the developing field of eugenics to reconstruct a mythologized 'golden age' of the northern European race's once noble origins, a 'mazeway resynthesis' of myth and science which fused National Romanticism's nostalgia for the past with forward-looking modern scientific progress.

Educated at Yale University and Columbia Law School, Grant practiced law for a number of years before engaging himself fully in his many zoological conservationist projects³⁷⁵ and 'behind the scenes' political activities which brought him into contact with many influential eugenicists and racial theorists in America such as Theodore Lothrop Stoddard (1883 –1950), Charles

³⁷³ Spiro, Jonathan Peter (2009) *Defending the Master Race; Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant.* New England: University of Vermont Press. p. 7.

³⁷⁴ Term used by sociologists Anthony FC Wallace and Kenneth Tollefson, see introduction. In *Revitalizations and Mazeways* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), Wallace defines mazeways as 'mental maps that join personalities with cultures and thereby illustrate how individuals embrace their culture, conduct everyday life, and cope with illness and other forms of severe personal or cultural stress', in other words a map with which to negotiate a cultural labyrinth, either on a domestic level or on the level of an entire culture.

³⁷⁵ Grant was co-founder of the Bronx Zoo, the Glacial National Park, Denali National Park and Secretary of the New York Zoological Society.

Davenport (1866 –1944) and Harry H. Laughlin (1866 –1944), all of whom were significant in promoting white and particularly Nordic supremacy in the United States and Europe. Grant was also associated with notable politicians, who were sympathetic with his causes, such as New York mayor William Lafayette Strong (1827-1900), and presidents Theodore Roosevelt (1901–1909) and Herbert Hoover (1929-1933).

In 1916 Madison Grant published his major work *The Passing of the Great Race; or, The Basis of European History*, which brought him to the public forefront as a supporter of the protection of the Nordic race against the erosion of multi-culturalism and miscegenation.³⁷⁷ In this work, Grant traced the prehistoric roots of the Nordic people whose superior racial characteristics were increasingly threatened by the uncontrolled immigration and population growth of those considered racially inferior.³⁷⁸ Its first edition sold 16,000 copies³⁷⁹ making it a best seller, with revised editions published in 1918, 1920 and 1921; translations were also made into German, French and Norwegian bringing Grant's thesis into the international arena of eugenics and racial science. In his assessment of Grant's work, historian Dr. Jonathan Spiro concluded that its greatest impact was in popularizing the Nordicist theories that he proposed through his articulate synthesis of the principles of racial science that had emerged during the nineteenth century.

[...] no one had brought them all together in one place and presented the whole with such esprit, audacity, and clarity. As a result, what had been the province of a few obscure academics was now made accessible to the general reader. After *The Passing of the Great Race*, the biological threat posed by inferior races was no longer a speculative theory held by a few but a palpable danger feared by all. 380

In The Passing of the Great Race, Grant called on the descendants of

³⁷⁶ Dates shown are terms in office; both American presidents had Northern European ancestry. ³⁷⁷ The first edition of this work was published in blue cloth with a gold seal of the Viking leader Rollo the Horseman on the cover.

 $^{^{378}}$ Grant elaborated this account of the Nordic peoples in America in his 1933 publication *The Conquest of a Continent.*

³⁷⁹ 'The Passing of the Great Race'. Publication figures shown in introduction. wolfweb.unr.edu. http://wolfweb.unr.edu/homepage/calabj/pdf/Great%20Race.pdf (Accessed 30.10.16). ³⁸⁰ Spiro, Jonathan Peter *Defending the Master Race*, pp. 157-158.

Northern Europeans in the American population to be conscious of their current plight and support practical eugenic and legislative measures to halt the erosion of the northern blood of the 'founder Americans' from integration with blacks and inferior European and Asian races. Building on the work of American economist, sociologist and racial theorist William Z. Ripley (1867-1941)³⁸¹ whose research he acknowledged in his work, Madison Grant considered the Europeans to be a superior world race within which three distinct subdivisions could be determined: the Nordic, the Alpine and the Mediterranean. Within this tripartite structure, the Nordic Race, emanating from the Scandinavian region, was biologically determined to be the 'alpha race' of world civilization. Grant described the descendants of these Northern Europeans as 'a native American aristocracy resting upon layer upon layer of immigrants of lower races, and claimed that the Nordic race had 'up to this time, supplied the leaders of thought and the control of capital, of education, and of the religious ideals and altruistic bias of the community. '382 Grant also argued that the established ruling elite of Northern Europeans was under threat from a liberal democratic process that was progressively marginalising them politically and biologically and depriving them of the privileged place in society that he considered their birth right.

In America we have nearly succeeded in destroying the privilege of birth; that is, the intellectual and moral advantage a man of good stock brings into the world with him.³⁸³

Like Gobineau and many other racial theorists of this time, Grant argued that inter-breeding between races led to a degradation of the superior gene pool in favour of the inferior genetic characteristics, a process which he considered to be almost irreversible in the United States without immediate eugenics measures to restrict immigration and segregate racial communities to protect the blood line and primacy of the white native Americans. Grant also dismissed the argument that immigrants could better themselves within a

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³⁸¹ In his introduction, Madison Grant acknowledges his use of theories, data and maps published in Ripley's *The Races of Europe* (1899).

³⁸² Grant, Madison (1916) *The Passing of The Great Race*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons. p. 90. ³⁸³ Ibid. 382. p.101. Kindle edition.

supportive and progressive society as the 'dogma of the brotherhood of man, derived in turn from the loose thinkers of the French Revolution and their American mimics'. ³⁸⁴ Grant attacked American liberals who argued that environment could alter heredity in contrast with his determinist view that social characteristics were inherent and could not be altered by environment.

Thus, the view that the negro slave was an unfortunate cousin of the white man, deeply tanned by the tropical sun, and denied the blessings of Christianity and civilization, played no small part with sentimentalists of the Civil War period, and it has taken us fifty years to learn that speaking English, wearing good clothes, and going to school and church, does not transform a negro into a white man.³⁸⁵

In his elaboration of this argument about the fixity of racial characteristics, Grant also expressed his anti-Semitic sentiment towards Jewish immigrants from Poland by suggesting that their biological and social characteristics were equally immutable and that America 'shall have a similar experience with the Polish Jew, whose dwarf stature, peculiar mentality and ruthless concentration on self-interest are being engrafted onto the nation'³⁸⁶ This identification of the Jew as a significant biological and social threat to the racial health of the nation was one which aligned him with many European and notably German thinkers who shared this view of the Jew as the racial 'other' of the Nordic.

In developing his thesis of the Nordic, Grant drew on the research of many nineteenth century racial theorists such as Gobineau (miscegenation), Gregor Mendel (the laws of inheritance), Anders Retzius (the cephalic index) and Karl Penka (Scandinavia as the dispersal point of the blond race) to define, and locate geographically, his ideal type of the Nordic.

This race is long-skulled, very tall, fair-skinned, with blond or brown hair and light colored eyes. The Nordics inhabit the countries around the North and Baltic Seas, and include not only the great Scandinavian and Teutonic groups, but also other early peoples who first appear in southern Europe as

³⁸⁵ Ibid. 382. pp. 171,172.

³⁸⁴ Ibid. 382. p.162.

³⁸⁶ Ibid. 382. p.172.

representatives of Aryan language and culture. 387

Within these 'Teutonic groups', Grant identified the English, Flemings, Dutch, and northern Germans as descendants, to varying degrees, of the pure Scandinavian Nordic race and the dominant class in Europe commenting that 'no one can question the race value of stature who observes on the streets of London the contrast between the Piccadilly gentleman of Nordic race and the cockney costermonger of the old Neolithic type.³⁸⁸

Much of Grant's work focused on the development, characteristics and subsequent geographic and biological dispersal of the physical, cultural and spiritual beauty of the Nordic race. His depiction owed much to the idealized type of the Nordic created by the fusion of racial science and the school of nineteenth century National Romantic thought in Europe and America at this time.

The Nordics are, all over the world, a race of soldiers, sailors, adventurers, and explorers, but above all, of rulers, organizers, and aristocrats in sharp contrast to the essentially peasant character of the Alpines. Chivalry and knighthood, and their still surviving but greatly impaired counterparts, are peculiarly Nordic traits, and feudalism, class distinctions, and race pride among Europeans are traceable for the most part to the North. 389

In his work, Grant even suggested that Jesus Christ shared the same genetic characteristics as the later Nordic Race in his analysis of traditional religious artistic representations of the Bible.

In church pictures today all angels are blonds, while the denizens of the lower regions revel in deep brunetness. [...] and in depicting the crucifixion no artist hesitates to make the two thieves brunet in contrast to the blond Saviour. The latter is something more than a convention, as such quasi-authentic traditions as we have of our Lord indicate his Nordic, possibly Greek, physical and moral attributes.³⁹⁰

This appropriation of Jesus as a Nordic figure by Grant was a notable feature

³⁸⁸ Ibid.382. p.278.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.382. p.205.

³⁸⁹ Ibid. 382. p.1807.

 $^{^{390}}$ Ibid. 382 p.1817.

of later attempts to align Christianity with Nazism through the theory of Positive Christianity, proposed by thinkers such as the official Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946) and put into practice by the leader of the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirche (German Evangelical Church)*, Ludwig Müller (1883 –1945).

Grant positioned the Nordic race at the apex of human society and promoted its protection from further erosion by liberal multi-culturalism and miscegenation, proposing the application of eugenics measures aimed at the preservation and regeneration of the Nordic race. To improve the American people overall Grant suggested a system of progressively eliminating, through sterilization, social undesirables who he referred to as those 'who crowd our jails, hospitals and insane asylums'. ³⁹¹ In his explanation of this process, however, Grant also made it clear that this project of human improvement could be eventually extended to the issue of race.

This is a practical, merciful and inevitable solution of the whole problem, and can be applied to an ever-widening circle of social discards, beginning with the criminal, the diseased, and the insane, and extending gradually to types which may be called weaklings rather than defectives, and perhaps ultimately to worthless racial types.³⁹²

Grant concluded that Man had two choices of method for racial improvement: firstly, the selective breeding of the elite Nordic race or, secondly, the elimination of the 'other' through segregation and sterilization. He concluded, however, that in modern society, under a democratic government, it would be difficult to obtain a consensus as to what constituted the elite class and legally difficult to implement measures against those eventually deemed suitable for elimination.

Within the structure of democratic government that Grant clearly viewed as an impediment to the radical measures that he proposed, he was an active campaigner for government action to control immigration to preserve

³⁹¹ Ibid. 382. p.448.

³⁹² Ibid. 382. p.448.

the racial hygiene of the nation. From 1922 until his death in 1937, he served as the vice president of the Immigration Restriction League, a group of conservatives who worked to raise public awareness of immigration issues and lobby politicians to support protectionist legislation. He was also president of the Eugenics Research Association and, in 1918, founded the Galton Society with American eugenicist and biologist Charles B. Davenport. Grant was also instrumental in putting his program of Nordic protection and regeneration into effect by supporting and providing data for the *Immigration Act of 1924*.

The Immigration Act of 1924 - Nordicism as political and legislative reality in the USA

The Immigration Act of 1924 consolidated and extended previous legislation and was introduced by Congressman Albert Johnson (1869-1957)³⁹³, an associate of Grant and head of the Eugenics Research Association, in the House of Representatives and by David Reed (1880-1953) in the Senate. This legislation limited the number of immigrants allowed entry into the United States through a national origins quota. This quota was originally calculated on the basis of two percent of the total number of people of each nationality in the United States recorded in the 1910 national census.³⁹⁴ The greatest wave of immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived, however, during the 30-year period prior to the start of World War I in 1914. Thus, the basis for the immigration quota was changed from the census of 1910 to that of 1890, when far fewer southern and eastern Europeans had resided in the United States. The immediate impact of this legislation impact in terms of immigration figures can be seen in the following table, (see table 2).

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 $^{^{393}}$ For a number of years Johnson served as chairman of the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization.

 $^{^{394}}$ The Emergency Quota Act of 1921 used the census of 1910. This legislation also allowed 3% rather than the reduced 2% quota of the 1924 Act.

US Immigration statistics 1924-1925 Immigrants by country of origin				
Year	1924	1925	Difference	% Change
Country of origin				
All countries	706,896	294,314	-12,582	-58.37
Europe total	364,339	148,336	-215,973	-59.27
North-western Europe				
Great Britain	59,490	27,172	-32,318	-54.33
Ireland	17,000	26,650	+ 9,650	+56.76
Scandinavia	35,000	16,810	-18,190	-51.97
Others	16,077	8,548	-7529	-46.83
Central Europe				
Germany	75,091	46,068	-29,023	-38.65
Poland	28,806	5,341	-23,465	-81.46
Others	32,700	4,701	-27,999	-85.62
Eastern Europe				
USSR and Baltic States	20,918	3,121	-17,797	-85.08
Other Eastern	13,173	1,566	-11,607	-88.11
Southern Europe				
Italy	56,246	6,203	-50,043	-88.97
Others	9,105	2,186	-6,964	-76.11

Table 2: US immigration figures 1924-25.

Adapted from figures published 1949 by the United States Department of Commerce Source:https://www2.census.gov/prod2/statcomp/documents/HistoricalStatisticsofthe United States1789-1945.pdf (Accessed 13/02/18).

Although this summarized table does not show the full time span covered in the original document, it does show the immediate impact of the 1924 legislation and it can be seen that, in 1925, all countries (with the exception of Ireland) showed a considerable decrease in immigration into the US. The greatest impact, however, is shown in the percentage decrease of the countries classified as part of Eastern and Southern Europe. It is also clear that the legislation favoured the nationalities of the native white Americans from Northwestern Europe and notably the German population

who only suffered a 39% decrease in comparison with the Eastern and Southern European states whose decrease exceeded 80%. The act also consolidated previous legislation by excluding all Asian immigration. This legislation clearly favoured the national groups classified by Grant as Nordic and is evidence of the emergence of Nordicism as a political and biological reality in the USA. These statistics demonstrate the immediate effects of this protectionist policy towards the Nordic race and the intended exclusion of those deemed racially inferior. Hence, Grant and his fellow legislators succeeded in implementing a pro-Nordic immigration policy that was to remain largely unchanged until it was replaced by the *Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952*.

Grant was also an active supporter and advisor for the drafting of legislation for state laws preventing miscegenation, notably the Racial Integrity Act of 1924 that was passed in the State of Virginia. Aimed primarily at miscegenation between whites and blacks, this legislation required that a racial description be established and recorded at birth either as 'white' or 'colored'. 395 A process that had come to be known as the 'one-drop' rule determined this classification. This rule stated that any person with even one ancestor of African descent was to be classified as 'colored'. This legislation expanded the scope of Virginia's existing ban on interracial marriage by criminalizing all marriages between white and non-white persons.³⁹⁶ The application of this 'one-drop rule' was adopted by a number of fellow states, notably in the South and remained in place, in Virginia and a number of other states, until the United States Supreme Court overturned it in 1956. Through this legislation, Grant and his supporters succeeded, on a limited scale, to control interbreeding between Nordics and inferior races to prevent further miscegenation and protect the remaining Nordic bloodline.

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³⁹⁵ The term 'colored', (US spelling) encompassed both black and native Indian descendants but exceptions were made for the latter.

³⁹⁶ Laws prohibiting racial intermarriage had been in place in many states since the American Colonial era but the 'one drop' clause defined and extended its scope.

Nordicism as a modernist belief system in America

In his analysis of the influence of The Passing of the Great Race on American thought in the 1920's, Spiro refers to the evangelists³⁹⁷ of Grant who cited and disseminated his work such as Seth K. Humphrey, The Racial Prospect (1920), Albert E Wiggam, The New Decalogue of Science (1922), William Sadler, Race Decadence, The Truth about Heredity (1930) and one of Grant's closest friends and associates, the influential racial theorist. Lothrop Stoddard (1883 –1950). These writers became part of a substantial movement of followers in the 1920s who believed passionately in Grant's theories and who Spiro described as 'evangelists' and 'disciples' believing in Grant's theories and promoting them with a quasi-religious fervour. A description, which echoes the words of Francis Galton's paper to the Sociological Society in London, on 16th May 1904 in which he announced that eugenics 'must be introduced into the national conscience, like a new religion. 1398 For many the superiority of the Nordic race and the necessity of regenerating it for mankind to reach its potential was more than just a biopolitical agenda it had also become a modernist belief system, a diagnosis and remedy to the growing problems of a degenerating society, rooted in a mythical racial past.

In scores of books, hundreds of articles, and thousands of speeches delivered to women's clubs, businessmen's luncheons, fraternal organizations, and reform groups, Grant's disciples spread the good word of scientific racism throughout the land in the early 1920's. They preached that inequality was a biological fact, and that the Nordics were the superior race.³⁹⁹

American Nordicist reality as a blueprint for Nazi racial policies

Outside America, Grant's publications, speeches at international conferences and practical application of Nordicist theories through legislation

³⁹⁷ Jonathan Spiro used this term as his chapter title.

³⁹⁸ Galton, Francis. 1904 'Eugenics: Its definition, scope, and aims'.

The American Journal of Sociology. 10 (1): 1-25

Source: http://galton.org/essays/1900-1911/galton-1904-am-journ-soc-eugenics-scope-aims.htm (Accessed 15/08/15).

³⁹⁹ Ibid. 373. p.170.

had considerable resonance with right-wing German thinkers who were seeking to establish their own sense of Pan-Germanic identity rooted in a romanticized concept of the superiority of the Germanic and Nordic race. These thinkers looked to America as a world leader in eugenics legislation aimed at the racial protection and regeneration of the Northern European people and sought to apply it to their own national situation following the devastation of the First World War; that of rebuilding a sense of national strength, identity, unity and rootedness. Within this movement, that considered American legislation as a potential model for the restoration of Germanic greatness, was the aspiring nationalist politician Adolf Hitler who, in his second volume of *Mein Kampf*, published in 1926, expressed his admiration of American eugenics and citizenship legislation.

There is today one state in which at least weak beginnings towards a better conception are noticeable. Of course it is not our model German Republic, but the American Union, in which an effort is made to consult reason partially. By refusing immigration on principle to elements in poor health, by simply excluding certain races from Naturalisation, it professes in slow beginnings a view, which is peculiar to the folkish state concept.⁴⁰⁰

In *Hitler's Private Library* (2010), Timothy W. Ryback⁴⁰¹ analysed the impact of Madison Grant's work on Hitler's early political thinking.⁴⁰² In his analysis, he proposed that 'few surviving books in Hitler's library had as clear or measurable an impact on Hitler's thinking⁴⁰³ and recounted an anecdote of Leon Whitey of the American Eugenics Society who described how in 1934, Madison Grant showed him a letter from Hitler describing the book as 'his Bible'.⁴⁰⁴

Although the original copy to which Ryback had access had no marginalia indicating Hitler's actual thoughts and areas of interest, as did

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 ⁴⁰⁰ Hitler, Adolf (Trans. Manheim, Ralph) (1995) *Mein Kampf.* London: Pimlico. p.400
 ⁴⁰¹ Timothy W. Ryback is an American historian and director of the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation in The Hague.

⁴⁰² In this work, Ryback analysed a number of works recovered from the Berghof and other locations, which had belonged to Hitler's extensive library. Many of these original publications, including Grant's are currently held at the Library of Congress, Washington.

⁴⁰³ Ryback, Timothy W. (2010) *Hitler's Private Library: The Books that shaped his Life.* London: Vintage. p. 94.

⁴⁰⁴ Ryback, Timothy W. Hitler's Private Library. p.114.

other works in his collection, Ryback established a convincing argument for the influence of Grant through comparisons with sections of *Mein Kampf* and other early writings and speeches of Hitler from the 1920's. Ryback also pointed out that Hitler's knowledge of Grant could also have come from secondary channels, such as writers like German race researcher and eugenicist Hans F.K. Günther (1891–1968), who referenced Grant in his own writings but there is, nonetheless, a valid argument that Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* had a formative influence on Hitler's racial thinking. In his analysis, Ryback suggested that Grant's selective synthesis of current strands of political and racial thought corresponded exactly with the scientific rationale and legislative framework that Hitler sought as a blueprint for his project of regenerating the German nation. Ryback suggests that Grant's selective and generalised synthesis of racial theory into an 'emphatic, single-minded, merciless and unapologetically racist message' was the 'sort of intellectual posture that appealed to Hitler'.⁴⁰⁵

Ryback's work sheds interesting light on the possible influence of Madison Grant's theories on the racial eugenics program that Hitler envisaged for the protection and regeneration of the Aryan race. Hitler developed and discussed these theories in *Mein Kampf* and other early writings and later transformed them into a practical reality when he took power in 1933, as Ryback concluded, 'Hitler was to transform Grant's treatise from Holy Scripture to state policy. ⁴⁰⁶ In *Mein Kampf* the fusion of Nordicism with Aryanism, so typical of Grant and so central to the Nazi racial myth, finds expression in Hitler's fears of the corruption of 'Aryan-Nordic blood and assertion that the Aryans were 'founders and creators of culture' (*Kulturbegründer und Kulturschöpfer*), the 'Prometheus of Mankind, from whose bright forehead the divine spark of genius has sprung at all times' 407

Eugenics legislation aimed at racial hygiene, and particularly the

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid. 403. p.96.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid. 403. p.115.

⁴⁰⁷ Adolf Hitler (1972) *Mein Kampf*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. p. 290. See also Chapoutot, Johann (2016) *Greeks, Romans, Germans: How the Nazis Usurped Europe's Classical Past.* Berkeley: University of California Press. 206 pp. 30-31.

preservation of the Nordic bloodline, promoted by notable figures such as Madison Grant, was always restricted by the fundamental basis of American constitutional democracy, the importance of establishing a national consensus. In an increasingly multi-cultural society, an elitist group of Nordicist thinkers was too marginal to implement legislation far reaching enough to fulfill the 'Nordicist manifesto' that Grant set out in *The Passing of the Great Race*. In *The Pure Society* (2001) André Pichot commented on how democracy in Britain, where the field of eugenics was rapidly developing, prevented the passing of laws relating to racial hygiene.

The propaganda and lobbying of associations and biologists came up against the English democratic tradition, and the political authorities opposed the demands of these scientists. Several bills for sterilization were rejected by the House of Commons, particularly in 1931 and 1934, the time when eugenic legislation crossed the Atlantic from the United states, where it had been pioneered.⁴⁰⁸

As discussed, the development of Nordicism in Britain into anything beyond a cultural phenomenon was very limited and the nation's democratic parliamentary system prevented the emergence of racial eugenics in any material form. The following sections will examine how Nordicism emerged as an aspect of progressive eugenics policies in Germany, as Nazism emerged from the failure of the Weimar Republic, to become a totalitarian regime. With the indefinite suspension of liberal democracy and the humanistic values it underpinned, 409 ultranationalism, eugenics and Nordicism were able to flourish and become intertwined without any ethical or legal boundaries.

Modernity and regenerating the Nordic race in inter-war Germany

The years following Germany's defeat in the Great War of 1914-1918 were marked by an intense period of radicalization as the damaged nation sought to recover from defeat and regenerate itself to create an alternative

The Enabling Act (German: *Ermächtigungsgesetz*) of 24th march 1933 gave Hitler the power to enact laws without the involvement of the Reichstag, effectively creating a Nazi dictatorship.

⁴⁰⁸ Pichot, André (Trans. D. Fernbach) (2009) *The Pure Society - From Darwin to Hitler.* London, New York: Verso. p.148.

modernity to that which faced them following the devastation of World War One. For many nationalist thinkers, the defeat of Germany was a sign of the nation's biological and racial weakness and that a project of national renewal and re-awakening should be based on a biological process of purification of the Germanic race. Within this emerging radical movement, the emerging school of Nordicist thinking gained ground as a means of turning nineteenth century theories of regenerating a lost racial primacy into a political and biological reality. This section will examine how Nordicism became radicalized in post-war Germany into a significant element of Nazi state legislation and thereby into an agenda of 'programmatic modernism' to protect the Nordic biological health of the nation from what were deemed weaker, inferior races and regenerate its mythical racial purity.

At the conclusion of the war, it has been estimated that Germany had lost around 2 million⁴¹⁰ men and the nation's sense of catastrophic defeat was compounded by the punitive conditions of the Treaty of Versailles⁴¹¹ forced on Germany by the allied victors. The treaty obliged Germany to accept total blame for the war, disarm, make substantial territorial concessions and make reparation payments for damage caused during the conflict. In 1921 the total cost of these reparations was assessed at 132 billion marks (then \$31.4 billion or £6.6 billion, roughly equivalent to US \$442 billion or UK £284 billion in 2017),412 an immense financial burden which was only recently settled in 2010.413 The impact of the Great War on Germany cannot, however, just be assessed in demographic, economic and territorial terms. The social impact of the violent deaths of so many young soldiers in apocalyptic conditions confronted the surviving population with the experience of mass killing on an industrial scale as modern technology, developed during Europe's industrial transformation, was applied to the destruction of human beings on an unprecedented scale. The modernity of nineteenth century industrialization

⁴¹⁰ Casualty figures for WW1 and WW2 are a contested issue amongst historians.

⁴¹¹ Signed on 28 June 1919. Germany was not permitted to negotiate any of its terms.

^{412&#}x27;Treaty of Versailles - 1919'. ushmm.org.

https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005425 (Accessed 25/03/17).

⁴¹³Hall, Alan. 'Germany Ends World War One Reparations'. dailymail.co.uk.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1315869/Germany-end-World-War-One-reparations-92-years-59m-final-payment.html

had replaced the concept of the individual with that of the urban industrial and commercial collective, and through the process of the technologization of warfare, death had become an anonymous, random, unpredictable, and brutal dimension of modernity. This apocalyptic mood was reflected in the brutality of warfare depicted in Erich Maria Remarque's (1898 -1970) *Im Westen nichts Neues* (All Quiet on the Western Front), published in 1929, and the stark, nightmarish images of artist Otto Dix (1891-1969).

Within these immense social pressures, the perception and representation of the Jew as the cultural and biological 'other', became increasingly crystallized in nationalist circles, into the essence of a myth of an ancient conflict between the once noble and pure Northern European race and the biologically inferior Jew. Within the cultural context of the 'imperfect histories' of the nineteenth century Pan-Germanic National Romantic movement, which sought to re-establish and legitimize the cultural roots of Germanic identity and primacy, and the emerging strand of biological Nordicism in the field of eugenics, the Jew became perceived as a malignant force within German modernity. This aspect of anti-Semitism, emerging as a reaction to modernity, was examined by Zygmunt Bauman in *Modernity and* the Holocaust (1989), in which he described how traditional German anti-Semitism became radicalized by the social transformations brought about by early twentieth century modernity that were eroding and transforming the established social landscape of German society. In this work, Bauman described how urban modernity had brought a number of Jewish intellectuals and businessman into positions of power and influence in German society and how, in the aftermath of the Great War, this added to the anxieties of those who saw their 'sacred canopy' of the established social status quo rapidly collapsing and led to a radicalization of a cultural anti-Semitism that had arguably existed for centuries both in Germany an across Europe.

Truly, the fate of the Jews epitomized the awesome scope of social upheaval and served as a vivid, obtrusive reminder of the erosion of old certainties, of melting and

⁴¹⁴ In 1923 the exhibition of his painting *The Trench*, depicted dismembered and decomposed bodies of soldiers after a battle, caused public outrage. Remarque and Dix were among a number of artists later banned under Nazi rule.

evaporating of everything once deemed solid and lasting. Whoever felt thrown out of balance, threatened or displaced, could easily - and rationally - make sense of his own anxiety through articulating the experienced turbulence as the imprint of Jewish subversive incongruity. He incongruity.

This perception of the Jew, amongst German conservatives and nationalists, as a destructive force within modernity was also reflected in Christopher Hutton's analysis of the anti-Semitic dimensions of Nazi ideology, in which he described the emerging world-view of the nationalist '*Kriegsgeneration*' who cast the Jew as the cultural and biological 'other' of a progressively weakening Germanic race.

Anti-Semitism was fundamental to the world-view of almost all ultra-nationalist (*völkisch*) ideologues and, increasingly in the post-war era, of race theorists. Jews were the essence of modernity, in that they thrived in cities and in modern consumer capitalism. They represented materialism, liberalism, internationalism, Marxism; they embodied the promiscuity of modernity, in that they were citizens of all countries, spoke many languages and lacked any organic relationship to territory and landscape [...] The fact that Jews thrived in modernity gave them unique power and influence over the distressed German Volk.⁴¹⁸

This perception of the Jew as a malevolent, parasitic aspect of modernity, that intended to erode and destroy the social, economic and cultural fabric of the post-war German nation, radicalized nationalist thought into the elaboration of futural projects of national, cultural and biological renewal that racial science and eugenics had now made a potential reality. Within this strand of radical right-wing thinkers, the biological agenda of Nordicism had considerable resonance in both the fields of ultra-nationalist politics and the eugenics movement emerging as what could be termed a 'revitalization movement'.

⁴¹⁵ This phrase is a clear allusion to what Bauman would later call 'liquid modernity', but also evokes Karl Marx's famous assertion in *The Communist Manifesto* (1948) that 'all that is solid melts into air', which is used as the title for Marshall Berman's seminal work on modernity (London: Verso, 1993).

 $^{^{416}}$ Bauman, Zygmunt (1989) *Modernity and the Holocaust.* Cambridge: Polity Press. p.45. 417 Translates as the 'War Generation' and used in German to describe young men in the 1920s and 30's who had survived the War or been children growing up during the conflict and the aftermath of the post-war years.

⁴¹⁸ Hutton M. Christopher (2005) *Race and the Third Reich.* Cambridge: Polity Press. p.12.

Nordicism as a twentieth century revitalization movement

In his discussion of revitalization movements in *Modernism and Fascism* (2007), Roger Griffin draws on the theories of British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner to discuss how, during the post-war years, a growing number of conservative and nationalist thinkers found themselves in a liminoid state, ⁴¹⁹ a state of extreme social stress, as the established identity, traditions, status quo or 'nomos' of their established society was being rapidly eroded by the seemingly unstoppable forces of change brought about by post-war modernity. In reaction to this perceived threat, many fascist thinkers sought the creation of a new nomos. Griffin describes the social need to create an alternative modernity, a 'new order', as being as crucial to the historical evolution of human culture as the liminal states of change that are normally processed through a variety of human ritual marking changes within an established cultural framework.

'Liminoidality' and adaptive, innovative, *revolutionary* social reactions to it which create a *new* order and a 'new world', have certainly been as constitutive of human history as the evolving but conservative liminal processes that maintain and regenerate the status quo. 420

The liminoid state of complete separation from a social nomos, which has been destroyed or damaged beyond repair, is the condition in which revitalization movements emerge with visions of an alternative modernity deemed essential to the survival of a society in ruins. Situating this social theory within the context of twentieth century fascism as a reaction to modernity Griffin quotes Victor Turner's description of how a new society emerges from a liminoid situation.

People who are similar in one important characteristic [...] withdraw symbolically, even actually, from the whole system, from which they may in various degrees feel themselves 'alienated' to seek the glow of *communitas* among those with whom they share some cultural and biological feature they take to be their most signal mark of identity Through the route of 'social category' they escape the alienating structure of

420 Griffin, Roger (2007) Modernism and Fascism – The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan. p.110.

⁴¹⁹ Liminoid describes the state of separation from a state of being, one that produces a permanent sense of the liminal without resolution in a new 'solid' state.

⁴²⁰ Griffin, Roger (2007) *Modernism and Fascism – The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and*

This model of a liminoid state of alienation, by a social group who seek the *communitas* of those with which they share a common features, views and experiences, aligns with the sense of alienation from modernity felt by the nationalists of the *Kriegsgeneration* whose common experience and aspirations became so misaligned with modernity that it caused them break way and design an alternative modernity, acting as a social anti-structure within a society that they rejected as being uninhabitable.

Griffin links this development of Turner's 'social anti-structure' with the concept of revitalization movements analysed by Anthony Wallace and Kenneth Tollefson as a 'mazeway resynthesis'. This creation of an adapted world-view or socio-cultural model to take the place of perceived defunct society is the means by which the liminoid state is converted into the futural vision of an alternative modernity. This takes place as a reaction to the alienating force of a structure which they exclude themselves from, as it is incompatible with their established world-view. Griffin quotes Tollefson's description of cultural revitalization as an 'adaptive social response whereby the past and present values, customs, and beliefs - which produce dissonance arising from the distortions that exist between them - are analysed and recombined into a new synthesis, a new mazeway, or a new Gestalt. 422 By applying Griffin's model of fascism as a revitalization movement to Nordicism as a specific generic strand within this broader school of thought, then its function as a modernist project of protecting and promoting the Nordic race in both the USA and Germany becomes more apparent. Nordicism in both countries combined the past, through its quest for rootedness in ancient Nordic traditions, folklore and mythology with forward looking modern scientific advances in the field of racial science and Eugenics. These eclectically chosen foundations of their historical legitimacy and controversial scientific methods were fused into a pseudo-scientific rational which became the radicalized world-view of a Pan-Nordic/Germanic communitas which

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⁴²¹ Ibid. 420. pp.110-11.

⁴²² Ibid. 420. p.111.

spanned both sides of the Atlantic.

They project the new vision, the new temporality contrived deep inside their inner world onto 'history'. planning utopian ways in which society can be harmonized and synchronized with it [...]⁴²³

During the late nineteenth century, Nordicists emerging from the National Romantic period had projected their new vision of racial primacy onto the history of the Germanic *Volk* who they claimed to be the descendants of a once great Aryan tribe that had settled and dispersed from the racially developmental environment of the Nordic lands. With the development of racial science and eugenics, they were able to hypothesize a future new order to harmonize their racial world-view with the futural society that they envisaged. Griffin described this duality with reference to a scene in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, when the young wizard is confronted with the sight of his schoolmaster Quirrell who appears as a single head with two eyes, one facing forward, the other backwards. Through this image Griffin explained what he perceived as a contradictory but symbiotic and vital relationship between the nostalgic and the futuristic in fascist revitalization movements.

[...] its momentum towards realizing the utopia of a homeland conceived in mythical terms which are at one and at the same time anti-modern and hypermodern, futuristic yet arch-conservative.⁴²⁵

In Nordicism, this seemingly contradictory duality was bound together by the belief that it would be possible to scientifically reconstruct a lost past from the surviving pure Nordic bloodstock, a scientifically reconstructed future of a mythical past.

From this synthesis, this alienated Nordicist 'anti-structure' elaborated a conceptual map, or 'mazeway' for a future society in which the primacy of Nordic blood was restored to its former greatness. The prophets of this

⁴²⁴ Ibid. 420. p.105.

⁴²³ Ibid. 420. p.69.

