


Alfred Baeumler: 'Alfred Rosenberg and the Myth of the 20th Century'

Juan Sebastián Gómez-Jeria, PhD^{1,2*} 

¹Free Researcher, Glowing Neurons Group, CP 8270745, Santiago, Chile

²Faculty of Sciences, University of Chile, Las Palmeras 3425, Santiago 7800003, Chile

DOI: [10.36348/jaep.2024.v08i03.007](https://doi.org/10.36348/jaep.2024.v08i03.007)

| Received: 22.02.2024 | Accepted: 26.03.2024 | Published: 30.03.2024

*Corresponding author: Juan Sebastián Gómez-Jeria

Free Researcher, Glowing Neurons Group, CP 8270745, Santiago, Chile

Abstract

Following one of our research topics we present here the first English translation of the text 'Alfred Rosenberg and the Myth of the 20th Century', written by the philosopher Alfred Baeumler. In addition to the research it may lead to, it seems important to read it before reading the book written by Rosenberg.

Keywords: Alfred Rosenberg, Alfred Baeumler, Germany, NSDAP, Greek art, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Hegel, Paul de Lagarde, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Houston Stewart Chamberlain.

Copyright © 2024 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

INTRODUCTION

One of Alfred Baeumler's several excellent texts is dedicated to political philosopher Alfred Rosenberg's masterpiece, entitled 'The Myth of the 20th Century' (Rosenberg, 2004; Rosenberg & Scholle, 1999). Here we present what we believe to be the first English translation of this text. In our opinion, and given the complexity of Rosenberg's text, we suggest that those interested read the text presented here first because it will provide them with an excellent basic approach. We have used the 1943 edition (Baeumler, 1943). This text, like others before it, is a translation that I hope will be improved and commented on by future researchers who are not afraid to do so (Gómez-Jeria, 2023a, 2023b, 2023c, 2023d, 2023e, 2023f, 2023g, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c, 2024d). The quotations contained in this text are from the original edition and, in the future, they would have to be modified to the extent that there is a complete standard text of the Myth in English to cite. For suggestions and comments, please contact the translator.

Text of 'Alfred Rosenberg and the Myth of the 20th Century'

On the eastern border of Estonia stand two fortresses, facing each other. On the west bank of the Narva River rises Hermannsburg, built by the Teutonic Order: imposing and clearly structured, firmly rooted and at the same time projecting aloft, with sharp contours, the image of a force that, resting on itself, turns towards the world to dominate it spiritually.

On the eastern bank lies the Slavic fortress of Ivangorod. Endlessly piling up new masses, the barely articulated construction spills into space. Their proportions and measurements are almost unhuman. While the tower here in the West reminds us of the posture of a warrior who sits calm and secure in the chair, there in the East the idea of a humane and chivalrous attitude cannot be presented. These misshapen walls must hide terrible secrets. Before our spiritual eyes there appears an inhuman despotism and an equally inhuman servitude. Every medieval fortress has its dungeons, but this castle looks like a single, gloomy dungeon. We miss in this construction any resonance of a joyful and free creation. The hopelessness of a soul opposed to the German seems to have created in him its symbol.



Figure 1: Left. Hermann Castle (also Hermannsburg, Herman Castle, Narva Castle, Narva fortress, and *Hermanni linnus*) in Narva, eastern Estonia. Right. Ivangorod fortress (Ivangorod, Russia).

German form and Asian infinity: in the narrow space of the eastern border of the Baltic lands meet. From the silent absolutism of the architectural appearance, emerge with unprecedented force the characters that are the destiny of peoples.

As an East German, in an outpost of the ethnic group, Alfred Rosenberg was born. In the destiny-laden space where the form-rich center of Europe meets the immensely monotonous East, in the field of tension of

two races and cultures, he received his first impressions. The Balts have united against the strangeness that surrounds them and have developed a closed, familiar tribal feeling. As if they represented a single European noble family, they opposed Russian breadth. In their stately estates and in their cities they cultivated the strict forms of humane chivalrous treatment, consciously erecting a protective wall of human measure against the foreign Tartar excess.



Figure 2: A map of the Baltic Tribes, around year 1200. The Eastern Balts are shown in brown hues while the Western Balts are shown in green. The boundaries are approximate (Wikipedia).

Hermannsburg is a true symbol of the Balt essence: something German, which could just as well be in Franconia, but here adopts a special stance: looking down with distant restraint on a world that does not and will never know the European form.

It is characteristic of the Balt to act through being. It is not proper for the Balts to attack this or that

directly and change it by force. The Balts does not gladly deny it. He never rushes into details to destroy them; he waits until he can oppose the New as a Whole to the Old. When he has fully conformed to the New, no one can be more implacable than he, and nothing will prevent him from preferring the Right and Noble to the False and Ignoble.

There is something about the Balt that could be called a sense of humanity, a special sense of the relationship between human beings. This sense is something different from mere social touch, it is a certain way of seeing the world. A Balt always sees the world through the medium of the human being. It cannot and will never abstract from the human. Everywhere he looks through, from the work to the creator, from the achievement to the one who does it.

In a very profound sense, he is the man of the anecdote. Who could rejoice more cordially over an anecdote than he? But what is an anecdote? The revelation, reduced to its bare minimum, of a human character or situation. The interest in characters and situations is a Baltic tribal peculiarity and it must be added that, in spite of all aesthetic talent, this interest is essentially ethical. What matters is how the whole human being behaves, how he answers a question in life, how he relates to the world and to other human beings.

In the unique and special thing that Rosenberg's work has brought to the German spirit, we recognize a historical gift from the East at the center of German collective life. What the Fatherland gave him, he gives back to the spiritual Fatherland to which the Baltic people have always been united. Goethe and Schopenhauer educated Rosenberg, and he never denied his inner affinity with the spirit of Kant. In the face of his work, schematisms that seek to bring the East back to the 'Prussian style' or to Herder's empathic capacity fail. The Baltic essence cannot be defined by the 'Prussian style' or by the romantic richness of the soul. The proximity of Russia's immense space and its configurations of power have generated in the Baltic an internal breadth that has become alien to the German interior, which in the course of the tragic history of the Reich became too narrow within small political territories. Nowhere else in the total German space has anything been formed that could be compared to the attitude of the Baltic: hardness in the innermost core, which joins an unusual breadth of horizons in a unique character. It is only on the border, in constant coexistence with a foreign ethnic group, that sensibility for human beings and wills can be developed, which, together with the breadth of the soul, constitutes the particularity of the Baltic.

Baltic Germanism is in the early nineteenth century in a similar relationship to the core territory as Southeastern Germanism is to Bismarck's Empire. Neither the Protestant Northeast nor the Catholic Southeast fit into the educational atmosphere of Bismarck's Empire. Neither is touched by the state's conception of the nuclear territory, which combines the realism of a new age with the philosophical idealism of Fichte and Hegel in a mixture. The dangers that lay in the idealistic statism of Bismarck's Empire did not exist for the eastern frontier regions of the old empire. Here there was maintained a disposition to see the political and the spiritual in new ways, a disposition that in inner

Germany had disappeared under the pressure of statist narrowing. *It is impossible to consider it a coincidence that the two books that revolutionized the political and spiritual attitude of the nuclear territory, Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf and Rosenberg's The Myth of the Twentieth Century, were written by Germans from the northeastern and southeastern periphery of the former Reich.*

The boy who was born on January 12, 1893 in a bourgeois house in the town of Reval on the Estonian coast, fate had not put an easy life in the cradle. The Balto does not carry the heart on his tongue; but even from the sinkest indications the vital feeling of a soul can be guessed. Even the imprisoned Kant has been recognized as melancholy. Rosenberg's literary oeuvre remains completely free of all painting, mood, and conceptual lyricism; From this man for whom only action and form count, a direct manifestation of feeling is not to be expected. And yet in his work a continuous trait of feeling is clearly perceptible. It is the human appeal of this work that its triumphant content is sustained by the slow movement of a melancholy soul. Rosenberg's heart is not casually attached to the vast and severe landscape of his homeland; where you should feel at home in the middle of forests, fields and meadows, it has to be 'like in Estonia'. Something of the pastoral mode of the third act of 'Tristan und Isolde', of a longing for infinity that goes beyond all forms, is found in this melancholy, before which the world sometimes seems to recede like a shadow. For such a soul, life is sometimes perceived as a melancholy affair. This state of mind has been compressed by Schopenhauer (in the poem on Kant's death) in the wonderful verse:

'The world is barren, and life is long'.

Spiritual creation can never be deduced from temperament. But surely the secret of creative impulses is closely connected with the type and color of temperament.



Figure 3: Alfred Rosenberg

At the end of the first book of 'The Myth', Rosenberg draws a picture of Germanic man. He is the man of 'ecstasy', with this word Chamberlain had already given the concept of idealism, the man of discoveries and audacity, of scientific knowledge and personal artistic

creation. Rosenberg characterizes ecstasy more closely as 'maximum mental disposition for action'. But in the deepest depths of this disposition for action he discovers what has just given this image its true Nordic depth: the feeling of the oneness and singularity of the soul, which is the presupposition of all freedom and greatness, and the consciousness of solitude that arises from it. 'Everything stands colored and configured in a peculiar way, intuited and strange at the same time, and in the middle and next to it I find myself, the Nordic man, the consciousness that has become the mystery of existence, solitary' (The Myth, p. 271).

Description and confession merge in this sentence, and it is precisely on this that the objective truth of the work that contains it is based. Solitude and action condition each other in the Germanic personality. For the action here is not a senseless and violent activity or an inner restlessness that moves on pre-written tracks, but the creative movement of a self-surrendered self. The action of the Nordic man is born of the dream of the soul, the great doers of the north are at the same time the eternal dreamers. There is nothing indeterminate and 'dreamy' about this concept of dreaming; as Rosenberg uses this expression, it is a clear term of genuine psychological depth. Dreamers in this sense are people who splurge generously on the world. Whoever knows how to speak of dreams in this way knows the presuppositions of world-historical action. Before all decisive action there is the audacious project, that inner action which is initially only the most secret possession of an individual and is revealed by decision. With this he enters the conditions of time and falls under the power of fate. But even the work, dismembered by the necessities of existence, is haloed by the brilliance of the soul that once dreamed of it.

Even the most rationally lucid creative man is never a purely rational being. From a center which always remains in darkness arises all that suddenly rises before us, as if sprung up 'out of nothing', the free projects of the soul, for which there is no previous trace in the given connection of things. *Anyone who builds something out of his own strength somehow makes his way from darkness to light.* In some, one project follows another until finally the last one becomes a work. Others carry out only a single thought apprehended with foreboding and clarity in youth. So it was with Schopenhauer, and similarly with Rosenberg.

The dispositions which are united in it are maintained in their diversity with the greatest severity by the unity of character. On the basic disposition for the configuring vision and the configuring creation, he initially embraces the profession of architect. The internal dynamics of his nature push him beyond the realm of artistic creation, without changing the configuring impulse. The only thing that transforms is the form of expression you choose. Under the constraint of an internal necessity, the innate configuring force

shifts from the artistic to the real human; the action of men in their characterological conditioning attracts interest upon themselves. He recognizes it as his life's task to see, distinguish and make forms in this area. It moves away from stone, metal and wood to turn to the noblest and most difficult material that exists: the human being.

From the artist emerges the politician and philosopher of culture. Perhaps here it may be recalled that Westphalia, the homeland of the Balt tribe, is the land that in two apparently opposite spheres has produced forms of maximum simplicity and strength: within the art of the Romanesque style, a proud succession of magnificent constructions and in the sphere of human coexistence, an exemplary juridical thought. Understanding the relationships between people in their structure as buildings, understanding the juridical-political systems almost architecturally and conceiving them as an expression of human characters, has always remained the strength of Balt Rosenberg.

As if driven by an inner force, at the age of 24 he begins to write thoughts, not knowing where that will take him. The innate gift for configuration means that, from the first attempt, he achieves closed texts, and his formulations have an astonishing certainty and maturity. But the most remarkable thing is that this young writer makes decisions that he will not need to retract in his entire life. We are faced with the rare case of a perfectly straightforward inner development, which is nevertheless not rigid at all, which can only be explained by an extraordinary firmness of character. Rosenberg's reflexive and political talents are not two different dispositions that somehow interact, but only two forms of expression of the same unitary fundamental force. The closed personality unfolds its activity in two opposite directions, which we usually find distributed in different personalities. So sure is this personality of itself, so firmly rested in confidence in its star, that it can afford the freest movement. The thinker communicates his firmness to the politician, the politician to the thinker his unconditionality.

Rosenberg's thought is political not only because it chooses political objects such as Judaism or the diversity of nations, but in a much deeper sense. *We must call a thought truly political when it is not satisfied with the description of human phenomena, but advances to the motive forces that determine the life of the individual and of the community.* Guided by his unusual ability to grasp the essentially human, Rosenberg has developed his own style of political knowledge. It has taught us to recognize essential features and forms even where before everything seemed to dissolve into an amorphous subjectivism and an accidental moralism. In all that is human-historical, he knows how to discover with the sense of smell of a hunter the determining and configuring impulses. He knows no realm of pure forms that rests in itself and is enjoyed by a contemplative

spirit. All that is spiritual autotelic is alien to him. Form is action. Every artistic or political form is born from a fluid igneous nucleus, it is the revelation of a soul. In the end, there is no form at all that is nothing but form: form is conformation. And all conformation is the action of a personality. Wherever we look in the human sphere, everywhere we find form, both in the daily life of a people and in its legal system or in its art. For this thought there is nothing fortuitous or isolated. Whether he is a statesman, an artist, a writer, or a Jewish merchant, Rosenberg relentlessly examines his work in terms of the internal form from which it proceeds. There is no room for evasion or excuse here; there is no retreat to an absolute spirit or good intentions: everything that happens is an expression of a mentality. Everyone must resign themselves to being held responsible for what they do. Form and consciousness are not on different planes that are separated as 'ethics' and 'aesthetics', but are one, and that is why Rosenberg must always understand conformation when he says form. *The produced is unthinkable without the producer, and the producer is always the personality.*

Without reflection, only guided by his instinct, Rosenberg has introduced configurative thinking into political and historical knowledge. Each form corresponds to a certain attitude of mind, the forms struggle with each other for their self-affirmation and validity, their struggle is the content of universal history; Germanic dynamism cannot imagine life in any other way than as a struggle of forces with each other. *Not to have understood this struggle as a mere animal struggle for existence, but as a struggle of form against form, that is, of value against value, is the decisive achievement in Rosenberg's thought.* 'Force against force, in God is compensation'. In this formula, to which Hebbel reduced Germanic dynamism, Rosenberg's basic assumption is also expressed. The subtitle of his major work, which reads: *An Assessment of the Soul-Spiritual Shaping Struggles of Our Time*, should not have been overlooked. To see in the daily struggle the battle of the spirits, not to idly contemplate the struggle of the spirits, to awaken and maintain in the midst of tumult the consciousness of the greatness and historical scope of the political event, this is the art in which Rosenberg is a master and in which no one surpasses him.

