

From the German Conservative Revolution to the New Right

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We intend to compare here two movements which have an important ideational and intellectual relationship: the German Conservative Revolution and the European New Right. Both movements are seen as fundamentally “Right-wing,” although they combine both “Right-wing” and “Left-wing” ideas and transcend these categories in the strict sense. The Conservative Revolution was a largely intellectual and partly political movement that emerged in early 20th Century Germany and Austria, and which was made up of several groups of intellectuals who often developed their own trends of thought, but all of whom held certain ideas in common which define them as “Revolutionary Conservatives.” We can mention here the following as the most important Revolutionary Conservative intellectuals: Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Oswald Spengler, Ernst Jünger, Edgar Julius Jung, Othmar Spann, Werner Sombart, Hans Freyer, Carl Schmitt, Karl Haushofer, Ludwig Klages, Friedrich Georg Jünger, Ernst Niekisch, and Hans Zehrer.

The European New Right refers to an intellectual movement that emerged in 1968 in France (as the *Nouvelle Droite*), and which had subsequently developed counterparts – with some variations and limitations in certain localities – in Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and later in various other European nations. The New Right, as we shall see, is strongly influenced by the aforementioned movement known as the Conservative Revolution. We can mention as some of the most important intellectuals of the “New Right” (in a more restricted sense) as the following: Alain de Benoist, Tomislav Sunic, Charles Champetier, Jean-Claude Valla, Michel Marmin, Marco Tarchi, Luc Pauwels, Yves Christen, Pierre Le Vigan, Pierre Gripari, Christopher Gérard, Karlheinz Weissmann, Javier Ruiz Portella, and Sebastian J. Lorenz.

However, there are additionally a number of intellectuals and groups of intellectuals who are sympathetic with or closely aligned with the New Right in the more specific sense, or who at least drew heavily upon the works and ideas set down by the *Nouvelle Droite*. These multifarious intellectuals belong to positions which can, in a broad sense, be described as “Identitarian” or “Radical Conservative” (often both), although they too are frequently described as “New Rightist” because of their similarities and relations with GRECE, even though some would argue they do not belong to the “New Right” in a more strict sense. Among these thinkers we must mention the following: Julien Freund, Giorgio Locchi, Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner, Dominique Venner, Pierre Krebs, Pierre Vial, Guillaume Faye, Robert Steuckers, and Alexander Dugin. To this list we should also add the German author Armin Mohler, an important scholar on the German Conservative Revolution (responsible for popularizing that term) who can also be seen as an intersecting point of the Conservative Revolution and the New Right.¹

Intellectual and Cultural Revolution

¹ Armin Mohler is famous for his scholarly work on the Conservative Revolution, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918-1932: Ein Handbuch* (Graz: Ares Verlag, 2005). On the link between Mohler and the New Right, see for example Alain de Benoist, “Armin Mohler: Una Mirada,” *Biografias*, 14 October 2006, <https://biografias.wordpress.com/2006/10/14/armin-mohler-una-mirada-alain-de-benoist/>.

The relationship between the Conservative Revolution and the New Right cannot be examined properly without an understanding of the concept of “metapolitics,” which is one of the foundational ideas of the New Right. As Alain de Benoist wrote, “metapolitics was born out of the consciousness of the role of ideas in history and out of the conviction that any type of intellectual, cultural, doctrinal and ideological work must be the prerequisite of any form of (political) action.”² A major reference point for this theory is Antonio Gramsci, who argued that all political orders, all states, are reliant not merely on their own political power, but on the “culture” – in a broad sense, the ideas, morality, traditions, customs, and “common sense” dominant in a society – which forms the basis of the possibility for a particular ideology to hold any political or social influence whatsoever. According to Gramsci’s theory, the civil society is the sphere in which there is “elaborated and disseminated worldviews, philosophies, religions, and all intellectual or spiritual activities, explicit or implicit, by means of which the social consensus is formed and perpetuated.”³

This means that all revolutionary movements are reliant on intellectual and cultural activity (metapolitics) to achieve any victory: “In developed societies, the seizure of political power is not possible without the previous capture of cultural power.”⁴ For Gramsci and other theorists of metapolitics, if a particular group is not able to defend its idea on the deeper intellectual and philosophical level, if it is not able to counter the arguments and claims of the intellectuals of the opposing movements or of the dominant state, it will forever remain a marginalized minority and without the ability to attain its goals. It should be clarified here that metapolitics is not limited to purely intellectual activity, but encompasses all forms of cultural activity which involves the dissemination of ideas and worldviews, including propaganda. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that metapolitical activity is distinct from political activity. Metapolitics is intended to have political consequences, and intellectuals who have engaged in metapolitics have sometimes subsequently involved themselves in political organizations, but pure metapolitics is strictly nonpolitical; metapolitics means the work towards a spiritual revolution.

The study of the history of modern political movements which made successful revolutions – whether one speaks of the French Revolution, the 1848 Revolutions, the Communist revolutions, or the Fascist revolutions – shows that all of these movements relied on the preceding activity of intellectuals who introduced revolutionary ideas and schools of thought into their societies, which had created the social and cultural basis for such revolutions to take place. It is in this fact that the link between the Conservative Revolution and the New Right begins; both movements were founded by intellectuals who were aware of the necessity of intellectual or cultural activity to successfully create new and revolutionary changes in their societies, and thus both movements involve a great deal of metapolitics. The New Right directly draws inspiration and philosophical ideas from numerous intellectuals and authors outside of its own group, with the Revolutionary Conservatives being a major source. The Conservative Revolution, due to the diversity and richness of thought provided by its thinkers, served as an important historical foundation for later

² Alain de Benoist, “The European New Right: Forty Years Later,” in Tomislav Sunic, *Against Democracy and Equality: The European New Right*, 3rd ed. (London: Arktos, 2011), 21.

³ Alain de Benoist, “Antonio Gramsci, marxista independiente,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 40 (11 February 2013): 6.

http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n__40._gramsci.

⁴ *Ibid.*

“Right-wing” metapolitical activity.⁵

Both the Conservative Revolution and the New Right are movements that were created in a state of cultural crisis marked by the political and social dominance of liberalism, which is seen as the primary enemy. Of course, the situation of each movement is different, as the Conservative Revolution began in a German condition where hard conservatism held a cultural power that it did not hold in Central Europe after World War II, and thus the New Right began in an even more difficult and culturally hostile condition. However, each movement recognized the importance of intellectual activity for revolution, and each recognized the link between thought and action, for metapolitics is intended to have consequences. As Edgar Julius Jung wrote, “the restructure of the social and political forms will become possible – apparently peacefully – the moment that the clenched power of a new intellectual world and of a resolute will challenges the swaying instability of today to a decision.”⁶

The relationship between Conservative Revolution and the New Right is crucial, and to better understand the latter one must have some understanding of the former, for the New Right can arguably be viewed as a new Revolutionary Conservatism. However, this means perceiving both the similarities as well as the differences between the two, for they are distinct movements. Of course, it must also be kept in mind that the New Right is not limited to influence from the Revolutionary Conservatives, for it also draws ideas from a number of other currents of thought, including French socialist theoreticians, the French “non-conformists of the 1930s,” the 19th century German school of sociology, and the French school of sociology of the 19th and 20th centuries.⁷ However, the evidence shows that the Conservative Revolution possessed a strong forming influence on the New Right.

