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Published in the Slovak Republic  
 Russian Journal of Sociology  
 Has been issued since 2015.  
 ISSN: 2410-9118  
 E-ISSN 2413-7545  
 2017, 3(1): 4-16

DOI: 10.13187/rjs.2017.1.4  
[www.ejournal32.com](http://www.ejournal32.com)



## Articles and Statements

UDC 316

### **Fascism and Nazism as Transitional Phenomena from Traditional to Modern Society. The Contribution of the Cognitive-Developmental Approach to the Explanation of the Evolution of Politics**

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#### **Abstract**

The Western world two, three or four generations ago manifested forms of the political life that is widely separated from these forms that prevail today. European and other nations often preferred authoritarian regimes to democracy, sustained colonies and imperialistic systems, tended to antisemitic and other prejudices, and led horrifying wars. The article shows that the so-called humanitarian revolution of the past decades, which has ameliorated our lives, exhibits psychological changes of modern humans measurable by modern psychological theories and methods. The cognitive-developmental approach or structure-genetic theory programme bases the historical anthropology and delivers the decisive theory to explain that what happened in history. The historical disciplines are requested to surmount the idea that the human being across continents and times has always had the same internal nature.

**Keywords:** nation, fascism, nazism, human, revolution.

#### **1. Introduction**

The world of mind, morals, and politics has changed a lot during the past 100 years. The Western world, a 100 years ago, had colonized the biggest part of the non-Western world, had conquered, occupied and ruled hundreds of nations and territories. These colonized peoples lived under the government of the imperialistic nations, being oppressed and exploited. In 1909, the British Empire roughly ruled 25 % of the earth's surface, being three times bigger than the French Empire and ten times bigger than the German Empire. The Europeans believed to have the right and the duty to govern the non-Western world by authoritarian methods, which contradict to every democratic standard (Ferguson, 2003: 240-241; Knopp, 2010).

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Europeans had conquered the huge territory of North America and had killed or removed the indigenous Indians from their territories. The Russians had seized the last parts of North Asia in that century, having accomplished a conquest, which belong to the biggest campaigns European peoples had ever conducted. On the whole, conquest, oppression,

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exploitation, and enormous losses of lives during wars belonged to the history of European peoples in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The two World Wars are parts of this imperialistic history of Europe. Nazi Germany wanted to establish a huge Empire on the costs of the Russian territory, to dominate then the whole world in a subsequent campaign of wars. The Britons, in both wars, wanted to stop Germany from becoming a world power because they saw their Empire threatened by a growing competitor (Scheil, 2005; Kershaw, 2007; Hillgruber, 1982; Churchill, 2010: 125, 366; Ferguson, 2004: 292-300). Italy wanted to erect an empire in the Mediterranean and Africa, and Japan across the Pacific Ocean. Altogether, war, conquest, oppression, and colonization defined not only the international relations between Western and non-Western nations but also those between the most advanced nations themselves. Whole Europe feared to become a German province or colony, while Germany was scared of a future overweight of the Russians and the North Americans (Scheil, 2005; Hillgruber, 1982; Kershaw, 2007; Fest, 2004: 909; Baker, 2009: 33-34). The international political system did not know any guaranty for the stability of any national territory, sovereignty of nation, and liberty rights or democracy granted to the nations. The fear of outbursting wars was great in Europe, especially from 1890 – 1914 and again from 1933 onwards.

The lack of freedom, security and liberty rights was not only part of the international system but also of the intranational system. There were only three democracies but 17 monarchies in Europe in 1914. The democratization process came into being with the first years of the new century. Already in 1919, there were 13 monarchies and 13 democracies in Europe (Bracher 1993: 72). The democratic transformation of Europe needed generations. Though, high percentages of people objected to the ideas and practices of democracy, preferring authoritarian regimes such as monarchy, dictatorship or Führerstaat. The Fascist movements right across Europe and elsewhere are a part of this resistance, backward-led turnaround, reactionary denial of democracy, and of the try to restore authoritarian regimes against the fresh establishment of democracies (Nolte, 1990; Kershaw, 1999: 30; Haffner 2001a: 72, 2001b: 237; Bracher, 1993: 270).

Thus, Fascism and Nazism are not as strange as one might assume at first glance but are rather some kind of manifestation of the national and international developments of that time. The anti-democratic and authoritarian tendencies of Fascism reflect the insecure status of the new democracy. The imperialistic ambitions especially of Hitler and Mussolini, Stalin and Churchill or of the Japanese government reflect the age of colonialism and imperialism and the wish to participate and to dominate in the imperialistic division of the world.

