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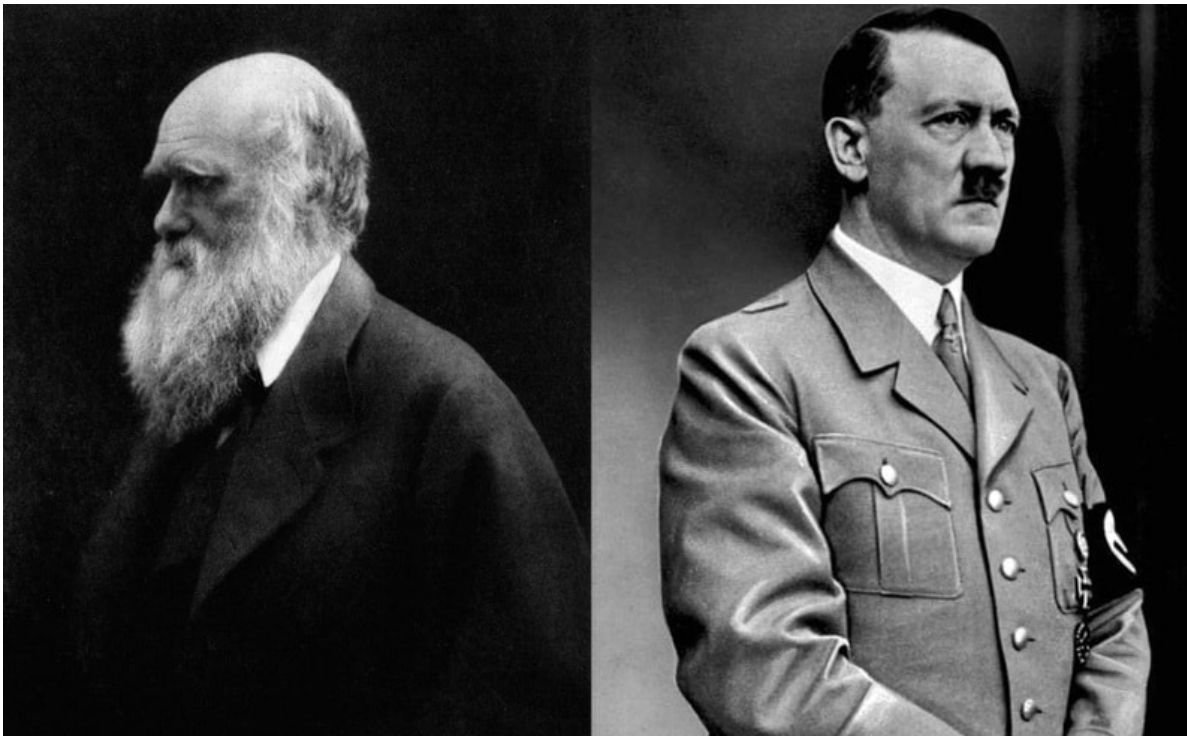
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## The Myth that Darwin Influenced Hitler

Gary Hill

**NOTE: This is an ongoing, unfinished book-length work and will be subject to additional and altered content over time.**



### Dirty Deeds Done Cheap: Christian Fundamentalist Lies and Hypocrisy

In response to claims that he was a theist Albert Einstein wrote, in a letter shortly before his death, *"It was, of course, a lie.....a lie which is being systematically repeated"*. This is a sentiment that could just as easily have been written by either Charles Darwin or Adolf Hitler in response to the myth that Hitler had derived the core of his ideological beliefs from the earlier scientific findings of Darwin. So widespread is the claim that in some people's minds it has been lifted to the status of historical fact. For example, the

influential conservative American political commentator Ann Coulter in her book 'Godless: The Church Of Liberalism' (2006) wrote:

*"From Marx to Hitler, the men responsible for the greatest mass murders of the twentieth century were avid Darwinists.....So it should not be surprising that eugenicists, racists, and assorted psychopaths always gravitate to Darwinism. From the most evil dictators to today's antismoking crusaders, sexual profligates, and animal rights nuts, Darwinism has infect the whole culture".*

Surely, one might think, Coulter's allegation is hyperbole; she cannot possibly believe what she writes. On the other hand, repeatedly claiming the ludicrous has effect. This is the key to how lies are spread, myths easily generated and characters maligned from as little as an ambiguous sentence or two and how relatively recent historical events (with readily available archival evidence) can be both ignored and deliberately distorted for nefarious reasons. But Coulter goes much further than mere historical ineptness and indiscretion. She wilfully denigrates all biologists by claiming that Darwin's findings are responsible *"for the greatest mass murders of the twentieth century"*. Another writer, Richard Weikart, author of 'From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics and Racism in Germany', published in 2004, spices up the polemic:

*"No matter how crooked the road was from Darwin to Hitler, clearly Darwinism and eugenics smoothed the path for Nazi ideology, especially for the Nazi stress on expansion, war, racial struggle, and racial extermination".*

While the born-again (for the second-time) Christian author A.N. Wilson, in his extraordinarily inaccurate hatchet-job biography of Darwin (Charles Darwin: Victorian Mythmaker, 2017; ironically published by the same company as the original 'Origin of Species'), claims an absurd level of exactitude for Darwin's influence on Nazi Germany:

*"Darwin was a direct and disastrous influence.....Germany [enacted] the Reich Citizenship Law, the Blood Protection Law, the Marital Health Law and the Nuremberg Laws for racial segregation.....much of which had started life in the gentle setting of Darwin's study at Down House."*

Henry Morris, the grandfather of modern creationism (founder of the Institute for Creation Research) expands the hyperbole well beyond Nazi Germany. From 'The Twilight of Evolution', published in 1963:

*"Evolution is at the foundation of communism, fascism, Freudianism, social Darwinism, Kinseyism, materialism, atheism and, in the religious world, modernism and neo-orthodoxy."*

Are any of these views actually true? Can we really observe any firm ideological link between Charles Darwin the man and his scientific findings, and Adolf Hitler the man and his subsequent political policies? Surely one man and his books cannot be held ultimately responsible for the Holocaust and other Nazi atrocities? Well, of course not. Such a claim is ludicrously simplistic. Yet it is commonly made. Perhaps, though, not quite as ludicrous as the accusation made by Christian fundamentalists Scott Lively and Kevin Abrams who, in their self-published 1996 book 'The Pink Swastika' claimed, apparently quite seriously, that homosexuality was largely responsible for the Nazi regime on the grounds that Hitler and all high ranking Nazis were gay and it is a well-known fact that gay men are more violent than straight men. Yes, that really is their argument. Would it be considered a realistic analysis if any other major historical event were to be explained with reference to a single cause? The political rise of Nazism in Germany had multiple complex causes dating to the aftermath of the First World War and the political and social policies of Hitler and his henchmen have their origins many centuries before Darwin was born. Darwin and his scientific findings were in no way complicit in either the spawning or implementation of Hitler's lunatic ideology. When presented honestly and cogently the case for Darwin's defence is compelling.

It is obvious from Hitler's own writing and speeches, and those of his fellow Nazi ideologues, that they either did not really understand or accept Darwinian ideas on evolution. Hitler's rambling and often incoherent ideology had its origin in multiple sources, most of which were broadly theological and philosophical, and all existed many years prior to Darwin's findings. Making the Darwin-Hitler link, then, is a prime example of the rhetorical fallacy of *'post hoc, ergo propter hoc'*, i.e., simplistically assuming that an event that follows some other designated event must have been caused by it. Hitler discussed the influences on his worldview in detail in his two-volume book 'Mein Kampf' ('My Struggle') which he published in 1924-25. Despite what plenty of people are being told and may believe, Darwin rates no mention at all. Furthermore, as we shall see, all of the authors from the late 19th and early 20th centuries who Hitler explicitly acknowledges as influences either ignored, only partially accepted or explicitly

rejected Darwin's findings, and were not afraid to say so. This seems obvious from any objective reading of their work and arguing otherwise is only possible from a basis of either profound ignorance or dishonesty. Those who proclaim an ideological link between Darwin and Hitler, therefore, appear to fall into three distinct camps:

First there are those who simply do not possess any reasonable grasp of the machinery of Darwinian evolution, or may think that they do despite having serious misunderstandings. They usually have a limited formal education in biology (and European history) and hold little interest anyway. They are prey to the opinions of others who also don't understand evolutionary theory and especially to those people who are in the business of systematically lying to their audience. They probably attend fundamentalist Christian churches commonly located behind woefully ignorant signs that ask questions like "*If evolution is real, how come there are still monkeys?*". This, despite the wide availability of popular science books explaining the mechanisms of evolution.

The second group are really a more obstinate and enthusiastic version of the first. They also have little understanding of evolutionary theory (and European history) but, unlike the first group, nevertheless see it as their duty to warn the world of the dangers of 'Darwinism' and 'evolutionism'. They can often be found trolling the internet making erroneous statements *ad nauseam*. To their minds, evolution is "*only a theory*" and they are happy to continue using this phrase in a perjorative fashion without bothering to understand what scientists actually mean when they bestow the title of 'theory' on an explanatory model. So enthralled of the worldview to which they subscribe (or more usually were subscribed to by their parents) that they are in pathological denial that any differing perceptions hold any legitimacy. Although they are a long way from winning their war (at least in developed places outside of the USA), they undoubtedly win some battles. For example, as long ago as 1926 the American creationist and ardent anti-evolution Baptist pastor William Bell Riley made the claim that the phrase "*we may suppose*" occurs over 800 times in Darwin's 'Origin of Species', claiming that the work was far more speculative than it actually is (another version of this myth commonly found in creationist literature uses the term "*we may assume*"). The phrase "*we may suppose*", actually occurs a mere three times, once each in chapters 10, 11 and 13. Like Coulter, Riley was of course lying, banking on his audience not having read the book.

The third group are those that probably do possess a reasonable, or even good understanding of the mechanisms underlying evolutionary theory (and even European history) but their religious convictions oblige them to find the science disagreeable. Such people make a habit (and sometimes a living) seeking to discredit any aspect of modern biology based on Darwin's findings which, in effect, means they are trying to discredit just about the entire basis of modern biology. Attempting to ideologically link Darwin and Hitler is a mere byproduct, then, of a generally anti-science, pro-faith attitude. Conservative Christian authors representing the intelligent design touting Discovery Institute such as Weikart, and Jerry Bergman, author of a number of anti-evolution articles such as 'Darwinism and the Nazi Race Holocaust', published in 1999 in the 'Journal of Creation' (submission guidelines: "*Do not use too many big or extra words*") are probably the most commonly cited in recent years.

Bergman, especially, paints such a dishonest picture of Darwin's life, scientific work and personal opinions that much would surely be considered libelous were he alive today. He wrote a particularly scurrilous paper in 2004 entitled 'Was Charles Darwin Psychotic?: A Study Of His Mental Health' in which it is clear that Bergman has no proper understanding of current psychological diagnoses. He details a constellation of physical and psychological ailments (most of which are gleaned from works written post-1974, only two are from Darwin's own pen) such as anxiety, agoraphobia, digestive problems and depression, all of which point to a general diagnosis of neurosis rather than psychosis. Indeed, Darwin is known to have been both physically and psychologically healthy from 17- to 28-years of age, at the time that psychotic symptoms would be expected to first present. His deterioration appears to have commenced between 1838 and 1842 (i.e., 29- to 33 years of age) which would be unusual for a first presentation of a psychotic episode and more reasonably points toward an undiagnosed tropical disease or, perhaps, multiple allergies. Indeed, the only 'symptom' Bergman can find which comes anywhere near to the psychotic end of a psychological personality continuum is his love of shooting as a young man (with which Bergman makes great play; I somehow doubt, though, that he considers any of the many Christian hunting organisations in the USA to be similarly psychotic). In any case, Darwin's flirtation with hunting lasted for a few years only. Despite repeated requests from his social set he refused to attend hunts as an adult precisely because he came to view hunting as cruel. Bergman's paper is thoroughly reprehensible; he is deliberately and cynically employing the word 'psychotic' as a lay person's notion of 'madness with evil intent' in order to taint Darwin's scientific findings. Wilson (2017) diagnoses differently, however, considering Darwin not as psychotic but as a mere malingerer, his "*psychosomatic whims*" deliberately engineered by him to provide an excuse to get out of doing things he didn't want to do. Like hunting, perhaps?

The extent of Bergman's basic historical and scientific errors and misunderstandings (as well as personal attacks of scientists) have become legend. For example, in his 2001 paper in the 'Journal of Creation', 'The Darwinian Foundation of Communism', in which

Bergman propagates the same lie as Coulter, he claims that Marx first "*encountered Darwin's writings and ideas at the University of Berlin*". This is highly unlikely and even if true is no more than a trivial fact. Marx attended the University of Berlin between 1836 and 1840 and during those years Darwin had published only brief descriptive work (usually one or two paragraphs in society transactions) concerning geological structures, birds, plants and moulds; certainly nothing that could have led to the genesis of a political philosophy. An error of a similar magnitude can be found in the opening statement of his paper entitled "The Ape-to-Human Progression: The Most Common Evolution Icon is a Fraud", also published in the 'Journal of Creation', this time in 2009:

*"Darwin suggested an unbroken evolutionary chain of life from simple molecules, such as ammonia, water, and phosphoric salts, to humans".*

This is sheer nonsense. Darwin famously did not speculate as to how the first life forms emerged, other than one offhand remark in a private letter about the possibility it may have occurred in a "*warm pond*". He did not feel there would ever be enough information available in his lifetime to be able to generate any meaningful hypotheses. From the letter written in 1863 to the English botanist Joseph Dalton Hooker:

*"It is mere rubbish to talk about the origin of life; one might as well talk about the origin of matter."*

And in 'Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex' (1871) he reiterated that thought:

*"It is no valid objection that science as yet throws no light on the far higher problem of the essence or origin of life."*

If Darwin had indeed suggested some mechanism for abiogenesis Bergman would no doubt have used a direct quote. He doesn't because none exist. Instead he misleadingly cites Stephen Meyer's 2009 book 'Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design'. Meyer isn't a biologist, he's not even a working scientist though he does have a joint first degree in physics and earth sciences. He has yet to conduct any experiments in an attempt to falsify evolution. He's a philosopher and intelligent design advocate from the Discovery Institute where he enjoys the company of Weikart and Bergman.

This pseudoacademic affiliation is important. Linking Darwin with Hitler is no more than a fringe view promulgated most notably by American fundamentalist Christians, especially from the Discovery Institute, and by Islamic authors such as Harun Yahya (pen-name of the Turkish creationist Adnan Oktar). So, publications that postulate a link between Darwin's findings and Hitler's ideology originate from very few sources and they are invariably not legitimate university history departments, with the possible exception of Daniel Gasman's 1971 book 'The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League'. It is telling that, until Wilson's 2017 offering, not a single biographer of Hitler has ever noticed a Darwin-Hitler connection, with a single (rather vague) exception. The following lone, bland quote can be found in Alan Bullock's acclaimed book 'Hitler: A Study In Tyranny' (1952):

*"His secretary, who had to endure many such outbursts, records that after his return to Berlin in January his conversations became entirely self-centred and was marked by the monotonous repetition of the same stories told over and over again. His intellectual appetite for the discussion of such large subjects as the evolution of man, the course of world history, religion, and the future of science had gone; even his memory began to fail him. His talk was confined to anecdotes about his dog or his diet, interspersed with complaints about the stupidity and wickedness of the world."*

The citation Bullock gives is Albert Zoller's, book 'Hitler Privat: Erlebnisbericht seiner Geheimsekretärin' (Private Hitler: An Account of His Private Secretary; 1949). Zoller was a French army officer who, in turn, reported having received the quote from his official interviews with Christa Schroeder, one of Hitler's private secretaries. As discussed in some detail later, even if the quote is accurate its translation most probably is not; the commonly translated German word for 'evolution' at that time actually translates most accurately as 'development' and Hitler spoke often of the 'development of mankind'.

Darwin's notion of evolution by natural selection simply describes a natural phenomenon. It can, in itself, be no more disturbing or distasteful than any other natural phenomenon such as the theory of gravity, or the germ theory of infectious disease. What these authors ultimately object to is this: before Darwin there was a consensus of perceived apparent design in nature, which required the actions of a top-down agent. Darwin discovered that this apparent design was able to be produced automatically, via bottom-up

mechanisms. Darwin's findings don't necessarily dismiss the possibility of a deity entirely; it is, after all a scientific, not a metaphysical view. However, they do demonstrate that although the actions of a deity might well be sufficient, they are certainly not a necessary condition to explain the diversity of life we observe on Earth today. As supporting data rapidly accumulated in the following years this view of the non-necessity of a deity in order to explain other natural phenomena naturally spilled over into all other branches of science and by the turn of the century no field of science recognised any specific artifact of nature that necessarily required a supernatural explanation.

One of the strengths of Darwinian evolution is that it offers a comprehensive historical narrative for the abundance of life forms on this planet. Young earth creationism does not and intelligent design does not. Perhaps this is why, as we shall see, authors such as Weikart and Bergman have such difficulty presenting an honest and balanced account of history. Intelligent design and creationist proponents not only offer no timeline they detail no design mechanism at all other than God or an intelligent designer must have done it, somehow. For example, one of the primary claims of proponents of intelligent design is that any increase in genetic information (the term 'information' invariably used in a manner not recognised by mathematicians or bioinformaticians) can only result from an intelligent agent (i.e., God, though they tend not to use the word if they can help it) inserting the information for a purpose. However, they offer no precise, testable hypotheses that might explore how or when this divine insertion occurs. Yet surely to claim that Darwinian evolution is wrong and the 'design hypothesis' is right requires more than conjecture; it requires the same standard of scientifically precise knowledge (*re* God's mechanisms and timing) that biological evolution already enjoys in abundance.

Not surprisingly, then, the Discovery Institute have little to show in the way of peer reviewed publications to support their views. Their own in-house, supposedly peer-reviewed, flagship journal 'Bio-Complexity' is an abject failure. For example, by September, their 2017 volume had published a single paper, 'Conservation of Information in Coevolutionary Searches'. It's merely an opinion piece. No new data or experimentation is presented. Neither is it reported that the author, Robert J Marks, is the journal's Editor-in-Chief. One wonders how their peer process (from author to editor, back to author, back to editor) actually works. This state of affairs is not an anomaly. In 2016 'Bio-complexity' published five papers, none of which reported novel data. Four were co-authored by members of the editorial board. 2015 saw two papers published, both by editorial board members. The previous year, four papers were published, three of which were 'critical reviews'; all were authored by editorial board members. You're getting the drift, I'm sure.

The accepted method of engaging in science is to generate and test hypotheses, present research findings at open scientific conferences and meetings, then to publish these data and findings in peer-reviewed journals and finally, perhaps, to write textbooks. The Discovery Institute blatantly bypass the first three stages; if Marks' 2017 paper had any scientific merit whatsoever, for example, why did he not submit to a reputable scientific journal? They present opinions, not novel scientific findings, and spend large amounts of money lobbying politicians to include intelligent design in the science curriculum of state schools all the while recommending 'textbooks' published by their own 'fellows'. Despite holding an annual budget of several million dollars they do little actual research into intelligent design (though they keep promising to; meanwhile they have their 'research fellows' in white coats interviewed in front of a green screen which is later replaced by stock images of laboratories) though they continue to claim tax exemption status partly on the grounds they fund scientific research. They prefer to report and comment, usually in a highly distorted fashion, on the hard work done by others, most often in closed meetings. This, for example, is the wording found on their publicity material announcing their 'Join the ID Debate!' Conference (Oct, 2017):

*"The debate about intelligent design in nature is for everybody. ID presents an ultimate question, far from being limited in the scope of its relevance to just scientists or philosophers."*

If the subject sounds interesting to you, you might be tempted to attend to either learn more or to contribute. Think again. It goes on:

*"To join us, you must apply beforehand and explain your purpose and interests. The meeting is private and open to guests only at the discretion of Discovery Institute's Center for Science & Culture."*

Unsurprisingly, then, they prefer to write books aimed only at the general public, never the scientific community. And they are not averse to 'planting' ludicrously favourable reviews of their publications in the media. This is an extract from a book review in the New York Times, written by economist George Gilder about Discovery Institute fellow Stephen Meyer's 2013 book 'Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin Of Animal Life And The Case For Intelligent Design':

*"I spend my life reading science books. I've read many hundreds of them over the years, and in my judgment Darwin's Doubt is the best science book ever written. It is a magnificent work, a true masterpiece that will be read for hundreds of years."*

More hyperbole? But then again, what would we expect from an economist, not biologist, newspaper reviewer who conveniently forgets to mention to his readers that he's the co-founder of the Discovery Institute. Gilder's praise of Meyer's book pales in comparison, however, with biochemist Michael Behe's opinion of his own 'discoveries' in the biochemistry of intelligent design. In his 1996 book 'Darwin's Black Box' he actually claimed that they:

*".....must be ranked as one of the greatest achievements in the history of science" rivalling "those of Newton and Einstein, Lavoisier and Schrödinger, Pasteur and Darwin."*

Behe actually wrote this before even a single peer-reviewed paper supporting intelligent design had been published in any scientific journal, in any discipline! Academically, their approach has been a failure; as far as the academic community is concerned they lack any scientific credibility whatsoever.

We can see that Robert Park's seven warning signs for bogus claims ('The Seven Warning Signs Of A Bogus Science, 'Chronicles Of Higher Education', January 2003) show a particularly tight fit in the case of the opinions offered by Discovery Institute authors and their ilk; (i) their claims are pitched directly to the media and general public, thus bypassing peer review; (ii) next, they play the victim by claiming that a powerful orthodox establishment is suppressing their 'evidence'; (iii) a substantial number of their claims are at the limits of the data available to them; (iv) they make abundant claims utilising the argument by popularity; (v) their 'research' is done in isolation from mainstream scientific communities and (vi) their claims would require new laws of nature to be formalised. Further evidence for the pseudoscientific credentials of Discovery Institute fellows is exemplified by their track record of supporting potentially dangerous medical causes. William Dembski, for example, has claimed that childhood autism is caused by vaccines while both Rev. Jonathan Wells and Phillip Johnson are signatories to the 'Aids Appraisal Letter', first published in June 1991 and ongoing, which denies any link between the HIV virus and AIDS. Rev. Wells (a devotee for over 40 years of the self-proclaimed messiah Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church, aka the 'Moonies') also claimed in 2004 that cancer was not caused by genetic mutations.

Discovery Institute fellow Paul Nelson has actually confirmed their arid research terrain. Quoted in an article entitled 'Interview: The Measure of Design, A Conversation About the Past, Present & Future of Darwinism & Design' which appeared in 'Touchstone' magazine in 2004, he admitted:

*"Easily the biggest challenge facing the intelligent design community is to develop a full-fledged theory of biological design. We don't have such a theory right now.....we've got a bag of powerful intuitions and a handful of notions."*

But intuitions and notions do not a science make. Their failure as scientific researchers has therefore forced the Discovery Institute 'fellows' to take another, more sociologically based approach to push their agenda; by claiming that evolution by natural selection (or random drift, or any other discovered or yet discovered mechanism) is simply rotten. The approach is disarmingly simple; identify your favoured starting points (in this case Darwin or evolutionary theory) then select your goals (e.g., Hitler, the Nazi Party and the Holocaust). Next, try to amass as much data as you can that can be manipulated and construed in such a way as to connect them. Throw in some untruths if you think you can get away with it. Don't shy away from the *ad hominem* attack. If the approach is successful enough Darwin's findings will be brought into question without having to actually address the science itself. Then, repeatedly chant the mantra that 'evolution is just not possible' because, obviously, repetition improves an unsound argument. Hitler would have had no difficulty understanding their approach. From 'Mein Kampf':

*"But the most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly and with unflagging attention. It must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over. Here, as so often in this world, persistence is the first and most important requirement for success."*

However, as University of Chicago historian Robert Richards rightly notes in his 2013 book 'Was Hitler A Darwinian? the logic is inherently flawed:

*".....even if Hitler had the Origin of Species as his bedtime reading and clearly derived inspiration from it, this would have no*

*bearing on the truth of Darwin's theory or directly on the moral character of Darwin and other Darwinians".*

Indeed, even if Hitler had been a scientist and had himself discovered evolution by natural selection, and had Nazi stormtroopers shouted 'Heil Darwin' as they went about their work, and even if Darwin had written of his hope that a future fascist dictator would be able to use his scientific discoveries to the detriment of humankind, the science itself would in no way be invalidated. To claim otherwise would be absurd, an *argumentum ad consequentiam*. The tactics employed by members of the Discovery Institute, then, are simply a diversion to hide their real intentions of attempting to discredit any scientific endeavour that might lead to doubts as to whether a deity exists. Again, this strategy has been admitted to by their own 'Research Director' Bruce Gordon, in his article entitled 'Intelligent Design Movement Struggles With Identity Crisis', published in 'Research News And Opportunities in Science And Philosophy' in January 2001:

*".....design theoretic research has been hijacked as part of a larger cultural and political movement.....it must be worth pursuing on the basis of its own merits, not as an exercise in Christian 'cultural renewal'"*.

The prominent Islamic creationist Harun Yahya was, philosophically, an ex-stablemate of the Discovery institute. He also routinely offers the Darwin to Hitler canard. Here's a couple of quotes concerning 'Darwinists' from Yahya, from his own website:

*"Since Darwinists are fearful of science, they employ propaganda tactics instead. Darwinists employ a hypnotic technique that prevents people from thinking independently or examining the true scientific evidence".*

And another quote, from a 2008 interview with Daniel Steinvorth in the magazine 'Der Spiegel':

*"Muslims who commit acts of terrorism are really atheistic Darwinists trying to discredit Islam".*

Yes, those quotes are real. And again, this time from an interview with the Discovery Institute's Denyse O'Leary in 2009 published on the 'Uncommon Descent' website:

*"Darwinism is a Pagan religion whose roots go back to the Sumerians and Ancient Egypt.....the Darwinist materialist mindset lies behind all wars, revolutions and anarchy."*

And to give a flavour of how even the most irrational anti-Darwin outpourings are acceptable to members of the Discovery Institute, O'Leary goes on to describe Harun Yahya's writings as:

*".....the most succinct and comprehensive of the critiques of overblown claims for Darwinian evolution that I have ever read."*

Attitudes have changed somewhat, however. While the Discovery Institute used to consider Harun Yahya to be an important ally they have more recently been forced to publicly dissociate themselves from him. The reason? Well it's obviously not because of his penchant for lunacy and the comedic phrase, or (maybe) even because he's a Muslim. It's because Yahya is now critical of the Discovery Institute, describing it on his website as:

*"a deceitful endeavour.....another of Satan's distractions.....a Masonic conspiracy for promoting atheism and Deism."*

Not because the Discovery Institute and intelligent design is intended to counter evolution, obviously, but because it does so without, for the most part, overtly mentioning God, by (usually) playing down claims as to the identity of the 'designer'. As Pennock (2004) wryly observes:

*"It is ironic that their political strategy leads them to deny God in the public square more often than Peter did."*

If you still have any doubts as to Weikart and Bergman's and Yahya's motives, ask yourself why they don't level similar absurd arguments at any other field of science. Did anyone ideologically link Isaac Newton (or even the Wright brothers) with Hitler because the Luftwaffe targeted a wholly civilian population when they bombed the Basque town of Guernica in 1937? Has anyone ideologically linked Antoine Lavoisier with Hitler because he decided to use the chemical agent Zyklon-B in the Nazi death camps rather than some non-chemical means of mass murder? Mendelian genetics directly informed the scientific basis for eugenics

policies worldwide, yet we witness none of the vindictiveness aimed at Darwin targeted also at Gregor Mendel. Indeed, who outside of the fundamentalist Christian community would even consider it reasonable for a scientist to be deemed responsible when, after their death, another individual uses their research findings and exploits them to serve their own political agenda? And how come we never hear Christian fundamentalists denigrate classical music? After all, the Nazis employed it enthusiastically, to great effect, in their propaganda films and mass rallies.

So what is it about Darwin that they hate so much? He simply discovered the existence of a mechanism that explains the diversity of the species currently observed on our planet (not, as Bergman and Meyer would like their audience to think, a mechanism for abiogenesis). He was a naturalist. He had no initial underlying philosophical interest in finding such a mechanism, other than a curiosity to explain phenomena as diverse as such as corals, orchids, birds and barnacles and it is a long and winding philosophical road from barnacles to concentration camps, despite Bergman's pathetic assertion that *"he wanted to murder God."* To the contrary, this is what Darwin wrote in his autobiography:

*"I feel compelled to look to a First Cause having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man; and I deserve to be called a Theist. This conclusion was strong in my mind about the time, as far as I can remember, when I wrote the Origin of Species."*

In light of the fact that he had even bothered to refer to God in 'Origin of Species' another fundamentalist Christian, Cornelius Hunter (2001), takes a different stab at Darwin's character by asserting that he (and others following him) were motivated toward evolutionary theory, not because of the scientific evidence, but for primarily religious reasons, i.e., because evolutionary theory effectively acts as an atheistic version of a theodicy, in that it purports to explain the apparent cruelty of nature. Perhaps not murdering, then, but certainly willfully discounting God. But this approach is simplistic; it cannot apply to all of theism, and certainly not to deism. It is only possible for someone who presupposes that God is, or expected to be, benevolent toward all of creation.

As noted, Bergman has quite a history of making erroneous and asinine statements. In a 2009 debate with developmental biologist PZ Myers on whether creationism should be taught alongside evolution in schools he stated, incredibly, that:

*".....no scientists opposed Hitler".*

If Bergman was anything like a diligent researcher he would have found the November 26th 1938 edition of the influential British magazine 'Picture Post' entitled 'Back to the Middle Ages' which displayed a collage cover featuring Hitler, Goebbels and Göring contrasted with the faces of a number of German scientists opposed to Nazism as well as detailed articles inside dealing with the many German artists and scientists forced to flee Germany. He would know the story of Franz Boas (1858-1942), the German-born pro-Darwinian, anti-racist 'father of American Anthropology' who was responsible for getting many anti-Nazi German scientists out of their homeland and arranging academic positions for them in the United States. Obviously Bergman hasn't bothered to read Jean Medawar and David Pyke's 2000 book 'Hitler's Gift: The True Story of the Scientists Expelled by the Nazi Regime'. In the same debate Bergman also claimed that a schoolteacher had been fired for posting the periodic table on his classroom wall, on the grounds that the periodic table was irreducibly complex and therefore constituted a religious statement. The story was, of course, completely fabricated. A further example of his willingness to bullshit: Bergman has published work under the pseudonym 'Hagor Montague'. He has actually cited work under that name without indicating that it is the same author.

Darwin initially trained to be a clergyman and at the time of writing 'Origin of Species' he was a committed theist married to a devout Christian. Although in his later life he described himself as 'agnostic' - and never as atheist - he nevertheless had openly atheist friends and, when they were invited to dinner at his home his wife would arrange the table so she did not have to sit next to them. Indeed, Darwin wrote on several occasions that he perceived no general incompatibility between his findings on evolution and religion. More specifically the theory of evolution by natural selection explains how the individual species that are observed today have descended, via means of often deceptively simple biological algorithms, from common ancestor species, a process referred to as 'speciation' (though, of course, evolution occurs in the absence of speciation). Thus Darwinian evolution is descriptive. Unlike the Bible, it is in no sense prescriptive. Many fundamentalist Christians appear to be philosophically blind to this most basic fact.

Unlike Darwin, Hitler had no scientific training at all and left a respected Catholic school at sixteen with an undistinguished academic record in every subject, having been removed from an earlier respected school for his poor performance and was later



turned down by art college. Not surprisingly, it is obvious from his own pen that he possessed no real understanding or appreciation of evolutionary theory. Bergman (1999), however, tells us differently:

*“As early as 1925, Hitler outlined his conclusion in Chapter 4 of Mein Kampf that Darwinism was the only basis for a successful Germany.”*

Did he really? Actually no, he didn't. Please go ahead and read Chapter 4, Vol 1 of 'Mein Kampf' and you will find that Bergman is blatantly fabricating (although Bergman does not specify a volume the date given can only refer to Vol 1; Vol 2 was not published until the following year). Indeed, we have available to us a complete record of everything Hitler wrote and said in public, and quite a bit of what he said and wrote in private. In addition to the lack of mention of Darwin or 'Darwinism' in any chapter at all of 'Mein Kampf', the transcripts of every recorded speech made by Hitler are freely available. Nowhere did he use the words 'Darwin', 'Darwinist', 'Darwinian' or 'Darwinism' or the terms 'theory of evolution' or 'theory of descent'. Similarly, in his private correspondence and personal notes, ('Hitler's Letters and Notes' published in 1974 by the German historian Werner Macer) not a single mention is found of Darwin or 'Darwinism'. This is indeed a surprising omission, considering the intellectual debt Bergman and Weikart claim Hitler owes Darwin. The same goes for Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda. The volumes of his meticulously kept diary dated 1923-1945 (published in full, 2008) similarly makes no mention of 'Darwin', 'Darwinism' or 'theory of evolution'. Indeed neither Weikart, Bergman or Gasman or anyone else have ever been able to uncover a single direct quote from any leading Nazi ideologue linking Nazi political policy with the 'theory of evolution', 'Darwin' or 'Darwinism'.

It appears that Hitler was an avid book collector and reader. In October 1934 he disclosed to the Gladbacher Fire Insurance Company that his personal book collection comprised 6,000 volumes. Eight years later, the writer Frederick Oeschner, who was given frequent access to both Hitler's city and rural private residences and his office estimated, in his 1942 book 'This Is The Enemy', that his personal library held nearly three times as many; 16,300 books. Of these, he noted that approximately 7,000 dealt with military matters, 1,500 with architecture and the arts and 800-1000 books could be classed as popular fiction. The remaining volumes dealt with diverse themes such as history and geography. Not a single work by Darwin was found. The portions of Hitler's library currently housed in the United States Library of Congress and at Brown University in the United States confirm this. As Robert Richards (2013) reminds us:

*“There's not the slightest shred of evidence that Hitler read Darwin.”*

Hitler did possess six books written by Hans Günther (an anti-Darwinian known disparagingly as 'Rassengünther' because of his preoccupation with 'race') including four copies of his classic work 'Rassenkunde des Deutschen Volkes' ('Racial Science of the German People'). According to Timothy Ryback ('Hitler's Private Library: The Books That Shaped His Life'; 2008) one of these copies showed signs of sustained use. Unperturbed by such evidence however, Weikart, responding in the comments section to a 'Philadelphia Inquirer' article 'Severing the Link between Darwin and Nazism', (October 27th, 2011) written by Fay Flam, actually countered with:

*"Whether Hitler ever read Darwin is, of course, irrelevant."*

Is this really a sound argument: the bedrock of Hitler's worldview was based on Darwinian science and it is entirely feasible that this came to be even though Hitler never actually read anything published by Darwin? Weikart would appear to think so. He then goes on:

*"I have examined the official Nazi biology curriculum. Lo and behold, it contains extensive teaching on evolution, including human evolution (and it is by natural selection, so it is overtly Darwinian)."*

I'm sure the curriculum included teaching about gravity and chemistry and classical music too. All of which were accepted subjects within the sciences and humanities and, as mentioned, were all used by the Nazis with evil intent. So why isn't Weikart questioning their value too?