The book of his life, the foundations of which were already laid by his first essays, was born of struggle and yet is at the same time the work of profound justice. Nothing can be called more Germanic and at the same time more German than this union of combative attitude and justice, which remains eternally incomprehensible to the pure man of violence. Pure violence lacks that with which the noble soul instinctively begins: the recognition of form.

At the same time, Rosenberg's work repels all those who want to be satisfied with the mere contemplation of forms. The 'Myth' has revealed the

spiritual-historical wanderers on the battlefields for what they are: undecided spectators of a drama in which they would be obliged to participate. What is a character that only dreams of itself and renounces to fight in the hostile world for its existence and its honor? Whoever sees the shaping struggles of his time must also struggle with them. Not to see is not to want to see. *Contemplative knowledge obliges.* There is in this a debasement of man by refraining from taking a practical position and abandoning values in the space of the spirit to their destiny. For a value is really value only when it is affirmed by living men with all the devotion of their person and, if necessary, defended in the concrete clash. The coincidence of the philosophical and political orientation of the forces in Rosenberg's personality is based on the fact that the spiritual form is seen as compelling action.

The first notes in which Rosenberg attempts to give an account of his time and his position in it appeared in 1917 in Moscow. The Higher Technical School in Riga, where he had studied, was transferred to Moscow in 1915. In the same year that the Russian state collapsed, the student Rosenberg prepared his drawings for the state examination in architecture and in early 1918 passed the examination. On November 30, 1918, Rosenberg rented the great hall of the Black-headed House in Reval and gave a lecture on the subject 'The Jewish Question'. On the same night of this talk, he left Reval and traveled to Berlin. With instinctive certainty he had grasped one of the central themes and tasks of his life. A short time later he became a contributor in Munich to a political magazine entitled 'In Good German, Weekly for Order and Law'. Its founder and publisher is Dietrich Eckart. In the eighth issue of this magazine appears Rosenberg's first article against Bolshevism: 'The Russo-Jewish Revolution'.

It was a lucky star who guided Rosenberg to Munich. In the Munich State Library his spirit of learning found rich nourishment. Through tireless reading he unconsciously created the necessary prerequisites so that the thoughts conceived in Moscow and Reval could mature into a book. But also politically, Munich was the right ground for the young writer who saw the problems of the time from the Jewish question. The Baltic linguistic variety did not prevent the comrade from the far north, who did not even possess German citizenship, from being well received by the Bavarians fighting Judaism. The firm stand on the Jewish question was a credential of character that meant more than any paper and even more than the vernacular. At Dietrich Eckart's house, Rosenberg meets Adolf Hitler for the first time.

The young National Socialist movement immediately found in him one of its most active collaborators. His instinct for what was happening in the depths of time had led him single-handedly to speak to excited people surrounding Maria's column on Marienplatz and to hand out pamphlets together with

Dietrich Eckart from a car. When, from January 1, 1921, the movement's fighting newspaper, the 'Völkischer Beobachter', began to be published in the possession of the party, he stood out with his first article in it (On Zionism), which was immediately followed by others on Freemasonry. In August 1921 he and Dietrich Eckart

took over the management of the 'Völkischer Beobachter'. After (in February 1923) the 'Völkischer Beobachter' had become a daily newspaper, on March 10, 1923, he published on the front page the note: 'From today I have assumed the main editorship. Alfred Rosenberg'.



Figure 4: Völkischer Beobachter. It started life in 1887 as the Münchener Beobachter. In 1918 Rudolf von Sebottendorff, a member of the Thule Society, a right-wing, völkisch and partially secret and esoteric group, acquired the newspaper. Early in 1920, the name was changed to Völkischer Beobachter.

In the historical 'consultation hours', in which under the fiery breath of the time and the spiritual guidance of Adolf Hitler the ideas and tactical principles of the movement were shaped, Rosenberg always participates. On 14 October 1922 he was with the Leader on the decisive day in Coburg. On the night of November

8, 1923, he accompanied the Leader with his pistol in his hand to the hall of the Bürgerbräukeller, with pistol in hand, and on the morning of November 9 he marched at the head of the column that took the road to the Feldherrnhalle. The development of the man of action runs as straight as the spiritual unfolding.



Figure 5: Left. Alfred Rosenberg with Adolf Hitler during the Beer Hall Putsch in Munich, November 1923. Right. Hitler in Munich addressing a meeting of the NSDAP in 1925. Third to the left of Hitler is Alfred Rosenberg, on the right are Gregor Strasser and Heinrich Himmler. (Photo Heinrich Hoffmann).

Today one can scarcely imagine how much strength of character was then required to wage the seemingly hopeless struggle against the Jewish power. Anyone who rebelled against Judaism was branded a 'popular instigator'; it seemed unthinkable that a spiritual man could be anti-Jewish [changed from 'anti-Semitic', translator's note]. But it was precisely in the formation of a new spiritual attitude that the revolutionary nature of the National Socialist movement consisted. *The fatal mistake of its (non-Jewish) opponents was to suppose that this movement had adopted the program of the old 'anti-Judaism'. They did not see that this was not an*

'anti', i.e., a struggle against the Jew as an opponent placed on the same plane, but something completely new. In the struggle of the National Socialist movement against Jewish rule, nothing of the narrow-mindedness which accompanied the previous 'anti-Semitism' [anti-Judaism] is perceptible, in spite of all its firmness of character. Rosenberg's early combat writings are not a continuation of the illustrated literature on Jews and Freemasons represented by the names of Fritsch and Wichtl.

The young National Socialist movement owes much to these men, but all its literature is something other than a continuation of what they started. While these men certainly already show an awareness of the connections in which modern Judaism and Freemasonry are to be viewed, it is only through the NSDAP that the struggle against the supranational powers has been conducted as truly political. The confrontation could only become truly penetrating if not only material was gathered, but also if the present representatives of these powers in Germany were concretely attacked, with the aim of eliminating them. But this, in turn, was only possible if there was a clear idea of what should take the place of the corrupt system that handed over the political and spiritual life of the people to international powers. Only from the positive side could the struggle be conducted effectively and in a new style.

For the men who fought with Adolf Hitler, an attitude that was probably unique in history was characteristic. The fanaticism of this entourage is well known; less well known is that inner unconditionality was accompanied by a cheerful superiority, which often turned into joviality. The Leader's Shakespearean humor very often resonated in liberating laughter with the temperaments of his closest associates. *It must not be forgotten that National Socialism not only had to fight against Jews, Communists and Freemasons, but at the same time had to distance itself from numerous nationalist and solitary groups that sought to wage the same struggle, when in fact they were still deeply attached to the ideas of the past.* To have prevented all mixing with folkloric-archaic circles belongs to the Leader's greatest achievements; and it was precisely in this struggle that he found in Rosenberg the strongest support. Very late in life, many opponents realized that National Socialism, in the midst of daily struggle, also represented a spiritual attitude that had previously been unknown.

Political decision and smiling security, fanaticism and détente were united in a unity in this attitude. The superiority that Adolf Hitler's fighters felt in themselves was nothing more than a psychological oddity: it had a historical basis, for it was an expression of the distance that separated the Leader and his entourage from their time.

During the period of the party's ban, when the *Völkischer Beobachter* also did not appear, Rosenberg founded the magazine 'Der Welt Kampf' [The World Struggle], in which he continued the struggle against the supranational powers from 1924 to 1930 (the year of the founding of the National Socialist Monthly, 'Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte'). For years, 'The World Struggle' was the spiritual compilation of material for those who led the movement to victory in all German districts. The most pressing task was to show the German people that the pitiful state in which they found themselves was not due to the failure of their own forces,

but that certain individuals, whose names were on everyone's lips, were to blame, because they practiced a policy of subjugation instead of a policy of resistance and reconstruction. At the same time, it had to be shown that these so-called German politicians did not really have command in hand but were led by those who were not always based in Germany.

The journalistic attack on the Invisibles was anything but easy. Information from the enemy camp was completely missing. *The National Socialist combat journalist depended on what Freemasons and Jews intentionally or unintentionally revealed in their newspapers, magazines, and books. As he immediately recognized, it was not at all a question of having information about the people and companies of the opposing side, but rather of making visible the adversary's way of feeling and valuing.* Only when the opponent had become a figure could the real fight against him begin. The facts that could be known had been known for some time; but knowledge remained dead as long as the adversary was not a figure. To condense it into a figure and thereby give the defensive forces goal, momentum, and direction, which was Rosenberg's feat.

His ability to grasp what is humanly essential and characteristic was fully developed. With the conscience of a passionate, tenacious and fierce fighter, endowed with an infallible sense of smell and backed by his excellent memory, he devoted himself to the pursuit of his adversary. From the self-incriminations of cynical and shameless impostors, he extracts all that there is to extract. Woe to him whom I have ever caught! He forgets no one, he lets go of none. He knows how to grab the opponent at the decisive point and knock him down or, when knocking him down is not possible, hit him in a way that hurts. *An irritated patriot or an offended moralist does not speak here, but the world-historical adversary of Jewish-democratic internationalism speaks here.* The journalist Rosenberg does not fight against Mr. Schmidt or Mr. Cohn, but he fights against the demon made visible, which is the mortal enemy of Germanness. It awakens in the reader the feeling: here it is a matter of life or death, it can only be You or Us!

In Rosenberg's articles and pamphlets from the early years of the movement's struggle, German nationalism takes on a new depth. It is neither literature nor historical knowledge prolonged to the present, when Rosenberg treats international capital as 'Moloch' and its servants as servants of Moloch. *Gold has been called an 'idol' a thousand times, but no one had had the courage to recognize that Jewish capitalism is true idolatry.* Such recognition could only come from one who clearly felt that the worshippers of Moloch were only triumphing because the servants of the national gods had become weary, indolent, and skeptical. For Rosenberg, nationalism is something different from a matter of economics, but also something different from a matter of morality. The nation demands the whole man and thus

aligns itself with the series of religious powers. But once the German has recognized what the nation demands of him, then he is certainly the God of Abraham, that very

real Hebrew God who is worshipped even more in the stock markets than in the synagogues.



Figure 6: Left. Modern Moloch (Quentin Massys or Metsys, 1466–1530). Right. The Modern Golden Calf (Henri Meyer, 1841-1899)

It is a simple but coercive logic that underlies Rosenberg's position: you have to take your adversary seriously, you have to recognize that these people have to act this way because they are like that, and therefore they will never change. They have their gods, but we have ours!

If, in the struggle against Jews and Freemasons, Rosenberg moved in a field where much of what he had already achieved helped him, in taking a stand against Bolshevism he found himself completely reverted to himself, to his instinct and his experiences. The Bolshevik revolution was still in its infancy, everything seemed to be still open and any evaluation possible. According to the usual economic, psychological, and political consideration, it would have been necessary to postpone the final judgment even further, or the idea of a pact with the new state of things in the East would have been incurred. That there was a rejection of Bolshevism no less unconditional than the rejection of Judaism is to the credit of the NSDAP, which, however ridiculous it might have seemed to the learned and knowledgeable at the time, assumed responsibility for the existence of Europe. Rosenberg had as a basis for his judgment only his assessment of the Bolshevik leadership, in which there were also many Jews, and his knowledge of the Russian people. As Balt, he knew what could and could not be expected from a Russian. While all around him he dreamed and fantasized, while Oswald Spengler and then many others, seduced by Dostoevsky, raved about the 'soul of the East', Rosenberg remained sober and

realistic. His unerring instinct for the human didn't fail him here either. He recognized that the new state order of the East at its innermost core was not constructive, but chaotic.

Rosenberg always left open what might become of the peoples who inhabit the vast Russia. *But he defended with the greatest determination the thought that the Bolshevik system was a calamity to that country and a menace to Europe.* Nothing dazzled or diverted him. His position was not determined by isolated impressions or feelings, but was based, like that of his compatriot Victor Hehn (*De moribus Ruthenorum*), on objective knowledge. Along with this, of course, in something else: in the deep knowledge about what makes peoples small or great, what is alive or dead, what is fertile or parasitic. The enormous effect of his stance was due to the fact that it was perceived: this assessment truly points to the whole. Here it is not decided according to momentary impressions or immediate advantage, but according to determining motives. A new notion of politics struggles to come to light. That the Bolshevik leadership was especially prominent in Jews might be objectively unimportant; as a symptom it was decisive. The two adversaries presented by Rosenberg to the German people went together. Their political unity could only be made visible to those who recognized the values that both annihilated or at least threatened. It is not arbitrariness, but arises from an internal necessity, that alongside the series of writings directed against Judaism (*'The Trail of the Jew Through the Changes of the Ages'*,

'Immorality in the Talmud', 'Zionism Enemy of the State', 'The Protocols of the Elders of Zion', 'Jewish World Politics') there is the writing 'Plague in Russia'.