⁴²⁵ Ibid. 420. p110.

movement, in the fields of science and ultra-nationalist politics, excluded their followers from the current state of modernity, which they perceived as being rapidly eroded by forces of multi-culturalism, and miscegenation, which were progressively destroying the purity, and strength of the Nordic race. In response to this destruction of their established nomos of racial superiority, Nordicism became transformed, in radical circles, into a secular belief system of the primacy of the Nordic race comparable with Francis Galton's call for eugenics to be introduced 'into the national conscience, like a new religion'. 426 The final stage of its 'mazeway resynthesis', its transformation from theories into a political and scientific reality was however still in flux. In the USA, the democratic governmental process resting on the consensus of a broad public limited its full development from theory into practice. In Germany, however, this process had been weakened by the failings of the Weimar Republic and the socially turbulent post-war years. In this anomic socio-political context, the practical application of Nordic thought continued to develop on both sides of the Atlantic as Nordicist eugenicists collaborated to establish a scientific blueprint for the preservation and restoration of the Nordic race. It was, however, only under the totalitarian regime of Nazism established in 1933 that this process could be unleashed to its full destructive effect, as I will examine later in this chapter.

The inter-war Nordicist scientific *communitas* in Scandinavia, Germany and the USA

Although the Great War had provoked continuing international tensions, as Germany remained an outsider in international matters, the pre-war collaboration previously established between leading racial eugenicists such as Madison Grant, Theodore Lothrop Stoddard and Charles Davenport in the USA and Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer and Fritz Lenz in Germany soon resumed forming what could be termed a 'Nordicist scientific *communitas* which Stefan Kühl⁴²⁷ studied in *The Nazi Connection - Eugenics, American*

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⁴²⁶ Ibid. 336.

⁴²⁷ German sociologist and professor at Bielefeld University.

racism and German National Socialism, (1994). In this work, Kühl frames his analysis of the Nazi period within a critique of racial aspects of the contemporary eugenics research of Roger Pearson⁴²⁸ (1927-) and the financial backing of the Pioneer Fund, and sheds new light on the significant interaction that took place during the inter-war period between American and German scientists. Kühl claims that the role of American scientists in promoting and supporting Nazi eugenics legislation and action has been largely sidelined as a 'silent presence in works about eugenics, even when not mentioned specifically. 429

From his archive research in the United States, Germany, Great Britain and France, Kühl attempted to re-open the question of the relationship between Nazi and American racial eugenicists and the extent to which their interaction was vital to the development of Nazism's political and scientific racial programmes. Kühl claims that Charles B. Davenport played a central role in reintegrating German scientists back into the international eugenics community and promoting their status within it and that, by 1924, German and American eugenicists were again in full collaboration. 430 He also argues that the Rockefeller Foundation 431 played a significant role in the establishment and sponsorship of major eugenics institutions in Germany such as the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Eugenics and Human Heredity, founded in Berlin in 1927. This research centre soon became strongly associated and occupied with Nazi theories of eugenics and racial hygiene through the direction of its leading theorists Fritz Lenz (1887 -1976), Eugen Fischer (1874-1967), Otmar von Verschuer (1896-1969) and Ernst Rüdin (1874-1962). Between 1921 and 1940, Menschliche Erblichkeitslehre (Principles of Human Heredity and Race Hygiene) by Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer and Fritz Lenz, was republished in five editions and became a key work on eugenics,

⁴²⁸ British anthropologist, soldier, businessman, eugenics theorist, and publisher of political and

academic journals.
429 Kühl, Stefan (1994) *The Nazi Connection - Eugenics, American Racism, and German National* Socialism. Oxford: University Press. p.134.

⁴³⁰ Ibid. 417, p.19.

⁴³¹ The Rockefeller Foundation, founded in New York in 1913, as a humanitarian institute by the owners of Standard Oil (ESSO), still exists today as an organisation 'promoting the well-being of humanity around the world'. https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org (Accessed 25/05/16).

published on both sides of the Atlantic. This work influenced many other Nordicist thinkers such as H.F.K. Günther who built on their work applying it to the future rebuilding of the Nordic race.

Within this transatlantic collaboration into a range of research areas within the developing science of eugenics, the field of racial hygiene had a significant role. In his work, Kühl pointed out that the Committee on Race Crossing (linked to the International Federation of Eugenics Organizations, IFEO) was jointly led by Fisher and Davenport. He also referred to collaboration in the late 1920's between the Eugenics Record Office, the Station for Experimental Evolution in Cold Spring Harbor and the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute who co-authored a questionnaire distributed to 1000 physicians, missionaries and consulates to collect information on miscegenation. 432 He also described how at a conference of the IFEO in 1928, Fritz Lenz, chairman of the Committee for Race Crossing, urged the Foundation to be more engaged in supporting their work on race mixing. 433 This Pan-Nordic *communitas*, a scientific 'anti-structure' within the American and German Eugenics movement sought to promote and develop their own racial agenda of Nordic racial hygiene beyond national boundaries as part of a Pan-Nordic revitalization movement.

In Scandinavia, racial hygiene and the need to protect and improve the health of the Nordic race, also gained ground during this period. In Sweden, Herman Lundborg (1868-1943) became a prominent eugenicist both in Sweden and internationally. In 1918 he toured Sweden with an exhibition of *folktypsutställning* (folk types) exhibiting models of Swedish racial types and also helped to organise a beauty contest to find the perfect Swedish-Germanic racial type. He also established the State Institute for Racial Biology in 1922.⁴³⁴ In Norway Jon Alfred Mjøen (1860-1939), who had been a personal friend of Alfred Ploetz since the 1880's⁴³⁵ and who held a German

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⁴³² Ibid. 429. p.21.

⁴³³ Ibid. 429. p.21.

⁴³⁴ Kyllingstad, Jon Røyne (2015) *Measuring the Master Race: Physical Anthropology in Norway 1890-1945.* Cambridge: Open Book Publishers. Kindle edition. p.2587. ⁴³⁵ Ibid. 423. p.2587.

doctoral degree in organic chemistry also rose to national and international note as a prominent figure in the eugenics movement. Migen argued that Norway, like the other Scandinavian states, had to fight for the protection of their Nordic race. According to his diagnosis of the contemporary situation, Migen argued that Norwegians had a responsibility towards their own nation and the world to protect their racial purity and quality. Like many cultural and biological pessimists of the time he believed that modern civilization had disrupted the process of natural selection and that mass migration from Norway to America was also draining the country of its superior racial types. 436 To counter this trend, Mjøen proposed a range of positive eugenics measures such as racial education, a return to rural life and health checks before allowing marriages, to protect and promote the reproduction of racially superior individuals and negative measures such as forced segregation and sterilization. In his work Measuring the Master Race: Physical Anthropology in Norway 1890-1945 (2015), Norwegian historian Jon Røyne Kyllingstad points out, however, that the application of the theories of Nordicist eugenicists such as Lundborg and Migen, was limited in Scandinavia by the disapproval of many other thinkers who opposed their theories in a liberal democracy. According to Kyllingstad Jon Alfred Mjøen and Herman Lundborg were part of an influential group within the IFEO who sought to create a 'Blond International' to purify and propagate the Nordic Race. 437

The Nordicist element within the Scandinavian eugenics movement was therefore marginalized within their own countries both by scientific opposition the liberal democracies which prevented the passing of racist eugenics measures without a broad public consensus. They were, however, well received within a growing German academic community of Nordicists who sought to develop relations with their Scandinavian counterparts with the aim of furthering their research into the protection and purification of the Nordic race. 438

⁴³⁶ Ibid. 434. p.2603.

⁴³⁷ Ibid. 434. p.2858.

⁴³⁸ Ibid. 434 p.2858

Notable in this academic collaboration between Scandinavian and German racial theorists was the Norwegian Nordicist Halfdan Bryn (1864-1933). Like many of his contemporaries Bryn reacted to the modernity of the time by blaming the poor working and living conditions of the cities' working classes where hygiene and health was poor. He maintained however that it was not just industrialization and urbanization that was to blame, but the degenerating racial composition of the population that was taking place through poor social selection. Bryn argued that, at an individual level, racial mixing could lead to 'genetic chaos', individuals who were ugly and unfit for intellectual development, whereas at a societal level, mixing led to alienation. 439 Bryn perceived that the Norwegian race was being threatened by migrants from eastern regions of Europe and, in Northern Norway, through miscegenation with Lapps and arguing that this problem was comparable with that of the Negro problem in the USA, which was being controlled through a range of racial legislation to prevent interbreeding between blacks and the white population.440

During 1923 and 1924 Halfdan Bryn met with German anthropologist and writer H.F.K. Günther (1891-1968) and the two collaborated closely on a number of research and publication projects. According to Kyllingstad, Günther saw Bryn as a key collaborator in his mission to spread his concept of the Nordic race throughout Scandinavia. In 1926, Bryn joined the German Nordicist association, the *Nordische Ring*, through which he developed an extensive network of like-minded thinkers. ⁴⁴¹ This growing association with German Nordicists who were becoming influential members of the rapidly expanding Nazi party increasingly marginalized Bryn within the Norwegian Eugenics community and he remained academically isolated until his death in 1933. According to Kyllingstad, the death of Bryn ended any further anthropological interest in scientific Nordicism in Norway as there was growing public criticism of his ideas and his association with the brutal racial doctrine of Nazism.

⁴³⁹ Ibid. 434. p.3261.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid. 434. p.4896.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid. 434. p 4942.

The Nordicist communitas within Nazism

Alongside this scientific 'anti-structure' or communitas in the field of eugenics, German Nordicist thinkers in the fields of politics, history, geography, religion, and anthropology built on the earlier work of pre-war racial theorists who had centred the origins of the Germanic tribes in ancient Nordic tribes who had migrated south from Scandinavia. Through their work, Nordicism became more clearly distinguished from nineteenth century Aryanism as a purely racial indicator, a racial category where the body became the focus of human identity. Within the emerging National Socialist movement of aspiring ultranationalist politicians such as Adolf Hitler, Nordic ideologues were a strongly represented and influential strand of the Party's *völkisch* worldview and developing racial policies.

Notable amongst these thinkers was anthropologist Hans Friedrich Karl Günther (1891-1968) who became a prominent and influential Nordicist writer in the inter-war period and taught at the universities of Jena, Berlin, and Freiburg, writing numerous books and essays on racial theory. A former student of eugenicist Eugen Fischer, Günther drew on the work of many contemporary eugenicists and racial theorists to formulate his own concepts of *Nordische Gedanke* (Nordic Thought), *Entnordung* (denordification), *Wiedervernordung* (renordification) and *Aufnordung* (nordification), which had a considerable influence on leading members of the Nazi Party. Günther saw the Nazi movement as the ideal means of bringing about his project of *Wiedervernordung*. He joined the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP) in 1932 and was awarded a number of prestigious honours during his career by the Nazi regime.

Part of the *Kriegsgeneration* that had survived the conflict, ⁴⁴² Günther began his academic and writing career after the war, with the support of the Munich publisher of medical and nationalist literature Julius Friedrich Lehmann (1864-1935), an influential figure among early Nazi members

⁴⁴² Günther enlisted in the infantry at the outbreak of was but was later medically discharged.

through his involvement in the Munich Beer Hall Putsch of 1923 and his participation in the nationalist Thule Society⁴⁴³ which attracted many influential early party members. Through these connections and the popularity of his publications, Günther soon became a leading figure in establishing the foundations of later Nazi eugenics policies.

Günther's publications leading to Hitler's takeover of power in 1933, included Nordicist works such as Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes (Racial Characteristics of the German People) (1922), Rassenkunde Europas, (The Racial Elements of European History) (1924), Kleine Rassenkunde Europas (A Short Ethnology of the German People) (1925), Der Nordische Gedanke unter den Deutschen (Nordic Thought Among the German People (1925), Adel und Rasse (Nobility and Race) (1926), Rasse und Stil (Race and Form) (1926) and Rassenkunde des jüdischen Volkes (Racial Characteristics of the Jewish People) (1930). In these works, Günther built on the work of former racial anthropologists, rejecting the linguistic term Aryan to base his racial analysis on physical measurements using the cephalic index and observations to discuss the physical and psychological attributes and shortcomings of different racial types.

In Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes (1922), Günther defined five racial types that made up the German Volk: the Nordic, Mediterranean, Dinaric, Alpine and East Baltic and defined their racial characteristics, placing the Nordic type at the apex of his racial hierarchy as a heroic, predominant race that possessed superior physical and mental attributes and described Scandinavia, Germany and North America as areas where there was still a strong strain of Nordic blood. In this work, Günther also discussed the process of Entnordung, the progressive depletion of the Nordic gene pool through a historic process of miscegenation with inferior races that had led to the social, cultural and political downfall of the Nordic people. To remedy this, Günther proposed a policy of Wiedervernordung, the regeneration of the Nordic gene

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⁴⁴³ The *Thule Society* (Thule-Gesellschaft) was a German occultist and völkisch group in Munich, established after World War I, named after a mythical northern country from Greek legend. The Society sponsored the early Deutsche Arbeiterpartei.

pool through a range of eugenics measures aimed at protecting and regenerating the Nordic race such as selective breeding and the exclusion of inferior races.

In *Rassenkunde Europas* (1924) Günther described the physique of the Nordic in almost romantic terms as a model of human physical beauty and perfection.

The skin of the Nordic race is rosy and fair; it allows the blood to glimmer through, and so it looks alive, often quite lustrous, and always rather cool, or fresh, 'like milk and blood.' The veins shine through (at least in youth) and show 'the blue blood.' The hair is smooth and sleek or wavy in texture, in childhood it may be curly. Each hair is thin and soft and often 'like silk'. In colour it is fair, and, whether light or dark blond always shows a touch of gold, or a reddish undertone. 444

Günther also praised their mental characteristics stating that 'judgment, truthfulness, and energy'⁴⁴⁵ are key attributes of the Nordic mentality, which drive them onto great achievements.

He is distinguished by a highly developed sense of reality, which in combination with an energy that may rise to boldness, urges him onto far-reaching undertakings. Together with this he has a decided sense for competitive achievement, and develops a characteristic passion for the real [...] His inclinations are always towards prudence, reserve steadfastness, calm judgment.⁴⁴⁶

Günther imbued his depictions of the Nordic with admirable characteristics, placing the Nordic at the apex of humanity, a race of physically beautiful and noble leaders of mankind. Günther concluded his praise for the leadership qualities of the Nordic race by stating that the bloodline of the Nordic had produced important leading figures in both Northern Europe and America.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that it is this Nordic race that has produced so many creative men, that a quite preponderating proportion of the distinguished men in European and North American history show mainly Nordic features [...]⁴⁴⁷

446 Ibid. 444. p.32.

⁴⁴⁴ Günther Hans FK. Wheeler GC (Trans) *The Racial Elements of European History* (London, Methuen and Co. 1927), p.12.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid. 444. p.12.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid. 444. p.34.

Like many Nordicist thinkers in Germany at this time, Günther expressed his admiration for the progress of Nordicist statesmen in the United States, such as Madison Grant, for putting into place legislation such as the Immigration Act of 1924, which favoured Northern Europeans with the aim of protecting the existing Nordic bloodstock from further miscegenation.

It may be presumed that the Immigration Laws as now passed are only the first step to still more definite laws dealing with race and eugenics. In North America, especially, where there is the opportunity to examine the races and racial mixtures of Europe from the point of view of their civic worth, the importance of the Nordic race could not stay hidden.448

In Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes (Racial Characteristics of the German People) (1922), Günther had expressed his lack of confidence in the democracy of the Weimar Republic to enable the practical application of his Nordicist theories calling for the union of those aligned with his concept of Nordische Gedanke (Nordic Thought) to help themselves and economically favour those capable of producing Nordic offspring to boost the Nordic gene pool in the German population.

The task of degeneration can be assumed by the state; the task of the Aufnordung can be solved in Germany and Austria only by the self-help of the Nordic race, by the union of the Nordic-minded Germans; for it is clear that the state cannot make his racial struggles his own. By the concentration of the Nordic-minded Germans, the organization of the German people will have to be made economic; For the rearing of an above-average number of children by healthy, predominantly Nordic husbands is dependent not only on the racial sense of duty of such spouses, but also on their economic situation. 449

This inability of Nordicism to flourish under the liberal democracy of the Weimar republic that German nationalists, such as Günther, perceived as having being corrupted by Jewish influence, necessitated a radical change in the political system, the potential for which Günther must have seen in the growing popularity of the Nazi Party that he joined in 1932. In 1933, Germanborn American political philosopher Eric Voegelin (1901-1985)⁴⁵⁰ suggested in

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid. 444. p.197.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid. 444. p.197.

Between 1933 and 1938 Eric Voegelin published four books criticizing Nazi racism, and as a result of the Anschluss with Germany in 1938 he was dismissed from his academic post at the

his 1933 work *Rasse und Staat*⁴⁵¹ that the Nordicist theories posited by Günther would require a totalitarian regime such as that created by National Socialism to enable his modernist project of Nordic Thought and renordification to become a political, social and scientific reality.

Günther sees very clearly that the current political order of the European-American world of nations makes it impossible for the Nordic idea to prevail in the political struggle. A national policy of Aufnordung would have to be preceded by a radical internal change that eliminates all institutions of mass democracy.⁴⁵²

In *Der Nordische Gedanke unter den Deutschen* (1927), Günther outlined what he considered to be the principles of 'Nordic Thought' amongst the German people. In this work Günther called for the regeneration of the Nordic gene pool and described what he saw as the coming of a new age of racial consciousness and purification. Günther argued that, in order to achieve this, education should promote the idea that the future progress of humanity no longer lay in the nineteenth century 'Age of Technology' but in the future 'Age of Biology' in which renordification would bring about an increase in high value hereditary traits and the eventual regeneration of Nordic supremacy. To achieve this enhancement of the human race, Gunther proposed the practice of positive eugenics to increase the racially desirable and reduce the racially inferior.

[...] the enhancement of mankind is only possible through an increase in the high-value hereditary traits, that is via a higher birth rate among the racially sound, and a check on the procreation of the less hereditarily-valuable. 453

To support this call for racial awareness, which he described as a form of moral conscience, Günther quoted the distinguished Austrian philosopher Christian von Ehrenfels (1859-1932), who proposed that racial awareness

University of Vienna. He narrowly avoiding arrest by the Gestapo, and after a brief stay in Switzerland, he arrived in the United States, where he remained.

⁴⁵¹ Race and State is the second of five books that Eric Voegelin wrote before his emigration to the United States from Austria in 1938. First published in Germany in 1933, the year Hitler came to power, the study was prompted in part by the rise of National Socialism during the preceding year.

⁴⁵²Voegelin, Eric (1997) *The Collected works Volume 2 Race and State.* Baton Rouge: University of Missouri Press. p. 217.

⁴⁵³ Günther, H.F.K. (1927) *Der Nordische Gedanke unter den Deutschen.* Munich: Lehmanns Verlag. p13 Translation by Roger Moorhouse.

should be a 'third person' in sexual relationships, acting as a moral guide to selecting a racially desirable sexual partner.

The idea is gaining ground that sexual intercourse, viewed morally, is not a duet but a trio - more exactly that the interests of the coming generation, and with those of the collective, often come more into consideration than those of the participants.⁴⁵⁴

In this work, Günther sought to present a scientific argument for a programme of positive eugenics and distanced his concept of Nordische Gedanke from the Ariosophy of esoteric, mystical Nordicists such as Guido Von List whose works on Nordic/Teutonic mythology and runes he described as 'an attempt to reinvigorate faded German myths and extinct symbols' stating that 'the Nordic Movement must ruthlessly reject such aberrations.'455 Günther rejected this form of cultural Nordicism, considering it to be a romanticization of the Nordic ideal, rooted in an irrational, mythologized past. Günther sought to limit his concept of renordification to the field of science, defining it as as a 'forwardlooking will to self-improvement' not 'a reinvigoration of the past'. 456 Günther also distanced himself, in contradiction with his earlier idealization of the Nordic in Rassenkunde Europas (1924), from Nordicists who saw the blond, blue-eyed Nordic as the ideal type, a strand within the Nazi movement that effectively excluded many Germans, notably in southern regions who did not fit this ideal type. This broader interpretation of the Nordic was more in line with Nazi racial policies that used the term Germanic or Aryan in preference to Nordic.

No less important is the Nordic Movement's rejection of the image of the Nordic race as an exemplar of blondness. Those that are schooled in racial science know that some Nordic are dark-haired and dark-eyed, and some of the blond and blue-eyed are, especially, East-Balkans. That is, in itself, an objection to the infatuation with blondness. More importantly, however, that infatuation can disguise the true sense of the Nordic idea. 457

In *Hitler's Private Library,* Timothy W. Ryback suggests that, from an early stage, Hitler was very familiar with Günther's work and was influenced

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. 444. p.66.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid. 444. p.12.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid. 444. p.71.

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid. 444. p.67.

by his Nordicist theories of miscegenation and racial revitalization. Ryback described how Hitler's library in Landsberg prison, where he wrote *Mein Kampf* following the Beer Hall *Putsch* of 1923, contained a 'well-thumbed', 1923 edition of Günther's *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes*, inscribed to Hitler by the work's publisher Julius Lehmann. In *The Master Plan* (2006) historian Heather Pringle commented on the public impact of Günther's works in promoting the concept of Nordic thought and Nordification as a scientific, racial solution to the growing social crisis, brought about by modernity, in German society, noting that by 1945, Günther's *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (Racial Characteristics of the German People), (1922), had sold 400,000 copies in Germany, a figure that suggests a considerable public diffusion of Günther's Nordicist racial theories.

Günther's racial works became best sellers in Germany, flying off bookstore shelves. Under their powerful spell, German nationalists began to graft the physical characteristics of the imagined Nordic race onto the increasingly popular idea of the ancient Aryans.⁴⁶⁰

Another influential Nordicist thinker who emerged from the Thule Society was Alfred Ernst Rosenberg (1893-1946), a Baltic German who had left Estonia following the Russian revolution of 1917 and arrived in Germany as an anti-Semitic and anti-communist German pan-nationalist who joined the early Deutsche Arbeiterpartei in 1919. Rosenberg made a significant contribution to the academic development of Nordicist ideology within the early Nazi party, becoming a regular contributor to and later editor of the *Völkischer Beobachter* of Dietrich Eckhart, which became the official newspaper of the Nazi Party. Rosenberg was also placed in significant and influential posts to implement his Nordicist policies, such as Leader of the Foreign Policy Office of the NSDAP (1933-45), Commissar for the Supervision of Intellectual and Ideological Education (1934-45) and Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories (1941-45). In 1933 he also took over control of

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⁴⁵⁸ Ibid. 444. p.69.

⁴⁵⁹ Pringle, Heather *The Master Plan - Himmler's Scholars and the Holo*caust (London. Harper Perennial. 2006), p.335.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid. 459. p.36.

⁴⁶¹ Dietrich Eckhart (1868-1923) a founder member of the early DAP and close associate of Hitler.

the *Nordische Gesellschaft* (Nordic Society), which had been founded in 1921 with the aim of developing German-Nordic cultural cooperation. Heinrich Himmler and Walther Darré also became influential members of this Nordicist group. From 1934 to 1939 the society organised annual *Reichstagungen* (Reich Meetings) to bring together experts in the field of Nordic Thought, establish contacts in Scandinavia and spread their Nordicist ideology. In an address to the first conference in 1934, Rosenberg ended his speech with a call for Nordic unity and cooperation in Northern Europe.

We also send our greetings far across the sea to all those men and women in other states who are honestly and similarly willing to accept the challenges of our time, to serve them and thus work together for peace in our ancient Europe, in the best interest of every single people in Scandinavia and around the Baltic; uniting the European destiny with the well-being of each nation. 462

In 1930, the year that he was elected to the Reichstag as a deputy, Rosenberg published his major work on racial theory and Nordicism *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts,* (The Myth of the Twentieth Century). Building on the works of Arthur de Gobineau, Madison Grant and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Rosenberg reflected both their turn of the century pessimism over the consequences of miscegenation and the the post-war social alienation of the *Kriegsgeneration* who formed a growing Nordicist antistructure. In his work he describes the loss of traditional values and beliefs in the devastation of the war.

Once, such ultimate aim was the "Christianizing of the world" and its redemption through the second coming of Christ. Another goal was represented by the Humanist dream of 'Mankind." Both ideals have been buried in the bloody chaos of the Great War, despite the fact that now one, and now the other, still find increasingly fanatical adherents and a venerable priesthood. These are processes of petrification and no longer of living tissue: A belief, which has died in the soul, cannot be raised from the dead. 463

Rosenberg's pessimism and sense of alienation emerges in his description of the breakdown of the metanarratives of Christianity and the humanist

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⁴⁶² Rosenberg quoted by Michael Müller-Wille in Roesdahl, Else and Sorensen, Preben Meulengracht (1996) *The Waking of Angantyr: The Scandinavian Past in European Culture*. Arhus: Arhus University Press. p.159.

⁴⁶³ Rosenberg, Alfred (Bird V. Trans.) (1993) *The Myth of the Twentieth Century.* California: Noontide Press. p.3.

development of mankind, in the apocalyptic events of the war. Rosenberg viewed the nomos of society, the social elements or constructs creating meaning and purpose, as being broken beyond repair even by those who he described as 'fanatical adherents' of a lost belief system. For Rosenberg the collapse of Germany in the devastation of the Great War marked the breakdown of the nomos that had shaped and maintained society, leaving Germany in an anomic state of political turbulence, economic strife and social degeneracy.

All present-day struggles for power are outward effects of an inward collapse. All State systems of 1914 have already collapsed [...] Collapsed also have social, church and ideological creeds and values. No highest principle, no supreme idea governs undisputed the life of the *Volk*, group struggles against group, party against party, [...] life is uprooted. 464

Rosenberg expressed his post-war sense of deracination as traditional social structures were rapidly eroded by a modernity in which Nordicist thinkers felt alienated as their 'sacred canopy' of pre-industrial traditionalism was smashed by the apocalyptic events of the war that had brought about the need to revitalize the German nation. Rosenberg described a fragmented society, in search of a higher, supreme, unifying ideal transcending the individual, an ideal that he situated in a romanticized 'sacred space' outside the fragmented and deracinating contemporary world, in which the regeneration of the Nordic race offered a new path of national identity, cohesion and spirituality which was uniquely Germanic and proposed a new 'sacred canopy' of future racial purity and primacy. Rosenberg described this as his 'new Myth -a new supreme value' which had to be presented to the masses as a new belief system, a 'mazeway resynthesis' founded on a mythical Vorzeit of racial supremacy which had been progressively eroded through miscegenation with inferior racial types. This lost racial primacy could be biologically regenerated, however, through positive eugenics and the founding of a culture based on Germanic cultural and religious traditions, a principle which he referred to as 'Blood and Soil', an ideology linking the ethnicity of a people to their blood line and the land that they have historically occupied and cultivated.

⁴⁶⁴ Rosenberg, Alfred. *The Myth of the Twentieth Century.* p.5.

In *Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Rosenberg proposed a racial reinterpretation of history based on the supremacy of the Nordic race, carried in the blood of the Germanic people, in contrast with the eroding, corrupting influence of the Jewish people. Rosenberg described his concept of blood as the embodiment of the Nordic soul, a biological and spiritual synthesis that had been eroded through miscegenation. Rosenberg's historical thesis was based on the diffusion of the Nordic people from Scandinavia where the once nomadic Aryan tribe had settled. According to Rosenberg the basis of Western culture had evolved through the leadership of those carrying the Nordic bloodline. In this context, Rosenberg perceived blood in a spiritual context, as a religion in itself, defining race as 'the image of the soul' 465 and the history of this belief system as 'the great world story of the rise and fall of peoples, their heroes and thinkers, their inventors and artists'. In this context, Rosenberg was proposing a new mythology, a new Germanic belief system that fused ancient traditions with futural visions of racial regeneration through the concept of blood, a transcendence that merged past, present and future.

Rosenberg also argued that the Roman Catholic Church had historically aligned itself with Freemasons, Jesuits and the Jews to erode once noble German spiritual values and its vital sense of *völkisch* community. Rosenberg rejected both the religious dogma of both the established Christian Catholic and Protestant churches and the image of Christ that they portrayed. He also criticized the emphasis that Christianity placed on humanitarianism, which, in his view, had protected the weak and progressively eroded the Nordic concept of honour and the protection of the its gene pool, from miscegenation.

Thanks to the preaching of humanitarianism and the doctrine of human equality, every Jew, negro and mulatto can become a citizen of equal rights in a European state [...] thanks to humanity negroes and Jews can marry into the Nordic race, indeed even occupy important offices. 466

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⁴⁶⁵ Ibid. 463. p.18.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid. 463. p.139.

He also attacked key aspects of Christian belief such as original sin, the Virgin birth and the resurrection which he saw as 'the denial of natural life' 467, as well as attacking what he perceived to be a historical misrepresentation of Jesus by religious groups that had distorted the original historical figure of Christ to support and spread their own belief systems.

The great personality of Jesus Christ, whatever form it may have have taken originally, was distorted and confused immediately after his death with all the rubbish of Jewish and African life. 468

In his work Rosenberg rejects the Jewish heritage of Jesus claiming that he was possibly of Aryan descent referring to H.S. Chamberlain, Friedrich Delitzsch⁴⁶⁹ and Dr E. Jung whose research had established Jesus as being Syrian on his maternal side and Roman on his paternal side, described by Rosenberg as being two of the greatest ancient civilizations. ⁴⁷⁰ Rosenberg presented Jesus as a bold, heroic figure who had opposed both the might of Rome and Judaic tradition, and whose image had been misappropriated by the early Christian Church as a symbol of love, sympathy and humanitarianism.

As part of his new mythology Rosenberg called for the rejection of the Christian dogma, which had weakened the spirit of the German people and a return to the Nordic principles of honour and duty that had been eroded by centuries of Christian teaching.

[...] it is evident that almost everything which has preserved the character of our race, our peoples and nations, has been in the first place the concept of honour and the idea of duty inseparably connected with it [...] but from the moment at which love and sympathy (or if one wishes: fellow feeling) become predominant, there also began the epochs of racial, national and cultural dissolution in the history of all once Nordically determined states.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid. 463. p.53.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid. 463. p.51.

⁴⁶⁹ Friedrich Delitzsch (September 3, 1850 – December 19, 1922) was a German Assyriologist who advocated replacing the Bible with German Mythology and who supported the concept of an Arvan Jesus.

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid. 463. p.401.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid. 463. p.100.

Rosenberg described how this concept of honour and its relationship with the soil could be found 'embodied in the lives of the Nordic Viking, the Teutonic Knight, the Prussian officer, the Baltic Hansa, the German soldier, and the German peasant', ⁴⁷² and should be the foundation of a new German civilization bound together by their shared sense of nobility, honour and eternal relationship with the soil of their Nordic ancestors.

In his discussion of Christianity, Rosenberg proposed the Nazi religious ideology of Positive Christianity that attempted to align National Socialist political and religious ideology and its strand of Nordic thought with the established Catholic and Protestant churches in Germany. In his work Rosenberg discussed the historical conflict between what he terms 'Negative Christianity', based on 'abstract dogmas and hoary old customs' and 'Positive Christianity', which 'calls upon the Nordic blood to awaken'473 and which presented Jesus as a heroic Aryan figure rejecting 'foreign' Judaic influences. This state-sanctioned form of Christianity was one of many new religions of the period that attempted to fuse Aryanism and Nordicism with the tradition of the Bible to create a national belief system that promoted Northern European values and supremacy. Alongside and often in opposition to the Positive Christianity of the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche (German Evangelical Church) of Ludwig Müller, the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung (German Faith Movement) of Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (1881-1962) proposed a truly Germanic belief system centred on a return to ancient forms of Northern European pagan worship and the rejection of both Christianity and Judaism as foreign faiths.

Rosenberg's myth, his biological and spiritual vision of a future Pan-German society was founded on the imperfect racial history established by nineteenth century nationalist writers who, combined with the emergence of racial science, sought to establish the primacy of the Nordic/Germanic race. In this context Rosenberg attempted to provide Nazism with its own Nordic creation myth that could only be embraced and attained through the

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⁴⁷² Ibid. 463. p.148.

⁴⁷³ Ibid. 463. p.54.

renordification of Germany and the diffusion of its people into territories where the Nordic people could expand and re-establish their essential relationship with the Soil. The impact of Rosenberg's Nordicist theories has been the subject of some debate for although its publications had exceeded 1 million copies by 1944, it was rejected by Hitler who claimed to have hardly read the book and who stated that Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century* was not to be regarded as an expression of the official doctrine of the party'.⁴⁷⁴ Its publication figures and the prominent positions held by Rosenberg in the Nazi regime suggest, however, that his Nordicist views had some influence with like-minded thinkers at the time.

In her analysis of the development of *völkisch* new religions alongside Nazism in New Religions and the Nazis (2006) Karla Poewe discussed the influence of Rosenberg and the conflict between the emerging new forms of völkisch faith and the established forms of Catholicism and Protestantism during the inter-war period. Poewe's work focussed in particular on the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung (German Faith Movement) of Jakob Wilhelm Hauer whose rejection of Christianity as a foreign faith aligned him with the early Nazi movement and leaders of the SS. According to Poewe, he joined Alfred Rosenberg's Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur (Battle-League for German Culture) in May 1933 and the *Hitlerjugend* (Hitler Youth) in December 1933. In 1934 he was persuaded by Reinhard Heydrich and Himmler to join the SS and SD and in 1937 he joined the Nazi Party. 475 In 1933, from an amalgamation of like-minded völkisch religious groups, he founded what became officially known, in 1934, as the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung. This movement fused Germanic neo-paganism with Hauer's attraction to Hinduism and Buddhism to form a belief system, in touch with Germany's prehistoric Nordic roots, and vehemently opposed to all forms of Christianity. In her work Poewe states that, by 1934, Hauer 'equated religion with race' and attempted

⁴⁷⁴ Hitler, Adolf; Hugh-Trevor Roper. *Adolf Hitler's Secret Conversations* (London, Enigma Books; 3rd edition (Oct. 2000) p. 400 Hitler's comments about Rosenberg's work were recorded by Hitler's secretary Martin Bormann and later published by historian Hugh Trevor Roper. ⁴⁷⁵ Poewe, Karla. *New Religions and the Nazis.* (New York and London, Routledge, 2007), p.97.

to convince his followers of a struggle between two Glaubenswelten (faithworlds) the Indo-Germanic and the Near-Eastern Semitic. 476

According to Poewe, two thirds of the board members of the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung were Nazis and notable members included H.F.K. Gunther and director of the *Ahnenerbe*, Herman Wirth. 477 Poewe states, from a study of his correspondence, that Hauer shared many ideas with influential party members such as Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess (1894-1987), Minister of the Interior, Wilhelm Frick (1877-1946) and Alfred Rosenberg. Poewe points out, however, that establishing any accurate membership of his movement is problematic because 'opportunism, secretiveness and deceit played into this numbers game'. 478 The movement was significant, however, in attempting to develop a faith movement compatible with Nazi Party doctrine. This faith movement appealed to many Nordicists within the party as a return to early forms of Nordic pagan worship and was generally compatible with their anti-Semitic world-view and their vision of an approaching final conflict between the Nordic and the Jew. In this context the Deutsche Glaubensbewegung of Hauer could be considered as a form of cultural Nordicism that overlapped with political and biological Nordicism providing a form of religion that appealed to many Nordicist thinkers during the 1930s.