To contribute to an increased understanding of these two movements and their importance in emerging cultural changes, we aim to compare and contrast the major ideas of the two movements and to therefore demonstrate both their similarities as well as their differences. We do not intend to examine in depth the philosophy of each individual thinker belonging to each category, but to examine fundamental trends and ideas within each group, and thus to show the essential philosophical and ideational relationship between the New Rightists and the original Revolutionary Conservatives.

The Concept of Revolutionary Conservatism

The defining idea of Revolutionary Conservatism was laid down by Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, who distinguished true Conservatism from both the Reactionary and Revolutionary views. The Reactionary aims to restore a past form (political, economic, social, cultural) or to

⁵ See the chapters “The ‘Gramscianism’ of the Right” and “The Conservative Left of the Revolutionary Right?” in Sunic, *Against Democracy and Equality*.

⁶ Edgar Julius Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellon Press, 1995), 2: 363.

⁷ Among the French socialist theoreticians we can mention Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Georges Sorel, Victor Griffuelhes, Edouard Berth, Pierre Leroux, Benoît Malon, etc. The French “non-conformists of the 1930s” include most prominently Thierry Maulnier, Bertrand de Jouvenel, Pierre Dominique, Georges Valois, Jean-Pierre Maxence, Georges Bernanos, Robert Aron, and Alexandre Marc. From the 19th century German school of sociology, we must mention especially Max Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, and Georg Simmel, and from the French school of sociology of the 19th and 20th centuries, Émile Durkheim, Gustave Le Bon, Louis Dumont, Jean Baudrillard, and Alain Caillé.

rigidly maintain an outdated form, viewing all aspects of this form as positive. The Revolutionary aims to completely overturn the present form and ignores the value of tradition, which is viewed as essentially negative, and views only the future form as positive. The Conservative, on the other hand, “has no ambition to see the world as a museum; he prefers it as a workshop,” and therefore values the stability of tradition but is also willing to do away with outdated values and assimilate “all new values which increase a nation’s vitality.”⁸

As Moeller van den Bruck wrote, “the conservative ponders on what is ephemeral, and obsolete and unworthy; he ponders also on what is enduring and what is worthy to endure. He recognizes the power that links past and future; he recognizes the enduring element in the transitory present.”⁹ Thus, true Conservatism is “Revolutionary Conservatism”; it is revolutionary in the sense that it is anti-reactionary and is willing to accept positive changes, and is conservative in the sense that it fights against negative changes and values positive traditions as well as eternal principles, which it maintains in the face of changes. This also leads to the transcending of the “Right” and “Left” categories in the old-fashioned sense, and therefore, as Armin Mohler wrote, “the Conservative Revolution can be defined as the attempt of exponents who had been disillusioned with the Left and with the Right to create something new (third way), utilizing stimuli coming from the Left and from the Right.”¹⁰

This essential concept of Revolutionary Conservatism is also found as a foundational idea of the New Right. Alain de Benoist, the leading intellectual of the *Nouvelle Droite*, has dedicated significant studies to Arthur Moeller van den Bruck and Ernst Jünger, both of whom he acknowledges as intellectual precursors of the New Right, and has affirmed the concept of the blending of conservation and revolution (Revolutionary Conservatism) as a descriptor for his own view of conservatism.¹¹ In this sense, since both the Conservative Revolution and the New Right share in the same underlying principle, “New Rightism” can be seen as a new Revolutionary Conservatism.

Social Theory

In terms of the essential principles social theory or sociology, the approaches of the Conservative Revolution and the New Right are identical. The basic problem of sociology is individualism versus holism, which carries both theoretical and actual social implications. Individualism in theory means the conception of society as an artificial collection of individuals who have no higher connections, since in this theory the individual is fundamentally self-centered. Thus,

⁸ Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire* (London: Arktos, 2012), 188 & 206.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁰ Armin Mohler, “Schmitt y la Revolución Conservadora,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 42 (12 March 2013): 3. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_42_autores_kr_i.

¹¹ Alain de Benoist, “Arthur Moeller van den Bruck,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 15 (11 June 2011): 20-73. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_15.; Alain de Benoist, “Ernst Jünger y la Nueva Derecha,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 6 (25 March 2011): 18-23. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_6.; Alain de Benoist, “Ernst Jünger: el Trabajador, entre los Dioses y los Titanes,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 78 (13 August 2014): 3-17. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_78_j_nger_ii.; Alain de Benoist, “A Conversation with Alain de Benoist,” interview by Arthur Versluis, *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2014): 82.

individualists regard the whole (society or community) as nothing more than the sum of its parts (individuals); the parts are greater than the whole. To quote Edgar Julius Jung, “individualism in this conception is, therefore, the world-view doctrine which decides the conflict of values between the individual and the community in favour of the individual.”¹² Individualism in social life means that individuals, consciously or unconsciously, view and feel themselves as essentially separate from other individuals, and act as self-interested beings, concerned with the whole only insofar as their relations to others and to society is practical and necessary.

The Revolutionary Conservative and New Rightist view, on the other hand, is holism, which rejects individualist theory as fallacious and sees individualism in social life as harmful and undesirable, a perversion of the human spirit. Holists do not deny the existence or value of individual beings, but regard them as social beings with profound connections to other individuals and pose the community as the primary reality. In holism, the community is an organic, spiritual entity uniting individuals on a deep psychological level and creating a sense of solidarity and interdependence; thus, the whole is greater than the parts. According to this social theory, holism is the natural condition of human societies, in which human beings are community-oriented and supra-individualist or anti-individualist. “The supra-individualist (the one recognizing values projecting above the individual) feels himself, as a member of a chain and, spatially, as part of an encompassing present life.”¹³

It must always be remembered that holism is an *organic spiritual unity*, not an artificial unity. Artificial unity is what Jung termed as “collectivism, the doctrine of the artificially organized masses,” and which, in its more extreme form, can also be termed totalitarianism.¹⁴ Holists recognize that the consequence of individualism in social life is that social bonds exceeding the individual are weakened or dissolved, and thus society is atomized, destroying the sense of community and undermining the natural solidarity. In a system where individuals “act solely as free economic agents with no spiritual bonds to each other,” wrote Tomislav Sunic, “a sense of the common good and the notion of historical community become devoid of any meaning.”¹⁵

Philosophy of the Volk

All Revolutionary Conservatives rejected the egalitarian notion of a “universal humanity” before which differences between peoples are unimportant; contrary to egalitarianism, Revolutionary Conservatism upheld the idea of the *Volk* (“Folk”) as a highly important value. The *Volk* is defined as a “people” or an “ethnos,” meaning a spiritual-cultural entity or community with common traditions, soul, and particular cultural identity. Connected with holism, the idea of *Volk* is linked with the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft* (“Folk-community”) due to the importance of the organic community in constituting the *Volk* as such. The importance of people in this sense can be found in New Right and Identitarian thought as well. In a formulation that applies as

¹² Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, 1:51.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1:50-51. See also Chapter 4, “An Introduction to the Basic Problem of Sociology – Individualism versus Universalism” in Othmar Spann, *Types of Economic Theory* (London: Routledge, 2012).