And alongside these combat writings stands the first official writing of the movement in which its positive aspect is exposed: the 'Principles and Objectives of the NSDAP'.

A word must be said about the manner in which this struggle for the German nation was waged by Rosenberg. The clever could twist the gesture at the use of something like the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion'. *They were sitting in the living room of good taste and scientific 'objectivity', and it was simply impossible for them that one day a Bolshevik would ever appear to smash their bourgeois porcelain and burn the contents of their libraries.* How could they have any idea that Judaism, which they regarded as harmless, collaborated with Bolshevism, and what danger it threatened Western civilization? But those who got into the tumult of the struggle to defend European culture from Germany in the turbulent times after the World War had to look for weapons and could not make too long considerations. *The origin of the 'Protocols' remained obscure, something Rosenberg did not hide. With remarkable prudence, in the midst of the fighting, he pointed out that there was no definitive proof of its origin.* But it would be a grave mistake to infer from this that he had taken a possibility for reality and thrown the documents into the fray without objective examination. The content of the 'Protocols' was clear and unambiguous. It did not contradict in any way what could be deduced from other Jewish manifestations and from the actions of international Jewry. Rosenberg approached the product from the physiognomic side. The Jewish will to power, which in economics and politics was blatantly exposed everywhere, but in literature was only occasionally apprehended, expressed itself openly (perhaps too openly) in the product. To make this will to power existing in reality also visible in literature could seem permissible to the fighter. Anyone who demands of a fighter that he wait until there are more tests like that has no idea what a world-historic confrontation is.

With the youthful strength of an early self-reliance that measures the world by clearly recognized ideals, Rosenberg has thrown himself into the fray. A fortunate star led him to the small group of unknown men in Munich who had taken up a seemingly hopeless struggle for Germany's freedom. *In Munich he was soon united by a virile friendship with the somewhat older Dietrich Eckart, who was a staunch admirer of Schopenhauer.* It was an alliance such as is only possible between people of different temperaments who are united in a common commitment to a great cause. He later wrote to both Chamberlain and Eckart.

The event that decided Rosenberg's later life was the encounter with Adolf Hitler. In the young soldier

at the front, in whom an immense shaping force struggled for the form of activity that suited him and which had an almost magical effect on all the people with whom he came in contact, he immediately recognized the emotional and political center of a new Germany. He saw in him the born leader of all those who trusted more in the faith of their hearts and in the strength of their will than in the calculations of prudence. Adolf Hitler was for him the soul-awakening of the nation and at the same time the only one whom he believed capable of assuming and bearing responsibility for the whole. He always saw him as man, taken in the world-historical sense. 'Whether on the battlefields of France, before thousands of his friends and enemies, before a court, he is always the same: the leader, the man who embodied the longing for the best, who gave expression to their urgency to action, beyond action'. So Rosenberg wrote during Hitler's trial in February 1924, in the darkest of times, when he was working on the reconstruction of the shattered party, in the 'Great German Newspaper' which was then trying to replace the 'Völkischer Beobachter'. The bravery and faith of the fighters who had once been touched by the Leader's mysteriously cool force remained unshaken. For these men, who did politics not only with their heads but also with their hearts, it could not be otherwise that Adolf Hitler would one day determine the fate of Germany. 'If the German essence is not a dream of a sunken past, but still lies as a dormant psychic force in the people, then this people will certainly one day raise its alarm clock as leader to the place where it belongs. Whatever may be the outcome of the process, love and veneration will invariably accompany in loyal fidelity the man whose heart knows only one thing: the German fatherland, the German people, German freedom'.

With these words Rosenberg spoke to the hearts of an ever-increasing number of Germans. Even in the formulation, words like these are characteristic of his way of being. In it, you always perceive that you are not saying something that is only valid for the moment. He never appears merely as a transmitter of thoughts or as a mere propagandist of an idea. He is always with his whole personality behind what he says, and the formulation reveals that thought is his psychic property and his most personal experience. But every thought, every experience, and this is only what is proper to it, is immediately related to the center of the worldview of the thinking and living: Rosenberg never moves on the periphery of his world; In everything he thinks and writes, he goes from the center of the soul outwards. When he has nothing to say that relates to the core of his being, then he doesn't speak up. *Language is not intended for him for games, but only for the utmost seriousness.*

From the constant reference of all manifestations to the center of the personality comes the dignity proper to all that Rosenberg says, and which finds its proper expression in the attitude of his style. This style lacks all rhetoric, all superfluous ornamentation.

Thought always rushes to the essential, which is pointed out as briefly and forcefully as possible. The peculiarity of his style derives from the fact that Rosenberg never writes or speaks without having before his soul an intuitive image of his object. He never surrenders to the word as such, he never lets himself be carried away by the expressive medium. From the greatness and seriousness of the object which he has in mind, the seriousness of the style follows of itself.

If, from the earliest days of the movement's struggle, Rosenberg's demonstrations always seemed to many party comrades the purest proclamations of a new worldview, this is not least due to the ethical evidence of his writings and speeches. They are self-evident because they arise from the immediate relationship with their objects and problems, ethically evident because their objects and problems are the highest and most serious that exist, and because their presentification is carried out with the utmost responsibility. This man has never been moved and occupied by anything other than the fate of his people. It is always the same question that moves his heart and his brain: What will become of the German essence?

Others have also lived in concern about the future of the nation and have striven for the stance of their idiosyncrasies. In the spiritual struggle for the idea of the nation, the Leader's comrade in struggle has given a new tone. He sees and experiences that Adolf Hitler not only knows how to reawaken faith in the indestructible strength of the German people everywhere, but that the Leader and his movement are themselves this reborn force. The immediate experience of this imperishable force contrasts sharply with what the post-war present shows everywhere with its decomposition and discouragement. The group of men gathered around the Leader are animated by a single thought: Where the Leader is, there is Germany. What claims to represent Germany officially today is not Germany at all. In the movement it is not a question of the 'pretense of power' of any new party, but only of making manifest the truth: Germany can only be where freedom and honor are fought, and not where politicians of compliance haggle over the facilitations of a state that they themselves have brought about by their lack of decisiveness. From this National Socialist attitude is drawn all that Rosenberg has written and said. His task was to develop, on the basis of the faith in the eternal Germany which he had awakened by the effectiveness of the Leader, a new and truer picture of the German essence and of German history.

No one was better prepared for this task than the frontier German, for whom the fundamental experience of his youth, the self-assertion of Baltic Germanness, had opened up history to him from its decisive side. It was obvious to him that in life and in history it is always the character of people that decides. Character is not something that changes because of the collapse of

institutions, it is the Permanent in the change of things, on which it can be built when everything seems to collapse. What does 'State' matter, what does 'Culture' matter? Away with abstractions! As long as there are Germans willing to fight for the honor of the nation, the state and culture can re-emerge at any time. Only one thing can never lead to a political and spiritual revival: the inactive contemplation of one's own past. It is only through action, not contemplation, that the present is raised to the height of the past.

In such recognitions lay the overcoming of historicism, the hereditary disease of German culture from the nineteenth century. *Historicism sees the present as something to become, not as something to be configured.* Whoever has ever fallen into the historical consideration of things, sees only developments and conditionings, only states and not actions. The idea of race, which contains the enormous knowledge of the constancy of living forces and of the eternal presence of innate character in the flow of events, is incomprehensible to him. The imposition of National Socialism found precisely in the well-disposed a mode of consideration which took only the state and culture as states, whose law was slow 'development'. One was not able to assume these states from within, dynamically, as the creations of men of a particular type and race. *The revolutionary effect exerted by Rosenberg's image of history was based on the fact that it not only dissolved historicism, a corrosive critique would have let it pass at most, but spiritually replaced it with a completely unusual totally new worldview.* By taking seriously the idea that all historical life is determined by men of a particular type and race, by penetrating the stratum of states and advancing everywhere with implacable consequence to the configuring center, Rosenberg had not only to pronounce new assessments in numerous particular cases, but also to destroy the central political dogma of historicism. For historicism it was obvious that all historically converted states were 'legitimate' and that the meaning of history could only be sought in a balance of opposing states. No one believed it possible to unite historical consciousness with something other than the conservation, cultivation and balance of what exists.

The new historical consciousness which arose from the struggle of the National Socialist movement against the Weimar Republic turned its back on the optimism of the historically educated bourgeoisie and opposed to it its own, deeper and more correct vision of historical life, with an implacability such as only the seriousness of responsibility for the future can bestow. *'Contrasts must not be balanced but must be resolved in struggle.'* With this phrase Rosenberg reduced the new dynamism to the shortest formula in a retrospective of ten years of lived history ('Ten Years of Revolt', 1928).

On the unconscious assumption that the meaning of world history can only be sought in something common to all peoples, time and again

attempts have been made to reduce human history to a single formula. The flexible complaint about the discord of nations and about the struggle of spirits is the inevitable reverse of such attempts. A historian like Heinrich von Treitschke spoke virile words about the necessity of war, starting from an understanding of the great powers and the living conditions of peoples. Rosenberg's recognition is broader and goes deeper. It is one thing to justify war, and another to recognize that struggle is the fundamental category of history as such. The life of peoples is not only a struggle for power, but also a struggle for ideas. Religious clashes do not go back to the whim of some theologians; in them, racial souls fight against each other. The contention of figures and characters with each other is given by their existence; war, then, is only a form of manifestation of the original tensions that are placed with the historical existence of man.

Where it was previously believed to perceive spiritual movements and developments of unreal units, the configuring eye recognizes processes of an entirely different nature. Rosenberg drew attention to one of these processes with the concept he coined of 'character protest'. The German Reformation, which arose from Luther's action, is not to be understood as a piece of 'ecclesiastical history' but can only be understood as a character protest of the German-German soul against a foreign coercive religious system. Such a protest of character is a unique historical event; It is at the same time a revelation of enduring racial substance. The peculiarity and value of the new concept consists in the fact that here character is recognized as a historical power. It is not an anonymous 'spirit', it is not abstract ideas that give rise to historical crises. One character, i.e., one attitude of mind, rebels against another, and only where at the same time a character acts in an ethical sense is there the prospect of beginning and implementing such a protest of character against the overwhelming supremacy of one tradition.

The shaping of the new conception of history meant much more than an outstanding spiritual achievement that had practical value for the struggle of the movement and especially for ideological formation. Before National Socialism could demonstrate in the political and social fields its capacity to shape real life, its picture of history was the only convincing proof that it arose not only from a transitory discontent, but that it proceeded from the real and lasting foundations of German life, and that therefore its opposition was of a positive and not a negative character.

The struggle against the Communists and the Jews, which had to be waged relentlessly, was, in spite of all its harshness and all the sacrifices, that only a struggle in the previous camp demanded; it was necessary because the coalition between political Catholicism and international Social Democracy, on which the existence of the Republic rested, paralyzed all

constructive forces and gave free rein to the underworld. The real historical adversary was the black-red coalition in conjunction with all the bourgeois parties that believed they could justify a pact with those who had submitted to the will of the enemy. Within the black-red coalition, tactical as well as ideological leadership resided in political Catholicism. It was not worth wasting a word about the more or less honest insignificance of the Social-Democratic functionaries and their rickety Enlightenment ideology, whereas the Centre was a religious and political power whose roots went deep into the past. If the struggle was to be waged from the essential foundations, then the movement had to win first of all on the terrain on which its strength seemed to lie against this adversary. The struggle had to move from the social and political 'previous field' to the ideological center. It had to be shown that the ignominious alliance of German political Catholicism with international Marxism was more than a tactical error of some parliamentarians, that *the Catholic Church was of internal necessity opposed to the racial-popular awakening*. In the midst of the hubbub of political confrontation, false theories of universal-historical scope had to be destroyed, an edifice of thought had to be convincingly built in their place, and a concrete interpretation of Europe's past and present had to be given. *Thus, from the situation of struggle, the plan of 'The Myth of the Twentieth Century' emerged.*

At the end of the World War, a man, completely self-devoted, begins to reflect on himself, on the fate of Germany and on the peoples of Europe. Disposition and inclination lead his thoughts, he is an architect, to be organized around the problem of art. H. St. Chamberlain's *'Fundamentals of the Nineteenth Century'* gives him the idea of race. The special situation in which he finds himself as Balt at the beginning of the Bolshevik revolution poses to him the problem of the Jew and the future of Russia. *A deep inclination to spiritual clarity and self-account led him to a personal appropriation of the thoughts of certain German thinkers: Goethe, Schopenhauer, Schiller, Kant. The history of Deussen's philosophy gave him his first connection with the spiritual world of India.* From these elements, the first notes were made in 1917. In the thick oilcloth notebooks, acquired in Moscow, which contain in tight but readable writing excerpts, aphorisms, notes and elaborate essays, some in double versions, lies before us the germ of 'The Myth'. The thoughts formulated here for the first time unfold in a book that in 1922 was announced under the title 'Philosophy of Germanic Art', completed as a draft in 1925. The title now is: 'Race and Honor'. *A further reworking and expansion led to the definitive version whose title, from January 1928, was 'The Myth of the Twentieth Century' and which appeared in the autumn of 1930.*

Rosenberg's inner development from architecture to politics is carried out on the basis of his configurative thinking, without any tension or difficulty.

At the core of his being is the courage to recognize and carry out and defend in life what is recognized. The displacement of total activity from the artistic to the political sphere is the natural consequence of their fighting spirit.

'The Myth' was born out of political struggle; with the same right, it could be said that Rosenberg's political struggle was born out of 'The Myth'. For the philosophical and political position represented in 'The Myth' is already developed in its essential features in its fundamental features in the first drafts, so much so that Rosenberg, when he wrote his first articles in Munich and then when he devoted himself to the writing of his major work, was often able to take literally passages from the sketches of his youth in later works.