Another significant figure in this Nazi Nordicist communitas who became an influential member of the Nordicist strand within the Nazi state was Richard Walther Darré (1895-1953). During the late 1920s and early 30s Darré became one of the leading theorists of the Blut und Boden (Blood and Soil) movement. He also served the Nazi regime as Reich Minister of Food and Agriculture from 1933 to 1942 and served Himmler in the Rasseund Siedlungshauptamt der SS, (RuSHA), (The SS Race and Settlement Main Office), the organization responsible for safeguarding the racial purity of the SS which will be discussed further in this chapter.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid. 475. p.11.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid. 475. p.97.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid. 463. p.97.

As a young man in Germany, Darré developed a keen interest in agriculture and joined the *Artamanen-Gesellschaft* (Artaman League), a völkisch youth group committed to the 'back to the land' movement where he began to develop the idea of the linkage between the future of the Nordic race and the soil. 479 This youth group was formally established in 1924 and together with its core values of rural life and traditions also sought the political aims of expelling Polish migrant workers from the countryside and establishing a future land army or Wehrbauern to protect Germany's land from the political and biological threat from the communist and Slavic east. 480 Through this organization, Darré met a number of like-minded Nordic thinkers, notably the young Heinrich Himmler, with whom he developed a close working relationship. Darré was another member of the Kriegsgeneration who had experienced the horror of War and Germany's subsequent defeat and humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles. Following a period in the Freikorps, he went to university to pursue his interest in agriculture and animal breeding, completing his doctorate in 1929. Darré was a keen writer and published 56 articles between 1925 and 1930⁴⁸¹ on agricultural methods and the essential link between the Nordic and the Soil, together with his two principal works Das Bauerntum als Lebensquell der nordischen Rasse (The Peasantry as Life Source of the Nordic Race), (1928), and Neuadel aus Blut und Boden (A New Nobility of Blood and Soil), (1930).

Associated with Darré and later with Himmler, was the wartime artist Wolfgang Willrich (1897- 1948) who became famous for his widely published portraits of military heroes and for his representations of the noble Nordic characteristics of the rural community (see figures 13,14 and 15). Sponsored by the SS, Willrich travelled around the countryside sketching German peasants who he saw as representative of the concept of Blood and Soil and evidence of the remaining Nordic gene pool in the rural population. In 1935 he published a collection of his work entitled *Bauerntum als Heger Deutschen*

⁴⁷⁹ The *Artamanen-Gesellschaft* was eventually absorbed, like many similar youth groups into the growing *Hitlerjugend* (Hitler Youth) in 1934.

⁴⁸⁰ Pringle, Heather (2006) *The Master Plan - Himmler's Scholars and the Holo*caust. London: Harper Perennial. p.39.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid. 480. p.53.

Blutes (The Peasantry as Guardians of the German Blood) which contained a foreword by Darré. Willrich also published a number of essays on race and art, notably in the monthly $Odal^{482}$ journal founded by Darré that promoted the concept of Blood and Soil. Willrich also gave lectures to promote art as an expression of Nordic racial ideology. Through his prolific work and support of figures such as Darré and Himmler, Willrich became one of Germany's most popular Nordicist artists, promoting Nordic thought throughout Germany, leading what could be termed a school of state-sanctioned Nordicist art. In Norway, Harald Damsleth (1906-1971) became well known for his artwork promoting the Norwegian Nazi Party, idealising the Nordic type and the nation's Viking heritage, (see figure 27).

In his works, Darré expanded on H.F.K. Günther's concept of *Wiedervernordung* defining the German peasantry as a homogenous racial group of Nordic antecedents, who formed the cultural and racial core of the German nation. He saw that healthy rural youth would eventually provide a key source of population for urban growth. However, since the Nordic birth rate was lower than other races, the Nordic race was under a long-term threat of extinction. He also asserted that if Germany wanted to grow strong once again, it had to return to its agricultural traditions as well as measures to restore the purity of the Nordic race. Darré argued that selective breeding would eventually bring about a renordified Germanic people and included in his measures the extermination of the sick and impure. He also argued that inheritance laws, redrafted after the French evolution that permitted landowners to divide their land between their heirs, had weakened the quality of the rural Nordic breeding stock by allowing weaker siblings to inherit land.

The old German farming traditions, he observed, had refined and biologically honed the Nordic race. In times past, each farmer had picked just one son - the strongest,

⁴⁸² Odal \hat{X} refers to the Elder Futharkh rune signifying heritage and inheritance. This runic symbol became popular amongst followers of Blood and Soil theories.

⁴⁸³ Willrich became particularly well known for his postcards which were widely published and which members of the Hitlerjugend would collect and often send to their war heroes for autographs.

⁴⁸⁴ Bramwell, Anna (1985) *Blood and Soil: Walther Darré and Hitler's Green Party.* Buckinghamshire: Kensal Press. p.55.

toughest, and most courageous - to inherit his land. As a result, only the very fittest had farmed the fields over generations, creating a superior human bloodline [...]⁴⁸⁵

Darré's specific strand of Nordicism, Blood and Soil, was founded and interwoven with his theories on racial science, eugenics, animal breeding and Nordic supremacy. He was also anti-Christian and proposed a return to local folklore and the celebration of ancient pagan festivals. In her analysis of Darré in *Blood and Soil: Walther Darré and Hitler's Green Party* (1985), Anna Bramwell suggests that Darré's Blood and Soil theories and intellectual skills brought a vital dimension to the Nordicist movement.

Darré brought a new element into the Nordic movement. His training in agriculture, his farming experience, his animal breeding, his liking for evidence and argument, and his capacity to inspire enthusiasm and activity all galvanised the movement.⁴⁸⁶

Through his Blood and Soil ideology, Darré provided Nordicism with both a scientifically based programme, based on contemporary issues of eugenics, population policy and rural development, for the renordification of Germany and a national mythology of an essential Nordic synergy between *Blut* (Blood), which represented race and ancestry and *Boden* (Soil) which expressed the eternal bond between a people and the land they that had occupied and cultivated for generations. In this context, Darré's theories align with Nordicism's resynthesis of ancient mythology with modern science to plan an alternative modernity of Nordic racial supremacy over inferior races.

Although this Nordic *communitas* within Nazism was influential in creating and executing the Nazi racial policy, the concept of Nordicism remained nevertheless politically marginalized within mainstream Nazism. The principle political issue centred around the fact that the German population was by no means a homogenous Nordic ethnic group especially in the South where the population appeared more alpine by the racial classification of the time. According to Heather Pringle, Günther had attempted to assess the Nordic population of Germany and published his

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid. 484. p.40.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid. 484. p.50.

results in 1925. According to his results just 50-55% of the German population possessed a trace of Nordic blood and only 6-8 % were of pure Nordic descent. 487 Given this ethnic profile of the nation, Nordicist theorists associated with the NSDAP risked alienating a large section of the German public from Nazism. It is significant to note that the word Nordic is hardly used in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and speeches in which he favoured the term Aryan to describe Germany's ethnic heritage, showing an early political awareness of the problem. It is also noticeably absent from the 25-point programme of the NSDAP announced by Hitler on 24th February 1920 and which kept to the broader terms, used by 'mainstream Nazism' of Germanic, non-German and Jewish. As a unifying nationalist party the NSDAP could not risk the internal divisions that may have appeared within the nation by publicly promoting the Nordic race as a social and biological ideal type. In her analysis of Nordic thought in Germany, Anna Bramwell discussed this political issue of Nordicism that risked a division between the more Nordic northern Germans and their southern counterparts.

The exclusive and tribal character of the Nordic movement meant that Hitler's National Socialism could never fully absorb it. The Nordic offered Northerness as the best, the most important part of the German Heritage, in doing so, they excluded the Catholic parts of Germany including the blonde blue eyed German Catholics of Austria and much of south Germany, also the Rhineland states.⁴⁸⁸

In *Race and the Third Reich* (2005), Christopher M. Hutton also discussed the politically sensitive issue of the fact that Nordic supremacy could not be fully aligned with the apparent racial diversity of the *Volk*. Hutton pointed out that following a Nordicist biological policy would eventually imply that certain groups within the *Volk* could be considered racially inferior and would be progressively eliminated from the German population to ensure a growing purity of Nordic blood.

The promotion of the Nordic Race raised the question of whether, say, the Dinaric or Mediterranean racial elements in the German Volk could be seen as racially inferior. This had implications for any understanding of the regional make up of the German Volk, and was highly sensitive in relation to the strong regional, cultural and

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid. 459. p.41.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid. 484. p.50.

confessional divisions in German society [...] If the Nordic race was identified with the superior element, then should not the same racially inferior elements be eradicated from the Volk in the same way as other foreign elements?⁴⁸⁹

In analysing this issue Hutton pointed out that we should consider Nordicism as a spectrum of belief ranging from what he terms, 'fundamentalist Nordicism', those who believed in the absolute supremacy of the Nordic race and those more moderate thinkers who argued that the German Volk had benefitted to various degrees from its 'hybrid quality' and that all variants of the Germanic Volk had its own qualities to contribute to the restoration of the German Nation. 490 In his examination of this issue of Nordic elitism Hutton quotes the objections of public figures such as the Protestant theologian Helmuth Schreiner (1893-1962)⁴⁹¹ who rejected the physical racial criteria of Nordicists such as Rosenberg and Günther who idealized the tall, blue-eved blond as the ideal Nordic type. In a 1934 publication, he objected to the 'privileging of the Nordic race within the German people', stating that 'even the dark, heavy-set, round-headed Germans are predominantly of Nordic race.'492 Hutton also quoted völkisch writer Martin Otto Johannes who, in a 1934 publication, criticized the way in which the Nordicist ideal type had been promoted as the perfect German.

Martin Otto Johannes argued that the Nordic question had to be approached with tact and objectivity. The dissemination of ideas about race had sometimes been badly handled, giving rise to uninformed discussion of race in educational contexts, which the Party was now rightly seeking to bring under control. It had to be stressed that the Nordic component was the unifying bond between the racial elements of the German people [...]. 493

Johannes argued that Nordic identity had been mishandled politically and should be evaluated on the basis that Nordic blood could manifest itself both physically and psychologically and that physical appearance should not be a primary indicator of racial value. In his view, the most important factor was the

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid. 418. p.111.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid. 418. p.114.

⁴⁹¹ Schreiner was Professor of Practical Theology at the university of Rostock from 1931 to 1937 when he was dismissed. He was one of the co-founders of the Jungreformatorischen Bewegung, which opposed the German Faith Movement and Nazism's attempts to reform Christianity. ⁴⁹² Ibid. 418. p.131.

⁴⁹³ Ibid. 418. p.132.

'Nordic spirit, Nordic soul and Nordic mindset.'494 In this context there was a clear spectrum of thought within Nordicism from those who saw the Nordic bloodline in terms of the Nordic ideal physical type and those who took a more moderate, inclusive and arguably more politically expedient view of the German population, valuing also the Nordic soul of Germans who looked far from Nordic in appearance. This differentiated view of a Nordicist spectrum is key to a deeper understanding of Nordicism as being far from a homogeneous movement within Nazism. In this context, the Nordicist *communitas* within Nazism can be seen to express a range of varying political, biological and religious strands, all reacting against the eroding forces of modernity but united by the core belief that the German people had originated from a Northern tribe of racially pure, strong and spiritually noble warriors whose gene pool had been weakened through centuries of miscegenation.

Nazism, as a political organization, did therefore not publicly place such a potentially divisive policy as Nordic thought to the forefront of its political agenda, especially under the democratic Weimar Republic, but allowed it, nonetheless, to develop as a significant strand of its political, social and religious agenda through the placing of prominent Nordic thinkers to positions of power and influence. As in the United States, democracy placed considerable limitations on the ability of the relatively marginal Nordicist *communitas* to implement its futural projects of regenerating the Nordic race. This was going to change, however, in 1933 when Hitler gained full power over the State and Nordicism, for the first time, was able to flourish and become a political, social and religious reality and play its part in Germany's destructive path to the industrial scale genocide of the holocaust.

1933 - Nordicism unleashed as a political, religious and biological reality

By 1933 the NSDAP had become the largest elected party in the Reichstag leading to Hitler's appointment as Chancellor on 30th January 1933.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid. 418. p.132.

This however was to become a 'stepping stone' to totalitarianism, following the Reichstag fire of 27th February 1933, which the Nazis used as evidence of a communist plot against the government. 495 In response to this, the Nazis declared a state of emergency, and on the following day, the 28th February, President Paul von Hindenburg issued the Reichstagsbrandverordnung, (The Reichstag Fire Decree) which permitted the Nazi-led regime to arrest and imprison political opponents without specific charge, dissolve political organizations, and to control publications. It also gave the central government the authority to overrule state and local laws and governments. This emergency legislation paved the way for the subsequent passing of the Ermächtigungsgesetz⁴⁹⁶ (The Enabling Act) of 24th March 1933. This further legislation gave Hitler plenary powers including the authority to enact laws without the involvement of the Reichstag, effectively putting an end to democracy in Germany creating a totalitarian regime under Hitler's absolute control. This gave the Nordicist stand within Nazism the unprecedented opportunity to engage the processes that they had hitherto only been able to hypothesize.

The rise of Nazism in the USA during the 1930s

The rise to power of Nazism in Germany and its renewed sense of national identity was reflected in the USA during the 1930s through the emergence, in 1933, of the *Bund der Freunde des Neuen Deutschland* (Friends of the New Germany). This group was established to promote German nationalism and in particular Nazism, and was initially led by German immigrant American Heinz Spanknöbel (1893-1947). This organisation lasted until the mid-1930s and was formally dissolved in 1936 after the Department of State protested against the pro-Nazi activities of the group.⁴⁹⁷ From the demise of the Friends

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 $^{^{495}}$ The Nazis tried and convicted a 24-year-old Dutch communist Marinus van der Lubbe who was subsequently executed by guillotine.

⁴⁹⁶ The Enabling Act was originally drafted as the *Gesetz zur Behebung der Not von Volk und Reich* (Law to Remedy the Distress of People and Reich).

⁴⁹⁷ "Friends of the New Germany": The Bund and German-American Relations Remak, Joachim. Source: The Journal of Modern History, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Mar., 1957), pp. 38-41 Published by: The University of Chicago Press

Source: http://www.jstor.org/stable/1872584 Accessed: 19/07/18-07-2018 p38

of New Germany, the *Amerikadeutscher Bund* (The German American Federation) was established in New York under the leadership of Fritz Julius Kuhn (1896-1951). The *Bund* was active in promoting German American nationalism through publications such as its newspaper, the *Deutsche Weckruf und Beobachter* (The German Wake-up Call and Observer) and through uniformed parades and public gatherings, notably on the 20th February 1939, the birthday of George Washington, when a crowd of 20,000 supporters attended a rally in Madison Square Garden, New York, for 'True Americanism' led by Kuhn, Its poster and program cover showed a Nordic/Germanic warrior spearing a snake. On his shield the American flag bore thirteen stars to represent the original founding states of Germanic/Nordic settlers in the Northeast. This mass-rally provoked violent clashes with an even greater number of anti-Nazi protesters.⁴⁹⁸

Despite widespread opposition, The *Bund* succeeded in establishing twenty training and youth camps across the America notably in the North Eastern States of Sussex County, New Jersey, New York and Wisconsin. 499 Its high profile and growing public concern over Nazism in Germany marginalised the group, which attracted government investigations of its activities and membership as well as criticism of its loyalty to Hitler over America during a period of increasing international tension. During this time, even the Nazi government in Germany sought to distance itself from this party and on March 1st 1938, the German Foreign Office made an announcement that forbade German citizens from being members of the *Bund* that was finally dissolved when the USA declared war on Germany in 1941. Although this was a relatively marginal group it was nonetheless significant as an indicator of the surge in German nationalism as many German Americans saw Nazism as a means of regenerating both their national and racial predominance over an increasing immigrant population who they deemed to be racially inferior and threatening to the purity of their race.

⁴⁹⁸ Taylor, Alan. *American Nazis in the 1930s - The German American Bund.* https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2017/06/american-nazis-in-the-1930sthe-german-american-bund/529185/ ⁴⁹⁹ Ibid. 498.

A legal framework for Nordicism In Germany

1933 and the years that followed were marked by a proliferation of legislation aimed at eliminating Jews, gypsies, those suffering from a range of diseases considered hereditary, homosexuals, habitual criminals and others deemed threatening to the racial hygiene of the nation. The Nazi regime and its strand of influential Nordicist thinkers, many of who worked as advisors to the State, were able to put in place a plethora of legislative measures based on principles of positive and negative eugenics aimed at purifying the gene pool and revitalising the German nation.

Within this eugenics legislation, for the political reasons discussed, the term Nordic was not used and the term German or Aryan was favoured to describe the *Volk*. Many detailed discussions also took place to establish a legal definition of both a German and a Jew, which would be applicable in practice. In April 1933 the Nazi state began to issue the *Arienachweis* (Aryan Certificate). This proof of Aryan descent was divided into two main types. The *Kleiner Arienachweis* (Short Aryan Certificate), which required seven birth or baptism certificates (the applicant, parents and grandparents) and three marriage certificates (parents and grandparents). It also required an *Ahnenpass* (ancestry record) and a certified *Ahnentafel* (genealogical table). The *Grosser Arienachweis* (Full Aryan Certificate) required additional proof dating back to 1st January 1800 that no Jewish or Negro blood was in the family lineage.

One of the earliest pieces of legislation, was announced on 7th April 1933, the *Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums* (Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service), excluding Jews from the civil service. Further laws that followed during that month restricted non-Aryans from practising law and medicine. Further anti-Semitic legislation up to 1939 succeeded in excluding Jews from public and national service, education, business and the press as well as placing close controls on the personal assets and property of Jewish families as well as their freedom of

movement. 500 On 14th July 1933 the Gesetz über den Widerruf von Einbürgerungen und die Aberkennung der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit (Denaturalization Law) allowed the state to revoke citizenship of Jews and other 'undesirables' who had settled in Germany after 19th November 1918. This was a significant law, which effectively removed German nationality and the rights of a citizen from 'non-Aryans', legally creating a stateless, racial group of *Untermensch*, who without the protection of the law, could now be legally excluded and eliminated from German society. The concept of the Untermensch as the antithesis of the Nietzschean Ubermensch had developed within the field of Nordicism and racial science to signify a 'caste' of racially inferior beings that were deemed unworthy of life. In his *Mythus*, Rosenberg, quoted the work of American racial theorist Theodore Lothrop Stoddard, The Revolt Against Civilization: The Menace of the Under-man (1922), as he described the racial mix of inferior races that drove the Russian Revolution of 1917 as 'a living reproach against the type of man whom Lothrop Stoddard rightly described as the underman'. 501 The Denaturalization Law and the subsequent Nuremberg Laws of 1935, created a legal framework, which, through its application, created the reality of the *Untermensch* in Germany.

On 14th July 1933, Germany passed one of its fundamental eugenics laws, the *Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses* (Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring) that allowed doctors to carry out the forced sterilization of all persons who suffered from diseases that were considered hereditary such as mental illnesses, delayed development and physical deformities. This was to be the foundation for the T4 racial hygiene programme. In October 1939, Hitler signed the 'euthanasia decree', which authorized the *Gnadentodt* (mercy death) of some 70,273 handicapped or incurably sick people in Germany and occupied territories, deemed unworthy

⁵⁰⁰ It has been estimated that during the Nazi period, Jews felt the effects of more than 400 decrees and regulations that restricted all aspects of their public and private lives. Source: 'Anti-Semitic Legislation'. ushmm.org.

https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007901 (Accessed 20/07/17). 501 Ibid. 463. p.146.

of life. This became known as the *Aktion* $T4^{502}$ programme which developed methods of killing, which were later applied on a larger scale in the death camps of the occupied eastern territories.

To encourage and promote the recovery of the Germanic people (and the Nordic race within it), legislation was passed in July 1933 to promote marriage and childbirth by allowing all newly married German couples a government loan of 1000 marks. The birth of one chid reduced the loan by 25%, the second child by 50% and with four children the loan was cancelled. This incentive to produce an increasing future population was later extended in 1939 to include the *Ehrenkreuz der Deutschen Mutter* (The Cross of Honour of the German Mother), issued from 1939 to 1945. The gold cross was awarded to women who had produced 8 children, silver was for 6 children and bronze was for 4 children.

To implement his Nordicist Blood and Soil theories Walther Darré issued the *Reichserbhofgesetz* (Hereditary Farm Law) on 29th September 1933. This law stated that selected lands of between 7.5 and 125 hectares were declared an *Erbhof*. This status meant that the land had to be passed from father to eldest son and could only be owned by a person in possession of the *Grosser Arienachweis* (Full Aryan Certificate), there were also restrictions in place regarding its sale or mortgage. This protected the Nordic breeding stock that Darré sought to regenerate in the German countryside by protecting their land from foreclosure or sale and re-establishing the Germanic rural tradition of the eldest, strongest son taking over his ancestor's land.

Two further key pieces of eugenics legislation were announced at the Party Rally of 1935 and became known collectively as the Nuremberg Race Laws. These clarified and extended previous legislation by further defining Aryan and Jewish racial identity and protecting the German blood from the erosion of miscegenation. These two laws were the *Reichsbürgergesetz*

⁵⁰² T4 was an abbreviation of Tiergartenstrasse 4 the street address of the department set up to implement this programme, which claimed 70,273 lives between Jan 1940 and August 1941. 'Euthanasia Program'. ushmm.org.

https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005200 (Accessed 24/10/17).

(Reich Citizenship Law) and the *Gesetz zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre* (Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour). The Reich Citizenship Law extended previous legislation from 1933 (that applied only to those who took on German nationality after 1918) to remove German citizenship from those in Germany with at least three or more grandparents born into the Jewish religious community. This legislation also defined those considered to be of German ancestry and those who were given the status of *Mischling*, of mixed blood, (see figure 16). The law for the protection of German Blood and Honour banned marriage and sexual relations between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. These relationships were labelled as *Rassenshande* (race defilement) and made punishable by law. This law also forbade Jewish males to employ female German domestic staff under the age of 45, on the assumption that Jewish men might force young German women into committing race defilement.

Through these laws and further legislation, the Nazi regime rapidly put in place a legal framework in which Nordicism was able to emerge as a number of racial programmes aimed at creating an alternative modernity in which the tall, blond, blue-eyed Nordic type within Germany could be protected and progressively restored to its former position of racial supremacy. Unleashed from the constraints of the Weimar republicanism and democracy, Nordicism could define its own legal and moral limitations in pursuing its ultimate aim of the renordification and expansion of the Nordic race as the rulers of a new era in world history.

Himmler's SS - The implementation of Nordicism

During Nazism's rise to power Heinrich Himmler's *Schutzstaffel* (SS) expanded from being Hitler's personal protection squad to the driving force behind the implementation of Nazism's policies of racial protection and regeneration. Under his leadership⁵⁰³ the SS rapidly developed to become the most influential and extensive military, political and ideological infrastructure within the Nazi regime, answerable only to Hitler.

⁵⁰³ Himmler was given leadership of the SS by Hitler in 1929.

In his comprehensive biography, *Heinrich Himmler - A life* (2012), Peter Longerich's research, which included personal correspondence and diary entries by Himmler, described how he grew up as part of the *Kriegsgeneration*, developed a passionate interest in the genetics of animal breeding and developed his racial theories from his readings of a wide range of historical, political, racial and cultural material which he synthesized into an eclectic world-view of the Aryan and Nordic prehistoric supremacy. Himmler believed that a struggle for existence was taking place between the Nordic people of Northern Europe and the Jewish threat from the East, brought about by modernity and Germany's historic failure to protect its vital Nordic blood stock.

In *The Master Plan - Himmler's Scholars and the Holocaust* (2006), Heather Pringle described Himmler's early intentions to use the SS as a foundation for the renordification and expansion of Germany by resynthesizing the past into a futural project of racial regeneration. Pringle argued that Himmler intended to transform the SS into a racial showplace of the Nordic type and breed pure Aryans to establish a new generation of nobility in the Third Reich. Part of this project included searching through the German past to create a narrative of historical racial supremacy that could be taught to these future leaders.⁵⁰⁴

Through his readings and his growing circle of Nordic-minded advisors and collaborators, Himmler had developed a complex belief system that included the Nordicist world-view of a blood link between the Nordic blood, carrying to various degrees within the German *Volk*, and the ancient Aryan tribe that had migrated from the East to Scandinavia. From Scandinavia they had spread into Northern Germany where they had lived as a high caste, racial nobility that had later formed the basis of a Teutonic Knighthood in the Middle Ages. Himmler saw this as a Golden Age of Germanic honour and sought out new forms of Germanic faith to replace the foreign, eastern faith of Christianity that had eroded and destroyed the original pagan faiths of the

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid. 459. p.38.

Germanic Volk, beliefs and traditions that had bound them to their soil and the heritage of their ancestors for countless generations. Peter Longerich described Himmler's view of Christianity as 'the Teutons' decisive original sin, preventing Germanic virtues from unfolding to their full extent in the medieval Empire.'505

In his examination of Himmler's Nordicist theories, Longerich draws on an early document from June 1931 recording a talk that Himmler gave to his SS leaders entitled The Purposes and Aims of the SS, the Relationship between the SS, the SA, and the Political Formations. To his assembled leaders, Himmler announced the future role of the SS in selecting and preserving the finest examples of the Nordic blood stock in Germany and creating a new Germanic mythology based on a community linked by the heritage of their Nordic blood and its relationship with the soil. In his speech Himmler stated that the: 'SS must become a force that includes the best human material that we still possess in Germany. The SS must be held together by the shared community of blood'506 Later in this speech. Himmler also spoke of the SS's role in renordifying the nation and his futural vision of expanding the *Lebensraum* (living space) of a renordified and expanded Germanic peasantry, through overcoming the threat of Bolshevism from the East, a conflict which he saw as being a 'fight to the death' between the Nordic race and the *Untermensch*. In this speech Himmler also described his intentions of of purifying and propagating the Nordic race in the conquered territories.

Shall we, by filtering out the valuable blood through a process of selection, once again succeed in training and breeding a nation on a grand scale, a Nordic nation? Shall we once again succeed in settling this Nordic people in surrounding territory, turning them into peasants again and from this seedbed create a nation of 200 million? Then the earth will belong to us!.507

Longerich also refers to further speeches made by Himmler during this period such as an address to the Reich Peasants' Rally of 1935, a lecture to a

⁵⁰⁷ Heinrich Himmler quoted by Longerich. Ibid. 490. p.123.

⁵⁰⁵ Longerich, Peter. *Heinrich Himmler - A life.* (Oxford University Press. 2012), p.271.

⁵⁰⁶ Longerich, Peter. Heinrich Himmler, p.123.

Wehrmacht course on national politics in January 1937 and a speech made in 1938 to his SS-Gruppenführer in which he underlined the SS mission of restoring the Nordic race and the essential conflict that was to take place between the Nordic and the Untermensch. Answerable only to Hitler, Himmler was able to develop the SS into an extensive organization, freed from legal constraints and following its own code of ethics, whose mission was the elimination of the Untermensch and the renordification and expansion of the Germanic Volk. To accomplish this, Himmler used his immense talent for bureaucracy and organization to develop the SS into the physical realization of his Nordicist beliefs and aims. At the core of this expanding organization, the Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS, (RuSHA), (SS Race and Settlement Main Office), became the intellectual and organizational hub for Himmler's Nordicist ideology.

Organising and Applying Nordicism - the RuSHA

To realise his plans for the renordification and expansion of the Nordic race, Himmler founded the *Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS*, (RuSHA) (*SS* Race and Settlement Main Office) in 1931 and placed it under the control of fellow former member of the *Artamanen-Gesellschaft*, Walther Darré, whose work on the Nordicist concept of Blood and Soil had greatly impressed and influenced Himmler. In his biography, Peter Longerich points out that this was a key appointment, as Himmler's talents lay more in organization than ideas and dissemination but Darré, with his academic credentials and successful career within the NSDAP, was an ideal collaborator to lead Himmler's project of renordification.

With Darré's appointment to the Racial Office Himmler exposed the SS to the blood-and-soil ideology and mythologizing of the 'Teutons'. Himmler, who owed his career in the Party not to original ideas but to his role as a functionary, would have had difficulty imposing these ideas on the SS as required beliefs. Darré, however, through his published works and his political success, was regarded as an authority [...]⁵⁰⁸

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid. 505. p.127.

Under the leadership of Darré and Himmler, the RuSHA, whose members often wore the Odal rune \hat{x} (heritage) as their uniform insignia, developed rapidly and, by 1935, consisted of seven departments, which reflected the main strands of their mission of putting renordification into practice though a range of positive eugenics measures. The *Amt Organisation und Verwaltungsamt* dealt with organization and administration, the *Amt Rassenamt* with race, the *Amt Schulungsamt* with education, the *Amt Sippen und Heiratsamt* with family and marriage, the *Amt Siedlungsamt* with settlement, the *Amt für Archiv und Zeitungswesen* with records and the press and the *Amt für Bevölkerungspolitik* with population policies. ⁵⁰⁹ This initial structure, which administered specialist sub-sections such as the *Lebensborn* (Spring of Life) and *Ahnenerbe* (Ancestral Heritage), based in offices in Munich and Berlin, could in many ways be seen as a physical mind, with each section representing a facet of the SS-Reichsführer's initial project of renordification. ⁵¹⁰

The main task of the RuSHA was to protect and develop the Nordic gene pool within the SS. From 1931 until the outbreak of war, when the exigencies of conflict and the increasing expansion of the SS forced Himmler to lower his initial recruitment requirements, the RuSHA undertook the task of screening SS applicants on the basis of their Nordic traits. The RuSHA required candidates to provide photographs, submit to a medical examination and provide detailed proof of Aryan descent. In *The SS - A New History* (2010) Adrian Weale described how, in 1932, Walther Darré recruited the services of anthropologist Dr Schulz and army veterinarian Dr Rechenbach to develop a five point racial scale to determine the ratio of Nordic characteristics of each applicant and therefore their suitability to serve in the SS. These five groups were 'pure Nordic', predominantly Nordic or Phalic'; harmonious bastard with slight 'Alpine, Dinaric or Mediterranean characteristics'; bastards of predominantly East Baltic or Alpine origin; and bastards of extra-European

⁵⁰⁹ In 1940 this was restructured into four main departments: the *Verwaltungsamt* (Administration), the *Rassenamt* (Racial Office), the *Heiratsamt* (Marriage office) and the *Siedlungsamt* (Settlement Office).

⁵¹⁰ Many of these original RuSHA departments were later placed under the administrative control of other sections of Himmler's extensive SS organizational structure.

origin.⁵¹¹ In theory, only those in the first three categories were eligible to join the SS, which illustrates that the SS were not just interesting in recruiting good Germans but the 'best Germans', the most Nordic, based on mainly physical criteria, accepting by preference those of Nordic appearance and tolerating only 'harmonious' and 'slight' traces of races placed below the apex of the Nordic man. Heather Pringle also described this process of physical selection that sought the most Nordic-looking candidates in contradiction with public statements of mainstream Nazism that maintained that all variants of the Germanic *Volk* had its own qualities to contribute to the rebuilding of the German Nation.

In the SS offices in Munich, the examiners pored over thee photographs, searching for supposed Nordic traits - long head, narrow face, flat forehead, narrow nose, angular chin, thin lips, tall slender body, blue eyes, fair hair. They rated the bodies of he applicants on a scale of one to nine, then graded them on a five-point scale from "pure Nordic" to "suspected non-European blood components" [...] A green card meant "SS suited"; red marked rejection. 512

This rigorous selection process enabled Himmler to initiate his project of creating an SS organization based on a strict racial selection, a Nordic *communitas* within the military and political structure of Nazi Germany, which he envisaged would become the Nordic nobility of the soon to be conquered eastern territories of a Greater Reich which would span Europe. On 18th January 1943 at a speech before the Leaders of the *WE-Lager* of the Hitler Youth, Himmler explained how the selection process of the RuSHA could be compared with the agricultural task of recovering and reinstating a once superior and established strain of plant that had been all but lost through hybridization.

[...] like a nursery gardener trying to reproduce a good old strain which has been adulterated and debased; we started from the principles of plant selection and then proceeded quite unashamedly to weed out the men whom we did not think we could use for the build-up of the SS.⁵¹³

⁵¹¹ Weale, Adrian (2010) *The SS - A New History*. London: Little Brown. p.66.

⁵¹² Ibid. 459. p41.

⁵¹³ Höhne, Heinz (2002) *The Order of the Death's Head: The Story of Hitler's SS.* London: Penguin Books. p.52.

One of the earliest and most contentious eugenics actions of the RuSHA was to undertake the control of marriage within the SS with the aim of ensuring that the offspring of SS marriages would constitute a refinement of the Nordic race within this racial elite. On 31st December 1931, Himmler issued his Heiratsbefehl (Marriage Order), on the basis of which, the RuSHA would only issue a permit for a member of the SS to marry once detailed background enquiries into the racial fitness of both prospective parents had been completed and established that both were of Aryan descent back to 1800.⁵¹⁴ Himmler introduced this order with the statement: 'The SS is a band of German men of strictly Nordic descent chosen according to certain principles.' underlining that the aim of this directive was 'to create a hereditarily healthy clan of a strictly Nordic German sort.'515 Himmler's order also established the role of the RuSHA in establishing and maintaining the book of the SS- Sippengemeinschaft, (Clan Book of the SS), in which the families of the SS would be entered after their marriage. Failure to comply would usually mean expulsion from the SS and Himmler obviously anticipated the resistance that he would meet in applying this measure of positive eugenics when he concluded his written order with the phrase: 'The SS believes that, with this command, it has taken a step of great significance. Derision, scorn, and incomprehension do not move us; the future belongs to us!' 516 These closing comments, supposedly aimed at Himmler's critics in the SS, Wehrmacht and political circles, underline both his determination and intention to establish the SS as expanding Nordic, elitist clan within the Nation which was destined to rise to dominance, despite opposition from mainstream Nazis and Nationalists, who did not share his belief system and sense of mission.

The Ahnenerbe - Researching the Nordic

Within the RuSHA structure, Himmler founded the *Studiengesellschaft* für Geistesurgeschichte, Deutsches Ahnenerbe (Study Society for Primordial

⁵¹⁴ The *Grosser Arienachweis* (Full Aryan Certificate) used the term 'Aryan' rather than 'Nordic'. Source of translated document: 'SS Marriage Order'. GHDI. http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=1505 (Accessed 28.07.17). ⁵¹⁶ Ibid. 500.