Altogether, the whole political life and moral climate of the near past both in national and international politics differ a lot from those forms that prevail today. Listening a speech of Mussolini or Hitler, reading reports on prosecution of dissidents or jews or on French or British activities in their colonies, considering the readiness to lead wars, etc. show us a world which is not only submerged now but seems not to have a chance to can reappear ever. For example, Kershaw (Kershaw, 1999: 326) maintains that any revival of the Führerkult is practically unthinkable. It seems to be impossible that a world could emerge again where a dictator pronounces (or writes in his book sold a million copies before 1939) the Aryans should dominate the world and should lead war to conquer the world, followed by his obedient generals and his whole nation. However, many historians would now object and contend that these incidents could happen again when the same circumstances appeared again. They would justify their contention by saying the human being is now the same as he or she was around 1900 or 1940.

However, some authors such as S. Pinker (Pinker, 2011: 260-261, 367-373, 497) or R. Dawkins (Dawkins, 2008: 368-376), on discussing politics and morals of the Western world in the past 100 years, write that the minds of people have changed dramatically and have surmounted the lower standards of the previous generations. They contend that the moral and political consciousness of the peoples has advanced. The most advanced intellectuals 100 years ago would belong to the reactionary group of today. Many of them were racists or refuted to give rights to women, working class members or even whole nations. Many intellectuals legitimated the right to lead wars. T. Roosevelt said that 9 of 10 Indians have deserved to be killed and many other defended genocides, wars, and oppression. Some kind of humanitarian revolution has taken place especially between 1950 and today. Pinker and Dawkins write that something in the people's psyche must have changed. Pinker says, basing on Elias' theory of civilization, that people are today less primitive and childish than two or three generations before. Though, both authors complain not to have the right theory to explain this obvious trend of moral progress and political

advancement. Besides, the description of Pinker and Dawkins matches to remarks of C. Darwin (1998) of 1872 where he wrote, basing on Lubbock and Tylor, that civilization, as some kind of moral progress, is a very recent phenomenon of the era of Enlightenment or even later on, a phenomenon much distant from and superior to the moral conditions of the Roman Empire with its cruel arena games.

Historians could object to Pinker and Dawkins saying that people have improved somewhat their habits and customs in consequence of their horrifying experiences with violence and war, of international treaties and associations, of better experience with democracy, of the rise of former colonies and of better living conditions and education – but have not changed their internal psyche or nature.

However, I think that the transformation does not only concern changed customs and processed experiences and, moreover, that the theory already exists after which Pinker and Dawkins are looking for. The structure-genetic theory programme, basing on Piagetian cross-cultural psychology, has indeed proven of the psychological and moral advancement of the Europeans (and of many other peoples of the world) in the past few generations. In fact, modern peoples have changed their internal nature and their core structures of psyche. They have not only changed or improved their knowledge, values, habits, customs, ideas, and experiences. They have risen their “mental age”, their “developmental stage” and their corresponding “psychological structures”. On the whole, the peoples of the most advanced nations of 1900 or 1940 stood on measurably lower psychological stages than their descendants of today. This is the reason for racism, imperialism, colonialism, anti-liberal political consciousness, dictatorship, anti-humanism, antisemitism, and the other extreme forms of irrationality which prevailed at that time. Modern peoples are separated from the former generations by a huge psychological gap. This is the cause why we cannot any more understand how the people could adore Hitler or Churchill and his speeches or activities, how they could deny democracy and humanism, and how they could readily go into terrible war campaigns. Thus, perished are not only the former generations but also their psychological structures. They haven't survived in modern people's brains and minds.

## **2. Discussion**

### **2.1. Piagetian Cross-Cultural Psychology as Historical Anthropology**

The first generations of child or developmental psychologists recognized and described resemblances between children on the one side and adults who live in archaic, traditional or premodern societies (folk societies to use a term of R. Redfield) on the other side. F. Schultze (1900) and H. Werner (1926/1948) delivered breakthroughs with this regard as they contributed complete monographs dedicated to this comparison. They showed the resemblances right across the whole psyche and personality such as reasoning, logic, perception, will, emotion, morals, etc. The next big step followed with Jean Piaget who described the resemblances between the two groups right across the understanding of logic, physics, social issues, morals, and politics, that is right across the whole psychology. Piaget distinguished four stages of human development, the sensorymotor stage, the preoperational stage, the stage of concrete operations and the stage of formal operations.

The Piagetian Cross-Cultural Psychology conducted more than 1000 empirical studies right across the five continents in the past 80 years in order to examine the cross-cultural validity of Piaget's stage theory of human development. The result was that every human being certainly goes through the first two stages. While modern humans pass at least the third stage of concrete operations, premodern adults reach this stage only to a certain degree or sometimes not at all. While modern adults attain at least the lower phases of the adolescent stage of formal operations, premodern adults practically do not reach this last stage. This implies that the “mental age” or “developmental age” of premodern humans sways between the fifth and the 12<sup>th</sup> year of age, while that of modern humans sways between the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> year of age. Every year between 0-20 can be a full developmental year, making possible the establishment of still higher psychological structures. On the whole, modern humans acquire 5, 10 or even more developmental years more than premodern humans do. The ultimate factor behind this human development is the brain development. Only modern societies with their school facilities, job experiences, and further cultural peculiarities force and attract people to attain the formal stage, while folk societies do not enable people to rise their psychological structures beyond the preoperational or concrete

operational stages (Dasen, Berry 1974; Dasen, 1977; Hallpike, 1979; Luria, 1982; Mogdil, Mogdil 1976; Piaget, 1974; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009a, 2011, 2012a, b, 2013a, b).