At first glance, many are tempted to understand 'The Myth' only as a polemical writing. The combative nature of its author is expressed so strongly, the allusions to the present are so many, that the idea of an occasional writing may well be presented. But a glance at the history of the work's genesis shows that first impressions can be deceiving. It is precisely the decisive feature in the development of Rosenberg and his work that the fundamental thoughts and the inner procedure remain unchanged from the outset. Because of its genesis, 'The Myth' cannot be anything other than an occasional written polemic. His references to the present spring from the same philosophical-historical thought as from the situation of struggle. A thinker who sees that the character of individuals and peoples never changes in its decisive features, must necessarily see past and present as one.

The Jew of antiquity is the same Jew who will later corrupt the princely electors. The germinal core of the book does not lie in the polemical intentions, but rather in the positive, in the vision of a new image of man and humanity. Denials and attacks spring from the affirmation of a great figure whose contours embrace the phenomena of the present in the presentation of the whole but determined nevertheless in each singular feature. The immense abundance of the material is contained in the unity of conception. Decadence emerges from something nebulous-indeterminate to a concrete figure, it goes from the 'what' to the 'how'. But this concrete seeing does not bear fruit only in a method that is then to be applied; a verse or a thought suffices to bring before him a man, a style of existence, an epoch in its peculiarity. What makes it fruitful is the leap, the gift that cannot be further derived from external phenomena, but of immediately extracting the essential features.

The method is physiognomic, it does not aim at connections, but at those essences that we call characters. Taken in itself, this method could lead to a collection of historical portraits, to a historical album of figures. In a peculiar way, however, in Rosenberg the physiognomic procedure is combined with a diametrically opposed one.

The same spirit that refers everything that happens to human characters also knows how to abstract and recognize great connections. The characterization does not become biographical, intimate, but historical, philosophical. Each character reveals itself in its 'principles', in what it recognizes as its highest values. The struggle of characters against each other must therefore be conceived at the same time as the struggle of historical systems of values. The physiognomic procedure thus leads to the confrontation of historical systems of values and worldviews.

A worldview is not a collection of eternal truths in itself resting, whose point of reference is unknown; it always remains inseparable from the subject who produces it and represents it in all its actions and creations. This subject cannot be an isolated individual, but only a historical individuality, within which singular individuals have life and subsistence. Only the original subjects of the historical movement, the peoples, have a worldview of their own. The worldview is always the place of origin and at the same time the concrete compendium of the supreme values of a natural-historical community.

The procedure of an ethical-historical physiognomics of peoples, men and institutions has been developed by Rosenberg with instinctive consequentiality, not derived from logical principles. He, who has recognized the unity of his procedure is in a position to determine the relationship between 'The Myth' and 'Foundations of the Nineteenth Century'. Many seem to imagine that 'The Myth' has somehow developed from Chamberlain's work. But what Chamberlain did in Rosenberg was a general thing; the impulse and scope of the whole and the coining force of the writer's language were a model for him, not the doctrine. In adopting expressions such as 'chaos of peoples' and 'coercive dogma of faith', Rosenberg demonstrated a happy literary nose. What worked upon him in terms of content was Chamberlain's philosophy of religion, in which there is much general German spiritual material. With the indeterminacy of the 'Foundations', however, he could not do much. In this exposition, which was too closely linked to the latest scientific literature of the time, I must have missed a unitary procedure. The author of the 'Fundamentals' indulges in his witticisms; often your intuition is lucky, sometimes not.

Despite some brilliant characterological achievements (such as the confrontation of Luther and Ignatius of Loyola), the unity of a physiognomic system is lacking. Chamberlain's devaluation of the political-historical must also contradict Rosenberg's sense of realism. From the very beginning, a more accurate picture of human destinies lies before Rosenberg's eyes. Chamberlain dwells on the general notion of an Aryan creative capacity; Rosenberg sets himself the task of concretely showing this force in its historical particularities and in its struggle with the powers that

oppose it. It does not want to develop assumptions, 'foundations', but to describe a unique course of struggles. His gaze is attached to events and their connection, he remains close to historical powers, while Chamberlain has art first and foremost in mind. His last word is culture, Rosenberg's last word is worldview.

While Chamberlain, in accordance with his concept of race, broadens the concept of culture as much as possible, the philosophical-cultural approach acts in a limiting way on its total conception (the acting man regresses), while the concepts of character, worldview, and value that Rosenberg uses are in immediate relation to the world of the acting man.

The most important effect Chamberlain had on Rosenberg was to draw the young architecture student's attention to Goethe and Kant. The two beautiful books that Chamberlain dedicated to Goethe and Kant were more significant for the author of 'The Myth' than the 'Foundations of the Nineteenth Century'. The philosophical flow of these works came to meet a still misunderstood impulse that he felt in his own soul. In the contemplation of the great personality, his conviction of the dignity of the Self was strengthened. What ultimately drew Rosenberg to Chamberlain was to find vividly expressed in him the fundamental feeling of his soul. The thought that had been born with him attained complete confirmation. Personality was inflamed with personality. It was the thought of the personality itself in which the coincidence resided. In an even more emphatic and effective way, because more realistic and historical, the younger one was to bring the archaic German-German thought to the consciousness of the time.

It is an often confirmed experience that 'The Myth of the Twentieth Century' is a difficult book. The cause cannot be sought either in the disposition or in the expression. It is certainly not obvious at first glance, but it is understandable and comprehensible; this is often idiosyncratic and unusual, but plastic and clear. On the contrary, it must be said: despite the author's unusual stylistic means, the whole remains difficult to capture. In the abundance of elaborated material the cause of this cannot be sought, this abundance is also found in books of fluid reading such as the 'Fundamentals of the Nineteenth Century' and 'The Decline of the West', the physiognomic procedure should make 'The Myth' an attractive book, if not even exciting. However, this work remains today a spiritual massif that is difficult to access in the midst of German culture. Rosenberg's abbreviating and concentrating style, which is a consequence of his intuitive thinking, may well have contributed to the difficulty of comprehension. All these prolixities, sometimes linked to a logically strict mode of expression, which clarifies relationships, are odious to the author of 'The Myth'. He always takes what he senses to the most compressed formula and does not shrink from the boldest abbreviations either. Once one has penetrated into this abbreviated style, not only is its individually

founded necessity perceived, but it is no longer possible to escape the attraction of this mode of expression. However, the real cause of the difficulty of understanding his work must be sought in a deeper layer.

The author of the 'Foundations of the Nineteenth Century' caused an immense commotion by introducing the idea of race into the presentation of historical links. The attempt first undertaken by Gobineau of a racial consideration of history was continued by him under new assumptions on the basis of studies of the natural sciences. Richard Wagner's world of thought, with which he always remained united, in all its audacity, did not correspond at all in all its features to the revolutionary spirit which the idea of race was to breathe into German thought. The strictly self-contained system of Bayreuthian conceptions contained not only the theory of the total work of art but was itself a kind of total work of art, a synthesis between the classical spirit of Weimar, the philosophy of Schopenhauer, and Wagnerian music: a combination into which the idea of race entered as one moment, among others. However, the whole has not been determined. The resulting contradictions were certainly saved personally, but not ideologically, by the veneration of the Wagnerian genius who had been able to weave it all together. The task of drawing the necessary revolutionary consequences from the concept of race remained invisible and unresolved. It was believed that a bridge could be built between the concept of race and idealist humanism, between Gobineau and Herder and Schiller, between Goethe and Mendel.

However great Wagner's synthesis was, as soon as he turned to the political and the problem of the worldview and an attitude in accordance with it arose, the internal incompatibility of the various moments of that total spiritual work of art had to become apparent.

Rosenberg did not grow up in the air of classicist humanism. When he devoured all Goethe, he was self-absorbed and assimilated only what was in accordance with his nature.

That which does not concern you,
they must not suffer it...

It was always his favorite quote. The brief sketch of Goethe contained in 'The Myth' allows us to recognize in which direction his appropriation went. It was the advantage of his youth spent in Reval to be able to develop with complete independence in order to achieve the same autonomy that distinguishes his compatriots Karl Ernst von Baer and Viktor Hehn. It was not by chance that Hehn became the author of the most anti-classicist book in all Goethe literature. His example shows with what realistic energy even classicism could be transformed into something of its own in the border region. To energetic natures who participate in German spiritual development outside the borders of the State,

the distance from the mother country affords them other possibilities of choice and of undisturbed harmonization of the assimilated formative elements than to those who, living in a closed formative atmosphere, have never felt the sharpening breath of the contours of a strange world. With utter nonchalance, the young Rosenberg was able to let the elements of his spiritual development, Goethe and Schopenhauer, Kant and India, grow together into a whole. It was a highly personal and individual whole that thus came about, and he had only the purity and strength of his instincts to thank that something very eccentric and capricious did not spring up in this way.

The act that arose from this assumption was the overcoming of the historicism of classical formation. Convincing and just, scientifically irreproachable and valid for all time, seemed to be the nineteenth-century image of history. Classicism and Romanticism had worked on it, but Classicism had proved stronger. At the center of world history was what was called 'the West', that is, the European synthesis of antiquity, Germanity and Christianity. It was the image that Hegel had brought into an easily comprehensible formula in his brilliant construction of world history, and which still underlay Ranke's more realistic historiography. Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem were the stations through which the universal spirit moved. Germanness had been recognized as a universal-historical force, but it remained essentially subordinate to the history of the Christian churches. The intuition gained by philology of the affinity of the Indo-Germanic peoples had not been incorporated into the overall picture. Hellenicity, Romanity and Germanness seemed to be connected to each other only by historical effects (receptions), while the essential unity between ancient India, Iran, Hellenic culture, the Roman Empire and the Germanic world was severed by the classicist concept of the development of a single West.

The nineteenth century failed to resume the once-cut threads. The science of the Indo-Germanic could only develop in a secondary line, culminating in Leopold von Schröder (also a compatriot of Rosenberg); German philology and historical science followed a different path. The immediate cause of their abstention lay in the lack of reliable research results. Although such a foundation cannot be denied recognition, the omission to follow the path taken by Bopp can only be explained by a concrete-historical-philosophical, and therefore ideological, unconscious assumption. Humanist representations, coupled with Christian ties, kept the classicist tradition alive even when the science of the shovel, year after year, brought stone after stone to light that belonged to a construction very different from the one that classicism had dreamed of.

With all its great merits for a deeper understanding of Hellenic and Roman culture, classical archaeology in particular suffered from an unprejudiced appreciation of the results of prehistoric research. The unity of the Indo-Germanic remained merely a content of

consciousness, nowhere did it become a lived, sap-filled reality that could have fertilized research and led it down new paths. It was shameful to see how stubbornly Germanic civilization in its breadth and nobility was ignored and interpreted from the Roman-Christian perspective.

Despite the high level of his achievements, when the idea of race burst like lightning into this situation, which was not very glorious for German historical science, a revolution of the humanities could theoretically have taken place. The heroes of German romantic historiography at the beginning of the previous century could have risen from their graves and enthused their belated successors to take up the grandiose projects that they themselves could not carry out because the scientific requirements were still lacking. His revived example might have put an end to the time of discouragement from excessive scientific caution; the idea of race would have been greeted with jubilation as confirmation of the intuition of a primordial Indo-Germanic people and made a methodological guide to a new science of Indian, Iranian, Hellenic, Roman and Germanic 'Antiquity'.

None of that happened. A figure as powerful in spirit as Chamberlain was not received with benevolent high esteem as a necessary correction of a science petrified in its disciplinary limits, but with silence, ridicule or petty specialized criticism, the concept of race was outlawed, classicism and Hegelianism, in the face of real investigation, for the pure philosophical-historical reaction celebrated their last triumph without glory.

The fear of using results that are not completely undoubted should not have gone so far! It was precisely German research, under the guidance of the concept of race, which should have recognized the Indo-Germanic as a closed cosmos.

This is the situation in which the young Rosenberg, an admirer of Schopenhauer and Indian philosophy, thinks and plans, without having any notion of it. In the Indian example it had been revealed to him what the unity of the Indo-Germanic means. This unity had become an experience that determined his further thinking. There is nothing simpler than the path to greatness. One only has to have experiences that relate to the order of things as it really is, and to have the courage to hold on to one's own experiences, even when the actual existence of that relationship is not yet demonstrable. Fidelity to oneself is the prerequisite of every feat that subdues souls. German research had become unfaithful to its great beginnings in the nineteenth century; today, therefore, we must allow ourselves to be told truths by those who have been able to remain faithful to an authentic conception, rooted in the reality of things themselves.

In fundamental conceptions it is not so much important that they contain many details, but rather that they lead in the course of investigation to the correct details. Indeterminacy is not in itself a deficiency. *Indeterminacy becomes dangerous only when it wants to take the place of determination.* Then private research can be stopped, errors are dogmatized, and the well-known phenomenon arises of the pseudo-scientific exposition of connections that we do not yet know in their realities. A distinction must be made between the form-pregnant indeterminacy of a genuine idea and the confusion resulting from an appropriation of isolated facts not guided by any instinct or method. It is a fundamental mistake of German specialized science to equate fecund indeterminacy with infecund indeterminacy, and to give nothing for an idea until it has yet fulfilled realities.