Intellectual history, German Ancestral Heritage) later renamed in 1937 as *Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft des Ahnenerbe* (Research and Teaching Community of the Ancestral Heritage). The main role of this new department was to discover new evidence of Germany's prehistoric Nordic and Aryan origins and to convey the outcomes of this research to the public through publications, exhibitions and scientific conferences. Himmler devoted considerable time and energy to developing this section of his SS, housed in an exclusive Berlin villa, providing it with laboratories, libraries and museum workshops. By 1939, the *Ahnenerbe* employed 137 German scholars and scientists as well as 82 specialist support workers such as filmmakers, photographers, librarians and laboratory technicians.⁵¹⁷

Himmler's original collaborators on this project were RuSHA organiser Walther Darré and controversial scholar and historian of German-Dutch origin, Herman Wirth (1885-1981). Having served for a brief period with the German army during the First World War without seeing combat, Wirth settled in Germany and became an early member of the NSDAP in 1925. In 1928, Wirth published his first work, Der Aufgang der Menschheit - Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Religion, Symbolik and Schrift der Atlantisch- Nordischen Rasse (The Accession⁵¹⁸ of Mankind - A study of the history of religion, symbols and writings of the Atlantic-Nordic race). In this work, Wirth posited his theory of an advanced, Atlantean, female-led civilization which had, from a polar diffusion point, spread across Europe, Siberia and North America, the traces of which were to be found in Nordic and Germanic prehistory and their ancient symbology. In 1933 Wirth edited the controversial ⁵¹⁹ publication of Die Ura Linda Chronik (The Oera Linda Book), originally written in Old Frisian, covering historical, mythological and religious themes in Northern European prehistory. Between 1931 and 1936, Wirth published his developing ideas in a number of volumes that he collectively titled Die Heilige Urschrift der Menschheit. (The Sacred Prehistoric Writings of Mankind) in which he studied

⁵¹⁷ Ibid. 459. p.3.

⁵¹⁸ Also translated as the 'emergence'.

⁵¹⁹ Many scholars believed this document to be a recent forgery written as a hoax.

the significance and relationship between ancient symbols such as those that he found carved on rocks during field trips to Scandinavia.

The *Ahnenerbe* was the co-ordinating body for a number of institutes founded to research aspects of Germany's cultural and material prehistory such as: Indogermanisch-arische Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft (Indogermanic-aryan Language and Cultural Studies), Indogermanische Glaubensgeschichte (Indogermanic Faith history), Deutsche Volksforschung und Volkskunde (German Ethnic Research and Folklore), Volkserzählung, Märchen und Sagenkunde (Folktales, Fairy tales and Myths), Runen, Schrift und Sinnbildkunde (Runes, Alphabets, and Symbols), Orientalistische Indologie (Oriental Indology), Urgeschichte (Prehistory) and Klassische Archäologie (Classic Archaeology). Another branch of the *Ahnenerbe* was dedicated to the study of natural sciences applicable to the regeneration and development of the Nordic race, which included the departments of Gesamte Naturwissenschaft (Natural Science), Biologie (Biology), Astronomie (Astronomy), Pferdezucht (Horse Breeding), Pflanzengenetik (Plant Genetics), Tiergeographie und Tiergeschichte (Zoogeography and Animal History) and Volksmedizin (Folk Medicine).

The research activities of the *Ahnenerbe* included a number of archaeological surveys and excavations at prehistoric sites around Germany such as the *Externsteine*, in the Teutoburg forest, believed to be a site of ancient pagan worship and the Viking Age trading settlement at Hedeby, at the southern end of the Jutland peninsula. It also organised a number of research expeditions to the Karelia region of Finland in June 1936, to study and record songs and music related to pagan worship and the Bohuslän region of Sweden to study, record and make plaster casts of petroglyphs (rock carvings) in August 1936. Further expeditions included a study of supposedly Nordic rock carvings in Italy in 1937, and the well-documented Tibet Expedition of 1938-1939, led by zoologist Ernst Schäfer (1910-1992), during which his team collected thousands of artefacts, a significant number of plants

⁵²⁰ See Hale, Christopher (2009) *Himmler's Crusade* London: Bantam.

and crops such as barley, wheat and oats and animals, including some live specimens, which were transported back to Germany for further research. Accompanying Schäfer on this expedition was racial anthropologist Bruno Berger (1911-2009),⁵²¹ a former student of H.F.K. Günther, who measured and recorded the physical racial characteristics of the local tribes to research traits linking the Tibetan people with the ancient Aryan/Nordic race.

The publishing role of the *Ahnenerbe* produced a diverse range of works supporting the Nordicist and racial theories of the Nazi regime. Notable works were, the *Germanien* magazine issued to all SS officers and books such as, *Axtund Kreuz bei den Nordgermanen* (Axes and Crosses of the North Germanic Peoples) (1939), *Die Hausmarke, das Symbol der germanischen Sippe* (House Markings, Symbols of Germanic Heredity) (1939), and *Indogermanisches Bekenntnis* (The Indo-Germanic Faith) (1943). In her analysis of the role of the Ahnenerbe in *The Master Plan - Himmler's Scholars and the Holocaust* (2006), Heather Pringle described the role of the Ahnenerbe as a 'think-tank' for German supremacy, constructing a Germanic prehistory to underpin Nazi claims to racial predominance, proving a scientific and historical rationale for Nazi racial ideology and disseminating through its exhibitions and publications the Nazi myth of the 'Master Race'.

In reality, however, the elite organization was in the business of myth-making. Its prominent researchers devoted themselves to distorting the truth and churning out carefully tailored evidence to support the racial ideas of Adolf Hitler. Some scholars twisted their findings consciously; others warped them without thought, unaware that their political views drastically shaped their research. But all proved adept at this manipulation, and for this reason, Himmler prized the institute. ⁵²²

The mythopoeic role of the *Ahnenerbe*, defined by Heather Pringle, was the task of consolidating and providing a modern scientific rationale for the mythology emerging from nineteenth century national romantic literature which had been appropriated by Nordicists as the foundation of their creation myth, creating an alternative primordial heritage to align with Nordicism's

⁵²¹ In 1974, Berger was convicted by a German court as an accessory to 86 murders for his part in acquiring and preparing concentration camp victims for the Jewish skeleton collection at Auschwitz concentration camp.

⁵²² Ibid. 459. p.3.

alternative vision of modernity, that of Nordic regeneration and racial dominance over inferior races. The role of the *Ahnenerbe* was therefore in many senses to align modern scientific techniques of historical and scientific enquiry with the myth making of the nineteenth century to create a modernist mythology, which could be disseminated as a secular belief system. As Pringle pointed out, this often required some manipulation to align fact with often-flawed theories. In her analysis, Pringle also discussed what she perceived as Himmler's ambition to use the research of the *Ahnenerbe* to fulfil his ambition of creating a Nordic SS elite who would become the future nobility of a new Nordic order.

From the very beginning, he had regarded the Ahnenerbe as the source of a glorious new history of the Aryan race, a history that could be used to teach SS men and their progeny to act and truly think like Aryans. Moreover, he had long hoped that such knowledge of the ancestors could be used to convince SS men to return to the countryside to take up the simple life with their families on special SS farm colonies. ⁵²³

For Himmler, the role of the *Ahnenerbe* was central to his search to establish a scientifically-based foundation myth of Blood and Soil on which he could build a society of Nordic SS warriors to colonize the conquered eastern territories and fulfil his ambition to regenerate the Nordic gene pool and provide it with the *Lebensraum* to thrive and grow. In this context the *Ahnenerbe* was established to provide the academic, scientific scaffold for Nazi racial myth-making and within this movement, Himmler's personal Nordicist 'mazeway resynthesis' through which he envisaged a utopian Nordic society.

Lebensborn - Propagating the Nordic gene pool

On 12th December 1935, in order to boost the Nordic bloodline of the SS within a declining birth rate in Germany, Himmler ordered the RuSHA to establish the *Lebensborn* (Spring of Life)⁵²⁴ network. The following day he issued the following communication to SS members outlining the role of the *Lebensborn* organization and its responsibilities.

⁵²³ Ibid. 459. p.141.

⁵²⁴ Lebensborn has also been translated as 'Well of Life' and 'Fountain of Life'.

- 1. aid for racially and biologically-hereditarily valuable families.
- 2. the accommodation of racially and biologically-hereditarily valuable mothers in appropriate homes, etc.
- 3. care of the children of such families
- 4. care of the mothers⁵²⁵

The initial purpose of this positive eugenics project was to establish a network of comfortable purpose-equipped homes for wives of SS officers for birthing and support with family matters. The first *Lebensborn* home was opened in 1936 in Steinhöring, a village near Munich. The *Lebensborn* centres also provided discreet surroundings for unmarried women who were either pregnant or had already given birth and were seeking support, provided that both the woman and the father of the child were classified as racially suitable. Parents of non-SS families had to pass a selection process that involved a physical examination of their Nordic characteristics and scrutiny of family genealogical and medical records. It was recorded that out of the total number of women who applied for the programme, only 40% were accepted and out of those selected until 1939, 57.6% were unmarried, a figure which had risen to around 70% by 1940. 526

This initial welfare role evolved into a more pro-active project during the course of its existence to focus more directly on Himmler's project of regenerating the Nordic race and the network was rapidly expanded. ⁵²⁷ To boost the number of Nordic type children many young, single girls in Germany and occupied northern European countries, were encouraged to have children with suitable SS soldiers and officers, after which the child would be given to the SS organization which took charge of the child's education and adoption by a suitably Nordic type family. SS officers in Germany and occupied

⁵²⁵ Weale, Adrian (2010) The SS - A New History. London: Little Brown. p.122.

⁵²⁶'The Lebensborn Program'. www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-quot-lebensborn-quot-program. (Accessed 28.07.17). ⁵²⁷ At its height the *Lebensborn* project included ten homes and offices in Germany, nine in Norway, two in Austria, six in Poland and a single home in Belgium, Holland, France, Luxembourg and Denmark. Ibid. 511.

countries were actively encouraged by Himmler to attend *Lebensborn* centres and have children outside wedlock with suitable partners, to expand the Nordic gene pool.

In a 1946 interview with journalist Louis Hagen, Hildegard Trutz, who was an aspirational eighteen-year-old leader of the *Bund Deutscher Mädel*⁵²⁸ in 1936, described her experiences in the *Lebensborn* project after her youth leader had encouraged her to attend a home and have a child to support the nation's racially valuable blood stock. Trutz's account recorded how the woman in charge of the home instructed them about their duty and the privilege of their position as part of a racial elite.

She said that Reich Leader SS Heinrich Himmler had been charged by the Führer with the task of coupling a small elite of German women (who had to be purely Nordic and over five foot five tall) with SS men of equally good racial stock in order to lay the foundation of a pure racial breed. To help in the Nordification of the nation was an honourable duty and each one of us should be proud of it. 529

Trutz described how the girls had to sign a legal agreement renouncing all maternal rights to the children who would be cared for by the State. Her account continues to describe how, during the following days, the girls were introduced socially to a group of SS men who she described as 'all very tall and strong with blue eyes and blond hair¹⁵³⁰ from which the girls were expected to choose a suitable mating partner.

We were given about a week to pick the man we liked and we were told to see to it that his hair and eyes corresponded exactly to ours. We were not told the names of any of the men. When we had made our choice we had to wait till the tenth day after the beginning of the last period, when we were again medically examined and given permission to receive the SS men in our rooms at night.⁵³¹

Hildegard Trutz's frank account of this procedure and the birth of her child who she handed over to the State illustrate the role of the *Lebensborn* as

⁵²⁸ The Bund Deutscher Mädel (BDM) was the female counterpart of the Hitler Youth.

⁵²⁹ Hagen, Louis (2011) *Ein Volk, Ein Reich: Nine lives under the Nazis*. Stroud: The History Press. Kindle edition. p.4652.

⁵³⁰ Hagen, Louis. Ein Volk, Ein Reich. p. 4652.

⁵³¹ Ibid. 529. p.4653.

more than just a welfare organization, but as a well-organised breeding centre for the Nordic race forming an integral part of Himmler's overall project of renordification. It has been estimated that in Germany alone 8000⁵³² children were 'produced' in this way.

One of the most successful projects of Nordic regeneration through the Lebensborn project took place in Norway where it has been estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000⁵³³ children were born as a result of relations between the 300,000 SS and Wehrmacht soldiers stationed in Norway, following its occupation on 9th April 1940, and Norwegian women. Himmler, like many Nordicists, considered that the Scandinavian countries carried the purest Nordic bloodline and actively encouraged sexual relations between his SS elite and the local population. The *Lebensborn* project was initiated in March 1941 in Norway following a meeting in February between Himmler, Reichskommisar Josef Terboven (chief of the German civil administration in Norway), SS leader Wilhelm Rediess and Max Sollmann who administered the *Lebensborn* in Germany. Hotels and suitably-sized villas were requisitioned and by the winter of 1941, 730 babies were registered at Lebensborn centres in Norway, by the end of 1942, more than 2,200 and by the end of the occupation in 1945, more than 8000 were registered in Lebensborn files recovered at the end of the war, covering the ten centres established across Norway. 534 Many of these children were taken away for relocation and adoption as giving birth to the baby of a German soldier carried a significant social stigma and many Norwegian girls in this situation were rejected by their family, friends and local community and had nowhere else to turn for help other than the *Lebensborn* centres, who would support the mother through childbirth as well as providing practical and financial support. After the war, many of these *Lebensborn* children suffered considerably at the hands of a Norwegian society that rejected them and their mothers for collaborating with the enemy of occupation. Many women, accused of

⁵³² Ibid. 526.

⁵³³ Ibid. 526. Figures are difficult to establish as although 8,000 Lebensborn children were registered, many more 'war children' were born to German soldiers and raised in secret for fear of reprisals.

⁵³⁴ Ericsson, Kjersti. Simonsen, Eva. (2005) *Children of World War Two: The Hidden Legacy*. Oxford: Bloomsbury. p.22.

consorting with the enemy, were assaulted and some had their hair cut off before being paraded through the streets in a wave of hatred that erupted against collaborators following Norway's liberation. In recent years former *Lebensborn* children have brought a number of legal cases against the Norwegian government for its treatment of them as children and failure to protect them.

One of the most notorious actions of the RuSHA and the *Lebensborn* department during the course of the war, was their involvement in the selection, education and adoption of children from occupied eastern territories whose Nordic physical appearance and genealogical background justified their removal for *Eindeutschung* (Germanization) and adoption by German families to boost the Nation's Nordic blood stock. The invasion of Poland, which began in 1939 presented Himmler with the opportunity to initiate his project of using the Nordic blood stock of occupied countries and the newly acquired agricultural land to realize his vision of elite, Nordic SS settlements flourishing and populating their newly created *Lebensraum* with their Nordic offspring. This role of the RuSHA and the Lebensborn programme was a component part of the overall Generalplan Ost, the Nazi's master plan for the east, which was a secret working document⁵³⁵ ordered by Hitler and elaborated by Himmler and his racial experts in various branches of the SS organization into a detailed plan for the management and implementation of the Nazi policy of *Lebensraum* in the eastern territories. This plan entailed large-scale ethnic cleaning; the enslavement, expulsion, and mass murder of Jewish and Slavic peoples and the selective removal of children who appeared to possess a sufficient number of Nordic characteristics. On 7th October 1939 Hitler appointed Himmler as Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums (Reich Commissioner for the Strengthening of German Folkdom) with the role of planning the resettlement of the occupied territories with a German population. In this role, following Hitler's direct orders, whilst also being given considerable autonomy of action Himmler was in an ideal

⁵³⁵ The *Generalplan Ost* was an ongoing work in progress as the war developed and was never fully implemented due to the eventual course of the war.

position to place his own Nordicist emphasis on the actions of his expansive SS organization.

In a letter dated 18th June 1941, Himmler explained his plans to use his organization for the recovery of Nordic type children from the occupied polish territories for either re-education or adoption by selected and carefully vetted childless families.

I would consider it right if small children of Polish families who show especially good racial characteristics were apprehended and educated by us in special children's institutions and children's homes, which must not be too large. After half a year, the genealogical tree and documents of decent of those children who prove to be acceptable should be procured. After altogether one year it should be considered to give such children as foster children to childless families of good race. ⁵³⁶

In February 1942, *SS Gruppenführer* Ulrich Greifelt, Chief of Staff of Himmler's office of the *Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums*, issued Directive 67/1 which ordered that suitable Polish children should be removed under the pretext that their health was at risk. Within this operation, which spanned a number of Himmler's SS departments and military units in the field, the RuSHA and *Lebensborn* played a significant advisory and practical role. In 1943, with the operation in full effect Himmler addressed a group of *Gauleiters*⁵³⁷ in Posen in October 1943, describing the forced removal and separation of racially suitable children from their families in Poland, who unlike their parents, could be Germanized. For Himmler, this 'duty' implied the protection of Nordic children from death, who could be used to expand the Nordic gene pool in the Fatherland.

Obviously in such a mixture of peoples there will always be some racially good types. Therefore, I think that it is our duty to take their children with us, to remove them from their environment, if necessary by robbing or stealing them. Either we win over any good blood that we can use for ourselves, and give it a place in our people, or we destroy this blood.⁵³⁸

538 Von Oelhafen, Ingrid. Tate, Tim. Hitler's Forgotten Children, p.128.

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⁵³⁶ Von Oelhafen, Ingrid and Tate, Tim (2016) *Hitler's Forgotten Children.* Canada: Dutton Caliber. p126.

⁵³⁷ A political official governing a district under Nazi rule.

Although many records were destroyed towards the end of the war, it has been estimated that some 200,000 Polish children were removed by the Nazis between 1939 and 1944⁵³⁹ and sent back to Germany to be Germanized, many more would have been rejected and sent for deportation to concentration and death camps. A smaller but significant number were also removed from Czechoslovakia, Slovenia, Belorussia and the Ukraine.

Children would be sent to holding camps at Lodz or Kalisz in Poland where they would be photographed (see figure 17) and examined according to the criteria of 62 physical characteristics established and administered by the RuSHA. This list included height, hair and eye colour (see figure 18), skin complexion, the shape and length of the head and nose and was designed to select not just the most suitable children, but also the most Nordic. If the children were found to be suitable, those between the ages of two and six were processed by the *Lebensborn* homes that cared for the child and prepared them for adoption by a childless German family. This preparation included the creation of a new identity with false birth certificates bearing new German names and birthplaces to hide the child's provenance. Older children, who could not be adopted immediately, were usually sent to *Heimschulen*, SS-run boarding schools where they were made to forget their past, taught to speak German and educated in Nazi beliefs. (See figure 19).

In her preparations for *Hitler's Forgotten Children: My life inside the Lebensborn* (2016), Ingrid Von Oelhafen examined the testimony⁵⁴² of Marie Doležalová who, as a fifteen year old, witnessed Hitler's reprisals on the Czech village of Lidice on 9th June 1942 following the assassination of *SS-Obergruppenführer* Reinhard Heydrich by the resistance on 27th May 1942.⁵⁴³ One hundred and seventy three adult men were shot, and the two hundred women of the village were transported to Ravensbrück concentration camp in Germany. One hundred and eighty-four children were taken and transported

 $^{^{539}}$ Dyck, Brent Douglas. 'Hitler's Stolen Children'. warfarehistorynetwork.com (Sept 2016) http://warfarehistorynetwork.com (Accessed 2/08/17).

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid. 539.

⁵⁴¹ Ibid. 539.

⁵⁴² Marie Doležalová was a witness for the prosecution at the post-war Nuremberg trials.

⁵⁴³ Heydrich was initially wounded but died on 4th June from septicemia.

to Lodz in Poland. Von Oelhafen described the experience of Marie Doležalová who was one of only seven to be chosen for resettlement.

Once the RuSHA's 'race examiners arrived in Lodz, they assessed each child for signs of Aryan qualities. They 'failed' 103 children, of them; seventy-four were immediately handed over to the Gestapo for onward transportation to the extermination camp at Chelmo, seventy kilometres away. Here they were gassed to death in specially adapted killing trucks. Just seven were selected as suitable candidates for Germanisation. Marie Doležalová was one of them. 544

Von Oelhafen also described Marie's education at one of the *Heimschulen* where she mixed with other Nordic looking children from a number of countries who were forced to learn German and punished if they spoke their mother tongue. Following this process of Germanization, she was subsequently adopted by a 'kind' German couple and encouraged to 'forget her past' in her own country.⁵⁴⁵

In Himmler's futural vision of Nazism, the regeneration of the Nordic gene pool lay not just in the selective breeding but in the nordification of the mind, to ensure that through a programmatic indoctrination of cultural and political Nordicism, the youth would be aware of their Nordic heritage, their attachment to the soil and their duty to refine and expand their bloodline. The RuSHA was one of many SS departments that were responsible for directing the education of not just the German youth as a whole but of the SS Nordic elite and their key role in Himmler's plans to create a new Nordic order across Europe.

Educating the future Nordic order

From his early political days, Hitler recognised that the task of transforming German society and establishing a thousand-year Reich depended on controlling the 'hearts and minds' of the nation's youth through education. From an early age, racially suitable children were taught the racial principles that would bring about a future generation sharing a 'hive mind' of

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid. 539. p.130.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid. 539. p.130.

Nazi ideology. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler described a future nation of young citizens 'forged together through a common love and common pride' concluding that 'no boy and no girl must leave school without having been led to an ultimate realization of the necessity and essence of blood purity.' ⁵⁴⁶ The Nazi Party's project of recasting the minds of the nation's youth was initiated by a wave of 'cultural purification' which spread across the nation, on and around the 10th May 1933, when mass book burning rituals took place at locations such as the square outside the State Opera in Berlin where some 25,000 volumes of academic work deemed unsuitable were destroyed by Nazi student groups. ⁵⁴⁷

In *Education in Nazi Germany*, (2010) Lisa Pine provides a detailed analysis of how, from this academic 'scorched earth', the transformation of the Nazi education system brought about 'a root and branch re-engineering of the education system at all levels - from kindergarten, through schools, to universities.' This 're-engineering' of the education system was an essential part of the Nordicist project of bringing about a 'mazeway resynthesis' of *Nordische Gedanke* (Nordic thought), a modernist belief system of Blood and Soil through which racially aware future generations would aspire to bring about the increased purification and supremacy of the Nordic gene pool.

Through the *Nationalsozialistischer Lehrerbund* (NSLB), (National Socialist Teachers' Association), ⁵⁴⁹ teachers were retrained in delivering a new curriculum established by the Minister for Education, Bernhard Rust (1883-1945), appointed by Hitler in 1934. Teachers were trained in racial knowledge, the supremacy of the Nordic/Germanic race, the need to protect the nation's racial purity, the menace of the Jew, the concept of Blood and Soil and the need to establish *Lebensraum* in the eastern territories. Teachers

⁵⁴⁶ Hitler, Adolf, Trans Manheim, Ralph. *Mein Kampf* (London, Pimlico, 1995), pp. 388-389.

⁵⁴⁷ Source: 'List of Banned Books'. library.arizona.edu.

http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/burnedbooks/documents.htm (Accessed (23/10/17). ⁵⁴⁸ Pine, Lisa (2010) *Education in Nazi Germany.* Oxford: Berg Publishers. Kindle edition. p.957.

⁵⁴⁹ The Nationalsozialistischer Lehrerbund (NSLB), was founded in April 1929 by Hans Schemm to promote Nazi ideology within the teacher profession and to provide guidance on pedagogical and curriculum matters.

who were racially unsuitable⁵⁵⁰ or who did not conform to these reforms were excluded from the profession and by 1937 membership of the NSLB reached 320,000 teachers (97% of the profession).⁵⁵¹ Teaching material was strictly censored and in 1941, the production of textbooks was limited to the *Deutscher Shulverlag,* owned and controlled by the Party. Textbooks were rewritten to reflect the Nazi *Weltanschauung* and promote awareness of political, social and racial issues. Images in many schoolbooks favoured the fair skinned, blue-eyed Nordic type described by Nordicists such as H.F.K. Günther whilst depicting the Jew, the racial other, as an ugly, menacing *Untermensch* to be excluded and eliminated from society. (See figure 20)

Children were only admitted to state *Kindergarten* upon proof of racial purity and the Law against the Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities placed a 1.5% ceiling on the number of Jewish allowed within any educational institution. By 1938, an amendment to this legislation excluded Jewish pupils from the Nazi state education system altogether. 552 This 'purging' of the education system allowed the transmission of Nazi ideology to those children destined to become the future generation of nordified Nazi adults whose offspring would regenerate the perceived 'golden age' of Nordic/Germanic supremacy. Curriculum subjects were transformed to communicate diverse aspects of Nazi ideology such as racial purity through selective breeding, the danger of miscegenation, physical fitness, Germanic and Nordic culture, the necessity of *Lebensraum*, the application of science to warfare and maths to issues such as the economics of racial hygiene. One school textbook asked pupils to calculate and compare the cost to the state in Reichsmark of maintaining 'a cripple, a mentally ill person, a deaf and dumb person, a feeble-minded person, an alcoholic, a pupil in care, a pupil in a special school and a pupil at an ordinary school.' 553

⁵⁵⁰ The *Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service* (7th April 1933) excluded Jews from the teaching profession.

⁵⁵¹ Pine, Lisa. *Education in Nazi Germany.* p. 406.

 $^{^{552}}$ A further law passed on 22nd March 1941 excluded Gypsy children from the state education system.

⁵⁵³ Ibid. 548. p.1440.

Alongside this Nazi national curriculum, the *Hitlerjugend* (Hitler Youth), (for boys aged 14-18), the *Deutsches Jungvolk in der Hitler Jugend*, (for boys aged 10-14) and the *Bund Deutsche Mädel*, (for girls aged 10-18) had taken over all youth groups from 1936 onwards and complemented the daytime education of the future Nazi generation through a range of evening and weekend activities such as camping, sports, political instruction and shooting, designed to instil a sense of comradeship, ideological awareness and physical fitness in Germany's youth and became a 'feeder institution' for elite Nazi educational establishments and organizations such as the SS, (see figure 21). The *Hitlerjugend* played a significant educational role in transforming the hearts and minds of the youth by ensuring that the time that pupils spent out of school was closely monitored and in line with Nazi ideology. Children whose parents were critical of the Nazi regime were encouraged to denounce their parents to their leaders.

Within this state education system, the Nazi regime established three main types of educational institutions tasked with the training of the future elite of the Greater German Reich: the Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalten (National Political Educational Institutions) or *Napolas*, the *Adolf Hitler* Schulen (Adolf Hitler Schools) or AHS and the Ordensburgen (Order Castles). Napolas were highly selective, secondary boarding schools whose aim was the creation of a future political, administrative and military leadership. The first three Napolas were founded in 1933 by the Minister of Education, Bernhard Rust, in Plön, Potsdam and Köslin and, by 1945, fortythree Napolas had been opened. In addition to the National Socialist school syllabus these institutions taught racial science, politics, military tactics, orienteering and placed a huge emphasis on competitive sports to develop physical and mental toughness. In her chapter on the Napolas, Lisa Pine quotes two former pupils who recalled that 'physical stamina was driven to the limit' and 'if anyone showed weakness he was considered a wet, a weakling, a coward, a disgrace to the whole platoon or company. 554 Between 1936 and 1939, under a new SS Napola inspector, August Heissmeyer, the Napolas

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid. 548. p. 2144.

became increasingly influenced by the Nordicist ideology of Himmler's SS until, in 1940, they came under his direct control and between 1941 and 1944 new *Napolas* were established in occupied territories to educate those who were deemed 'racially valuable'. 555

The *Adolf Hitler Schulen* were residential secondary schools in each *Gau* (Party region) designed to create future members of the Nazi Party who would work in its administration and leadership. In a speech to armaments workers on 10th December 1940 Hitler declared the aims and objectives of the AHS.

We are bringing talented youngsters, the children of the broad mass of our population. Workers' sons, farmers' sons, whose parents could never afford to put their children through higher education [...] Later on they will join the Party, they will attend an Ordungsburg, they will occupy the highest positions.⁵⁵⁶

To apply for a place at an AHS, both parents had to be active party members and prove their Aryan descent back to 1800. Prospective pupils also had to be selected from the *Deutsches Jungvolk* and their application endorsed by the local *Gauleiter*. They also had to pass a rigorous selection process including a detailed racial examination and physical endurance tests. Once admitted, students attended sessions on racial science, political instruction, physical training and the Party apparatus, to enable them to become effective and ambitious Nazi Party functionaries. In her analysis of the organization, Lisa Pine described how, in addition to the Nazi national curriculum, imbued with the Nazi *Weltanschauung*, Slavic languages were taught so that AHS students would, in the future, be able to give orders to the subordinated peoples of the soon to be conquered eastern territories. All AHS pupils also spent time working in Party offices to gain practical experience of Party administration.

As with the Napolas, the education of boys in the AHS played a significant role in the Nazis' long-term plans for a New Order in Europe, creating an administrative corps of

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid. 548. p. 2197.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid. 548. p. 2260.

enthusiastic and trained Party leaders, with an unconditional belief in the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. ⁵⁵⁷

Following their period of education at an AHS, students who had completed a six-month period of compulsory Labour Service and two years national service in the army could apply for selection to attend the NS-Ordensburgen, four Order Castles which were planned as prestigious institutions of higher education for future high-ranking Party officials and leaders. This project was initiated by Hitler's Head of the Labour Front, Robert Ley (1890-1945), who planned to construct four Order castles in Crössinsee in Pomerania; Vogelsang in the Eifel mountains; Sonthofen in Bavaria and Mareinburg in East Prussia. These were intended to be prestigious, wellappointed centres of excellence, each forming a stage in a four-year programme designed to develop future Party leaders, through rigorous paramilitary and ideological training. These prestigious educational institutions, which Ley envisaged, would 'open doors to the highest positions in the Party and in the State '558 evoked associations with the chivalry and courage of Nazism's romanticization of the medieval Knights Templar fused with associations with the Nordic Valhalla, where Oðinn's (Odin's) heroes would feast and train for the coming battle of Ragnarok. In her analysis Lisa Pine quotes comments by visiting foreign reporters who described how, 'The young men are told that they form a Nordic crusading order like that of the Knights Templar of old' and another who described the students as leaders of 'the Hitlerite Valhalla'. 559 These Ordensburgen represented Nazism's futural vision of a New Nordic Order rooted in the ancient traditions of medieval and Nordic history.

Alongside the *Ordensburgen*, Himmler created a number of institutions to train future leaders of his SS order who would regenerate the Nordic bloodstock and rule as an elite Nordic nobility over the conquered territories and subjugated peoples of the east. In 1934, Himmler established the first of

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid. 548. p. 2322.

⁵⁵⁸ Robert Ley quoted by Pine, Lisa. p. 2322.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid. 548. p. 2364.

these SS-Junkerschulen⁵⁶⁰ housed in a prestigious castle at Bad Tolz and a second in Braunschweig in 1934. During the war three other SS-Junkerschulen were established in Posen-Treskau, Klagenfurt and Prague to train Himmler's Nordic elite to rule over the occupied territories as a new feudal aristocracy.

Himmler's new, elite man was the political soldier of the armed SS who would be trained in the SS-Junkerschulen, the new SS institutions established for that very purpose. Racial selection was the pre-eminent elite characteristic for the SS. The cadets were encouraged to see themselves as future leaders [...] It was at the SS-Junkerschulen that Himmler built his elite leadership corps aimed at ruling the 'New Order' Nazi empire. The bulk of the cadets were not of noble birth, but they constituted what the SS regarded as 'an aristocracy of blood'.561

To provide this emerging 'Nordic aristocracy' with an ideological focus point and elite training centre, Himmler leased the derelict castle of Wewelsburg near Paderborn in 1934, which he immediately began restoring at considerable expense. Himmler planned that this castle would eventually form the heart of a complex of structures providing an SS village for staff, residents and senior officers⁵⁶² described by Heather Pringle as 'a cross between a monastic retreat and a finishing school for the upper echelons of the SS'. 563 Himmler intended to create an ideological research and training centre and retreat for his senior officers and was assisted in his choice of location by one of his closest ideological advisers, Karl Maria Wiligut (also known as Weisthor or Wise Thor). Wiligut was an ultranationalist mystic who claimed to be a descendant of both *Þórr* (Thor) and the Germanic chieftain Arminius. 564 Willigut had considerable influence over Himmler's plans for Wewelsburg and was appointed by the Reichsführer-SS as head of the department for pre and early history at the RuSHA. In his biography and source book of Willigut, The Secret King (2001), Dr Stephen E Flowers described him as 'a product of the Zeitgeist governing his time and the

⁵⁶⁰ Like students of the Ordensburgen, students were referred to as Junkers, a honorific term, derived from Middle High German meaning 'young nobleman' or 'young lord'. ⁵⁶¹ Ibid. 548. p. 2500.

⁵⁶² See the models of the expansive complex in Cook, Stephen and Russell, Stuart (1999) Heinrich Himmler's Camelot. USA: Kressmann-Backmeyer. pp. 27-33. ⁵⁶³ Ibid. 459 p.48.

Arminius was a chieftain of the Germanic Cherusci tribe who famously led an allied coalition of Germanic tribes to a decisive victory against three Roman legions in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in 9 AD.

influences that preceded him'.⁵⁶⁵ Wiligut was a mystic who claimed to possess a spiritual connection with his Nordic primordial past and a spiritual knowledge of runology, transmitted to him from his ancestors. He also created SS marriage and baptismal ceremonies⁵⁶⁶ as well as the design of ritual objects such as the The SS *Tötenkopf* honour ring worn by senior SS officers. He was a prolific writer of esoteric verse and a regular contributor to esoteric and Nordicist journals such as $Hagel^{567}$ and was also associated with both the *Edda-Gesellschaft* (Edda Society)⁵⁶⁸ and the *Nordische Gesellschaft* (The Nordic Society).⁵⁶⁹ Much of his work focused on the power of Nordic runes and the ancient Gods such as this this verse published in *Hagel*.

Rune-Knowledge is pounding in our hearts, It whispers and warns us to duty with its pure mouth...

Once again honour your ancestors' Sal according to loyal Nordic custom, Give honour to God! Then his spirit will live in your midst!⁵⁷⁰

Wiligut worked closely with Himmler and the chief architect in charge of the castle's restoration and expansion, Hermann Bartels, to develop a centre for a Nordicist cult of the SS from which Himmler could develop and diffuse his own particular synthesis of ancient Nordic and medieval Teutonic culture as a new religion of the SS elite. The most notable features of this castle, whose triangular footprint has a north-south alignment often associated with pagan religions are a marble *Sonnenrad* (sun-wheel) inlaid into the floor of what was called the *Gruppenführersaal* (Hall of the Generals), (see figure 22) and the crypt with 'an eternal flame' at its centre surrounded by twelve stone pedestals. The top of the domed ceiling of this crypt was also decorated with an extended swastika. This was to be the inner sanctum of Himmler's ideological centre, (see figure 23).

⁵⁶⁵ Flowers, Stephen E. (2001) *The Secret King - Karl Maria Wiligut Himmler's Lord of the Runes*. USA: Dominion Press. p.11.