**Table 1.** Human development and history

Typical age (in modern societies)	Piagetian stage of psychological development	Societal evolution	Some characteristics of reason and practice
From birth to 2 years	Sensorymotor stage	Mammal societies	Practical intelligence in space and time.
2-8	Preoperational stage	Some premodern societies	Weak reasoning abilities and low sense for reality. Animistic understanding of nature; everything is alive. Belief in man-made magical power over things and beings. Practise of oracles and ordeals, punishment of unintended consequences, and belief in eternal and divine rules (non-differentiation between nature and society). Belief in myths and fairy tales. Adherence to authorities and support of hierarchies. God himself rules law and government. Support of severe punishment. Weak tolerance of deviating opinions.
6-12	Stage of concrete operations	Some premodern societies	Belief in man-made magic disappears gradually. Animistic schemes and other irrational belief systems still persist somewhat. Attenuation of the adherence to unilateral social relations and hierarchies.
10-20	Stage of formal operations	Modern, industrial societies	The evolution of rational, combinatoric, systematic, and logical structures of reason takes place. The preconditions to the rational and scientific worldview emerge. Disappearance of magical beliefs, animistic schemes, and other forms of mysticism. Disenchantment of the worldview. Evolution of understanding for humanism, democracy, tolerance and human rights. Enlightenment and rationality shape the adolescent stage.

Hallpike (1979) was the first to draw the decisive consequences by defining that premodern humans share with children their psychological structures but differ from them by their life experience and knowledge. Next to Hallpike and me, some other authors contributed to this theory programm likewise. The historian C. Radding (1985) interpreted the medieval culture in the light of the lower psychological stages, thereby explaining the authoritarian structures, the philosophical debates and the ordeal practices by the means of developmental psychology. Don Le Pan (1989) explained the English history of literature and S. Gablik (1976) explained the history of arts in Piagetian terms. L. Ibarra (2007) reconstructed the Maya culture basing on the new theory and J. Ziégler (1968) the problems of the developmental regions. J. Habermas (1976) reconstructed the historical evolution of law and morals, politics and sciences in Piagetian terms.

In the past 30 years, basing on 13 books and many more articles, I reconstructed the whole history of mankind, the history of population, economy, society, culture, law, morals, politics, sciences, philosophy, religion, literature, violence, etc. in the light of the cognitive-developmental approach. The structure-genetic theory programme bases, according to my view, the historical disciplines in a revolutionary way comparable to the role of evolutionary theory to biology or of Newtonian mechanics to physics. It explains endless chains of historical and ethnological phenomena. The overweight of magic and superstition, the belief in oracles, witches, and sorcerers, the animistic worldview and the belief in ghosts and fairy tales in premodern cultures can be

explained in developmental terms. Conversely, the rise of the modern sciences, the era of Enlightenment, modern humanism, democracy and liberty rights, etc. have originated in the emergence of the adolescent stage of formal operations in some intellectual circles in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and then, later on, spreading to wider circles of society and people (Habermas, 1976; Hallpike, 1979, 2004; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009a, 2011, 2012a, 2013a, 2014a, b, c, d).

## **2.2. The continuous and stepwise trend of modernization and psychological development**

According to Piaget, some scientists and philosophers of the 17<sup>th</sup> century were the first to establish the adolescent stage of formal operations. The era of Enlightenment and the emergence of sciences during the 18<sup>th</sup> century are carried by those structures that are typical for the formal operational stage. These authors criticized the childlike magical-animistic understanding of the world; they objected to the belief in witches and sorcerers, superstitions and ghosts. The official or public culture made a great jump from childish psychological stages to adolescent stages of psyche with their prevalence of empirical-causal types of explanation. Although the 19<sup>th</sup> century is the century in which the sciences defeated the medieval magical-animistic and fairy tale worldview, the common people needed many more generations to follow the notions the intellectual elite had already gained. Of course, the common people did not adhere to the archaic views and customs to the same rate as medieval people had done but they did not overthrow the archaic rites and ideas within a single generation, not even in a short row of generations. The last shadows of the belief in witches, sorcerers, ghosts and other forms of superstition are to find in Europe in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A lot of archaic rituals, usually to find among the Australian Aborigines or the Black Africans in their indigenous cultures, still have existed in Europe around 1850 or even 1900. Of course, often practised in attenuated forms and supported only by some percentages of people, not as an undoubted everyday belief as in truly archaic societies. For example, in the period mentioned many Germans still believed in the evil eye, in magical formulas against bullets, in oracles and ordeals, in sympathetic connections between foot print and person, clothes and person, usable for magical operations, etc. Some people still brought sacrifices to rivers, wind and fire. Own relatives were charged of having committed magical attacks, bringing sickness and death, as in the most archaic cultures of the world (Wuttke, 1860: 48, 75, 80, 83, 87, 112-120; Frazer, 1994; Oesterdiekhoff, 2013a: 241-250).