Hitler's favourite author though, from childhood and into adulthood, was undoubtedly Karl May. He rates a particularly admirable mention in 'Mein Kampf' for the influence on his childhood and according to Albert Speer (quoted by Ryback, 2008):

*".....when faced by seemingly hopeless situations, he would still reach for these stories.....they gave him courage like works*

*of philosophy for others or the Bible for elderly people."*

May was, despite his surname, German and despite having never travelled to the United States wrote novels set in the 'Wild West' all of which had a common theme of the sharp-shooting white hero defeating the racially inferior 'Redskins'. The underlying prevalent theme was that of 'Manifest Destiny', i.e., the moral right of Europeans to inhabit every corner of North America. Hitler referred to the value of this concept in a number of speeches. It is not difficult, therefore, to draw parallels between 'Manifest Destiny' and Hitler's concept of 'Lebensraum', or the advocacy of German expansion into areas of Europe populated by 'inferior peoples', particularly toward the east. On October 17th 1941, Hitler is recorded as saying about Russia:

*"There's only one duty: to Germanize this country by the immigration of Germans, and to look upon the natives as Redskins."*

And this was not a one-off sentiment; Hitler is frequently recorded as referring to Russians as 'Redskins'. By 1943 Germany had 217 divisions facing Russia and only 70 facing the Atlantic and Hitler had special editions of Karl May's books distributed to troops the Russian front. Nor is it a stretch to identify the similarity of Native American forced migrations into reservations with the forced displacement of the Jewish population into concentration camps. Of course, the phrase 'Manifest Destiny' was first used in 1845, though the concept predates that year, and the forced migration of Native Americans commenced with the Indian Removal Act of 1830, some 29 years before Darwin wrote 'On the Origin of Species'.

Weikart repeatedly makes the claim that there are a large number of instances where Hitler uses the term 'evolution' in his writings and speeches. On closer examination, however, we can see he is attempting to deliberately mislead (this charge is made all the worse by the fact that Weikart actually lived in Germany for a time). The phrase 'theory of evolution' in modern German is 'evolutionstheorie' or, more specifically, 'Darwin'sche evolutionstheorie' or die 'Darwinsche evolutionstheorie'. All these terms are found to be more commonly used since about 1950 and none of these words appear in any of Hitler's writings nor in any of his speeches. In Hitler's day a number of words and phrases could be applied to convey the general notion of biological evolution, for example, the terms 'abstammungslehre', 'deszendenztheorie' and 'abstammungstheorie'. Again, there are no known records of him having used these words. The word 'entwicklung' was, however, very commonly used by Hitler in both his writings and his speeches. Entwicklung can translate as either 'evolution' or 'development', dependent on the context, similar to English usages as in, for example, 'the evolution of German culture' or 'economic development' and Hitler often employed the word with this type of meaning. Similarly so for the word 'höherentwicklung', which is most often applied in a more philosophical or abstract sense, as in the 'higher development' of thought.

Inclusion of any instance of 'entwicklung' or 'höherentwicklung' has been claimed by Weikart to demonstrate that the Nazis were familiar with and used Darwinian ideas. It does no such thing. Weikart is simply counting instances of the use of these words while completely ignoring the context and intended meaning. His claim that Hitler's repeated use of certain words, translating more usually as 'development', signifies his approval of Darwinian evolution is disingenuous as well as dishonest; indeed there is not a single instance of Hitler ever using the root-word 'entwicklung' to explicitly convey the sense of biological evolution. This is easy enough to verify, even for those not fluent in written German. James Murphy's 1939 English translation of 'Mein Kampf' is readily available online and the two volumes total to about 250,000 words. Murphy translates the exact English word 'evolution' from the original German a mere 12 times. Here is each example along with some surrounding context. In Vol. 1 the word doesn't even appear until Chapter 10 (contra Bergman's claim) where it appears once in a discussion as to why the Second Reich had collapsed:

*".....clear insight into the laws of political **evolution** which is a necessary quality in political leadership."*

It then appears in four sentences in Chapter 11, entitled 'Race and Nature'. While Bergman claims Chapter 4 of Vol. 1 to be the smoking gun, Weikart (2004) contradicts, arguing that Chapter 11 is where the evidence lies:

*"The Darwinian underpinnings of Nazi racial ideology are patently obvious. Hitler's chapter on "Nation and Race" in Mein Kampf discusses the racial struggle for existence in clear Darwinian terms."*

But does it? The first instance is the only example that could be construed as referring to biological evolution and even then it is certainly more applicable to artificial selection than any Darwinian idea of natural selection:

*"The stronger must dominate and not mate with the weaker.....if such a law did not direct the process of **evolution** then the higher development of organic life would not be conceivable at all."*

The second instance refers to the importance of the domestication of animals for farming in the growth of civilisation:

*".....fail to recognize that this **evolution** had to take place in order that man might reach that degree of civilization."*

The third instance is found in an argument against pacifism during wartime:

*".....he will protest against the fantasies of pacifist ranters, who in reality are nothing better than cowardly egoists.....it is a necessity of human **evolution** that the individual should be imbued with the spirit of sacrifice in favour of the common weal."*

The fourth occurrence also has no biological connotation whatsoever:

*"The intellectual faculties of the Jew have been trained through thousands of years.....His intellectual powers, however, are not the result of an inner **evolution** but rather have been shaped by the object-lessons which the Jew has received from others."*

I leave it to the reader to decide for themselves whether Weikart's charge is warranted. In Vol. 2, there are two instances of the word 'evolution' in Chapter 4. The first is non-biological in context and the second distinctly un-Darwinian and vaguely religious in character:

*".....it may be worth while to glance once again at the real origins and causes of the cultural **evolution** of mankind....."*

*"Because everyone who believes in the higher **evolution** of living organisms must admit that every manifestation of the vital urge and struggle to live must have had a definite beginning in time and that one subject alone must have manifested it for the first time. It was then repeated again and again; and the practice of it spread over a widening area, until finally it passed into the subconsciousness of every member of the species, where it manifested itself as 'instinct.'"*

In Chapter 7 the word is used in a discussion about the Soviet armed forces:

*"The general **evolution** of things, even though it took a century of struggle, placed the best in the position that it had merited."*

There are two instances in Chapter 11. They both occur in a discussion about how to best organise a political party:

*"Organization is a thing that derives its existence from organic life, organic **evolution**. When the same set of ideas have found a lodgement in the minds of a certain number of people they tend of themselves to form a certain degree of order among those people."*

*".....the leadership principle may be imposed on an organized political community in a dictatorial way. But this principle can become a living reality only by passing through the stages that are necessary for its own **evolution**. These stages lead from the smallest cell of the State organism upwards."*

Finally, only once in Chapter 13, which is concerned with Germany's political alliances following the First World War:

*"This **evolution** has not yet taken the shape of a conscious intention and movement to restore the political power and independence of our nation."*

So where, one might ask, per Bergman's claim, has "Hitler outlined his conclusion in Chapter 4 of *Mein Kampf* that Darwinism was the only basis for a successful Germany"? And is it true per Weikart's claim that the "Darwinian underpinnings of Nazi racial ideology are patently obvious." If Hitler has achieved this he appears to have managed the feat without once mentioning 'Darwin', 'Darwinism', 'Darwinian', 'natural selection' or even 'evolution' in any Darwinian sense whatsoever. That's quite a conceptual and linguistic trick. When faced with this (lack of) evidence, it is sometimes argued that Hitler simply conveyed Darwinian notions without ever mentioning them. Given the examples above, this is obviously not so. However, given the gravity

of the charges made against Darwin, that his scientific findings weren't simply a minor add-on to Hitler's worldview but the core philosophy that drove all his political and social aims, does this seem at all plausible? Hitler had no qualms about showing his gratitude to others he acknowledged had influenced him so why does he never do the same for Darwin?

Nevertheless, Weikart (2004) ploughs on and offers further contrived evidence. This example claims that Hitler accepted (despite what he had expressly written in *Mein Kampf*) that humans had evolved over millions of years, in line with evolutionary biology. This one is ludicrously tenuous; the implication is that since he believed that humans had evolved over millions of years this provides sufficient evidence that his political theories were directly underwritten by Darwin! According to Weikart (who offers no citation) this quote is from Hitler's Speech at the opening ceremony for the 'House of German Art' in Munich in July, 1937. Speaking of "*degenerate art*" Hitler is purported to state:

*"When we know today that the evolution of millions of years, compressed into a few decades, repeats itself in every individual, then this art, we realize, is not "modern." It is on the contrary to the highest degree "archaic," far older probably than the Stone Age."*

This is both a glaring quote mine and a mistranslation. The original speech can be found on the website of the organisation 'German History in Documents and Images'. What Hitler actually said was:

*"Since **we know today that the** development of **millions of years** repeats itself in every individual but is **compressed into a few decades**, we have the proof that an artistic creation that does not surpass the achievement of eight-year-old children **is not "modern"** or even "futuristic" but is, **on the contrary**, highly **archaic**. It probably is not as developed as the art of **the Stone Age** period, when people scratched pictures of their environment on the walls of caves."*

The bold words are the only ones present in Weikart's version of the quote. Weikart has cobbled together less than a third of the original paragraph and quoted it as if it were verbatim - without even the use ellipses. Worse, contrary to Weikart, the word 'evolution' in a biological sense does not occur, 'development', of course, being the correct translation. A further example of such deliberate mistranslation from German to English is this example from Geisler and Turek's book 'I Don't have Enough Faith to be an Atheist' (2004), but it is commonly found elsewhere. The following 'quote' is from Chapter 6 of 'Mein Kampf'. It is used to directly support Geisler and Turek's assertion that:

*"Adolf Hitler used Darwin's theory as philosophical justification for the Holocaust."*

Never mind that Hitler does not mention his intentions re the Holocaust in *Mein Kampf* at all. The alleged quote is:

*"If nature does not wish that weaker individuals should mate with the stronger, she wishes even less that a superior race should intermingle with an inferior one; because in such a case, all her efforts, throughout hundreds of thousands of years, to establish an evolutionary higher state of being, may thus be rendered futile."*

Ignoring also for now the obvious teleological and profoundly un-Darwinian notions that nature "*wishes*" and makes "*efforts*" toward a "*evolutionary higher state*", it might well appear to someone unfamiliar with the mechanics of evolutionary biology that Hitler is appealing to evolutionary mechanisms to at least support his political views. After all, he appears to actually mention the word, and in a biological context. This is not the case, however. Here is the same passage in the original German:

*"So wenig sie aber schon eine Paarung von schwächeren Einzelwesen mit stärkeren wünscht, soviel weniger noch die Verschmelzung von höherer Rasse mit niederer, da ja andernfalls ihre ganze sonstige, vielleicht jahrhunderttausendelange Arbeit der **Höherzüchtung** mit einem Schlage wieder hinfällig wäre."*

The word that Christian fundamentalists deliberately and commonly mistranslate as 'evolutionary' is in bold. Yet in no way does this word translate as 'evolutionary'. 'Höherzüchtung' has never been used by native German speakers to refer to evolutionary biology. 'Höher' translates directly as 'higher' while 'züchtung' translates directly as 'breeding'. An accurate rendering, therefore, is 'higher breeding' or 'cultivation', obviously referring to 'artificial selection', which is hardly an original Darwinian concept or even a Darwinian concept at all; Darwin went to great pains to contrast natural selection with artificial selection. Geisler and Turek then compound their dishonesty by adding a touch of scientific illiteracy. They go on:

*Hitler, like other Darwinists, illegitimately personifies nature by attributing will to it."*

This profoundly ignorant statement is typical of the level of argumentation emanating from these quarters. Like other Darwinists? Really? What other Darwinists, pray? Of course, they cite not a single one. With good reason. For if they had, they would be forced to bring their readers' attention to the ideas of theistic evolution (i.e., the notion that biological evolution is guided by God, e.g., Miller, 1999). But this too is not even the orthodox view in biology. The anti-Darwin lobby appear terribly confused on this issue. On the one hand the literal, young-Earth creationists deny that any evolution occurs beyond the level of individual species, while some old-Earth creationists and intelligent-design proponents sometimes argue against theistic evolution (e.g., Dembski, 1995 "*an ill-conceived accommodation*"; Meyer, 1999), yet others fully embrace common descent (e.g., Behe, 1996). When faced with the genetic evidence for common descent, however, the latter group are not averse to postulating that all the genetic information necessary to account for the diversity of extant species was purposely 'front-loaded' by the designer (i.e., God) which would, of course, be a variant of theistic evolution. Nevertheless, you can't realistically argue on the one hand that 'Darwinism' is an inherently evil 'philosophy' or 'religion' because it rests on a blind mechanical process, having no inherent teleological design, purpose, intent or destiny (as fundamentalist Christians, including Geisler and Turek continually do) and in the next breath claim that Darwinists illegitimately reassign purpose and teleology from supernatural to natural means. For their arguments to have their intended effect, Geisler and Turek are surely playing on the ignorance of their intended readership.

There are two instances where Hitler appears to have alluded to Darwinian evolution. Both come from the 'Table Talks', a series of conversations and monologues recorded by stenographers between 1941 and 1944. Hitler would not allow any recording devices to be used during these talks and the subsequent accuracy of the two extant transcripts of these talks and the quality of the translations has been repeatedly questioned and criticised. Nevertheless, in October 1941 Hitler discusses the absurdity of schools teaching the story of the creation in one class and notions of evolution in another and how the two conflicting stories had confused him as a child. He then goes on to say that:

*".....it would be more profoundly pious to find God in everything".*

He gives no judgement on the theory of evolution. In July 1942, Hitler likens himself to a scientist:

*"I feel I am like Robert Koch [the German doctor who isolated the responsible agents for tuberculosis, anthrax and cholera] in politics. He discovered the bacillus and thereby ushered medical science onto new paths. I discovered the Jew as the bacillus and the fermenting agent of all social decomposition."*

This was the second occasion in which Hitler had likened himself to Robert Koch. The first was in a speech in Salzburg 22 years earlier when he also likened himself to Pasteur (an ardent creationist of course). Yet we are being led to believe that it was Darwin who was his scientific hero. So why did he never say that? He repeatedly praises men like Martin Luther, Arthur de Gobineau, Houston Chamberlain, Koch and Pasteur among others, but never, ever, Darwin. The previous January he was recorded as saying:

*"From where do we get the right to believe, that from the very beginning Man was not what he is today? Looking at Nature tells us, that in the realm of plants and animals changes and developments happen. But nowhere inside a kind shows such a development as the breadth of the jump, as Man must supposedly have made, if he has developed from an ape-like state to what he is today."*

By any reading this is surely a straightforward and unambiguous denial of not only speciation but of the scientifically accepted evolutionary origins of human beings. This passage could have been written by any modern-day creationist trying to convince his audience that evolution *sans* speciation ('microevolution') is as far as the evidence goes. It surely beggars belief that after writing two large volumes, giving dozens of public speeches, in person and on the radio, and then having regular recorded conversations on a wide range of subjects over a period of three years, the man who had supposedly based his entire political ideology on Darwinism had no more to say on the matter than these trivial few lines. Weikart can surely see that Hitler negated Darwinian evolution completely, yet he chooses to consider this statement as an "*abberation*" (as if he had any others to compare it with) and so finds himself forced to partially quote from a little-known book of essays (first published by the 'Literary Guide' in 1943-44, later reprinted by Watts & Co.) by Arthur Keith (1866-1955), a Scottish anatomist and anthropologist:

*"The German Führer, as I have consistently maintained, is an evolutionist. He has consciously sought to make the practice of*

*Germany conform to the theory of evolution."*

In addition to Weikart's book this carefully selected quote can be found on a number of fundamentalist Christian websites. What you never find in these places, however, is Keith's following sentence:

*"He has failed, not because evolution is false, but because he has made three fatal errors in its application".*

So, completely contrary to what Weikart and others would like us to believe, the point Keith was actually making is that Hitler didn't understand evolution well enough to apply it. And neither, it appears, did Arthur Keith. He was responsible in 1914 for giving a scientific name, *Homo piltdownensis*, to the fraudulent fossil skull (part human, part orang-utan, part chimpanzee) known as the Piltdown Man, despite a paper having appeared a year earlier in 'Nature' (Irving, 1913) suggesting the skull was fake, on the basis that ".....*the stratum of Piltdown gravel.....is of far later date than anything belonging to the Pleiocene.*" However, Keith was not only convinced that Hitler was an "evolutionist" he also denied the validity of all proto-human fossils found in Africa, believing instead that all humans originated in Europe and that "racial characters are more strongly developed in the Jews than in any other race". He further argued that nation states were quasi-biological entities and, in a 1931 lecture in London's Conway Hall, 'Race as a Political Factor' argued that the races should be kept apart:

*"The three primary racial groups within the human species are the Caucasian, mongoloid and negroid. From analogy with cross-breeding in animals and plants, and from experience of human cross-breeding, it can be asserted that inter-marriage between members of the three groups produces inferior progeny. Hence racial segregation is to be recommended."*

These ideas sound like something pulled directly from 'Mein Kampf'. Yet Keith is consistently selectively quoted by Christian fundamentalists, not to criticise Keith for views that align with Hitler, but to discredit Darwin, for having allegedly influenced those views!

The closest to a direct reference to Darwinian 'natural selection' in the entire Nazi political archive is found in the minutes of the Wansee Conference of 1942. Even this is highly questionable. Reinhard Heydrich, one of the architects of the Holocaust (the name of the project to build three of the death camps was Operation Reinhard) reported on his plans for Jewish work camps:

*"Able-bodied Jews, separated according to sex, will be taken in large work columns to these areas for work on roads, in the course of which action doubtless a large portion will be eliminated by natural causes. The possible final remnant will, since it will undoubtedly consist of the most resistant portion, have to be treated accordingly, because it is the product of natural selection and would, if released, act as a the seed of a new Jewish revival".*

In this commonly encountered English translation Heydrich is stating, correctly, that Jews who are able to survive the rigours of the camp will be the hardest and if allowed to reproduce will pass these traits onto their offspring. This would certainly be an example of natural selection. As Darwin explained in 'The Descent of Man':

*".....the weak in body or mind are soon eliminated; and those that survive commonly exhibit a vigorous state of health".*

Note that Heydrich is simply reporting the possible natural consequences of his plans. He has not fallen for an *argumentum ad consequentiam*. Contrary to assertions from Christian fundamentalists, he is not even remotely attempting to use natural selection as a justification for the Jews being placed in the camp. Indeed, Heydrich is bringing natural selection to the attention of his colleagues only because of its potentially negative effects on Nazi aspirations. However, once again, translation of the quote is highly suspect. The original German text does not refer to natural selection in the Darwinian sense. The second sentence of the above quote reads:

*"Der allfällig endlich verbleibende Restbestand wird, da es sich bei diesem zweifellos um den widerstandsfähigsten Teil handelt entsprechend behandelt werden müssen, da dieser, **eine natürliche Auslese darstellend**, bei Freilassung als Keimzelle eines neuen jüdischen Aufbaues anzusprechen ist."*

The relevant term here is the bold "*eine natürliche Auslese darstellend*". This was not the phrase commonly used by German-speaking biologists to describe Darwinian natural selection. This was 'natürliche selektion'. Thus, rather than "*the product of natural selection*" the passage most accurately translates as "*representing a natural selection*". It is possible, of course, that

Heydrich was unaware of the correct scientific term and substituted a more generic phrase but this would not explain why he prefaced the term with an indefinite article; this would surely not be a mistake.

Because of the disturbing lack of direct quotations from Nazi sources, authors claiming a Darwin-Hitler link are forced to copiously scaffold their assertions by quote-mining from carefully selected third parties. Weikart's book and Bergman's papers are replete with examples of this practice. Further, they often deliberately convey these opinions in such a way that they masquerade as a primary source. Bergman (1999) again:

*"His race views were not from fringe science as often claimed but rather Hitler's views were "..... straightforward German social Darwinism of a type widely known and accepted"*

Bergman has constructed this quote cleverly. A cursory glance makes it appear that the nested quote emanates from Hitler. It doesn't. If it did, Bergman would quote and cite Hitler himself stating that his views were "*straightforward German social Darwinism.*" It's not as if Hitler boxed shy of letting the world know his opinions. Well, apart from Hitler never having used the word 'Darwinism', the phrase 'social Darwinism' wasn't even coined until the final year of Hitler's life. Why else would Bergman feel the need to nest-quote an opinion from political scientist George Stein's 1988 paper in 'American Scientist', 'Biological Science and the Roots of Nazism'?

Another sly yet commonly employed trick by anti-Darwin commentators is to use selective quotes derived directly from Darwin, but in a rebuilt form, in a blatant attempt to distort the original meaning. The following, for example, is an excerpt from the transcript of the voice-over from the documentary 'Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed'. This film attempted, among other aims, to argue that evolutionary theory has led to all manner of atrocities, including eugenics and the Nazi Holocaust. This passage purports to be a direct quotation from Darwin that demonstrates his support of eugenics and callous lack of concern for his fellow humans:

*"With savages, the weak in body or mind are soon eliminated. We civilized men, on the other hand, do our utmost to check the process of elimination. We build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed and the sick. Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. Hardly anyone is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed".*

It certainly appears that Darwin is suggesting that weaker members of society not be allowed to have children. Now here is the original quotation in full, taken from 'The Descent of Man'. The words deliberately omitted are in bold:

*"With savages, the weak in body or mind are soon eliminated; and those that survive commonly exhibit a vigorous state of health. We civilized men, on the other hand, do our utmost to check the process of elimination. We build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed and the sick; **we institute poor-laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of every one to the last moment. There is reason to believe that vaccination has preserved thousands, who from a weak constitution would formerly have succumbed to small-pox.** Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. **It is surprising how soon a want of care, or care wrongly directed, leads to the degeneration of a domestic race; but excepting in the case of man himself,** hardly anyone is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed".*

So we have a purported direct quote from Darwin which ignores half of the words from his original paragraph. This exact doctored quote has a long history and appears to have been first used by the anti-evolution prosecuting lawyer William Jennings Bryan in the 1925 Louisiana 'Scopes' trial which challenged the legality of the Butler Act prohibiting the teaching in state schools of:

*".....any theory that denies the Story of Divine Creation of Man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animal."*

It is difficult to imagine that the producers of the documentary were not aware of their falsehood. Even worse, the documentary simply ignores the paragraph immediately following in which Darwin makes crystal clear his contempt for eugenics :

*"The aid which we feel impelled to give to the helpless is mainly an incidental result of the instinct of sympathy, which was originally acquired as part of the social instincts, but subsequently rendered, in the manner previously indicated, more tender*

and more widely diffused. Nor could we check our sympathy, even at the urging of hard reason, without deterioration in the noblest part of our nature. The surgeon may harden himself whilst performing an operation, for he knows that he is acting for the good of his patient; but if we were intentionally to neglect the weak and helpless, it could only be for a contingent benefit, with an overwhelming present evil”.

So, contrary to what 'Expelled' is claiming, Darwin actually told us that the practice of eugenics would result in "*deterioration in the noblest part of our nature*" and be "*an overwhelmingly present evil*". Comparing the two versions, I think anyone would agree that the view painted of Darwin in 'Expelled' falls far short of honesty. In fact, rather than being a cold-hearted eugenicist Darwin reveals himself to be considerably more tolerant and less bigoted than are many present-day fundamentalist Christians. Another example of the dishonesty of 'Expelled': there are scenes at the opening and closing of the film in which the narrator, Ben Stein, is purported to be lecturing to a packed auditorium of university biology students who appear to be enthusiastically applauding his diatribe against 'Darwinism'. No such event occurred. The scenes were filmed at Pepperdine University, a Christian University in California which doesn't even have a biology department. It is now common knowledge that the enthused 'students' were extras bused in especially for the filming.

Another example purporting to be Darwin's exact words from 'Descent of Man' has been oft-quoted by creationist sources for almost twenty years. It goes like this:

*" At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races. At the same time the anthropomorphous [i.e., most human-looking] apes ... will no doubt be exterminated. The break will then be rendered wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state, as we may hope, than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as at present between the negro or Australian and the gorilla".*

This excerpt apparently demonstrates Darwin's acceptance of a racial hierarchy within human beings and his recommendation that the 'civilized races' will replace the 'savage races'. This version of the passage originated sometime in the mid-1990s and its origin has been traced back to the Discovery Institute. In fact, Darwin meant no such thing. Here is the original passage, from chapter 6 of 'The Descent of Man'. Again, the critical omitted words are in bold:

***"The great break in the organic chain between man and his nearest allies, which cannot be bridged over by any extinct or living species, has often been advanced as a grave objection to the belief that man is descended from some lower form; but this objection will not appear of much weight to those who, from general reasons, believe in the general principle of evolution. Breaks often occur in all parts of the series, some being wide, sharp and defined, others less so in various degrees; as between the orang and its nearest allies -- between the Tarsius and the other Lemuridae -- between the elephant, and in a more striking manner between the Ornithorhynchus or Echidna, and all other mammals. At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes, as Professor Schaaffhausen has remarked, will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilised state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the negro or Australian and the gorilla".***

When the paragraph is rendered in full it becomes obvious that Darwin is not giving us his solely his own views but also discussing the opinions of someone else, in this case Hermann Schaaffhausen (1816-1893), Professor of Anatomy at the University of Bonn, writing in the 'Anthropological Review' of April 1867. Darwin provides a full citation. Reading the several sentences before this also reveals the true context of the quote; that Darwin is discussing apparent gaps in the fossil record at his time of writing. The prediction that "*the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace, the savage races*" is imply that; a prediction. In no way can it be considered a prescription or a call to action. No doubt Darwin based his prediction on the genocides already perpetrated by European colonial powers, such as that of the natives of Dominica and numerous Australian aboriginal tribal groups. This, along with the extermination of "*anthropomorphous apes*" might well lead to a fossil record with gaps, i.e., between the common ancestors of the extant primate family and any of their descendent species. The passage does not say what Christian fundamentalists would like it to say. None of these examples are as brazenly dishonest, however, as this offering from numerous anti-evolutionists claiming to be directly quoting Thomas Huxley. He is quoted as saying:



*"Only from death on a genocidal scale could the few progress."*

You will go round and round in circles trying to find the actual citation from Huxley's own pen. Because it doesn't exist. The original publication of the phrase comes from Adrian Desmond's (1997) biography of Huxley entitled 'From Devil's Disciple to Evolution's High Priest'. There, it is clearly presented as the author's opinion and not claimed to be a quote from Huxley. Some authors, such as Weikart (2016) state their agreement with Desmond and attribute the quote correctly. More commonly, however, it is claimed to be a direct quote. An example of such blatant dishonesty is provided by Michael Craven, President of the Center for Christ & Culture. In his 2008 article 'Exposing the Darwinian Paradox' he proclaims it as an explicit quote from Huxley but, not surprisingly, offers no reference. It has even been carefully nested so as to appear to be a quote from Darwin himself, as attempted by Anne Barbeau Gardiner in her article 'Darwinism and the Culture of Death' (2006):

*"Death was key to the vision that Darwin borrowed from Malthus. Thus, Thomas Huxley rightly saw that, according to Darwin, "only from death on a genocidal scale could the few progress.""*

Unsurprisingly, Gardiner's essay is a review of Weikart's 2006 book 'From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics and Racism in Germany'. The fact is the term 'genocide' didn't even exist until a half-century after Huxley's death. It was coined by the Polish-born writer Raphael Lemkin (1900-1959) in his 1944 book 'Axis Rule in Occupied Europe'. Lemkin invented the term in response to a comment made a few months earlier during a BBC radio interview with Winston Churchill:

*"We are in the presence of a crime without a name."*

As discussed in more detail later, the anti-evolution movement in the USA was established by and in support of white supremacists and even today, if you look carefully under the bonnet, they have never really been able to shake off their racist underpinnings. For example, can it be more than coincidence that no Discovery Institute 'fellows' have ever been African-American, Asian or any other non-European ethnic background? Weikart's choice of publisher for his most recent book is Regnery Press, also the publisher of choice for several other Discovery Institute 'fellows' (e.g., Jonathon Wells' 'Icons of Evolution', 2000, and 'Politically Incorrect to Guide to Darwinism', 2006; Richards & Gonzales' 'The Privileged Planet', 2004). The owner of this publishing company is William Regnery. He is the primary funder of the US think tank 'National Policy Institute' (NPI) whose original mission statement in 2005 reads like something lifted straight out of the Nazi Party archives:

*"NPI seeks to elevate the consciousness of whites, ensure our biological and cultural continuity, and protect our civil rights. The institute will investigate issues of interest to the white community. It will study the consequences of the ongoing influx that non-Western populations pose to our national identity. NPI is guided in its work by the wisdom and vision of the Founders, whose purpose was to establish 'a more perfect Union' for the benefit of 'ourselves and our posterity'."*

In a speech entitled 'We Can Kill With Kindness—Ourselves, That Is' given to the 'Friends of the American Renaissance' conference in Chicago in 2005 William Regnery unashamedly mimicked Hitler:

*"Consider that within the first or second hand memories of people in this room the white race may go from master of the universe to an anthropological curiosity."*

The irony is that these are the very same people who criticise Darwin for suggesting that some 'races' might be eliminated in the future! At the NPI's 2016 conference held in Washington, D.C., its current leader, Richard Spencer, used excerpts from a Nazi Party speech critical of Jewish people, employing the original German, which he followed with a Nazi salute to the audience, then imitated by many in the audience.

Regnery started a dating service for "*heterosexual whites of Christian cultural heritage*" in 2004 to ensure "*the survival of our race*" being his "*first arrow in a business quiver providing services and products to whites.*" Regnery also funds the 'Occidental Quarterly' a journal which unashamedly bills itself as advancing the cause of 'academic racism'. One would expect that an organisation such as the Discovery institute, purporting to be primarily scientific in their outlook, would take great pains to distance themselves from the pseudoacademic rantings of people like Regnery. Surely someone at the Discovery Institute can smell the incongruity; an organisation claiming that Darwin directly influenced Hitler (a bad thing) having their 'fellows' published by an organisation owned by someone that unashamedly argues that Hitler's ideals were a good thing.

If Hitler had been influenced by Darwin he would have found himself to be squarely at odds with the official scientific policy of his own Nazi Party. From the outset 'Zeitschrift für die Gesamte Naturwissenschaft' (Journal of All Natural Science; to become the official science journal of the Nazi Party) set a decidedly religious-based, anti-Darwinian tone. In the very first paper the co-editor, psychiatrist and philosopher Kurt Hildebrandt (1881-1966; a longtime proponent of Plato's political ideals) wrote, in a paper entitled 'Positivismus und Natur' (1935):

*"What is called positivism today, worse than any older philosophy that went under that name, denies actual spiritual experience.....exact biology has dealt Darwin's mechanization a deathblow."*

After the journal became an official Nazi party organ, during its second volume, he further wrote in 1938 that Darwinism had to be rejected because:

*"Our modern theory of inheritance has not supported this hypothesis, but endangers the foundational assumptions of Darwin.....Mendelian research rests on the assumption of an unchanging species and mutation-theory has, indeed, several disadvantages, but does not attempt to explain or demonstrate the origin of a higher species.....the creative unfolding of species, the origin of species from the amoeba to man, cannot be explained by this mechanistic theory. Rather exact research on heritability has clearly destroyed the mechanistic framework of Darwinian theory".*

The Discovery Institute would no doubt feel quite at ease with Hildebrandt on all his points. Surprisingly, he clearly didn't realise that Mendelian genetics actually supported Darwin's basic thesis. Or maybe he did but he didn't like it because it simply didn't fit with his Nazi volkisch-biological (folk-biology) views. This appears likely, as the same year the botanist Ernst Bergdolt (1902-1948) wrote in the same journal that Darwinian natural selection was:

*".....typical of the kind of passive environmentalist theory declaimed by Jewish liberals".*

Just in case there was any remaining doubt as to the journal's anti-Darwinian stance, Günther Hecht of the Department of Race Policy wrote an article in 1938 entitled 'Biologie und Nationalsozialismus' in which he made it clear that the:

*"materialistic theories of Darwin" had no place in the "völkisch-biological position of National Socialism."*

And, the following year, Hans Driesch published a lengthy paper arguing that Darwinian mechanisms were incapable of producing speciation because they lacked any teleological input. Despite the Nazi Party's official science journal making such a public display of distancing Nazi Party ideology from Darwinian science, however, Weikart (2013), quite amazingly claims:

*"In surveying many Nazi periodicals I have never discovered a single article that even called into question evolutionary theory....."*

Obviously untrue. But let's think on. Why on earth would Weikart expect Nazi periodicals, which also covered a wide range of non-science based subject matter (from good housekeeping to librarianship), to question accepted scientific findings? Notice what he's doing here? He's simply assuming that evolutionary theory is immoral. So, whenever someone calls into question evolutionary theory they are taking a moral stance. And when someone supports evolutionary theory they are taking an immoral stance. Because many Nazi periodicals did not call evolution into question, they therefore must have been accepting of such immorality. Not only is his logic flawed, he obviously did not look hard enough among Nazi periodicals.

Nazi political ideology rested on a particularly narrow political base and to a large extent this was reflected in the German scientific community. Whereas socialism and communism, its main philosophical and political rivals within Europe, had a number of reference works to refer to, such as the writings of Marx, Engel, Lenin and Stalin, Nazism relied heavily on Hitler's writings and speeches. After Hitler came to power, 'Mein Kampf' was distributed free of charge to all newly-wed couples and to everyone serving in the armed forces, a total of 10 million copies in all. If, as Christian fundamentalists claim, Hitler himself was the driving force behind the alleged enthusiasm for Darwinian thought in Nazi Germany, he appears to have been spectacularly unsuccessful. As late as 1940 the Darwinian zoologist and Nazi Party supporter Konrad Lorenz complained in the journal 'Der Biologie' that there were:

*“.....schools of National-Socialistic Greater Germany who in fact still reject evolutionary thought and descent theory”.*

Lorenz further mentions that the rejection of descent theory in German universities had less to do with the concept of evolution *per se* and more specifically with Darwin's synopsis of natural selection. For those interested in Germany's relatively slow take-up of Darwinian ideas, I suggest reading Levit and Hossfeld's 2013 paper in 'Historical Biology: A Journal of Paleobiology', entitled 'A Bridge-Builder: Wolf-Ernst Reif and the Darwinisation of German Paleontology'.

Outside of their official science journal, a number of Nazi ideologues stated publicly and explicitly that their racial and social policies were not based on scientific principles but on cultural, religious and political motivations. And they were proud of it too. Consider this statement by Gerhard Wagner, the Nazi government's chief medical advisor, in a speech titled 'Race and Population Policy' at the Nuremberg Nazi Party Rally in 1936:

*“Our genetic and racial thinking stems.....not from our scientific, but rather from our National Socialist convictions, and that it was not learned scientists, but rather our Führer Adolf Hitler, and he alone, who made genetic and racial thinking the centre of our National Socialist worldview.....the doctrines of blood and race are not first of all an important and interesting piece of biological science to us, but rather above all else a political-ideological attitude”*

Doesn't the sentiment (and sometimes even the content) of that statement read more like the doctrine of a modern-day Christian fundamentalist than a Darwinian? Well, compare Wagner's attitude toward science with that of British Christian fundamentalist Paul Taylor (who holds a degree in chemistry), taken from the 'Answers in Genesis' website:

*“.....scientific models, while helpful, must never take the place of scripture. The scientific model can be superseded. Scripture cannot.”*

Wagner's "*political-ideological attitude*" is playing the same role as Taylor's "*scripture*" in that science is either irrelevant to, or should genuflect to both. Nor did the Nazis limit their "*völkisch*" view of science toward biology. An anti-Semitic 'Deutsche Physik' movement was also set up, along with a journal of the same name with a prominent theme being a denial of Einstein's 'Jewish' theory of relativity. This was countered especially by Hanns Hörbiger's and Philipp Fauth's 'Welteislehre' or 'World Ice Doctrine', published in the 800-page book 'Glazial-Kosmogonie' in 1912. Briefly, the authors claimed that the current configuration of the universe was caused by a 'dead', waterlogged star falling into a 'live star' which caused an explosion that created the Milky Way (the only galaxy known at the time). Also, the earth has had six moons, five of which collided with the Earth and became incorporated within Earth geology. The present moon was captured by Earth about 13,500 years ago and a further collision between the present moon and Earth was inevitable, and all planets will eventually fall into the sun. The present moon is covered with a mantle of ice 225 km deep and deep ice sheets similarly cover Mercury, Venus and Mars. Mythical events such as the Biblical flood and the destruction of Atlantis were claimed to have been caused by the fall of previous moons.