⁵⁶⁶ See the record of Wiligut's name giving rite in Flowers, Stephen E. Appendix C. p.122.

⁵⁶⁷ Journal of the Edda Society.

⁵⁶⁸ Founded by Rudolf John Gorsleben.

⁵⁶⁹ An influential Nordicist society led by Alfred Rosenberg from 1933, Himmler was a member of the board.

⁵⁷⁰ From Runic exhortation by Wiligut quoted in Flowers, Stephen E. *The Secret King*, p11.

The SS-Schule Haus at Wewelsburg was developed as a museum of prehistoric artefacts and a library containing some 30,000 titles ⁵⁷¹ including a number of early publications and manuscripts. This education centre would be open to visiting high-ranking SS officers and Nazi scholars who sought to deepen both their knowledge and sense of Nordic spirituality at this prestigious SS academic centre and focus point of the SS cult created by Himmler and close advisors such as Wiligut who worked for the SS to create a Nordic mythology for the future generation of Nordic-minded youth emerging from the Nazi education system.

The Nazi education system was designed to create a new Nazi generation of young healthy adults who, unlike many of their parents, had been indoctrinated to believe in their racial superiority and their right to claim and expand the living space in which future generations would flourish. Within this futural project, Nordicism was a dominant feature presenting the Nordic type as the ideal type of future German and within this strand, the SS played a significant role in developing and promoting a future cult of the Nordic as a belief system of the racial elite whose gene pool would become increasingly purified and refined like the 'rope between the animal and the Superman - a rope over an abyss' of Friedrich Nietzsche.⁵⁷²

April 1940 - Occupying the North

On the 9th April 1940 operation *Weserübung* was implemented and German forces invaded Denmark and Norway, bringing about what Nordicists such as Himmler and Rosenberg perceived to be a historic *Anschluss* between the Germanic and the Nordic peoples. The Scandinavian countries had declared themselves neutral and, being unable to defend themselves against the overwhelmingly superior German forces, Norway and Denmark were forced to surrender and accept German occupation. Sweden was not occupied and remained neutral throughout the war. This occupation of the

⁵⁷¹ Cook, Stephen and Russell, Stuart (1999) *Heinrich Himmler's Camelot.* USA: Kressmann-Backmeyer. p.126.

⁵⁷² Nietzsche, Friedrich (Trans. Thomas Common) (1917) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* New York: The Modern Library. p.7.

North differed, however, from other invasions, in that Germany hoped to establish a peaceful occupation representing itself as a concerned neighbour who was coming to the assistance of Denmark and Norway rather than a foreign aggressor. In his political diaries of the time, Alfred Rosenberg described the negotiations that took place in secret, prior to the invasion, with sympathetic right-wing Norwegian politicians such as Vidkun Quisling who were preparing themselves for the opportunity to take power following the occupation. In a leaflet dropped over the Danish capital of Copenhagen on 9th April, the text appealed to the public to accept their presence, and blamed Britain for violating the neutrality of the two countries to legitimize the occupation as a protective military operation in Norway and Denmark.

Germany has decided to anticipate the English attack, and with its military forces take over the protection of the Danish and Norwegian kingdoms' neutrality, and preserve it as long as the war lasts.⁵⁷⁴

In his diary entry of the 9th April 1940, Alfred Rosenberg expressed his Nordicist viewpoint that this invasion was an *Anschluss*, a historic unification of the Germanic and the Nordic that had been separated for far too long. This was a historic occasion described by Rosenberg as 'a great day in German history' and who quoted Hitler as stating "Just as Bismarck's Reich arose out of the year 1866, the Greater Germanic Reich will arise out of the present day." Although mainstream Nazism saw the strategic advantage to the operation, Nordicists within the party regarded the occupation of Scandinavia as the long awaited opportunity to restore the Nordic gene pool of Germany through direct integration with the Scandinavian nations, established by nineteenth century racial science as the original dispersal point of the pure Nordic race.

During the 1930s, Norway, Denmark and Sweden, like many European countries, had all seen the emergence of far-right nationalist parties who

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⁵⁷³ Matthäus, Jürgwen, Bajohr, Frank (2015) *The Political Diary of Alfred Rosenberg and the Onset of the Holocaust*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield. p.191.

⁵⁷⁴ Translation from a facsimile of the leaflet in Hong, Nathaniel (2012) *Occupied - Demarks Adaptation and Resistance to German Occupation 1940 -1945.* Copenhagen: Danish Resistance Museum Publishing. p.31.

⁵⁷⁵ Matthäus, Jürgwen, Bajohr, Frank. *The Political Diary of Alfred Rosenberg*, p.191.

modelled themselves on the NSDAP. In Sweden, a number of often conflicting groups associated themselves with Nazism such as the Sveriges Fascistiska Folkparti established in 1926, (named the Sveriges Nationalsocialistiska Folkparti after 1929) and in 1933, one of its leading members, Sven Olof Lindholm (1903-1998), established the Nationalsocialistiska Arbetarpartiet. In occupied Denmark, the Danmarks Nationalsocialistiske Arbejderparti (DNSAP) was founded in November 1930 but had only marginal success in state elections under the leadership of its most prominent leader, Frits Clausen (1893-1945), who led the party from 1933 to 1945. At its electoral peak in 1943 the DNSAP only received 2.1% of the vote in the parliamentary elections. 576 Nazism was therefore a minority movement in these countries and was generally perceived as a foreign threat to the independence of the Scandinavian nations who were engaged in developing their own specific cultural and political identities as related but separate Nordic nations. Denmark in particular had a historic relationship of defending its territory from early Germanic and Frankish tribes, as evidenced by the creation of the Danevirke, a protective Iron Age earthwork in Southern Jutland. Denmark had also recently been engaged in battle with Prussian troops and had been forced to cede the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Saxe-Lauenburg to Prussia following its defeat in the war of 1864. The German occupation of Denmark was therefore resented as a foreign occupation and met with varying degrees of resistance, indifference and in a few cases opportunist collaboration. In October 1943, the Danish people showed their communal defiance of Nazi racial policies by organising the hiding and transport of around 7000 Jews and 700 of their non-Jewish relatives across the narrow sea to neutral Sweden, following a leak from the German authorities regarding the intended round up of Jews in Denmark. 577

In Norway, in 1933, the *Nasjonal Samling* (National Unity) was founded by the Minister of Defence, Vidkun Quisling (1847-1945). On the 9th April 1940, Quisling proclaimed himself Prime Minister and ordered a halt to all

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid. 574. p.53.

^{577&#}x27;Rescue in Denmark'. ushmm.org.

resistance against the invading German forces. With leading members of his party, he established a puppet government of collaboration supporting the Nazi regime. In his declaration broadcast to the Norwegian nation, he blamed Britain for violating the nation's neutrality by laying mines in Norway's territorial waters and stating that the German Army was thereafter offering assistance to the Norwegian government to maintain the nation's independence and assure the safety of the Norwegian people. Quisling had been in secret negotiations with Hitler for a number of months prior to the invasion and although his party was electorally marginal to the point of being insignificant in Norway, the *Nasjonal Samling (NS)* was handed power by the Germans as a puppet government to enforce the wishes of the Nazi regime over an unsupportive public.

Following the Soviet invasion of Finland which began in November 1939 and ended with the signing of a peace treaty in March 1940, in which Finland had been forced to cede border areas to the Soviet Union, the Scandinavian nations were aware of the potential threat to their independence and national identity from the Soviet Union. In Hitler's Vikings (2011) Jonathon Trigg examined the role of Scandinavian volunteers for the SS and their various motives for enlisting in the army of an occupying nation. In this work, he discussed how many Scandinavians volunteers enlisted to fight the perceived menace of Bolshevism from the east. This was not only a political motive from the point of view of sovereignty and independence but also a racial one in the context of protecting the Nordic race from becoming overwhelmed by eastern Slavs. It remained however more a defensive reaction rather than a wish to join the SS in order to create Lebensraum for a superior New Nordic SS Order. It was therefore more nationalist in character than Nordicist although there must have been a certain degree of conceptual overlap. Enlistment remained relatively low, however, as most Scandinavians refused to collaborate with the Nazi regime.

⁵⁷⁸'Recording of a speech of Quisling of 9th April 1940'. www.youtube.com https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5nuooEl1QQ (Accessed 19/10/17).

As for the Swedes, Norwegians and Danes, they were both angry and fearful as they looked east and saw a brutal dictatorship seemingly willing to assault peaceful countries and bring death and destruction to their doorsteps. The Scandinavian Far-Right's answer was to look south to Nazi Germany for salvation.⁵⁷⁹

The Nazi parties in Norway and Denmark drew on this fear to legitimize the occupation and collaborate with Himmler's SS by acting as recruitment bases for the enlistment of volunteers for Scandinavian SS regiments. They also drew on their nations' ancient mythology and their Viking heritage and many Scandinavian SS recruitment posters (see figures 24-26) represented mythical images of the nation's early history conjuring up images of a perceived 'golden age' of national heroism and victory.

In his work, *The Political Misuse of Scandinavian Prehistory in the Years 1933-34* (1996), Michael Müller White draws on research by John T.

Lauridsen, in Denmark, and Lise Nordenborg Myhre, in Norway, into the distortion of Scandinavia's prehistory by Scandinavian National Socialists.

White described how the Scandinavian Nazi parties used images of a mythologized Viking past to evoke the concept of a new 'Nordic Order' unified by a shared gene pool and common ancestral heritage. Both the DSNAP and NS used images of Viking ships, barrows, runes and Nordic warriors in their propaganda and in Norway the NS used the impressive Viking barrow cemetery of the Kings in Borre, Vestfold near Oslo for their annual party gathering, (see figure 27). At the 1942 gathering, Quisling spoke of the significance of this sacred site as a link to the nations once glorious past and domination of the known world.

We gather here at Vest-Viken [Borre], because the people who united Norway in one kingdom were buried here. These people carried the name of Norway all over the world. It was these people who founded the states in Russia and, in a certain sense also the British Empire. 580

⁵⁸⁰Quisling quoted by Michael Müller-Wille et al. *The Waking of Angantyr: The Scandinavian Past in European Culture*. p.157.

⁵⁷⁹ Trigg, Jonathan (2011) *Hitler's Vikings: The History of the Scandinavian Waffen-SS: The Legions, the SS Wiking and the SS Nordland.* London: The History Press. p.211.

In his speech Quisling evoked a mythologized image of the ancient Norwegian Viking warrior as the founder of the civilized world drawing on the powerful sensation of being gathered at this ritual site where these Nordic leaders were buried, to create a sense of awe and collective transcendence. This political misuse of the past, linked political, cultural and biological Nordicism into a means of generating a form of Nordic transcendence where the individual only counted as part of a greater over-arching Nordic metanarrative.

The occupation of the North was a significant strategic operation in military terms but was also viewed by influential Nordicists, such as Himmler, as an ideal opportunity to boost the Nordic gene pool by encouraging sexual relations between his SS troops and the native Nordic population. This was formally organized by the establishment of a number of Lebensborn centres in Denmark and notably Norway, where it has been estimated that up to 10,000 children may have been born to German fathers during the war. The occupation of the North was therefore a significant step for Nordicists towards the renordification of the German people, in biological, cultural and political terms, expanding German territory into a greater Nordic Germania.

Lebensraum for the Nordic - the East

The brutality of the German forces' push into Poland on 1st September 1939 and The Soviet Union on 22nd June 1941 contrasted strongly with their aim to create a peaceful protectorate in Scandinavia. The push to the east was a war of brutal annihilation of a political and racial enemy and for Nordicists such as Himmler, whose SS troops played a major role in the genocidal ethnic cleansing of the occupied territories, it was the time for the expanding Nordic empire to claim the essential living space that it required for the propagation of a new Nordic European order. The *Blut und Boden* (Blood and Soil) movement had laid the foundations of the concept of *Lebensraum* and the need to reclaim land for the future expansion of the Nordic race united with the land through an eternal bond of ancestral heritage.

In an address to his senior officers in 1931, Himmler had emphasized the historic importance of what he perceived to be the ultimate struggle for existence between the superior Nordic and the racially inferior *Untermensch* of the east. Himmler described this final battle in apocalyptic terms as a fight to the death to protect Nordic civilization.

[...] if Bolshevism is victorious then this will mean the extermination of the Nordic race, of the last valuable Nordic blood, and this devastation would mean the end of the earth.⁵⁸¹

This was therefore far from a simple occupation of enemy territory as during the invasion of France and Holland in May 1940, this was intended to be a fight to the death between deeply opposed races and political ideologies. The aim of the occupying the eastern territories was not to relocate civilian refugees or capture enemy troops; the only plan for occupation of the east was the annihilation of the sub-human inhabiting these territories and the communist armies that defended them.

In May 1941, as part of the plans for *Operation Barbarossa*, special task forces, called *SS-Einsatzgruppen*, were formed from the personnel of the SS, the SD, the *Gestapo* and other police units. Under the direct control of Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich, these specially formed task forces operated behind the lines in occupied territories in Poland and the Soviet Union to carry out operations of ethnic cleansing ranging from individual killings to the mass murder of large groups of the local population such as the operation at Babi Yar near Kiev where 33,771 Jews ⁵⁸² were killed in two days. Stripped naked, the victims were led into a ravine where each man, woman and child was shot in the back of the head. The massacre continued without interruption for two days and new victims were forced to lie on those already dead. Similar incidents also took place at *Kharkov* in the Ukraine where 21,600 Jews were murdered and in the *Rumbala* forest near Riga, Latvia, where 25,000 Jews were killed. Any children, deemed Nordic enough in appearance were

⁵⁸¹ Ibid. 505 . p.123

^{582 &#}x27;1941 Mass Murder'. www.holocaustchronicle.org.

http://www.holocaustchronicle.org/staticpages/270.html (Accessed 23/10/17). 583 Ibid. 581.

saved from execution and handed over to the *Lebensborn* organization for nordification and nazification, before adoption by suitably Nordic German families.

This slaughter of civilians was matched by the brutal treatment of Soviet prisoners of war in comparison with British and later American POWs. In *Total War* (1972), Peter Calvocoressi and Guy Wint estimated that out of approximately 5.5 million Russian prisoners captured during Operation *Barbarossa*, more than 3.5 were dead by the middle of 1944. It has been estimated that nearly two million died in camps, another million died in military custody in the USSR and a quarter of a million disappeared or died in transit. Another further 473,000 died or were killed in military custody in Germany or Poland. The authors providing these statistics concluded that 'the assumption must be that they were either deliberately killed or done to death by criminal negligence'. ⁵⁸⁴

These were not military actions, necessitated by operational or strategic demands; they were a means of clearing the occupied territories of the racially inferior inhabitants to create the *Lebensraum*, the living space for the foundation of a Nordic Empire that had been envisaged for so long and which was a vital element of the SS project of renordification and the creation of a new Nordic Reich. In this context, the SS units of the Einsatzgruppen were tasked to exterminate a race whose presence had endangered the Nordic race through miscegenation and whose living space was needed for the expansion of this future Nordic *Ubermensch*. To justify these actions, Nordicism had constructed its own moral and ethical framework, creating a narrative of the Nordic's struggle for existence against a sub-human enemy that threatened their survival and whose victory would mean the end of their ancient and noble civilization. Nordicist myth making therefore played a significant role in the Holocaust by creating a mazeway synthesis, fusing science and myth to create a Nordicist nomos through which the mass-murder of women and children could be rationalized, not as a crime, but as a biological necessity to ensure the survival of the Nordic race.

⁵⁸⁴ Calvocoressi, Peter and Wint, Guy (1989) *Total War.* London: Penguin Books. p. 50.

Conclusion - Ragnarok and the shattering of the Rainbow Bridge

The outcome of Nazism's racial policies, the final death count of the T4 programme, the brutal regime of the concentration camps, mass executions in the field by SS-Einsatzgruppen and later industrial scale genocide in purposebuilt death camps is one of the best-documented and most debated periods of modern history. 585 The process of eliminating 'the other', planned with bureaucratic efficiency at the Wannsee conference of December 1942, was refined as the war turned against Hitler's armies, to create the death camps in which millions were put to death as part of the *Endlösung*, the final solution to the Jewish Question, designed and implemented mainly by Himmler's SS. The extent to which individual members of the SS actually believed in the Nordic ideals of their leader has been the issue of some debate and although it is impossible to generalize so many individuals' personal motives, their actions were nonetheless the result of orders aimed at bringing about the Nordic visions of the SS leadership who commanded them. The course of the war had prevented the permanent relocation of the *Untermensch* and the expansion of the future Nordic Order into the mythical 'promised land' of the conquered territories. The final solution to protect the Nordic race was therefore implemented by Himmler's SS troops. In a speech to his senior officers on the 4th October 1943 in Posen, Poland, Himmler discussed the role of the SS in carrying out a brutal mission of racial cleansing that could never be written into their history.

I am talking about the evacuation of the Jews, the extermination of the Jewish people. It is one of those things that is easily said. "The Jewish people is being exterminated", every party member will tell you, "perfectly clear, it's part of our plans, we're eliminating the Jews, exterminating them, a small matter" [...] Most of you know what it means when 100 bodies lie together, when 500 are there or when there are 1000. And to have seen this through and, with the exception of human weakness, to have remained decent, has made us hard and is a page of glory never mentioned and never to be mentioned. ⁵⁸⁶

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⁵⁸⁵ Notably the debate between historians Daniel Goldhagen (*Hitler's Willing Executioners*) and Christopher Browning (*Ordinary Men*).

⁵⁸⁶ 'Himmler's Posen Speech'. www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org. http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/himmler-s-posen-speech-quot-extermination-quot (Accessed 11/10/17).

The true extent of the Holocaust was, however, discovered as Allied and Soviet soldiers liberated the concentration camps that had been abandoned by fleeing SS troops and found evidence of the massacres that had taken place. The mass graves, stacked corpses, documentary evidence and witness accounts were further evidence of the results of Nordicism being unleashed without the legal or moral constraints of a democracy which could otherwise have prevented it.

As the Nazi regime finally collapsed in the ruins of Berlin, so did the Nordicist project of protecting and purifying the Nordic race. Many, unable to face the failure of their utopian dreams or aware of their guilt, committed suicide, others were tried for their crimes against humanity at Nuremberg and subsequent trials where they were imprisoned or hanged. Some, such as H.F.K. Günther, whose ideological participation escaped the law, were acquitted but remained academically discredited and socially isolated in a post-war society that condemned their theories as being contributory to the Holocaust. Their myth of Nordicism as a futural project of regeneration had been totally discredited by its own outcome as the world became aware of the extent to which the Nordicist strand within Nazism had contributed to this elimination of the 'other'.

The increasingly extreme eugenics measures, implemented by the Nordicist strand within the Nazi regime, had failed to bring about the regeneration of a mythologized past as an alternative to the modernity of the Weimer period from which they felt alienated. Rejecting this modernity as a path to racial degeneration and eventual destruction, Nordicism, as a revitalization movement, attempted to create an alternative modernist vision of racial regeneration and purity in which the Nordic race would rule, like a Nietzschean *Ubermensch*, over the racially inferior. This failed project had tried to re-establish a connection with a mythologized Nordic past in the same way as *Bifrost*, the Rainbow Bridge, had once connected *Miðgarðr*, the realm of man, with *Asgarðr*, the domain of the gods. The collapse of Nordicism is analogous with the shattering of this sacred causeway as the Norse Gods succumbed to their enemies at the final battle of *Ragnarok*, bringing about the

end of their reign over mankind. In 1942 Quisling had presented the Manichean struggle he witnessed between the world's disintegration into cultural and racial chaos and the process of regeneration fought for by the Nazis and her allies thus:

These currents of corruption are all closely linked with each other and finally merge in the mighty stream which we call Anglo-Jewish world capitalism. That is the Midgard snake which wraps itself round the world and gnaws at the roots of the Nordic tree of life. To remove Anglo-Jewish, capitalist influence from every area, dynastic, political, social, economic and cultural is the premise for the resurrection of Norway and hence the principal goal of our movement for national unification. 587

The war against Nazism was not just a military conflict, but a mythological one, and the defeat of the Axis powers was a victory for pluralism, for multiculturalism, and for hybridity over the cult of racial purity and the demonization of everything deemed hostile to Nordic-Aryan ideals. The fascist attempt to banish liquidity from modernity had failed. Yet ideologies and movements that aim to re-establish temporal fixity and provide a new cultural or ethnic rootedness to the future can never completely disappear, since the nomic crisis that engendered them continues in different forms, proliferating symptoms of a liminoid culture. The serpent of Miðgarðr has revealed itself to be like the multi-headed Hydra of Greek mythology, no longer confined to the oceans, but globalized, as if encircling the world and continually provoking modernist attempts to defeat the sense of decadence, anomie, and dissolution it evokes. Inevitably, like the shattered fragments of the Rainbow Bridge, aspects of Nordicism and the mythologization of the Nordic can still be found in our modern society. The final chapter of this work will now examine how these fragments have surfaced or resurfaced in both Northern Europe and the USA as a reaction to our current state of rapidly evolving modernity, driven by information technology and globalization, which sociologist Zygmunt Bauman described in 2000 as a state of 'liquid fluidity.'

⁵⁸⁷ Quisling, Vidkun, 'Nationaler Verfall und nationale Wiedererhebung' [National decay and national resurgence] in *Quisling ruft Norwegen!* (Munich: Franz Eher Verlag, 1942), pp. 134-6.

Chapter 4

The Flotsam of Nordicism in a Liquid Modernity

I watch the ripples change their size

But never leave the stream

Of warm impermanence and

So the days float through my eyes

But still the days seem the same⁵⁸⁸

David Bowie, Changes, Hunky Dory, (1971).

From his first hit single in 1969, as the astronaut Major Tom in *Space Oddity*, floating away in the emptiness of infinity to his haunting final album, *Blackstar* (2016), set in the liminality of his terminal illness, the audio-visual art of David Bowie (1947-2016), has epitomized the constantly evolving and increasingly 'liquid' nature of our current state of modernity. Throughout his long career, Bowie never stood still long enough to become associated with any established style, genre or look, continuously absorbing and resynthesizing sound and image to create a unique ever-shifting stream of creativity, where change was the only identifiable constant. Bowie never let his artistic work solidify before melting it down, to recast it again, in another new form, which represented in itself, yet another transient state.

The concept of reality's liquefaction under the impact of globalizing modernity was introduced by sociologist Zygmunt Bauman in his seminal work *Liquid Modernity* (2000) as an alternative term for post-modernity, a phase of post-war change described by sociologists and cultural theorists such as Jürgen Habermas (1929 - present), Jean-François Lyotard (1924-1998)

⁵⁸⁸ Bowie, David. 'Changes.' azlyrics.com

https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/davidbowie/changes.html (Accessed 07/07/17).
⁵⁸⁹ The body of a dead astronaut, presumably Major Tom, features in the video for Blackstar Born David Robert Iones, English musician, singer, songwriter and actor.

and Jean Baudrillard (1929-2007). Bauman developed this term to describe his interpretation of our current state of modernity, which he viewed as an evolution of late modernity into something even more elusive and transient. Liquid modernity, and its concomitants 'liquid times', 'liquid love', and 'liquid fear', ⁵⁹¹ refers to the heightened state of flux and ephemerality that material, cognitive, and emotional realities have entered under the impact of turbocharged technological, social (and now ecological and demographic) change. Subjectively, this new human condition is reflected in the compulsive need many members of modern societies experience to constantly adapt and transform their lives, and proliferate new personae in order to make sense of the increasingly fragmented plural realities of which they consist. The 'liquefaction' of existential and social reality has, of course, been intensified by the revolution in social media and the exponential growth for the younger generations in virtual realities. ⁵⁹²

In a socio-political context, post-modernity and liquid modernity have been described as reactions to the impact of industrialisation, urbanisation, the melting of traditional religious certainties and the growth of multi-cultural, multi-faith societies in which no single theology or creed can maintain its authority or hegemony. In this context, the totalitarian and authoritarian societies of the 20th and 21st societies century can be seen as various attempts to put an end to modern 'liquefaction' by creating a society based on a single, absolutist, hegemonic truth system that fixes reality again for its citizens. ⁵⁹³ It is within this context that the absorption of cultural, political and biological Nordicism into racist creeds makes sense as part of a rebellion against the threat of relativism, nihilism and ephemerality in the same way that the massive stone edifices of totalitarian architecture express the will to permanence and the monumental.

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⁵⁹¹ These are all titles and themes of subsequent publications by Bauman.

⁵⁹² 'Liquid Life and Social Media'. InvisibleStudio.it.

http://www.invisiblestudio.it/new/blog/liquid-life-and-social-media/

⁵⁹³ Griffin, Roger. (2015). Fixing Solutions: Fascist Temporalities as Remedies for Liquid Modernity. *Journal of Modern European History.* 13. pp. 5-23.

Griffin characterizes such initiatives as 'modernist' reactions to 'modernity', crystallizing in ideologies that sought to create alternative political, economic and social structures either as the foundation of a new vision of the world which re-established a sense of transcendence, hope, and nomic certainty (e.g. Romanticism), or as the basis of a utopian socio-political 'new order' which used state power to embrace planned progress but banished what was seen as chaotic flux and atomizing individualism and decadence. Bauman referred to these counter-modern, regenerative artistic, ethical, social and ideological structures as 'solids', human constructs created to replace older out-dated structures that had become eroded and rendered obsolete by the continuous flow of modernity and change.

In this context, the emergence of Nordicism as a 'solid' ideological rooted in a deeply mythicized or pseudo-scientized structure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both in its Romantic and racist or totalitarian manifestations, was a reaction against the increasingly anomic modernity of the time. Appropriated by Nazi and Aryan racists, Nordicism was instrumentalized by ideologues and racial scientists to ward off the perceived threat to the established nomos of Northern European racial superiority and purity allegedly posed by miscegenation, racial decay, and Jews. To counter this erosion of what was, in reality, a romanticized, mythologized era of Nordic supremacy, Nordicists sought to develop an alternative modernity or new solid, through a resynthesis of the ancient and the modern with the aim of regenerating a pure Nordic nobility to rule over inferior racial types. Through this synthesis of the ancient and the modern, racist Nordicists aimed at creating a more durable solid, the thousand year Reich, which would resist the erosion of modernity and eventually achieve their telos of the Nietzschean *Ubermensch*, reconfigured no longer as the spiritually gifted, transcendent 'higher self' but as a new evolutionary phenotype, the racially and culturally superior human being as the master and *hegemon* of a new civilization. The victory of capitalist modernity over both Nazi and then Soviet experiments in creating what Bauman calls in *Modernity and Ambivalence* 'the gardening

state^{',594} has ensured that, except in pockets of socio-political 'solidity' artificially maintained at great human cost (e.g. North Korea, Iran, Saudi Arabia) in our current times the 'rope over an abyss'⁵⁹⁵ described by Nietzsche's Zarathustra, has no final mooring point on *terra firma*, and so we are forced to remain on a constant journey across an abyss of almost constant anomie tantalizingly faced with the ever-receding cliffs on the other side of the ravine. All truly modern human beings suffer new variants of the fate of Tantalus.

According to Bauman's theory, modernity no longer offers the concept of any ultimate telos and society is now in a constant state of 'becoming', rejecting the failed projects of twentieth century programmatic modernism as redundant or utopian, in a modernity which no longer allows 'solids' to develop into any firm structure before they are melted away and replaced with other temporary structures which in turn will be melted and remolded into new temporary 'solids'.

To be 'modern' means to modernize - compulsively, obsessively; not so much 'to be', let alone to keep its identity intact, but forever 'becoming', avoiding completion, staying underdefined. Each new structure, which replaces the previous one as soon as it is declared old-fashioned and past its use-by date is only another temporary settlement - acknowledged as temporary and 'until further notice'. ⁵⁹⁶

To be 'modern' is therefore to exist in a constant state of anomic flux in which any structure offering shelter from the constant state of change is temporary and will soon be replaced by another.

Since the downfall of the Third Reich, the concept of Nordicism has become permanently associated with Nazism, in post-war historiography, as a murderous project of regenerating a mythical 'Master Race'. Applying Bauman's theory, the failure of this project signifies its lack of viability as a 'solid', washed away by the dominant current of modern thought and liberal pluralism that judged it not just incompatible and obsolete, but indefensibly

⁵⁹⁴ Griffin, Roger (2007) *Modernism and Fascism – The Sense of a Beginning under Mussolini and Hitler*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan. p.196.

⁵⁹⁵ Nietzsche, Friedrich (Trans. Thomas Common) (1917) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* New York: The Modern Library. p.7.

⁵⁹⁶ Bauman, Zygmunt (2000) *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Kindle edition. p. 172.

evil within a modern humanitarian society, but also by the sheer practical unsustainability of a totalitarian state with unlimited territorial ambitions. Assigning the term Nordicism to a particular phase of history fails, however, to recognize the extended and protracted history of cultural Nordicism as part of the Romantic quest for a new nomos, or that 'solids' such as Nordicism do not completely dissolve. Instead, they remain as dispersed, marginal fragments in later societies, and are still relevant to our understanding both of the dynamics of far right-wing thought in Northern Europe, and of liberal nostalgia for a stable, humanistically enlightened form of representative democracy.

This final chapter will therefore not attempt to identify any cohesive international neo-Nordicist movement capable of providing 'fixity' and 'solidity' in the way it did at the height of the 19th century cult of rootedness and mythic ancestries, or the 20th century cult of racial essences, but rather consider how certain aspects of this ideology and its aims are still prevalent in small groups and individuals in society. It will also avoid the process of attempting to 'make the subject fit the mould' by using the term 'Nordicist' to label any individual or group concerned with aspects, real or imaginary, of the Nordic, but examine the aspects of their world-view which fall within the definition of Nordicism that I have established. It will also not attempt to undertake the task of analysing the presence of post-war Nordicist beliefs across the entirety of Northern Europe and the USA, but will analyse a number of contemporary examples that demonstrate how fragments of the shattered 'solid' of Nordicism that arose are still prevalent not just in far right-wing thought, but in the longing for a refuge from what Water Benjamin called the 'storm of progress'.

Modern nostalgia for the ancient Nordic in popular entertainment

In his concluding chapter of *Thor - Myth to Marvel*, Martin Arnold asserted that our current nostalgia for ancient Norse culture is largely dominated by today's mass-market, consumer-led society seeking diversion and a sense of adventure away from the daily concerns and worries of everyday life.

From Longfellow to Lee, and, so, from myth to Marvel, ideas about Thor and Scandinavian antiquity have generally involved a shift away from the purview of scholars, polemicists and the literati [...] and into mass-markets, where entertainment substitutes for aesthetics and unbridled imagination substitutes for serious analysis and accuracy. ⁵⁹⁷

Although our current academic climate seeks, through the evidence provided by modern archaeological methods, to provide a more balanced and accurate cultural image of ancient Norse material and spiritual culture, Arnold argued that the popular received image of Vikings and ancient Norse mythology lies more in the hands of modern myth-makers than scholars. Arnold continued his discussion of the current state of our academic and popular interest in the Vikings by suggesting that the dominant trend is towards what he described as the 'irreversible decline into the *ersatz*, the kitsch and the lowest common denominator'. ⁵⁹⁸ He further argued that this modern representation of the ancient North is a post-war reaction against Nazism's appropriation of Norse mythology and its continued use by some far-right individuals and organisations.

Doubtless the taint of Nazi ideology and the continued promulgation of Nordic supremacist ideas by far-right groups have done much to provoke a counterbalancing trivialization of Norse mythology. 599

This trivialization of Norse mythology and the Viking is evident in the popular representations in Marvel comics and later cinemagraphic epics representing Þórr (Thor) as a global superhero waiting to come to the rescue of a world from cosmic powers of evil and destruction. In a consumer-led society where net profit serves as a useful indicator of public opinion the box office popularity⁶⁰⁰ of the Marvel *Thor* feature films, starring Christopher Hemsworth as *Pórr* (Thor) and Anthony Hopkins as *Oðinn* (Odin), demonstrate the significant role of ancient Norse culture in what Boym described as a global epidemic of nostalgia. This mass-market appeal is comparable with the

⁶⁰⁰ Thor - Ragnarok (2017) reached a worldwide box office total of \$843,376,522 in December 2017. 'Thor: Ragnarok'. Boxofficemojo.com.

⁵⁹⁷ Arnold, Martin (2011) *Thor – Myth to Marvel.* London: Continuum Books. p.159. ⁵⁹⁸ Ibid. 597. p.159.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid. 597. p 159.

http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=marvel2017.htm (Accessed 22/12/17). This figure does not include income received through Internet downloads or DVD sales.

popularity of the tales of Norse mythology, adapted from the Eddas that were published during the nineteenth century to an eager readership who were more excited by the image of the noble warrior and adventurer than any factual research that historians were beginning to undertake. Marvel's modern representation of *Pórr* does not, however, attempt to create a serious form of modern myth-making as during the nineteenth century. Critics of Marvel Studio's latest *Thor* project, *Ragnarok*, have discussed the self- deprecating, humorous moments in the film⁶⁰¹ in which the characters do not take themselves seriously, demonstrating at times, a post-modern rejection of cultural Nordicism, acting as what Arnold described as a 'counter balance' to this phenomenon.

Another example of the role of modern cinema in Nordic myth creation and its diffusion on a mass-scale is the global success of the stunning cinema adaptations of JRR Tolkien's (1892-1973)⁶⁰² Hobbit and Lord of the Rings trilogy by director Peter Jackson. These films recreated the world of Nordic and Northern European ancient mythology described by Tolkien in his best selling novels originally published between 1937 and 1949. The global impact of these printed works is apparent in the sales figures for the *Hobbit* of over 100 million copies worldwide in over 50 languages. 603 From his extensive knowledge of early northern European languages and mythology, Tolkien created a detailed and expansive world of mythology from a synthesis of a wide range of Northern European historical and literary sources. Tolkien's works are now considered classics of modern mythology, which demonstrate, how in a modern society where science attempts to answer everything, there is still a constant need for myth to explore and explain the dynamics of human experience. A number of critics have, however, claimed that Tolkien's work could be interpreted as an example of cultural Nordicism and the debate

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⁶⁰¹Rose, Steve. Thor - Ragnarok Review. www.theguardian.com.

https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/oct/19/thor-ragnarok-review-chris-hemsworth-cate-blanchett-taika-waititi (25/02/18).

⁶⁰² JRR Tolkien was the Rawlinson and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon and Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford from 1925 to 1945 and Merton Professor of English Language and Literature and Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, from 1945 to 1959.

⁶⁰³'Tolkien's Hobbit celebrates 75th anniversary'. usatoday.com.

https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/books/2012/09/20/hobbit-tolkien-75-anniversary-corey-olsen/1576943/ (Accessed 25/02/18).

between these critics and those who oppose this accusation illustrates the nebulous line that separates academic and popular interest in the Nordic, from what could be termed cultural Nordicism.