According to the notions of stage theory, these data of the European ethnology are clear indicators that the 19<sup>th</sup> century Germans (or Europeans) stood on intermediary psychological stages between people of strictly premodern or folk societies and people of the today's most advanced nations. These data are supported by empirical surveys made in South Italy around 1960, where many or even most of the adults did not attain the formal operational stage (Peluffo, 1967). Piagetian data from big cities within developing countries of 1960-1980 or from peasant cultures in the USSR of 1933 make it plausible too, that high percentages of the Europeans around 1900 or even later did not attain the formal operational stage (Luria, 1982; Freitag, 1983; Dasen, 1977; Oesterdiekhoff, 2012a, b, 2013a, b; Flynn, 2007).

There are, of course, no direct empirical Piagetian data upon the Europeans of 1850 or 1920 but we have a lot of comparable psychometric intelligence research data. According to modern adjustments, every European people before 1930 had IQ scores of below 75. The biggest gains of intelligence happened between 1950 and 1990, due to more qualified school education, richer job requirements, etc. Humans with an IQ of 75, however, have the mental age of adolescents aged 13 roughly. These data clearly show that European peoples two or three generations ago stood on lower psychological stages, having not fully accomplished the formal operational stage (Flynn, 2007; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009a, 2011, 2012a, b).

I strongly maintain that the totally different political and moral climate of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century with its authoritarian structures, political and ideological extremism, antisemitism, imperialism, nationalism, and war mentality originates in these lower psychological stages of the peoples. That implies developmental psychology is the main reference point to explain political developments. Rosenberg and co-authors wrote a book to show the relevance of developmental psychology to base the political sciences: "We therefore conclude that only genetic-epistemological theories currently provide the psychological theory and cross-cultural validity (not to mention the



normative support) required for a normative-psychological theory underlying a general political development.” (Rosenberg et al., 1988: 160).

### 2.3. Führerkult and democracy

Piaget found out that children initially deny democracy and democratic standards, preferring authoritarian forms of government. They believe that nature and society are unchangeable, eternal, and holy. As one cannot change physical laws it is not possible to change customs, manners, laws, and ethics, even not the rules to play marbles. Every custom is made by god, ancestors, or the father. Children themselves are not allowed to change rules. They have to obey that what authorities explain and prescribe. On the other hand, children connect this holy understanding of social life with a scanty rule practice. They scarcely understand, for example, the rules for marble games when they are still young. In modern societies, children of the second decade of life change their attitudes to rules and customs. They assume to have the right to change rules and argue that rules' legitimacy solely depends from their democratic origination. In the same time, they improve their rule practice. On the whole, while children of the first decade combine the holy law-ethos with a scanty practice, children and teenagers of the second decade link democracy with a better civil life or social praxis (Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1993; Damon, 1977).

Piagetian cross-cultural psychology discovered that adults of folk societies do not surmount the children's understanding of laws and customs. Indigenous peoples of America, peasant societies in Asia or illiterate residents in big cities of Brasil believe customs and laws are unchangeable and made by god or ancestors (Freitag, 1983; Havighurst, Neugarten, 1955; Hallpike, 2004; Kern, 1952; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009a, 2011, 2013a, 2014c, 2015). The customary laws in folk societies right across the five continents base on children's law understanding. The fundamentalistic Islamic law comprehension connects likewise the idea of the holy law with the denial of democracy. It is the political and religious Führer (king, Ayatollah, Imam, etc.) alone who decides and rules – in the name of god. Accordingly, the civil life in these countries is terrible.

Likewise (modern) children initially identify state and government with the policeman (on the local level) and with the president or prime minister (on the national level). They initially believe – in democratic nations – that the president or prime minister rules the country alone, makes the laws, controls the whole country, causes wealth, security, etc. as if he was some kind of dictator or god. “When children at a young age are asked in separate items about who makes the laws, runs the country, helps the country most, best represents the government, or, in a political context, who helps you most, the responses consistently favour the President.

In subsequent tests of other children, they uniformly see the President possessed of all the virtues: benign, wise, helpful, concerned for the welfare of others, protective, powerful, good, and honest”. (Easton, Hess 1962: 241-242). Small children do not understand and deny liberty rights, tolerance with dissidents, the right to object to the state, etc. They are in favour of a strict government, where one voice commands all others and does not allow deviations. Developmental psychology shows, that the older (modern) children are, the more they develop the intellectual maturity to understand both the difficulties and the possibilities of democracy and its characteristics tolerance, human rights, freedom, and debates (Adelson, Bell 1970; Connell, 1971; Damon, 1977; Selman, 1980; Tapp, Kohlberg 1971; Rindermann, 2008).

Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau were the first authors in history who described the institutional framework and the principles of democracy. Beforehand the political life and the political philosophies of the whole mankind did not base on those ideas the three thinkers had developed. From 1789 onwards the ideas started to conquer the political systems. Both the evolution of democratic theory and democratic states must be interpreted in terms of psychological development. The political consciousness of mankind developed beyond children's minds. However, in the transitional phases, these developments are insecure, instabile, and always threatened by setbacks or turnarounds. This was the situation in Europe especially between 1800 and 1950 (Oesterdiekhoff, 2015, 2013a: 391-494).

The Catholic Church in Europe objected to democracy by 1945, likewise the conservative and fascist parties. In Germany after 1919, many political parties wanted to remove the new democratic system. From 1930 onwards, the chancellors Schleicher, Brüning and von Papen wanted to replace the republic by monarchy or aristocracy and the majority of the people were in search of a strong man who ruled them as a Führer (Kershaw, 1999; Haffner, 2001a: 72, 2001b: 208, 220, 237;

Bracher 1993: 270; Fest, 2004). After 1933 Hitler became the most beloved and adored leader Germany ever had for centuries. Greater parts or often the majority of the people were fully convinced that god or the providence had sent Hitler to rescue his people, to make Germany strong again and to recover economy, society, and culture. They believed more and more that he knew better things than anybody else, that his unique intelligence, boldness, wisdom, and dedication was higher than that of every other man. They believed that he could not make any faults but is a perfect man without any deficiencies. Thus, the people wanted that he alone decides over them and that he doesn't asks them what they want to. "Führer befiehl – wir folgen Dir". The idea was widespread that there is a total identity of Hitler, people, and country. Accordingly, the Nazis, for example Goebbels, wanted to eradicate "1789" (Nolte, 1990; Kershaw, 1999: 30-75, 324; Bracher 1993: 371; Fest, 2004).

Hitler was an object of a true religious cult. His adherents saw him as some kind of a holy man or even more. It was a common topos to compare him with Jesus who also had promised a future Reich and the redemption of the evils (Fest, 2004; Kershaw, 1999: 33, 35, 43, 46, 56, 74, 106, 135; Nolte, 1990). In Germany beforehand, Bismarck was object of a religious cult. After 1945, this tradition found its total end not only in Germany but in whole Europe. Today we have such phenomena still in Venezuela (Hugo Chavez after his death) or in Africa. In former times, it was a worldwide phenomenon to identify political leaders with holy men or with gods. European medieval kings usually were identified with Jesus, being his successor or reincarnation (Frazer, 1994; Oesterdiekhoff, 2013a: 417-432).

The civil life in Nazi Germany was terrible like as it uses to be in a dictatorship or authoritarian system. The Germans combined a holy understanding of leadership with a scanty social praxis as all authoritarian regimes have ever done in history. Fascism in Europe was the last step of the authoritarian political structures that governed the continent since millenia. Regarding leaders in religious terms and attributing them the total power traces back to the most archaic stages of history. To my opinion, only developmental psychology can explain this perished world of political life. The Germans (Europeans) stood on intermediary psychological stages also regarding their development of political consciousness.

#### 2.4. Racism

In the night following the Machtergreifung of 30.1.1933 Hitler said that now the Aryan world revolution has begun with the target of the total world dominance of the Aryans over all other races, over the jews and the coloured peoples. He saw, following the racial theories of Gobineau, Chamberlain and others, the world history as a struggle where the biologically stronger races prevail while the weaker ones perish. The advancement of a race depends from its blood purity, from the avoidance of genetic contributions of inferior races. Hitler, as many of his contemporaries too, saw the modern, industrial civilization as a proof of the supreme biological or racial status of the Aryans (the German or Nordic races) while he estimated that the lower races (the red, black and yellow ones) are incapable to civilization and therefore destined to perish. Furthermore, the Aryans are destined to master the world as long as the inferior races are still allowed to live as slaves. The strongest race or nation will master the world as the Romans dominated the Mediterranean as a sample of colonies or provinces. Only war against every continent can procure this world dominance of the Aryans or the Germans. This programme, to find in "Mein Kampf" and even more in his so-called second book of 1928, Hitler repeated already on the first day of his chancellorship (Hillgruber, 1982; Kershaw, 2007; Giordano, 2004: 26, 27, 73, 140, 158; Bracher: 1993: 15; Fest, 2004: 316, 532, 533; Ferguson, 2004: 262, 263; Knopp, 2010: 248, 257; Haffner, 2001a: 91).