Hörbiger and Fauth's theory was hijacked to make a case for polygenism. Specifically, areas of Earth with permanent or near permanent seasonal ice were considered to be the spawning grounds for Aryans and, unlike the other inferior 'races', Aryans were not descended from primates, but came from 'divine sperma' from outer space. Unbelievably, Hitler and Reichsführer of the SS, Heinrich Himmler were strong adherents to both the physical and the biological aspects of 'Welteislehre', though the Nazi Party's official stance was that one need not believe in this theory to be a true Nazi. Pertinent to the present discussion is that Himmler tried, unsuccessfully, to get the biological aspect of 'Welteislehre' taught in German universities in place of Darwinian evolution (Kurlander, 2017).

Mathematics was another particular object of concern. A peculiarly German-Aryan anschauliche (intuitive) mathematics movement, 'Deutsche Mathematik', was started by two leading anti-Semitic and card carrying Nazi professors of mathematics, Theodor Vahlen and Ludwig Bieberbach. Between 1934-1937 Vahlen was chair of the 'Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Technik', the body which advised the government on matters of scientific and technological research and development. He also held the office of Brigadeführer in the SS. The aim of 'Deutsche Mathematik' was to counter the Jewish influence on mathematics and their perceived tendency toward more abstract ideas and from 1936 their journal, also named 'Deutsche Mathematik', published articles rubbishing the ideas of Jewish mathematicians. At the 1934 annual conference of the 'Verein zur Förderung des Mathematischen und Naturwissenschaftlichen Unterrichts' ('Association for the Promotion of Mathematical and Natural Sciences') Bieberbach presented a paper in which he claimed:

*“.....there is a German and a Jewish mathematics, two worlds, separated by an unbridgeable chasm. The selection of the problems and the style of treating them is characteristic of the thinker and therefore a product of his racial affiliation.....There is no self-sufficient mathematical domain that is independent of ideology and life.....German mathematics is rooted in blood and soil.”*

He then mentions Erich Jaensch's psychological typologies in which the S-type (Jews and speakers of Romantic languages) is prone to abstraction, while the J-type (Germans) are more realistic in their aspirations. Using the Cauchy and Goursat Theorem as an example of "*Jewish abstraction*" he went on:

*"The Cauchy-Goursat theorem arouses intolerable displeasure in us Germans.....All in all, such juggling with concepts and a pronounced shrewdness characterize the nonorganic, hostile S type, especially Jewish mathematics"*

thereby both shooting himself in the foot while at the same time demonstrating the vacuity of his racial view of mathematics; neither Augustin-Louis Cauchy nor Édouard Goursat were Jewish! Nevertheless, he continues:

*"This is a typical example of how race-alien influences and race-alien seduction blocks the Germans from the source of their own strength.....There is no self-sufficient mathematical domain that is independent of ideology and life; the dispute on the fundamental principles that is now raging is in reality a dispute over race."*

Bieberbach's talk was no mere curiosity, being extensively reported in the German scientific press, including 'Deutsche Zukunft' ('German Future'; April 8th, 1934) who agreed wholeheartedly with Bieberbach:

*"For practical cultural policy it turns out that mathematics is freed from the curse of sterile intellectualism; its burden falls upon those thinkers who are alien to the nation and the race, who will no longer exist in the future and whose representatives belong to the past and can no longer be viewed as German scientists. German mathematics is rooted in blood and soil."*

Indeed, it seems to be the case that the Nazis rejected Darwinian evolution for the very same reasons as do the 'fellows' at the Discovery Institute. In 1995 the Discovery Institute organised a conference called 'The Death of Materialism and the Renewal of Culture' followed by a press release announcing the opening of the Discovery Institute's 'Center for Renewal in Science and Culture' ('Renewal in' has since been dropped). The then President of the Institute, Bruce Chapman had this to say:

*“.....for over a century western science has been influenced by the idea that God is either dead or irrelevant.....the center seeks nothing less than the overthrow of materialism and it's cultural legacies.....to raise serious doubts about scientific materialism and reopen the case for a broadly theistic understanding of nature.”*

Note the ideological similarities between the articles in the Nazi Party's official science journal and that of the aims of the Discovery Institute. Both parties view science not as an objective enterprise but as a primarily culturally-based pursuit. Compare the Nazi claims that there exists a "*volkisch-biological view*", a "*Deutsche Physik*", and "*a German and a Jewish mathematics*" with the Discovery Institute's claim that there exists a "*western science*". This is essentially the same simplistic mentality. Both the Discovery Institute and the Nazi Party also make/made a frequent habit of denouncing 'materialism' and in so doing frequently and erroneously, and perhaps deliberately, equating naturalistic or scientific materialism of a largely provisional nature with philosophical materialism. However, naturalistic materialism is not a philosophical stance; it is a (provisional) finding based on data and experimentation. In other words, naturalistic materialism is falsifiable. Philosophical supernaturalism, on the other hand, is not falsifiable. Thus any claim resting wholly on supernatural suppositions, whether emanating from Nazi party members or Discovery Institute 'fellows' is not scientific. Unless of course we redefine science itself, which is what the Nazis certainly attempted to do and the Discovery Institute would surely like to do.

One of the oft-made claims of Discovery Institute supporters is that a conspiracy exists to silence their views. They perceive the scientific evidence supporting evolutionary theory not only to be weak but claim that many biologists actually know this, continuing to support the theory because it so effectively reinforces their philosophical materialism. However, while all philosophical materialists are naturalistic materialists, it does not follow that all naturalistic materialists are necessarily philosophical materialists. Gregor Mendel, for example, was an Augustinian friar and a number of contemporary researchers of evolutionary theory, such as Ken Miller, co-author of the main biology textbook used in school education in the US, are life-long

practising Christians. Indeed, Miller strongly and consistently rejects the claim that Darwinian evolution is, or has ever been, an anti-theistic enterprise (e.g., Miller, 1999). Nevertheless, conflating naturalistic and philosophical materialism more easily allows for attacks on evolution. In this way they aim to weaken the 'materialism' of society. As did the Nazis. Even in those cases where science was actually claimed to have informed Nazi thought it was never allowed to be given a greater prominence than their political or religious motivations. George Stein (1988) sums up the situation well:

*"..... it is clear that science was used merely as raw material or evidence by ideologically interested political actors as proof of preconceived notions.....all attempts to use science in this manner are, in fact, mere pseudoscience."*

Doesn't Stein's view just as well describe the antics of the Discovery Institute and their 'fellows'? The truth is that Hitler, like the Discovery Institute and other creationists, had no enthusiasm whatsoever for Darwinist thought. Throughout 'Mein Kampf' Hitler discusses the history of the human species and 'racial theory' in general in the language of creationist polygenics (i.e., separate creations for the different races), Biblical-style bloodlines and supernatural causation. This was clearly the ideology and language with which he was more familiar, not the terminology of Darwinian evolution and Mendelian or population genetics. Hitler actually believed, as the Bible says, that 'racial heritage' is primarily passed from generation to generation less by cultural means than physically, through the 'life-blood' itself. Because of his fundamentalist belief in verses such as Leviticus 17:11 Hitler viewed blood transfusions as an "*omen of danger*" and banned all but 'live' transfusions of whole blood, where the donor and the recipient lay next to each other during the procedure. Because of this all members of the SS had their blood group tattooed on their upper arm. Germans were not allowed to receive blood from Jews and vice-versa lest the racial characteristics and traits of the donor passed to the recipient. When the German national blood donor service was set up in 1940, only those deemed to be Aryan were allowed to donate. Even intersex transfusions were frowned upon. All this pseudoscience caused a perpetual shortage of blood and the needless deaths of tens of thousands of German civilians and soldiers (Hirszfeld, 1946). It is also pertinent to note that Hitler frequently used the word 'kind' in place of the more commonly used 'species', which had gained much common usage at that time. 'Kind' (translated from the Hebrew 'min' or 'milyn'; 'created type') is a term lifted directly from the Old Testament Books of Genesis, Deuteronomy, Leviticus and in one instance, Ezekiel.

### **Some Influences Hitler Did Acknowledge and Some People Who Supported and Agreed with Him**

Hitler's racial ideology hinged upon the notion that human beings do not comprise a single composite species but are made up of a number of 'races' or 'subspecies'. This Hitlerian worldview has somehow been morphed into a principle accusation made by Christian fundamentalists toward Darwin, i.e., claiming that Darwin was inherently racist and used science to portray human beings as split into 'subspecies' according to a hierarchy. He did no such thing. Indeed, Darwin refuted this view on a number of occasions during his career and dedicated a whole chapter of 'The Descent of Man' to demonstrating his doubt and contempt for such ideas. Polygenist views can be traced back to ancient times in several cultures, but for Hitler it was the work of Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882) a Frenchman born into a family of minor nobility that struck the major chord. Obsessed with heredity and bloodlines, and claiming to have descended from Norman and Viking royalty, Gobineau somehow managed to conjure up a personal philosophy comprised of a mixture of pseudoscience, Catholic values, anti-democratic views, French aristocratic sentiment and German romanticism. Written several years before Darwin's findings suggested that all humans, regardless of their 'race', have a common evolutionary origin, his highly influential lengthy essay 'Essai Sur l'inégalité des Races Humaines' ('Inequality of Human Races') was first published in French in 1853. It was translated into German in 1897 by Ludwig Schemann, a leading proponent of Nazi theory. Two quotes from the work encapsulate Gobineau's racial views:

*"It is said that Genesis does not admit of a multiple origin for our species.....we must, of course, acknowledge 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.....there is nothing to show that, in the view of the first compilers of the Adamite genealogies, those outside the white race were counted as part of the species at all".*

*"I conclude..... that the permanence of racial types is beyond dispute; it is so strong and indestructible that the most complete change of environment has no power to overthrow it."*

The first quote is pure Christian-based polygenism which would later become completely at odds with Darwin's views, as discussed in more detail later. The second quote would later become completely at odds with the notion of natural selection. Hitler extended

Gobineau's un-Darwinian thoughts in *Mein Kampf*:

*"Marriage is an institution called upon to produce images of the Lord and not monstrosities halfway between man and ape."*

In April 1933 all government employees in Germany were required to show evidence that they had no Jewish blood. Two years later, in 1935, Hitler signed miscegenation statutes into law in both the 'Nürnberger Gesetze' (Nuremberg Laws), which made all sexual relations, including marriage, between Aryans and Jews illegal, and 'Gesetz zum Schutze des Deutschen Blutes und der Deutschen Ehre' (The Protection of German Blood and German Honour Act) which applied similarly to other races where at least one of the partners was a German citizen. Those already in such a marriage suffered legal discrimination by being excluded from government employment or government funded organisations. Until 1874 births in Germany were not registered by the state but by religious authorities. This meant that these laws could not be enacted effectively without the cooperation of the churches. In the case of both the Lutheran and Catholics this was given without dissent. The first law explicitly considered Jews as a distinct racial group, rather than in any religious sense. Having a single Jewish grandparent classified an individual as Jewish, regardless of the religion they had been raised with, or whether they practiced any religion at all. Jews who had converted to Christianity were not exempted and, again, the churches provided the Nazis with baptismal records.

Because it was not based on anything resembling sound science, the policy was problematic from the outset. The prominent race theorist and adviser to the Nazi Party, Hans Gunther, had commissioned a report from Felix Jentsch in April 1936, 'How Does One Best Research the Magnitude and Type of German-Jewish Mixing (Bastardization)?' which estimated that there were about 500,000 Germans who, although would not meet any criteria for being full-blood Jews, would nevertheless be at least partly genetically Jewish (see e.g., Ehrenreich, 2007). Other anthropologists cautioned that discriminating Jewishness on the basis of physical features alone was unscientific. This was not news to Nazi Party officials. In 1933, when Genealogical Authority director Achim Gercke was asked by Hitler's deputy Rudolph Hesse how prospective racial assessments would be made, Gercke made it plain that racial assessments did not rely on standardised methodology and therefore had no scientific or medical basis. This, however, did not faze him:

*"God created the races.....entrusted us to improve and pass on."*

He suggested a purely genealogical criteria; a Jew was someone who could be ascertained to have one sixteenth Jewish blood. He was unable to implement his idea, however, as he was sacked in 1935 after allegations of homosexuality. It was inevitable that the religious notion of 'racial purity', as opposed to a cultural definition of Jewishness, was later to backfire on the Nazis. That same year, Emil Maurice, one of the founders of the SS, was discovered to have had Jewish ancestry but, after personal intervention from Hitler, was declared to be 'Ehrenarier' or 'honorary Aryan'. Similarly, the Luftwaffe officer in charge of procurement, Erhard Milch, was found to have a Jewish father and was given Aryan status only after his mother signed an affidavit naming another man as the real father. The most embarrassing episode of this type, however, involved a six-month old girl. In 1935 the Nazi Party's family magazine 'Sonne ins Hause' ('Sun in the Home') announced a competition to find the most beautiful Aryan baby, judged by no less than the Minister for Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels. In an attempt to poke fun at the Nazi Party's racial policies, photographer Hans Ballin entered a photograph of Hetty, born to Jacob and Pauline Levinsons, a Jewish couple who had immigrated to Germany from Lithuania seven years earlier to pursue careers in classical music. They had lost their positions with an opera company after the Nazi Party came to power and were now doing menial work. Hetty won the competition and featured on the front page of the magazine. After the war she emigrated to the USA and became a professor of chemistry in New York.

Weikart is especially prone to ideologically linking various German scientists, who worked within an evolutionary biological model, with both Gobineau's ideas about race and Nazi Party racial policy. However, on closer examination these links are often grossly exaggerated. Two of the leading evolutionary theorists in 1920s-30s Germany were anthropologist Eugen Fischer and geneticist Fritz Lenz. According to Weikart (2004) they were ".....both influential figures in racial science during the Nazi period". This much is true and they certainly viewed 'race' as a biological concept including the hierarchical notions of 'inferior' and 'superior' races. They were also committed eugenicists. Along with botanist Erwin Baur they published the seminal work of papers 'Menschliche Erblchkeitslehre und Rassenhygiene' ('Principles of Human Heredity and Racial Hygiene'; 1921 and updated five times between then and 1940). This 700-page tome is considered to have played a pivotal role in influencing Nazi Party racial policy from a scientific standpoint; Hitler himself is reported to have read the first edition while in prison.

Weikart further claims, however, that Fischer and Lenz "*embraced both Gobineau and Darwinism.*" This is overly simplistic, the actual situation being far more nuanced. No doubt they did embrace 'Darwinism' as the best scientific model for evolutionary

theory and common descent. The claim that they explicitly employed Darwinian science to influence Nazi racial policy, however, appears far from truthful. If this were so we would expect their flagship textbook to discuss at some length the Darwinian basis for their racial theories. The problem is this: one of the most characteristic features of their collection of papers is its complete disregard for Darwinian evolutionary theory. Not surprisingly given that Darwin had repudiated hierarchical notions of 'race'. In the important 1931 edition, the terms 'Darwinist' and 'Darwinism' do not occur at all. The term 'Darwinian' is mentioned once on page 132 in reference to the 'Darwinian tubercle', a thickening on the helix of the upper and middle thirds of the primate ear. Darwin himself rates three minor mentions, one of which is entirely unconnected to biology, occurring two thirds of the way through the book, on page 575, where the authors give Darwin as an example of a successful person who was a member of a gifted family! The other brief and inconsequential mentions are on the following page and on page 617.

Weikart also declines to mention that both Fischer, and especially Lenz, were not particularly interested in Nazi politics, beyond seeking government funding for their research at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Genetics, and Eugenics (also funded by the American Rockefeller Foundation). The Institute opened in September 1927 as part of the Fifth International Congress on Genetics in Berlin where the Chair of the Human Genetics Program was the prominent American zoologist and geneticist, Charles Benedict Davenport, author of the influential 1911 book 'Heredity in Relation to Eugenics' and who, the previous year, had founded the federally-funded United States Eugenics Record Office. Later, even into the war years, Davenport not only publicly sympathised with Nazi party ideals but continued to maintain contact with German geneticists and anthropologists, even serving on the editorial boards of two of their journals. His view was one of particularly strong biological determination, that many did not agree with then and few would agree with today, to the extent that he considered any person exhibiting thalassophilia (a love for the sea) could not have acquired that trait through their experiences. He concluded that, because male naval officers show the trait most often, it must be a sex-linked recessive trait.

Nevertheless, first and foremost Fischer and Lenz considered themselves to be scientists. In her 1990 paper 'The Race Hygiene Movement in Germany 1904-1945', Sheila Weiss notes that the majority of German anthropologists now labelled as 'racial eugenicists' and such-like were, in the German context, far more preoccupied with the decline of class barriers than racial barriers. Historian of medicine Paul Weindling agrees. In his 1989 book 'Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945', he notes that Fischer's relationship with the Nazi Party was distant and he was only ever a peripheral figure with respect to the formulation of policy. He didn't become a party member until December 1939 and then only joined on the insistence of Heinrich Himmler, who advised him that his career might suffer if he didn't. Indeed, soon after Hitler came to power, Fischer had a public spat with the Nazi Party by claiming that Jewish racial characteristics, though distinguishable from Aryan characteristics, were by no means inferior. The Nazi Party were so concerned with the influence Fischer might have that when he attended the International Congress for Anthropology and Ethnology in London in 1934, they had Walter Gross, founder of the 'Aufklärungsamt für Bevölkerungspolitik und Rassenpflege' (Office of Population Policy and Racial Hygiene) accompany him to keep him under surveillance.

Lenz was even more directly antagonistic to Nazi racial policy than Fischer. Although he became a party member a year earlier than Fischer, his notions of 'race' differed considerably from the Nazi Party. Like Darwin, Lenz denied that 'pure races', including that of the Aryan, could be identified on the basis of physical features and, contrary to Nazi Party policy, recognised no consistent demarcation of 'racial' characteristics on the basis of morphology. Rather, he thought that heritable differences between the races became most apparent in their cognitive abilities and personality. Because of this Lenz was decidedly not anti-Semitic. In his paper 'The Inheritance of Intellectual Gifts' (1931) he wrote:

*".....contrary to the opinion of the anti-Semite, the Jews have played a constructive role in history.....the Jew is a good family man; he has a natural 'business sense'. Germans and Jews are more similar to one another than most have realised. Next to the Teutonic, in fact, the Jewish spirit is the chief motive force of modern Western history.....the lop-sided anti-Semitism of National Socialism must be regretted."*

Weikart also repeatedly exaggerates the degree to which purportedly 'Darwinian' German anthropologists agreed with and colluded with the unscientific criteria of racial assessment. In July 1940, the Reichsstatthalter (Governor) of the central state of Thuringia wrote to the director of the Genealogical Authority Kurt Mayer complaining that many anthropological expert reports were questionable because:

*"I have seen hundreds of extremely criminal full-Jews in the Buchenwald concentration camp by Weimar, who, for the most part, did not exhibit even a trace of anthropological Jewish characteristics. Frequently they were tall and blond and possessed*

a sharply defined 'Aryan' countenance." (cited Ehrenreich, 2007)

He further notes:

*"In the book Jewish Villainism (Das jüdische Gaunertum) by Herwig Hartner-Hnizdo, you can see numerous pictures of Jews that would in no way be anthropologically recognizable as Jews."*

Hans Weinart was another anthropologist mentioned by Weikart who was frequently commissioned by the Genealogical Authority to assess a person's race. What Weikart declines to tell us is that, again like Darwin, Weinart was highly sceptical as to the notion of 'race' and he too often clashed with Kurt Mayer on this very point. For example, in one 'Expert Report' (R39/838B; 12th September 1941; cited Ehrenreich, 2007) he wrote:

*"An individual characteristic is not 'Jewish' in so far as its occurrence is only to be found in Jews. The Jews are not a unified race.....Accordingly, a person who exhibits this or that 'Jewish looking' characteristic cannot [automatically] be accused of having received that characteristic due to Jewish ancestry. He could always fall under the more or less large percentage of persons that have Jewish looking characteristics without being Jews."*

The following year, in another report (R39/226:35, 8th December 1942; again cited Ehrenreich, 2007) Weinart stated that ascertaining the racial heritage of any person is:

*".....only conditionally possible on the basis of a pure racial-scientific evaluation."*

Putting aside the fact that Darwin gave no credence whatsoever to polygenism, the notion of a direct ideological pathway from Darwin to Hitler can only really be taken seriously if it can be demonstrated that the concepts of human 'subspecies' did not exist before Darwin. This is, of course, not so. For Hitler, the modern cradle of such laws was not Darwin's mind but the various state governments of the United States. Law Professor James Whitman ('Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law'; 2017) outlines how, in June 1934, senior Nazi lawyers and Justice Department officials met to study US state legislation in detail, eventually leading to the inclusion of extensive similarities in legal text between American and German anti-miscegenation laws.

Anti-miscegenation laws were present in the first Thirteen Colonies in the late 1600s, long before Darwin or Gobineau. At their peak, 31 states had anti-miscegenation laws on their statute books and in every case the justifications given for instituting such laws were based on Christian morality. Although there was never any equivalent Federal law, the right for states to pass such laws was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1883, twelve years after Darwin had suggested that all the 'races' had a common origins. We now know Darwin was correct. Genetic variation within any one 'race' is greater than the genetic variation between any two 'races'. It has even been observed that variation in a single trait can be greater in an extended family than in the population as a whole. In other words, it is possible that any two random individuals from different 'races' are genetically closer than any two random individuals from the same 'race'.

In January 1913 however, Representative Seaborn Roddenberry of Georgia, incensed by the marriage of an African-American boxer to a white woman, tried to enable a federal anti-miscegenation law through Congress arguing that:

*"Intermarriage between whites and blacks is repulsive and averse to every sentiment of pure American spirit. It is abhorrent and repugnant. It is subversive to social peace. It is destructive of moral supremacy"*

Although unsuccessful at the federal level of government ten further states subsequently introduced anti-miscegenation laws. Note that Roddenberry made his appeal not to Darwinian or other scientific notions of biology but to emotional and moral sentiment. Thus there was ample legal and religious precedent from the United States, devoid of any Darwinian motivation, that could have influenced Hitler. The irony is that German anti-miscegenation law was actually more liberal than in most US states in which the term 'negro' was legally defined as anyone with a single 'negro' ancestor, no matter how far back the ancestor lived (the 'one drop' principle). In contrast, Germany adopted a single-Jewish grandparent rule and disregarded earlier ancestors. What is also surprising is how entrenched these laws proved to be. Even after Hitler was defeated and anti-miscegenation laws were repealed in occupied Germany, they hung on in several US states for another two decades. In 1960, seventeen US states still had laws



prohibiting people of different races from marrying. As late as 1959 a mixed-race couple of white and African-Native American descent who had married in Washington DC, were jailed for one year under Virginia's 'Racial Integrity Act' of 1924 by Judge Leon Bazile, who described their marriage as "*a most serious crime*". The sentence was suspended for 25 years on condition that they did not step foot in Virginia. Paraphrasing the German physician and anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840; with whom he was obviously familiar, as well as Nazi 'race hygienists' such Gercke and Fischer) Judge Bazile wrote in his summing up:

*"Almighty God created the races White, Black, Yellow, Malay and Red, and he placed them on separate continents. And but for the interference with His arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix".*

Of course, Hitler shared Judge Bazile's sentiment about miscegenation. From Chapter 6 of Mein Kampf:

*"The act which brings about such a development is a sin against the will of the Eternal Creator. And as a sin this act will be avenged."*

Even fourteen years after Hitler's demise, Bazile was couching his arguments in favour of anti-miscegenation laws in terms of Christian morality, not Darwinian biology. Bazile was, of course, a devout Catholic who, as his personal correspondence attests, not only had considerable religious difficulties with interracial marriages but also with marriage between Christian sects; as a young man he underwent considerable anguish as to whether it would be morally permissible for him to marry his future wife, Virginia Bowcock, a Baptist. Blumenbach, though not a Christian polygenist, did promote the idea that Adam was white-skinned and all the other four 'races' ('Mongolian', 'Ethiopian', 'American' and 'Malayan', in addition to 'Caucasian') were the result of degeneration in his bloodline largely due, he hypothesised, to the effects of climate. His work with craniometry, however, led him to change his views somewhat after his data revealed that both mean skull volumes and variations in skull volume were similar in both Europeans and Africans. A later study by Friedrich Tiedemann (1781-1861) confirmed Blumenbach's findings. In his paper 'On the Brain of the Negro, Compared with That of the European and the Orang-Outang' published in 1836, he reported no differences in brain and skull volume, either absolutely or in relation to body size, between 'Caucasians', 'Mongolians', 'Malays', 'American Indians', and 'Negros'. Thus scientific evidence that human beings did not comprise distinct 'subspecies' but shared important phenotypic characteristics was available many years before either Gobineau, Hitler or Bazile had formulated their own views. All evidently chose, however, to ignore the science.

The last anti-miscegenation law was quashed in the USA as late as 1967. That same year, the Supreme Court of Georgia, who clearly did not understand either Darwin's or Gregor Mendel's scientific findings on hybridisation, stated that:

*"Amalgamation of the races is.....unnatural, [yielding offspring who are] generally effeminate, and.....inferior in physical development and strength to the full-blood race"*

Unfettered Darwinian natural selection would, of course, result in just what Hitler or these learned judges found so objectionable, i.e., it increases the likelihood of 'crossing' in all sexually reproducing species, including humans. What American anti-miscegenation laws were doing (unknowingly, for they were founded on Christian notions of morality, rather than having any scientific basis) was profoundly un-Darwinian as they were hindering natural selection via the crude promotion of artificial selection. As with the American states, the Nazis defended their use of anti-miscegenation laws, not by referring to Darwin's findings, but to pseudoscientific imperatives based firmly on Judeo-Christian precedent. Hitler himself wrote in Mein Kampf:

*".....it is one of those concerning which it is said with such terrible justice that the sins of the fathers are avenged down to the tenth generation.....Blood sin and desecration of the race are the original sin in this world."*

Did Hitler get the idea that blood desecration is a sin down to the tenth generation from Darwin? No, he got it direct from Deuteronomy 23:2-3:

*"No bastard shall enter the assembly of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none of his descendants shall enter the assembly of the Lord. No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none belonging to them shall enter the assembly of the Lord for ever"*

Hitler had his friend Julius Streicher (1885-1946), the founder and publisher of the pro-Nazi weekly newspaper *Der Stürmer* (which had increased its circulation from 14,000 copies in 1927 to 2 million by 1940) help set up the 'Institut zur Erforschung Jüdischen Einflusses auf das Deutsche Kirchliche Leben' or 'Institute for the Study and Elimination of Jewish Influence on German Church Life'. Headquartered in Jena, the institute, whose members included professors of theology and bishops, trained the clergy in anti-Semitic theory and practice, organised conferences with an anti-Jewish theme and published a number of pamphlets and books vilifying Jews, including a de-Judaised version of the New Testament, on the basis that Jewish forgeries had been added to the original texts. *Der Stürmer*'s title banner carried the slogan 'Die Juden sind unser Unglück' ('the Jews are our Misfortune'; a phrase originating from the Christian theologian and clergyman Martin Luther (1483-1546) and later popularised by the 19th century German historian Heinrich von Treitschke) and Streicher produced record sales by publishing lurid stories of the sexual violation of German women by Jews, accompanied by staged semi-pornographic photographs. In recognition of his work, the city council of Nuremberg voted to present Streicher on his 52nd birthday with a first edition (1543) of Martin Luther's seminal anti-Semitic treatise 'Von den Juden und Ihren Lügen' or 'On The Jews And Their Lies'. In their story reporting the gift, 'Der Stürmer' described the work as "*the most radically antisemitic tract ever published*". During his trial at the the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg in 1945, Streicher attempted to use Luther's treatise in his defence. Even when not citing Luther he was unambiguous as to the religious basis for Nazi anti-miscegenation laws:

*".....the Jews should serve as an example to every race, for they created the racial law for themselves.....the law of Moses, which says, "If you come into a foreign land you shall not take unto yourself foreign women".....These laws of the Jews were taken as a model for these [Nazi] laws.....notwithstanding many Jews had married non-Jewish women, these marriages were dissolved.....That was the beginning of Jewry which, because it introduced these racial laws, has survived throughout the centuries, while all other races and civilizations have perished."*

His last words before being hanged were "*Now it goes to God!*".

That indigenous German Christian thought had an early anti-Semitic slant is no more evident than in Luther's comprehensive 65,000 word treatise. The language he employs is ornate, even for a 16th century clergyman, and particularly vexatious, describing Jews as a:

*base, whoring people.....full of the devil's faeces.....which they wallow in like swine", while the synagogue was an "incorrigible whore and an evil slut".*

Hitler was clearly taking his cue from Luther when he wrote in 'Mein Kampf':

*".....the personification of the devil as the symbol of all evil assumes the living shape of the Jew."*

Luther recommended seven remedial actions to be taken against the Jews. Summarised, these are for Jewish synagogues, schools and homes to be burned to the ground; for any gold and silver owned by Jews to be confiscated; for their religious writings to be confiscated, for Jewish preaching to be made illegal, with death as the punishment; for Jews to be given no legal right of safe passage and Jews to be forced to work as agricultural slave labour. It is not difficult to see that the essence of what Luther wrote in the 16th century was what the Nazis actually achieved in the first half of the 20th century. Every single one of Luther's seven suggested actions were implemented by the Nazis; in 1938 the government periodical 'Der Informationsdienst' ('The Information Digest') published all seven of Luther's recommendations. They were simply carrying out his suggestions. They needed no input from Darwin. Professor of Religion William Nichols puts it most succinctly and truthfully in his 1995 book 'Christian Antisemitism: A History of Hate':

*"Luther's proposals read like a program for the Nazis."*

In her 1975 book 'The War Against the Jews 1933-1945' the American historian Lucy Dawidowicz agrees with William Nichols, writing that an obvious progression of "anti-Semitic descent" from Luther to Hitler is "easy to draw" and a preponderance of evidence suggests this is so as Peter Weiner (1942) opines:

*"Many attempts have been made to explain the exaggerated destructive nationalism of the Germans and the Nazis. Again, I think that to a great extent Martin Luther is at the bottom of it."*

Such a view is neither modern nor is it anti-Christian. In a speech given to the 1941 Archbishop's Conference in London, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple noted:

*"It is easy to see how Luther prepared the way for Hitler."*

And three years later, one of his fellow clergy, W.R. Inge wrote:

*"We must hope that the next swing of the pendulum will put an end to Luther's influence in Germany."*

The importance of Luther in framing Hitler's political ideology did not stop at hatred at Jews, however. Eighteen years before Luther published his infamous anti-Semitic tract he had published a pro-feudal pamphlet 'Wider die Mordischen und Reubischen Rotten der Bawren' ('Against the Peasant Bands of Robbers and Murderers') that goes beyond despotic in its detailing of the divinely-ordained autocratic rights that all rulers should exercise over their subjects. The peasants, Luther declared:

*".....are no better than straw. They will not hear the Word and they are without sense; therefore they must be compelled to hear the crack of the whip and the whizz of bullets, and it is only what they deserve. We must pray for them that they may become obedient; but if they do not, pity is of no avail here; we must let the cannon-balls whistle among them, or they will only make things a thousand times worse.....Like the drivers of donkeys, who have to belabour the donkeys incessantly with rods and whips, or they will not obey, so must the ruler do with the people; they must drive, beat, throttle, hang, burn, behead and torture, so as to make themselves feared and to keep the people in check.....the duty of the preachers is to preach hatred. If the authorities refuse to follow this drastic advice, the pastors and preachers are at all events to proclaim it to the people."*

Again, Luther provided Hitler with a template for despotic government derived not from Charles Darwin but from Germanic Christianity. Similarly, the coloured stars that Hitler demanded be worn by the Jews and homosexuals were not of his invention but an idea borrowed from the Catholic church. They derived from the earliest Catholic Inquisitions against the French Cathars who had denounced the God of the Old Testament as Satan and considered the Catholic church as having betrayed and corrupted the original purity of Christ's message. After massacring 20,000 Cathars in a single day, the Inquisitors required all those remaining alive who denounced the Cathar teachings to wear a yellow cross on their clothing for the rest of their lives. In 1920, writing in his book 'The New Jerusalem', written following a tour of the Middle East, the devout Catholic convert G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936; currently the subject of a campaign to be canonised) both echoed the church law and predated Nazi law with his suggestion that Jews should not be discriminated against in the social arena, but:

*".....let there be one single-clause bill, one simple and sweeping law about Jews.....every Jew must be dressed like an Arab.....The point is that we should know where we are; and he should know where he is, which is in a foreign land."*

Originally, Chesterton was sympathetic to the Jews but as he got older the standard anti-Semitic stereotypes such as greed, usury, capitalism, bolshevism, cowardice, disloyalty and secrecy accumulate in his written work (see e.g., Mayers, 2013). Darwin certainly wasn't to blame for Chesterton's anti-Semitism and fascist ideals. On the contrary, although originally unconcerned with evolutionary theory, by the time he wrote about Jews and their clothing Chesterton had become strongly anti-evolution, both from a theological and a scientific perspective. In his defence of Christian apologetics, 'Orthodoxy' (1908), he wrote:

*"Evolution is a good example of that modern intelligence which, if it destroys anything, destroys itself. Evolution is either an innocent scientific description of how certain earthly things came about; or, if it is anything more than this, it is an attack upon thought itself. If evolution destroys anything, it does not destroy religion but rationalism."*

That Luther's ideas were entrenched early in the development of Nazi policies is further evidenced by this line from Mein Kampf:

*".....beside Frederick the Great stands Martin Luther as well as Richard Wagner"*

and by a quote from Bernhard Rust, Hitler's Education Minister, in the Nazi Party newspaper, 'Völkischer Beobachter' ('People's Observer'). This he said in August 1933, before Hitler had passed any anti-miscegenation or anti-Jewish laws and well before the destructive events of 9-10th November 1938 (Kristallnacht; note that November 10th was Luther's birthday):

*"Since Martin Luther closed his eyes, no such son of our people has appeared again. It has been decided that we shall be the first to witness his reappearance ... I think the time is past when one may not say the names of Hitler and Luther in the same breath. They belong together; they are of the same old stamp".*

The continuing importance of Martin Luther to Nazi thought during their regime is apparent by, for example, the Nazi-financed anti-Semitic feature film 'Jud Süss', released in 1940 but set in the 18th century (well before Darwin had any influence on anyone) and featuring numerous voiceovers of quotes from Luther (and, of course, none from Darwin) inciting anti-Semitic activity. The following year at his acceptance speech on being promoted to Director of Film at the 'Ministry for the People's Enlightenment and Propaganda', Hans Hinkel had this to say (cited Steinweis, 1993):

*"Through his acts and his spiritual attitude, he began the fight which we will wage today; with Luther, the revolution of German blood and feeling against alien elements of the Volk was begun".*

Another film financed by Hinkel's department was never completed, though footage remains. This anti-Soviet documentary concentrates not on the economic or political differences between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union but on the differing attitudes toward religion. Much is made of the conversion of churches to secular use, including factories for the war effort, in 'Die Gottlosen' ('The Godless').