¹⁴ Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, 1:65. See also Karin Friedrich, “A Conservative Revolution Against Hitler: Edgar Julius Jung’s Analysis and Criticism of the Total State,” in *Totalitarianism and the Challenge of Democracy*, ed. Andrzej Jabłoński and Wojciech Piasecki (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1992).

¹⁵ Tomislav Sunic, *Homo americanus: Child of the Postmodern Age* (USA: Book Surge Publishing, 2007), 188. See also Alain de Benoist, “Critique of Liberal Ideology,” *The Occidental Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (Winter 2007–2008): 9–30.

much to his Fourth Political Theory as to the New Right, Alexander Dugin has written that “the subject of this theory, in its simple version, is the concept ‘*narod*,’ roughly, ‘*volk*’ or ‘people,’ in the sense of ‘peoplehood’ and ‘peoples,’ not ‘masses.’”¹⁶

Also shared by most Revolutionary Conservative and New Right thinkers is the recognition of the complexity of cultural and ethnic realities and relationships. Othmar Spann, for example, held a “spiritual definition of Germandom [German *Volkstum*] which allowed for the existence of distinct branches (*Stämme*) of the *Volk*.”¹⁷ One can also contrast here Hans Freyer’s view of *Volk*: in his pre-war works, Freyer generally regarded the singular *Volk* as the only valid cultural unity, whereas in his later works – more similarly to the New Right – he recognized the reality of smaller and greater cultural unities as well as the interrelatedness of different cultures. Likewise, in his earlier works, Freyer had advocated complete cultural closure as a response to the complete openness of liberal states, whereas in his later works he recognized the historical reality and importance of dialogue between cultures, and thus supported the concept of *partial* closure in which inter-cultural interaction is combined with particularism.¹⁸ An identical idea is found in New Right thought, where the unnatural complete openness and destruction of cultural barriers committed by liberal globalism is rejected as well as complete closure in favor of balanced inter-cultural relations. Finally, most Revolutionary Conservatives held the same view as New Rightists that the *Volk* and its culture is not static, but rather that traditions transform or are re-appropriated in new ways over time, while the culture still retains its “traditionality” and its existence as a particular entity. “To defend one’s own identity,” wrote Alain de Benoist, “is to understand the identity as that which remains in the game of differences – not as the same, but rather as the always singular way of changing or not changing.”¹⁹

Regarding the matter of race, a variety of particular perspectives can be found in the Conservative Revolution. We can, however, identify two major viewpoints: one which regards biological race as a notable component of ethnic identity, and one which regards biological race as insignificant. In the theories of Hans Freyer and Edgar Julius Jung, for example, we find the concept of race as an influential force in a people’s composition and identity, although it is significant that both thinkers viewed race as secondary to the cultural and spiritual aspect of the *Volk* (thus rejecting biological reductionism).²⁰ Oswald Spengler, on the other hand, dismissed the biological idea of race and attempted to redefine “race” as having a certain type of personality.²¹ In the case of Othmar Spann, the *Volk* was regarded as a purely spiritual community in which biological race was essentially insignificant, with the spiritual form totally

¹⁶ Alexander Dugin, “The Fourth Estate: The History and Meaning of the Middle Class,” *The Radix Journal*, 9 June 2014, <http://www.radixjournal.com/journal/2014/6/9/the-fourth-estate>.

¹⁷ Karl Viererbl as quoted in Lukáš Novotný, “Kameradschaftsbund. A Contribution to the History of the Czech-German Relationship (Part Two),” in *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations* (Prague & Vienna: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy v Praze, 2009), 388.

¹⁸ See Colin Loader and David Kettler, *Karl Mannheim’s Sociology as Political Education* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 123 & 132, and Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 332 ff.

¹⁹ Alain de Benoist, “Identidad y Diferencia,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 47 (28 May 2013): 8. http://issuu.com/sebastianjllorenz/docs/elementos_n__47._diferencialismo.

²⁰ See Muller, *The Other God That Failed*, 97-99, 287, 297-298, and the chapter “People, Race, Reich” in Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, vol. 1.

²¹ See Chapter 3, “The White World-Revolution” and Chapter 4, “The Coloured World-Revolution” in Oswald Spengler, *The Hour of Decision* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1934).

determining the physical form.²² Finally, in regard to the notions of racial and cultural superiority, one finds this concept among some Revolutionary Conservatives (e.g. Jung and Spann) and entirely absent among others (e.g. Freyer).

New Rightists – similarly to many Revolutionary Conservatives – recognize the reality of race as a factor in ethnic identity, but simultaneously recognize its limitations and reject genetic or biological materialism, and thus view the ethnos or *Volk* as the primary identity. In other words, the nature and identity of peoples is influenced by racial background, but the predominant forces are cultural and spiritual. Thus, as in the Revolutionary Conservative perspective, the *Volk* is formed by a fusion of racial (biological) and supra-biological or spiritual factors, and therefore biological race alone is nearly meaningless without the culture and spirit of a people which give it meaning. Furthermore, the New Right firmly rejects ideas of objective racial superiority (racism) as well as cultural superiority as subjective and artificial, favoring the notion of non-racist differentialism.²³

Gender

In the Conservative Revolution, we find the basic idea, either argued for or taken for granted, of distinction between men and women in terms of general masculine and feminine character which is seen as inherent to each, in contrast to modern gender egalitarianism (found, for example, in Marxist theories), which argues that men and women are fundamentally identical except for their basic biological difference. However, among Revolutionary Conservatives who addressed the issue of gender (for some, such as Moeller van den Bruck, did not), we can find differing positions. One, represented by Edgar Julius Jung, is the traditionalist and patriarchalist perspective whereby women are seen as inherently lesser than men and thus should be dominated by men.²⁴ A drastically different alternative view, represented by the Biocentric philosophy of Ludwig Klages, rejected patriarchy entirely and placed a great value upon women, even to the point of supporting the idea of matriarchy, although neither gender was depreciated in this view.²⁵ What both perspectives held in common was the value of differences between the two genders and also the idea of parenthood and the relation between mother and child, although each clearly approached the matter from different positions.