In an article published as a blog posting on the Tolkien Society website, entitled *Taboo Tolkien: The Nordicist Claim on Middle-earth Refuted*, Michael Martinez⁶⁰⁴ defended the work of Tolkien against interpretations from academics such as Dr Stephen Shapiro⁶⁰⁵ who argued that themes of cultural and biological Nordicism could be discerned in works such as *The Lord of the Rings*. In an interview in 2003, Shapiro claimed that 'Tolkien was not a Nazi but he was a Nordicist in that his works hark back to England's original culture before the Norman invasion'. ⁶⁰⁶ In Tolkien's defence, Martinez quoted letters from the author in which he claimed that 'I know better than most what is the truth about this 'Nordic nonsense' and attacked the man he called 'that ruddy little ignoramus Adolf Hitler.' In this letter Tolkien further criticized Nazism for:

ruining, perverting, misapplying, and making forever accursed, that noble northern spirit, a supreme contribution to Europe, which I have loved, and tried to present in its true light. Nowhere, incidentally was it nobler than in England, nor more early sanctified and Christianized.⁶⁰⁷

This reaction expressed the author's anger at the process through which nationalist and racial ideologists appropriated Nordic culture into Nordicist thought, adopting the North as their cultural 'ideal home' of racial purity and predominance. Tolkien clearly considered this a distortion of the culture that inspired so much of his academic research and his fictional work. Martinez also quoted an interview with the *Daily Telegraph* in 1967 in which Tolkien complained that the term Nordic had become associated with 'racialist

Michael Martinez (born 1959) is one of the most well known scholars in regards to I.R.R. Tolkien's works.

⁶⁰⁵ Born in new York, Dr. Shapiro currently works at Warwick University.

 $^{^{606}\}mbox{Hari, Johann.}$ 'The wrong Lord of the Reads'. www.independent.co.uk.

http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/johann-hari/the-wrong-lord-of-the-reads-82201.html (Accessed 25/02/18).

⁶⁰⁷ Quotes taken from a letter dated 9th June 1941. Quoted by Martinez Michael. 'Taboo Tolkien: The Nordicist Claim on Middle-earth Refuted'. www.tolkiensociety.org. https://www.tolkiensociety.org/blog/2015/11/taboo-tolkien-the-nordicist-claim-on-middle-earth/ (Accessed 25/02/18).

Tolkien's rejection of this term shows how post-war definitions of Nordicism have linked it with Nazism as a form of racism and how post-war writers sought to distance themselves from this regime, firmly distinguishing their Nordic cultural interest from cultural Nordicism. This debate over the influence of cultural, political and biological Nordicism in Tolkien's work also illustrates how our contemporary liberal democracy seeks out the development of any identifiable pockets of Nordicism in order to expose and attack them before they can develop into any form of solid which historians have identified as the Nordicism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This point highlights the ambivalence of popular interest in Scandinavia both in the nineteenth century and today between a benign interest in Nordic culture and the idealisation of this culture into a national or racial myth that forms the basis of a cultural Nordicist agenda. As was previously pointed out, the membrane between them is thin and permeable.

This ambivalence is also evident in the success of the multiple award-winning *Vikings* television series, created by historical novelist Michael Hirst for the *History Channel*, which premiered in March 2013 on Canadian television. Since its premier, five seasons have been produced for a worldwide audience with a planned sixth series announced in 2017. 609 *Vikings* was originally inspired by the Icelandic sagas of the Viking king *Ragnar Lothbrok*, famous for his raids on Britain and France, his brother Rollo, 610 his wives, the shield maiden Lagertha 611 and the mythical Aslaug 612 and his sons who ruled in England and Scandinavia. This series, loosely based on a range of historical and literary sources, immerses the modern viewer in a Viking world of pagan mythology, passion, loyalty, betrayal, sexual desire, war and peace in much the same way as the Icelandic sagas were translated and

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid. 607.

⁶⁰⁹'Vikings renewed for sixth season'. ew.com. http://ew.com/tv/2017/09/12/vikings-renewed-season-6/ (Accessed 22/01/18).

⁶¹⁰ This character was inspired by Rollo the Great, the first Duke of Normandy and the great-great-great grandfather of William the Conqueror. He was in fact not even a contemporary of Lothbrok.

⁶¹¹ The tale of the shield maiden Lagertha was originally set down in the 12th century by the Danish historian and chronicler Saxo Grammaticus.

⁶¹² The character Aslaug, a mythical *daughter* of *Sigurd* and *Brynhildr*, appeared in Snorri's Edda and the Volsunga Saga.

packaged for the sensibilities of Victorian, German, Scandinavian and American readership of the nineteenth century. In keeping, however, with our current nostalgic trends, this series goes to considerable length to represent the Vikings not just as warriors but settlers, skilful craftsman, expert boat builders, explorers, tradesmen and a deeply religious people seeking to survive and prosper in the harsh climatic, social and political conditions of their Scandinavian homeland and the hostility of the populations of the lands where they attempted to settle. It remains, however, a work of fiction rather than fact, frequently disregarding the historical record to enhance plot development. There are also more than enough battle scenes and violence to entertain the public and fit the received Anglo-Saxon depiction of the Viking as a warrior and barbarian. 613 What Vikings has in common with Lord of the Rings, however, is a global popularity measured in many millions of readers and viewers, pointing once more to the insatiable appetite of those swimming in an ocean of liquid modernity for fictional islands of a stable, absolute nomos of the kind that, under modernity, can only occur in myth, imaginary lands in which life could still be lived dramatically, heroically, untouched by existential doubt and a sense of insignificance.

This received stereotype of Vikings as a bloodthirsty warrior caste is most prevalent in the video game market where Viking inspired games come and go in a rapidly evolving consumer-driven marketplace where any game or genre has a relatively short shelf life. Popular titles which range in style from fantasy adventure to 'hack and slash'⁶¹⁴ include *Saga: Rage of the Vikings* (1998), *The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* (2011), *Völgarr the Viking* (2013), *War of the Vikings* (2014), *The Banner Saga* (2014), *Jotun* (2015), *Northgard* (2016), *For Honor* (2017) and *Vikings: Wolves of Midgard* (2017).⁶¹⁵ With a few exceptions, these games are not designed to educate the viewer, but as a form of audio-visual entertainment which immerses the gamer in a fantasy world based loosely on early medieval civilisations and Nordic myth and legend as a form of escapism from the real world of material concerns and

⁶¹³ Earlier sections of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles depict the Vikings as murderous barbarians.

⁶¹⁴ Gaming terms used to describe gameplay that emphasizes violent combat.

⁶¹⁵ 'Top 10 Viking games on PC'. gamersdecide.com. http://www.gamersdecide.com/pc-gamenews/top-10-viking-games-pc (Accessed 22/12/17).

domestic worries. Their value as a commodity is in the technical creation of an entertaining alternative world of Nordic-based fantasy for the gamer to become immersed in.

Our popular interest in Nordic culture through the media of entertainment can therefore be viewed with ambivalence both as a benign nostalgic escape from the disorienting pace of our 'liquid modern' culture and as the idealized, romanticized cultural basis for contemporary fragments of Nordicism which can assume a murderous mythic agency. In response to consumer demand, ancient Nordic culture has been turned by the film, fantasy literature and videogame industries into a commodity designed to generate huge sales in mass market places where innovative entertainment and computer technology are the key to the highest sales at the cinema box office, cable, satellite and online subscriptions. It has also created a popular idealisation of Nordic culture that bears many characteristics of cultural Nordicism through its appeal to those seeking a mythologized home of racial and cultural predominance. In this context television and cinema and the Internet can be considered as modern forms of cultural collective transcendence as individuals are brought together to share an image of an ideal cultural home in the past, a return to a previously ideal ancient Nordic home to shelter from the stresses of contemporary modernity.

The idealisation of Nordic culture is a feature of society that has arguably transcended the demise of Nordicism to become a noticeable element of our post-war culture. In his article, published in the *Social Semiotics* journal in 2017, Christopher Hutton examined the role of visual propaganda during the Third Reich as a means of disseminating the Nordic thought of thinkers such as H.F.K. Günther to the general public. Hutton discussed how the political rise of Nordicism at the end of the nineteenth century coincided with the emergence of mass media and culture through the ability to mass produce photographic images for use in advertising, the popular magazine, cinema and books.

Established visual forms such as the photograph and the map took on greater potency as they were diffused through newly popular genres such as the school textbook and national newspapers. The photograph became a key tool of racial theory, as a modality ideal for mediating between race theory and the popular iconography. ⁶¹⁶

In this article Hutton argued that, although the political element of Nordicism as the epitome of racial, Aryan health moved into the marginal strands of neo-Nazism during the post-war years, the established image of the Nordic in western culture as a model of health and beauty shorn of Nazi connotations transcended its political context and has evolved, through the mass media, into a contemporary received image of the Nordic as the role-model of the ideal human being and life-style.

In post-war Europe and North America, the Nordicist political movement moved to the neo-fascist fringe. [...] Nordic iconography, in particular the Nordic aesthetic of beauty and health, became key to post-Second World War popular culture in the West, notably mass advertising and the Hollywood film industry. Racial iconography survived the collapse of institutionalised race theory, diffusing through the imagery of the new global media. 617

Hutton argued the image of Nordic ideal type became a popularized stereotype of health and beauty through the influence of the mass media. Hutton claimed that the 'Nordic ideal of the tall, blond, blue eyed individual' has been prevalent in post-war mass culture as frequent representations of *Nordic Beauty* quoting iconic figures such as the Barbie Doll, Hollywood movie stars such as the Nordic-looking Veronica Lake, Buster Crabbe and the Marvel hero Captain America. Hutton proposed that this 'Nordic aesthetic' has now transcended the Nordicist context to become what he termed 'part of a global visual vocabulary' transmitted culturally through the visual representation of the Nordic type as a model of health and beauty. This Nordic aesthetic could be considered as an enduring aspect of

⁶¹⁶ Hutton M, Christopher. 2017. 'Racial ideology as elite discourse: Nordicism and the visual in an age of mass-culture'. *Social Semiotics*, 27 (3): 335-347 p.339.

⁶¹⁷ Hutton, Racial ideology as elite discourse, p. 344.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid. 616. p.335.

cultural/biological Nordicism that exists both in a benign and a racist form in contemporary culture. In his work, Hutton also described how this idealisation of the Nordic physique is often associated with the natural untamed beauty of the Nordic landscape.

It is redolent of health, fitness, athleticism, the naked body, as well as unsullied purity and naturalness. It suggests harmony between the aesthetics of the body, the rugged and austere Nordic environment, with its dazzling snow-covered mountains, crystal-clear lakes and blue skies, and the "made world" of design, fashion and architecture. 619

This association between the physical beauty of the ideal Nordic type and the natural environment of Scandinavia, as an idealized land of untamed beauty, was a notable feature of National Romanticism and thinkers who considered the Nordic climate to be a formative element of the superior Nordic man. This attraction to the savage beauty of the Nordic environment is reflected in the current popularity of the literary and cinemagraphic genre now termed Nordic Noir in which the development of the characters and the plot is intertwined with the backdrop of the harsh Nordic climate and landscape to explore the dark side of human nature, or what in Jungian terms can be seen as the Nordic 'shadow'. Notably authors of this literary genre are the Swedish novelist Stieg Larsson (Millennium Trilogy), and Norwegian Jo Nesbø (Harry Hole series) whose novels are now international best-sellers. Many of their works have been made into films set against dramatic landscapes in Scandinavia. This emergence of the Nordic Noir genre has also sparked a rekindling of interest in Icelandic literature with writers such as Ragnar Jónasson (Dark Iceland series) drawing on the dramatic climatic conditions of his country to reflect an intense atmosphere of social claustrophobia in which the characters of his novels interact both with each other and the untameable forces of their often-hostile Icelandic setting. In his work Jónasson explores the interaction of close-knit, isolated communities, exploring human passions and conflict in a way that could in many ways be compared with the Icelandic sagas that became so popular during the nineteenth century. In conclusion, it could be argued that the 'permeable membrane' that distinguished scholarly

⁶¹⁹ Ibid. 616. p.335.

and popular interest in Nordic culture from cultural and later political and biological Nordicism during the nineteenth century, still exists today and that, in our 'liquid culture', one flows with ease into the other.

The re-emergence of right-wing thought in Europe

The re-emergence of right-wing thought and direct action groups across Europe has arguably been by boosted by reports of increased immigration into Northern and Western Europe in recent years and notably during what has come to be termed the *European Migrant Crisis* of 2015. During this time, rising numbers of migrants arrived in the European Union (EU), travelling across the Mediterranean Sea or overland from South-East Europe. These included asylum seekers, but also others, such as economic migrants and some dangerous political and criminal elements, including Islamic State militants. This brought about a significant shift towards protectionist thought and criticism of State and European immigration policies, such as in Germany who accepted large numbers of migrants and where the populist right-wing PEDIGA group (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West) has grown in popularity since its founding in 2014.

In an article entitled, *The Right is Rising and Social Democracy is Dying Across Europe*, published in the Guardian in September 2017, Josef Joffe⁶²⁰ discussed the rise of right wing, nationalist, thought in Europe and the subsequent decline in social democracy. Although his article focussed mainly on the electoral success of the right wing party, the *Alternativ für Deutschland* (*AfD*) (the Alternative for Germany), it also discussed the increased success of right-wing 'authoritarian popularists'⁶²¹ in Europe such as Marine Le Pen (*Front national*), Geert Wilders (*Freedom Party*), the *UK Independence Party* (UKIP) and in the USA, Donald Trump, who have succeeded in gaining

German newspaper. German newsp

national support for their nationalist, anti-immigration and protectionist policies. 622 In the USA, this has included a travel ban on Muslims in 2017, stricter immigration laws and a proposed wall across the US-Mexican border. The article agues, however, that many voters in European elections, such as in Germany, voted for these right wing parties as a protest vote, as an expression of their feelings of frustration and abandonment by the mainstream parties. This trend towards an increased presence of the right-wing in mainstream politics could also be interpreted as an indicator of what Boym described as 'national and nationalist revivals all over the world' emerging as as a reaction to immigration and globalisation. Although they are still minority parties in Europe, this trend towards nationalist thought is evident from this map showing the percentage of votes won by right wing parties across Europe in recent general elections. It is interesting to note that Denmark, the land of *Hygge*, voted the happiest country in the world in 2016 and second happiest in 2017 (to Norway)⁶²³ has one of the greatest representations of populist right-wing politics in Europe, in the form of the *Dansk Folkeparti* (Danish People's Party). 624 This suggests that beneath the world's image of the Nordic Model of social content lies an emerging undercurrent of societal unrest.

⁶²² In his recent work on the French New Right, Stéphane François refers to the influence of Nordicism as part of its attack on Judeo-Christianity, Globalization, anomic modernity and multicultural democracies. François, Stéphane. (2018) *Paganisme, écologie et identité.* Paris: Taylor and Francis.

⁶²³'World Happiness Report 2018'. World Happiness. http://worldhappiness.report (Accessed 30/03/18).

⁶²⁴ According to the election results of 2015.

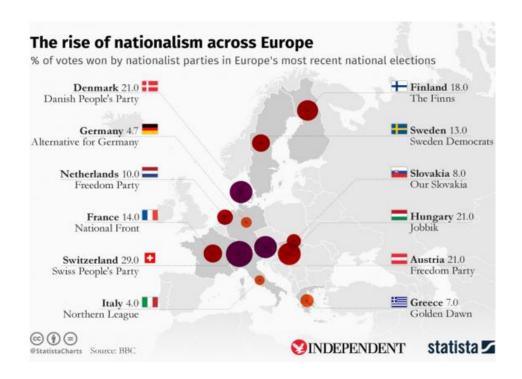


Table 3: Source: https://www.theguardian.com/uk 29/09/17 (Accessed 02/01/18).

Within this rise in mainstream right-wing thought across Europe and the USA, some commentators and journalists are also observing a rise in farright and neo-Nazi activity. In an article published in *Newsweek Magazine* of March 2015, Claire Fernandez, deputy director for policy for the European Network Against Racism⁶²⁵ described the rise of nationalist and neo-Nazi activity in Europe as 'very worrying'. Fernandez cited Germany as an example where, in 2014 the organisation identified 22,000 supporters of the far-right in Germany of which 5,400 were defined as neo-Nazi. Fernandez also discussed how far-right groups are using the Internet as a vehicle for their propaganda, recruitment and fund-raising.

In terms of neo-Nazi activity and violence we are definitely seeing an increase. Neo-Nazi groups have more visibility and support online and we are clearly seeing more far-right activity in mainstream society. 626

⁶²⁶Capon, Felicity. 'Neo-Nazi Activity on the rise in Europe'. Newsweek Magazine US edition. http://www.newsweek.com (Accessed 02/01/18).

 $^{^{625}}$ The ENAR was established in 1998 as a pan-European organisation promoting racial equality and monitoring racism.

The article also cited information from the Swedish anti-racism organisation $Expo^{627}$ indicating that despite a fall in the numbers of neo-Nazi organisations in Sweden, the intensity of their actions is growing. The organisation attributed this rise, in part, to the result of the Swedish general election in 2014 where the far-right, anti-immigration party, the *Sweden Democrats*, gained 13% of the votes. *Expo*, an anti-racist organisation that monitors the spread of neo-Nazi propaganda activity in Sweden reported that the number of recorded activities had increased by 23%, from 2,334 incidents in 2013 to 2,814 in 2014.

One of the most significant manifestations of this trend towards populist nationalist revivals in Europe could be observed in Britain's referendum of June 2016 in which the public voted for their countries independence from the European Union, commonly known as *Brexit*, described by former Labour minister Lord Adonis in a letter to the Prime Minister Theresa May, as 'a populist and nationalist spasm.' This referendum brought into question the viability of a European Union and sparked calls from right-wing parties in a number of other European countries, for similar referendums to restore national independence from the legal, political and economic control of the larger European community. 630

In his analysis of the currents of populist right wing thought in British politics, *The Road to Somewhere - The New Tribes Shaping British Politics* (2017), political commentator David Goodhart analyses the populist surges which, in his analysis, brought about both Brexit and the rise of President Trump by describing two groups of individuals who make up western society, the 'Anywheres' and the 'Somewheres'. Goodhart defines the 'Anywheres' as 'a large minority group of the highly educated and mobile' who 'value

 $^{^{627}}$ The Expo Foundation was founded in 1995 with the aim of studying and mapping right-wing and racist activities and trends in European society.

⁶²⁸ Capon, Felicity 'Neo-Nazi Activity on the rise in Europe'. The recorded activities include disseminating flyers, painting graffiti, or plastering stickers on buildings.

⁶²⁹ Lord Adonis in a letter of resignation to the Prime Minister as government infrastructure advisor. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-42515637 (Accessed 30/12/17).

⁶³⁰ 'Brexit sparks calls for other votes'. www.bbc.co.uk. (June 2016)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-36615879 (Accessed 09/01/18).

autonomy and openness and comfortably surf social change' and the 'Somewheres' as a 'larger but less influential group' who are 'more rooted and less well educated, who value security and familiarity and are more connected with group identities.' Goodhart argues that over recent decades the more conservative 'Somewheres' have felt excluded from the public sphere and that the populist 'backlash', as he described it, is a manifestation of this social and political discontent. This concept of a large group within the population which yearns for a return home to the 'security and familiarity' of rootedness in the past and aligns with both the emergence of Nordicist nineteenth century *völkisch* thought as a populist movement and the contemporary re-emergence of fragments of Nordicist thought in both Northern Europe and the USA.

A mythical era of racial purity

In his authoritative analysis of right wing ideology in Scandinavia, *Racist and Right-Wing Violence in Scandinavia* (1997) Tore Bjørgo, 633 discussed the historical misperception of many right-wing thinkers and groups who believe that interbreeding with other racial types is a feature of modernity and globalisation rather than a natural process which has taken place throughout history. In their recreation of an idealized past, many right-wing thinkers constructed their theories on the core belief that there was a period in the past when races lived in separate territories that formed an essential part of their rootedness in a particular place and ethnic culture, blood and soil.

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⁶³¹ Goodhart, David. *The Road to Somewhere: The New Tribes Shaping British Politics*. (London, Penguin, 2017), Introduction.

⁶³² Goodhart, David. *The Road to Somewhere*, Introduction.

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Some versions of nationalist ideology are based upon the assumption that the 'natural order' of things- before history, modernity or imperialism started to mess things up- was that ethical or cultural groups lived apart in neatly separate territories. Ethnic conflict, racism, war and instability are seen as invariable outcomes when these 'natural' boundaries are over-stepped and different cultural groups become mixed. Stability and peace can only be re-established when the various national (or cultural) groups find back to their natural, separate and homogenous societies. 634

This belief in an ideal, racially pure state of previous existence is a common strand in the world-view and myth making of many right-wing individuals and groups who believe in a mythical past of racial purity during which the Nordic race, developing in geographic and racial isolation, reached a stage of perfection which could be regenerated through modern programmes of positive eugenics. The following case studies of individuals and groups, whose world-views demonstrate elements of Nordicism, illustrate this belief in an era of primordial heterogeneity as the foundation for their belief systems and programmes of Nordic cultural and biological protection and regeneration.

Nordicism.com - online Nordicism

Much of the liquidity of our modern society has been driven by the rapidly developing and expanding technology of the Internet, which has allowed the uncensored transmission of ideas to a global readership that has never previously existed. Through privately maintained web sites, blogs and social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, the dissemination of political and religious ideology has been liberated from the constraints of traditional publishing and news reporting. For mainstream political parties, the astute use of this means of communication has become essential. It has also become, however, the platform for many extremist groups to communicate their ideologies and terrorist groups who rely on the near-instant transmission of terrorist incidents, by members of the public, to amplify the impact of their direct action.

⁶³⁴ Bjørgo, Tore (1997) *Racist and Right-Wing Violence in Scandinavia* Norway: Tano Aschehougs Fontenserie. p.67.

This network also provides a number of isolated Nordicist thinkers with the means of communicating, spreading propaganda and discussing their Nordic thought with other like-minded individuals' as part of an online *communitas*. The Internet, whose servers legally defend the right to uncensored free speech and self-expression, is therefore a virtual publishing house and meeting place for Nordicist thinkers who use a range of web sites to express and discuss their views.

Stormfront.org, established in the early 1990s by former Klu Klux Klan leader Don Black, is an international forum site that describes itself as 'a community of racial realists and idealists' and 'white nationalists who support true diversity and a homeland for all peoples.' ⁶³⁵ This site contains millions of posts divided into a range of nationalist and white supremacist subject threads and a search of the term Nordic or Nordicism reveals numerous posts discussing its relevance historically and in today's society.

Germanic Pride was created in 2015 and displays the Odal rune \$\times\$ (heritage) over a photo of the *Externsteine* on its home page with the slogan 'No roots = No future' (see figure 35). This natural sandstone rock formation in the Teutoburg Forest, Westphalia, Germany, was used as a hermitage during the Middle Ages and attracted the interest of *SS* scholars and archaeologists who conducted excavations at the site. *Germanic Pride* is devoted to developing a sense of rootedness for those who consider themselves to be of Nordic/Germanic origin. Its sections include a YouTube video of Dr Alfred Ploetz, son of the German Nordicist eugenicist of the same name, recalling how his father referred to the Nordic race as the 'salt of the Earth.' ⁶³⁶ An article on the mythical island of Thule describes it as 'a great empire created and inhabited by the Nordic type of people only' which covered the North Pole, Scandinavia, North Germany, the Baltic area, Siberia, Canada and Alaska in prehistoric times. These ancient Nordics are described as a perfect physical and spiritual race of human beings that has progressively deteriorated. This

 $^{^{635}\}mbox{'}Homepage'.$ stormfront.org. https://www.stormfront.org/forum/index.php (Accessed 04/01/18).

⁶³⁶'Germanic Pride homepage'. wordpress.com. https://cometa9a.wordpress.com/about/(Accessed 10/01/18).

site idealises the Nordic race creating the imagined space of Thule, in which the Nordic race lived in a perfect state of racial purity in isolation from other peoples.

Someone did name them like the "Divine Race" because their soul-level was very close to God's wisdom and their brain was very much evolved. 637

In another section, entitled *Germanic Roots* the anonymous author of the site displays a number of images by *SS* war artist Wolfgang Willrich of ideal Nordic types and argues that the terms Germanic and Nordic people are synonymous. The site argues, however, that it does not promote racial hatred but a sense of rootedness in a once great Northern tribe and that the preservation of the Nordic bloodline as 'one of the most high and Holy actions'. ⁶³⁸

Nordic Anti Semite is a private blog by far right-wing blogger Aidhan, whose articles on the superiority of the Nordic race and the need to protect and regenerate it are filled with derogatory terms such as 'brown subhumans', 'ratlike Jews', 'genetic wastage' and 'mongrels'. These blogs are interspersed with images of ideal Nordic physical types (see figure 34) and degrading images of black and Jewish people, including a historical photograph of an African American hanging from a tree with a caption by Aidhan that reads, 'Sometimes it's the only thing a Nigger understands'. These pages also include a number of images of Hitler and members of the Hitler Youth as examples of an ideal Nordic society. Promoting the concept of Nazism, the web site includes a section for the memoires and pro-Nazi anti-Semitic articles of Jerry, a former member of the Hitler Youth and *Reichs Arbeits Dienst* (RAD)⁶⁴⁰ during World War Two.

 $^{^{637}}$ 'Thule Island'. wordpress.com. https://cometa9a.wordpress.com/91-2/ (Accessed $^{10}/^{01}$).

⁶³⁸'Germanic Roots'. wordpress.com. https://cometa9a.wordpress.com/germanic-roots-2/(Accessed 10/01//18).

^{639&#}x27;Blog Homepage' https://nordicantisemite.com (Accessed 04/01/18).

⁶⁴⁰ The Reich Labour Service was a major organisation established in Nazi Germany as an agency to help mitigate the effects of unemployment on the German economy, militarize the workforce and spread Nazi ideology.

In his blog, Aidhan calls for the geographic segregation of races to protect them from miscegenation especially the Nordic race, which he idealizes, in his images and descriptions, as the tall, blond, blue eyed stereotype of the Scandinavian. Amongst the many historical photos of Nordic types from the period of the Third Reich, one image shows a map copied from Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916) in which the American Nordicist showed the distribution of the Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean races in Europe. Aidhan uses these images to evidence his opposition to multi-culturalism and his call for racial segregation.

We have no obligation to host or live with any other race. We want the Nordic Race, and just the Nordic Race. We don't want to mix with, see or live with other races. We see nothing in the other Peoples preferable and nothing in them that is a substitute for our own people. So we want our own country for our own people. ⁶⁴¹

Calling for a homeland for a purified Nordic race, Aidhan also calls for the eventual extermination of the Jewish people as a punishment for their destruction of the Nordic race describing what he views as an essential racial battle for survival against the Jew.

The Nordic Race would have a Nordic country, Negroes would have a Negro land/place to go (country is not a Negro concept) and Jews would be blamed for what they have done and forcibly exterminated for their guilt. This is why the Jew seeks to end the Nordic Race.

Nordicantisemite.com expresses the belief that the Nordic race is genetically superior to others and Aidhans's blogs are radically anti-Semitic, attacking both the Jewish people and high profile individuals who he considers to be the principal enemies of the Nordic race.

Nordicism, and the belief in inherent Nordic racial superiority of the Nordic group, and the consequent will for racial separation is innate to surviving members of the Nordic Race, who the Jews have decimated. 642

In his blogs Aidhan also blames the European Union for an immigration crisis that risks the eventual destruction of the Nordic race arguing that 'they are the

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⁶⁴¹ Ibid. 639.

⁶⁴² Ibid. 639.

ones who set the quotas that allowed the mass swamping in subhuman effluent 'refugees' to begin with.' ⁶⁴³ He also argues that powerful Jewish organisations and individuals have formed a silent majority supporting Muslim immigration into Europe and that a key function of the EU is the destruction of European nation states, cultures and identities. ⁶⁴⁴

Similar in name and views and associated by hyperlink to Aidhan's blog site is that of Trent (no other name is shown) who hosts the *Anti-Semitic Nordicist* blog site. On this site, Trent claims that the 'Nordic man or Aryan man is the only species of human biologically capable of forming advanced civilisations' and has been 'poisoned by Jews.' ⁶⁴⁵ Like his associate Aidhan, Trent's views are radically anti-Semitic describing the Jewish race as 'a demon spawn in human form' ⁶⁴⁶ and expresses his sympathy with Hitler's Nazi regime by stating that they lost the war 'trying to free mankind' and that the Second World War was 'an effort to save the Nordic race.' ⁶⁴⁷ Trent also describes the physical beauty of Nordic blue eyes and blond hair, supported by images of ideal Nordic types, and his belief that the Nordic race is superior to others both physically and as leaders of Empires that have ruled the world.

I believe that Nordics, a zoological subspecies of man Indigenous to Scandinavia are a super race, with their blonde hair and blue eyes they have founded glorious empires that rule the world, and nobody else has, period. ⁶⁴⁸

Facebook is used as a platform by Nordic interest groups and individuals such as *Nordic Beauty @protectnordicbeauty*, a Facebook page dedicated to the 'beauty, culture and tradition and for the preservation of the Nordic people scattered all around the globe.' and to making 'people aware of the problems in Europe and in particular in the Nordic countries.⁶⁴⁹ This Facebook page which to date has 118,927 followers⁶⁵⁰ was previously

⁶⁴³ Ibid. 639.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid. 639.

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid. 639

⁶⁴⁶ 'Blog Homepage'. word.press.com. https://antisemiticnordicist.wordpress.com (Accessed 07/01/18).

⁶⁴⁷Ibid. 646.

⁶⁴⁸Ibid, 646.

 $^{^{649}}$ 'Profile page'. https://www.facebook.com/protectnordicbeauty/ (Accessed 04/01/18). 650 Figures correct on 04/01/18.

banned and closely monitors postings which are of an abusive or racist nature. This page nonetheless promotes Nordicism by providing a platform for group members to discuss and admire what they consider to be the natural blue-eyed and blond-haired beauty of the Nordic race and view a large gallery of mostly female, ideal Nordic physical types posted by the site's followers.

Facebook is also home to the right-wing network of the interconnected *Nordic Defence League* (5,115 followers), Norwegian Defence League (27,667 followers), *Swedish Defence League* (10,099 followers) *Danish Defence League* (11,851 followers), and *Finnish Defence League* (11,286). 651 Whilst not overtly Nordicist, and focussing primarily on social and political issues, these Facebook pages provide a platform for anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic news reports and political comments aimed at the protection of the Nordic people and opposing globalisation and multiculturalism. As Facebook modifiers regularly monitor these sites for racist or abusive comments, postings must conform to regulations or be deleted, the expression, however, of the belief that the Nordic race is endangered and needs protection is thinly-veiled in some postings.

Varg Vikernes - Norse paganism and Nordic purity

Nordic nostalgia and the need to create sacred spaces of collective memory and transcendence based on resynthesized models of the Nordic past have led to the re-emergence of new religions based on ancient pagan worship. Although the practice of Norse paganism has been present on the outer fringes of religion throughout history, the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have seen a re-emergence of Norse paganism in Northern Europe and the USA.

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⁶⁵¹ Figures correct on 04/01/18.

The neo-pagan Ásatrú ⁶⁵² movement has become one of the most prominent branches of Norse neo-paganism, defining itself as 'the indigenous religion of the Northern European peoples,' and ' a religion that reveres nature and ancestry and values honor and nobility.' This movement has no formal universal creed or forms of worship and is composed of a number of strands whose beliefs and rituals differ considerably. One group that has attracted considerable media attention is the Ásatrúarfélagið (Ásatrú Fellowship) of Iceland, founded in 1972, which has seen its membership steadily increase to 3,583 members in 2017⁶⁵⁴ and regularly celebrates pagan days of worship. Permanent temples have now been built in both Iceland and Denmark reflecting the extent to which Ásatrú has become established as an alternative faith to Christianity. In Sweden the Samfundet Forn Sed Sverige, originally founded in 1994 as the Sveriges Asatrosamfund, has also increased in popularity.

Another popular strand of Norse paganism is *Odinism*, which shares many similarities with Asatrú, but remains distinct as an organisation and form of worship. Odinist groups include The Odinist Fellowship and Odinic Rite (London) and The Troth (USA). Odinist web sites include http://odinist.org and https://www.odinism.net. These groups and sites promote the worship of the Norse pantheon and a celebration of ancient Norse traditions and festivals and, although rooted in Scandinavian culture, do not refer to race and are considered 'inclusionary'. These neo-pagan groups draw on the texts of eleventh and twelfth century Icelandic scholars such as Snorri Sturluson, to recreate a form of worship which links their followers with their ancient Nordic spiritual heritage. It is therefore a faith that is attractive to those who wish to regenerate the Nordic race and its ancient culture. Within the field of pagan worship, certain individuals and groups form what can be discerned as a discreet strand of Norse paganism that draws on Norse mythology as a foundation for their racial and nationalist beliefs. These groups are often described as the *völkisch* strand of Norse heathenry. This fusion of Norse

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⁶⁵² Translated from the ancient Norse meaning worshipers of the Aesir.

⁶⁵³ Puryear, Mark. (2006) The Nature of Ásatrú. Lincoln, USA: iUniverse. p. xv.

^{654 &#}x27;Ásatrú membership'. asatru.is. https://asatru.is/felagafjoldi (Accessed 15/01/18).

mythology with a political and racial agenda of racial purity can be seen in the actions, writings and videos of Norwegian Varg Víkernes. 655

On 20th January 1993 the Black Metal⁶⁵⁶ musician behind the solo project Burzum, 657 known as Varg Víkernes, came to public notoriety when one of Norway's leading newspapers Bergens Tidende, published an article entitled *Vi tente på kirkene* (We burned down the churches)⁶⁵⁸ in which Víkernes and his associates claimed responsibility for the arson of a number of ancient stave churches. 659 This was intended as an attack on the foreign faith of Christianity that had been imposed on the pagan peoples of Norway. On this same date, Víkernes was arrested by police for the arson of four churches and later released on bail. On 19th August 1993, Víkernes was further arrested for the murder of Black Metal collaborator Øystein 'Euronymous' Aarseth and the subsequent trial received considerable media coverage raising the profile of Black Metal as a serious social concern in Norway. At the conclusion of this trial in May 1994, Víkernes was found guilty and sentenced to twenty-one years 660 for the murder of 'Euronymous'. He was also further convicted of the arson and attempted arson of Asane Church and Storetveit Church, respectively, in Bergen, the arson of *Skjold* Church in Vindafjord, and the arson of *Holmenkollen* Chapel in Oslo. Víkernes was, however, acquitted by the jury of the arson of *Fantoft* stave church, 661 dating from the 12th century, despite protests from the judge. 662

⁶⁵⁵ Born Kristian Larsson Vikernes on 11th February 1973.

⁶⁵⁶ Black metal is an extreme subgenre of heavy metal music.

⁶⁵⁷ Burzum was founded by Víkernes as a solo project in 1991 and is still releasing albums available as cd's or for download on popular web sites such as amazon.com and Apple's iTunes. The term Burzum originates from JRR Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* in which the followers of Sauron speak the 'Black Speech'. In this fictional language Burzum means darkness and is inscribed on the 'One Ring'.