A political party that claimed to have been directly influenced by Martin Luther was the Christian Social Party of Hitler's native Austria. Founded in 1893 with a great deal of support from the Catholic priesthood within Austria it became the first political party in the world to attain power on the issue of anti-Semitism, winning 66% of the seats on the Vienna City Council in 1895, placing the devout Catholic Karl Lueger as Mayor. For the following 25 years the party's emblem consisted of a Jewish snake strangling the Austrian eagle. Hitler, in Chapter 2 of Volume 1 of 'Mein Kampf' credits Lueger with convincing him of the value of anti-Semitic attitudes:

*"I was not in agreement with the sharp anti-Semitic tone, but from time to time I read arguments which gave me some food for thought. At all events, these occasions slowly made me acquainted with the man and the movement, which in those days guided Vienna's destinies: Dr. Karl Lueger and the Christian Social Party.....I had occasion to become acquainted with the man and his work; and slowly my fair judgment turned to unconcealed admiration. Today, more than ever, I regard this man as the greatest German mayor of all times.....How many of my basic principles were upset by this change in my attitude toward the Christian Social movement! My views with regard to anti-Semitism thus succumbed to the passage of time, and this was my greatest transformation of all."*

In 1907 the Christian Social Party merged with the Austrian Catholic Conservative Party and, representing the vast majority of Catholic voters, the party rose in power to form every national government except one in the period 1918-1938. Despite some Catholic Bishops petitioning Pope Leo XIII to censure the party because of its racist platform he refused to do so and by not doing allowed the party to claim publicly that it had Vatican approval.

But perhaps the most poignant quote concerning Luther comes from Weiner's (1942) comment after reading Austrian historian Heinrich Seuse Denifle's first volume of his 'Luther and Lutherdom' (1904):

*"A terrifying, dirty, dishonest Luther appeared, a Luther much blacker and more hideous by far than all his former opponents taken together had depicted him. And the worst of it was that Denifle had quoted hardly anything but Luther's own words."*

Nevertheless it is commonplace for authors claiming an ideological link between Darwin and Hitler to seriously downplay the influence of Martin Luther on Hitler's ideology. They have good reason to do so. Criticisms of Luther, who effectively, like Hitler, viewed the Jews as sub-human, effectively destroys the Christian fundamentalist falsehood that the notion of humans being comprised of a hierarchy of 'sub-species' is a Darwinian invention. Fundamentalists could argue from the 'no true Scotsman' angle, of course, claiming that Luther's ideas of Christianity were simply a distortion of the genuine article. They tend not to do this either however as the argument skates on even thinner ice. Luther was, after all, the primary historical initiator for the existence of Protestantism, the broad Christian grouping from whose churches nearly all of them belong. It is important to note, in this regard, that in the July 1932 Reichstag election in which the Nazis won the largest representation in the German Parliament, the Nazi Party share of the vote in the predominantly Protestant north and east of Germany was approximately double that of the mainly Catholic south and west of the country (Geary, 1998). Weikart (2004) manages to gracefully sidestep all of these issues. He

simply makes no mention of Martin Luther at all in his book.

Despite such compelling evidence, however, it has been suggested by some contemporary German theologians with connections to the Lutheran church such as Johannes Wallman (e.g., 1987) and Uwe Siemon-Netto (e.g., 1996) that Luther's treatise actually had little effect on the development of Nazi attitudes toward the Jews, as there had been a decline in the number of occasions the treatise was cited in academic works published in the 19th century. They both claim that the Nazis were already anti-Semitic and merely revived Luther's treatise to bolster their policies. This might be so, but it surely raises the question as to whether, if Luther's treatise had never existed, Nazi vehemence toward the Jews would be so strong and so devastatingly effective. The fact remains that Hitler and his many supporters within the German clergy were able to call upon a nationalistic German and Christian-based hatred of the Jews that pre-dated Darwin by centuries.

Some Christian churches in Germany have accepted the role played by Luther's treatise in motivating their clergy into supporting Nazi policy. For example, on the 60th anniversary of 'Kristallnacht' the Lutheran Church of Bavaria issued a statement containing this extract:

*"It is imperative for the Lutheran Church, which knows itself to be indebted to the work and tradition of Martin Luther, to take seriously also his anti-Jewish utterances, to acknowledge their theological function, and to reflect on their consequences. It has to distance itself from every [expression of] anti-Judaism in Lutheran theology,"*

which would seem to run counter to the attempts of Wallman and Siemon-Netto to circle their wagons around Luther.

Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that in Europe Christian anti-Semitism was by no means confined to German Lutheran Christian circles. For example, Cosmo Lang, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury from 1928-1941, contended in a speech to the UK's House of Lords that "*the Jews themselves*" were to blame for the "*excesses of the Nazis*." American Christian anti-Semitism was another thing entirely, discussed more fully later.

Another prominent German theologian who gave the Nazi party considerable ideological succour was the Lutheran Gustav Adolf Deissmann (1866-1937). Deissmann held Professorships in theology first at Heidelberg and later at Berlin, the latter position long considered to be the most eminent chair in German theology and certainly so during the Reich. In September 1914 he wrote a theological treatise for the Lutheran church and the German people entitled 'The War and Religion' which outlined the Christian case for Germany's involvement in what we now call World War I. His argument was based on the notion that the war provided an important opportunity for Germany to realise Luther's ideals. He goes on:

*"The positive effects of war upon religion are infinitely stronger than its negative ones.....Our present religion is national and German, and we preach a German God! A German, a national God!.....Christianity is the religion of war".*

Deissmann considered Lutheran German Christianity to be the true expression of Christianity, unlike the "*.....sweet-sentimental, and sentimental-weak Christianity*" of Germany's opponents and in his sermons (which were invariably held to packed audiences) has been quoted as saying in response to German soldiers handing out poisoned sweets to children in Belgium:

*"I am proud to preach the religion of might and what our enemies call barbarism.....only in a German cloak can the real Christ breathe."*

All this nourishing food for Hitler's thought, and not a single mention of Darwin anywhere in Deissmann's writings and speeches. Indeed the above quote could have been lifted straight out of 'Mein Kampf'. However, at least three other leading Lutheran theologians bear responsibility for recommending the ideologies of both Luther and Hitler to the German people. The first, Gerhard Kittel (1888-1948), was Professor of Evangelical Theology at the University of Tübingen. He was a passionate anti-Semite throughout his life and became a (prominent) member of the Nazi Party in 1933 and stated at the time that his choice to join was not pragmatic but was based on "*a Christian moral foundation*." He was a member of a group of twelve leading German theologians and pastors who issued the 1939 'Godesberg Declaration' in which they thanked God for Hitler, described Nazism as "*a call of God*" and pledged to transform their respective churches into "*an instrument of racial policy*".

Second was Emanuel Hirsch (1888-1972), Professor of Theology at Göttingen University and a member not only of the Nazi Party but also holding a post within the SS. He described Hitler coming to power in 1933 as a:

*"sunrise of divine goodness after endless dark years of wrath and misery" and that the Nazi Party "should be accepted and supported by Christians as a tool of God's grace."*

(cited Byassee, 2006). Hirsch gave enthusiastic public support to both the 'Nuremberg Laws' and the 'Protection of German Blood and German Honour Act' and was highly critical of theologians and clergy who did not show active support for the Nazi cause. Unlike many clergy who initially supported Hitler but changed their minds as the Nazi project unfolded, Hirsch remained unrepentant of his attitudes throughout his life.

The third prominent clergyman was Paul Althaus (1888-1966), Professor of Practical and Systematic Theology at the University of Göttingen. He wrote 'The Theology of Martin Luther' (1962) and 'The Ethics of Martin Luther' (1965) both of which offer an unrepentant and uncompromising glorification of the man and his ideology. Like Deissmann he too viewed the waging of war as a perfectly Christian endeavour in order to resolve differences with other nations. He even went so far as to equate Hitler with Martin Luther and even Christ himself:

*"Our Protestant churches have greeted the turning point of 1933 as a gift and miracle of God."*

(cited Ericksen, 2012). Again, powerful home grown theological underpinning for Hitler's political ideologies with Darwin nowhere in sight. And, as Wiener (1942) has argued:

*"A nation which found it easy to accept a character like Luther as Christ, could not find it difficult to accept a man like Hitler as Messiah."*

Returning to science (and pseudoscience), the claim that Adam was white-skinned certainly predates Darwin. The earliest publication of this doctrine appears to be that of a Protestant turned Catholic Frenchman, Isaac La Peyrère (1596–1676), in an anonymous work written in Latin, 'Prae-Adamitae' (1655), and translated into English a year later as 'Men Before Adam'. Although the work was immediately and widely condemned by both Protestant and Catholic scholars it is important to note that La Peyrère's arguments employed no anthropological or other scientific data; he relied entirely on Biblical evidence. Thus, La Peyrère's devotion to the faith was never questioned, it was his interpretation of the text that was considered heretical. As French biologist Armand de Quatrefages wrote in 'L'Espèce Humaine' (1877):

*"He was a theologian, a believer, who admits as true all that is in the Bible, and miracles in particular.....He always finds in the book which serves him as a guide, some reason to support his interpretation. In a word, we find throughout, in La Peyrère, a mixture of complete faith and free criticism. This book convinced no one, and the doctrine of the author soon fell into forgetfulness, until within a few years since it has been reproduced and welcomed with a favor sufficiently unexpected."*

Other commentators, such as Edward Long (1774) not only claimed scriptural evidence of separate species but scientific evidence too; according to him (a slave owner and British colonial administrator) people of different 'races' could only ever produce sterile offspring:

*"Some examples may possibly have occurred, where, upon the intermarriage of two Mulattos, the woman has borne children; which children have grown to maturity: but I never heard of such an instance; and may we not suspect the lady, in those cases, to have privately intrigued with another man, a White perhaps?.....The subject is really curious, and deserves a further and very attentive enquiry; because it tends, among other evidences, to establish an opinion, which several have entertained, that the White and the Negroe had not one common origin."*

Although many nineteenth century American churchmen were certainly robust pre-Adamites others, such as Rev. Ebenezer Burgess writing in 1871, were keen to emphasise that they did not accept the doctrine. Nevertheless, Burgess does show some sympathy with La Peyrère's interpretation of Biblical text. Quoting Genesis he writes:

*"These are the three sons of Noah, and of them was the whole earth overspread." This may be taken literally, as, until recently, has always been done, or its application may be limited to the "Adamite race," whose creation had just been recorded, and whose history is given in the subsequent portions of the sacred writings, without either affirming or denying the existence of another race not descended from Adam. The latter interpretation, though less obvious than the former, is certainly consistent*

*with usage in other parts of the Bible."*

If Quatrefages observation of a "*favor sufficiently unexpected*" did not emanate wholeheartedly from the churches *en bloc* and certainly did not come from Darwin, from whence did it come? It came from the thin veneer of scientific credibility through the writings of, among others, the Swiss paleontologist and geologist Louis Agassiz (1807-1873), the American surgeon Josiah Clark Nott (1804-1873), and the American Egyptologist George Gliddon (1809-1857), all of whose work predated Darwin. Nott and Gliddon's famous compilation of essays "Types of Mankind" (1854) was distinctly unDarwinian in approach, attempting to match anthropological data with Biblical history. It was an unashamedly racist and particularly white supremacist book. Their follow-up book 'Indigenous Races of the Earth' was equally popular. Published in 1857, two years before Darwin published 'Origin of Species', it enjoyed pre-orders well in excess of its first print-run. Weikart (2004) claims that Hitler paraphrased Agassiz in "Table Talks" (October 24th, 1941):

*"There have been humans at the rank at least of a baboon in any case for 300,000 years at least. The ape is distinguished from the lowest human less than such a human is from a thinker like, for example, Schopenhauer."*

Here is the original quote (which appears in a contribution by Agassiz in Nott and Gliddon's 1854 book of essays):

*"The chimpanzee and gorilla do not differ more one from the other than the Mandingo and the Guineau Negro: they together do not differ more from the orang than the Malay or white man differs from the Negro.....I maintain distinctly that the differences observed among the races of men are of the same kind and even greater than those upon which the anthropoid monkeys are considered as distinct species."*

The link is weak, at best. Nonetheless, according to Weikart, Hitler's paraphrasing of the ardent creationist Agassiz provides evidence that Hitler was a Darwinian! This is surely as illogical, contradictory and spurious a connection as one can ever imagine. Darwin's brief correspondence with Louis Agassiz (he communicated far more with his son, Alexander) reveals the following paragraph from a letter dated April 12th, 1864:

*"I know well how strongly you are opposed to nearly everything I have written & it gratifies me deeply that you have not for this cause taken, like a few of my former English friends, a personal dislike to me."*

Indeed, Lindberg and Numbers in their 2003 book 'When Science and Christianity Meet' describe Agassiz as "*the foremost scientific critic of Darwin in America*". And it was precisely because Agassiz was so un-Darwinian (even to the point of being a strong advocate of slavery), that Henry Morris in his book 'Men of Science, Men of God' (1982) lauds Agassiz as one of the most esteemed founders of creation science. He is listed on the website 'Creation Science Hall of Fame: Honoring those who Honored God's Word as Literally Written in Genesis', where we are told:

*".....it is significant that he was an inveterate opponent of evolutionism to the very end of his life."*

This opposition to evolution was not confined to the biological domain. At a talk given by William Watson Goodwin in 1861 Agassiz even expressed disbelief that modern languages had evolved from earlier ones. He claimed each language to be primordial and considered any similarities between extant and extinct language groups to be either coincidental or based on differences in the mental faculties of the different 'races' (see Goodwin, 1861).

Not only was Agassiz an inveterate opponent of evolutionary theory who honoured God's word, he was also, as were all Christian polygenists, an inveterate racist. For much of his career and until his death Agassiz was convinced that the white race were a superior sub-species of human, relative to all other races, who were "*beasts*" in comparison and he claimed that this was both a scriptural and a scientific fact. What follows is an extract from a letter Agassiz wrote to his mother, Rose on December 2nd 1846:

*"It was in Philadelphia that I first found myself in prolonged contact with Negroes; all the domestics in my hotel were men of color. I can scarcely express to you the painful impression that I received, especially since the feeling that they inspired in me is contrary to all our ideas about the confraternity of the human type (genre) and the unique origin of our species. But truth before all. Nevertheless, I experienced pity at the sight of this degraded and degenerate race, and their lot inspired compassion in me in thinking that they were really men. Nonetheless, it is impossible for me to repress the feeling that they are not of the same blood as us. In seeing their black faces with their thick lips and grimacing teeth, the wool on their head, their bent knees,*

*their elongated hands, I could not take my eyes off their face in order to tell them to stay far away. And when they advanced that hideous hand towards my plate in order to serve me, I wished I were able to depart in order to eat a piece of bread elsewhere, rather than dine with such service. What unhappiness for the white race – to have tied their existence so closely with that of Negroes in certain countries! God preserve us from such a contact.”*

The book 'Life and Letters', compiled by Agassiz's wife omits many of Agassiz's more racist attitudes and includes a much shortened version of this letter. The above is the unexpurgated version from the original French language version housed in Harvard University's Houghton Library. Four years later, in an article written for the 'Christian Examiner' (1850) Agassiz demonstrated substantial agreement with La Peyrère:

*"To suppose that all men originated from Adam and Eve is to assume that the order of creation has been changed in the course of historical times, and to give to the Mosaic record a meaning that it was never intended to have. On that ground we would particularly insist upon the propriety of considering Genesis as chiefly relating to the history of the white race, with special reference to the history of the Jews."*

But even if Weikart is correct, and Hitler was knowingly paraphrasing Agassiz, he was not the only one agreeing with Agassiz for his creationist and racist outlook. Here is George M. Price (the 'father of flood geology') writing in his 1924 book, 'The Phantom of Organic Evolution':

*"These present-day anthropoid apes may be just as much a product of modern conditions [degeneration] as are the negroid or the Mongolian types of mankind. And if I were compelled to choose between saying that the apes are degenerate or hybridized men and that man is a developed ape, I am sure it would not take me very long to decide which it would be. Nor do I think it would take any well-informed scientist long to make the choice."*

Henry Morris continued his white supremacist (and overt pro-slavery) stance right up until the 1990s. The following quote, for example, can be found in the 1991 2nd edition of his book 'The Beginning Of the World':

*"The descendants of Ham were marked especially for secular service to mankind. Indeed they were to be 'servants of servants,' that is 'servants extraordinary!' Although only Canaan is mentioned specifically (possibly because the branch of Ham's family through Canaan would later come into most direct contact with Israel), the whole family of Ham is in view. The prophecy is worldwide in scope and, since Shem and Japheth are covered, all Ham's descendants must be also. These include all nations which are neither Semitic nor Japhetic. Thus, all of the earth's 'colored' races, - yellow, red, brown, and black - essentially the Afro-Asian group of peoples, including the American Indians--are possibly Hamitic in origin and included within the scope of the Canaanitic prophecy, as well as the Egyptians, Sumerians, Hittites, and Phoenicians of antiquity."*

And earlier, from 'The Genesis Record' (1976):

*"Often the Hamites, especially the Negroes, have become actual personal servants or even slaves to the others. Possessed of a genetic character concerned mainly with mundane matters, they have eventually been displaced by the intellectual and philosophical acumen of the Japhethites and the religious zeal of the Semites."*

Lest anyone feel that Morris is being somehow being quote-mined, Richard Trott (2003) writes of his personal experience of Morris' attempted evasiveness when confronted with a charge of racism:

*"I questioned Henry Morris about this issue personally in North East Maryland on July 18th 1993.....Morris claimed that these announcements are not racist because there are "black Jews" and black "Indians" who are not Hamitic.....this appears to be flatly contradictory to Morris's claim [as quoted above].....that "all of the earth's 'colored races', - yellow, red, brown and black, may be Hamitic. Furthermore, Morris pointed out that there are whites who have been "slaves" and are Hamitic. These white Hamitics are not mentioned in Morris's book. Morris also confirmed to me that he believes that African Americans are Hamitic.....Morris sometimes defended these statements to me and at other times simply contradicted them, but never rescinded them."*

George M. Price, was of course, a highly conservative Biblical literalist and white supremacist who wrote that Darwin's scientific findings were "unbiblical and innately immoral" and even blamed German militarism leading up to the First World War on



Darwin's influence. If Weikart insists on charging Hitler with paraphrasing Agassiz (and why wouldn't he, given Hitler's creationist outlook?) he must surely also accept that Hitler is also echoing Price (again, why wouldn't he?).

Nott, Gliddon and Agassiz all accepted a translation of the name 'Adam' as "to show red in the face" or "blusher". Since only lighter skinned people display a discernible blush, they took this as evidence that Adam must have been Caucasian. This notion was, in turn, predicated on studies of ancient Hebrew made by a number of Christian academics including the Presbyterian minister Josiah Priest, author of 'Bible Defence Of Slavery: On The Origin, History And Fortunes Of The Negro Race', published 1843, who wrote:

*"First Adam, as above, signifies earthy man, red; second Adamah, signifies red earth, or blood; third Adami, signifies my man red, earthy, human; fourth Admah, signifies earthy, red, or bloody ; all of which words are of the same class, and spring from the same root, which was Adam, signifying red, or copper color."*

Like the works of Nott, Gliddon and Agassiz, Priest's own book was by no means considered fringe. It proved to be immensely popular, being reprinted eight times in the first five years of publication. Later additions included a supplementary pamphlet by the Rev. W.S. Brown, which was highly critical of the anti-slavery movement. So, on the basis of evidence as flimsy as this, polygenists enthusiastically partitioned humans into distinct 'groupings'. In Gobineau's case he chose the white (Aryan) race (superior in terms of intelligence, morality and physical harmony), the black race (intense, willful) and the yellow race (lazy, uninventive). In the obvious absence of a biological barrier between the races he proposed the need for a 'moral' barrier, in the best interests not only of the Aryan race but of humans in general.

All of the abovementioned examples of polygenic scholarship predate Darwin. However, even after Darwin's scientific findings had been widely accepted in most European countries they did not always find favour in the more fundamentalist white Christian sects in the United States. Another highly influential book, authored by Charles Carroll in 1900, 'The Negro a Beast or, In the Image of God' and published by American Bible House argued, like Gobineau and the other polygenists, that Adam was the progenitor of only the white 'race' and that the negro was, in fact, not a human being but a pre-Adamite animal that did not possess a soul. According to Carroll, a Christian Professor of theology, for a child to possess a soul, both parents needed to provide half a soul each. Thus, if a white person bred with a black person, the child would also soul-less:

*".....if the half-breed marries a man, will not their offspring have a soul?" No! "Then if the three-quarter white marries a man will not their offspring have a soul?" No. "If the offspring of man and the Negro was mated with pure whites for generations, would not their ultimate offspring have a soul?" No!"*

Now God commanded Adam to have dominion over the Earth, but prior to Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden they never had to toil. Obviously, then, they required someone to toil for them. Who else but the beasts of the fields, including the black race? This is all outlined in Chapter 6 entitled 'Red, Yellow and Brown Skin Denotes Amalgamation of the Human Family with the Beast, the Negro.' According to Carroll, the mindset that accepted the ideas of atheism and Darwinian evolution has resulted from the moral and intellectual degeneration of the white race descended from Adam and Eve brought on by miscegenation with such animals.

In stark contrast to these Christian polygenists (whether pseudoscientist or outright crackpot), Darwin did not start out with any particular views on 'race' that were not scientifically based (he expressed incredulity, for example, when informed of what Long had written). He did, however, attempt to explain the sometimes mutually reinforcing presumptions made by others for racial differences and, as a result, in 'The Descent of Man' he made plain he considered all such attempts to subdivide humans into races or subspecies to be premature and likely scientifically worthless:

*"The question whether mankind consists of one or several species has of late years been much discussed by anthropologists ... . But it is a hopeless endeavour to decide this point, until some definition of the term "species" is generally accepted; and the definition must not include an indeterminate element such as an act of creation. We might as well attempt without any definition to decide whether a certain number of houses should be called a village, town, or city".*

Darwin also commented on the disagreement between the various factions of anthropologists on how the human 'races' or 'subspecies' should be delineated. As he saw it the problem was that all of the physical and mental characteristics chosen to categorise each 'race' proved, on closer examination, not to be unique to any one 'race'. It was obvious to Darwin, therefore, that the various ethnic groups had a common evolutionary origin with all identifiable human characteristics highly intermingled. As he

further wrote in 'The Descent of Man':

*Although the existing races of man differ in many respects, as in colour, hair, shape of skull, proportions of the body, &c., yet if their whole organisation be taken into consideration they are found to resemble each other closely in a multitude of points. Many of these points are of so unimportant or of so singular a nature, that it is extremely improbable that they should have been independently acquired by aboriginally distinct species or races. The same remark holds good with equal or greater force with respect to the numerous points of mental similarity between the most distinct races of man. The American aborigines, Negroes and Europeans differ as much from each other in mind as any three races that can be named."*

*"Now when naturalists observe a close agreement in numerous small details of habits, tastes and dispositions between two or more domestic races, or between nearly-allied natural forms, they use this fact as an argument that all are descended from a common progenitor who was thus endowed; and consequently that all should be classed under the same species. The same argument may be applied with much force to the races of man."*

*".....all the races agree in so many unimportant details of structure and in so many mental peculiarities that these can be accounted for only by inheritance from a common progenitor; and a progenitor thus characterised would probably deserve to rank as man.....It may be doubted whether any character can be named which is distinctive of a race and is constant. Savages, even within the limits of the same tribe, are not nearly so uniform in character, as has been often asserted..... Man has been studied more carefully than any other animal, and yet there is the greatest possible diversity amongst capable judges whether he should be classed as a single species or race, or as two (Virey), as three (Jacquinot), as four (Kant), five (Blumenbach), six (Buffon), seven (Hunter), eight (Agassiz), eleven (Pickering), fifteen (Bory St. Vincent), sixteen (Desmoulins), twenty-two (Morton), sixty (Crawford), or as sixty-three, according to Burke..... the races ought not to be ranked as species.....they graduate into each other, and that it is hardly possible to discover clear distinctive characters between them".*

The difference between the creationist hero Agassiz and Darwin regarding their respective attitude to 'race' becomes patently obvious. Of course, when 'Origin of the Species' was first published, slavery was still legal and enthusiastically sanctioned by many churches in the United States. Polygenist views were so rife in these places that European ethnologists had begun referring to such notions as the 'American School' of ethnology, i.e., science contaminated by theology. As Quatrefages (1877) explained:

*"The anthropological question is complicated with that of slavery; and from reading the greater part of the writings that have come to us from beyond the sea, it is clear that there they are, before all, advocates or opponents of that institution. But in the United States it is necessary always to be biblical; and hence came the particular shades which distinguish certain anthropological works in that country. The anti-slavists are generally outspoken monogenists."*

And in a remarkably prescient comment, Burgess (1871) agreed noting:

*".....all pluralists depart from the established usage of science, inventing definitions of their own for the sole purpose of maintaining preconceived theories."*

Of course nowadays creationists routinely use their own carefully tailored definitions of scientific terms such as 'theory', 'law', 'mutation', 'evolution', 'observation', 'prediction', 'vestigial' etc, in order to maintain their preconceived ideas.

One of the very few American academics who openly and vehemently opposed polygenism (and Agassiz in particular) was John Bachman, who was both a Professor of Natural History as well as finding time to serve as a Lutheran clergyman, holding his appointment at the same church in Charleston for 56 years. Rather than making cranial measurements he systematically compared the teeth and bones of specimens from different 'races' and came to the same conclusion as Darwin that human beings comprised a single species. In 1850 he published his major work 'The Doctrine of the Unity of the Human Race Examined on the Principles of Science'. He also discovered a new species of bird and rat. Nott and Gliddon were particularly vexatious toward him, publically calling him a "*clerical ignoramus*" while the Scottish polygenist physician and ethnologist Robert Knox in his 1850 book 'The Races of Men' wrote of him "*I have read with horror the ravings of Mr. John Bachman*". Though, to be fair, Knox was by no means a white supremacist, describing his own 'sub-species' of human being, the 'Saxon' (i.e., having originated in Germany and thus Hitler's 'Aryan') as someone who "*invents nothing.....has no musical ear.....lacks genius*" and is so "*low and boorish*" that "*he does not know what you mean by fine art.*" Which goes some way to vindicate Darwin's view that any division of human 'races' is purely arbitrary.

African-American Christians appear to have understood the true import of Darwin's findings of common descent much earlier than many of their white counterparts. Indeed, many African-Americans were more disposed to Darwinian science than to some of the teachings of the white churches in the southern states. In 1863 an anonymous author for the African-American newspaper 'The Christian Recorder' (published by the African Methodist Episcopal Church "for the dissemination of religion, morality, literature and science") positively reviewed Darwin's findings and, although the article was written prior to Darwin's writings on human evolution, appears to have understood the import of the notion of common descent. They particularly praised him for having acted as a counter to the current polygenist views:

*"One question of much dispute seems to have been settled by Mr Darwin.....the Caucasian, the Malay, and the Negro, according to his facts, are varieties of a species, and may all have descended from a single pair, as set forth in the scriptures."*

Informed criticism of Christian polygenism also emanated from the highly influential Princeton Theological Seminary, especially so in a 1911 paper 'On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race' authored by its principal, Benjamin Warfield. Although he starts out in modern creationist fashion by remarking that evolutionary theory "is rapidly losing ground among recent scientific workers", he then goes on to say, perhaps begrudgingly:

*"The prevalence of the evolutionary hypotheses has removed all motive for denying a common origin to the human race, and rendered it natural to look upon the differences which exist among the various types of man as differentiations of a common stock.....it is now agreed with practical unanimity that the unity of the human race, in the sense of a common origin, is a necessary corollary of the evolutionary hypothesis.....the fact of the unity of the human race has to thank the evolutionary hypothesis."* (my emphasis)

Other honest and realistic views became available. In Spring 1925, for example, the 'Baltimore Afro-American' newspaper published a series of articles, 'Day to Day' by William N. Jones, in which he argued that Darwinian evolution had "created greater racial sympathy in the short-term". In an article celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Thomas Huxley he wrote that few white men had done as much as Huxley to help race relations because Darwin's scientific findings had questioned the Christian notion that some men were born to be rulers "by Divine right" while others were born to be slaves "by Divine curse". He went on:

*"Science won, and as a result the world, in spite of hidebound and narrow dogmas, is heading towards real brotherhood."*

A few years later the journalist Wilbur Cash writing in his book of personal memoirs, 'The Mind of the South' (1941; and never out of print since) had this to say:

*"One of the most stressed notions which went around was that evolution made a Negro as good as a white man-that is, threatened White Supremacy."*

Similarly, Jeffrey Moran, commenting in 2011 on attitudes in some states in the 1920s states:

*".....antievolutionists were identified with some of the most racist features of the South."*

It is mind-boggling indeed that modern day fundamentalist Christians can read historical archives like these, along with passages from Darwin and infer from them that Darwin and his scientific findings convinced that human beings could and should be classified and placed on a hierarchy according to racially specific characteristics. Those who do so would surely fail any standardised reading comprehension test. Compare for yourself the above quotations from Darwin and others with Bergman's own warped version of Darwin's scientific conclusions outlined in his paper, 'Darwinism and the Nazi Race Holocaust':

*".....it was Darwin who claimed that certain races were genetically inferior as was scientifically 'proven' by Darwinism.....the 'superior race' belief was based on the theory of group inequality within each species, a major presumption and requirement of Darwin's original 'survival of the fittest' theory".*

I cannot imagine a more dishonest rendering of what Darwin actually wrote. Thankfully, biologist Steven J. Gould didn't share Bergman's difficulty in understanding Darwin's words. Writing in his essay 'Eternal Metaphors of Palaeontology' (1977) he

succinctly notes:

*“.....an explicit denial of innate progression [of a racial hierarchy] is the most characteristic feature separating Darwin’s theory of natural selection from other nineteenth century evolutionary theories.”*

Even Gasman, in the final pages of his book, recognises this and curiously, given the theme of his work, admits that Darwin's findings were, in fact, wholly incompatible with Nazi racial theories, writing:

*“It was therefore hardly ideologically admissible at the same time to allow for the evolution of the Aryans from a group of inferior anthropoid progenitors. Any theory of this kind would have destroyed the notion that the Aryans were in possession of racial superiority from the beginning”.*

Despite such clear differences between the likes of Gobineau, Hitler and Darwin in their attitude to the ‘races’, however, it is Darwin who creationists frequently claim was inherently racist. One very common source of such accusations is based on the full title of his seminal book, which is ‘On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life’. The claim of racism is both ignorant and odious. Throughout the book Darwin uses terms like ‘race’, ‘sub-species’ and ‘variety’ interchangeably when discussing a range of animals such as dogs and horses as well as plants. For example, in this passage from Chapter 1 he uses three different words to describe the same concept:

*“When we look to the hereditary varieties or races of our domestic animals and plants, and compare them with species closely allied together, we generally perceive in each domestic race, as already remarked, less uniformity of character than in true species”.*

Some other example passages for 'Origin of Species' were Darwin mixes his terms:

*".....if we could succeed in naturalising, or were to cultivate, during many generations, the several races, for instance, of the cabbage.”*

*".....it is quite incredible that a fantail, identical with the existing breed, could be raised from any other species of pigeon, or even from the other well-established races of the domestic pigeon."*

The more prominent irony is that ‘Origin of Species’ doesn't even discuss the evolution of humans (indeed, the word 'man' occurs once only in the entire book; in this sentence, "*Light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history*"), so whenever someone remarks on the racist nature of the book’s title, you can be certain he or she hasn't actually familiarised themselves with his work but is merely parroting misinformed and/or blatantly dishonest Christian fundamentalist sources.

True though, by today’s more enlightened standards Darwin probably was somewhat racist, with the usual prejudices of Victorian England. He was after all, a middle-class white Englishman brought up in a country under the strong influence of the 19th century Church of England where the inferiority of the non-white races was considered to be an empirical fact by most. Indeed, during Darwin's lifetime the vast majority of Europeans had never set eyes on a non-European. The term ‘racism’ is not an absolute and we can observe degrees and varieties of racism. For instance, Darwin made no anti-Semitic comments anywhere in his writing (except perhaps in a single case; in a letter to his sister Susan written September 3rd 1845 he used the relatively innocuous phrase "*we are as rich as Jews*"), and he certainly expressed pleasure when he found his work quoted and discussed in Hebrew language publications and, on January 21st 1882, along with a number of other influential Englishmen, he was a signatory to a letter published in the 'Observer' newspaper in London expressing concern at the persecution of Jews in Russia.

Nevertheless, a recent anti-evolution primary school 'Islamic Science' textbook published in Turkey in 2012 has bettered even Bergman by taking the *ad hominem* fallacy regarding Darwin to a whole new level of absurdity:

*"First, he was a Jew. Second, he hated his prominent forehead, big nose and misshapen teeth"*

How either of these statements might impact on the veracity of his findings is not mentioned, of course. Darwin did, however, commonly use the terms ‘savage’ and ‘barbarian’ when referring to Africans and some other ethnic groups. These comments were

unlikely to be intended as derogatory. It was simply an acknowledgement of the English lexicon of the time and such words were used both formally and informally by people from all walks of life, including in children's books. The term 'Negro', especially, was in such formal use at that time that it was included in Parliamentary and other legal documents, medical and scientific papers and certainly by both the Anglican and Catholic churches. Indeed, a British politician as esteemed as Winston Churchill used terms such as "*blackamoor*", "*chink*", "*wop*", and "*baboo*" publicly and in office, even into the 1950s (Toye, 2010). We are able to glean nothing from Darwin's writings, therefore, that suggests that he was any more racist than any of his peers and in some ways he was much less so, obviously much less so than the likes of Agassiz, Priest, Carroll, Gobineau or Hitler.

He did make what appear to be derogatory remarks about Africans being intellectually inferior to Europeans in his correspondence with fellow naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913). It is important to understand, though, that neither Darwin nor Wallace considered intelligence to be any more desirable than any other phenotypic trait for members of any species to possess. They always recognised that nature has no trait hierarchy, simply favouring those traits that conferred a greater chance of reproduction in a specific environment. In his 1890 paper 'Human Selection' for example, Wallace (who considered this to be his most important work) had written:

*"Those who succeed in the race for wealth are by no means the best or the most intelligent."*

Wallace also considered such people to fall short in the moral stakes too, writing of his distaste for those who were comfortable risking human life and health by employing people to perform dangerous occupations in the service of their bank balance. Wilson (2017) nevertheless accuses Darwin (and by implication, Wallace) of having deliberately devised a belief system tailored to suit the "*the Victorian well-to do*" (like Darwin himself) in order to convince them that their success in life was fully deserved. As Americans are apt to exclaim, "*wait, what?*". We started with a discussion of Coulter's charge that Darwin was responsible for Victorian-era communism. Now, apparently, one of Coulter's peers is telling us that Darwin was responsible for making Victorian capitalists feel good about themselves. Can't these Christian fundamentalists ever get their story straight? To such intellectually childish minds the English biologist Richard Dawkins is probably considered the living person most under the malign spell of Darwin. So how well does his view comport with Wilson's? From 'River Out of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life' (1995):

*"In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get lucky; and you won't find any rhyme or reason to it, or any justice."*

One might be forgiven for concluding that Wilson has not only not read Darwin or Wallace, he hasn't read Dawkins, either. Dawkins' view of the implications of evolutionary theory is surely the very antithesis of what Wilson is claiming Darwin was attempting.