The New Right holds in common with the Revolutionary Conservatives the recognition of gender, of differences between masculine and feminine character, and of the value of sexual identity. New Rightists reject both egalitarian feminism, which erroneously asserts that gender differences are merely a “social construct” and aspires to neutralize differences between men and women, as well as traditional sexism or gender-based chauvinism, which views women as inferior to men and aspires to relegate them entirely to a simplistic, underprivileged social

²² See John J. Haag, *Othmar Spann and the Politics of “Totality”: Corporatism in Theory and Practice* (Ph.D. Thesis, Rice University, 1969), 128-129; Lukáš Novotný, “Kameradschaftsbund. A Contribution to the History of the Czech-German Relationship (Part One),” in *Prague Papers on the History of International Relations* (Prague & Vienna: Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Karlovy v Praze, 2008), 295; the chapter “The Race Theory of Othmar Spann” in Eric Voegelin, *Race and State* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997).

²³ See Alain de Benoist, “What is Racism?,” *Telos*, no. 114 (Winter 1999): 11-48.

²⁴ See Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, 1: 307-311 & 338-339.

²⁵ See the section “Paradise Lost” in Joseph Pryce, “On The Biocentric Metaphysics of Ludwig Klages,” *Revalo-Oliver.com*, 14 May 2001, http://www.revalo-oliver.com/Writers/Klages/Ludwig_Klages.html.

condition. The New Right favors a differentialist position on gender, a component of which is what some have described as an “identitarian feminism” or “differentialist feminism”: “Against sexism and unisex utopianism, differentialist feminism [or gender differentialism] recognizes men as well as women by acknowledging the equal value of their distinct and unique natures.”²⁶ In the New Rightist perspective, men and women should have equal political rights and equally participate in social and political life, with the recognition of their distinct natures allowing a harmonious balance of expression. We can mention as a historical reference for this position on gender in numerous ancient European societies (especially Celtic, Germanic, and Slavic), in which gender differentialism was inherent in the culture, with men and women participating equally in public life, and in which “the women exercised religious, political, and even military functions,” although in a style based on their gender’s nature.²⁷

Religion

Attitude towards religion varied among Revolutionary Conservatives. Oswald Spengler can be described as essentially irreligious, for he recognized no eternal truths (not in religion, philosophy, or science), since in his cyclical theory of cultures all “truths” are culture-bound, and he detachedly observed the passing of religious Culture into irreligious Civilization.²⁸ Many Revolutionary Conservatives, such as Othmar Spann, Edgar Julius Jung, and Werner Sombart, viewed Christianity as the religious truth; they rejected rigid rationalism and positivism and advocated the returning of society to mysticism and spiritual guidance in religious faith. Furthermore, the Catholic anti-individualist current of thought recognized the importance of community in spiritual life: “Holiness arises in the life of the community, where religion, morality, manners and law have their soil. The natural binding to the society finds its completion through the inner binding to God.”²⁹ Finally, in the case of Ludwig Klages and most Biocentrists, we find the critique of Christianity as a religion against Life and the upholding of primordial Paganism as the religion linked with Life, the cosmos, and sensuous experience.³⁰

The philosophy of religion in the New Right is complex and draws upon the works of multiple scholars, one of the most important being the renowned historian of religions Mircea Eliade, who studied the essential nature of religion and religious experience. Eliade explained that all religion is based on the fundamental distinction between the Sacred – the supernatural, transcendent reality encompassing gods and spirits – and the Profane – the natural, material realm of existence – and asserts the primacy of the former over the latter. According to Eliade, “the history of religions – from the most primitive to the most highly developed – is constituted by a great number of hierophanies, by manifestations of sacred realities,” beginning with “the most elementary hierophany – e.g., manifestation of the sacred in some ordinary object, a stone or a

²⁶ Alain de Benoist and Charles Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance* (London: Arktos, 2012), 36.

²⁷ Alain de Benoist, “La condición femenina,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea*, no. 61 (28 November 2013): 31. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n__61._feminismo.

²⁸ See Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926), 1:167-168. For a critique of the lack of understanding of transcendence in Spengler’s thought, see Julius Evola, *The Path of Cinnabar* (London: Integral Tradition Publishing, 2009), 203-204.

²⁹ Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, 1:71.

³⁰ See Pryce, “Biocentric Metaphysics,” Lydia Baer, “The Literary Criticism of Ludwig Klages and the Klages School: An Introduction to Biocentric Thought,” *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 40, no. 1 (January, 1941): 103-106.

tree,” and reaching to “the supreme hierophany (which, for a Christian, is the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ)...”³¹ With Eliade and Max Weber, the New Right also criticizes the “desacralization” and “disenchantment” of the world, whereby religious experience and mysticism is devalued and replaced by materialistic thinking, and the sacredness of the cosmos and nature is no longer recognized.³²

It is commonly assumed or asserted that the New Right is an entirely Pagan movement which attacks and aims to completely eliminate Christianity.³³ It is true that many of the leading New Right intellectuals advocate some form of Paganism (either full Pagan religiosity or simply Pagan values) and critique Judeo-Christianity for a number of reasons. Some of the key points of critique include the argument that monotheism inherently produces intolerance, aggressive universalism, and persecution of others (as opposed to the more tolerant nature of polytheism), the argument that the linear view of history in Judeo-Christianity created the unbalanced ideology of progress, and the argument that Judeo-Christianity devalued the natural world and thus contributed to desacralization.³⁴

However, it should be remembered that – as the Spanish New Rightist Rodrigo Agulló explained – the New Right as a whole is not anti-Christian, and not only do Pagan thinkers such as Benoist show appreciation for many Right-wing Christian authors, but the New Right movement includes both Christians and Pagans. The essential religious position of the New Right is not to war against Christianity, but to advocate a respect for Paganism, a return to the same values one can find in the Pagan world, and to overcome the negative desacralization of the world in modern times (achieving the “re-enchantment of the world”). Furthermore, as Agulló pointed out, referencing Eliade’s studies, there is always possibility of reconciliation between Christianity and Paganism, whereby Christianity is fused with Pagan values and ideas (as has occurred historically in many Catholic and Orthodox societies).³⁵

Economic Theory

There are many close similarities between Revolutionary Conservative and New Rightist theories of economics. All Revolutionary Conservatives – most prominently Sombart, Spengler, Moeller van den Bruck, Jung, Spann, and Freyer – rejected and critiqued the liberal capitalist system of economy for a number of negative traits: (1) its internationalist tendencies which harm local cultural life, for its separation from the organic life of the *Volk*, (2) its individualist nature

³¹ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (Orlando: Harcourt, 1987), 11.

³² See Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, 24, 50-51, 151-154, 201-213; Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 51, 148, 139-156, 350, 357.

³³ See for example Chapter 4, “Twilight of the Gods” in Michael O’Meara, *New Culture, New Right: Anti-Liberalism in Postmodern Europe*, 2nd ed. (London: Arktos, 2013).