^{658 &#}x27;Twenty years since the Church Burnings'. Bergens Tidende. bt.no. http://www.bt.no/nyheter/lokalt/20-ar-siden-kirkesjokket-2932446.html#.UlnFZxa89UM accessed (12/10/13).

⁶⁵⁹ A stave church is a medieval wooden Christian church building.

⁶⁶⁰ Twenty- one years is the maximum sentence that a Norwegian court can impose.

⁶⁶¹ The burnt ruins of this ancient church were provocatively used as the cover photo of Burzum's 1992 EP, Aske (Ashes).

^{662 &#}x27;A Burzum Story'. www.burzum.org.

http://www.burzum.org/eng/library/a_burzum_story02.shtml (Accessed 12/10/13).

It was during his period of imprisonment that Víkernes further developed his political ideology away from the Satanist 'hype' of the Black Metal scene, which had attracted increasing media attention and which, whilst advantageous as a means of promoting his music, detracted from any credible socio-political agenda inspiring his work and actions. In *Black Sun* (2002), Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke pointed out this shift, commenting that during this period 'Vikernes began to formulate his nationalist heathen ideology using materials from Norse Mythology combined with racism and occult National Socialism'. It was also during this period that Víkernes became associated with the *Allgermanische Heidnische Front* (German Heathen Front) and the *Norsk Hedensk Front* (Norwegian Heathen Front), both of which promoted the neo-pagan faith of *Ôðalism* and a form of blood and soil ideology.

Víkernes served fifteen years of his sentence and was released on probation on 22nd May 2009. Following his release from prison, Vikernes left Norway to live in an isolated location in France with his partner Marie Cachet, out of the eye of the media where he has continued writing and publishing. In 2013 he began his blog and YouTube channel, both called the *Thulean Perspective - For Blood and Soil*, and through his writings, has promoted an ideology called *Ôðalism*⁶⁶⁵ based on an adapted form of blood and soil nationalism. In 2013, Víkernes posted his definition of his *Ôðalic* belief system fusing ancient religion with a modern political agenda based on racial purity and the need to regenerate lost traditions, customs and religions that have been lost to the progress of Christianity and globalisation.

Ôðalism is in the strictest sense an ideology based on blood (of the native population) and soil (the homeland of the native population); protecting, promoting

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⁶⁶³ Goodrick-Clarke, Nicholas (2002) *Black Sun. Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity.* New York: University Press. p.204.

⁶⁶⁴ In an interview entitled 'And Thus Spake Varg', Vikernes stated that he wrote a political article for the organisation Source: http://www.burzum.com/burzum/library/interviews/varg/ (Accessed 30/12/17).

⁶⁶⁵ The stem Odal refers to the Odal rune of the Elder Futharkh representing heritage, inheritance and inherited land.

 $^{^{666}\,\}mbox{The Blood}$ and Soil ideology of Nazi theorists such as Walther Darré was fundamental to Nazi Nordicism.

and if necessary reviving the customs, traditions, world view, values and religion that naturally came from each particular population in their homeland.⁶⁶⁷

In his article, Víkernes declared his belief in racial and cultural diversity, arguing that each unique culture should remain in their own territory where their blood attaches them to the soil. Wíkernes did not promote the expansion of his Nordic race into other territories but promoted its protection on its own soil against what he described as the threat of miscegenation and what he termed the 'genocidal politics' of feminism and colonialisation.

The human population of this planet will be rich only if we keep the diversity, and make sure that no human races are lost, either through interbreeding with other more numerous or dominant races or through other genocidal politics, such as feminism and colonisation. ⁶⁶⁹

Víkernes also argued for the segregation of the races calling for the exclusion of non-Europeans and the return of pure blooded Europeans from former colonies to preserve what he terms diversity, but which implies a racial purity which should be protected and regenerated to prevent it from disappearing through miscegenation.

Ôðalism is advocating the repatriation of all non-Europeans in Europe as the solution to the genocidal politics lead by most European nations today – and also repatriation of all unmixed Europeans from the former European colonies. Ôðalism is not nationalism in a modern sense: each and every modern nation is a modern construct based on geography (where the borders have been drawn) and ethnicity (i.e. languages spoken) instead of racial – or if you prefer tribal – identities. The Ôðalic nationalism is based on race. ⁶⁷⁰

Víkernes defined his form of nationalism as a return to primordial tribalism, stating that race is not confined by what he sees as the 'modern construct' of national borders. Víkernes' nationalism, promoted through the modern technology of the Internet is both forward looking and retrospective. In his numerous YouTube videos he calls for a return to a rural lifestyle, as an

⁶⁶⁷Vikernes, Varg. 'Why Ôðalism?' The Thulean Perspective.

https://thuleanperspective.com/2013/07/31/why-odalism/?wref=tp (Accessed 23/12/17). ⁶⁶⁸ Blood and Soil was an important element of the ideology of the SS and notably, Nazi Minister for Agriculture Walther Darré.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid. 667.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid. 667.

alternative to modernity, the rejection of Christianity as a foreign non-indigenous form of faith and the exclusion of Jews and Muslims from European soil. Opposing globalisation he argues that religion, culture, traditions and all that forms a racial world-view cannot be made universal, as they should grow out of a historic relationship between blood and soil. He also promotes the re-establishment of native European values and belief systems such as traditional forms of paganism, which he claims are rooted in northern European racial identity. In addition to his YouTube video blogs and website, Víkernes has published a number of printed works. In 2011 he published Sorcery and Religion in Ancient Scandinavia, in 2015 he published Reflections on European Mythology and Polytheism and in 2017 he coauthored Paganism Explained (Parts 1 and 2) with Marie Cachet with accompanying YouTube videos. These works all celebrate the ancient Norse pantheon as an alternative belief system to the foreign faith of Christianity.

In creating this modernist belief system Víkernes has created a sacred space connecting the past with the present and future, consisting of a resynthesized form of ancient paganism, adapted to his rejection of our current state of modernity, as an future alternative to our current state of globalisation which he perceives as bringing about the weakening of superior races with inferior blood. Like a number of isolated Nordic thinkers Víkernes makes constant use of the Internet to promote his religious and racial ideology and is named as an associate on the *Nordic Anti Semite* web site of blogger Aidhan.

Modern Vinland

During the late nineteenth century the 'imperfect history' of America's discovery by Leifr Eiríksson, set down in the Iceland during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries in the *Grœnlendinga saga* (The Saga of the Greenlanders) and *Eiríks saga rauða* (Eirik the Red's Saga), became a foundation myth for many descendants of Nordic and Germanic settlers in the USA. This myth of Vínland, a mythologized original homeland for Germanic and Scandinavian Americans, where the original Viking settlers first set foot

on American soil, became an imagined, romanticized land of plenty and a focal point of Northern European nationalism in the USA. This myth of Vínland is still present in a number of right-wing groups in America who strive for white supremacy in an attempt to defend their race from annihilation through immigration and interbreeding between races.

In 2007, an American prison inmate, Dr. Casper Odinson Cröwell, established the Vinland Folk Resistance, as a breakaway group of the Aryan Brotherhood, with the aim of creating an organisation that was more devoted to the purity of the Nordic/Aryan race in America and an adapted version of the ancient Norse pagan faith of Odinism. The Aryan Brotherhood was originally founded in 1964 in San Quentin Prison, California, as a white supremacist, neo-Nazi prison group that defended the interests of white prisoners from black and Mexican gangs. Since this date, the organisation has grown and become increasingly involved in organized crime both within and outside the prison system. In 2013, The Federal Bureau of Investigations estimated that although its members made up less than 1% of the US prison population, its 20,000 members may have been responsible for 20% of murders behind bars and was thought to be active in at least sixteen states.⁶⁷¹

In 2007, the National Geographic Explorer series broadcast an interview with Cröwell, currently serving two life sentences for assault with a deadly weapon, who explained how he joined the Aryan Brotherhood as an 'enforcer' and his reasons for eventually leaving it. In 2007, Cröwell turned his back on the criminal activities of the Brotherhood and gave evidence against them to the authorities, claiming, in an interview with *National Geographic* that it had become the 'Heroin Brotherhood', and accusing them of being 'race traitors' for the murder of white prisoners. 672

On leaving the Aryan Brotherhood in 2007, Cröwell, with the support of his wife Linda and Ron McVan, a white supremacist and Odinist, founded the

⁶⁷¹ Source of statistics: 'Family from Hell: The Rise of the Aryan Brotherhood'. (2013) http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/family-from-hell-the-rise-of-the-aryanbrotherhood-8563520.html April 2013. (Accessed 05/01/18).

⁶⁷² The Aryan Brotherhood - National Geographic Explorer Series. (2007).

Vinland Folk Resistance from inside prison. In his introduction to the group he stated that 'Our mission goal is to awake our race to the detrimental and ultimately catastrophic reality of racial extinction which we face [...] Our intention is to promote awareness and pan-Aryan Tribalism and solidarity among our dwindling people'. On his welcome page, Cröwell described the USA and Canada as Vínland, rejecting the term America as Latin and referring to Christopher Columbus as a 'fraudulent hero.'

Vinland is the name our Nordic-Aryan Ancestors gave to this land and it too is the name by which we call it with great affection and respect for those hearty and stalwart Ancestors. We are Patriots of our Aryan Folk and this land, our Odal/Othal land, which our Ancestors found and centuries later established and built upon.⁶⁷⁴

In his writings, Cröwell makes no distinction between Aryan and Nordic and roots the foundation myth of his modern day Aryan/Nordic tribe in the belief that Vínland is their ancestral homeland that they must defend. In his blog, Cröwell described a process of deterioration of the white European population in the USA, providing figures showing that in 1967 the racial composition of the USA was 76% white, whereas at the time of his writing it stood at 50%. Cröwell blamed this on the US government's immigration policy that was weakening the white race and called for an awakening of the people to protect the Aryan/Nordic folk.

We resist and defy the Government sponsored program of 'Passive Genocide' of the White Race, and we seek to incite a revolution in thought to first awaken the lethargic and complacent minds of our people and then educate those minds towards the welfare, existence and survival of our race and thereafter, the advancement of our folk.

To counter this trend towards the erosion of northern European white supremacy and the eventual extinction of his race Cröwell also cited the

⁶⁷³ 'Blog Homepage'. Vinland Folk Resistance.

http://vinland folk resistance. blog spot. co. uk/2007/03/welcome-to-vinland-folk-resistance. html (Accessed 06/01/18).

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid. 673.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid. 673.

 $^{^{676}\,\}rm This$ concept of a racial awakening was a significant element of early Nazi ideology that used the slogan 'Deutschland erwacht'.

slogan originally credited to white supremacist David Lane (1938-2007)⁶⁷⁷, known as the 'fourteen words'. The number 14 is often used on tattoos of the Aryan Brotherhood and other white supremacist groups and has become a national slogan, (see figure 36). These fourteen words are:

We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children. 678

To secure this future Cröwell and McVan called for a return to family values, racial segregation and stricter immigration laws to protect the Aryan/Nordic race that founded Vínland and a return to the ancient practice of paganism, which they claimed to be the indigenous religion of the original Viking settlers.

Cröwell and the principal contributors to his site, such as McVan, rooted their beliefs in racial superiority in a resynthesized strand of Odinism by creating a brotherhood of priests (*Gothar*) and warriors (*Einherjar*) who collectively form the *Sacred Order of the Sons of Odin 1519*. This pagan group uses the ancient Norse *Valknut* design (see figure 37) as a symbol of their devotion to Oðinn (Odin) and to signify 'honor and reverence to all our ancestors who chose to die horrible deaths at the hands of the Christian missionaries.' Like many neo-pagans, Cröwell presented Christianity as a foreign faith, often brutally imposed on the ancient Norse pagans and aimed to regenerate this faith in a form compatible with his racial principles.

Our primary purpose is the defence, advancement and promotion of all aspects of our native and indigenous Pagan/Heathen religion called Odinism. This religion and way of life was indigenous to the peoples of Northern and Western Europe and so it remains so of their descendants today, "us"!

Through a series of periodicals, available through the site, entitled *Gungnir*, ⁶⁸⁰ Cröwell and his collaborators discussed their Odinist beliefs, the rules and conditions of membership, their spiritual objectives, the significance of runes and encouraged readers to take part in pagan ceremonies to celebrate gods

⁶⁷⁷ David Lane was a convicted criminal who was an important member of 'The Order', a white supremacist group involved in violent crime. He was also an associate of Cröwell and McVan. ⁶⁷⁸ Ibid. 673.

⁶⁷⁹ 'Sons of Odin - 1519'. Holy Nation of Odin. http://sonsofodin1519.org/node/2 (Accessed 06/01/18).

 $^{^{680}\,\}mbox{Gungnir}$ was the name given to Odin's spear.

of the Norse pantheon and pagan rituals aligned with the seasons quoting sections of the *Hávamál* from the *Poetic Edda*. Cröwell has also published two works entitled *Ek Einherjar: Hammer of the Gods* (2009) and *Vor Forn Sidr* (Our ancient religion) (2012) in which he discusses his faith, the Norse pantheon and provides advice on conducting ceremonies and rituals, with sections attributed to both Ron McVan and David Lane. McVan has also published a number of works on Norse mythology and Odinism under his own name such as *Creed of Iron* (2012) *Wotan's Holy Rites and Ritual* (2012) and *Book of Wotan* (2016).

Through their writings, Cröwell and his associates draw on ancient Norse mythology and the mythical settlement of Viking explorers in Vinland to create a modern myth of Nordic predominance and pagan heritage in the USA as a reaction to the current state of modernity in the USA, which they perceive as destroying the Aryan/Nordic race through immigration and miscegenation. Their reference to Vinland provides a sense of rootedness and historical purpose to their belief system, which is aimed at regenerating the Nordic gene pool in the USA.

Another American far-right group that draws on ancient paganism and the myth of Vínland is a small group, based in Virginia, called the *Wolves of Vinland*. This group, which has been associated with white supremacist organisations in the USA, has established a small community on private land in Virginia called *Ulfheim*, from the ancient Norse, meaning the home of the wolves. This community, which has been compared more with a biker gang than a serious political or religious movement, uses the site for pagan celebrations, weight-lifting, wrestling, boxing matches and rituals involving animal sacrifice to honour the Norse pantheon, (see figure 38). The group regularly publish their photos of these events on Instagram⁶⁸¹ and Twitter using social media to promote and recruit members to their group. Through their creation of *Ulfheim*, this group has established a small piece of a mythical Vínland where they can practice the lifestyle and rituals of their Nordic ancestors.

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⁶⁸¹ 'Wolves of Vinland Newsfeed'. http://twitter.com #wolvesofvinland (Accessed 05/01/18).

The Nordic Resistance movement

The Nordiska Motståndsrörelsen (Nordic Resistance movement) is a neo-Nazi organisation founded in Sweden in 1997, which now has branches in Finland, 682 Norway and Denmark. Actual membership figures are not published but it has an active website called Nordfront, is active on Twitter as @Nordfront_Live with 725 followers⁶⁸³ and a march in September 2017, in Gothenburg, was attended by some 600 sympathizers. 684 It is therefore a small but prominent National Socialist organisation, active both within and outside the parliamentary system in what it declares as its battle against international Zionism and the threat of Muslim mass immigration as an attempt to create a global caliphate. The NRM seeks to create a racially pure, unified Nordic region as a National Socialist State. Its political manifesto Our Path - New Politics for a New Time, published in English on the internet in 2016, bore the ancient Norse $T\acute{y}r$ \uparrow rune, the emblem of the party on its cover, representing law, war and heroism. In this manifesto the NRM claims that since 1945 the destructive forces driving multiculturalism; Zionism, Islam and Marxism, have 'continually conducted political genocide against the Nordic and ethnic peoples of Europe'685 declaring that National Socialism 'delivers a strategy of survival for our race and has succeeded in providing a modern political form that reflects the eternal laws of nature.' 686 In its manifesto, the NRM blames Zionism, Marxism and liberalism for a process of globalisation and mass-immigration that threatens not only the Nordic people but the stability and existence of the entire Western culture.

The current goal of the global Zionist elite is not only to promote the state of Israel, but also to contribute to long-term instability in all nations who may pose a threat to

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 $^{^{682}}$ On 30th November 2017 a Finnish court banned the movement for encouraging crimes of racial violence.

 $^{^{683}}$ Followers as of 04/01/18.

⁶⁸⁴ Nazi demonstration Protest'. www.express.co.uk.

https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/860686/nazi-demonstration-protest-Sweden-Gothenburg-police-arrests-Nordic-Resistance-Movement-NRM

⁶⁸⁵ 'Our Path - New Politics for a New Time'. Nordfront.se. https://www.nordfront.se/wpcontent/uploads/2016/12/Our-Path.pdf p.10. (Accessed 15/03/18). ⁶⁸⁶ Ibid. 685. p.10.

their power structure. This includes, not least, the ethnically homogenous countries of the Western world. Therefore, all global Zionists work towards not only multiculturalism and mass immigration, but also other socially disintegrating ideologies such as liberalism and norm-dissolving cultural Marxism.⁶⁸⁷

The core policy of the NRM is the protection and progressive regeneration of the Nordic gene pool which is threatened by multi-culturalism, mass immigration and inter-breeding. The group states its aim of preventing the further dilution of the Nordic bloodlines in Scandinavia to avoid what it considers to be the ultimate racial genocide of the Nordic people.

Our racial survival and freedom is the most important goal of the political efforts of the Nordic Resistance Movement. Against this goal there are many threats, including the most alarming and urgent today which is the mass immigration of foreign races to the Nordic countries. This, in combination with the current lower birth rate of Nordic women in comparison to immigrants, and the fact that the immigrated foreigners sometimes conceive with Nordic women and men, result in the diminishing of the ethnically Nordic population in relation to the non-Nordic population. The so-called multiculturalism and mass immigration is in actuality a physical displacement and genocide of the Nordic people. 688

The manifesto further argued that, historically the Nordic people have developed in isolation from the biological and cultural influence of other races and that this uniqueness is reflected not only in their physical appearance but in noble, admirable characteristics which have been refined and perfected by millennia of racial separation.

Historically, the Nordic people have lived separated from the involvement of foreign races and have therefore, preserved a unique gene pool, culture and sense of society and community. Unique attributes that differ from other races can be found not only in the physical appearance of the Nordic people, but on a level that goes much deeper. Traits such as cooperation, ingenuity, sense of order, devotion to duty, and altruism have been the societal result of thousands of years of racial separation. ⁶⁸⁹

This myth of a racially unique, pure and noble Nordic people, which has existed in a biological and cultural isolation, is a direct echo of many Nordicist thinkers and groups of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid. 685. p 12.

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid. 685. p.16.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid. 685. p.12.

called for the biological protection of an elite Nordic race which was being destroyed through miscegenation and who proposed a range of positive and negative eugenics measures to remedy this decline of a once-noble race. To protect and re-establish the Nordic gene pool, the NRM proposed a range of positive eugenics solutions such as the immediate repatriation of those who are not racially identifiable as being of northern European descent and an immediate halt to mass-immigration leading to a racially selective Nordic immigration policy. Its means of racial selection echoes the physical criteria of Himmler's SS, established by early twentieth physical anthropology fused with modern genetic research, when it declares that 'in reality, it is in most cases quite obvious who is of Nordic or closely related descent. In more uncertain cases we could use modern genetic profiling to determine which people are predominantly of Nordic racial descent. '690

The Nordic terror of Anders Breivik - Oslo and Utøya 22/7

On 22nd July 2011, Anders Behring Breivik, a seemingly ordinary thirty-two year old Norwegian citizen, who was assessed as fit to stand trial by a court psychiatric report, planted a bomb in Norway's capital before going on a shooting spree on the island of Utøya, leaving a total of 77 dead and over 240 persons injured. In court, Breivik calmly and remorselessly accounted for the actions which he insisted were undertaken 'out of goodness, not evil', explaining that 'the aim of the killings was for racial purity and to change the direction of multi-cultural drift, to avoid greater confrontation and civil war.' Breivik further stated that 'the only way I could protect the white native Norwegian was through violence'. ⁶⁹¹ He also offended both the judges and his victims with his initial insistence on saluting the courtroom each day with a raised clenched fist, the salute of the Knight's Templar described in his manifesto. ⁶⁹² (See 28). A vivid and detailed account of this attack and a profile

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⁶⁹⁰ Ibid. 685. p.13.

⁶⁹¹ 'Breivik's testimony of 17th April 2012'. Sky News.

http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/16210390 (Accessed 18/04/12).

⁶⁹² Breivik, Anders (2011) *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* (published online). http://www.deism.com/images/breivik-manifesto-2011.pdf (Accessed 20/03/18).

p.1102. Military salutation of the Knight's Templar.

of this Nordic extremist, *One of Us: The Story of Anders Breivik and the massacre in Norway* was published by Åsne Seierstad in 2015, based on eye witness accounts and interviews.

During the trial, the court heard how this act of resistance against multiculturalism in Norway had taken years of planning and preparation. Breivik also discussed his political manifesto, 2083: A European Declaration of Independence, in which he detailed his preparations for that day, his criteria for potential targets, and explained the political and racial motivations for his actions. That morning, shortly before his attacks, Breivik emailed this manifesto to approximately 1000 recipients, many gathered from his Facebook page, (see figure 33), and posted a YouTube video denouncing multiculturalism, entitled Knights Templar 2083, to publicly affirm the rationale for the terrorist acts he was about to commit. In court Breivik also explained that, in keeping with what he termed 'a great European tradition', he gave names from Norse mythology to these weapons. He called his rifle 'Gungnir' after the magical spear of Odinn (Odin), and he named his handgun 'Mjǫllnir' after Þórr's (Thor's) hammer, 693 (see figures 31 and 32) giving his weapons a mythical significance as defenders of his racial Miðgarðr (Midgard).

The court also heard that, during 2007, Breivik spent up to 16 hours a day playing the online early medieval mythological game *World of Warcraft* which contains many visual and thematic references to Northern European myth and legend.⁶⁹⁴ Even more significantly, in order to play this game he created the avatar 'andersnordic', a heroic double which doubtlessly informed the persona which murdered 69 people on the island of Utøya in the name of awakening his fellow-Norwegians to the need to preserve the purity of their country's unique Norse-Christian culture.

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^{693 &#}x27;Testimony of Anders Breivik: Day 4'. Daily Telegraph.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/norway/9213218/Norway-killer-Anders-Behring-Breivik-trial-day-four-as-it-happened.html (Accessed 29/04/12).

 $^{^{694}}$ 'The life of a mass murderer in World of Warcraft'. kotaku.com.

 $https://kotaku.com/5903501/the-life-of-a-mass-murderer-in-world-of-warcraft (Accessed\ 08/01/18).$

Breivik's manifesto, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, could in many ways be considered a mind-map of Breivik's radicalisation and the blueprint both in practical and ideological terms for his actions of July 2011. In his manifesto, composed mainly of a compendium of articles copied and adapted from a range of sources, such as Wikipedia, nationalist web sites and anti-Islamic 'Eurabia' bloggers such as Fjordman, ⁶⁹⁵ Breivik protested against cultural Marxism, ⁶⁹⁶ the threat of Islam, mass immigration, globalisation and multi-culturalism. In his work, Breivik, who described himself loosely as a 'cultural conservative', claimed that, during the post war years, cultural Marxists have controlled the world's media as a platform for silencing critics of the globalisation and multi-culturalism that he perceived as a threat to the existence of his race.

The mainstream media has been hijacked by cultural Marxists/Multiculturalists are not acting in the interest of Europeans and Europe. There is no freedom of speech in Europe. If you don't cheer and embrace your own annihilation you are a racist bigot, an enemy of the establishment and must be suppressed, ridiculed, undermined and persecuted. This policy of oppression and persecution has been ongoing since the creation of multiculturalism in the 50s, 60s and 70s. 697

Breivik also expressed how a post-war reaction against the concept of racial purity has dominated Western thought, encouraging the 'persecution' of those who seek to maintain their national independence and racial uniqueness.

Breivik attacked the European Union for dismantling border controls, undermining national stability and weakening Europe's culture. He accused multiculturalists of the cultural genocide of the European people by exposing them to increasing harassment, assault, rape and other forms of violent crime committed by immigrants. ⁶⁹⁸ In a section dealing with crimes committed by Muslim immigrants Breivik stated that 'European cultural

Peder Are Nøstvold Jensen (born 11 June 1975) is a prominent Norwegian blogger who writes under the pseudonym Fjordman and whose articles are far-right and anti-Islamic. His web site can be found at http://gatesofvienna.net

⁶⁹⁶ Cultural Marxism is he belief among right wing ideologists that Marxists are attempting to erode traditional Western values from within by breaking down social inequalities and establishing what right wing critics term a culture of 'political correctness'.

⁶⁹⁷ Breivik, Anders *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* (published online, July 2011). p.801.

⁶⁹⁸ Breivik, Anders *2083*, p.774.

Marxists/multiculturalists are collectively held responsible for all criminal acts Muslims commit against indigenous Europeans in Europe.' 699

In relation to the spread of Islam, Breivik described a European Civil War divided into 3 phases: 1999-2030, 2030-2070 and 2070-2083. During these periods he projected the spread of Islam from 2-30% of the population to 30-50%. He also described the development of European resistance to this spread of Islam through the formation of clandestine cells, resistance groups and future coup d'états to overthrow regimes supporting Marxism and multiculturalism, including the executions of the movement's prominent figures. To bring about this counter-attack for European culture Breivik claimed an association with a newly founded 700 clandestine order of the *Knights Templar*, originally established in 1119, called *The European Military Order and Criminal Tribune* whose aims are the seizure of political control and punishment of leading multi-culturists and other 'traitors'.

One of the primary purposes of the tribunal and order is to attempt /contribute to seize political and military control of Western European multiculturalist regimes and try, judge and punish Western European cultural Marxist/multiculturalist perpetrators [...] for crimes committed against the indigenous peoples of Europe from 1955 to this day.⁷⁰¹

Breivik continued by describing the role and function of various ranks and structures within the organisation as part of the three phases of the European civil war including notably the use of 'terror as a method of waking up the masses' He also provided a detailed 'manual' of methods and techniques necessary to carry out a range of terror attacks drawing on his personal experience of the preparations for the attacks of July 2011, including a categorisation of potential targets and details of the eventual acquisition and deployment of weapons of mass destruction such as anthrax. ⁷⁰³

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid. 697. p.153.

⁷⁰⁰ Breivik claimed that the *Pauperes commilitiones Christi Templique Solomonici* (the poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon) was re-founded in London in 202 by representatives of eight European countries. Ibid. 706. p.817.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid. 697. p.817.

⁷⁰² Ibid. 697, p.836.

⁷⁰³ Ibid. 697. p.961.

Although Breivik generally discusses the battle against multiculturalism in pan-European terms and with reference to a modern day crusade of the ancient order of the *Knights Templar*, his discussion of the future of the Nordic people drew on many aspects of Nordicism. Referring to the Nordic type defined in Madison Grant's *Passing of the Great Race* and referring to demographic maps and statistics contained in that work, Breivik predicted that the ideal Nordic type would be largely destroyed through interbreeding with other races within 150 years. To preserve the Nordic gene pool Breivik describes a racial struggle that will only be won through resistance and direct violent action.

[...] within 4-5 generations (if the current development is allowed to continue) the Germanic/Nordic race in several countries will be diluted or annihilated to such a degree that there will be no one left with Nordic physical characteristics; blond hair, blue eyes, high forehead, sturdy cheekbones. As such Nordic tribes will become extinct if we do not resist and seize political and military control of our countries. To illustrate the ongoing demographic annihilation of the Nordic peoples; in 1900 there were 50% Nordics in the US (blonde hair, blue eyes). But now, as a result of primarily non-European immigration, there was in 2008 ONLY 16%. 704

Breivik described the Nordic people, not just in physical terms but also as an ethnic tribe, amongst others in Europe, who were threatened with biological and cultural extinction through multiculturalism and immigration. To defend Nordic interests, Breivik suggested the establishment of a pan *Nordic League* of Scandinavians, Germans, Britons, Americans, Polish, Swiss, Dutch, Belgians and Balkans to with the aim of 'propagating Nordic interests'.⁷⁰⁵

In discussing the dilution of the Nordic gene pool through interbreeding, Breivik explained that the 'Nordic genotype' is recessive in comparison with the African, Arab or oriental genotypes, described by Breivik as 'more dominant' and that it was therefore weakened through interbreeding describing children of mixed-race as 'cut off forever from their extended ethnic family'. To counter this process of racial 'annihilation', Breivik suggested the

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid. 697. p.1153.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid. 697. p.1155.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid. 697. p.1158.

implantation of positive eugenics policies through the modern science of bioengineering to protect and even potentially enhance the Nordic race.

The key to our survival is to liberalise the strict bio-technology laws and to commercialise and glorify repro-genetics while there is still a sustainable selection of Nordics of 99% purity left (this window of opportunity will be forever lost in 150 years). Not only will we have the option to secure our survival but we will be able to purify our tribe and add several IQ points to our off-spring in the same process.⁷⁰⁷

Breivik also proposed to encourage the Nordic birth rate and improve the biological health of the Nordic through measures to reduce the influence of feminism, reduce promiscuity and greatly restrict divorce, contraception and abortion in Nordic territories.⁷⁰⁸ He also proposed a system very similar in aims and selection methods to the SS *Lebensborn* project by describing a network of 'surrogacy facilities' in low cost countries to 'outsource breeding'⁷⁰⁹ through a commercial program of egg/sperm donation and *in vitro* fertilisation with the state caring for and educating the children in large boarding homes divided into 5 developmental age groups.⁷¹⁰ This process would be subject to a careful racial selection of the candidates.

All egg and sperm donors must be screened according to high pre-defined standards including genetic diseases. Optimally the donors should score high in interpersonal, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematic, intrapersonal and visual-space intelligence tests and be of the indigenous group.⁷¹¹

In his elaboration of his ambitions for this programme Breivik, who projected that this programme would initially need to create 30,050 Nordic type children per year to counter-balance Norway's annual birth deficit,⁷¹² even referred to the potential development of artificial womb technology in these surrogacy centres.⁷¹³ Breivik insisted, however, that just having children was pointless unless they are educated to believe in the dangers of Islam, multiculturalism and the basics of what he termed 'our patriotic struggle', describing in some

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.697. p.1159.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid.697. p.1179.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.697. p.1182.

⁷¹⁰ Ibid.697. p.1182.

⁷¹¹ Ibid.697. p.1184.

⁷¹² Ibid.697. p.1184.

⁷¹³ Ibid.697. p.1187.

detail a process of education of all Nordic children in the conservative worldview.

In his social visions for a futural Nordic state, Breivik differed from many Nordic nationalists by his lack of interest in the reestablishment of ancient forms of pagan faith to replace the foreign faith of Christianity. Breivik pointed out that being a Christian is a rule of the Knights Templar and described himself as a militant Christian who was 'very pragmatic and influenced by my secular surroundings and environment.' Despite this mixture of a secular outlook and Christian affiliation, Breivik considered pagan Odinists as 'brothers in our common fight' and Viking mythology as 'an important part of my culture and identity.' He stated, however, that Odinism, as a religious movement, 'does not have the potency to unite us against such a devastating force as Islam, cultural Marxism/multiculturalism and capitalist globalism.'

Breivik, much like his manifesto, is a composite of right-wing extremist thought in which a strand of Nordicism can clearly be identified as part of his radicalized 'mazeway resynthesis' in which he perceived himself as a warrior fighting against the of globalisation and multiculturalism which he considered a threat not only the Norwegian state but the future of the Nordic race. Breivik was sentenced to 21 years imprisonment, 716 and has remained, to date, in solitary confinement despite his legal protests. Although it would be an oversimplification of Breivik's complex psychology to label him a Nordicist, it could be argued that aspects of cultural, biological and political Nordicism formed a significant aspect of his world-view and rationale for his actions of July 2011, which he viewed as an important act of resistance in a war against globalisation and the threatened extinction of the Nordic race.

In his analysis of Anders Breivik within the historical and contemporary context of populist and extreme right wing views in Norway, social

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⁷¹⁴ Ibid.697. p.1360.

⁷¹⁵ Ibid.697. p.1361.

 $^{^{716}}$ This is the maximum sentence that a Norwegian court can impose but is subject to possible extensions.

anthropologist Sindre Bangstad argued that Breivik was a product what he described as 'dark undercurrents'717 of historical racist ideology in Norway and other western countries which have re-emerged today in the form of Islamophobia. In his work, Bangstad described how from his youth, he was taught the 'hegemonic narrative' of Norway's fight against fascism in which 'heroic blond and mainly male Norwegians' 718 took refuge in the countryside to continue their resistance against the German troops who had invaded Norway in 1940. Bangstad also challenged the enduring myth of Norway as a racially pure racial model arguing that the 'utopian fantasy of Norway as an ethnically 'pure' and 'homogenous' country is a recurrent theme in Norwegian history.'719 Bangstad positions himself amongst the revisionists of this 'imperfect history', describing the extent to which a number of Norwegians collaborated with the occupying German forces stating that 'by the 1980s the first cracks in the hegemonic narrative of Norway's role in the Second World War began to appear' suggesting that academia had previously sanitized Norwegian history. Bangstad further argued that Norway suffers from the same racial tensions as many other European states, and is no no way immune to forms of populist racism emerging across Europe. He added that this revision of right-wing thought in Norway 'will be provocative, even intolerable, for Norwegians long accustomed to seeing themselves - and being seen by others - as the embodiment of all that is good and virtuous in the world. '720 This argument aligns with that of Lena Berggren who criticized the sanitisation of Swedish history by academia suggesting that many postwar Scandinavian scholars have chosen to ignore or side-line the historic narrative of right-wing thought, in preference to the received image, described by Christopher Hutton, of the perfect Scandinavian political and social model. In his conclusion Bangstad also warned that the overlap between racial extremism and populist right-wing thought in Europe remained a significant threat to the integration of immigrants into western culture and society:

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⁷¹⁷ Bangstad, Sindre (2014) *Anders Breivik and the Rise of Islamophobia.* London: Zed Books. p.151.

⁷¹⁸ Bangstad, Sindre. *Anders Breivik and the Rise of Islamophobia*, p.140.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid. 717. p.151.

⁷²⁰ Ibid. 717. p.197.

The greatest material threats to equal rights to citizenship, inclusion and participation in contemporary liberal democracies in western Europe remain those emanating from the exclusionary discourses and from the mainstreaming and sanitizing of extreme right-wing discourses and rhetorical tropes by the populist right wing in Norway and other Scandinavian and western European countries. As the horror of 22/7 slowly, painfully but surely fades into the historical past, that challenge remains with us for the foreseeable future.⁷²¹

Although Bangstad avoids discussing the concept of Nordicism in his work, it could be argued that his analysis reveals many points which suggest that elements of Nordicist thought are still emerging as a reaction to globalisation and when radicalized to the point where theory turns into practice can still produce horrific crimes against humanity such as the shocking events of 22/7.