Darwin (along with the rest of his extended family, without exception) was a notable opponent of the slave trade. The phrase often employed by the anti-slavery movement "*Am I not a man and a brother?*" was actually coined by Darwin's grandfather, the famous potter Josiah Wedgwood, who had it engraved on mass produced china cameos alongside an image of a kneeling black man in chains. Wedgwood, along with Charles Darwin's other grandfather, the physician Erasmus Darwin, founded the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1787 and financed the 1791 campaign against buying sugar from slave plantations. Later, in 1824, following the deaths of Josiah and Erasmus, both the Wedgwood and Darwin families provided significant financial support to the Anti-Slavery Society run by the politician William Wilberforce. Ironically, Wilberforce's son Samuel, a Church of England Bishop, was to become an ardent and public opponent of Darwin's scientific findings.

Charles Darwin did not depart from his extended family on this matter and made no secret of his wish that the Confederate States would lose the American Civil War. In Darwin's correspondence, he tells of his sharing a cabin with the captain of the Beagle, a devout Christian with a missionary zeal named Robert FitzRoy, *en route* to the Galapagos Islands. FitzRoy refused to carry anyone aboard his ship who did not agree to attending a daily worship conducted by himself. Although they were in agreement on many scientific matters, they argued on the subject of slavery to such an extent that Darwin chose to eat alone and seriously considered leaving the ship. Fortunately for him (and for science) the gun-room officers invited him into their cabin whereupon FitzRoy sent a naval officer with a written apology and request that they remained sharing a cabin. It is ironic that Darwin collected his specimens and made the field notes that were to form the basis of evolutionary theory while having a six-day Biblical literalist as his closest companion. Years later, after Darwin had published his work on evolution, and Fitzroy's faith had become even stronger, he became wracked with guilt at the part he had played in Darwin's discovery of "*the abomination of evolution*" writing that it had caused him "*acutest pain*" and attending public meetings concerned with evolution in order to argue the case against.

While at medical school in Edinburgh Darwin came across the work of a black taxidermist, a freed Guyanese slave, and asked if he would teach him his art. He later wrote in his autobiography:

*"By the way, a negro lived in Edinburgh, who had travelled with Waterton, and gained his livelihood by stuffing birds, which he did excellently: he gave me lessons for payment, and I used often to sit with him, for he was a very pleasant and intelligent man."*

Darwin counted Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Colonel of the First South Carolina Volunteers (the first federally organised African-American regiment, made up of emancipated slaves, which fought in the American Civil War), as a good friend and had him stay in his home. Writing to him on February 27th 1873 Darwin praises Higginson's 1870 book 'Army Life in a Black Regiment' and goes on:

*"I always thought well of the negroes, from the little which I have seen of them; and I have been delighted to have my vague impressions confirmed, and their character and mental powers so ably discussed".*

Higginson wrote two further books, 'Common Sense About Women' (1881) and 'Women and Men' (1888), in which he advocated gender equality in all spheres of life. Regarding slavery Darwin had previously written in 1833 to Catherine Darwin:

*"I have watched how steadily the general feeling, as shown at elections, has been rising against Slavery. What a proud thing for England, if she is the first European nation which utterly abolishes it. I was told before leaving England that after living in slave countries all my opinions would be altered; the only alteration I am aware of is forming a much higher estimate of the negro character".*

He wrote a very similarly worded sentiment the following year to the clergyman and geologist, John Stevens Henslow. Darwin also tells us that when he doing his field work aboard the 'Beagle' he enjoyed the company of the three 'westernised' natives from Tierra del Fuego every bit as much as his own countrymen and remarks:

*"I was incessantly struck, whilst living with the Fuegians on board the "Beagle," with the many little traits of character, shewing how similar their minds were to ours."*

That very same line later appears in 'The Descent of Man' when Darwin discusses alleged differences between the 'races'. He was obviously not averse then, when occasion permitted, to mixing with other races and treating them as his equal. More likely he suffered, as we all surely do, from a strong whiff of cultural supremacy, suggested by his also writing about how much he disliked native Fuegian culture. So, it is obvious from Darwin's published work and his personal correspondence that Lively (2017) is veering far from the truth when he writes:

*"In the late 1850s, Darwin emerged as the ideological savior of the African-slave-owning world."*

And it is equally untruthful to insinuate, as Wilson (2017) has, that Darwin was "*secretely sympathetic to slavery.*" Certainly, this is not a charge that has emanated from within Darwin's lifetime. Really, if his sympathies were so secret that his peers were unaware, what are we to make of the motives of someone who makes such a claim nearly a century and a half after his death? And how long is it, I wonder, until we encounter quotes allegedly emanating from Darwin himself, to the effect that he agreed with slavery all along, but kept his thoughts secret?

Nevertheless, Darwin could be extraordinarily naive about what he was told by native peoples. For example, The Beagle and its crew were the first Europeans to set eyes on the Yamana people of Tierra del Fuego. In a letter to Caroline Darwin (12th April, 1833) he wrote:

*"These Fuegians are Cannibals.....Jemmy Button [one of the three 'westernised' Fuegians] told Matthews, a long time since, that in winter they sometimes eat the women.....the other day a Sealing Captain said that a Fuegian boy, whom he had, said the same thing.....it is difficult to disbelieve two such distinct explicit accounts & given by boys.— Was ever any thing so atrocious heard of, to work them like slave to procure food in the summer & occasionally in winter to eat them.— I feel quite a disgust at the very sound of the voices of these miserable savages."*

Note that Darwin reports no observed instances of cannibalism. That Darwin and his compatriots had been duped by these boys was confirmed by Lucas Bridges, who was born in Terra del Fuego in 1874 (along with three of his siblings). The son of the English Christian missionary Thomas Bridges, his family had settled there permanently three years earlier. According to Bridges' 1948 book 'The Uttermost Part of the Earth', the Fuegians lied to Darwin because they had learned that this was the kind of behaviour Europeans had come to expect of 'savages'. That the Fuegians had never practiced cannibalism was confirmed by the archeologist and anthropologist Samuel Kirkland Lothrop (1928). In the end it was the Europeans who were the more savage. Well-armed sheep farmers and repeated measles epidemics killed many Fuegians. By the 1930s their culture had become extinct.

One particularly fanciful notion held by Gobineau was that Aryans were descended from a primeval people from Northern India who had originally lived an ideal 'Rousseau-esque' existence and it was from these origins that all the major human cultures such as Ancient Egyptian and Greek, Roman, Chinese and pre-Columbian American, had flourished. He wrote that, "*history springs only from contact with the white races.*" All these societies had eventually failed, he believed, because the Aryan bloodline had eventually become diluted by interbreeding with the other two inferior races. Only the Germanic peoples were deemed to have enough of the original Aryan bloodline left to be able to reconstitute a pure Aryan race once again. This would obviously require an end to all interracial breeding in order to reduce the previous 'deleterious' effects of Darwinian natural selection. Gobineau observed this process of racial dilution being continued in 19th century Europe as a result of colonisation and for this reason he opposed Europeans becoming too involved in other cultures, lest the pure Aryan bloodline was further diluted and purity become even more unattainable. Gobineau was not particularly anti-Semitic, however, and in 'Inequality of the Human Races' wrote at some length in praise of the "*free, strong, and intelligent*" Jewish people who had succeeded despite their "*natural disadvantages*". Obviously these opinions were anathema to the Nazi party and they heavily edited this aspect of his work in their own material designed for public consumption.

Although he wrote 'Inequality of the Human Races' before Darwin had published 'The Descent of Man', Gobineau lived for another eleven years after Darwin's findings became available and would certainly have become aware of how Darwin so strongly negated polygenist ideas and notions of racial hierarchies. Despite having ample opportunity to defend his ideas, however, he chose not to do so, writing only fiction and historical texts in his remaining years. Although Darwin was responsible for first outlining the actual mechanism by which natural selection has effect, it is only fair to mention that notions of 'speciation', that plants and animals (including humans) had changed over vast amounts of time, existed long before Darwin's findings, originating as far back as Ancient Greece with philosophers such as Anaximander, Empedocles and Aristotle.

Having been a diplomat in the French mission in Tehran, and a keen and knowledgeable student of oriental culture (he wrote a history of the Persian people and was the first European to publish on the Baha'i faith), it is almost certain that Gobineau would also have been aware of the views of early Islamic thinkers on the subject of the common ancestry of humans. Compared to the Bible the Qur'an contains a relatively incomplete chronology of creation. In particular, the 'six ayums' it supposedly took Allah to create the seven firmaments plus the Earth do not equate to the six days outlined in a literal interpretation of Genesis. Ayums tend to be defined as developmental stages, each of which is of an indeterminant time. It is not uncommon for Islamic scholars to consider the concept of the six ayums to be consistent with the scientific evidence for the timeline of the universe. Thus notions equating to the silliness of Christian young Earth creationism are comparatively recent concepts in Islam. Having an indeterminate and potentially extended timeframe at their philosophical disposal resulted in a number of early Islamic scholars producing texts that anticipated both abiogenesis and modern evolutionary theory. The prolific Arabic author Al-Jahiz (c. 776-869), for example, in his lavishly illustrated seven-volume 'Kitab al-Hayawan' ('Book of Animals') suggested a form of 'Lamarckian' inheritance in which environmental factors caused a 'struggle for existence' resulting in the survival of stronger bloodlines by the transmission of inherited characteristics (see e.g., Shah, unpublished manuscript; Stott, 2012)

This has provided fertile ground for yet another Christian fundamentalist (and Islamic) Darwin myth. We now have him learning Arabic from the Cambridge University linguist Samuel Lee (1783-1852), reading Al-Jahiz in the original Arabic (yet to be translated into English) and then deliberately plagiarising his ideas. Unfortunately for the purveyors of this assertion, Darwin knew no Arabic at all and, in any case, he records meeting Lee on one occasion only, for the duration of a dinner party only. Wilson (2017) makes a particularly strong charge of plagiarism, referring to Darwin's:

".....inability to come clean about.....his debts to previous scientists" due to his "*driving ambition to become the English Humboldt*" and a "*towering ambition.....to be a universal genius*".

But this argument is easily refuted. First, as the historian of biology Peter Bowler (2003) reminds us:

*"Such efforts to denigrate Darwin misunderstand the whole point of the history of science.....Simple priority is not enough to earn a thinker a place in the history of science: one has to develop the idea and convince others of its value to make a real contribution. Darwin's notebooks [available since 1967 in their entirety, despite the erroneous claim made by Wilson that some remain missing] confirm that he drew no inspiration from.....any of the alleged precursors."*

Bowler is correct on this important point; scientific discoveries as comprehensive as biological evolution have never derived solely from the ideas of a single individual; for science stands on the shoulders of giants. Second, in the third edition of 'Origin of the Species' Darwin added 'An Historical Sketch of the Progress of Opinion on the Origin of Species' in which he lists thirty people who had conveyed similar notions of evolution before him and who he acknowledged had been of influence. In the fourth edition he added eight more.

By way of an example of Wilson's historical inaccuracy we need look no further than his claim that Darwin entirely ignored the prior work of Edward Blyth. Considered an expert on both the bird species of India (with several species named after him) and artificial breeding techniques of farm animals, Blyth had published an article in 1835 briefly outlining a proposal as to why some species had become extinct and others flourished. A number of fundamentalist Christian institutions, such as 'Answers in Genesis' agree with Wilson that Darwin deliberately plagiarised Blyth. Yet, contrary to these allegations, we know that in February 1855 Darwin initiated contact with Blyth by writing to him and between then and 1869 the two men exchanged letters on no less than 57 occasions. In none of these correspondences does Blyth accuse Darwin of plagiarising his ideas, nor even discuss the matter. Indeed, their mutual respect is obvious and Darwin referred to Blyth in the very first chapter of 'Origin of Species' as:

*"Mr Blyth, whose opinion, from his large and varied stores of knowledge, I should value more than that of almost anyone."*

Furthermore, the reference section of Darwin's book 'Variation of Animals and Plants Under Domestication' (1868) shows that Blyth is, by far, the most cited author. To compound Wilson's inaccuracy, Blyth was initially an old-earth creationist. In 1837 he had written of:

*".....an eternal and ever-glorious Being which willed matter into existence [with humans as] the last act of creation upon this world."*

Twenty years later, it is clear from their correspondence that the primary influence was from Darwin to Blyth. In a letter dated February 19th 1867, for example, Blyth relates to Darwin his hypothesis that humans had descended from primates related to gibbons. But more importantly than shoddy historical research and vested interests in demonising Darwin, surely the claim of plagiarism (regardless of the alleged progenitor) acts to dispel the credibility of the Darwin-Hitler link? For, if Darwin's scientific findings weren't actually his, what would be the point in finding fault with Darwin the man? Surely, none of Darwin's personal faults can be attached to his findings (and their alleged ramifications) if they weren't even his findings in the first place?

The concept of a separate creation for each of the human races was, as Gobineau continually affirms, a distinctly Christian notion, although to be fair the majority of Christians did not adhere to that belief until the African slave trade became established and needed to be defended on moral grounds. While the Qur'an posits a sharp distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims, teaching, for example, that Allah loves all true believers and comparing unbelievers to the lowest of animals for whom just about every type of sanction is permissible, there is no similar delineation made on the basis of a biological concept of 'race' anywhere in Islamic teachings. In contrast to the Nazis the Jews are generally only considered lower beings on the basis of their (lack of) faith, not their 'race'. This Islamic 'colour-blindness' was certainly recognised in the mid-19th century. For example, a Dr. Browning (a member of the London Abolition Convention) recounting his experiences of travelling in Islamic countries in the 'Pennsylvania Freeman' of August 6th, 1840 noted that:

*"There was one circumstance connected with the East that was peculiarly interesting, and that was, that there they knew of no distinction of color; they had no nobility of skin. White men, of the highest rank, married black women, and black men frequently occupied the highest social and official situations."*

Commenting on Browning's observations, Josiah Priest (1843) was, of course, in no doubt this was an abomination:



*"Oh, how happy a thing it would be, in the estimation of this man, would the Americans only pattern after the Mahometan, in this thing, and thus confound the two colors, black and white, and sin against God."*

So, despite Gobineau having ready access to contrary views from both another religion and from scientific investigation, he seemed unwilling to modify his view that the 'races' were created separately and that the Biblical Adam was the progenitor of only the Aryan race. Hitler's attitude was no different, by allowing himself to be guided by Gobineau rather than Darwin, he was effectively opting for a racial view of humanity based on religious faith and romantic ideals rather than scientific evidence. Accordingly, in 'Rassenpolitik' (a government published photobook issued in 1942 credited to Heinrich Himmler, and which attempted to explain Nazi racial policies in a 'scientific' way to the German people), no mention is made of 'Darwin', 'Darwinism' or of 'natural selection'. There is mention, however, of Gobineau and of Gregor Mendel and of course some typical Nazi un-Darwinian pseudoscientific nonsense. Some extracts:

*"Gobineau recognized with sure perceptiveness the danger of race mixing.....We owe to these Nordic scientists this revolutionary knowledge: Humanity is not equal.....Racial differences are physical, spiritual, and intellectual.....Gregor Mendel was the first to discover the laws of genetics.....Genetics tells us that characteristics are passed unaltered from generation to generation, and that spiritual and other characteristics are inherited along with physical ones"*

Similar pseudoscientific gabble can be found in Brennecke's 'The Nazi Primer' colloqually known as the 'Hitler Youth Manual' which also purports to explain Nazi policy in scientific terms, this time to teenagers. This book is repeatedly claimed to provide evidence that the Nazi Party's ideology was based on Darwinian principles. Nothing could be further from the truth. Once again, the terms 'Darwinist', 'Darwinian', 'Darwinism' and the actual term 'natural selection' occur nowhere. Darwin himself is mentioned once – in a single sentence in Chapter 3 – the word 'evolution' is similarly mentioned only once – in that very same sentence. This is the context:

*".....types today have developed gradually out of the older forms. This assumption is in fact generally accepted today after experiments have demonstrated that race and consequently species transformation occur on the earth. The study, which has to do with this question, is called the study of evolution. Closely associated with it is the name of the Englishman Charles Darwin (1809-1882)."*

And that's it. That's the totality of the mention of the man claimed to have provided the scientific basis for Nazi racial policy. Simply that Darwin is "*closely associated*" with the concept of biological evolution. There is far more mention of Gregor Mendel, including a brief biography and a surprisingly accurate, lengthy discussion of Mendelian heritability. Any objective reader would surely conclude that the Nazis were actually pushing Mendel's scientific findings, not Darwin's. The book even says as much:

*".....we shape the life of our people and our legislation according to the verdicts of the teachings of genetics. Out of the laws of heredity, we have learned something about the nature of races."*

Darwin, of course, knew nothing and wrote nothing about genetics or the laws of heredity. Mendelian biologists enjoyed a much higher status in Germany than Darwinian biologists who, as discussed, found it difficult to get papers published after the Nazi Party science journal published editorials denouncing Darwinian evolution in the strongest of terms. But it gets worse. The manual is replete with religious sentiment and ideology:

*"To man belongs his body, his mind, and his soul. These three form a unity. Therefore, in our consideration of races we will investigate not only physical structure, but also mental and spiritual characteristics.....We have learned already that numerous inheritable factors of a bodily, mental, and spiritual sort are transmitted from man to man.....The inheritableness also extends, however, to the diseases of body and soul."*

It is ironic that the distinctly Nazi notion that the soul can be affected by mechanisms of heredity has been taken up by some Christian (particularly Catholic) theologians in recent years. Faced with the overwhelming scientific evidence for Homo sapiens being a branch of the ape family and not descended from only two individuals, requires that they identify at what point in history the first hominid (or first heterosexual pair of proto-humans, or small group of humans simultaneously) was 'infused' with a soul, which is then inherited by their offspring, eventually becoming fixed in the entire species. Such a process would not be visible from fossil remains, as 'ensouled' hominids would not be expected to differ physically from 'soul-less' hominids. Some suggest that the

presence of a soul can be determined by the ability to reason and to use that reasoning ability to alter the environment, something which can be observed. Unfortunately, this idea also has obvious Nazi-type leanings. If being 'ensouled' is synonymous with possessing the ability to reason, it follows that human beings who cannot adequately reason either do not have souls, or have inferior souls. And, as the Nazis argued, should be treated accordingly.

Back to the 'Hitler Youth Manual': As expected, Hans Günther's definition of race and his classification of six distinct races (1922) is described in detail, but the main thrust of the argument is standard Nazi creationist and anti-evolution polemic; that the races were created separately, are ultimately immutable, and can only be 'diluted', never completely changed:

*".....we believe that races receive their different natures in order to develop them and not to mix them."*

Indeed, much of the discussion of race could have been lifted from a Christian polygenist book from the mid-19th century or a pamphlet aimed at preventing the repeal of US anti-miscegenation laws in the latter half of the 20th century. Further examples from Chapters 2-4:

*"A race is a collection of individuals differentiated from every other group (constituted in such a way) by its unique combination of bodily characteristics and soul attributes and continually reproduces its own kind."*

*"In no instance up to this time have environmental influences brought about the formation of a new race. That is one more reason for our belief: A Jew both in Germany and in all other countries remains only a Jew. He can never change his race by centuries of residence with another people, as he often asserts, but just as often contradicts by his own actions."*

*"the blood stream of a people can be defiled by being mixed with blood that is essentially and racially foreign to it. Our fostering of a race should prevent these pollutions."*

*"Intermarrying with races of foreign blood is as dangerous for the continuance and existence of a people as inheritable internal defects."*

*".....we could make two types of influences responsible for the creation of new races. These have to do with environmental influences or with changes of internal factors. We will see what there is to be said as to both possibilities..... Only that which is of value in the struggle for life remains permanent.....What we need to learn from these experiments is the following: In no instance up to this time have environmental influences brought about the formation of a new race..... All arguments and political demands, which are founded on the belief in the power of environment, are therefore false and weak."*

When the Hitler Youth Manual does appear to discuss natural selection (it devotes a whole two out of 320 pages to a bastardised version of the mechanism) it does so in terms of the dangers it poses to maintaining racial purity. The effects of natural selection are claimed to be almost always deleterious and for that reason, they conclude, they should not be encouraged to spread and attempts should always be made to remove the effects from the gene pool. Note the serious discrepancy in reasoning here between the Hitler Youth Manual and the minutes of the Wansee Conference of 1942. In the former, natural selection is claimed to be detrimental to Nazi aspirations as it would lead to a weakening of a race. In the latter it is claimed to be detrimental to Nazi aspirations as it would lead to a strengthening of a race! Arthur Keith appears to have been correct; Hitler and the Nazi Party did not understand evolutionary theory at all.

Another major intellectual influence on Nazism was Chamberlain (1855–1927). Chamberlain was a British-born author, son of an admiral, and self-described devout Christian who chose to live in Germany for most of his life and whose second wife was Eva von Bülow-Wagner, Franz Liszt's granddaughter and Richard Wagner's step-daughter. He became a German citizen during the First World War and was awarded the Iron Cross by Kaiser Wilhelm II. Hitler became a close friend of Chamberlain in the last few years of his life and visited him, along with Joseph Goebbels, on a number of occasions in the years 1923-1926 at his home at Bayreuth, at the time Hitler was writing 'Mein Kampf'. In 1923 Chamberlain wrote to Hitler giving him his blessings (cited Stackleberg & Winkle, 2002):

*"Most respected and dear Hitler ... That Germany, in the hour of her greatest need, brings forth a Hitler – that is proof of her vitality ... I can now go untroubled to sleep... May God protect you!"*

Chamberlain became a member of the Nazi Party and penned a number of articles for their journals. And despite possessing a BSc degree and having conducted postgraduate experimental work in plant physiology, Chamberlain repeatedly made it clear that he had no time whatsoever for Darwin's evidence and thoughts on evolution. Bear in mind when reading the following quotes that Chamberlain is acknowledged to have been a primary ideological influence on Hitler by a number of creationist authors. In a letter to his future mother-in-law Cosima Wagner, written March 9th 1896 (cited Pretzsch, 1934) he stated:

*".....this hair-raising absurdity poisons not only natural science but the whole of human thought: Darwinism rules everywhere, corrupting history and religion; it leads to social idiocy; it degrades judgment about men and things."*

And from his philosophical work, 'Kant' (1905):

*".....man was said to be descended from the ape; the anatomical impossibility of this is established to-day by a thousand reasons ..."*

Where else have we read such sentences? Their blunt and erroneous nature – they are as wrong then as they are now – is mirrored by any number of creationist authors and websites today. Chamberlain's own seminal book ('Die Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts'; 'The Foundations Of The Nineteenth Century'; decoriously described by Robert Richards (2013) as:

*"a rich farrago of Goethean sentiment, Kantian epistemology, Wagnerian mysticism, and Aryan anti-Semitism"*

was published in 1899, and continued his anti-Darwinian theme along with his own novel ideas on Christianity and no less than 135 pages examining Jewish physiology and character traits. In his introduction, Chamberlain referred to 'Darwinism' as:

*"a manifestly unsound system", an "English sickness" and "a craze". He then goes on to describe it as "the evolution mania and the pseudo-scientific dogmatism of our century", followed by:*

*".....we have seen the idea of evolution develop itself till it spread from biology and geology to all spheres of thought and investigation, and, intoxicated by its success, exercised such a tyranny that any one who did not swear by it was to be looked upon as a simpleton."*

*"Biologists delude themselves with the belief that empirical theories such as those of Darwin are sufficient."*

Slightly more florid in style than something that might be published by the Discovery Institute, perhaps, but the sentiment is near identical. In 'Kant' (1905) he further wrote:

*"the historical sketch with which Darwin prefaced his book is a mere mockery. From the very first sentence Darwin speaks of species as if they were things running about like Tom, Dick and Harry, which any child might see by merely opening its eyes."*

Chamberlain's hatred of evolutionary theory did not stop at criticism of the science, however. Like Bergman, he disparaged Charles Darwin the man at every opportunity, venting his spleen particularly strongly in 'Kant' where he informs us that:

*"Darwin.....did not see clearly, and still less did he think deeply" and jibes "Had Darwin..... been in ever so slight a measure a thinker", and "what a want of reflection disfigures the fundamental thoughts of Darwin and his followers."*

Bergman insists, quite incredibly, in 'Darwinism And The Nazi Race Holocaust' (1999) that Chamberlain was actually pro-Darwin and that Darwin's theory was merely:

*"modified by Chamberlain" and "clearly contributed to the death of over nine million people in concentration camps".*

Once again, I feel can safely leave it up to the reader to make their own mind up about Bergman's honesty in this regard. However, Bergman's cynical and selective use of history is particularly disingenuous when it comes to Chamberlain. Discovery Institute fellow, biochemist Michael Behe, who claims to have identified irreducible complexity in his book 'Darwin's Black Box' (1996), employing the bacterial flagellum as his flagship mechanism, actually owes a great deal to Chamberlain, in

Chapter 6 of 'Kant' (1905) who first suggested that the bacterial flagellum could not have evolved by Darwinian mechanisms because all of its parts would have been needed from the outset. As usual, Bergman is wrong; it wasn't Chamberlain who modified Darwin, it was Behe who modified Chamberlain.

Unsurprisingly for someone who could not accept Darwin's scientific findings, Chamberlain also advanced explicitly racist sentiments. There are significant differences in thinking between Gobineau and Chamberlain in this regard, however. While Gobineau was primarily motivated by romantic and scholarly endeavours, and did his best to place his opinions within a distinctly Christian context, Chamberlain, although also a Christian, was far more overtly political. Chamberlain's view of what comprised the Aryan race was also much wider than that of Gobineau, emphasising a Proto-Indo-European culture linking the northern European Nordics, Celts and Teutons with the southern European Slavs, Greeks, and Latins. He also considered the North African Berber tribes to have originated from Aryan stock. Of course the natural leadership of this racial grouping and of all ethnic groups was considered to be provided only by the Germanic peoples:

*"the less Teutonic a land is, the more uncivilised it is.....the Aryans are pre-eminent among all peoples; for that reason they are by right ... the lords of the world"* (1899).

Further, he championed governance of the Aryan people by a non-democratic, *"thought out by a few and carried out with iron consequence"*, Catholic-based theocracy:

*"the Roman Church is not only a religion but also a secular system of government, and that the Church as representative of God upon earth may eo ipso claim — and always has claimed — absolute power in all things of this world."* (1899).

Unlike Gobineau, Chamberlain held particular disdain for the Jewish people, typically pronouncing (1899) à la Luther that:

*"Their existence is sin, their existence is a crime against the holy laws of life"* and *"all that is derived from the Jewish mind, corrodes and disintegrates what is best in us"* and, apparently unaware of the irony, described Judaism as *"a religion of exclusive self-assertion and fanatical intolerance"*.

As a result of his comprehensive analysis of the Jewish character, he became certain that Jesus could not have been a Jew, but a Galilean of Aryan descent. One peculiar perception he had of Jews was that they were more likely than Christians to become atheist:

*"theists become in the twinkling of an eye atheists, a strikingly common thing in the case of Jews ..."* Of course, this conversion was not so prevalent in Germans as *".....for us (Teutons) God is always in the background"*. (1899).

Hitler, with his characteristic hatred of both atheists and Jews, picked up on Chamberlain's idiosyncratic Jewish-atheist link and later included it as a criticism of the Jews in 'Mein Kampf'. He also accepted Chamberlain's view that Jesus was not a Jew.

Hitler would have had more than the historical views of Luther or the contemporary views of Chamberlain to influence him, however, as virulent anti-semitic and anti-evolution feelings were not confined to Germany. They were particularly prominent in the United States among Baptist preachers. Perhaps the best known was the previously mentioned William Bell Riley, founder of the World Christian Fundamentals Association. He was also the founder and long-time director of the Northwestern Bible School in 1902 (shut in 1966 and reopened in 1972 as Northwestern College) which at the time of his death in 1947, aged 86 years, was the second largest Bible college in the world. Riley was a staunch advocate of the inherent and scriptural superiority of the white race (contributing numerous articles, along with George M. Price, to the openly racist magazine 'Defender') a rabid anti-Semite and a hater of evolutionary theory. He regularly praised Hitler throughout the 1930s on his weekly radio show broadcast throughout the United States, sharing such gems as:

*"There is no question in my mind that Hitler is an instrument of God with help from on high."*

Thereby mirroring the opinions of his Christian comrades across the pond, such as Deissmann, Kittel, Hirsch and Althaus. Similarly, Riley asserted that Hitler had *"snatched Germany from the very jaws of atheistic Communism"* and supported his efforts to *"foil the nefarious Jewish plot"* (cited FitzGerald, 2017). Other influential fundamentalist Christian organisations, such as

the Moody Bible Institute held similar opinions. Their popular magazine 'Moody Monthly' published a large number of readers letters praising Hitler for both his Christian moral values and sound political management. The following example comes from October 1935:

*"To the Editor:*

*After much prayer to our Saviour, I send you this word. I think you very much for your article in June about our brethren in Germany. God bless you that you give justice to Adolf Hitler, that you do not misjudge him. He tries as best he knows how to help Germany. You know that he was a Roman Catholic and he still knows little about the Bible. But he studies the New Testament, and we who know Christ as God and Saviour who died for our sins on the cross, love him, and we have to pray for him and not to believe everything his enemies speak about him. I am a German. Two years ago I was on a visit in Germany for three months. All my relatives live in Germany. They are Christians that believe in the shed blood of Christ for our sins. They praise Hitler. They have full freedom to preach Christ crucified for our sins. We believe that Christ will come soon and that He will be merciful to Hitler too. Hitler's father was a drinker, but Adolf lives with his mother and is a very good son. I am an old woman and pray for the coming of the Lord.*

*Sincerely yours,*

*Hedwig Nabholz"*

The author of this letter was apparently unaware that Hitler's mother had died 28 years earlier. Another popular fundamentalist Christian periodical, 'King's Business' regularly published editorials and articles extolling the Christian virtues of Hitler, such as these excerpts from March 1934:

*"Hitlerism is preferable to atheistic Sovietism.....the Bolshevik Jew is of atheistic Jewry – not to Orthodox Jewry. The Bolshevik Jew, hater of all that is called God, naturally is a sworn enemy of his own believing brethren."*

*"Hitler is to be commended for preventing an orgy of bloodshed and destruction, the object of which would have been the annihilation of the people of God in that land."*

The second extracted quote is certainly premature in its praise. By the 1930s several US states had small towns, often with a high percentage of inhabitants with German ancestry, that made no attempt to disguise their leanings toward Nazism. Perhaps the best example is that of Yaphank in Suffolk County, approximately 100 kilometres from New York City. Here, main streets were renamed after Hitler and Goebbels and numerous houses proudly flew swastikas on their front lawns. Until 1941 the town was also home to Camp Siegfried, modelled on similar ventures organised by Hitler Youth, where Aryan youth, strictly Christian youth only, naturally, were domiciled and schooled in the moral and political virtues of Nazism.

Riley, and many of those like-minded, maintained their public admiration for Hitler until the United States government made it plain they were on the side of the allies. Realising that he would be perceived as unpatriotic, and lose his legal right to show allegiance to Hitler, as well as having to deal with a manifesto against anti-Semitism signed by 50 fundamentalist pastors, Riley in 1940 did an abrupt about-turn and started referring to the Nazis as "*pagans*" and "*evolutionists*". He then proceeded in 1941 to publish his pamphlet 'Hitlerism: Or the Philosophy of Evolution in Action' in which he referred to Hitler a "*Beast-Man*" though, tellingly, declining to make any comment at all regarding Hitler's treatment of the Jews (see Riley, 1942).

In 1934 in the basement of his church Riley published and widely distributed 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion' (known in Germany as the 'Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion') a fraudulent, anonymously authored pamphlet first published in the Russian anti-Semitic magazine 'Znamyá' between August 26th and September 7th 1903. It purported to have uncovered the Jewish plan for the global economic domination and slavery of all non-Jewish peoples. It was part-plagiarised from a French satirical work entitled 'Dialogue aux Enfers Machiavelli et Montesquieu' ('A Conversation in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu'; 1864) by the journalist Maurice Joly, intended as a savage critique of Napoleon III. Protocol 2:3 of the Protocols states:

*"Do not suppose for a moment that these statements are empty words: think carefully of the successes we arranged for Darwinism, Marxism, Nietzsche-ism. To us Jews, at any rate, it should be plain to see what a disintegrating importance these directives have had upon the minds of the Goyim [non-Jew]"*

The document was already widely available in Europe in the early 20th century (and has become popular again in some Islamic

countries such as Egypt). Hitler was certainly taken in. In Chapter 10 of the first volume of 'Mein Kampf' he labels the work as "authentic" (as, initially, did the 'London Times' in May, 1920) and goes on:

*"To what an extent the whole existence of this people is based on a continuous lie is shown by the Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion.....with positively terrifying certainty they reveal the nature and activity of the Jewish people and expose their inner contexts as well as their ultimate final aims."*

The Italian philosopher Julius Evola (1898-1974) had provided a foreword to the 1938 edition in Italy where he described the Protocols as a "spiritual tonic", even though it was widely known that he was dubious as to the authenticity of the document. Like Riley, Evola was pro-European, an anti-Semite and determinedly anti-Darwinian. His influential 1941 book 'Sintesi di Dottrina della Razza' ('A Synthesis of the Doctrine of Race'; re-published in Germany in 1943 after he fled there following the allied invasion of Italy), despite offering a far more esoteric version of racial theory than the Nazi pseudoscientific Christian model, was nevertheless considered recommended reading for Nazi intellectuals partly due to Evola's praise for the spiritual ideals of Himmler (who he considered a personal friend) and the SS (he considered the moral basis for the SS and the Jesuits to be near identical), but also because of his consistent criticism of Darwinian theory and 'biological materialism' generally, as well as political democracy. In his 1958 book 'Metaphysics of Sex' he further expounded his philosophy of 'de-evolutionary spiritual racism':

*"Our starting point will be not the modern theory of evolution but the traditional doctrine of involution. We do not believe the man is derived from the ape by evolution. We believe that the ape is derived from man by involution.....We concur with the various researchers.....who have rebelled against the evolutionary dogma."*

The Protocols pamphlet had previously been published more than ten years earlier than Riley's edition in the United States by car-maker Henry Ford through his Dearborn Publishing Company, which was forced to cease trading due to the large number of lawsuits they attracted due to anti-Semitic editorials and articles which libelled several prominent Jewish-Americans. In 1927 Henry Ford was forced to issue a public apology for publishing the *Protocols*, admitting that they are "gross forgeries." James Gray, then editor of *Moody Monthly*, subsequently wrote an editorial claiming that Ford's apology was evidence itself of the hold the Jews had over the legal system. Riley, too, would have been perfectly aware of its fraudulent nature. In 1935 the 'Federation of Jewish Communities in Switzerland' sued a pro-Nazi group who were also publishing the pamphlet. During the trial in Bern several Russian witnesses testified that the document was fake. This was reported in newspapers throughout the world.