³⁴ See for example Alain de Benoist, *On Being a Pagan* (Atlanta: Ultra, 2004); “Judaeo-Christian Monotheism is the Matrix of the West” in Pierre Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence: Western Ethnocide or European Renaissance?* (London: Arktos, 2012); “The Pagan Right” in Sunic, *Against Democracy and Equality*; Benoist, “A Conversation with Alain de Benoist,” 93-95.

³⁵ Rodrigo Agulló, “¿Qué religión para Europa? La polémica del neopaganismo,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 82 (11 October 2014): 49-61. http://issuu.com/sebastianjllorenz/docs/elementos_n_82_paganismo_i. On Mircea Eliade’s studies of this matter, see for example *The Sacred and the Profane*, 136-138, 163-164, 178-179, and “History of Religions and ‘Popular’ Cultures,” *History of Religions* 20, no. 1/2, (August-November, 1980): 1-26.

which harms the sense of community, (3) its promotion of negative capitalist ethics which creates ruthless business practices, egocentrism, and an obsession with profit, and (4) its quantifying, economic reductionist nature. Against liberal capitalist economics, Revolutionary Conservatives generally emphasized the importance of: (1) reuniting the economy with the particular, soil-grounded life of the *Volk* and the state, (2) the necessity of the sense of community and interdependence in labor and economic life, (3) the value of altruistic work ethics as an opposite of capitalist ethics, (4) the importance of establishing an economic self-sufficiency of the nation (without necessarily sacrificing foreign trade), and (5) the primacy of the political and social elements of states over the economic life. Despite the attack on capitalism and despite agreements with some of Karl Marx's critiques of capitalism, Marxism was generally rejected due to its economic reductionism, egalitarianism, philosophical materialism, and extreme doctrine of class warfare.³⁶

The primary form of economic system promoted by Revolutionary Conservatives was corporatism, which, in terms of defining principles, is grounded on (1) respect for the multiplicity and varying qualities of different types of work in the economic system, (2) the organization of the economy into units or estates based on type of labor, (3) bargaining and cooperation between workers' and employers' organizations, and (4) the importance of harmony, community-feeling, the sense of duty, and holism in economic life. We can note, however, that some Revolutionary Conservatives, such as Moeller van den Bruck, Spengler, and Sombart, posed their idea of corporative economy as a form of conservative socialism, while others, such as Spann and Jung, posed their corporatism as a non-socialist system.³⁷ Other visions of alternative economic systems in the Conservative Revolution include the nationalistic state socialism of Hans Freyer, the National Bolshevism of Ernst Niekisch, and the militant, anti-bourgeois, and "totally mobilized" workers' state of Ernst Jünger.³⁸

The New Rightist critique of capitalism resembles the Revolutionary Conservative critique, attacking the individualistic ethics, the disconnection from and alienation of the people, the domination of finance, the fetishism of commodities, and places an even greater stress on the critique of consumerism and uncontrolled industrial growth from the ecological point of view (provided not only by some of the German theorists, but also more recently by ecological economists such as Edward Goldsmith and Serge Latouche).³⁹ New Rightists also criticize the

³⁶ See Part IV: "Economics" in Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, vol. 2; Haag, *Spann and the Politics of "Totality,"* 32-43; Chapter 8, "Political Economy in Germany," Chapter 10, "A Short Account of the Evolution of Socialism," and the section "Universalist Economics" in Chapter 12 in Othmar Spann, *Types of Economic Theory*; Werner Sombart, *A New Social Philosophy* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969); Muller, *The Other God That Failed*, 78-87, 106-118; Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 121 ff.

³⁷ See Chapter 2, "Socialist," in Moeller van den Bruck, *Germany's Third Empire*, and "Prussianism and Socialism" in Oswald Spengler, *Selected Essays* (Chicago: Gateway/Henry Regnery, 1967). For the cases of Sombart, Spann, and Jung, see the previous citation.

³⁸ See the previous citation of Muller's and Herf's work dealing with Freyer's theories; Klemens von Klemperer, "Towards a Fourth Reich? The History of National Bolshevism in Germany," *The Review of Politics* 13, no. 2 (April, 1951): 191-210; Ernst Jünger, "Total Mobilization," trans. Joel Golb, in *The Heidegger Controversy* (Boston: MIT Press, 1992).

³⁹ On the latter point, see Alain de Benoist, "Mañana, el decrecimiento," *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 56 (4 October 2013): 3-12.
http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n__56._ecolog__a.

quantifying tendencies and economic reductionism of liberal capitalism, for “contrary to the presuppositions of liberalism and Marxism, the economy has never formed the infrastructure of society: economic over-determination (‘economism’) is the exception, not the rule.”⁴⁰ Just as the Conservative Revolution, the New Right rejects both capitalism and Marxism in favor of some “Third Way” economic form: “The general conception of the economy of the New Right can be qualified as ‘organic economy.’ The societies are living organisms composed of living beings and of functions in constant interaction.”⁴¹

The New Right does not strictly advocate any particular economic system, and is open to a range of non-capitalist, non-Marxist alternatives. However, it should be noted that Alain de Benoist has made approving appraisals of the “conservative socialist” theories of Moeller van den Bruck, Sombart, and Spengler – along with showing appreciation for various French syndicalist and other socialist theorists (such as Georges Sorel, Édouard Berth, and Jean-Claude Michéa) – pointing generally towards such forms of corporative socialist theory for the New Right’s vision.⁴² Finally, we can mention that Alexander Dugin has also offered a significant “Third Way” economic program in relation to his Eurasist vision, which is summarized as the scheme of “state regulation of the strategic branches (military-industrial complex, natural monopolies and similar) and maximal economic freedom for medium and small business.”⁴³

Political Theory

In the Conservative Revolution, one can find differing positions on political theory. In the traditionalist current of thought, one finds the support for monarchical government as manifested across world history, the support for an aristocratic and hierarchical system which would secure good leaders through meritocratic selection (an open yet authoritarian elite), and a critique of democracy as the reign of quantity. To quote Othmar Spann, “democracy wants to vote about truth – that is not only unfeasible ... but also frivolous, because setting the majority in the saddle means that the lower rule over the higher.”⁴⁴ Among some Revolutionary Conservatives, such as Hans Freyer (in his early works), one also finds the vision of an authoritarian state differing from most monarchies which would totally integrate the people into a unified force and which is presented as “the awakening of the *Volk* out of timeless existence [*Dasein*] to power over itself

⁴⁰ Benoist and Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, 23.

⁴¹ Carlos Pinedo, “La concepción de la Economía Orgánica en la Nueva Derecha,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 26 (11 June 2012): 13. http://issuu.com/sebastianjllorenz/docs/elementos_n_26.