The Indian has always retained for Rosenberg, from the point of view of philosophy, a particular brilliance. He never allowed himself to be seduced into undervaluing and setting aside this magnificent appearance of the Indo-Germanic because it did not fit into the scheme of 'universal history'. Something similar happened to him with Iranian. Unobfuscated by the construction of 'Western' development, always guided by a lively sense of popular character and by the unmistakable physiognomy of a spiritual creation, he followed in his own way the trail of historical links. He did not seek to establish temporal relationships and dependencies, but to recognize affinity, that is, the internal relationship of characters and creations to each other. In this way he arrived at a concrete notion of the course of world history that departed completely from the traditional one. He saw the ebb and flow of the Nordic spirit from the East through the perspective of India and Iran, and wondered if a development very different from the real one might not have been possible. The actual course of history, passing through Jerusalem and Rome, condemned a large part of the Germanic world to destruction, and only belatedly and fragmentarily led to the emergence of a Germanic Europe, seemed to him to be devoid of internal necessity and inevitability. Far from him was the idea of wanting to correct the course of world history, his sense for what Chamberlain so beautifully called the 'majesty of facts' remained ever alert, but he could never convince himself that everything must happen as it did. This did not come from a craving for playful assumptions or an inclination to self-sufficiency, but from a keen feeling for the possibilities that lie dormant in all living forces. Before his eyes was the image of a powerful shaping soul who, unaware of itself in its passage through time, had been harassed and often hindered in its unfolding by other forces. Who can say that world history had to run through Rome and Augustine, Bishop of Hippo? Is it not conceivable an entirely different course of things, a universal history without Jerusalem and Rome, the main content of which would have been a fertilization of the Germanic spirit by the spirit of India and Iran?

No one who has ever recognized what a race is can deny the legitimacy of such considerations. In the constancy of the racial character of the great peoples there are contained real possibilities which the traditional conception does not know. The difference between possibilities and realities remains unquestionable, but the word possibility acquires a new meaning in the racial consideration of history. Although the possibilities are not yet realities, the idea of a possible course, when founded on the racial dispositions of peoples, is capable of displaying an extraordinary fruitfulness. It gives judgments an evaluative scale that is more than just an arbitrary assumption or subjective imagination.

In the idea of a universal history without Rome lies the key to Rosenberg's philosophy of concrete history. What seems critical and destructive in 'The Myth' is superficial, conditioned by a representation of very high positive content and revolutionary force that acts in the depths. The adversary is not arbitrarily placed or attacked from a subjective point of view. The strength of the work's conviction is based precisely on the fact that every negation springs from a position and that everything underlies a single scale of affirmation. *Whoever wants to engage in a confrontation with this book must not cling to this or that singular detail but must confront himself with the scale that is applied here.* But this scale is not so much a personal taste as a scientifically well-founded conviction.

Factual research in recent decades has elevated to the rank of incontrovertible certainty the fact that what we call world history is a single gigantic confrontation between peoples of Indo-Germanic and non-Indo-Germanic descent. The East-West antithesis, which dominated the old historical conception, has dissolved and given way to the antithesis of two 'linguistic' groups of races and cultures. Deep in the 'West' extends the non-Indo-Germanic, and likewise in the depths of the 'East' the Indo-Germanic spreads. The traditional scheme placed a unity where essential antagonisms had concluded a temporally limited truce and overlooked deeply founded affinities that by the 'chance of universal history' had been excluded from historical realization. What form would the European spirit have today if the metaphysics of India and Iran, united with the philosophy of the Hellenic world, had acted directly on Germanness? If Hellas had not had to be recovered by Winckelmann, Goethe, and Hölderlin, if India had not only had to be recovered by Germanic science but had not had to pass through the gorge of Rome and Jerusalem, they had merged in the lap of the spiritual forces of Germania into a universal Indo-Germanic worldview. World history would have taken a different course. But the depth of the historical being is diminished not only by thinking of it as composed of pure chance in the empirical sense, but also by representing it as simply necessary. Happening cannot be constructed. There are only developments, but not a 'development' whose linear course could claim necessity for itself. The reality of the

course that led to the present state must be recognized; its necessity is never demonstrable. In the representation of another course, when it is not merely assumed arbitrarily, there resides a regulative force which the representation of the necessary development is entirely lacking. The latter will always lead to a justification of the factual in every form of manifestation. Hidden in the traditional concept of the linear development of a single West is a dogma: the dogma of the necessity of all temporal events. It is one of the greatest achievements of the thinker Rosenberg to have quietly overcome this dogma already in the assumptions of his work.

When, in 'The Myth', states of affairs and ways of thinking of the post-war era are treated with the sharpest polemics, this does not spring from a limited 'party politics' or from conjunctural considerations of any passing utility. Rather, this polemic is the reverse of what constitutes the object of the exhibition: the shaping struggles of the past. It is not the author's intention to 'attack' current powers; rather, it wants to make visible a system of values from which follows the refutation of the powers that are unleashed in the decomposition of German and European life. That is an entirely different and more effective method of refutation than direct attack.

Every immediate polemic suffers from the weakness that one confronts one's adversary on the same plane and thereby relativizes one's own position, which is only the 'other'. The author of 'The Myth' does not even think of attacking, for example, from the position of the German spirit the Roman Church, as his course is almost always misunderstood. *The force of his polemic comes rather precisely from the fact that he does not take the adversary as equally existent, but only assigns to him the historical place that corresponds to him.* 'You really shouldn't exist at all,' he rebukes his opponents. "It is high time that you cede the field to the powers and values that have so far been prevented from their free deployment by a long and hard history." It is a question of liberating these values, and the controversy follows from that by itself. The adversary is not sought in his place and fought with effort but is swept away like a storm. This storm arises from the pressure difference that arises of its own accord as soon as the original Indo-Germanic value system is confronted with the system that is revealed in post-war Europe.

Rosenberg has created a new procedure of political confrontation. By showing the supposed aims of the movement's struggle in the gigantic struggle of the times, it employs history for the first time on a large scale politically. This has nothing to do with 'political history' in the sense of the nineteenth century. The past, understood as an incessant struggle of some worldviews corresponding to the decisive racial groups: this is the seminal idea of 'The Myth'. 'Fight' against 'evolution!' 'Contrasts must not be balanced but must be resolved in struggle'. Out of the current chaos has arisen the mindless

hodgepodge of values, which ends in bastardization, which means lack of character. The reception of the Jew into the European community of peoples is the symptom of the general decomposition. The attitude toward Judaism makes it possible to guess where whole forces are still stirring. It is only from men in whom there lives an instinct which rejects the Jew that anything can be expected for the reconstruction of Germany and Europe. It is foolish to speak here of 'anti-Semitism' (anti-Semitism). It is not a question of denial and criticism, and still less of a critique of the incapable of any great Jewish people scattered throughout the world. *It is about restoring the forces that have created all that is inwardly powerful and noble that fills our existence. Only one way of salvation and liberation is open: the way back to the value system that corresponds to our innate character.*

His physiognomic method has put Rosenberg in a position to transform this understanding into concrete knowledge. During long years of tireless work, he immersed himself in the literature offered to him and chose the features by which he could most effectively present the picture of history that emerges from its few fundamental assumptions. It is utterly insufficient and erroneous to reproach him with dependence on the literature of his time or the use of dubious sources. That is a criticism intended for immature ears. 'The Myth' does not compile cultural oddities that could be examined one by one in terms of their authenticity but develops a total conception of history from the point of view that it is always character that manifests itself in all events. The task of a scientific critique would be to deal with this total conception. That there has so far been no criticism worthy of being taken seriously can surprise no one. The historical image of tradition does not have the power to confront the revolutionary vision that is in accord with reality.

With astonishing certainty, Rosenberg's first sketches of 1917 (first published in the 'Writings and Discourses') delineate the fertile germ from which all that was to come was to spring. A sketch with the title 'Nirvana and Personality' allows us to recognize at what point the incipient reflective work begins.

The starting point is the 'configuring principle' turned towards the Eternal, which, essentially like the mysterious primordial background of the world, prevails in all the great Indo-Germanic creations. From the confrontation between Goethe and Indian philosophy, the following thoughts develop: the purification of the human personality is the common goal to which the extreme modes of thought of the Indo-Germans tend. The Hindu believes that he attains this goal by withdrawing from the world; the German, dedicating himself to the finite, which he conceives as a symbol of the infinite. Both build from the inside out, but in different ways. The Hindu sees only the barrier as an obstacle; Goethe sees it as a condition for greatness. What they have in common is an enormous shaping

force. Strength in one case tends to purification, seeking to divest oneself of personality; in the other case, by elevating it.

From the very beginning of the thought, the opponent is also considered. The Jew is measured according to the Indo-Germanic notion of personality; it becomes clear that for him it is not a question of stripping himself or of elevating the personality, but of destroying it. *In the Jewish idea of the messiah lies the claim to world domination*. Because it lacks shaping forces, the Jewish people always remains as it is; we certainly find in him the 'marked character', but not raised to the 'dignity of personality'. 'That is why these people hate everything that is not like them, that is why there should be no tolerance towards them' (Rosenberg: 'Writings and Discourses', Vol. I, p. 16).

It is a thought of Goethe's that stimulates Rosenberg to go on. 'Meaning widens, but paralyzes; action gives life, but it limits'. By a very independent and audacious extension, this important thought acquires the character of a philosophical principle. The alternation between sense and action is, comparable to inspiration and expiration, the rhythm of life as such. Inspiration is sense, exhalation is action. By inspiring, we surrender to meaning, we open ourselves to the depths of the world and aspire to encompass everything; by exhaling we limit ourselves, we act in the finite, we work. The Hindus offer us the example of extreme feeling; the Germans, that of extreme action. In the idea of personality the two are united. The German makes unity a historical reality and elevates it to philosophical consciousness. That is why the German must become the universal-historical adversary of the Jew, who not only has no idea of the systole and diastole of the personality, but in his blind thirst for power even strives to destroy everything that this cosmic rhythm carries within it.

No one can deny his admiration for this sketch, written only in key words, which so fortunately unites the philosophical with the political. It follows that Rosenberg did not have to wait for Spengler's characterization of the 'Faustian' man. From his confrontation of Goethe and Tolstoy, as well as from numerous other characterizations, it is evident that at the time the puzzling book with the title 'The Decline of the West' appeared, he already carried within him all those clear and fruitful thoughts that would later be shaped in 'The Myth'. Spengler's 'Faustian man' agrees in essential features with Chamberlain and Rosenberg's 'Germanic man', which should not be surprising given that these characterizations contemplate the same reality. Man characterized by the thirst for discovery and audacity, science and art, technology and work, is the one who has created the world in which we live. But within this 'Faustian' culture, abysses have opened, problems have arisen that can no longer be solved by simple cultural considerations. A philosophy of culture that in this desperate conjuncture does not seek to increase chaos but

to dissipate and build it, must be determined by a central thought in accordance with the powers that created Europe and clearly delimit itself from everything that has brought 'the West' to the brink of perdition. The mystical concept of an elusive 'cultural soul' is incapable of this, and 'morphological' comparisons between all the cultures of the Earth may perhaps satisfy curiosity but not provide the European with clarity about himself (Compare Rosenberg's 1925 essay on Spengler).

It is only in the face of attempts such as Spengler's, along with which one could also name the failed efforts of Ernst Troeltsch (not to mention other insignificant ones), that the constructive force that lies in Rosenberg's sketch becomes very evident. Otherwise, one might be tempted, for simplicity's sake, to take his fundamental thoughts for granted. What could be simpler and more obvious than such a thought of personality as the center of the Indo-Germanic world? However, it is decisive, first, that here personality is seen together with race. Already in the first proposition, both the abstract concept of personality of theoretical idealism and the concept of culture without race in modern times are overcome. Then there is the breadth and depth with which the personality is apprehended. How seductively close it is to overestimate the antithesis between Indian passivity and European activity to the point of turning it into the opposition of two 'cultures' separated by worlds! Rosenberg recognizes even in the idea of the negation of one's own self the tendency towards the purification of the personality. On the other hand, he does not allow himself to be dragged by the idea of personality into individualistic discourses. It is only in action against and on behalf of other forces that man experiences the increase that is possible for him. Two tendencies fill his life: the one towards personality and the one towards dedication to the community. Neither should weaken the other. 'That is why it is necessary to cultivate solitude and introspection temporarily, and it is only in this pulsation of two tendencies, guided by conscience, that man is born' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 18).

Under 'man' is not meant an abstract homo sapiens, but the man who makes up the great story, the Aryan personality. From this man who knows 'ecstasy' separates himself that selfish human being whose only relation to the world is an impulse of power that nothing can delimit: the Jew. Rosenberg tackles the problem of the Jew at the decisive point, at the root of personality. He distinguishes (in a 1919 essay) between person and personality. *It designates as a person the selfish and natural impulse of man's affirmation, so strongly developed in the Jew. Not only the individual, but the whole Jewish people is entirely a 'person', so that its only guiding notion is that of dominion over other men.* The fullness and breadth of the world, the freedom of the spirit, remain completely forbidden to the person. Personality, on the other hand, is possessed only by a being capable of self-denial and who thus becomes aware of his freedom. The principle of freedom has not been

developed among the Jews; it has ventured only into a few individuals. The pernicious action of Judaism is based on the fact that it did not leave free rein to the ideal power of the personality, in so far as it developed it, but even put that power at the service of the person. 'While other peoples were internally divided and contained by their religion and morality in order to impose themselves without consideration, here morality and religion were placed entirely at the service of unlimited selfishness' ('Writings and Discourses', Vol. I, p. 122).

As the attempt at this distinction between person and personality shows, Rosenberg strives to arrive at a new philosophical concept of man. At the heart of it is the configuring principle; But man is something other than, for example, only the individuation of a general shaping force. Such a representation would lead to an abstract-metaphysical or aesthetic-vitalistic theory of man. Both erroneous paths are avoided with fine skill. Rather, Rosenberg tries to clarify a notion according to which man is neither quite nature nor entirely freedom. It is nature because it is a natural being and belongs to a certain race; It is freedom because it is only by rising above nature that it is truly man (personality) and only by intensifying itself does it reach its height. This is the fundamental definition already present in 1917: 'Personality is a conscious recognition of a unity of nature and freedom' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 10).