Nevertheless, after Riley did cease publication three years later, the Protocols were republished by the Catholic priest Charles Coughlin, in his newspaper 'Social Justice'. To do this, he received financial help from Henry Ford (which is doubly ironic, as Ford also took a dislike to Catholics, referring to them as "slaves of Jews" after a Catholic lawyer had represented a Jewish businessman suing Ford for libel) and, it has been claimed, from Nazi Germany also. This is entirely feasible. Coughlin was an influential member of the pro-Nazi Christian Front. By far the largest chapter of the Christian Front was in Boston, led by Francis Moran. As in Germany, the Christian Front organised boycotts of Jewish businesses and were also responsible for numerous serious assaults on Jewish citizens, including children. Moran was a personal friend of the German Consul-General in Boston, Herbert Scholz, an SS officer and confidante of Heinrich Himmler. The transcript of the Nuremberg War Trials has Scholz speaking about his close relationship with Moran and how the SS had funded the Christian Front's office in the expensive Copley Square Hotel until 1940 when the FBI closed down the Christian Front as a terrorist organisation.

Like Riley, Coughlin had a nationwide radio show, with an audience estimated at up to 30 million, in which he regularly spewed forth his pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic venom. Despite having been ordered by the Vatican two years previously to tone down his anti-Semitism Coughlin gave a speech in New York in 1938 when, while giving a Nazi salute, he exclaimed:

*"When we get through with the Jews in America, they'll think the treatment they received in Germany was nothing."* (cited Warren, 1996)

Coughlin's claim were no different to those of Chamberlain and Hitler; Marxist atheism was a Jewish plot, this time aimed not at Germany, but against the United States. An investigation by the Department of Justice into the activity of the priest found:

*"...there is at least one occasion upon which 'Social Justice' reprinted in almost identical form a speech delivered by Joseph Goebbels. The 'Social Justice' article gave no credit to Goebbels and did not in any way indicate that it was a reprint of Goebbel's speech."* (cited Warren, 1996)

The popularity and influence of anti-Jewish rhetoric in the United States at this time was remarkable. When Ford first gained control of the medium-sized weekly newspaper, the Dearborn Independent in 1919, it was distributed only in the Dearborn, Michigan area and had a circulation of 72,000. After the first anti-Semitic article appeared, however, circulation steadily rose, reaching ten-fold within five years, eventually becoming by 1925, the newspaper with the second-largest circulation in the United States after the New York Daily News, which only surpassed it by 50,000 copies. It was distributed primarily through Ford car dealerships and churches, as well as colleges and schools, often given away.

On March 8th 1923, The Chicago Tribune published an interview with Hitler. When asked about the possibility that Henry Ford might run for President, Hitler responded:

*"I wish I could send some of my shock troops to Chicago and other big American cities to help in the elections. We look on Heinrich Ford as the leader of the growing fascist movement in America. We admire particularly his anti-Jewish policy which is the Bavarian fascist platform. We have just had his anti-Jewish articles translated and published. The book is being circulated to millions throughout Germany".*

Hitler was referring to Ford's compilation book, 'The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem' which comprised 91 anti-Semitic articles published by the Dearborn Independent. It was then rebadged as 'The Eternal Jew' in Germany where it sold very well. There were two German publishers, one in Berlin and the other in Leipzig. The Leipzig company, Theodor Fritsch, alone reported that between 1920-22 five re-printings were made and by 1938 they had released 29 editions. The 1923 Chicago Tribune interview with Hitler went on to mention that their reporters could not find a single bookshop in Southern Germany that did not stock Ford's book. Four years later Samuel Untermyer, President of The Non-Sectarian Anti-Nazi League, had this to say in the New York Times (25 July 1927):

*"Wherever I went on my recent world tour, even into the most remote corners of the earth, in every county, city, and hamlet, the Ford cars were to be found. Wherever there was a Ford car there was a Ford agency not far away, and wherever there was a Ford agency these vile, libelous books in the language of that country were to be found.... These articles are so fantastic and so naive in their incredible fantasy, they read like the work of a lunatic and but for the authority of the Ford name, they would have never seen the light of day and would have been quite harmless if they had. With that name, they spread like wildfire and became the bible of every anti-Semite."*

Not surprisingly, Hitler praised the work of Henry Ford throughout his political career. The New York Times reported on 3rd December 1922 that in Hitler's office in Munich:

*"The wall beside his desk is decorated with a large picture of Henry Ford. In the antechamber; there is a large table covered with books, nearly all of which are a translation of a book written and published by Henry Ford."*

He is the only American to get a mention in 'Mein Kampf' (a single sentence in the first edition only, however) and striking similarities can be observed between some of the passages in that book and 'The Eternal Jew'. In July 1938 Ford was awarded the 'German Eagle Order'. This award, instituted by Hitler himself, was given to non-Germans who had benefitted German society in some way. The benefit was not simply one of support and incentive; by 1942 about a third of all the trucks in the German armed forces had been built by Ford's factories in Germany (Solomon, 2010). Ford's influence was felt way beyond Hitler, however. According to French historian Leon Poliakov (in 'The History of Anti-Semitism Vol. IV: Suicidal Europe'; 1977) Himmler's personal masseur Felix Kersten told him that Himmler's dislike of the Jewish people came only after reading 'The Eternal Jew'. Similarly, the leader of the Hitler Youth Movement, Baldur von Schirach, stated at the International War Tribunal in 1945 that Ford's book had been the primary reason he had joined the Nazi Party at the age of seventeen, adding:

*"You have no idea what a great influence this book had on the thinking of German youth. The younger generation looked with envy to the symbols of success and prosperity like Henry Ford, and if he said the Jews were to blame, we naturally believed him."*

The respect was certainly not one-sided. Ford's 'right-hand man', Ernest Liebold, who acted as general manager of Dearborn Publishing, placed an order for a commemorative box of 100 swastika tie-pins, to be given as gifts for Ford's like-minded business associates. While Dearborn publications and the views of Ford himself were certainly denounced by 'liberal' church pulpits on the

east coast of the United States, the more conservative, fundamentalist-style churches in the south and mid-west proved far more supportive. Even the normally circumspect Christian Science Monitor published an unusually lengthy editorial entitled 'The Jewish Peril' on June 19th 1920, giving credence to Ford's warnings:

".....it would be a tremendous mistake to conclude that the Jewish peril, given another name and atmosphere, does not exist. It might, indeed, be renamed, out of one of the grandest of the books of the Old Testament, 'the terror by night,' for it is, essentially, the Psalmist's concept of the forces of mental evil.....In other words, that a secret international political organization exists, working unremittingly by means of its Bureau of Psychology, though the world which should be awake to it is entirely asleep to it."

'The International Jew' remains in publication in the USA, available from the website of the Christian organisation Promise Ministries, where it is described as a "*monumental work*".

The 'Protocols of Zion' appealed to Riley, not only because they provided him with anti-Semitic ammunition but also because he abhorred anything to do with Darwin and evolution, especially when it was taught in schools. He often claimed, in similar manner to the Nazi botanist Ernst Bergdolt, that evolution was no less than "*an international Jewish-Bolshevik-Darwinist conspiracy*". In 1923 he helped set up the Anti-Evolution League of Minnesota which grew within a year to be the Anti-Evolution League of America. The organisation was anti-evolution to what bordered on a perverse level. One of his closest colleagues, Thomas Theodore Martin, author 'Hell and the High Schools' (1923) which included this example of Christian moral sensibilities:

"*The German soldiers who killed Belgian and French children with poisoned candy were angels compared to the teachers and textbook writers who corrupted the souls of children and thereby sentenced them to eternal death.*"

This, of course, was the very same incident applauded by the later to be Hitler-loving Christian theologian Gustav Adolf Deissmann. However, while Deissmann had his 'might is right' moral stance to fall back on, one wonders about Martin's conception of God; the psychopath who sends people to eternal death, simply because they had been taught a particular biological theory at school? Martin's deranged sense of morality is made worse by the fact that he didn't understand evolutionary theory, and clearly mistook Darwin's findings for Lamarckian notions (capitalised words are in the original):

"*Professor August Weisman of the University of Freiburg "demonstrated beyond all question" THAT ACQUIRED CHARACTERISTICS BY A PARENT CANNOT BE TRANSMITTED TO THE OFFSPRING. Prof. William Bateson of England, the greatest living Biologist, in his address before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Toronto, Canada, December, 1921, admitted and stated it positively, THAT ACQUIRED CHARACTERISTICS CANNOT BE INHERITED. Elsewhere he said, "AN ORGANISM CANNOT PASS ON TO ITS OFFSPRING A FACTOR WHICH IT DID NOT ITSELF RECEIVE IN FERTILIZATION."* Professor S. C. Schmucker, in "*The Meaning of Evolution,*" p. 261, says: "*The blight of the fact that acquired characteristics cannot be transmitted, meets us here.*" *He hits the nail on the head -- "the blight of the fact"; for it certainly blights Evolution -- how can there be evolution from lower to higher species if there is no transmitting acquired characteristics? "How wide must a chasm be before it becomes visible to an evolutionist?"* (1923)

Basic misunderstandings of evolutionary theory by fundamentalist Christians, mistaking the ideas of Lamarck and Darwin, are far from historical, however. Wilson (2017) makes the same error, mocking Darwin for assuming that today's long-necked giraffes resulted from short-necked ancestors "*panting to reach those leaves, but without success*".

It is obvious why people like Riley and Martin disliked evolution. If all the 'races' shared common ancestry, as Darwin suggested, then state laws promoting racial barriers, which they avidly supported, could be perceived as arbitrary and so difficult to justify on the basis of Biblical knowledge and authority. Naturally, then, the good people of the Anti-Evolution League accepted no "*degenerates*" among their membership. This included "*persons of African origin*" (the irony burning particularly brightly here, given what they were protesting against), as well as the more usual "*drunkards and fornicators*". Of course, along with all their fundamentalist brethren, Riley and Martin believed in the literal truth of Genesis 1:27:

"*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*"

And, of course, they were in no doubt as to what God's image entails and it certainly would not be the image of any "*degenerate*",



such as "*persons of African origin*". The modern day 'Institute for Creation Research' clearly appreciate what Riley and Martin meant. In their article 'Illustrations of Ancient Humans Skew Facts' (2009) author Brian Thomas discusses the work of paleoartist Viktor Deak who, using computer modelling, had created 3D virtual models faces from skeletal structures. Thomas takes exception to Deak's work, because he had:

*".....depicted mankind as having emerged, Darwinian style, from a hairy, ape-like ancestor.....The clear message is conveyed, without a spoken word, that humans evolved from dark skinned, wide-nosed creatures.....if Deak had depicted these creatures with light skin, normal lips.....they would have been just as valid, scientifically. But that wouldn't fit with the evolutionary story."*

In other words, depicting proto-humans as being '*dark, skinned*', '*wide nosed creatures*', without '*normal lips*', must be wrong because it clashes with the belief that God created man in his own image and that image would certainly not have these three characteristics! It looks like Thomas would have no difficulty getting along with Riley and Martin. To confirm that view, Thomas published another article the following year, '*Canadian Philosopher Insists 'We Are All African!'*'. He first outlines what it is he is criticising :

*"Philosopher and secular humanist Christopher DiCarlo claims that if humans trace their lineages far back enough in time, they will all have an African origin.....DiCarlo figured that if no group has any special status, all humans can embrace their evolutionary origins and be freed of the "hatred, violence and bloodshed."*

This is a problem for Thomas because:

*"Even if scientific studies show that all people are biologically the same, this does not logically justify his "no special status" claim. God can choose certain people, and that makes them special - unless it is first assumed that there is no God."*

So let's recap here. According to Thomas, if you don't believe in God then you have to accept that if "*all people are biologically the same*" then no group deserves "*special status*". This is a bad thing. But, if you do believe in God, then "*even if scientific studies show that all people are biologically the same*" some groups of people can still be "*special*" if God has chosen them. This is a good thing. Thomas then digs himself into an even deeper hole. Further discussing the "*evolutionary ancestor-descendant relationship*" he opines:

*"They are more accurately interpreted as varieties of mankind who all lived at the same time."*

Bearing in mind that Darwin's conclusion was that:

*"the races ought not to be ranked as species.....they graduate into each other, and that it is hardly possible to discover clear distinctive characters between them"*

does Thomas' modern day creationist view sound un-Darwinian? Yes, it surely does. Does it sound more like something Hitler might have written? Decidedly so.

One of the first campaigns fought by the Anti-Evolution League of America culminated in the 1925 Tennessee anti-evolution law known as the 'Butler Act', which banned teachers in state schools from denying the Biblical account of human origins. They made no secret in their pamphlets as to why they gave their support. Apart from the fact that evolution questioned the Biblical creation, they also feared that evolutionary theory promoted the notion that the black and white races were equal and belonged to the same species. Indeed, the standard textbook used in Tennessee high schools at that time was George Hunter's 'A Civic Biology' which explicitly listed five 'races' or 'subspecies' in ascending order according to civilisation; 'Caucasians' at the pinnacle, 'Mongolian' in second place, 'American Indian' in third place, 'Malay' in fourth place and 'Negro' in fifth place. It also alluded to polygenism and pseudoscience by portraying the notion that interbreeding within a species was genetically detrimental. That emotionally-laden racism was the primary reason for purveying such nonsense appears to have been well understood in a scathing editorial 'If Monkey's Could Speak' in the 'Chicago Defender', May 23rd 1925 (published during the trial):

*"Anything which conflicts with the South's idea of her own importance, anything which tends to break down her doctrine of white superiority, she fights. If truths are introduced and these truths do not conform to what southern grandfathers believed,*

*then it must be suppressed.....The Tennessee legislators who passed a law making it a crime to teach Darwinism in that state probably have never read the text themselves and all they know about the subject is that the entire human race is supposed to have started from a common origin. Therein lies their difficulty. Admit that premise and they will have to admit that there is no fundamental difference between themselves and the race they pretend to despise."*

Yet again, old habits die hard and as recently as 2005 the influential creationist website 'Answers in Genesis' exhibited similar views to those of Tennessee legislators 80 years earlier. In an article entitled 'A Wakeup Call to Christians' authored by Joshua Gilbert, he pointed out the "*seriousness of the threat of the theory of Evolution to the Christian Faith*", lamenting the changes that had occurred in the South African education system as the result of the dismantling of the apartheid system. Under apartheid, all state schools followed the Christian National Education curriculum, in which, like Tennessee, teaching of the theory of evolution pertaining to hominids was banned because it directly undermined the Biblical notion that the 'races' were separate creations arranged in a divine hierarchy. The ban was rescinded in 1994. As an example of the dangers of "*evolutionary indoctrination*" Gilbert cites and links to a paper published in the South African Archaeological Bulletin (Esterhuysen & Smith, 1998) which states:

*"Christian National Policy stated, amongst other things, that white children should "receive a separate education from black children to prepare them for their respective superior and inferior positions in South African social and economic life, and all education should be based on Christian National principles.....Pupils were indoctrinated by the CN [Christian National] world-view through the formal curriculum, which omitted "anti-biblical" concepts such as evolution, made Bible education compulsory and presented a version of history that..."omitted, distorted or vilified the role of blacks, 'coloureds' and Asians in the country's past."*

Not surprisingly, both the original article and the link to the paper cited have since been removed from the Answers in Genesis website though not, of course, from internet archiving sites.

A further difference between Gobineau and Chamberlain concerned their view of the current status of the Aryan race. To Gobineau, although the Aryan race was superior in most aspects of human endeavour, other races might have minor superiorities which could be capitalised on by a small influx of blood from other races. However he warned that too much race mixing would result in the dilution in purity of the Aryan race with the ultimate destruction of civilisation. Chamberlain, on the other hand, perceived the Aryan race as enjoying a high level of purity and the object should be to preserve this purity at all costs. Thus Hitler's attitudes toward other races, and particularly to the Jewish people, as well as his ideas of racial purity appear to have been influenced far more by the anti-Semitic and Darwin-phobic Chamberlain than by the Darwin-ignoring Gobineau. Arguably, Hitler also portrayed far more in common with Americans like Ford, Coughlin, Riley and Martin than even Germans such as Fischer, Lenz and Weinart.

'The Foundations Of The Nineteenth Century' was distributed to all German libraries on the instructions of Kaiser Wilhelm II and included in the German school curriculum. It was later considered recommended reading by all Nazi Party members simply because Hitler was so impressed by it. Not surprisingly, given this level of recommendation, it sold extremely well; surpassing 60,000 copies within 10 years, 100,000 copies by 1914 and 24 editions and more than 250,000 copies sold by 1938. On September 9th, 1925 the official Nazi Party newspaper dedicated five columns to Chamberlain to honour his 70th birthday, describing his book as the "*Gospel of the Nazi movement*".

A third influence on the Hitlerian worldview, albeit with a much more chequered history, is that of Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919). Haeckel was a polymath with particular expertise in biology and zoology, rising to Professor of Comparative Anatomy at the University of Jena where he spent 47 years. Impressed with Darwin's work at an early stage he wrote, rather sycophantically, to Darwin in July 1864:

*"Of all the books I have ever read, not a single one has come even close to making such an overpowering and lasting impression on me as your theory of the evolution of species .....Since then your theory — I can say without exaggerating — has occupied my mind every day."*

Haeckel's own book 'Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte' or 'The History of Creation', first published in 1868, was marketed in Germany as an attempt to explain Darwin's ideas to the general public. It was not an accurate description of its content, nor of Haeckel's career. Although he is often painted as the man who did more than anyone else to promote the work of Charles Darwin in

Germany, Haeckel's views on biology in general and on human origins in particular can be considered no more than semi-Darwinian. Although certainly an enthusiastic proponent of the general concept of evolution, in no sense can he be realistically labelled a 'Darwinian' as, crucially, he did not believe that natural selection was the method by which evolution progressed. He was also a polygenist.

Despite these most basic scientific disagreements between Haeckel and Darwin there is no shortage of Christian fundamentalist authors who try to convince their readers that the two men were not only in complete agreement, but in cahoots. In order to do so they often invent their own definitions of what a 'Darwinist' is (or was), which are invariably far broader than would be accepted by mainstream biologists and historians. For instance, in their paper 'Haeckel: Legacy of Fraud to Popularise Evolution', published in the 'Journal of Creation' (where else?), Finnish authors Ojala and Leisol refer to Haeckel as "*a Darwinian demagogue*". This is nowhere near being true. By his own admission, Haeckel's view of evolution was far more Lamarckian than Darwinian. To be considered a Darwinian in the first half of the 20th century required, at a minimum, acceptance of three of Darwin's claims re humanity. First, that *Homo sapiens* comprised a single species. Second, that *Homo sapiens* were a branch of the primate family and had evolved from a common ancestor shared with modern non-human primates. Third, that the evolution of *Homo sapiens* had been mediated by natural selection. Haeckel accepted the first claim in part only (while Hitler accepted neither of the first two claims and made no comment at all on the third). Indeed, according to George Uschmann (1979; then director of the Ernst Haeckel House), when Thomas Huxley edited the English translation of Haeckel's earlier book 'Generelle Morphologie' he removed, at Darwin's request (being ever the gentleman; and with Haeckel's agreement), large segments of Haeckel's grossly acidic views on others who had contributed to the field and with whom he disagreed. In the end, the book was reduced to less than half its size and was never published in that form. The historian of science, Lynn Nyhart (1994) has also discussed the distinct differences in direction that Darwin's and Haeckel's work took in the decades following publication of 'Origin of Species'. Thus, as Gasman (1971) reminds us:

*"Haeckel's Darwinism is a vast transformation of what Darwin wrote and stood for."*

Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) was the French naturalist credited as the first to suggest explicitly that human beings had evolved from the ape lineage. His book 'Philosophie Zoologique' published in 1809 contains the following paragraph:

*"Certainly, if some race of apes, especially the most perfect among them, lost, by necessity of circumstances, or some other cause, the habit of climbing trees and grasping branches with the feet.....and if the individuals of that race, over generations, were forced to use their feet only for walking and ceased to use their hands as feet, doubtless ... these apes would be transformed into two-handed beings and ... their feet would no longer serve any purpose other than to walk".*

This passage demonstrates key differences between the views of Lamarck and Darwin. Lamarck is suggesting that speciation was caused by phenotypic changes occurring during an organism's lifetime due to use and/or disuse, then being passed on to future generations (thus the inheritance of 'acquired characteristics'; it was this hypothesis that T.T. Martin, founder of the Anti-Evolution League of America erroneously took Darwinian evolution to be). Darwin, on the other hand, hypothesised something very different; that advantageous traits would appear more often in future generations simply because the individual organisms having that advantageous trait would be more likely to reproduce (i.e., 'naturally selected characteristics'). Strictly speaking, however, no selection actually takes place, and it is actually disadvantageous traits being removed from the gene pool that shapes subsequent generations. Although Darwin shows great respect for Lamarck in his publications, it is clear from his private correspondence that an early repudiation of his views was the case. This from a letter he wrote to the English botanist Joseph Dalton Hooker on January 11th, 1844:

*"Heaven forfend me from Lamarck nonsense of a "tendency to progression" "adaptations from the slow willing of animals" &c,—but the conclusions I am led to are not widely different from his."*

Darwin disagreed particularly with Lamarck's further notion of directed variation, or an underlying teleological process to evolution which would always flow in the same direction, and which had enabled a selected 'lower' form of life to eventually become a 'higher' form of life (humans being, of course, the highest). It was not that Darwin outright rejected the notion of evolutionary progress, at least in his early work. As he wrote in the penultimate paragraph of 'Origin of the Species':

*".....as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to*

*progress towards perfection*”

This is highly unusual wording for Darwin as his main premise for direction in natural selection was that it tends toward fecundity, nothing more. Darwin was, of course, a theist when he wrote ‘Origin of the Species’ and it likely that this passage might simply reflect his (perhaps remnant) beliefs. He had, however, written earlier in the text:

*“It is so easy to hide our ignorance under such expressions as "plan of creation," "unity of design," etc., and to think that we give an explanation when we only restate a fact”.*

Nevertheless, this sole suggestion of teleology in Darwin's writing was naturally picked up by Chamberlain (1905) in one of the very few times he finds himself able to mention the name without providing an accompanying polemic:

*“Darwin specially recommends his theory for our acceptance in that it also promises to mankind that all corporal and mental endowments will tend to progress in the direction towards perfection”.*

Unlike Darwin, who conducted extensive fieldwork, Lamarck’s ideas, as the title of his work suggests, were largely philosophical and he presented far less original data. In essence, Lamarck took a theological approach. He concluded that progress had occurred in one deity-favoured human lineage while Haeckel suggested very few lineages. Bearing in mind that both Lamarck and Haeckel perceived the human ‘races’ as separate lineages it was not a huge leap, then, to view the ‘lower’ races as having been exposed to difficult environmental conditions for so long that significant progress in their "*direction toward perfection*" was unlikely. Haeckel never came to fully accept a Darwinian view and kept to a Lamarckian outlook even after Gregor Mendel’s (1822-1884) work on trait inheritance demonstrated that Lamarck was wrong and Darwin was right. Haeckel may well have been someone’s demagogue, but he was certainly not a Darwinian demagogue.

Nowhere else in Darwin’s work (or in later mainstream biology for that matter) does there exist the notion that evolution tends to "*progress in the direction towards perfection*". This was well appreciated even during both Haeckel and Hitler’s lifetimes. Even if there was some kind of teleological force directing evolution it would appear to be an incredibly wasteful process, as 99% of the species ever evolved have since become extinct and the remaining modern species are riddled with examples of how evolutionary mechanisms have driven phenotypic changes by ‘piggy-backing’ on existing structures, often resulting in inefficiencies that no good designer would countenance. The notion of biological teleology also raises an important question: when is this perfection reached and evolution then (necessarily) end (and what or who is it that decides)?

Haeckel did agree with Darwin that human beings had evolved from a common ancestor shared with modern apes, albeit thinking the cradle was in Asia rather than Africa. He departed from Darwin’s ideas far more seriously, however, in that he was also an adamant polygenist, unable to accept Darwin’s view that all human races were members of not only the same genus but the same species. Like Gobineau and Chamberlain he was also resolute in his support of the notion of a superior Aryan race. He categorised human beings first crudely by their hair type and wrote that those people with ‘woolly-hair’, such as Africans, as opposed to ‘straight-hair’, such as northern Europeans, were:

*“.....incapable of a true inner culture or of a higher mental development.....only among the Aryans was there that “symmetry of all parts, and that equal development, which we call the type of perfect human beauty.” (1868)*

He then went on to identify a hierarchy of ten distinct sub-species of humans, going so far as to label each separately within the genus Homo. In his numerous human tree diagrams, Caucasians (Aryans or ‘Homo mediterraneus’) were, of course, always at the top and negroes always at the bottom of the ladder. Perhaps most surprising given the appeal he is supposed to have had for those of a Nazi persuasion was his consistent placing of the Jews at or very near the highest rungs of the ladder. For unlike Chamberlain, Haeckel was not nearly as anti-Semitic, if he could even be considered such at all, becoming known for his ‘Judenfreundschaft’, or friendliness toward Jews.

In 1894 the Austrian journalist and dramatist Hermann Bahr (1863-1934) published a series of interviews on the subject of anti-Semitism with several dozen of the leading contemporary European commentators, including Haeckel. Haeckel told Bahr that despite having students who were anti-Semitic, several of his good friends were Jewish and they were "*admirable and excellent men*". He then went on to praise educated Jews:

*“I hold these refined and noble Jews to be important elements in German culture. One should not forget that they have always stood bravely for enlightenment and freedom against the forces of reaction, inexhaustible opponents, as often as needed, against the obscurantists And now in the dangers of these perilous times, when Papism again rears up mightily everywhere, we cannot do without their tried and true courage”*

Haeckel displayed other relatively liberal views for his time. In the last decade of his life Haeckel befriended the Jewish physician and sexologist, Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), founder of the ‘Scientific Humanitarian Committee’, now considered the first advocacy group in the world for homosexual and transgender people (he also coined the term transvestite). His book ‘Naturgesetze der Liebe’ or the ‘Natural Laws of Love’, published in 1912, in which he contended that homosexuality was an innate part of human sexuality and therefore perfectly natural, was dedicated to Haeckel after he had read the proofs and praised them. Sexually liberal notions such as these proved too much for Nazi fascist, religious and pseudoscientific sensitivities; ‘Der Informationsdienst’ even published an article in 1938 ‘Staatsfiende sind Auszumerzen’ (‘Eradication of National Enemies’) which claimed that Jewish people were more likely than Aryans to be homosexual. Within a year of coming to power Hitler had Hirschfeld’s ‘Institut für Sexualwissenschaft’ (Institute for Sexual Research) closed down. The standard archival newsreel of the Nazi book-burnings that was distributed throughout the world is believed to be of Hirschfeld’s library and records. Hirschfeld was in France at the time and died in Paris two years later.

Another interesting feature of Haeckel’s tree diagrams was that of the relative position of the ‘races’. They appear to have been malleable, not because of new scientific findings, but according to the effect Haeckel thought the ranking might have on his reputation. For example, earlier versions of his human tree show native Americans near the top, ahead of the Asian ‘races’. They were, however, relegated in favour of the Japanese ‘race’ when his books were translated into Japanese. Native Americans never did regain their lost position, forever placed lower than the Asian peoples in subsequent versions. Even after Darwin had suggested otherwise, Haeckel always maintained the presumption that some sort of racial hierarchy existed. Again from ‘The History of Creation’:

*“ ... the morphological differences between two generally recognized species - for example sheep and goats - are much less important than those ... between a Hottentot and a man of the Teutonic race”.*

Darwin would have been either bewildered or appalled, likely both. Similarly from Haeckel’s book ‘Die Lebenswunder’ (‘The Wonders of Life’; 1904):

*“the lower races, such as the Veddahs or Australian Negroes, are psychologically nearer to the mammals, apes and dogs, than to the civilised European. We must, therefore, assign a totally different value to their lives.....their only interest are food and reproduction.....many of the higher animals, especially monogamous mammals and birds, have reached a higher stage than the lower savages”.*

The notion that sheep and goats, whose offspring are invariably stillborn, are closer in an evolutionary sense than two humans, such as an African and a European, who would ordinarily have no problem in achieving viable offspring, is obvious nonsense even to someone with no knowledge of phylogenetic trees. Nowadays, of course, there is an agreement among biologists that the concept of ‘species’ can effectively be defined by genetic relationship and ability to reproduce. In the late 19th century, however, the nature of a ‘species’ had yet to be so exactly determined. Darwin himself acknowledges this in Chapter 2 of ‘Origin of Species’:

*“no one definition (of species) has as yet satisfied all naturalists”* but then goes on to say, *“yet every naturalist knows vaguely what he means when he speaks of a species”.*

Defining a ‘species’ by the ability of two of its members to successfully breed was certainly not alien to Haeckel. As with Gobineau, Chamberlain and Hitler, however, he appears to have decided to ignore evidence contrary to his views. The idea was first mooted in Alfred Russel Wallace’s 1889 book ‘Darwinism’. Briefly, he (correctly) proposed that natural selection contributes to reproductive isolation and that over time two populations can become reproductively isolated and eventually become two distinct species. When it came to humans, though, Haeckel appears to have dismissed any role for reproduction in his view of what constituted a species or sub-species, arbitrarily choosing perceived differences in language development as the delineating factor:

*“With each of these human species, language developed on its own and independently of the others.....If one views the origin of the branches of language as the special and principal act of becoming human, and the species of humankind as distinguished*

*according to their language stem, then one can say that arose independently of one another."* (1868)

Note that Haeckel's culturally-based approach to defining "*the different species of men*" is, paradoxically, species-specific; it could not be used to sub-categorise any other species of animal.

So we can see a general two-fold trend of un-Darwinian thought running through Christian polygenists, such as Gobineau and Chamberlain, Haeckel and finally Hitler; that humans are not a singular species but made up of subspecies (or even different species) and that some subspecies are somehow more 'advanced' than others and so exceptional. However, in order to substantiate an ideological link between Darwin and Hitler requires that one or more people acted as important intermediary influences. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least that there is no evidence that Hitler actually read any of Darwin's works. Also, given that he was unsuccessful at any academic pursuit, even if he had read Darwin, it is questionable whether he would have sufficiently understood the material to have gained enough insight to be able to put the ideas into practice. Gobineau could not have been an intermediary as his relevant work was written too early and, in any case, he ignored Darwin's work. It was certainly not Chamberlain - he absolutely hated Darwin and all he stood for. The task, then, is left to Haeckel. However, evidence for this role has proven a highly contentious issue.

Notwithstanding the debate between Weikart and Gasman (who both accuse Haeckel of providing the link) and Robert Richards (who staunchly defends Haeckel), the problems in establishing an ideological link between Haeckel and Hitler are threefold. First, and most importantly to this discussion, Haeckel's heart was never really into being a 'Darwinian'. Although he was certainly a champion for the concept of evolution he never accepted that natural selection was the mechanism by which it operated. As mentioned, it is really not feasible to consider someone a 'Darwinian' if they outright deny natural selection, despite the arbitrary and inconsistent definitions of 'Darwinist' employed by creationists such as Weikart, Ojala and Leisola. Redefining terms to suit the argument is, of course, commonplace in Christian fundamentalist literature and particularly noticeable in books written by 'fellows' of the Discovery Institute. Nonetheless, the same practice is pounced on when the argument does not suit their agenda. For example, when Weikart reviewed Richard Steigmann-Gall's book 'The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity' in 'German Studies Review' in 2004 he had the audacity to complain:

*"Many German pantheists used religious, even Christian, terminology, but they often redefined it."*

This is a typical ploy of Weikart's; attempting to divert culpability away from Christianity by relabelling the obviously religious members of the Nazi Party as pantheists and pagans. Second, and this surely cannot be stressed enough; Haeckel was a polygenist. It is just not possible to be both a polygenist and a 'Darwinist'. Third, although Hitler would have had no difficulty with Haeckel's basic racial ideology, he would certainly have taken umbrage (and did, as we shall see) with most of Haeckel's political and philosophical beliefs.

One particularly tenuous line of evidence linking Haeckel to Hitler is his alleged membership in 1918 to the Thule Society. This claim was initially made by Gasman (1971) and has been repeated in a number of fundamentalist Christian publications since then. It is pertinent because the Thule society sponsored the 'Deutsche Arbeiterpartei' ('German Workers Party') who, under Hitler's tutelage, became the National Socialists. Gasman describes them as "*a political-theosophical-astrological-anti-Semitic secret organization.*" Which is what they were and more; they actually believed that Aryans had descended from various deities. Despite their support for the German Workers Party the Thule Society included a number of aristocrats in their membership and were wealthy enough to purchase 'Munchener Beobachter' ('Munich Observer'; later renamed 'Völkischer Beobachter' or 'People's Observer') a large circulation newspaper which they used to publish pro-Nazi articles. To be accepted as a member the following oath was required (von Sebottendorf, 1933):

*"The signer hereby swears to the best of his knowledge and belief that no Jewish or coloured blood flows in either his or in his wife's veins, and that among their ancestors are no members of the coloured races".*

The similarity with the membership requirement for the Anti-Evolution League of America is obvious. Rudolph Hesse, was a prominent member, as was the Nazi propagandist Alfred Rosenberg. Despite claims to the contrary, however, there is no evidence that Hitler himself ever joined, nor stepped foot inside their hallowed halls (Goodrick-Clarke, 1985). Nor is there any evidence that Haeckel was a member. For a start, Haeckel was not anti-Semitic, at least to that degree, and was far too much of a philosophical naturalist to have anything to do with mumbo-jumbo as esoteric as theosophy, astrology or descent from deities. In addition, at the

supposed time of his membership Haeckel was an invalid - he was to die within a year - and was unable to leave his home. The society did, however, list a painter named Ernst Häckel as a member and we can distinguish between the two because the latter actually wrote to the former on a few occasions and these letters were kept by Haeckel and are currently archived.

Unlike Gobineau and Chamberlain, Haeckel was not particularly enamoured with any of the Christian churches, especially Catholicism, and could be pugnacious in his dealings with clergy. One story goes that after he gave a lecture at the International Freethinkers Conference in Rome in 1904 the Pope was so incensed as to what he said that he ordered a "*divine fumigation*" of the auditorium. Nevertheless, Haeckel did continue as a member of the German Evangelical Church, regularly paying his dues, until 1910 when he wrote an article announcing his resignation. In Haeckel's 'Monist' view, organic and inorganic substances are different only in the relative sense. In essence they are identical. This sole primordial substance was even considered to include the concept of God. In other words the universe, including all its tangible and intangible manifestations, is ultimately made up of one substance only, which remains always inseparable. The theological consequences are obvious: there is no place for the existence of the soul separate from the universe itself. It is surprising, then, to note that the first president of the Monist League, formed in 1906, was the Protestant churchman Albert Kalthoff (1850-1906) and, initially, the institution was run along the lines of a church. The Nobel laureate in chemistry, Wilhelm Ostwald, even gave regular Monistic Sunday Sermons, later published in several volumes. The organisation became increasingly pacifist and socialist as well as atheistic. This trio of policies was, of course, complete anathema to Hitler and so the Monist League voluntarily disbanded when he came to power, their members fearing that they would be persecuted.