⁴² See Benoist, “Arthur Moeller van den Bruck,” 52-53; Alain de Benoist, *Quatre figures de la Révolution Conservatrice allemande: Werner Sombart, Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, Ernst Niekisch, Oswald Spengler* (Paris: Les Amis d’Alain de Benoist, 2014); Alain de Benoist, *Edouard Berth ou le socialisme héroïque: Sorel, Maurras, Lenine* (Grez-sur-Loing: Pardès, 2013); Alain de Benoist, “Jean-Claude Michéa: le socialisme contre la gauche!,” *Éléments* no. 142 (January-March, 2012): 50-57. We thank Alain de Benoist for pointing us towards the references to the French socialists.

⁴³ Alexander Dugin, “Main Principles of Eurasist Policy,” *Международное Евразийское Движение*, 21 June 2001. <http://evrazia.info/article/421>. A more complete view of Eurasist policies has been set forth in Alexander Dugin, *Eurasian Mission: Program Materials* (Moscow: International Eurasian Movement, 2005).

⁴⁴ Othmar Spann, *Der wahre Staat* (Leipzig: Verlag von Quelle und Meyer, 1921), 111. Quoted in Janek Wasserman, *Black Vienna: The Radical Right in the Red City, 1918–1938* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 83.

and to power in time.”⁴⁵

However, among certain other thinkers, we find the redefinition of democracy in terms different from republican or liberal-democratic concepts. Carl Schmitt, for example, argued that true democracy is a non-liberal and non-pluralistic democracy whose leaders express the will of a completely unified and homogeneous people, regardless of what political form is practiced. Another important pro-democratic view was given by Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, who argued that democracy is not defined by electoral systems or republican forms, but rather as the participation of a people in determining its future. Furthermore, he argued that true democracy, since ancient times, always took on *völkisch* and conservative forms: “Wherever a true democracy has existed, it was a conservative expression of a nation’s desire for self-preservation, cast in the form suited to that nation... And indeed all empires [*Reiche*], whether spiritual or secular, maintained their power by remaining in close touch with the people and giving popular expression to the people’s desire.”⁴⁶

Similarly to many Revolutionary Conservatives, New Rightists attack “liberal democracy,” which is based on egalitarian, universalist, and individualist principles, as well as “egalitarian democracy,” which is exemplified by the totalitarian communist “republics.” Liberal democracy, furthermore, tends towards anti-democratic oligarchy: To quote Guillaume Faye, “the prevailing aversion to populism actually expresses a covert contempt for authentic democracy... populism is the true face of democracy...”⁴⁷ The New Right rejects authoritarian forms of government and advocates the vision of non-liberal, organic democracy which, very much related to Moeller van den Bruck’s, is based upon the emphasis on the participation of the entire people in the government. Furthermore, organic democracy reconciles political plurality with the unity of the people, and is based on the principle of fraternity, which means “cultural cohesion and a clear sense of shared belonging.”⁴⁸ Finally, contrary the assumptions of many traditionalists, New Rightists such as Benoist point out that organic democracy is based on the reconciliation of the principles of participation and liberty with the basic principles of authority and hierarchy, and has historically even been reconciled with monarchy.⁴⁹ It should be kept in mind, of course, that the New Rightist vision of organic democracy and politics is influenced not only by the Revolutionary Conservatives, but also by various other thinkers such as Johann Gottfried von Herder, Friedrich Carl von Savigny, and Julien Freund.⁵⁰

Many thinkers of the Conservative Revolution and the New Right also agree on the concept of a federalistic “empire” or *Reich* (also translated as “realm” or “domain”), which, it must always be emphasized, is not an “empire” in the sense of imperialistic states. The imperial state tolerates the existence of differing nationalities (ethnic groups), and religious forms, allowing each

⁴⁵ Hans Freyer, *Revolution von Rechts* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1931), 37. Quoted in Colin Loader and David Kettler, *Karl Mannheim’s Sociology as Political Education* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 126.

⁴⁶ Moeller van den Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, 166.

⁴⁷ Guillaume Faye, *Why We Fight: Manifesto of the European Resistance* (London: Arktos, 2011), 221.

⁴⁸ Alain de Benoist, *The Problem of Democracy* (London: Arktos, 2011), 28.

⁴⁹ See Chapter 1, “The Ancients and the Moderns” in *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ See for example Alain de Benoist, “On Identity,” *Telos*, no. 128 (Summer 2004): 14-15; Alain de Benoist, *Beyond Human Rights: Defending Freedoms* (London: Arktos, 2011), 74; Alain de Benoist, “Julien Freund y la impolítica,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* No. 84 (31 October 2014): 8-11. http://issuu.com/sebastianjllorenz/docs/elementos_n__84._freund.

population to live in its own territory within the federal structure, thus unifying a plurality of peoples in an organic manner. The empire, furthermore, is based off of the principles of subsidiarity and the division of sovereignty among the different states in respect to the central authority, for the emperor “is suzerain of princes and kings, i.e., he rules over sovereigns, not territories, and represents a power transcending the community he governs.”⁵¹ This stands in contrast to classical nationalism and the nation-state, which is based on centralization (limiting sovereignty to the central government), the homogenization of culture within its borders, and the absolutization of “national culture.” In addition, both Benoist and Jung have criticized nationalism as an individualism transposed to the national level, giving rise to the “national egoism” of nation-states.⁵² However, it should be noted here that while Jung offered the vision of a pan-European empire, Moeller van den Bruck and Spann offered pan-Germanist nationalist visions of the Reich, which still differed from classical nationalism in the sense that they referenced the Holy Roman Empire and recognized the cultural plurality of the German people.⁵³

Philosophy of War and Peace

Among some Revolutionary Conservatives – including Jünger, Sombart, Freyer, and Jung – we find arguments for a positive side to war, despite its negative side: concepts of the positive anti-individualism and socially integrative effect of war experience, the idea of military virtues which give rise to heroism and willingness to sacrifice oneself for a supra-individual cause, the value of the Warrior or Hero figure against the pacifistic bourgeois world, and the notion that “war is an enterprise in which men with great willpower and courage emerge from the masses of indolents.”⁵⁴ While it could be said that the New Right generally does not extol the values of war, New Rightists certainly share Spengler’s realism about the impossibility of eradicating war from human life, and thus the necessity of being prepared for the occurrence of war: “Peace is a desire, war is a fact; and history has never paid heed to human desires and ideals... when whole peoples become pacifistic it is a symptom of senility. Strong and unspent races are not pacifistic.”⁵⁵

Another important reference point for the philosophy of war and international relations is Carl Schmitt. With Schmitt, New Rightists argue that the idea of fighting for “universal humanity” among liberals and Marxists leads to the dehumanization of enemy combatants, thus “declaring [the enemy] to be an outlaw of humanity; and a war can thereby be driven to the most extreme

⁵¹ Benoist, “The Idea of Empire,” *Telos*, no. 98–99 (December, 1993): 84. This concept was also developed by Johannes Althusius, who is another major influence on New Right political thought; see Alain de Benoist, “The First Federalist: Johannes Althusius,” *Telos*, no. 118 (Winter, 2000): 25–58.