This political philosophy roots by no means only in the evolutionary theory of Darwin but in archaic philosophies. Plato in his philosophy of the state developed similar ideas to those of Hitler, as already K. Popper in his "Open society and its enemies" of 1945 had maintained. According to Plato (Plato, 1957), the elite of the state is by no means allowed to mix its blood with the lower classes. A state can only prevail when the elite strongly cares for the purity of its blood. The lower classes have to be dominated because their blood has not a high quality. Every state that does not care for the purity of the elite's blood will vanish. Plato's philosophy, dominating the thinking of the Europeans for over 2000 years, has, of course, some still more archaic traits than the 19<sup>th</sup> century racism. He believed that the different kinds of animals were successors of former humans

of the elite, of humans who violated the rules of genetic purity, of degenerated humans, who mixed their blood with the lower classes or foreigners. The resemblances not only with Hitler's ideas but also with the Indian caste ideology and the totemic worldview of archaic peoples around the world are obvious.

On the whole, racism, widespread in the Western world 100 years ago, roots in archaic ideologies, which are completely contradictory, irrational, and pre-scientific. How can the Aryan racism define the role of the Aryan Persians and Indians regarding civilization? Why stood the Europeans 300 years ago on lower cultural levels than many coloured nations of today? How is to understand the industrial rise of a yellow race such as the Japanese? The ideology of the preponderance of the German race and nation on the one hand and the simultaneous devaluation of other races and nations (xenophobia) on the other hand roots in archaic presumptions according to them only the own tribe consists of humans while all other tribes are barbarians or second-class humans. Piaget (Piaget, 1995) compared the sociocentrism of the tribal societies, their belief to be the only children of the gods, their belief their local rites would preserve the whole cosmos, and their belief to be the privileged humans on earth, with the egocentrism of children, with their tendency to see their family as privileged and as the centre of the cosmos.

The full developed formal-operational stage, with its peculiarities such as combinatoric, hypothetical-deductive, reflective and systematic thinking patterns, examines and refutes contradictory, superficial, egocentric, and empirically wrong ideologies and philosophies. The formal-operational thinking is the precondition to scientific thinking abilities, coming into existence among modern adolescents especially with their 15<sup>th</sup> year of life (Piaget, Inhelder, 1969). Europeans on intermediary stages, with lacking or weak formal operational capacities, were frequently susceptible to irrational ideologies such as racism and extreme nationalism. People of the most advanced nations of today, having formed the formal operational stage higher than former generations, are usually not any more prone to such irrational and egocentric ideologies as they prevailed in earlier generations.

### **2.5. Antisemitism, belief in witchcraft, and paranoia**

Antisemitism was widespread not only in Germany but also in the Western World and elsewhere. Not only Henry Ford but many other entrepreneurs, politicians, and scientists around the world shared antisemitic prejudices. The idea that certain groups of humans damage the well-being of mankind and are accountable to any kind of misfortune affecting the humankind or the own nation belongs to the inevitable universals of the archaic-primitive worldview to find across the whole history and every nation. Antisemitism is only a variant of this primitive worldview.

Ethnology described that really every folk society across the continents and history believed that every kind of misfortune, sickness, death, poverty, war defeat, accident, bad weather, etc. is made by either god or ghosts or even more by malevolent human beings such as sorcerers or witches. It was believed that such humans actually have the magical power to cause death, sickness, or accident. Basically, this belief in witches and sorcerers is a part of the belief in magic (Hallpike, 1979; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009a, 2011, 2012a, Frazer, 1994). Developmental psychology described that the belief in magic is an inevitable manifestation of the child's psyche. Every child from suckling to his seventh year roughly strongly believes in magic. Thus, not culture and socialisation but the child's psychological stage is accountable to the belief in magic. Correspondingly, young children due to their nature believe in magicians, sorcerers, and witches, too. The belief in magic annihilates with the emergence of the stage of concrete operations and vanishes with the rise of the stage of formal operations. Thus, developmental psychology alone explains the belief in magic, that is, the belief in witches and sorcerers, too. It also explains the annihilation of the belief in magic and witches among modern peoples, who stay on more advanced – operational – stages (Piaget, 1975; Piaget, Inhelder, 1969; Werner, 1948; Oesterdiekhoff, 2009a, 2011).

This belief in witches is a paranoid one. Therefore, the belief in prosecution by certain humans or by witches is discernible among schizophrenic persons as a secure indicator of this mental illness. Interestingly, schizophrenia implies the regression of the psychological system to more primitive stages. Psychology knows for decades that there are commonalities between children, mentally handicapped persons, and archaic humans. These commonalities are often described also regarding this paranoid syndrom. It is reducible to the childish anthropological stage with its characteristics magic, making other persons accountable for any kind of misfortune,



weak development of categories such as causality and chance, and a tight relationship between ego and cosmos, etc. (Werner, 1948; Tölle, 1993; Oesterdiekhoff, 2012a).