### **Hitler's Lifelong Antipathy Toward Atheism**

This brings us to another Christian fundamentalist-originating myth; that Hitler was an atheist. This is imperative to those claiming the Darwin-Hitler link because evolutionary theory is seen in fundamentalist Christian (but not most orthodox, mainstream) sects as contrary to a literal interpretation of the Bible. Thus it is not possible, in the fundamentalist mindset, to accept an evolutionary-accepting Hitler and a theistically-inclined Hitler in the same person. Thus, whenever the evidence appears to point toward Hitler as a believer in God (or a deity of any kind), which is not difficult given his many utterances on the matter, a great deal of effort goes into distancing Hitler from what is considered 'true' Christianity. This is, however, a comparatively modern phenomenon. In researching this subject I have been unable to find a single source claiming Hitler to have been an atheist that has emanated from within his own lifetime; the earliest sources appear to originate in the 1970s.

As discussed in some detail earlier, however, Hitler being an atheist was certainly not what highly influential German or American clergymen, such as Deissmann, Kittel, Hirsch Althaus, Riley, Coughlin etc. were announcing in the 1930s. All of these argued forcefully that it was Hitler's correct sense of Christian morality that was instrumental in stopping communism and evolution from gaining ground. Nor was it the opinion of senior Anglican clergy. William Temple, for example, who served as both the Archbishops of York and Canterbury during Hitler's tenure (and who kept in touch with German clergy) wrote two books, 'The Hope of a New World' (1941) and the 'The Church Looks Forward' (1944) in which he discusses Hitler's motivations. In neither does he suggest that Hitler is anything other than a misguided Christian. Theologian Friedrich Heer came to the same conclusion in his 750-page analysis of Hitler's faith, labelling him a "*misguided Austrian Catholic*" (1968). If leading churchmen of the time and after are able to conclude that Hitler was a theist, albeit misguided, it seems reasonable to argue that the notion of Hitler the atheist appears to have as much currency as the mythological Darwin-Hitler link.

Less, perhaps; even Weikart (2004) acknowledges that Hitler was not an atheist. Though this view comes carefully packaged in misrepresentative nuance attempting to dissociate Hitler entirely from Christianity and even from monotheism. He does this by first trying to convince us that Hitler did not accept the divine status of Jesus, i.e., that Hitler was not a trinitarian. As we shall see below, this claim is dubious, but in any case, no Christian was trinitarian until the middle of the 2nd Century and even today there are many broadly Christian sects that are not trinitarian, such as Jehovah's Witnesses and Unitarians (even Mormons). He then tries to portray Hitler as having no belief in a personal, monotheistic God or an afterlife. But this manoeuvre fails too. An excerpt from the Table Talks (conveniently ignored by Weikart) appears to show that Hitler did have a belief in an afterlife:

*"I feel good in the historical society I am in if there is an Olympus. In the place I'm entering will be the most illuminated spirits of all times"*

It is certainly the case, pervasive in his writings, speeches and political policies over three decades, that Hitler held a lasting hatred of atheism and as early as 1922 was emphasising his religiosity to the German public. The following passage is from a speech he gave in Munich on April 12th of that year where he is arguing against Count Lerchenfeld, who had previously claimed that a Christian should not harbour anti-Semitic feelings. Note the four times in the space of a minute or so that Hitler explicitly makes the point that his are also Christian values:

*"My feelings **as a Christian** points me to my Lord and Savior as a fighter. It points me to the man who once in loneliness, surrounded by a few followers, recognized these Jews for what they were and summoned men to fight against them and who, God's truth! was greatest not as a sufferer but as a fighter. In boundless love **as a Christian** and as a man I read through the passage which tells us how the Lord at last rose in His might and seized the scourge to drive out of the Temple the brood of vipers and adders. How terrific was His fight for the world against the Jewish poison. To-day, after two thousand years, with deepest emotion I recognize more profoundly than ever before the fact that it was for this that He had to shed His blood upon the Cross. **As a Christian** I have no duty to allow myself to be cheated, but I have the duty to be a fighter for truth and justice.....For **as a Christian** I have also a duty to my own people."*

'Mein Kampf' (1924-25) in particular is replete with justifications for his political ideology based on Biblical and theistic influence. Indeed, Murphy's 1939 English translation contains 116 references to a deity (e.g., God, Goddess, Creator, Lord) and in every case these terms are used they are referred to in a wholly positive sense. In contrast there are only two references to atheism. Both are perjorative. Some examples of these passages have already been quoted. Here are some more:

*"What we must fight for is to safeguard the existence and reproduction of our race and our people, the sustenance of our children and the purity of our blood, the freedom and independence of the fatherland, so that our people may mature for the fulfillment of the mission allotted it by the Creator of the universe."*

*".....finally to put an end to the constant and continuous original sin of racial poisoning, and to give the Almighty Creator beings such as He Himself created."*

*"The folkish-minded man, in particular, has the sacred duty, each in his own denomination, of making people stop just talking superficially of God's will, and actually fulfill God's will, and not let God's word be desecrated. For God's will gave men their form, their essence and their abilities. Anyone who destroys His work is declaring war on the Lord's creation, the divine will."*

The following quotes are some examples of Hitler's consistent, unwavering antipathy to atheism. On the inauguration of the Vatican as a sovereign state in 1929 Hitler wrote, in the Nazi Party newspaper 'Völkischer Beobachter' ('People's Observer'):

*"The fact that the Catholic Church has come to an agreement with Fascist Italy ...proves beyond doubt that the Fascist world of ideas is closer to Christianity than those of Jewish liberalism or even atheistic Marxism."*

Watching old newsreels of Hitler shouting, violently gesticulating, punching the air and skilfully moulding his audience into an idolatory mass, was he really shouting, as Christian fundamentalists would have us believe, Nietzsche's maxim 'God is Dead'? No, on the contrary, in March 1933, in a speech before the Reichstag, he had this to say:

*"By its decision to carry out the political and moral cleansing of our public life, the Government is creating and securing the conditions for a really deep and inner religious life. The advantages for the individual which may be derived from compromises with atheistic organizations do not compare in any way with the consequences which are visible in the destruction of our common religious and ethical values."*

From another speech given in Stuttgart in February 1933:

*".....Christians and not international atheists are now standing at Germany's fore."*

Similar sentiments in a speech in Koblenz, August 1934:

*".....our fight against the Bolshevik culture, against an atheistic movement, against criminality, and in our struggle for the consciousness of a community in our national life....."*



Why would we expect Hitler to say otherwise? After all, the 24th Principle of the Nazi Party, which he himself had co-authored in 1920 states:

*"..... the Party represents a positively Christian position without binding itself to one particular faith."*

Undoubtedly many people voted for the Nazi Party precisely because of his strident anti-atheist platform. One of these was Martin Niemöller, author of the (oft-quoted and much-altered to suit various interest groups) verse that generally begins 'First they came.....'. Like many German Lutheran clergy, Niemöller actually started out as an ardent supporter of Hitler. He voted for the Nazi Party in every election since 1924 and after being appointed to a church in the wealthy Berlin suburb of Dahlem in 1931, always started his sermons with a Nazi salute and a shout of 'Heil Hitler' (Buchheim, 1956). There are numerous examples of his pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic attitudes, not least from his book 'First Commandment' (1937). He was interned in Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps seven years later, not as is commonly believed in some circles, simply because he was a Christian, but because he forcefully argued for the independence of the German Lutheran church from state interference. Specifically, he objected to the 'Aryan Paragraph' which instigated a ban on all church members with Jewish ancestry from serving as officers of the Church and the state-funded church building program according to Nazi architectural ideals. Lutheran clergy who had no problem with such a church-state partnership were left alone. Of interest here is why Niemöller supported Hitler in the first place. He was certainly of the same ilk as Deissmann, Kittel, Hirsch, Althaus, Riley, Coughlin etc; in 'First Commandment' (1937) he describe Hitler's:

*".....divine call in the spiritual revolution which is beginning to take place throughout the whole of our nation."*

His former cellmate of nearly two years, Leo Stein, who eventually managed to gain refugee status in the United States and wrote of his experiences of Niemöller in the 'National Jewish Monthly' in 1941 quotes Niemöller:

*"I had an audience with him [Hitler], as a representative of the Protestant Church, shortly before he became Chancellor, in 1932.....I hated the growing atheistic movement, which was fostered and promoted by the Social Democrats and the Communists. Their hostility toward the Church made me pin my hopes on Hitler."*

Not surprisingly, one of the first political moves made by Hitler on becoming Chancellor was to ban all atheist organisations in Germany, including the 600,000 member-strong 'Deutscher Freidenker-Verband', which at the time was the largest atheist organisation in the world. Hitler ordered that the 'Deutscher Freidenker-Verband' not only be made a banned organisation but had their Berlin city-centre headquarters stormed by elite SS troops in March 1933 and the building given to the Lutheran church who duly opened an office to entice lapsed members back to the church and to offer advice on church matters. Hitler then gave a speech in October 24th, 1933 in which he said in front of an estimated 250,000 people:

*"We have therefore undertaken the fight against the atheistic movement, and that not merely with a few theoretical declarations: we have stamped it out."*

We can be sure that the troops who stormed the offices of the 'Deutscher Freidenker-Verband' were believers in God: although membership of the SS was open to German males of all religions (the SS had exclusively Muslim divisions fighting in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, for example) Heinrich Himmler had prohibited both Jews and atheists from serving in any capacity. In his definitive biography of Himmler (Heinrich Himmler: A Life, 2011) the German historian Peter Longerich quotes Himmler as saying in 1944:

*"I have never tolerated an atheist in the ranks of the SS. Every member has a deep faith in God."*

Article 24.6 of Hitler's program of 'Positive Christianity' (a de-Judaised version of Christianity which places greater emphasis on Jesus) included the statement:

*"The German religion is a religion of the people. It has nothing in common with free thoughts, atheist propaganda, and the breakdown of current religions."*

The first international treaty signed by Hitler after gaining power was the 'Concordat' with the Vatican on . In the speech he gave

on April 26th, 1933 after signing the treaty, he made the following statement:

*"Secular schools can never be tolerated because such schools have no religious instruction, and a general moral instruction without a religious foundation is built on air; consequently all character training and religion must be derived from faith"*

This last statement would surely find no fault with many modern Christians. In accordance, Bernhard Rust, Hitler's education minister, made Christian religious education, including communal daily prayer, a compulsory subject in all state schools, including trade schools.

Although Darwin's findings do not negate the possibility of a deist creation, they bring into question theistic interpretations as to the origins and purpose of life, as did Haeckel's Monism. It is hard to see how either Haeckel's or Darwin's views on this matter would have been tolerated by the Nazis, and they weren't. In the Guidelines from Die Bücherei 2:6 (the official Nazi party journal for librarians; 1935) the following categories of books were strongly discouraged (though not outright banned, as is commonly claimed) from being stocked in public libraries, something the vast majority of librarians adhered to, except for inclusion in the so-called 'Poison Cabinets' of the large city and university libraries:

*"Schriften weltanschaulichen und lebenskundlichen Charakters, deren Inhalt die falsche naturwissenschaftliche Aufklärung eines primitiven Darwinismus und Monismus ist (Häckel)."*

Which translates as:

*"Writings of a philosophical and social nature whose content deals with the false scientific enlightenment of primitive Darwinism and Monism (Haeckel)."*

Other proscribed works were anything concerned with the "*literature of Marxism, Communism and Bolshevism*" and "*literature by Jewish authors, regardless of the field*". There was, however, a concurrent list of banned German authors, which was legally enforced and all told, the Nazis eventually banned over 4,100 books. In comparison to the Nazis, the Vatican were surprisingly liberal. Their equivalent list of proscribed and banned books, the 'Index Librorum Prohibitorum', active until 1966, never included any publication by either Haeckel or Darwin (or notably, Hitler) although a number of works attempting to amalgamate evolutionary theory with Catholic theology were included in the Index.

To the Nazi Party, however, Haeckel's 'monism', in particular, well overstepped their philosophical mark. Gunther Hecht of 'Rassenpolitischen Amt der NSDAP', or the 'National Socialist Department of Race-Politics', writing in 1937 in the 'Journal of All Natural Science' makes plain their attitude:

*"The common position of materialistic monism is philosophically rejected completely by the volkisch-biological view of National Socialism.....The party and its representatives must not only reject a part of the Haeckelian conception — other parts of it have occasionally been advanced — but, more generally, every internal party dispute that involves the particulars of research and the teachings of Haeckel must cease."*

Hitler's antipathy toward atheism continued as late as the 'Table Talks' where he is recorded as saying, for example:

*"An educated man, on the other hand, runs the risk of going over to atheism, which is a return to the state of the animal".*

Himmler had a long fascination with Paganism and had been introduced to Islam by Rudolf Hess. He subsequently left the Catholic Church in 1936. Felix Kersten wrote in his memoirs about Himmler's particular interest in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, who he regarded as one of the world's strongest men (Poliakov, 1977). In 1943 when the German forces were facing defeat in North Africa, Himmler commissioned a study into how the Nazis might co-opt Islamic views to further their cause with the local population. The SS general Ernst Kaltenbrunner suggested that Hitler might be rebranded as the prophesied return of Isa (Arabic for Jesus) who, according to the Qu'ran, defeats Al-Masih ad-Dajjal (the anti-messiah, similar to the anti-Christ) at the end of the world. A million pamphlets were printed in Arabic advertising this, without effect. However, David Motadel's book 'Islam and Nazi Germany's War' (2014) records that when German forces captured Soviet towns with a predominantly Muslim population Himmler ordered the mosques previously closed by the Soviet authorities to be reopened and immediately reestablished religious

holidays and celebrations. Qu'ranic scripts appeared in public places. If Hitler were truly atheist, and had wanted to put an atheist regime in place within Europe, it is highly unlikely he would have countenanced any of this; the damage to his reputation would be obvious.

There is a commonly held myth that Hitler too was involved in Paganism. This seems highly unlikely as he was notoriously suspicious of any organisation or school of thought, such as the Thule Society, that involved secret ceremonies and initiations, preferring to build an openly practised, mass ideological movement. This did not stop German Pagans from attempting to curry favour with him, however. One example is that of the psychiatrist and writer Mathilde von Kemnitz. In 1925 she had married a close confidante of Hitler's, the World War 1 General Erich Ludendorff. Kemnitz and Ludendorff then founded a neo-Teutonic pantheistic-pagan nature cult 'Ludendorff' based on her home-grown philosophy of 'Gotteserkenntnis' ('Knowledge of God'). Despite its name she disagreed vehemently with the Nazi ideal of Positive Christianity (though her husband did not) but she did share the anti-Semitic elements. In her book 'Triumph des Unsterblichkeitwillens' or 'Triumph of the Will to Immortality' (1921) she had made the following dedication to Hitler:

*"Now don't forget you young, blessed soul,  
If you never leave the afterlife  
You will thus be a perfect God  
For as long as you live."*

It became obvious that Hitler tolerated Kemnitz's paganism only because of his association with her husband. After Ludendorff died in December, 1937 Hitler ended the print run of Kemnitz's newspaper 'Am Heiligen Quell Deutscher Kraft' (At the Holy Well) by refusing to allow the state to provide supplies of paper. Ironically, several years earlier Hitler, in agreement with Kemnitz, had stopped production of a previous newspaper which she had founded, 'Ludendorff's Volkswarte' because the editorial board were not publishing articles that were anti-Semitic enough. In a speech in Hamburg in September 1938 he made his position on such ideas very clear:

*"We will not allow mystically-minded occult folk with a passion for exploring the secrets of the world beyond to steal into our Movement. Such folk are not National Socialists, but something else."*

Support for Hitler's anti-Pagan views came from Baldur von Schirach who on December 3rd 1936 wrote in 'Volkischer Beobachter':

*"It is my purpose neither to erect Pagan altars in the forests of Germany heathen altars and introduce youth to any kind of Wotan's cult, nor in any way to hand over young Germany to the magical arts of any herb apostles."*

Also informative are the comments and notations made by Hitler in his personal collection of books (Hitler's handwriting was distinctive, so we can be sure which of the notations are his). For example, examination of a collection of works by the German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte (described by the historian Robert Nisbet, 1980, as "*the true author of National Socialism*"), gifted to Hitler by the filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl reveals, according to Ryback (2008):

*"a veritable blizzard of underlines, question marks, exclamation points, and marginal strikes that sweeps across a hundred printed pages of dense theological prose".*

Ryback particularly remarks that whenever the Holy Trinity is discussed, or whenever Jesus is referred to as the Son of God, Hitler's notations are approving. Particularly revealing is Hitler's response to Fichte's question: "*Where did Jesus derive the power that has held his followers for all eternity?*" Hitler had boldly underlined Fichte's answer: "*Through his absolute identification with God.*" Another passage underlined by Hitler is also telling:

*"God and I are One. Expressed simply in two identical sentences -- His life is mine; my life is his. My work is his work, and his work my work."*

An oddity in the Hitler library is a 326-page typewritten treatise written by an unknown author Maximilian Riedel, 'The Law of the World: The Coming Religion'. Riedel delivered the document personally to Hitler's residence along with a personal note which included the claim:

*"I have been able to prove, with incontrovertible scientific evidence, the concept of the trinity of God as a natural law."*

Ryback (2003) tells us:

*"Based on the marginalia, it seems that Hitler not only received the Riedel manuscript but also read it carefully with pencil in hand. Individual sentences and entire paragraphs are underlined, sometimes twice or even three times."*

One sentence in particular was heavily underlined:

*"The human mind never decides things on its own, it is the result of a discourse between the body and the soul."*

Hitler seems to have been influenced by this viewpoint. In December 1941, during one of his monologues, he paraphrased the notion in this way:

*"Mind and soul ultimately return to the collective being of the world.....If there is a God, then he gives us not only life but also consciousness and awareness. If I live my life according to my God-given insights, then I cannot go wrong, and even if I do, I know I have acted in good faith." (cited Ryback, 2003).*

One further notable book in Hitler's collection is a leather bound volume entitled 'Worte Christi' ('Words of Christ') and inscribed *"To our beloved Führer with gratitude and profound respect, Clara von Behl, born von Jansen von den Osten. Christmas 1935."* According to Ryback (2008):

*"Human hands had obviously spent a lot of time with this book."*

During the Second World War the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (now the CIA) commissioned an expert group of four psychologists and psychiatrists, led by Harvard University's Walter Langer, to perform an analysis of Hitler's state of mind so as to predict how he might behave in the future. Over an eight month period they analysed everything they could find of Hitler's writings and speeches, interviews etc. Their originally secret 281-page report, 'A Psychological Analysis of Adolf Hitler' (1943) came to the conclusion that the fundamental motivation for Hitler's behaviour at that time was religious:

*"A survey of all the evidence forces us to conclude that Hitler believes himself destined to become an Immortal Hitler, chosen by God to be the New Deliverer of Germany and the Founder of a new social order for the world. He firmly believes this and is certain that in spite of all the trials and tribulations through which he must pass he will finally attain that goal. The one condition is that he follow the dictates of the inner voice that have guided and protected him in the past."*

They went on to describe a man whose religious fervour, rather than abating, was actually increasing with age:

*".....Hitler's conviction in his mission and his belief that he is guided by some extra-natural power which communicates to him what he should and should not do under varying circumstances..... Although beliefs of this kind are common during childhood they are usually dropped or are modified as the individual becomes older and more experienced. In Hitler's case, however, the reverse has taken place. The conviction became stronger as he grew older until, at the present time, it is the core of his thinking."*

Langer's team decided that *"Hitler's belief in divine protection"* would compel him to fight to the end but, should Germany lose the war, the most likely scenario would be his suicide. Their diagnosis was correct. These are Hitler's words, from a radio broadcast made on 30th January 1945, the 12th anniversary of the National Socialist regime and exactly three months before his death:

*"God the Almighty has made our nation. By defending its existence we are defending His work.....Only He can relieve me of this duty Who called me to it. It was in the hand of Providence to snuff me out by the bomb that exploded only one and a half meters from me on July 20, and thus to terminate my life's work. That the Almighty protected me on that day I consider a renewed affirmation of the task entrusted to me.....In the years to come I shall continue on this road, uncompromisingly safeguarding my people's interests, oblivious to all misery and danger, and filled with the holy conviction that God the Almighty will not abandon him who, during all his life, had no desire but to save his people from a fate it had never deserved, neither by virtue of its number nor by way of its importance."*

After the war, one of Hitler's senior advisors, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring confirmed the team's findings:

*"Looking back.....I am inclined to think he was literally obsessed with the idea of some miraculous salvation, that he clung to it like a drowning man to a straw."* (cited Ryback, 2008).

This view has also been confirmed by one of Hitler's private secretaries of more than two years, Traudl Junge, who reveals that Hitler's talk of the "*divine*" were not merely for public consumption as he would often talk in similar terms in personal conversations. After interviewing her the previous year, Ryback (2003) wrote:

*"She was convinced that he believed in some form of divine protection, especially after surviving a dramatic assassination attempt in 1944. "After the July 1944 attack," she told me, "I believe he felt himself to be an instrument of providence, and believed he had a mission to fulfill."*

A similar conclusion has been reached more recently by the eminent psychiatrist Fritz Redlich (who was forced to flee the Nazi regime in 1938). Redlich reviewed the medical history of Hitler's family members, the personal diaries of Hitler's physician, Theodor Morell, as well as Hitler's own medical records (even down to his electrocardiograms, laboratory results and eye examinations) and also interviewed many eyewitnesses to his behaviour in 'Hitler: Diagnosis of a Destructive Prophet (1998). He found no evidence of any major psychoses and also rules out borderline personality disorder but suggests that Hitler may have shown early symptoms of Parkinson's disease. He also concluded, however, that Hitler was prone to paranoia and narcissism and that the primary motivation behind his attitudes and behaviours was his belief in God:

*".....he knew what he was doing and he chose to do it with pride and enthusiasm."*

A year previous to Langer's diagnosis, Max Steer, then Professor of Audiology at Purdue University, analysed the many available recordings of Hitler's voice. He calculated a mean level of 228 vibrations per second, whereas 200 vibrations per second is a typical frequency for anger. He suggested that this unusually high pitch for a man would tend to put the listener "*into a passive state.*" And he concluded, independently yet similarly to Langer's team:

*"Hitler almost always speaks in one of only two moods. One is a mood of mystical and semi-religious self-abasement. It is this mood that he habitually appeals for the confidence and support of the German people. In it, he speaks of faith and destiny and miracles, of regeneration and martyrdom, and of his struggle for the souls of men. Often in this mood he uses purely religious terms: shame, sin and expiation. He is a redeemer, calling upon the people to lay their sins and sufferings on his shoulders."* (quoted in Wallace Deuel's 'People Under Hitler'; 1942).

There is a commonly held myth among fundamentalist Christians that Hitler had crucifixes removed from schools and replaced with portraits of himself. It's completely untrue. As head of state, Hitler's portrait was indeed displayed in all schools, but this was no different to previous decades when the German head of state (and Kaiser's image) was displayed in schools and other public buildings. The story about the removal of crucifixes is based on two unrelated events. The first was in Oldenburg on November 4th 1936 when an atheist local government official Carl (sometimes reported as Karl) Röver enacted a local law to remove crucifixes from those Catholic and Protestant schools which were funded directly by the state of Bremen. The very same decree also had images of Martin Luther (revered by the Nazis) removed from the Protestant schools. The reason given was not inherently anti-Christian but similar in kind to that of the constitutional separation between state and religion in the USA. To add some context: the region in which this event occurred had voted the National Socialists into power in the state election of June 16th 1932, before they had achieved electoral success federally. The Nazi vote was as high as 70% in the more rural areas. The local Catholic Teachers Association had, on 24th April 1933, declared its unqualified support for the Nazi government and this was mirrored by their national body.

Newspaper reports at the time indicate that government officials in Berlin were unaware of Röver's plans. This is likely, as some of Röver's previous policies had found disagreement with Nazi Party officials and he was known to be intensely disliked by Göring (though he was a personal friend of Bormann). After a cross-church protest organised by the local Catholic bishop, and initial stubbornness from Röver, he was forced to rescind the ban three weeks later at a rowdy public meeting in the town of Cloppenburg attended by 7,000 people. According to Röver, Hitler himself had ordered him to reverse the policy and to reinstate

the crucifixes. A similar local government move was made in Bavaria in 1941, again apparently without Hitler's knowledge, and in this case there is documentation showing that Hitler personally had the order rescinded within days. Both cases were widely reported in newspapers both within Germany and in other European countries and the details of the events are readily available in many archives.

Perhaps one of the least cited pieces of evidence for Hitler not having any atheist sympathies is his preservation of the neutrality and integrity of the Vatican State (which is completely surrounded by the city of Rome) during the German occupation of much of Italy in 1943-44. Here was an opportunity for Hitler to make a decisive strike against the largest Christian church in the world that would undoubtedly have had a devastating effect on the future of the church and the religion. However, research performed by the British historian and Anglican priest Owen Chadwick and published in the book 'Britain And the Vatican During The Second World War' (1988) reveals that the Vatican had no concerns whatsoever of a German invasion. They were far more concerned with the reduction in the domestic policing of Rome as a result of the political upheaval caused by the war.

After the Italians had surrendered to the allies, but Rome itself was still in German hands, large numbers of allied prisoners of war were released and many headed for the Vatican. Vatican policy, however, was to refuse them admission. The Irish priest, Hugh O'Flaherty, disobeyed orders and with help from other priests and nuns concealed thousands of allied servicemen in private residences throughout Rome. Even though Herbert Kappler, the local head of the SS and Ludwig Koch, the German head of the Rome police were perfectly aware of what O'Flaherty was doing they made no attempt to arrest him while he remained in the Vatican (Gallagher, 2009).

After the war had ended the Vatican Refugee Commission both unknowingly and knowingly provided dozens of Nazi war criminals with false identities. It was a case of 'speak no evil, hear no evil, see no evil, but definitely harbour evil'. The Santa Maria dell'Anima College in Rome, run by the Austrian Bishop Alois Hudal (1885-1963) had helped O'Flaherty hide allied servicemen during the war. However, Hudal was at heart a pro-Nazi (with certain reservations *re* church-state relations similar to Niemöller), anti-Semite and rabid anti-Communist who, like Riley, perceived a direct link between the Jews and atheistic Marxism and actively campaigned for their exclusion in academia. In 1935 he wrote a preface to the biography of the anti-Semitic Christian Social Party politician and ex-dictator of Austria, Engelbert Dollfuss. Hudal's 1937 book, 'The Foundations of National Socialism', was an ambitious attempt to marry Nazism with Catholicism. It included a foreword written by the then Archbishop of Vienna, Theodore Innitzer (colloqually known as the 'Heil Hitler Cardinal'), and the pair made no secret of their admiration for Hitler and the Nazi cause. On publication, Hudal sent a copy to Hitler. After the war Hudal secreted a number of Nazi officials in a secret chamber in the church crypt. Among these was Josef Mengele (the 'Angel of Death'); another was Adolf Eichmann of the SS who later wrote:

*"It was curious that Catholic priests kept helping me on my journey. They helped without asking any questions."* (cited Steinacher, 2014).

In all, the Vatican issued 10,100 travel documents that were accepted by the Red Cross as genuine, allowing large numbers of Nazi personnel to escape to South America. For the most part they did this, Steinacher (2014) concludes, less for any sympathy for the individuals involved but more in the hope that these German Nazis might help enable a resurgence in European Christianity needed to counter the growing influence of the atheistic Soviet Union.

### **The Notion That Natural Selection Is The Basis For 'Social Darwinism' and Eugenics Is Not Even Wrong**

The notion of an ideological link between Darwin and Hitler can be no more odious than when claims are made that Darwin's findings and views were the inspiration for the Nazi Party's policy of eugenics. Perhaps the most chilling statement of all from Haeckel is a single sentence embedded in a paragraph in which he is discussing the 'lower races'. In the 'Wonders of Life' he says simply:

*"We must, therefore, assign a totally different value to their lives".*

Elaborating, he goes on to say:

*"We must class as a traditional dogma the widespread belief that man is bound under all circumstances to maintain and prolong life, even when it has become utterly useless - a source of pain to the incurable and of endless trouble to his friends. Hundreds of thousands of incurables - lunatics, lepers, people with cancer, etc. are artificially kept alive in our modern communities, and their sufferings are carefully prolonged, without the slightest profit to themselves or the general body.....What an enormous mass of suffering these figures indicate for the invalids themselves, and what a vast amount of trouble and sorrow for their families, what a huge private and public expenditure! How much of this pain and expense could be spared if people could make up their minds to free the incurable from their indescribable torments by a dose of morphia!"*

Haeckel is speaking explicitly here of eugenics, no doubt. So compare what he has written above with this passage from Darwin's 'Descent of Man', quoted earlier:

*"The aid which we feel impelled to give to the helpless is mainly an incidental result of the instinct of sympathy, which was originally acquired as part of the social instincts, but subsequently rendered, in the manner previously indicated, more tender and more widely diffused. Nor could we check our sympathy, even at the urging of hard reason, without deterioration in the noblest part of our nature. The surgeon may harden himself whilst performing an operation, for he knows that he is acting for the good of his patient; but if we were intentionally to neglect the weak and helpless, it could only be for a contingent benefit, with an overwhelming present evil."*

Honestly, does this read like someone in agreement with Haeckel? Someone enthused by and recommending eugenics? Alfred Wallace was no less direct. In his personal letters, published by James Marchant in 1916, he had vilified eugenics as, among other things:

*".....the meddling interference of an arrogant scientific priestcraft".*

Note the linking of religion and eugenics in his statement. More on this later. In stark contrast to Darwin and Wallace's admonition against ill-feeling toward Haeckel's "incurables", many people in the late 19th and early 20th centuries considered eugenics to not only hold great promise for the benefit of future generations, but to be entirely consistent with Christian morality. It is important to note that Haeckel's eugenic-friendly views were not at all unusual for his time. What made him stand out as a promoter of eugenics was his suggestion that it was the state who should sponsor and administer a comprehensive program of eugenics in order to strengthen the German nation and people.

There is one allegedly 'Darwinian' idea which, superficially at least, appears to be shared with Hitler's philosophy. 'Survival of the fittest' is the relevant phrase, first used by the British polymath Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) in his book 'Principles of Biology' (1864). He certainly appears to have intended the term to be synonymous with natural selection, writing:

*"This survival of the fittest, which I have here sought to express in mechanical terms, is that which Mr. Darwin has called 'natural selection'"*

But Spencer's view of 'survival of the fittest' harboured distinct differences to Darwin's idea of the concept. Spencer was then one of Britain's leading exponents of Lamarckianism and, in common with Nietzsche, considered the struggle for existence to involve an individual's self-improvement from their conscious, planned actions and certainly not from the non-teleological, chance variation acting on groups that Darwin had postulated. Spencer's support for Lamarck's ideas were so strong that even after August Weismann's watershed experiments on mice which demonstrated that acquired characteristics were not inherited (1889; thereby boosting Darwin's theory at the expense of Lamarck's reputation), he resolutely refused to accept the findings, later writing an extended two-part paper entitled 'The Inadequacy of Natural Selection' (1893).

Ironically, Spencer originally employed the phrase to argue in support of a laissez-faire economic system of the type seemingly beloved by American Christian fundamentalists; the "uncaring apostle of cut-throat capitalism" as Crook (2007) describes him. John D. Rockefeller certainly agreed with Spencer:

*"The growth of large business is merely a survival of the fittest.....This is not an evil tendency in business. It is merely the working out of a law of nature and a law of God." (cited Hofstadter, 1944).*

Again, doesn't this sound like something lifted directly out of 'Mein Kampf'? Naturally, those to the political left of Rockefeller

disagreed with his view that 'survival of the fittest' was a law of nature. And this notion was developed early. This is Friedrich Engels, writing to the Russian socialist Pyotr Lavrov in 1875:

*"All that the Darwinian theory of the struggle for existence boils down to is an extrapolation from society to animate nature of Hobbes' theory of the bellum omnium contra omnes and of the bourgeois-economic theory of competition together with the Malthusian theory of population. Having accomplished this feat.....these people proceed to re-extrapolate the same theories from organic nature to history, and then claim to have proved their validity as eternal laws of human society. The puerility of this procedure is self-evident, and there is no need to waste words on it."*

Darwin had employed the phrase as a synonym for natural selection in the fifth edition of 'Origin of Species', which was published in 1869. It was clearly intended metaphorically (though not by Spencer, thus there is a good argument to be had that 'Social Darwinism' is more aptly labelled 'Social Spencerism'). By Hitler's time, the term 'survival of the fittest' had become mangled in use and synonymous in popular culture with not only physical fitness and strength but also with the victors in any number of competitive activities including but not limited to the sporting, social and economic arenas. 'Social Darwinism' therefore remains simply defined as any attempt to incorporate allegedly observable natural processes, such as 'survival of the fittest' into human social structures. The term 'social Darwinism' has only ever been applied retrospectively to Nazi Germany.