In a lengthy confrontation with Schopenhauer's doctrine of the will, Rosenberg attempted to clarify his concept of man in 1918. To the unconscious and instinctive impulse to which Schopenhauer refers everything, he contrasts the properly human, the 'configuring' will. He assumes, then, back to man what in Schopenhauer was separated from man as the realm of ideas. In art, religion, and philosophy, we see at work a 'formal impulse' (Schiller) that is equally human, in an even deeper sense, than the natural impulse. We can't say more about it. 'We only know conformation when it manifests itself, in art, in science, and in philosophy; Its essence is completely enigmatic to us. We can only say that it is the most profound creative human activity, opposed to nature, based on the idea of freedom' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 63).

In 'The Myth' an entire chapter is devoted to Schopenhauer ('Will and Impulse', pp. 323 ff). There is the sentence: 'One of the most important recognitions about the essence of man is that of the existence of the fact that he is a configuring creature' (Myth, p. 343). In a further development, five directions of the configuring will are distinguished: religion, morality, art, science, philosophy. In all these directions the unity of the personality is manifested.

The recognition of man as a configuring being proved fertile for Rosenberg, first in the field in which he had reached this conception, the artistic. The oldest part

of 'The Myth' is the second book, in which is elaborated the material that was once to serve for a 'Philosophy of Germanic Art'. It is a symbol of Rosenberg's personality that the fundamental thought of his political-revolutionary book is developed in an aesthetic treatise. The essay 'On Form and Conformation in the Work of Art' of May 1918 presents the first sketch of that interlocking of thoughts that in the finished work has not without reason received the title 'The Essence of Germanic Art'.

Man as a personality is a configuring will; this will is racially conditioned (Myth, p. 279). When Rosenberg titles the last chapter of the second book of 'The Myth': 'The Aesthetic Will', he consciously contradicts all the theories that claim to be able to apprehend the work of art from the formal side. The work of art certainly has its own formal law, but it is equally a product of the shaping forces of the soul like all the other creations of man. It is, therefore, a mistake when many aesthetes believe that they can dispense with the content of the work of art. The content itself is a formal problem (Myth, p. 304). When the work of art is understood as an act of racially conditioned personality, aesthetics must become a new meaning in the aesthetics of content. 'The choice or exclusion of certain elements of the content is for us already a configuring process, entirely artistic' (Myth, p. 304). *The artist's choice and conformation of the material are mutually connected internally.* It was not only his own artistic inclination that led Rosenberg to develop his thought of personality as an act in an aesthetic problem. In the aesthetics of the nineteenth century, he was confronted with a conceptual edifice that gave consistent expression to a false conception of man. Through the formalism of this aesthetic, the work of art had been detached from the creative interiority of the artist and erected in a certain way on itself; By emphasizing the content, the personality was restored to its rights. By means of the theory of contemplation, a moment of artistic apprehension and comprehension had been isolated and exaggerated. The refutation of this doctrine was singularly adequate to assert the correct conception of man as an active configuring being. Aesthetics necessarily goes astray when it stops at the consideration of the work. Its task is to trace the path from the work of art to the artistic conformation, that is, 'to understand representation as a necessary effluence of the internal process' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 39). Only the activation of the concept of form puts us in a position to do justice to the reality of the work of art in all its depth.

By form Rosenberg means the external artistic process, by conformation the inner artistic process. Artistic creation is a characteristic example of human activity in general. Personality is synthetic activity. 'This inner creative process, this inner synthesis of the world pouring in from without, this living uniting of apparently divergent tendencies, which is what I want to designate as conformation. It is the inner reaction to the world and

at the same time a human force that spontaneously tests itself in the world and strives to unite the singular into an organic unity' (*ibid.*, p. 36).

To properly understand the term conformation, which is fundamental to all of Rosenberg's thought, one must free oneself from all 'aesthetic' prejudices. The word designates the human personality in its relation to the world at large. Its meaning is epistemological rather than 'aesthetic'. It is hardly supposed that Rosenberg, when he coined this thought, already knew anything of Kant's 'synthetic unity of apperception'; however, his concept of conformation comes very close to this central concept of pure reason. It is only for man as a shaping being that the world is constituted. As an artist, he creates from the material of his experience a world under a specific formal law, an artistic world. 'Conformation is the profoundly internal activity that occurs in the artist when matter and content, coming from outside and inside, want to merge into a whole; it is the quiet middle center where the true work of art has its beginning, the axis around which the analysis of the outer and inner world is rotated until a synthesis as an artistic world' (*ibid.*, p. 37).

The point to which all these considerations are directed, and from which they at the same time start, is the active interiority of man, that is, the personality. By means of a philosophy of interiority, the contradictions and problems in which a thought that does not know the essence of the act necessarily becomes entangled must be resolved. Rosenberg carefully avoids the dangers that lie in wait for a philosophy of interiority. One of these dangers is psychologism, that is, that form of consideration which takes man as a psychological subject isolated from the world and from things. The personality in Rosenberg never becomes a merely 'experiencing' individual. The essence of all Western art is for him: 'that the Nordic soul is not contemplative, that it does not lose itself in individual psychology, but that it experiences cosmic-psychic laws volitionally and configures them spiritually-architecturally' (Myth, p. 433). The other danger is spiritualism, that is, the tendency to conceive of man as detached from the senses and the body, from nature and matter, and to apprehend him as an absolute self, as pure interiority. Once this step has been taken, there is no possible return to the world, to the community, to the destiny and to the tasks of history.

Man is, in Dürer's words, 'inwardly full of figure'. Interiority should not be understood as a passive experience or an amorphous surrender, but rather a configuring creation from that igneous-fluid nucleus that we try to circumscribe with words such as personality or will. From this philosophy of conformation any notion of 'subjectivism' must be kept completely away. The inner is always referred to the outer, soul and world need each other. Only with a false notion of interiority, where everything dissolves into spiritual smoke, can nature and

the artist's work be volatilized in a non-objectual way. Already in the essay on form and conformation, Rosenberg therefore directs the strongest attention to the matter and technique of the work of art. In Futurism's lack of nature and purpose, he recognizes a clear sign of dissolution. Great art is for him realistic precisely because it is the art of personality. He declares that he has put matter first with a certain one-sidedness because it is important to him 'to highlight the dignity of the object in the face of an unbridled subjectivism' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 35).

From the opposition between interior and exterior follow two distinct possibilities of artistic style. The configuration may be conditioned more by the subjective moment or more by the objective. If the objective moment predominates entirely, we are faced with pure construction, the engineering style; if the subject predominates entirely, a fantastic art of unbridled imagination arises. In great art, both moments are recognized; however, they do not have to be in balance. Through the predominance of one or the other moment, two opposing styles emerge. This is the subject of an essay entitled 'Objective and Individual Style', which is immediately linked temporally and thematically to the essay on form and conformation (compare Myth, pp. 345 ff.: 'Personality Style and Objectual Style'). As early as 1918 Rosenberg compared this contrast to that of the Doric temple and the Gothic cathedral. The Greeks follow the law that resides in matter, 'they closely adapt their creation to their material and try to represent the various functions of the material in clearer and clearer forms. They go back, so to speak, to the necessary alphabet and construct from the objective, with the greatest restraint, a fine feeling of measure and harmony, their individual' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 49). In a similar way they built the Romanesque and the Renaissance. 'The Romanesque style rests on the primordial forms of stone construction, the cube and the semicircular arch. To these fundamental elements all the principal forms may easily be referred, they also give us, like many forms of the Greeks, the coined alphabet of architecture' (*ibid.*). Conversely, in the Gothic period, human individuality boldly imprinted its own forms on matter. From this emerges an individual and inimitable style, closed in on itself, limited to a certain period. The forms of the individual style in architecture are almost unusable. 'While Greek formal beauty had universal objective validity and could be built up over millennia, Gothic had a markedly shaped character for a few generations' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, pp. 49 ff).

In the essay on objective and individual style this distinction is expressly kept free from any value judgment. The exposition of thought in the Myth, on the other hand, is partly burdened by the value judgment that is linked to the Spenglerian opposition between Apollonian and Faustian culture. The neutral distinction between objective and individual style is put in relation

to the metaphysical antithesis between space and time, and the conception arises that the Hellenic style would correspond to an ideal of bodily-static beauty, while the Nordic-Germanic style would correspond to a dynamic ideal of will. Since Rosenberg now equates this difference with that of form and conformation, it is an assessment that apparently degrades the classical style of the Hellenes. It now seems as if the ideal of harmonic beauty and Hellenic art are a counterexample to Nordic volitional art. Rosenberg goes so far as to assign Greek beauty to the body and Germanic beauty to the soul. Since man as a person, according to their terminology and in contrast to man as personality, belongs to the objectual world (Myth, p. 349), individuality is the union of person and personality (Myth, p. 369; compare p. 389 ff), the appearance arises that the classical art of the Greeks would no longer belong to the great Indo-Germanic art of personality. There can be no doubt, however, that the art produced by the Doric temple and the sculptures of the Parthenon is also an art of the deepest interiority and shows that surplus of soul power which distinguishes all the great Indo-Germanic creations.

The distinction between form and formation is of exceptional systematic importance. On the one hand, it points to the relationship that exists between the world and the self, matter, technology and spirit, by linking training to form, and on the other hand it offers the possibility of distinguishing levels of formation. However, there is always the danger of exaggeration when a systematic distinction is applied to historical reality. What matters to Rosenberg is clear: he wants to free the art of northern Germany from the disfiguring painting that has been inflicted on it by an aesthetic that is under the spell of a false ideal of harmony. To this end, the concept of conformation as opposed to that of 'harmony' is excellent. But the art of the Hellenes cannot be treated on the same level as formalist aesthetics, which is only based on a misunderstanding of classical harmony. In Greek and Nordic-Germanic art, we encounter two different kinds of conformation. A closer examination of classical art would show that even in the serene calm of his most finished works dwells that mysterious surplus of soul which has led Rosenberg to the concept of conformation. In the end, the confrontation of Germanic and Greek art was for him only a means of presenting his notion of character as the substratum of the artistic creation of both in the most plastic way possible. It was never his intention to point out essential oppositions that did not exist within the Indo-Germanic sphere. Only a philosopher of culture like Spengler, who overlooks the majesty of racial realities, can erect absolute antitheses such as 'Apollonian' and 'Faustian', of whom Rosenberg says: 'He does not see soul-racial powers shaping worlds, but invents abstract schemes' (Myth, p. 404).

What Rosenberg misses in Greek art, he has clearly expressed in the confrontation of the Iliad and the

Song of the Nibelungs, already carried out in the sketches of 1918. It is far from wanting to belittle Homer as a creator (Myth, p. 307). Rather, for him, it is a question of delimiting the completely different world of the north from the world of Homer. His reasoning is as follows: the Homeric poem is not built on the actions of men as effluvia of their inner being. The course of events is, so to speak, random. The poet of the Song of the Nibelungen, on the other hand, derives the events themselves from within his characters. It is simply an injustice to link an aesthetic critique to the sometimes clumsy technique of the Song of the Nibelungen, for the creation of characters such as Siegfried, Crimilda, Rüdiger, Hagen, and the concatenation of a course of action arising from their attitude towards fate with inner necessity, constitute an artistic achievement. A narrow concept of form has so far prevented critics from seeing this. 'Their actions flow from the will of internal forces and conflicts; they act according to an internal consequence and according to a certain disposition of the soul. It is the interweaving of action born from within oneself that has just woven the tragic antithesis that leads to catastrophe' (Myth, p. 307).

The concept of conformation proves to be immediately productive here. It is foolish to quarrel over details when the wall of an old prejudice is collapsing, kicking up dust with a roar. Rosenberg has put an end to an aesthetic discussion that brought nothing new and has opened the door to new insights. 'For to recognize a work of art that presents strong personalities means to recognize an equivalent creative shaping force that has created them' (Myth, p. 307). By means of the new procedure the work of art is not simply brought back to the artist, as has often happened before, but to a racially determined and lawful force of mind. From the inner temper of the soul follows the style. By referring to a characterological disposition, the artistic work is not dissolved in the psychology and biography of the artist but understood as an organism from the racially shaped personality. The artistic form of the Song of the Nibelungen must be sought in a deeper layer than where it was hitherto thought to be found. The concept of racial character explodes the categorical system of formal aesthetics. The art of North Germanic art has the form according to its content. From a poem whose art lies in the knotting of the dramatic knot, one cannot expect, by invoking the laws of the 'epic', Homer's mode of representation.

Every great content creates for itself the form that belongs to it alone, and it is only from the configuring forces that the definitive form can be understood. The application of patterns of absolute aesthetics leads to the gravest injustice. The point is to eliminate this injustice, not that Homer's critique is correct in every detail. He who only criticizes criticism only shows that he has not grasped the decisive point.

'Every figure is an act, every act is essentially a discharged will' (Myth, pp. 316 ff). 'The Greek, too, was in the depths of his will at the time of the birth of his art' (Myth, p. 318). The development towards form that is later produced in him takes place in a different way in the Nordic artist. The lack of 'form' in it is not an aesthetic deficiency, but a consequence of its artistic conception. For the German, 'personality' always means an antithesis to matter, an 'active, attacking and tireless effort to transfigure matter into an allegory of the innermost will and of the forces shaping art' (Myth, p. 302). The Hellenic, on the other hand, seeks the balance between the internal impulse and the external form, between conformation and form. That is the meaning of Greek beauty and 'harmony'. The will to style and the work come to coincide here, while the feeling of infinity and the consciousness of gravity of the Nordic soul oppose a harmonization of the internal and the external and lead to the predominance of the will to form in artistic representation.