The belief in magic, witches, and sorcerers weakened a little bit in Europe after 1200 but was still prevalent by 1700. The era of Enlightenment expresses the further dilution of magical beliefs. However, rests of these beliefs and practices existed by the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Europe (Wuttke, 1860; Werner, 1948; Oesterdiekhoff, 2011, 2013a, b, 2014b, d). I regard the antisemitic paranoid worldview as some kind of succession of the witchcraft belief. It is a diluted and weakened form of the witchcraft belief. Europeans after 1800 and especially after 1900 had difficulties to believe in witches. However, the transformation to the formal-operational stage does not unfold immediately but over some intermediary stages. Antisemitism is a main part of these in between stages and a rest of the paranoid consciousness of the archaic humankind.

Especially, the Nazi Germans believed the Jews would try to control the whole world by their instruments communism, capitalism, internationalism, pacifism, etc. The Soviet communism and the American capitalism are believed to be main instruments of the Jews to destroy the world. Their “magical” influence to damage the world was seen as far-reaching, mysterious, and hardly detectable. Especially Hitler recognized the Jews as having the worse genetic potential, capable to devastate the whole humankind and to make the earth totally free from humans. Therefore, Hitler believed that the Jewish tries to undermine the purity of the German race would not only destroy the German race but the whole humankind. Therefore, he wanted to eradicate them in order to rescue the Germans and the whole humankind (Nolte, 1990; Fest, 2004: 944-984; Haffner, 2001a: 96, 98, 152-167; Giordano, 2004: 26, 275-281). The holocaust stays in the heritage of the burning of witches and sorcerers to find right across the continents in the former history.

The resemblances to the archaic religious worldview with Satan and his disciples or helpers such as the witches are striking. Hitler’s idea of the fight between Germans and Jews reminds to the religious idea of the fight between god and devil, priests and witches, paradise and hell, etc. On the whole, antisemitism, a central ideology of the world about a century ago, existing in strengthened form among the Nazis, unsurmounted by Hitler himself, who was more antisemitic than most other Nazi leaders, but also in Eastern Europe, Vichy France, and elsewhere, is a form of the paranoid syndrom. The cause to it is not mental sickness but the intermediary psychological stage, that is, the rests of the childish-primitive psyche.

## 2.6. Imperialism and war

Humans on lower psychological stages have lower thresholds to exert violence. Children aged 3 are on the top of aggressiveness with a then following tendency of declining violence rates, a trend not having accomplished before the age of 25 (Pinker, 2011: 714; Oesterdiekhoff, 2000, 2012a). Pinker, in his bestseller on the history of violence, describes the decline of violence in the whole world across the past millenia, centuries, and decades. He maintains that the premodern humankind stood on childlike-primitive stages, basing his assumptions of Elias’ theory of civilization (Elias, 1976). Accordingly, Pinker (Pinker, 2011: 113-125) explains the decline of violence and the humanitarian revolution of the past generations by the psychological maturation of greater parts of the humankind. Pinker describes the greater readiness of the premodern humankind to exert violence regarding the history of war, homicide rates, duels, maltreatment of women and children, etc. I describe especially phenomena such as cannibalism, the Roman arena games, duels, wars, etc. basing on the developmental approach (Oesterdiekhoff 2000, 2009b, 2011, 2012a, 2013a).

Between 900 and 2000, there are counted 2314 militarian conflicts between sovereignties in Europe. Between 1400 and 1700, three wars per each year began between European nations. 26 % of the Aristocrats in England from 1300 to 1500 died from homicide (Pinker, 2011: 136, 252, 350). To start a war in order to conquer foreign territory, to react to an immaterial conflict or to revenge an insult was a normal procedure (Hillgruber, 1982; Haffner, 2001b: 113; Pinker, 2011: 352, 372, 390). France declared war on Germany 1870 because Germany was not willing to declare that in future no German aristocrat would ever try again to become the king of Spain. Although the Hohenzollern aristocrat had refrained from the Spain’s request, France started the war due to the missing declaration regarding future prospects. WW I started because Russia wanted to prevent the oppression of Serbia by the Danube monarchy. It wanted to extend its influence on the Balkan by supporting the Slavic nations. The mobilization of the Russian army aroused the German

declaration of war on Russia in order to defend the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. The reason to the war does not stand in any reasonable relationship to the war with its consequences. The whole Europe from 1900 onwards was in a steady expectation of the Great War in Europe. Several conflicts from 1905, 1908 and 1911 regarding Bosnia and Marocco were dangerous situations that could have led already to the Great War beforehand (Haffner, 2001b).