Despite what many fundamentalist Christians believe, and regularly portray, at no point did Darwin extend his theories beyond biology. Yet there appears to be no shortage of anti-Darwinian critics claiming that acceptance of the concepts of 'natural selection' and 'survival of the fittest' have been a major cause of immorality. Natural selection, they argue, acts to justify a whole raft of selfish behaviours which result in the weaker members of society becoming prey to the 'fittest' in society. As one particularly puerile Creationist website opines:

*"The most evolution could produce would be the idea that 'might makes right'.....if you teach children that they evolved from monkeys, then they will act like monkeys"*

This is logically obvious nonsense. Neither does it accord with the evidence. If it did, telling people they aren't animals but were created exclusively and purposefully by a kind and loving God should have brought about a seachange for the better in human psychology. By taxonomically equating people with animals, Darwinian style thinking can be shown to have influenced a number of schools of thought that, rather than laud it over other species, have actually proposed giving animals greater rights, sometimes attempting legally to be on a par with human rights. The Australian moral philosopher Peter Singer, for example, has cogently questioned the validity of 'speciesism', in which the welfare of human beings is privileged over other animal species. The reality is that possessing scientific knowledge never debases us; simply understanding that we belong in the animal kingdom does not make us any less human (or humane). The moral value of a person (or even an organism) does not reside in how we came about. It resides in the virtues we have and how we behave toward others. The belief that human beings were specially created in the image of God is insufficient to ground moral value. As Pennock (2004) argues, this:

*".....mistaken view is related to what is known as the naturalist fallacy, though in their particular case it might be better termed the supernaturalistic fallacy. Even if one was created for X, it does not follow one ought to do X. If one is divinely created in the image of an angry and vengeful God, it does not follow that one ought to be angry and vengeful, or that one has moral worth by virtue of being created in such an image. Similarly, one would not have moral worth by virtue of being divinely created in a loving and merciful image, but rather by being loving and merciful."*

The angry and vengeful God that we could have been created in the image of would, of course, be the Germanic Christian God of Gustav Adolf Deissmann and Adolf Hitler. This God would have no qualms about invoking the 'survival of the fittest' and would certainly balk at, if not verily smite the 'good enough to survive long enough to reproduce' of Darwinian biology. While Spencer was concerning himself not with religious myth but with the structure of solely social and economic systems, Haeckel saw the struggle for existence in terms of polygenic racial ideology, in which the Aryans were continuously pitted against 'inferior races'. Hitler embraced the notion of 'survival of the fittest' to not only expand on Gobineau, Chamberlain (the phrase "struggle for existence" is used eight times in 'Foundations of the Nineteenth Century', while the word 'struggle' itself appears 112 times) and Haeckel's racial ideologies, but to provide the moral basis for a new German society. The following excerpts are from Mein Kampf:

*"I do not see why man should not be just as cruel as nature. ....Struggle is the father of all things. It is not by the principles of humanity that man lives or is able to preserve himself above the animal world, but solely by means of the most brutal*



*struggle..... The very first essential for success is a perpetually constant and regular employment of violence..... Mankind has grown strong in eternal struggles and it will only perish through eternal peace”.*

Seriously, does that sound like anything Darwin would have written? Following on from these kinds of ideas, Hitler had no doubt that state-ordained eugenics served a higher ‘spiritual’ purpose than that of ‘materialist’ science. Again from Mein Kampf:

*“Thus for the first time a high inner purpose is accredited to the State. In face of the ridiculous phrase that the State should do no more than act as the guardian of public order and tranquillity, so that everybody can peacefully dupe everybody else, it is given a very high mission indeed to preserve and encourage the highest type of humanity which a beneficent Creator has bestowed on this earth.”*

"Higher inner purpose" is a distinctly religious notion. How can this kind of religious reasoning be equated with anything 'Darwinian'? It can't. The charge that 'Darwinian' concepts of 'natural selection' and 'survival of the fittest' are primarily responsible for the atrocities perpetrated by Hitler and his fellow Nazis can be effectively refuted in a number of ways. Here are some:

First, and most importantly, the concept of 'Darwinian fitness' has nothing in common with the numerous concepts of 'fitness' employed in either popular culture or social theory. Taken to its extreme, social Darwinism states that the strongest or fittest individuals or social groups should be allowed to flourish, while the weak and unfit should be allowed to die or otherwise become extinct on the basis that this is what happens in nature, 'red in tooth and claw' (another phrase widely and erroneously attributed to Darwin by Christian fundamentalists; it was actually written in 1848 by the poet Alfred Tennyson). Nazi-style eugenics policies are, therefore, conveniently trotted out by Christian fundamentalists as an inevitable consequence of Darwin having discovered evolution by natural selection. But natural selection never 'favours' only 'the fittest'. It always 'favours' the 'good enough to survive long enough to reproduce'. Imagine a lion stalking a herd of deer for lunch. The deer run away in a pack and the lion is only able to bring down one; the slowest deer. The next slowest deer survives just as well as the others even though there might be many deer in the pack that can run much faster. This relatively unfit deer may then live long enough to pass on its genes. Neither does only the fastest lion ever catch a deer. A lion only has to be good enough to catch a deer, any deer, including the sickest, slowest deer. This relatively unfit lion may also live long enough to pass on its genes. Even in the case of, say, adult human males, 50 kg weaklings with highly motile sperm would be far fitter in an evolutionary sense than any SS division of Arnold Schwarzenegger look-alikes with less motile sperm. But the more important point is this: natural selection is not, and cannot, act on the individual deer, lion or human. It can only act on a population of deer, lions or humans.

So, in no way does 'Darwinian fitness' necessarily imply the physical strength or intelligence, physical size, or physical prowess or even degrees of selfishness of any individual organism within a population. It simply refers to the fact that a population of organisms has adapted successfully to their immediate habitat. A student of biological evolution would consider, for example, the bacterial lineage known as Pelagibacteraceae, which make up between 25-50% of all the bacteria found in the ocean to have exhibited far more biological 'fitness' than Homo sapiens thus far. Or, on land, the common earthworm can be considered magnificently 'fit', having survived 600 million years since its last direct ancestor species, including five extinction events. And what about the 500 known species of tardigrade? These 1mm long animals are so hardy they can live on the ocean floor and even in the zero gravity of outer space, even surviving high levels of radiation. They can survive temperatures ranging from absolute zero to well above the boiling point of water. They can go decades without sustenance. Given the biological definition of 'fitness', the notion that individual Homo sapiens, never mind an Aryan subset of the species, comprise some pinnacle of evolutionary fitness is obvious nonsense. Clearly, then, Darwinian and Hitlerian notions of 'fitness' are worlds apart and could not even begin to share any moral basis.

The second problem is that the moral consequences are imaginary. One fine riposte to this simplistic, deterministic and overtly bleak Christian view of human nature comes from Richard Dawkins, in his essay 'A Devil's Chaplain' (2003):

*“There is no inconsistency in favouring Darwinism as an academic scientist while opposing it as a human being; any more than there is inconsistency in explaining cancer as an academic doctor, while fighting it as a practising one. For good Darwinian reasons, evolution gave us a brain.....capable of understanding it's own provenance, of deploring the moral implications and of fighting against them”.*

Even if Darwin's and Hitler's views of 'fitness' had coincided, moral arguments for applying 'social Darwinism' to any society would still be subject to the naturalistic fallacy, i.e., that prescriptive moral statements or intentions cannot necessarily be derived from the purely descriptive findings of Darwin. Some (slightly more realistic) creationists do accept a denuded version of natural selection, conceding that 'microevolution' is possible; they accept that evolution occurs within a 'kind' or 'species' (or barymin) but then claim that it never proceeds to speciation and certainly not to 'macroevolution'. Yet, and this is an important point: it is precisely this within-species genetic variability (rather than the Darwinian sense of 'macroevolution') that eugenics seeks to exploit. This fact surely raises the question: if 'social Darwinism' and eugenics really are based directly on the principles of Darwinian natural selection, as Christian fundamentalists claim, how come they are so unwilling to link their own accepted concept of 'microevolution' with the alleged inevitable consequences of 'social Darwinism'?

Third, the artificial selection (or "*sculpting the gene pool*" as Richard Dawkins so aptly refers to it) discussed and employed by Hitler cannot be blamed on Darwin because it predates him by a very long way. Breeding techniques had been employed successfully by livestock farmers, horticulturists, horse, dog and pigeon breeders etc for millennia. Studies of mitochondrial DNA, for example, suggest that dogs were first bred from wolves somewhere in the region of 12-15,000 years ago, an example of artificial selection which is still going on. At the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show in New York held in February 2011, no less than six new breeds were introduced. Indeed, Hitler's own pet German shepherd was the result of artificial selection. Although Darwin did write a book about artificial selection, 'The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication', published in 1868, none of the research was his own. He simply discussed knowledge which was already in the public domain, apart from Chapter 27, which briefly outlines some of his own speculative ideas on heredity.

Fourth, although Darwin does, in the 'Descent of Man' discuss the possibility of a blind utilitarian ethics based on natural selection he was shrewd enough to appreciate that natural selection doubtless also evolved overtly caring and altruistic behaviours, at least in species that had developed sufficient intelligence to develop social instincts such as cooperative effort. Sympathy, Darwin writes in the 'Descent of Man':

*".....can hardly be doubted was originally developed through natural selection as one of the most important elements of the social instincts".*

Indeed Darwin devotes much of Chapter 5 of the 'Descent of Man' arguing that a progression in morality is not only inevitable but necessary to the survival of human beings. We now know that Darwin was likely correct. Altruistic behaviours can readily be observed in non-human primates (there is even good evidence that some species have some degree of sentience) and there is growing evidence that they existed in some proto-human species too. We commonly observe three distinct evolutionary mechanisms resulting in 'moral' or altruistic behaviours from one member of a species toward others. Furthermore, *Homo sapiens* are producers of these altruistic behaviours *par excellence*. There is the obvious case of altruism toward those with whom we share some immediate genetic inheritance. Groups of genetically related individuals commonly act in unison, particularly when competing with non-kin out-groups. Next, there is reciprocation, or the bestowing of favours with the expectation of some future payback. In addition to these two broad behaviour patterns, there is the paradox of 'true altruism', observed thus far only in humans, where individuals act in such a way that they sacrifice themselves (or more accurately their reproductive potential) to aid a non-kin individual or group. It is highly unlikely that 'true altruism' is selected for in any direct sense as the trait would not confer any obvious selection benefit. Psychologists have noted that such strong altruistic behaviours are invariably automatic. That is, they are not accompanied by any conscious concepts or calculations of gain or reward. This is surely an example of Dawkins' observation that humans are perfectly able to deplore any "*moral implications*" of natural selection and concern ourselves, both consciously and unconsciously with "*fighting against them*", in contrast to the simplistic, calculating, bleak and dark view of human nature that Christian fundamentalism suggests we possess.

The term 'social Darwinism' was popularised by the American historian Richard Hofstadter in the title of his book 'Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860-1915' published in 1944 (though he had previously used it in a paper published three years earlier). Coming from the political left, he intended the term to be derogatory in his criticism of free market economics and especially American style capitalism prevalent during the 1920s and 1930s. Hofstadter's main premise, still relevant today, was that by the early 20th century the concept of 'Darwinian' principles had become almost meaningless within social and political theory as they had been annexed by groups of all complexions, often in ways which demonstrated a limited understanding of the actual science or even the ethical values of Darwin himself. Thus the irony that he was coining a term for a concept that he thought had died. Particularly interesting in light of the Darwin-Hitler link is that, despite being Jewish and an ardent anti-fascist and writing his book during the Nazi era, we would expect him to make great play of the role of Darwinism in the build-up to Nazi

thought. However, he deemed the contribution to be so irrelevant that he made no mention of it at all. Indeed, he actually makes little mention of Darwin at all. Furthermore, Hofstadter had little time for biological explanations in the social sciences generally and in particular considered biological explanations of human action to be "*illegitimate and dangerous*." One might therefore expect him to exhibit a bias against Darwin aimed at the person, yet he exonerates Darwin from blame for 'social Darwinism':

*"If there were, in Darwin's writings, texts for rugged individualists, those who stood for social solidarity and fraternity could, however, match them text for text with some to spare."*

Although the earliest documented use of the phrase 'Social Darwinism' is thought to have occurred in Joseph Fisher's "A History of Landholding in Ireland," (1877) the term was very rarely employed before Hofstadter used it in the title of his first book. Bibliometric analyses show just how rare the term was in the English language, at least. Between 1877 and 1916 only eleven instances can be found in published literature and from 1916 to Hofstadter's book only 49 articles and reviews (and no books) include the term (Hodgson, 2004). Notably, only two pre-Hofstadter uses of the term had been applied to Herbert Spencer and his notion of 'survival of the fittest', it being most commonly used to refer to competition among groups than to competition between individuals within a group. Many examples of the use of the phrase 'social Darwinism' in the decades building up to the coalescence of Nazi Party principles were actually highly critical of the validity of the notion. For example, Lester Ward, who rejected Spencer's support of laissez-fair economics stated as early as 1907:

*"I have never seen any distinctively Darwinian principle appealed to in discussions of 'social Darwinism.' It is therefore wholly inappropriate to characterize as social Darwinism the laissez faire doctrine of political economists .....That laissez faire doctrine is false and not sustained by biological principles I freely admit and have abundantly shown, but the fallacy involved is to be found in an entirely different department of scientific investigation."*

Ward's quote, effectively rescuing Darwin (and biological principles in general) from 'social Darwinism' is especially pertinent here for two reasons. First, Ward was not at all a Darwinian, he was a Lamarckian. Second, Ward's ideas on race and eugenics were remarkably similar to those of Hitler. An early advocate of eugenics, he stated in his presidential address to the Biological Society of Washington (1891) that the:

*".....crime of perpetuating the least taint of hereditary disease, insanity or other serious defect [should be prevented] by a practical and successful stirpiculture."*

Later (1913), he wrote:

*".....artificial selection has given to man the most that he possesses of value in the organic products of the earth. May not men and women be selected as well as sheep and horses?.....At least we should by a rigid selection stamp out of the future all the wholly unworthy elements."*

Note that Ward correctly employs the term 'artificial selection' when discussing eugenics and not, as Christian fundamentalists are erroneously apt to do, replace it with 'natural selection'. It is difficult to overstretch this point; Galton himself, when discussing eugenics, made it plain that he was not talking about the application of Darwinian natural selection. Rather, by employing eugenics he intended:

*"to **replace** natural selection by other processes that are more merciful and not less effective."* (1908)

My bold. Ward also considered that:

*".....war has been the chief and leading condition of human progress.....when races stop struggling progress ceases".*

From his book 'Pure Sociology' (1903). Even more pertinent is the fact that when fellow sociologist Jacques Novicow labelled Ward as a 'social Darwinist' precisely because of his attitude to race conflict, Ward explicitly denied that he was a Darwinist (Bellomy, 1984). Hofstadter's ghost does live on. Modern American anti-Darwinian Christian fundamentalists, nearly all advocates of unfettered free market economics, have unwittingly, yet effectively hijacked a term originally aimed perjoratively at their own views, in order to ideologically link Darwin with Hitler, while neither fully understanding the actual science or the ethical values of Darwin himself. They are thus a prime example of a group that Hofstadter would consider to be utilising 'social Darwinistic' traits.

Indeed, Joseph Palermo, an historian from Sacramento State University, wittily described the 2012 American Republican Party National Convention in an article in the Huffington Post as *“social Darwinism meets theocracy”*.

Soon after being voted into power, in July 1933, Hitler signed into law the ‘Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses’ or ‘Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring’. This act required that people suffering from a wide range of illnesses, including but not limited to hereditary deformities, blindness and deafness or mental illnesses such as manic-depression (now bipolar disorder) and schizophrenia, be sterilised to eliminate the possibility of their descendants becoming a burden on the state and wider society. This was followed, on the imminent outbreak of war in 1939, by a decree ordering the widespread euthanasia of the chronically ill and disabled, starting with babies and young infants, but eventually progressing to adults, and soon afterward, during wartime, by the ‘Holocaust’, the mass killing of primarily non-Aryan ethnic groups, especially Jews, across much of Germany and German-held territory. It is estimated that 12 million non-combatants died, approximately 50% of whom were Jews, the rest a wide range of humanity including, but not limited to Gypsies, homosexuals, atheists, communists, Jehovah’s witnesses, Christian clergy who publicly opposed Hitler’s policies and various other opponents of the Nazi regime.

In response, the French social theorist Michel Foucault, writing in his book ‘The Will To Knowledge’ (1976) argues that, with laws as drastic and far-reaching as these, the thousand-year Reich was a pipedream. The Nazi regime could not have prevailed for long, even without the allied war efforts, as Nazi social policies were inherently unsustainable, short-sighted and illogical. On the one hand, although they had created a society which had perfected 19th century techniques of social discipline, on another level they were:

*“.....a society of blood.....an absolutely suicidal state”* with an *“oneiric exaltation”* of savagery in *“the systematic genocide of others, and the risk to oneself of a total sacrifice.”*

There is no basis in which to claim that natural selection would similarly act to lead a population or species to its own extinction. What Hitler was attempting, whether it would have worked or not, was as far from natural selection as you can get. There is considerable irony in Hitler’s notion of purifying the Aryan bloodline. Because it was founded on religious ideology and pseudoscience underpinned by a lack of understanding of natural selection and principles of heredity it was likely doomed to fail. Any species that reproduces using sexual mechanisms has, despite smaller overall numbers of offspring per mating pair, a considerable advantage over asexual reproducing organisms in terms of the quality of progeny. Although molecular biology did not appear until after the Nazi era, the basic mechanisms of population genetics were certainly understood by biologists at the time (and even, to a lesser extent, by farmers with little or no formal education). They understood that limiting genetic variation by reducing the size of a gene pool makes certain traits more readily available but ultimately leaves a population ‘less fit’ and more susceptible to disease processes.

However, despite a plethora of evidence from agriculture and animal breeding programs, Hitler seemed to think that hybridisation was harmful, against the *“law of Nature”* (for some reason Hitler always capitalised ‘nature’) and *“a sin”*. Nothing could be further from the truth. Hybridization actually produces genetic vigour and more successful offspring. On the other hand breeding within a relatively small genetic pool is shown to result in reduced fertility, lower birth rates, higher infant mortality, shorter lifespan, the increased expression of heritable disorders and a reduction in immune system function. The very high levels of disability, deformity, and disease associated with pedigree dogs attests to this. Genetically pure races such as espoused by the likes of de Gobineau, Chamberlain, Riley, Coughlin and Hitler can also be likened to an agricultural monoculture. Compared to a human grouping with a larger genetic pool, a pure ‘race’ bred to be genetically distinct from other ‘races’ and then faced with a hardy enough disease or parasite to which its genetic makeup is particularly susceptible, would have its ability to survive compromised. If, as Christian fundamentalists claim, Nazi racial theory had truly been inspired by evolution by natural selection surely Hitler would have been encouraging German citizens to mate with as wide a variety of humans as possible, so as to increase the genetic fitness of their population by expanding their gene pool? Once again, though, Darwin unfairly gets the blame for Nazi policy. According to Weikart:

*“Darwinism provided the moral justification for infanticide, euthanasia, genocide, and other policies that had been (and thankfully still are) considered immoral by more conventional moral standards. Evolution provided the ultimate goals of his policy: the biological improvement of the human species”.*

This is a strawman. By his own admission (and much official Nazi drivel) Hitler was never attempting *“the biological improvement*

of the human species". Rather, he was attempting to return an inherently 'superior' segment of the human species, the Aryan, to the pure state that supposedly existed when it was created by God; before it's 'blood' had been contaminated by 'inferior races'. William Dembski and Benjamin Wiker, intelligent design creationists allied with the Discovery Institute and co-authors of 'Moral Darwinism: How We Become Hedonists' (2002) seem to suffer from the same reading comprehension deficit as Weikart. Their view is:

*"Darwin is the founder of the modern eugenics movement.....whether it is expressed through a call to weed out the unfit, breed more of the fit, abort the undesirable and deformed or manipulate our nature genetically through technology".*

Hang on a minute, haven't we heard this contradictory argument before? Are these people seriously saying that a blind mechanical process, having no inherent teleological design, purpose, intent or destiny (and which is morally undesirable because of that) somehow provided Hitler with an "ultimate goal"? What kind of logic is this? And even if this were somehow even a realistic concept, didn't the finder of such an incongruous mechanism describe the notion of eugenics as "an overwhelming present evil"? How can someone tell us that a behaviour is "an overwhelming evil" and subsequently be considered to have provided "the moral justification" for those who act in that way? Surely, at the very least Dembski and Wiker are obliged to tell us where Darwin actually expressed this "call to weed out the unfit" or "abort the undesirable". In true Christian fundamentalist fashion, however, they offer us no actual reference, because none exists. It is no more than their usual unsubstantiated assertion. Similar fare is, of course, served up by the Islamic creationist Harun Yahya:

*"The eugenics, euthanasia, forced sterilization, concentration camps, racial purity and gas chambers of the mid-20th century emerged as a result of the Darwin-Haeckel-Hitler coalition, representing the worst and most ruthless cruelty in the history of humanity".*

What "Darwin-Haeckel-Hitler coalition", you might well ask? And does it possibly bear any relation to Riley's "Jewish-Bolshevik-Darwinian conspiracy"? Or Andrews' Darwin-Nietzsche-Hitler consortium? Good grief, is there any group threatening the sanctity of the civilised world that Darwin was not in league with? One might even suspect, given the evidence presented that Darwin made a habit of threesomes! And doesn't the very fact that these threesomes differ according to the person making the claim ring alarm bells as to their credibility?

There is an oft-quoted link made between Darwin and his fellow Englishman labelled the 'father of eugenics'. Like Harun Yahya's views it is similarly laughable and, like many of Weikart and Bergman's claims, similarly tenuous. Francis Galton (1822-1911), creator of the first weather map, the founder of psychometrics and the statistical concepts of correlation and regression toward the mean, was also a proponent of eugenics, in fact he coined the term. Although Christian fundamentalists often cite his 1883 book 'Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development' (in which the term 'eugenics' first appeared; notably after Darwin's death) as evidence of Galton's inherent depravity, it is usually Darwin, because of his earlier discussions on similar issues in the 'Descent of Man', who is erroneously claimed to have been the first to propose eugenics as a cure for human social ills.

But this is yet another example of a blatantly dishonest claim. Apart from the fact that Darwin so strongly denounced what was to be labelled eugenics, it was actually Galton who first discussed the notion, on two separate occasions, before Darwin had even published a single word on the issue. The first was in two related articles entitled 'Hereditary Talent and Character Parts I and II' which had appeared in MacMillan's Magazine in 1865, and the second in his 1869 book 'Hereditary Genius'. Galton suggested (in the first of his 1865 papers) that British society should instigate a policy of 'positive eugenics' in which families be given marks according to their hereditary strengths. Families with higher ranks would then be encouraged to intermarry as early as possible and given financial incentives to do so. Galton didn't invent this idea. Far from it. In effect, these arrangements are not dissimilar to what had been going on for centuries between Europe's noble and wealthier families. Galton intended that these arrangements be widened and in a novel twist suggested that, historically, the churches were to some degree responsible for degeneration within humanity because they encouraged some of the more intelligent and able members of the younger generation to become celibate by becoming priests, monks and nuns. Haeckel similarly pointed out the folly of a society allowing the strongest, bravest and brightest young men to die in war while leaving the weakest males of a generation to freely reproduce.

A further spurious link in the Darwin-Galton chain, seemingly a compulsory one to be made by anti-Darwin commentators, is none other than the fact that Darwin and Galton shared a grandfather, the physician and anti-slavery advocate Erasmus Darwin, though no grandmother; they were thus second cousins (with a coefficient of relationship of only 3.13%; though they are most often erroneously referred to as first cousins; even Weikart makes this error). Why someone should even be considered morally

responsible for the opinions of their second cousin is never explained, however. Indeed, most English people would be at great pains to be able to name all of their second cousins, even in this age of social networking. And this family were no different. There was very little contact at all between the two families until 1853 when Darwin was 44 years of age. Then, he wrote a short note to Galton to congratulate him on publication of his book 'Narrative of an Explorer in Tropical South Africa'. It is clear from the content of the letter that the two men were largely unaware of each other. Darwin writes:

*"I live at a village called Down near Farnborough in Kent, & employ myself in Zoology.....The only member of your family whom I have seen for years, is Emma, who gave myself and wife a very cordial greeting at the British Association at Birmingham, some few years ago."*

He then inquires as to what Galton's two brothers are doing with their lives. The pair did continue corresponding afterward and it is in these letters that Darwin's distrust of the concept of 'race' is further amplified, as well as his doubts about Galton's notion of eugenics. Consider, for example, these excerpts. Galton writes:

*"The life of the individual is treated as of absolutely no importance, while the race is as everything".*

To which Darwin replies on January 4th 1873:

*".....but surely Nature does not more carefully regard races than individuals, as (I believe I have misunderstood what you mean) evidenced by the multitude of races and species which have become extinct. Would it not be truer to say that Nature cares only for the superior individuals."*

Darwin clearly disallowing the notion of superior races in a couple of short sentences. It is important also to note also that at no point in his books nor in his personal correspondence did Galton ever propose hard 'negative eugenics' in the Hitlerian sense, such as the mass murder of those people deemed undesirable. He only ever proposed the avoidance of negative traits and the promotion of positive traits. As he put it, eugenics':

*".....first object is to check the birth rate of the unfit instead of allowing them to come into being.....the second object is the improvement of the race by furthering the productivity of the fit by early marriages and the healthful rearing of children."*

Sentiments to which Darwin replied (January 4th, 1873):

*"As it is, there is much concealment of insanity and wickedness in families; and there would be more if there was a register. But the greatest difficulty, I think, would be in deciding who deserved to be on the register. How few are above mediocrity in health, strength, morals and intellect; and how difficult to judge on these latter heads. As far as I see, within the same large superior family, only a few of the children would deserve to be on the register; and these would naturally stick to their own families, so that the superior children of distinct families would have no good chance of associating much and forming a caste.....I doubt whether you have made clear how the families on the Register are to be kept pure or superior, and how they are to be in course of time still further improved."*

In other words, Darwin's clear attitude was that Galton's notions of even 'positive eugenics' was entirely unrealistic. Nevertheless, Galton was heavily criticised in some circles for not more stridently advocating 'negative eugenics'. One such critic was the English novelist H.G. Wells, an enthusiastic promoter of eugenics who, when asked about Galton's views, remarked in 1904:

*"I believe ... It is in the sterilisation of failure, and not in the selection of successes for breeding, that the possibility of an improvement of the human stock lies."*

The Nazis did implement a single policy of 'positive eugenics'. In their 'Lebensborn' project, set up in 1935, 'biologically fit' and 'racially pure' women were encouraged to have children with elite German soldiers. In return they were provided with maternity homes, superior medical care and financial assistance. The fact is that Nazi eugenics programs were far more characterised by being overtly 'negative' and as such cannot at all be considered Galtonian, and not at all Darwinian. Furthermore, as mentioned beforehand, Darwin discussed the subject of both positive and negative eugenics (without actually employing the term, of course), specifically in Chapter 21 of 'Descent of Man' as a possible misinterpretation of his findings. He clearly rejects eugenics as "evil" and "inhuman" and also points out difficulties in implementation as it would be impossible to agree on who should be a fair judge of

desirable traits. Again, from his letter to Galton, January 4th 1873:

*"I am not, however, so hopeful as you.....the greatest difficulty, I think, would be in deciding who deserved to be on the register."*

As it turns out Darwin was right once again. This lack of agreement "*in deciding who deserved to be on the register*" is just what happened when eugenics programs commenced in the 1920s in the United States. While Luther and Hitler both considered the Jewish people to be "*the vermin of society*", advocates of eugenics in other countries invented their own scapegoat peoples. With delicious irony, one such eugenics advocate, the Reverend Newell Dwight Hillis (1858-1929), a Congregationalist minister from New York, travelled throughout the country giving lectures calling for the sterilisation of America's German-derived citizens. In his 1918 publication '*The Blot on the Kaiser's Scutcheon*' he refers to Germans, in language not dissimilar to Luther, Hitler or Chamberlain's description of Jews, as "*brutes*" and "*orang-outangs*". The fact that different advocates of eugenics representing different social groups had differing ideas of what constituted good human stock demonstrates that, like the Christian polygenists before them, their criteria were not primarily based on objective scientific data, 'Darwinian' or otherwise, but on religious, political, cultural, subjective and aesthetic considerations. The Nazi criteria for who constituted an Aryan (or an honorary Aryan) was, of course, no different.

The Nazis had plenty of excuses for a moral basis for eugenics at their disposal. Twenty-seven US states had adopted eugenics laws based on Christian morality mixed with pseudoscientific ideas by the time Hitler had gained power and Hitler clearly stated in '*Mein Kampf*' that he made a particular study of American eugenics laws and programs. American business leaders and medical scientists travelled to Germany to share their knowledge of and plans for eugenics. Indeed, a pro-eugenics poster depicting a young blindfolded couple walking off the edge of a cliff was a common site in medical centres in Nazi Germany in the 1930s. It was not a product of the Nazi publicity machine. It had been copied directly from a poster campaign issued by the Louisiana Department of Public Health. Hitler was merely following their lead, attempting to legitimise his anti-Semitism by swathing it in a façade of pseudoscience, none of which bore the slightest resemblance to 'Darwinian' science.

This view of eugenics having both a knowledge- and a moral-base from outside of science was not confined to the Nazis. One prominent advocate of this view was the English Baptist pastor Frederick Brotherton Meyer (1847-1929). Meyer was author of the book '*Religion and Race Regeneration*' (1912; Hitler himself could have authored a book with that title). Meyer argued strongly that attempting any nationwide policy of eugenics based solely on scientific considerations was bound to fail. In his view:

*".....only one force supplies us with the inspiration and discipline necessary for achieving lasting race improvement: religion".*

Other important non-German moral advocates of eugenics were the English clergymen, Ernest Barnes (1874-1953), who was the Bishop of Birmingham from 1924 until his death, and the Reverends J.H.F Peile and John Percy Hinton. All three elucidated a Christian moral basis for both positive and negative eugenics. As a member of the House of Lords, Bishop Barnes petitioned the British government on a number of occasions to enact eugenics legislation, particularly that concerned with enforced sterilisation. As late as 1950 he referred in the UK Parliament to "*inferior stocks*" that were a "*menace to the future*". Peile authored what was then a highly influential paper '*Eugenics and the Church*' published in '*The Eugenics Review*' in 1909, later given as a talk at the '*Eugenics Education Society*'. He viewed Galton's positive eugenics as perfectly compatible with Christian philanthropy, but agreed also with some of milder versions of negative eugenics, describing the recent marriage of two deaf mutes as "*a triumph of unenlightened philanthropic effort*". Hinton on the other hand, was a particularly strong advocate of negative eugenics, apparently under the impression that "*mental deficiency is increasing by leaps and bounds*". In his 1935 book '*Sterilization: A Christian Approach*', which he co-authored with Josephine E. Calcutt and the prolific Christian author and theologian, Leslie Dixon Weatherhead, they stated:

*"We consider it a sin against the idea of personality and conscience to insist upon the propagation of degenerate and sick life, if means are available to oppose such a calamity. It seems blasphemy to imagine that the birth of sick children could be at all God's will and Divine providence".*

I don't think Hitler would have any problem with that kind of strong, positive Christianity. Indeed, a number of extracts from Hinton, Calcutt and Weatherhead's book were included in an unpublished German book manuscript ('*Eugenics and Christianity*:'

Questions of Sterilisation, Northernisation, Euthanasia, Marriage') being written by Karl Brandt, the co-head of the Nazi euthanasia program and, at one time, Hitler's personal physician. The manuscript came to light when it was accepted into evidence at the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg. Most pertinent to the present discussion is that neither Peile nor Hinton *et al* nor Brandt make any mention at all of either 'Darwin' or 'Darwinism' in their writing. Peile uses the term 'natural selection' once only, describing it in terms which make clear his disapproval of this aspect of the natural world:

*".....crude and wasteful, carried out at the cost of an amount of suffering which neither our instinct nor our reason will tolerate if we can prevent it."*

The Catholic Church has tended to denounce eugenics and any interference in natural procreation. Shortly before Hitler's rise to power Pope Pius XI had strongly reiterated that view in his 1931 Encyclical 'On Christian Marriage in Relation to Present Conditions, Needs, and Disorders of Society'. Nevertheless, some individual Catholic clergy did dissent, one of the most prominent being the moral theologian Josef Mayer, author of a 1930 pamphlet, 'Eugenics in Roman Catholic Literature'. Mayer was a member of the committee that agreed the 1933 'Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring'. This law had been drafted solely by the geneticist Hermann Muckermann who was an ex-Jesuit priest who had left his order six years earlier.

Nevertheless, whenever fundamentalist Christians acknowledge past Christian support for eugenics programs they invariably blame liberal or modernist tendencies within the churches (see Bergman's paper in the Journal of Creation, 2006, 'The Church Preaches Eugenics: A History of Church Support for Darwinism and Eugenics' for an outline of such views, as well as mention of eugenics support from liberal Jewish rabbis). This is a less than accurate picture, at least in the United States. What Bergman declines to discuss, for example, are the large numbers of anti-evolution Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers who enthusiastically competed in the many 'sermon contests' in favour of eugenics organised by the American Eugenics Society in the 1920s and who refused to marry couples where one or both partners had a physical infirmity or history of psychological illness. Clergymen like Barnes, Peile and Hinton were also considered perfectly mainstream, in this case, establishment Church of England. Bergman is surely aware of all this and chooses to argue from a parochial standpoint, misleading his readers by discussing only the opinions and activities of so-called 'liberal' American churchmen.

The fact remains that Darwin's discovery of natural selection and the practice of eugenics (whether positive or negative) are polar opposites in terms of underlying 'motivations'. To labour this point to destruction: arguably the most consequential factor in natural selection, both scientifically and philosophically, is that it operates automatically and needs no conscious agent. It is a blind mechanical process, having no inherent teleological design, purpose, intent or destiny. Indeed, evolutionary processes are able to, and have, exploited any DNA, regardless of where it comes from. Because of this, the effects of natural selection can only ever be identified in retrospect. Indeed, this unteleological aspect of evolution is invariably portrayed by creationists as its cardinal philosophical evil. What Hitler and other eugenicists attempted to do was the exact opposite to the evolutionary mechanism proposed by Darwin; they were in effect acting as a deity might, purposefully planning and designing the characteristics of future generations of people in order to determine their destiny. Artificially selecting for the future. Eugenics, whether in the form of anti-miscegenation laws, church rules about not marrying couple where one or both are deaf or otherwise impaired, or the deliberate sterilisation or slaughter of those deemed unsuitable, is all an attempt at controlled selective breeding or artificial selection. It is not difficult to see how eugenicists could conceive themselves as doing, or at least 'helping along' God's work, something many of the clergy cited seemed to have no difficulty understanding. Ironically, probably the oldest available text that describes the benefits of eugenics is a passage from the fundamentalist's favourite book, Genesis 30:31-43:

*"What shall I give you?" he asked. "Don't give me anything," Jacob replied. "But if you will do this one thing for me, I will go on tending your flocks and watching over them: Let me go through all your flocks today and remove from them every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-coloured lamb and every spotted or speckled goat. They will be my wages. And my honesty will testify for me in the future, whenever you check on the wages you have paid me. Any goat in my possession that is not speckled or spotted, or any lamb that is not dark-coloured, will be considered stolen." "Agreed," said Laban. "Let it be as you have said." That same day he removed all the male goats that were streaked or spotted, and all the speckled or spotted female goats (all that had white on them) and all the dark-coloured lambs, and he placed them in the care of his sons. Then he put a three-day journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob continued to tend the rest of Laban's flocks. Jacob, however, took fresh-cut branches from poplar, almond and plane trees and made white stripes on them by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches. Then he placed the peeled branches in all the watering troughs, so that they would be directly in front of the flocks when they came to drink. When the flocks were in heat and came to drink, they mated in front of the branches. And they bore young that were streaked or speckled or spotted. Jacob set apart the young of the flock by themselves, but made the*



*rest face the streaked and dark-colored animals that belonged to Laban. Thus he made separate flocks for himself and did not put them with Laban's animals. Whenever the stronger females were in heat, Jacob would place the branches in the troughs in front of the animals so they would mate near the branches, but if the animals were weak, he would not place them there. So the weak animals went to Laban and the strong ones to Jacob. In this way the man grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks, and female and male servants, and camels and donkeys".*

Discussing the knowledge of eugenics held by the ancient Jews, Rabbi Max Reichler one of the authors in 'Jewish Eugenics and Other Essays' (1916) had this to say:

*"To be sure eugenics as a science could hardly have existed among ancient Jews; but many eugenic rules were certainly incorporated in the large collection of Biblical and Rabbinical laws. Indeed there are clear indications of a conscious effort to utilize all influences that might improve the inborn qualities of the Jewish races, and to guard against any practice that might vitiate the purity of the race or 'impair the racial qualities of future generations' either physically, mentally, or morally...The very founder of the Jewish race, the patriarch Abraham, recognized the importance of certain inherited qualities, and insisted that the wife of his 'only beloved son' should not come from 'the daughters of the Canaanites,' but from the seed of a superior stock".*

What Reichler is exclaiming here is exactly what Julius Streicher pointed out in his defence at the Nuremberg trials. Putting aside the typical Biblical nonsense about the genetic effects of animals mating in front of peeled branches, the history of agriculture and animal breeding demonstrates that the basic knowledge underlying eugenics was certainly known and used several thousand years ago. Hitler just attempted to substitute people for goats and dogs in his attempt to repurify the 'master race' of people. The mechanisms of heredity are the same. And, once again, it is emphatically not based on Darwin's findings, and this is a fact whether you believe in the genetic effects of peeled branches or not.

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