⁵² See *Ibid.*, 88, and the chapter “The foundation of German federational politics” in Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, vol. 2.

⁵³ See Chapter 8, “The Third Empire” in Moeller van den Bruck, *Germany’s Third Empire*, and Novotný, “Kameradschaftsbund (Part One),” 299-301.

⁵⁴ Nicholas A. Varsanyi, *A Study of Werner Sombart’s Writings* (Ph.D. Thesis, McGill University, 1963), 125. See also the chapter “The Nihilism of the Early Ernst Jünger” in Klemens von Klemperer, *Germany’s New Conservatism: Its History and Dilemma in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); Alain de Benoist, “Soldier, Worker, Rebel, Anarch: Types & Figures in Ernst Jünger’s Writings,” *The Occidental Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 49-51; Muller, *The Other God that Failed*, 112-115; Jung, *The Rule of the Inferiour*, 17-21, 56-57.

⁵⁵ Oswald Spengler, “Is World Peace Possible?,” in *Selected Essays* (Chicago: Gateway/Henry Regnery, 1967), 205-207.

inhumanity.”⁵⁶ The New Right also references the concept of civilized warfare in European history that Schmitt had discussed: “The limiting of war to armies battling each other in the face of otherwise unresolvable political differences was designed to avoid gruesome excesses.”⁵⁷ It should also be noted that the New Right draws upon the theory of the “multipolar world” set down by Carl Schmitt, which was developed further by Alain de Benoist and Alexander Dugin. This theory is posed as an antithesis to the current hegemony of the cosmopolitan “West” (the “unipolar world”) and argues for the creation of a world where each nation and civilization is free to determine its own destiny and policies, free from the hegemony of others – a world order in which, due to the minimization of domineering states, unnecessary wars would be minimized as well.⁵⁸

History and Destiny: Europe vs. the West

Well-known among Revolutionary Conservatives was Oswald Spengler’s pessimistic theory of cultural cycles, in which each High Culture goes through cycles of birth, growth, decline, and death analogous to the life of a living organism. Spengler also set an important distinction between *Kultur* (“Culture”) – the early stage of a High Culture’s life marked by religiosity, vitality, and will-to-power – and *Zivilisation* (“Civilization”) – the later stage of a High Culture’s life marked by mechanization, urbanization, decadence, and irreligiosity. Spengler asserted that the Western High Culture was currently in its *Zivilisation* phase, due to its cosmopolitanism, materialism, and rationalism.⁵⁹ Another pessimistic, cyclical view of history was expressed by Ludwig Klages, who wrote of the decline of true Life and the triumph of the Spirit (rational intellect) across history since ancient times. Klages’s Biocentric theory predicted the death of mankind in forthcoming mechanization, but whose death would lead to “the inauguration of a new ‘Golden Age,’ when a fresh cycle of cosmic events dawns in bliss and beauty.”⁶⁰

However, the majority of Revolutionary Conservatives – whether we speak of Freyer, Jung, Sombart, or Spann – rejected the *Kulturpessimismus* (“Cultural pessimism”) of Spengler and Klages and held optimistic or voluntarist views of history, despite the fact that they agreed with Spengler insofar as they did not believe in the destined progress of the strictly linear view of history. One of Spengler’s most important critics was Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, who agreed with Spengler insofar as he believed theorized about the rise of strong “young peoples” and the decline of “old peoples,” but rejected the circular or cyclical view of history, asserting that history is undetermined and incalculable. For Moeller van den Bruck, history actually takes on a “spiral” form (in which each people go through a multiplicity of ascendant and descendant phases) and peoples in decline always have the possibility of reversing their decline.

⁵⁶ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political: Expanded Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 54.

⁵⁷ Paul Gottfried, *Carl Schmitt: Politics and Theory* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 27. For a specifically New Right analysis of Schmitt’s theories, see Alain de Benoist, *Carl Schmitt Today: Terrorism, “Just” War, and the State of Emergency* (London: Arktos, 2013).

⁵⁸ See Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* (New York: Telos, 2003); Benoist, *Carl Schmitt Today*, 104; Benoist and Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, 28-30; Alexander Dugin, “The Multipolar World and the Postmodern,” *Journal of Eurasian Affairs* 2, no. 1 (2014): 8–12; Dugin, “Multipolarism as an Open Project,” *Journal of Eurasian Affairs* 1, no. 1 (2013): 5–14.

⁵⁹ This theory was established in Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West*, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926 & 1928).

⁶⁰ Joseph Pryce, introduction to Ludwig Klages, *The Biocentric Worldview* (London: Arktos, 2013) 23. See also Baer, “The Literary Criticism of Ludwig Klages.”

Furthermore, Moeller van den Bruck rejected Spengler's conception of the "West" and asserted that Germany was a non-Western nation, belonging to a different cultural category and even being more similar, spiritually, to Russia than to "Western" nations such as England.⁶¹

Moeller van den Bruck was not alone in distinguishing Germany from the "West." Werner Sombart set down a unique distinction between peoples of the Trader type and the Hero type, each type representing a dominant character type among a people's psychology. The Traders, exemplified by Anglo-Saxons, are defined by utilitarianism, materialism, individualism, and commercialism, while the Heroes, exemplified by the Germans, are defined by altruism, the sense of duty, self-sacrifice, anti-individualism, and contempt for materialism. These fundamental differences in character set the Germans against the Western peoples dominated by the Trader character.⁶² Edgar Julius Jung had agreed with Spengler that Germans were part of the Western Cultural peoples, but he argued that Germans formed a religious and holist (anti-individualist) "western" people divided from the materialistic and individualist "westerners" represented by England, France, and the United States.⁶³ Jung further argued that Germans had a special destiny to overcome the Western *Zivilisation* and create a new "West" through a "new Middle Ages": "If the Germans remain western, i.e. ruled by the understanding [rationalism], there will be no Western spirit, no Europe any longer."⁶⁴ Spann held a similar view to Jung – without at all considering Germans as "Western" – and positioned "the German people between the capitalist world of the West and the socialist world of the East," and argued that Germans were a specially spiritual, holist, and aristocratist people who would reestablish the True State and lead Europe's transformation.⁶⁵

In a fashion similar to Moeller van den Bruck and other Revolutionary Conservatives, the New Rightists also reject Spengler's historical determinism and fatalism, and propose a voluntarist view of history in which there is no fixed decline, but always the possibility of overcoming decadence and setting an alternative destiny. Furthermore, although New Rightists accept Spengler's conception of a Western Civilization (*Zivilisation*) in a state of decline, they are largely in agreement with the anti-Western German thinkers in their distinction between true European culture and the "West." For New Rightists, the "Western Civilization" is the civilization established by early modern liberalism, egalitarianism, individualism, and cosmopolitanism, and thus it is necessarily distinct from genuine European culture as manifested across its broad history, whether we speak of the Celtic, the Latin, the Greek, the Germanic, or Slavic heritages. This modern "West" threatens all heritages, condemning the peoples of the world "to disintegrate and then die out through mixture, fused into a multiracial society, which is a prelude to the global society and the omega point of Western civilisation," as Pierre Krebs observed.⁶⁶ Just as the Germans called for a revolution of Germany against the "West," New Rightists call for a break with and the overthrowing of Western *Zivilisation*, and for the rejuvenation of European culture. "Europe has already been the site of many cultures and therefore, there is no reason why it can't be again the homeland of a new culture," declared

⁶¹ See Benoist, "Arthur Moeller van den Bruck," 40-43.