On the whole, the international political system, in Europe and elsewhere, had no guaranty against wars, invasions, and conquests. France felt always threatened by Germany and England, Germany by Russia, Great Britain and France, and Great Britain by Russia, Germany, and France. They tried to prevent foreign invasions by treaties and by finding allies or by expanding their empires. Great Britain had conquered 25 % and France 8 % of the world's surface. Great Britain declared war on Germany in WW I because it felt threatened by a Germany that occupied Belgium with its close border to the channel and England. Great Britain and France did the same in WW II because they felt threatened by a Germany expanding to the east, thereby possibly becoming a greater power than ever before (Ferguson, 2004: 292-300, 334-337; Fischer, 2004: 46, 93, 139, 281; Giordano, 2004: 35-38, 48, 50; Churchill, 2010: 125, 366; Baker, 2009: 388, 398; Hillgruber, 1982; Kershaw, 2007; Scheil, 2005).

Hitler's plans were predominantly inspired by the British Empire, especially by the rule over 400 million of Indians made by only some thousands of British officials. He interpreted this as the proof of the capability of the Aryan race to dominate the world. He wanted to extend the German Empire to the east by conquering smaller or greater parts of Russia. This then much greater Germany would get rid of any threats by the other European nations, especially by Russia, and could start to build up a world power, which first dominates Europe, Russia and Africa, later on perhaps Asia and both Americas. Hitler's idea was to make Germania (the former Berlin) as the capital of the world and to treat every other nation as a province or as a colony. He wanted to rule the subjected nations as the European nations ruled the African colonies or the ancient Romans the Mediterranean, withdrawing from them sovereignty, democracy, and own military forces, and using them as colonized peoples (Hillgruber, 1982; Kershaw, 2007; Haffner, 2001b: 141, 279-281; Baker, 2009: 33, 34, 56, 57; Giordano, 2004: 27, 29, 48, 73, 159, 190; Fest, 2004: 325, 909, 972, 1065).

Comparing the instability of the international system of the past with that of today raises the question to the causes of this transformation to more stability. The number of wars declined enormously in the past 50 years. The only conquests in the past 25 years concerned Kuwait 1990 and Crimea 2014. I deny the possibility to explain the greater stability by only referring to the processed experiences with the two terrible wars, to international treaties and associations such as the UNO or the Nato, and to the threat by atomic bombs. All these things have their impact but they do not explain the main cause. Further, when we look upon the world of 1900 or 1940 we do not see that the economic, social and political system of nations differs from that of today in a way that had favoured the outburst of wars. The greater instability of the former international system is not explainable in terms of institutional frameworks such as political systems or economic structures.

The main cause is the lower threshold to exert violence, to react violently in cases of disadvantages, insults, national honour, etc., and the wish to treat other peoples and nations as colonies. There was no guaranty for the independence and sovereignty of nations, for democracy and human rights, for the insight into the necessity of peace and co-operation lowered in the minds of peoples, at least not to a rate that forbids leading wars for any imperialistic intentions. The ultimate cause to the instability of the international system was not the institutional framework but the psyche and mentality of the people. Correspondingly, the humanitarian revolution of the past decades is the main cause to the decline of wars, a phenomenon, which must be referred to the psychological advancement of the world's peoples measurable by the instruments of cross-cultural psychology (Pinker, 2011: 318, 367, 372, 390, 784; Oesterdiekhoff, 2000, 2012a, 2013a, 2009b).

### 3. Conclusion

The new theory – called structure-genetic theory programme – shows that European peoples some generations ago stood on intermediary psychological stages between premodern peoples and those of today's most advanced nations. They stood mainly at the border concrete/formal-operational stage or on the first phases within the formal-operational stage, that is on "mental ages" lower than those of the current generation in the most advanced nations. Developmental

psychology has described that people on lower stages have different understandings of logic, physics, social, moral and political issues. Regarding political affairs they prefer authoritarian to democratic governments, are in favour of nationalism, extremism, violence, or tend to irrational prejudices and to deny liberty rights and humanitarian principles.

Europe and the world 100 years ago were characterized by weak forms of democratic consciousness, imperialism, colonialism, antisemitism, warfare mentality, etc. The decisive cause to these forms of political life is the psychological stage position of the people. Current generations are separated by the former ones by an unbridgeable gap. Therefore, the former political world is vanished with the people's forms of consciousness and cannot emerge again, even not under extreme circumstances. Current generations look upon the world of imperialism and colonialism, the motives and plans behind the empires and the wishes to erect them, Auschwitz and Hiroshima as strange phenomena they can hardly conceive. We look at these phenomena as the former generations born 1800 or 1900 would have looked at the Roman arena games or cannibalism or the brutal punishment law of the ancient regimes.

The article shows that historical anthropology forms the kernel of systematic historical theory. Historical anthropology, however, is to base on developmental psychology. It is necessary to found the historical disciplines on that systematic theory the structure-genetic theory programme really is. Moreover, it is necessary that history surmounts the idea that the human being across times and cultures is always the same and does not change his or her internal nature. Thus, the structure-genetic theory programme supports ideas historians such as Febvre, Schneider, Lamprecht and Radding had when they tried to base history on developmental psychology.

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