Conclusion - Liquid Nordicism

Like the shattered fragments of the Rainbow Bridge, modern manifestations of Nordicism can still be found in contemporary society both as a benign form of modern Romanticism, an escape from the stress of 'liquid life', and as the malignant form that became a significant driving force behind the holocaust. In our contemporary state of 'liquid modernity', where globalisation and multiculturalism have become seemingly unstoppable forces, neo-Nordicist elements appear from time to time as small revitalisation movements or lone wolves attempting to regenerate an idealized, imagined state of primordial racial purity. These constructs are, however, generally short-lived, unstable 'temporary solids' that fail to last or combine with others to form any cohesive movement. Some re-emerge in new far-right organisations, others fade away into obscurity and a few extremists are imprisoned for racially motivated crimes. Despite a cultural climate which arguably still idealizes both the past and present in Scandinavia, our dominant current of contemporary thought rejects racism as a crime against humanity and seeks to limit, marginalize and eliminate Nordicist elements through the media, public disapproval and antiracist legislation. This however, is not a guarantee of defence against the

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⁷²¹ Ibid. 717. p.219.

potential threat of Nordicism and Breivik's attacks of 22/7 were a brutal reminder that radicalized Nordicism can still emerge under certain conditions and pose a dangerous threat to society.

This work has, through the Norse metaphor of the rebuilding and eventual shattering of the Rainbow Bridge, attempted to shed new light on Nordicism by examining it as single entity with its own cultural dynamics and historical narrative, albeit one that bifurcates into light and dark strands that sometimes intertwine disturbingly, as in the case of Ingvar Kamprad, or of Denmark's contemporary political culture, where a cult of *Hygge* intersects with populist resistance to multiculturalism. Nordicism was the bridge that attempted to connect those who considered themselves to be of Nordic descent, with a mythical primordial existence and identity located in an idealized home as a means of healing the nostalgia brought on by the disorientating forces of modernity. From its emergence out of late eighteenth century Romanticism, Nordicism evolved through its interaction and fusion with aspects of modernity in both northern Europe and the USA such as nationalism, migration, industrialisation, racial science, eugenics, the First World War and the subsequent rise of National Socialism where it evolved into its most evil, malignant form of racial selection and elimination of inferior 'others'. Through this process, Nordicism developed from a Romantic, nationalist yearning for national identity and sense of rootedness in ancient Nordic culture into a cultural, political and biological agenda of programmatic modernism under Nazism. At the conclusion of the Second World War this 'solid' of Nordicism was shattered like the smouldering ruins of Berlin as the Soviet forces, like the sons of Muspell, 722 broke through the last defences of the capital to end the regime whose influential strand of Nordic thought had instigated the industrial scale genocide of millions of those considered racially threatening to the purity and regeneration of a mythical ancient Nordic tribe.

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⁷²² In *Gylfaginning* we are told that, during Ragnarǫk, the Rainbow Bridge will break when the *Sons of Múspell* attempt to cross it.

By examining this narrative through an analytical framework composed firstly of the theories of programmatic modernism proposed by Roger Griffin and merging it with Zygmunt Bauman's concept of 'liquid modernity' this study has also demonstrated how Nordicism has evolved as a process of myth creation protecting both the individual and society from the challenges and terror of an ever-changing and accelerating state of modernity. Like fragmented remnants of the failed futural projects of late nineteenth and early twentieth century modernism, designed to bring about a mythologized ideal state of human existence, both the promise and the threat of Nordicism are still present as an active force in today's society as the 'Somewheres' in society attempt to create pockets of 'solidity' and 'fixity' as existential anchors in today's 'liquid universe,' with the potential to create new homes which may prove to be either socially inclusive or exclusive. This analysis has highlighted that both the benign and malignant forms of Nordicism stem from the same modernist impulse to generate and realize myths to re-establish and maintain a sense of transcendence, hope, and nomic certainty in a society which is abandoning futural visions of ultimate perfection as it struggles to come to terms with the constant sense of 'liquid fear' permeating our existence. Although Nordicism will never again be able to solidify on the scale of its previous murderous form, the continued idealisation of the Nordic and the permeability of the membrane separating this phenomenon from remaining fragments of cultural, biological and political Nordicism floating like flotsam in a 'liquid modernity' means that this narrative is still incomplete. The horror of 22/7 was a poignant reminder that the sunlit 'Nordic model' advocated by some can still cast dark shadows.

Illustrations

National Romantic Images of the North



Cairn in the Snow

Figure 1: Hünengrab im Schnee, (Cairn in the Snow), (1807), by Caspar David Friedrich (1774 - 1840), whose work inspired many artists from the Dusseldorf School of art. This oil on canvas shows a pagan burial site between three oaks, near the town Gützkow in Germany.

Source: http://www.philipphauer.de/galerie/caspar-david-friedrich-werke/ (Accessed 06/12/14).



Megalithic Tomb in Winter

Figure 2: Johan Christian Claussen Dahl (1788 –1857) became the leading painter of the Norwegian Golden Age with stunning landscapes such as *Megalithic Tomb in Winter*, (1824-25), Its subject, composition and style shows the influence of Caspar David Friedrich when compared with *Hünengrab im Schnee* (Figure 1)

Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Johan_Christian_Dahl__Megalith_Grave_in_Winter.JPG (Accessed 12/09/14).



Dolmen at Raklev

Figure 3: Dolmen at Raklev, (1839), by Johan Thomas Lundbye (1818 -1848), presents the ancient beauty of the coastal landscape near Røsnæs which he described as 'the Danish coast at it's noblest, but also its wildest'. This oil on canvas is typical of the National Romantic art of the Danish Golden Age and its celebration of the nation's ancient history defining its uniqueness and natural beauty.

Source: http://www.thorvaldsensmuseum.dk/en/collections/work/B255 (Accessed 06/12/14).



Þórr's Battle with the Giants

Figure 4: *Tors strid med jättarna* (Þórr's Battle with the Giants), (1872), by Swedish painter Mårten Eskil Winge (1825-1896). This work, presents a dramatic image of Þórr riding on a chariot holding aloft his hammer, Mjǫllnir, as he battles his constant enemy, the Giants. The physical appearance of Þórr corresponds with the 'ideal type' of the Aryan/Nordic promoted by later Nordicists.

Source: http://www.nationalmuseum.se/sv/English-startpage/Collections/ (Accessed 06/12/14).



Þórr Battering the Midgard Serpent

Figure 5: Thor Battering the Midgard Serpent (1790) - Henry Fuseli (1741-1825). Image from http://25.medi tumblr_It9iykSJiV1qivvpgo1_500 Accessed 03/03/13. In this work Ođinn looks down on Þórr and fellow God Hymir who steers the boat. In his right hand Þórr holds the chain to which he had attached the head of an ox as bait. In his left hand he holds his hammer Mjǫllnir aloft and poised to strike the powerful serpent. Fuseli combined Norse mythology with Greco-Roman neoclassicism to present the naked Þórr in a statuesque pose as he battles Jǫrmungandr.

Source: http://www.racollection.org.uk (Accessed 06/12/14).



Þórr wades through the waters while the rest of the Æsir ride across Bifrost

Figure 6: Ink drawing by Lorenz Frølich (1820-1908). Þórr (Thor) wades through the waters while the rest of the Æsir ride across Bifrost. Published in Gjellerup, Karl. *Den ældre Eddas Gudesange*. (1895). Frølich became a prolific artist whose representations of the Norse Pantheon appear in many publications such as Nordens Guder (1885) by Adam Oehlenschläger.

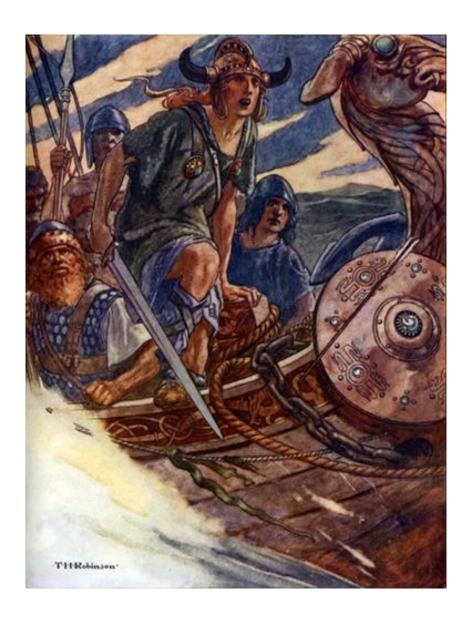
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Thor_wades_while_the_æsir_ride_by_Frølich.jpg (Accessed 12/12/12).



Funeral of a Viking

Figure 7: Funeral of a Viking (1893), a dramatic image of the high status funeral of a Viking by Sir Frank Dicksee (1853-1928). The horned helmet of a number of participants was a common stylized image of Vikings, which enhanced their dramatic, heroic appearance for the Victorian public. Their clothing and helmets are reminiscent of the stage costumes used by Wagner in his Ring Cycle. See figure 9.

Source: http://www.artmagick.com/pictures/picture.aspx?id=6156&name=funeral-of-a-viking. (Accessed 03/03/13).



Thrithiof's Saga

Figure 8: Illustration by Thomas Heath Robinson (1869-1954) of *Thrithiof's saga* (c1910) an iconic image of Vikings attacking from their longboat. The horned helmet of Thrithiof typifies the image of the Viking created during the Victorian period by British artists.

Source: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/revival_01.shtml (Accessed 12/04/13).

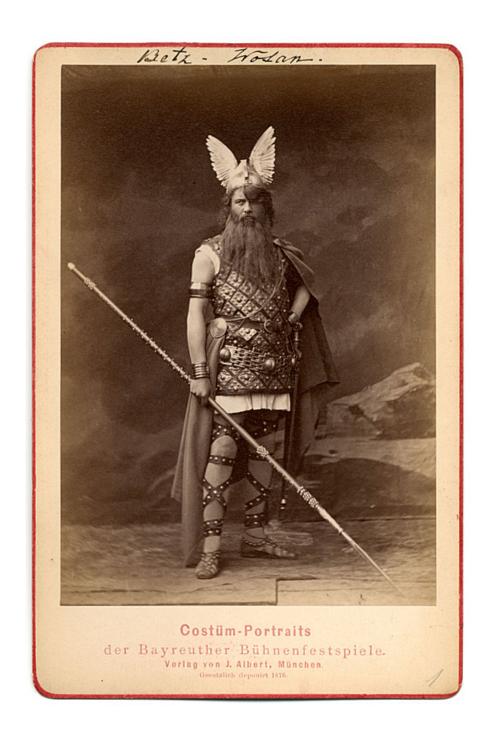


Figure 9: Franz Betz as Wotan in the 1876 première of the Ring in Bayreuth on a period postcard with the caption: Costume Portrait from the Bayreuth Stage Festival. J. Albert, publisher, Munich, 1876. The costume design of Carl Emil Doepler created an enduring image of the Norse pantheon that significantly influenced future artistic representations.

Source: http://www.pov.bc.ca/bayreuth.html (Accessed 27/10/15).

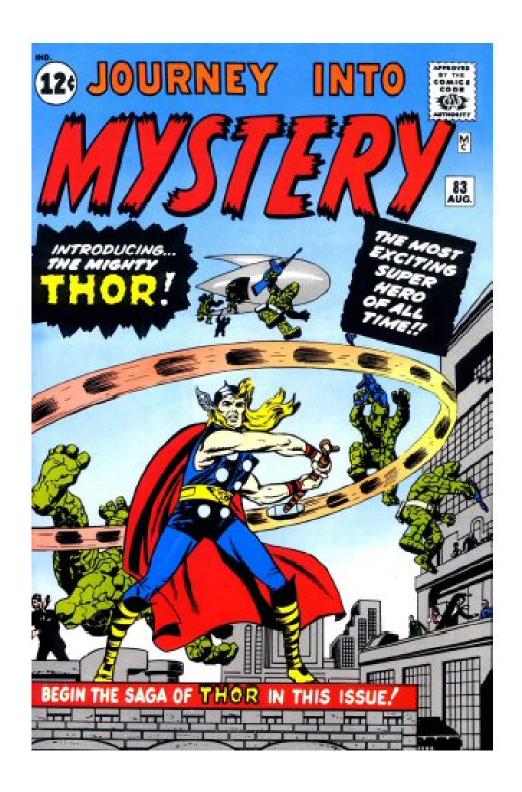


Figure 10: The comic superhero Thor in his first appearance for marvel in *Journey into Mystery* #83 (Aug. 1962). His creator Stan Lee was clearly influenced by the image of Norse deities created by Carl Emil Doepler for Wagner's première of the Ring Cycle in 1876

Source: http://marvel.wikia.com/wiki/Journey_into_Mystery_Vol_1_89 (Accessed 18/12/15).

The Nordicist aesthetic



Figure 11: Cover of pamphlet extracted from Ludwig Fahrenkrog's *Das Deutsche Buch* to promote the *Germanische Glaubensgemeinschaft* (1921). This striking image, fusing National Romanticism with Neo-classicism and *völkisch* imagery, shows two naked Nordic type males surrounded by oak leaves under a swastika sunsymbol with Thor's *Mjöllnir* in its centre.

Source: http://books.openedition.org/obp/416 (Accessed 25/01/15).

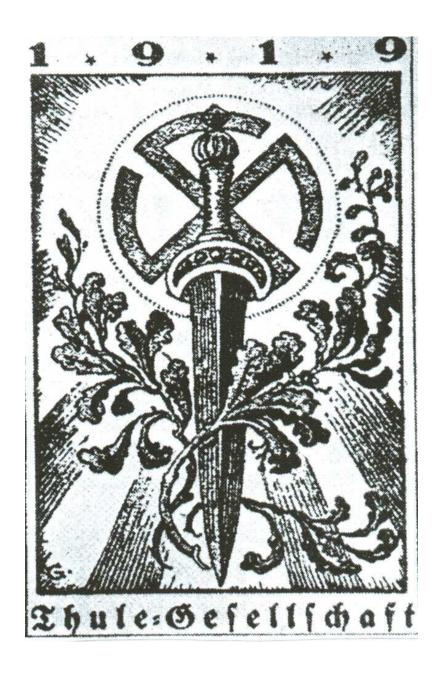


Figure 12: The emblem of the Thule Society, again showing the swastika as a radiating sun symbol with oak leaves. The rotation of this swastika reflects the style later adopted by the Nazi Party as its emblem and the medieval dagger superimposed over it became another frequently used element of Nazi iconography.

Source: http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sociopolitica/sociopol_thule05.htm (Accessed 21/12/15).

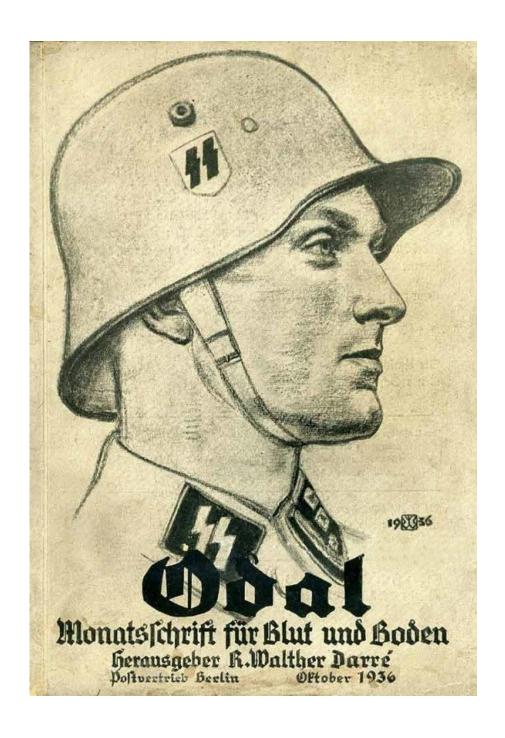


Figure 13. Wolfgang Willrich. Cover page of Darré's monthly journal *Odal* from October 1936, depicting a Nordic type SS soldier.

Source: https://volkischpaganism.com/2015/09/05/wolfgang-willrich-germanic-pagans-and-nordic-profiles/ (Accessed 19/05/17).



Figure 14. Wolfgang Willrich. This image of the Nordic relationship with the soil shows the central figure of motherhood sitting on rocks under a feature, which could be seen to represent *Yggdrasill*, the mythical tree of life that that connected the nine worlds in Norse cosmology. In Nazi mythology, the *Algiz* rune of the elder *Futharkh* was adopted as a symbol of the tree of life, named the *Lebensrune* (life rune) and used to represent the *Deutsches Frauenwerk* (The German Association for Women Workers) during the 1930s. The shape also resembles a stylised womb and ovaries. The *Hagel* rune above the tree was used in Nazi runology to represent the unshakeable faith of the SS. The rune above the man represents the *Odal* rune of heritage and inheritance. The *Hakenkreuz* rune (swastika) above the second woman could be seen to represent the Sun as a symbol of life and vitality. The ghostly figure beneath them holding up the ground in a Christ-like crucifixion position represents their ancestry and eternal biological and spiritual relationship with the soil.

Source: https://volkischpaganism.com/2015/09/05/wolfgang-willrich-germanic-pagans-and-nordic-profiles/ (Accessed 13/05/17).



Figure 15. 'Family' by Wolfgang Willrich. This idealised image of a rural blond, blue-eyed Nordic family bears many similarities to Figure 2 especially the mother, who has been taken directly. A sunflower has replaced the swastika and the symbol of *Yggdrasill*, the rune of life, has been sublty incorporated into the beams of the house behind the couple. The ghostly figure has been replaced by the son, in his Hitler Youth uniform and daughter working in the soil in the foreground with their bare hands, connecting with the soil of their ancestors.

 $Source: https://volkischpaganism.com/2015/09/05/wolfgang-willrich-germanic-pagans-and-nordic-profiles/\ (Accessed\ 15/05/17).$



Figure 16. Chart published by the German government to illustrate the racial classification of the Nuremberg Laws, 1935. Only people with four German grandparents (four white circles in top row left) were of "German blood". A Jew is someone who descends from three or four Jewish grandparents (black circles in top row right). In the middle were the *Mischling* (mixed blood) of the first or second degree. A Jewish grandparent was defined as a person who is or was a member of a Jewish religious community regardless of bloodline. The circles with red crosses indicate that marriage was permitted; the dark circles with crosses indicate matches that were prohibited by law.

Source: http://worldwar2headquarters.com/HTML/posters/german/nuremberg-laws.html (Accessed 24/07/17).



Figure 17. Photograph from 14th September 1943 of a young Nordic looking Polish girl from a *Jugendverwahrlager* (Youth Holding Camp) in Poland. This was part of the selection process administered by Himmler's RuSHA to remove racially viable children from occupied Poland.

Source: http://warfarehistorynetwork.com (Accessed 2/08/17).



Figure 18. Photograph of cases containing artificial eye colour samples used in RuSHA medical examinations to classify racial types.

Source: https://www.ushmm.org/m/img/N09695-501x554.jpg. (Accessed 8/08/17).

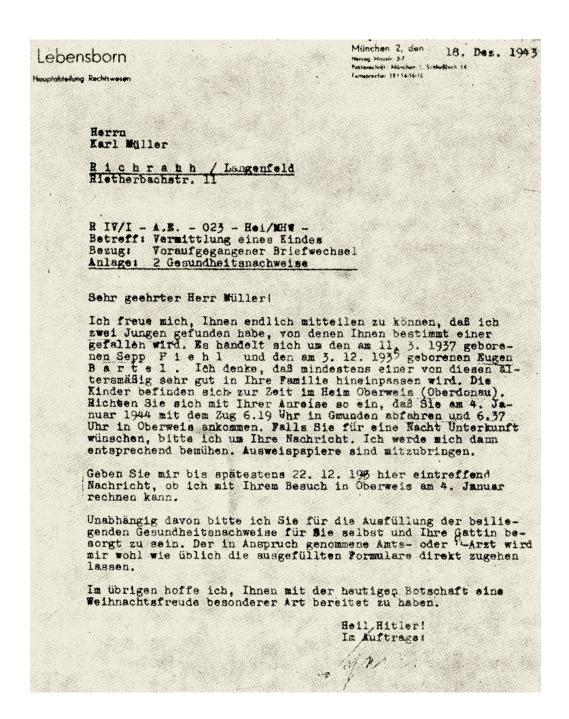


Figure 19. Letter on *Lebensborn* stationery dated 18th December 1943 to a Mr Müller informing him that the organisation has found two boys, 6-year-old, Sepp Piehl, (born 11th March 1937) and 8-year-old Eugen Bartel (born 3rd December 1935), for adoption. The letter states that at least one should be suitable for his home. There is no mention of the boys' origin and their names have been Germanized. The letter informs Mr Müller that the boys can be visited at the *Heim Oberweiss* in the Oberdonau district and that he should bring along his identity papers and completed medical form. This *Heimschul* was opened by the *Lebensborn* organisation in 1938 and dealt with the care and *Eindeutschung* of children from Poland, Romania, Serbia and Hungary.

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4d/Lebensborn_document_1.jpg (Accessed 3/08/17).



Figure 20. Image from a Nazi school textbook, showing a predominantly 'Nordic type' group of German school pupils jeering at an excluded Jewish teacher and pupils. There is a noticeable contrast between the beauty of the Germans and the ugliness of the Jews.

Source: http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-nazi-inspired-schoolbook-depicting-ugly-jewish-school-children-and-105317256.html (Accessed 30/09/17).



Figure 21. SS recruitment poster showing a Nordic type *Hitlerjugend* as a youth and as an SS Mann illustrating the link between these two organisations in promoting both a sense of racial awareness and physical toughness. In this poster the *Hitlerjugend* are presented as the future Nordic warriors of Himmler's SS. The text reads 'you too'. Recruitment posters for the *Hitlerjugend* usually favoured portraits of the ideal 'Nordic type'.

Source: http://www.pinterest.co.uk (Accessed 7/10/17).



Figure 22. Wewelsburg. The marble *Sonnenrad* (sun-wheel) inlaid into the floor of what was called the *Gruppenführersaal* (Hall of the Generals)

Source: http://www.pinterest.co.uk (Accessed 9/10/17).

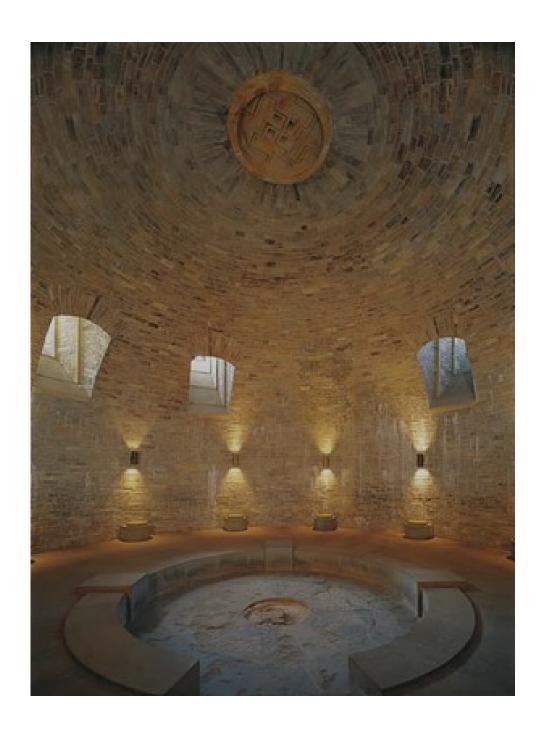


Figure 23. Wewelsburg. The crypt where the eternal flame burned in the centre from a gas pipe inlaid into the masonry. This sacred place formed the inner sanctum of the Wewelsburg complex. In its unfinished state there has been some speculation amongst scholars as to the intended use of the twelve pedestals, which surround this Hall of the Dead. The use of a wide-angle lens has distorted the image somewhat but allows a clear view of the extended swastika inlaid into the domed ceiling.

Source: http://www.pinterest.co.uk (Accessed 6/10/17).

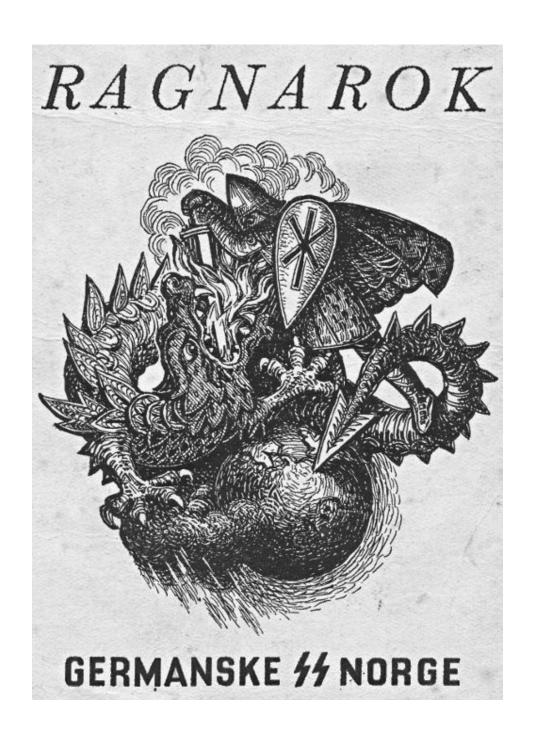


Figure 24. Ragnarok. A recruitment poster for the Germanske SS Norge (GSSN, *Germanic SS Norway*), which was an SS unit established in Norway in July 1942. GSSN was at the same time a Norwegian branch of Germanic-SS, and a sub organization of Quisling's Nasjonal Samling. The image shows a Viking figure, perhaps Thor, battling the Midgard serpent during Ragnarok. His shield bears the Hagel rune, used in Nazi runology to represent the unshakeable faith of the SS.

Source: http://www.pinterest.co.uk (Accessed 6/10/17).



Figure 25. Danish Waffen-SS recruitment poster (1944). The poster associates the Danish reign over Estonia (starting 1219) with the fierce battle against the Soviet forces in the same area during 1944. The text reads 'Narva 1219, a symbol 1944. Also today - The battle against the east! Volunteer for the Danish regiment of the Waffen-SS.' Danish legend tells that the flag appeared at the battle of Lindanise on 15th June 1219. During the battle, in the Danes' hour of need, the Danish flag, the 'Dannebrog', fell from the sky and gave them renewed hope.

Source: http://www.pinterest.co.uk (Accessed 10/10/17).

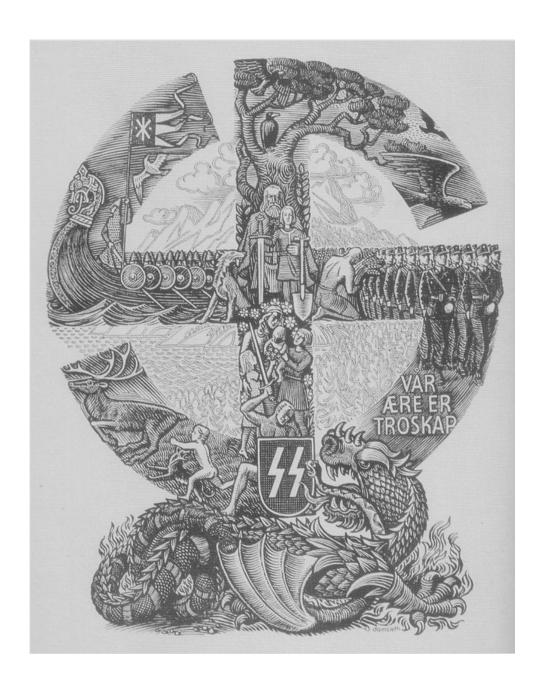


Figure 26. Norwegian Waffen-SS recruitment poster. The text reads 'Our honour is loyalty'. This complex image shows a fusion of ancient Nordic culture with the new Order of the SS. At the base of the swastika is *Þórr* holding an SS shield battling the Midgard serpent. The left side of the swastika shows scenes from Norse mythology and a Viking longboat bearing a *Hagel* rune on its flag, with a sea gull flying overhead. This is mirrored on the right by SS troops marching with an eagle overhead. The centre shows *Yggdrasil*, the tree of life with a crow, often associated with Norse mythology and *Ođinn* who appears in the centre with a young Nordic boy, possibly *Þórr* holding a sword in his right hand and a shovel in his left. Beneath them is a mother figure, possibly *Ođinn's* wife *Frigg* with children and surrounded by flowers as a symbol of motherhood.

Source: http://www.pinterest.co.uk (Accessed 7/10/17).



Figure 27. Poster by the famous Norwegian war artist Harald Damsleth (1906-1971) for the 1943 NS gathering at the Cemetery of the Kings, Borre. This image shows a prehistoric standing stone on a mountainside and a Viking figure bearing a torch. In the waters of the fjord is a Viking longboat. Above is the NS emblem of the eagle carrying what usually appears as a sun symbol in ancient Norse rock carvings in place of the Nazi swastika.

Source: http://borreminne.hive.no/aargangene/1997/Bilder/nsplakat_borrestevne82.jpg (Accessed: 23/10/17).

Modern fragments of Nordicism

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Figure 28. The Týr symbol and the green background of the flag of the Nordic Resistance Movement representing law, war and heroic glory as well as the ecological aims of the party.

Source: https://ironpiedmont1996.deviantart.com/art/Nordic-Resistance-Movement-677682366 (Accessed 01/01/18).

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Figure 29. Anders Breivik gives the salute of the Knights Templar at the beginning of one of his many court hearings.

Source: https://sputniknews.com/europe/201802161061719003-norway-breivik-remorse/(Accessed 01/01/18).

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Figure 30: Anders Breivik posing as a modern day Nordic warrior with his Ruger Mini 14 rifle. This image was posted in an appendix to his manifesto and was included in his video posted on the Internet on the morning of the attacks.

Source: Breivik, Anders *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* http://www.deism.com/images/breivik-manifesto-2011.pdf (Accessed 20/03/18).

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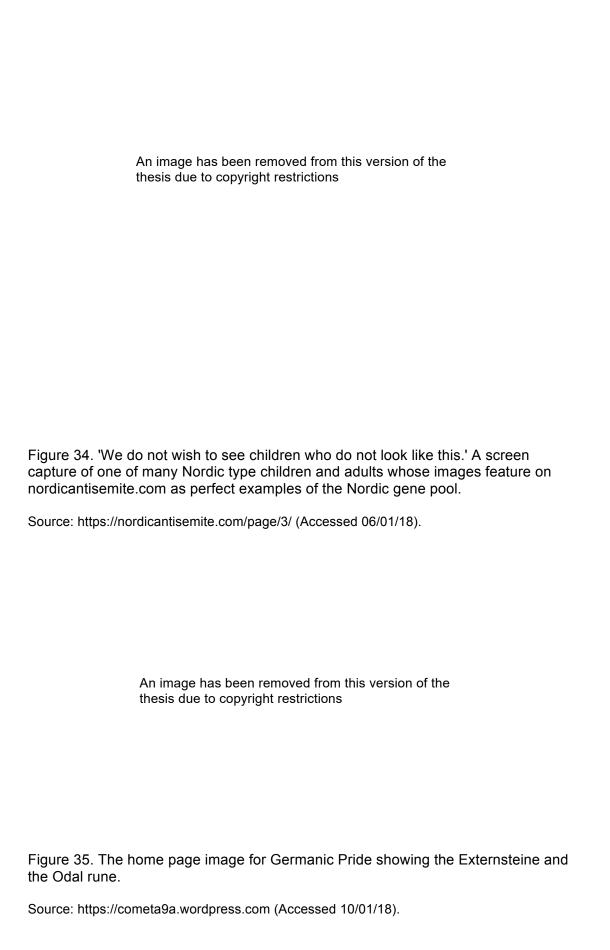
Figures 31 and 32: *Mjǫllnir* and *Gungnir*. Breivik's pistol and rifle, named after *Þórr's* Hammer and *Ođinn's* Spear, inscribed on the weapons in Elder *Futharkh* Norse runes. Source: Fredrik Walløe (journalist) published by International Business Times.

Source: http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/articles/336683/20120503/anders-behring-breivik-thor-odinguns-police.htm. (Accessed 07/06/12).

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Figure 33: Screen capture of Anders Breivik's Facebook page that he used to network with like-minded right-wing thinkers. He considered such social networking sites as an essential means of communication between militants and the transmission of their ideologies.

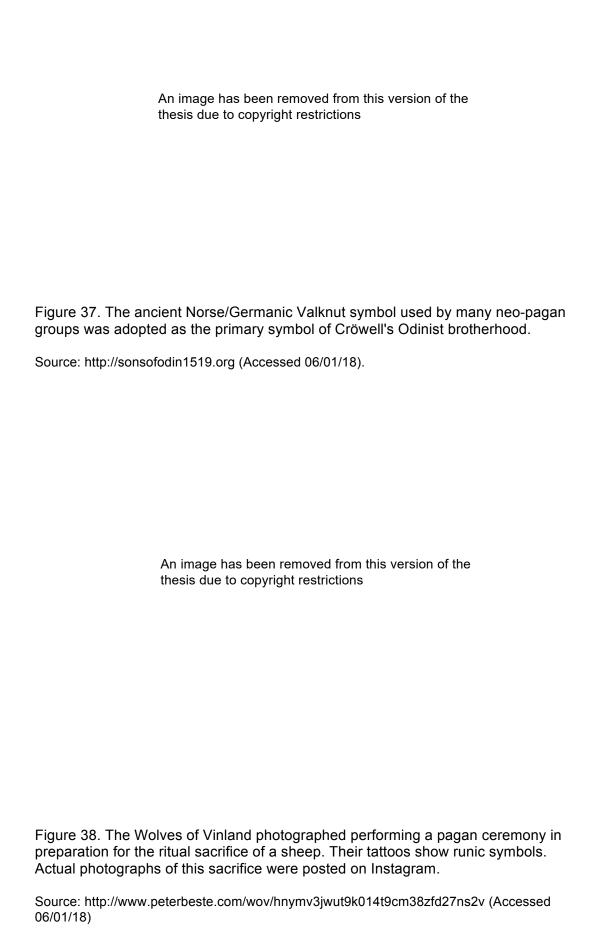
Source: https://publicintelligence.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/FireShot-capture-020-Anders-Behring-Breivik-nb-no_facebook_com_people_Anders-Behring-Breivik_100002651290254.png (Accessed 04/01/18).



An image has been removed from this version of the thesis due to copyright restrictions

Figure 36. Dr. Casper Odinson Cröwell. In the American prison system tattoos and religious pendants are an encoded display of your creed and identity. The swastikas and eagle represent the neo-Nazi beliefs of the Aryan Brotherhood, the shamrocks, membership of the organisation and the runic tattoos and the *Mjollnir* tattoo and pendant are signs of his belief in Norse mythology. The number 14 stands for the fourteen words (see main text) and 88 stands for Heil Hitler (as H is the eighth letter of the alphabet).

Source: https://vk.com/id99887771 (Accessed 06/01/18).



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