Every book of profound effect has its secret. The secret of 'The Myth' is that its author has taken the thought of personality seriously. Philosophical-artistic treatises will only be read correctly when they are conceived as a way to a deeper knowledge of the Nordic soul of itself. Behind the aesthetic value stands an extra-aesthetic value (Myth, p. 449). Nordic art is the way it is only because the 'idea of the imperishable personality' is a 'declaration of war' on the world of appearances (Myth, p. 389). *The more man becomes aware of his personal existence, of his uniqueness and imperishability, the more distant the world becomes to him as a mere interlock of appearances.* 'In the idea of personality the metaphysical problem is condensed into one point' (Myth, p. 392). Rosenberg has described the temper of the solitary self, according to his personal temperament, in the Myth, pp. 388 ff. But he utters the decisive word where he points out the connection between the idea of personality and the concept of destiny. The relation of the Germanic soul to fate has nothing to do with fatalism or magic. Self and fate confront each other with no causal connection. It is not without good reason that Rosenberg recalls in this important statement the conceptions of Luther and Kant and at the same time refers to Hölderlin (Myth, pp. 397 ff). *By its own act, the self-summons the destiny that it assumes as inescapable and yet self-willed. Freedom is not an enigmatic faculty of doing as one pleases, but the disposition of mind that has dared to 'declare war' on the world of appearances, in the face of almighty destiny.* The Nordic man knows that he is free because he has the certainty that he can inwardly endure everything that comes his way, even if it is at the price of his own life. Freedom is where their honor lies. 'The idea of honor is inseparable from the idea of freedom' (Myth, p. 532).

In the northern sense, honor is not a social phenomenon, it is not honor to others, but honor to oneself. In the Germanic world, personal honor is

everywhere encountered as the 'center of all existence' (Myth, p. 598); Life is worth nothing in the face of honor. It is no coincidence that the great Germanic poet chooses conflict as his subject, for in conflict honor shines brightly. *Honor and destiny are correlative concepts: only those who have honor can also have a destiny.* In the ancient Song of Hildebrand this appears with marvelous clarity: 'In the fulfilment of the self-engendered law of honor, old Hildebrand sees at once the prevailing destiny...' (Myth, p. 399).

In 'The Myth', for the first time honor has been placed at the center of extensive philosophical and historical exhibitions. Chamberlain had understood loyalty as a fundamental feature of the Germanic world. However profound and correct this may have been, a decisive point had not yet been touched; moreover, Chamberlain had stopped at the mere ascertainment of the facts. Rosenberg discovers honor as the unitary point of the Germanic world and not only gives a description of this fact but recognizes honor as 'the supreme value of Germanic man'. It allows us to see the civilization of the north, so to speak, from the inside as a whole, and not only as a past, but ever-present whole. Times come and go, times change, but the supreme 'characterological value' always remains the same. Much can change, freedom and honor must remain at the center if there is to be a European civilization with a Germanic imprint.

For the idea of liberty of conscience and honor 'was fought on every battlefield, in every scholarly study, and if this idea does not triumph in the next great contest, the West and its blood will perish, as India and Hellas disappeared one day forever in chaos' (Myth, p. 115).

These two sentences, which close the imposing characterization of the gigantic spiritual event of the West, contain the program of Rosenberg's life's work:

"With this recognition that Europe in all its creations has been creatively shaped by character alone, the theme of both European religion and Germanic science, but also of the new Germanic politics, is revealed. To become aware of this fact, to live it with all the ardor of a heroic heart, is the prerequisite for every future rebirth. This knowledge is the basis of a new worldview, of a new-old idea of the State that generates a new vital feeling that will only give us the strength for the liquidation of the usurped dominion of the non-European and for the creation of a civilization of our own that permeates all spheres of life' (Myth, p. 115).

The idea of freedom is not empirically collected in 'The Myth' as an isolated moment and placed at the beginning of the work but is developed from the central thought of the work with consequent logical necessity. *If the book were not built on the consistently realized concept of man as an active and configuring being, if action did not occupy the center of his anthropology, then the idea of honor would be completely groundless.*

It would lose none of its significance, but the force of conviction of 'The Myth' would be less. The peculiarity of this work in relation to the 'Fundamentals of the Nineteenth Century' finally consists in an internal systematicity, which is not recognized by every reader, but felt by the majority.

The philosophy of modern history has taught us to regard the emergence of the complex and tangled whole we call culture as the work of configuring, so to speak, natural forces acting in silence. Culture was an 'objective' spirit; The individual did not enter into consideration, the violence of the form seemed to direct everything by itself. Frobenius concluded that culture is not created by men, but 'lives' in men. In the morphological method, this form of consideration of culture, which starts from the external configuration and its formal metamorphosis, reached its zenith. With this attitude, the present remains a white spot on the map; we have to wait and see what the mysterious forces of culture have in mind, and a cultural policy cannot be derived from this philosophy. Like all spiritual beatitude, it only leads to all powers, even corrupting ones, having a free hand.

Rosenberg's approach of understanding culture from within, that is, from its supreme value, opens up entirely new possibilities. *We can now understand culture as an organism without, however, falling into the passivity of an organic-morphological consideration; at the center of all cultural creation is man, not as an accidental individual, but as a personality, who is unique and yet in all his decisive manifestations appears as the representative of something universal.* For the supreme value of a race is at once personal and universal. It is 'universal' not in the sense of a universal human culture, but in the sense of a civilization shaped by a certain character which, notwithstanding all change of form, remains the same in its essence.

Another advantage of the concept of 'supreme value' is that it has an immediate bearing on all areas of human creation and action. This precludes any reduction of the concept of culture to a mere doctrine of forms. The idea of supreme value is all-encompassing; it does not place man's action from a unilaterally aesthetic, technical or ethical point of view. If we wanted to use these categories at all, we would have to find a predominance of the ethical point of view. But what is decisive is that these categories no longer fit together, because man is understood here as a configuring being as such, as a creative personality, before whose unity the autonomy of those 'singular' spheres recedes.

The most important advantage of the doctrine of supreme value, however, is that it forces us to conceive of culture not only as something past, but at the same time as something extremely present. In the clear light of the thought that each race has only one supreme ideal (Myth, p. 116) and cannot renounce its supreme value

without sinking the culture formed by it into chaos, neither a sweet abyss in expectant contemplation nor a literary prophesying of sunsets or sunrises are possible. The supreme value rules unconditionally and at all times. It is not necessary to wait first for the results of the philosophy of culture to know what to do. It is in one's own heart that each one must discover what matters and on which all civilization rests. Through fundamental characterological value, everything else is organized. 'For a supreme value requires a definite grouping of the other precepts of life conditioned by it, that is, it determines the style of existence of a race, of a people...' (Myth, pp. 116 ff). *The present must not only be understood from the past, but also the past from the present.* Those characterological values that once clashed, are still clashing today. The shaping struggle that was taking place in the Reichstag of post-war Germany is the same one that led to the Concordat of Worms in 1122. Every historical figure is referred to certain characteristics and cannot be detached from them; Happening is always a struggle of man against man, of character against character, whether it be works of art or ideas, legal principles or educational forms. From one human character to another there is no 'development', there is only self-affirmation or self-immolation. Western culture is not a melting pot in which the spiritual contents of all areas and peoples, by virtue of a mysterious law, are 'developed' into a 'cultural synthesis', but a characterological unity that must be affirmed if chaos is not to ensue. It is precisely from the current references to Judaism and democracy, to Marxism and liberalism that the seriousness of historical consciousness speaks. *He who does not see the dissolution and its exponent, Judaism, does not recognize what is positive and healthy either. The struggle against Judaism and the corrupting phenomena of the present is the guarantee that the past has been correctly understood.*

The recognition of historical figures, Rosenberg shows us, does not have to lead to a passive attitude. Rather it is the other way around: nothing can strengthen the will to struggle of an inwardly whole man more than the insight that history is not self-producing 'development', but a struggle from man to man. *Before Rosenberg, the philosophy of culture knew struggle only in the form of a completely ahistorical critique as the Enlightenment practiced it with everything traditional.* It is only recently that 'The Myth' has shown how the recognition of historical figures can be combined with the struggle for a certain supreme value that in itself is of a historical nature. *The form of this work is not a historical exposition peppered with anti-Semitic excurses, the typical misunderstanding of those who measure Rosenberg against the standards he has left behind, but a new procedure based on intuition and reflection that is followed with the need for the thought of a characterological value that encompasses past and present.*

While around that small number of men at whose center the Leader stood, anxious but confused minds demanded and sketched out a new art out of art, a new education out of education, Rosenberg wrote the simple and clear recognition that was so thoroughly tested in the struggle of the movement: the new race of Germany is looking for a new art, 'but with the knowledge of what it will not be born of before a new noble value, dominating all life, takes possession of us' (Myth, p. 449). How little can be meant by the wealth of 'cultural goods' that accumulates in a 'sympathetic' soul when the living presence of a supreme ordering value is lacking! What man does and creates dissipates like chaff to the wind when it is not determined and sustained from a center.

The nineteenth century immeasurably expanded our knowledge of the cultures of the earth; this century developed at the same time enormous economic and political activity. In all areas, the men of the twentieth century are faced with a vast heritage. And yet, there was once nothing heavier and more oppressive than taking on this inheritance. For the century of the greatest effort of all forces and of the most visible successes was at the same time the epoch of a gigantic weakness of the will. It might be called the century of Schopenhauer, whose theory of the will was at the same time the most seductive doctrine of the absence of will. Will is not just impulse. Nor is it just a mindless restlessness directed by the intellect. *A great will presupposes a great faith.* When a strong disposition to volitional activity does not find its proper goals, then arises that restless attitude which has so often been praised as a sense of Western culture, and which nevertheless was only the reverse of an inner perplexity and a despair of the soul. The nineteenth century lacked faith in itself and so, despite its entrepreneurial zeal and its capacity for performance, it was a time of unhappiness and weakness of will. *In the present there was no longer any greatness believed, everything great receded into the distance and became 'culture'.* When the men of this admirable but unfortunate age turned to the past, it was not with a feeling of veneration and at the same time self-victory, but from the dark impulse to assuage a hidden discontent and rest in the contemplation of the past greatness of the feverish aimless toil of the present.

The greatest diagnostician of this epoch, Nietzsche, recognized with real insight in historicism the expression of the incredulity and weakness of the will of his century. From the past contemplated without will, no goals can ever be derived. An age that does not muster courage in itself cannot become greater and richer through the vaster and more abundant past. It was the misfortune of 'historical formation' to forget that action does not spring from knowledge of what happened, but from faith in the presence of forces shaping history.

Rosenberg's first answer to the nineteenth-century problem was a clear and sure instinctive rejection

of historicism. *Already the first notes allow us to recognize that from the beginning only one question moved him: What will become of us? Where are we going? What task has been imposed on us? From an upright interior and a hopeful soul, he outlines the thought of conformation, to which he has always remained faithful.* Against Schopenhauer he formulates his fundamental conception of the creative will: 'Not the suppression of suffering, nor the satisfaction of a desire, and therefore of a tendency of the will, but the spontaneous creator, the legislator, the inspiration, the command, however one describes the inner activities whose essentiality is embraced and exhausted by the concept of conformation. That is what brings happiness, bliss' ('Writings and Discourses', Volume I, p. 64). Starting from the intuition of a new epoch to come, he summons the courage to write: 'The classical period of Europe, especially of Germany, is yet to come (ibid.)'.

The experience of the great personality of the leader and the overwhelming force of the National Socialist movement reinforces his certainty. The formative power of the great will, which he feels within himself, erupts as a bold action. From a passionately felt present, the image of Indo-Germanic prehistory is shaped. The weakness of historicism is not only recognized but overcome from within. The new era is here. Against the 'dreamless destroyers', against the black magic of anti-Germanic dreamers such as Jews and Jesuits, a new creative dream vision arises (Myth, pp. 455, 459 and ff). It has not been incubated in isolated brains; with a soul-subjugating power, it is born in moved hearts that immediately recognize in it with veneration the legacy of a powerful remote past.

Everything that is great in the past and belongs to us, everything that is a present force carrying the future within itself, Rosenberg condenses into the concept of myth. Myth is the creative dream of reality of a soul; not a subjective dreaming, but an objectively powerful image of what will be. Nothing in the world arises without faith; all the men who transformed the face of the Earth have lived proceeding from a myth. The will to shape a new world is never born from the contemplation of existing forms, it can only be born from the strength for shaping. A creative force that knows itself to be powerfully capable of shaping feels itself as mythical. In this sense, all great cultures have arisen from myths, and even the work of an Ignatius of Loyola was rooted in a 'myth' (Myth, p. 456). Without the dream force of a race, nothing arises that gains any powerful existence in history.

The myth is presaged and outlined by creative individuals but can never be psychologically understood from isolated individuals. Its content is universal, it is the substance of a race, of a people. 'The inscrutable integration of all the directions of the self, of the people, in general of a community, constitutes its myth' (Myth, p. 459). The myth is not a unique figure, but an enduring

shaping principle, it is the primordial foundation of all forms, the creative center of the life of a natural-historical community.

If a people, in the course of its history, is displaced from its myth, it suffers a disturbance in its self-consciousness. Between the soul of the people of that people and reality, the image of the world designed by the soul of another race confusedly interposes itself. Feeling and acting become hesitant, darkness and division take the place of original naivety and unity. Certainly, life gains tensions and colors that it probably would never have gained without that disturbance, but that richness is paid for dearly. Through a divided self-consciousness, a gifted and enterprising people can be brought to the brink of destruction. Even if it finally manages to prevail in countless political and spiritual struggles, its history will not lose its tragic character, and only after enormous efforts and repeated spiritual revolutions will it find the way back to its origin. Until Rosenberg, it had been considered obvious that only the richness of a people's experiences and creations was decisive in judging its evolution. Through the 'myth', the crucial thought has been introduced into historical contemplation that the evolution of a people must be judged according to the unity and cohesion of its attitude.

The health and strength of both individuals and peoples manifest themselves in their ability to distinguish the myths that belong to them from those that are harmful to them. The 19th century lacked this capacity for discernment, allowing itself to be seduced by doubt and criticism to equalize all myths. But neutrality equals dissolution, for neutrality is but another word for lack of faith. The paralysis of the 19th century's will is rooted in its lack of faith, which ultimately led to the myth of a people of foreign race, the soulless myth of money and world domination, becoming the idol of the West. Under the triumphal din of an apparent victory, this idol had been erected over all peoples in Versailles in 1919. The Führer's struggle against Versailles was the struggle against the Jewish-democratic myth. Rosenberg's task was to bring this struggle to its conclusion on the fundamental plane. The Führer's comrade-in-arms resolved the task by demonstrating that world history cannot be understood as an imaginary 'development' toward an imaginary goal, but rather is the self-affirmation and struggle of myth-shaping forms of being against one another.