⁶² See Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1990), 183 ff.

⁶³ See the chapter "The victory of the inferior in the world-war" in Jung, *The Rule of the Inferior*, vol. 1.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:118.

⁶⁵ Haag, *Othmar Spann and the Politics of "Totality"*, 28. See also *Ibid.*, 24-27, 54-55, 111.

⁶⁶ Krebs, *Fighting for the Essence*, 19.

Benoist, “we are back at Spengler’s, but with one correction; what comes to an end heralds a new beginning.”⁶⁷

Tradition vs. Modernity: Towards a New Future

In addressing the relationship between Tradition and Modernity, often seen as the two major opposing forces in history, we return to the essential concept of “Revolutionary Conservatism” discussed in the beginning, which is shared by both the Conservative Revolution and the New Right. Generally, Revolutionary Conservatives critiqued rationalism, scientism, the ideology of progress, and analyzed the harm done to the natural world and to the traditional cultural and spiritual life of humanity by industrialization, mechanization, and advanced technological developments. However, it can be said that in the Conservative Revolution there were two basic approaches to the problems posed by modernity.

The first tendency – best represented by Klages, Hans Zehrer, Wilhelm Stapel, Ernst Niekisch, and Friedrich G. Jünger – was an essentially backwards-looking “anti-modernism” that was hostile to technological and scientific progress due to the belief that technology and industrialism enslaves humanity, that it has an “anti-life, demonic quality,” and that technology has attained the ability to “annihilate everything organic, whatever it may be – suddenly, totally and precisely.”⁶⁸ The second tendency – best represented by Freyer, Schmitt, Sombart, Ernst Jünger, Moeller van den Bruck, and partially by Spengler – can be described as a forward-looking position that advocated the reintegration of the industrial economy into the organic life of the people and the acceptance of science and “technics as a means of power but in the service of traditional values...”⁶⁹ It can be said that the latter tendency represents the most influential attitude in the Conservative Revolution.⁷⁰ In this case, it must be remembered that a critique of the ideology of progress does not mean a rejection of progress *per se*, a critique of scientism and positivism does not mean a rejection of science *per se*, a critique of rationalism does not mean a rejection of reason *per se*, and so on.

The New Right shares with most Revolutionary Conservatives the more anti-reactionary, forward-looking perspective, which offers the possibility of the reconciliation of Tradition and Modernity to create an alternative “postmodernity,” one distinct from liberal and Marxist visions of the future. In this view, in a “Revolutionary Conservative” fashion, the positive values of traditional culture (spirituality, holism, local customs, etc.) are maintained and the positive

⁶⁷ Alain de Benoist, “The ‘West’ Should Be Forgotten,” *The Occidental Observer*, 21 April 2011, <http://www.theoccidentalobserver.net/2011/04/the-%e2%80%9cwest%e2%80%9d-should-be-forgotten>. See also Sebastian J. Lorenz, “El Decadentismo Occidental, desde la Konservative Revolution a la Nouvelle Droite,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 10 (15 April 2011): 4-5. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_10.

⁶⁸ Ernst Niekisch, “Menschenfresser Technik,” *Widerstand* 6 (1931): 110. Quoted in Herf, *Reactionary Modernism*, 39.

⁶⁹ Miguel Ángel Simón, “La Konservative Revolution como doctrina de la decadencia de Alemania,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 31 (12 August 2012): 55. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_31_mohler_rc.

⁷⁰ See also Herf’s *Reactionary Modernism*, which is dedicated specifically to discussing this view; Benoist, “Arthur Moeller van den Bruck,” 23-24 & 71-72, n. 118 & 122; Sebastian J. Lorenz, “La pregunta sobre la Técnica en los revolucionario-conservadores,” *Elementos: Revista de Metapolítica para una Civilización Europea* no. 34 (7 November 2012): 3-4. http://issuu.com/sebastianjlorenz/docs/elementos_n_34_tcnica_kr_i.

values of modernity (what is valuable in modern progress) are accepted and combined, while what is negative in modernity (individualism, materialism, mechanization, etc.) is firmly rejected to achieve a more balanced cultural order. In terms of technology in particular, New Rightists assert – correspondingly to many Revolutionary Conservatives – that “technophobia and technophilia are equally unacceptable,” and that technological and scientific should be accepted, but moderated and controlled under the guidance of ecological and traditional cultural principles.⁷¹ Alexander Dugin, who observed the beginnings of such a reconciliation of modernity and tradition in certain East Asian societies marked by “modernization without Westernization,” explained this objective clearly in his vision in which “the formal opposition between tradition and modernity is removed... the realities superseded by the period of Enlightenment obtain a legitimate place – these are religion, ethnos, empire, cult, legend, etc. In the same time, a technological breakthrough, economical development, social fairness, labour liberation, etc. are taken from the Modern.”⁷²

From the German Conservative Revolution to the New Right, one finds a common vision for an alternative European destiny, one which is not reactionary or “restorationist,” but neither does it accept liberal and Leftist “modernism” or “postmodernism,” and offers instead a radical synthesis of tradition and modernity to overcome the present situation and create a positive future. In each case, the leading revolutionary intellectuals recognized the battle between fundamental values and worldviews (*Weltanschauungen*) that would determine the future of politics and the destinies of peoples. On the one hand, there are the values of holism, religious spirituality, eternal values, upholding ethno-cultural identity, the valuing of differences, organic economic and political forms, and a radical cultural conservative view of tradition. On the other hand, there are the values of individualism, philosophical materialism, nihilism, egalitarianism, cosmopolitanism, liberalism, totalitarianism, and the corruption of culture. Everything in the latter grouping is recognized as the foundation of the opposing worldview – represented in its most prominent form in the regnant liberalism – which is the enemy of the positive future of peoples and which must be overcome. Despite the vast change in circumstances and conditions, this elementary struggle for a new future for the world remains the same.

⁷¹ Benoist and Champetier, *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, 28.

⁷² Dugin, “Multipolarism as an Open Project,” 12-13. See also the statements about “modernization without Westernization” in Dugin, “The Multipolar World and the Postmodern.”