With bold apprehension, Rosenberg has thus resolved the decisive problem of the philosophy of history, over which people have been racking their brains for centuries. Every authentic myth is a myth of blood. Blood is the ultimate historical reality we know. Whatever form a myth takes, it is always a self-affirmation of whoever shapes it. The difficulty of historical understanding lies in the fact that the myth-generating communities do not glimpse the correlation of what they produce with themselves. The fertile mantle

that forms around them, they consider a gift from the gods. The myth in which the shaping principle carried within the community first expresses itself becomes mere doctrine, that is, a teaching detached from its subject; life denies itself and turns against life. By discovering that every formulated myth, every historical religion is born of blood, life returns to itself. The myth of blood is not a 'mythology' among others, it does not establish a 'new' religion alongside the old religions, but rather has as its content the mysterious primordial origin of all mythological shaping. All mythologies proceed from a shaping principle; the knowledge of this principle is not in turn a mythology, but the very 'myth' contemplated with veneration as life.

The antithetical concept to myth is dogma. A dogma too can originally be a true myth born of blood. A myth becomes a dogma when it is detached from man and elevated to unconditional truth. In the name of this unconditionality, it can be imposed on men of another blood as the truth par excellence. Myth is not as transferable as blood; it is not universal and can never become universal. Dogma, on the other hand, is already universal by virtue of its absoluteness and hence eminently useful as a means of universal propaganda. The antithesis of myth-dogma reflects the antithesis of organic-historical popular unity and universal church.

The decisive question posed by Rosenberg's concept of myth is: How is it possible to speak of a new myth when it is a matter of the myth of blood? In what sense is this myth a myth of the 20th century? The answer is simple. The myth of blood is not only the myth of the 20th century because it will determine this century and those to come, but also the myth of our time because only our time could recognize it. As a recognized myth it is new, its discovery a revolutionary event. In its content it is ancestral, as old as the history of peoples. No one had known of this myth until now, and yet everyone has lived according to it. The discovery of its hidden reality is the change of era.

The myth is always the myth of a community. It refers to those who believe it and make it reality; implicit in its concept is the relation to a human belief and action, with an author and center. For this reason, the concept of myth cannot simply be replaced by the concept of idea. The idea exists by itself, detached, absolute. Its validity consists precisely in its not relating to anything else. Like revelation, the 'idealistically' understood idea comes 'vertically from above'. Only through a reinterpretation can the idea become an 'idea for me' ('idea for us'). The myth does not need a humanizing reinterpretation; as the myth of blood, it is human from the beginning.

Through the concept of myth, all absolutist misunderstandings are discarded from the outset. Ideas do not exist without racial-popular bearers. 'Ideas are racially conditioned, just like volitional values' (Myth, p. 20). Only a racial soul can be the bearer of a reality-

shaping idea. Rosenberg calls myth the 'idea' of a history-bearing racial soul. His work presents world history as the 'dramatic struggle of enemy racial souls' (Myth, p. 8).

Based on myth, the word idea acquires a new concrete meaning. The idea is the myth that has passed through the spirit and will of an individual and arrived at consciousness. It is great individuals who time and again set before the eyes of a community the values it lives by.

The value that surpasses the others and to which all values somehow refer, Rosenberg calls the supreme value of a race or people. With this, the term idea is happily translated into German: supreme value is the duty that a historical community imposes upon itself.

The myth is the creative force and life itself; it is the source of all values and valuations, the origin of all historical meaning and the creative unity of all actions. It is not because he proclaimed ideas that contradict the value patterns of the confessions, or because he made some '*amusing annotations on the European church*', that Rosenberg has been taken up by the representatives of the church and blacklisted, but because he has carried honesty and consequence to their ultimate consequences, to the point where the decision has to be made. The struggle around the 'myth' does not deal with this or that value, this or that historical fact, but with value itself and the meaning of human-historical existence in general. All the historical-critical manifestations about the 'myth', whether from the theological or non-theological side, whether in the guise of scientific innocuousness or intellectual arrogance, can only provoke yawns in an attentive and honest reader of the book. It must be recognized that in the Protestant field, voices have been raised more than once that found this kind of 'criticism' consisting of juxtaposing critical objections to historical details instead of addressing the work as a whole, shameful. From the clergy of the church, confused by the continued study of scholasticism, no more than hypocritical 'objectivity' could be expected. Some Protestant preachers were weak enough to lean on this pseudo-historical criticism. But many nevertheless recognized that the 'myth' posed a question to their church that could only be answered from the very center of the church. The reaction to the 'myth' only deserves to be taken seriously where it is theological, for only the theological response does justice to the fact that Rosenberg questions the church itself, not by means of denials in the liberal style, but by expounding the creative unity from which man truly lives. The theological response at least recognizes the plane on which Rosenberg's work moves.

For that pastor from Schleswig-Holstein who contrasts with refreshing naivety the myth of the blood of man to the message of faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, Rosenberg is a lost soul, but he has correctly

determined the rank of his work. 'He knows', he says of Rosenberg, 'that there exists a truth superior to all other realities, a supreme value by which all other values are measured, that there exists a force which is the primordial source of all force and all life, an ultimate meaning and a definitive interpretation of all being, which has unconditional validity'.

To speak theologically means to encompass the whole. The theological response does justice to Rosenberg at least insofar as it recognizes that his work encompasses the whole. It makes no sense to respond theologically to an enlightened thinker, because he does not attack from a plane corresponding to the theological. Between Voltaire and Rosenberg there is not a difference of degree, but of nature. The witty mocker Voltaire stands beyond all confessions and nations; Rosenberg speaks from a concrete historical position. He does not feign a timeless superiority of reason, which does not exist, does not speak in the abstract but with responsibility as a German from a certain point in German history. Like Nietzsche, Rosenberg proceeds historically from German Protestantism; the incomprehensible phenomenon for the theologian consists in the fact that neither the Thuringian nor the Baltic shows the slightest personal contact with the Christian spirit.

The personal detachment from Christianity is often presented as the result of hard struggles of the soul. A convincing description of such struggles has not yet been given; in most cases the idea of these struggles seems to simply arise from the vague feeling of obligation that they should actually exist. However, it is only a legend invented by theologians that a position outside the church must be linked to some struggle or agony. A large number of intellectually and socially active Germans live quite naturally outside the church. 'Properly religious problems I do not know from experience...'. This phrase from Nietzsche's '*Ecce Homo*' expresses a possibility, too unfamiliar in the theologized Germany, which it is high time to take note of.

It has sometimes been assumed that the author of the 'Myth' is somehow influenced by Nietzsche. *In reality, Nietzsche has contributed nothing to the formation of the 'Myth', just as German Romanticism has not influenced it either; Rosenberg's spiritual liberators have been exclusively Goethe and Schopenhauer.* Since Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, there have been great Germans time and again who, without knowing of each other, led an existence free from all ecclesiastical ties. There has been talk of an *anima naturaliter christiana* [phrase by Tertullian of Carthage, translator's note], the independent spirits were qualified as exceptions, as 'heretics'. It is time to speak of an *anima naturaliter germanica* and to cease considering the history of the German spirit from the history of the church. Only in the eyes of theologians who believe in an eternal duration of the Christian era can the independent spirits appear as

'heretics'. The Christian era was a world-historical episode. Christianity is only tradition; it no longer has any power that stirs the soul. The inner life of the era stirs today in those who in other times would have ended up at the stake for their convictions.

The enormous commotion aroused by Rosenberg's work should not be judged by the arguments that were opposed to it. No impartial person would deny today that the apologetic movement that attempted to rise up against the 'Myth' has been stifled by its own spiritual sterility. The book against which the apologists of the churches directed their sermons was full of vivid experiences, it was ardent, sustained by a suprapersonal conviction and therefore captivating and overwhelming. What was opposed to it lacked everywhere the tone that moves the soul. In front of the lived idea stood the un-lived dogma, in front of the myth stood the 'word', in front of the certainty of faith stood the certainty of the institution. And yet, the unique excitement surrounding the 'Myth' is a symptom of great importance. In this agitation manifests what was literally taken seriously by the defenders of the churches: the awareness that a new era of struggle around Christianity has begun. Before, the church claimed to measure everything that happened by its own standards; now a new measure has been erected: the reality of the German people and their history.

We are not the ones who have to justify ourselves before the Church, but rather the Church that has to justify itself before us: this is the decisive understanding to which every reader of the 'Myth' must arrive, if they do not allow themselves to be captivated by a mysterious 'word' that demands the sacrifice of their reason. The Germanic substance, the racial soul of the German people existed before there was a Christianity in the north; it has determined the history of the German faith and has produced Christian art; it will continue to determine our history even when Christianity is no longer the religion of our people. There is no choice: either one recognizes what the world and life prove everywhere, that everything great is produced by man thanks to the grace of his blood, that the history of each people is a great unity and that the individual must find the place that corresponds to him in that unity; or one claims to derive the Supreme from a revealed 'word', not bound to race, and with that one immediately falls into insoluble difficulties, especially when it comes to delimiting that Supreme from the less elevated, that is, that produced by man. The hopeless confusion into which theological thought falls as soon as it is confronted with the realities of life and history (theology is not a discipline of faith but of subtlety, it needs it!) has become completely visible for the first time thanks to Rosenberg's decisive thinking. By having placed the myth at the center as the supreme value, he has forced theology into a very unfavorable battlefield for it. Supreme value is at the same time a religious, ethical and historical concept. Whoever allows themselves to be guided by this concept is capable of comprehending the

world and life in a unified way. Under the theological assumption, on the other hand, this concept loses its applicability. Precisely the supreme value cannot be 'revealed' but must come from man himself; the other values join it organically. If, on the contrary, a revelation is assumed, then the historical world fragments. The sacrifice of reason before the claim of revelation means at the same time the renunciation of the understanding of history.

The theological literature on the 'Myth' reveals that the apologists of the confessions find themselves in a quandary for the first time. It is a matter of concealing through much talking the fatal circumstance that the point from which they can respond has not yet been found. But such a point will never be found, because it does not exist. The traditional categories of apologetics break down before a thought that is neither enlightened-denying nor romantic-constructive but moves in realities. *Theology only exercises its power as long as life has not yet come to find itself. It can dominate theories. Realities and history escape it.* Over the myth of blood, it has no power at all, because it is not an abstract philosopheme, but life itself that has become conscious of itself. The sacrifice made by the German people in the First and Second World Wars can no longer be dissolved into a series of individual acts of devotion, as required by theological thought removed from reality. In the necessity of the times of war, an 'impersonal collective' has been born; the community of the sacrifices made by it unites the millions 'together with their children and more distant descendants' (Myth, p. 449). 'Patriotism' no longer exists; in its place, a 'mythical, real experience' has come about. A new sense of reality gathers individuals into an indestructible unity, into a community of suprapersonal consecration. In the thunder of battles, the people have experienced 'that the old will of blood still lives' (Myth, p. 700). The community of blood has helped itself: before this experience, the old legends of the East pale. A new legend does not replace the old one; the object dissolves into nothingness before the eyes of the diligent apologists. Before the reality of the dawning day, the phantoms vanish.

It has never been properly understood what it means that Rosenberg rejects not only the dogmas of the Christian churches, but any formation of dogmas. Through the 'Myth', not only is the epoch of all Enlightenment and liberal argumentation against Christianity and the church ended, but through it any attempt at a 'romantic' restoration of the Middle Ages becomes impossible; rather, the entire situation in which Christianity can even be discussed in the future fundamentally changes. How childish the enterprise of continuing to speak of a new 'rational religion' seems in the face of such a revolution in the mode of thought, and of continuing to oppose 'revelation' to 'individual reason'. The historical thought that Rosenberg applies with the utmost consistency is not the thought of the historical biblical criticism of the 19th century. The author of the

'Myth' is not a descendant of Ludwig Feuerbach and David Friedrich Strauss, but the founder of a new understanding of human-historical existence. *He does not proclaim any new dogma or institution but speaks from the certainty of a new faith in the eternal, reality-creating powers.* It borders on the comical when a theological reader believes he can determine that Rosenberg presents us with a liberal content in mythical garb. It has always been attempted, on the part of the historical powers whose time had passed, to press the New into the thought forms of the Decrepid, in order to make it appear at least for a brief period harmless. But such artifices no longer have any effect in the face of an honesty that only expresses what is. Rosenberg only expresses what he has experienced, his instinct for the real enables him to distinguish the essential from the inessential and preserves him from getting lost in dialectical justifications of what is merely transmitted and still existing. For him, faith is not any kind of assent, but the relation of the soul to what effectively acts in the creative depths and moves in a formative way. Faith is a feeling for the real. A new epoch is born from a new sense of reality: that is the meaning of the 'Myth of the 20th Century'. Precisely the distancing from all false 'myths', dogmas and fictions is what is subversive about this work that has arisen from honesty, which does not proclaim more than the author knows and can take responsibility for, but which also does not shy away from drawing the ultimate consequences from the experience of the change of eras. Rosenberg's importance for our time is based on the fact that he has succeeded in making visible, by spiritual means, the event and experience of the renaissance of the German-Germanic popular soul.

About a process surrounded by the mystery of creative life, one can only speak in allusions. As energetic as the language of the 'Myth' may become when it comes to describing historical characters and institutions, it is nevertheless always restrained when referring to the new faith. In this, the difference between a mere literato and a writer who speaks and acts by historical mandate becomes manifest: whoever wants to give expression to what moves their epoch without contact with hidden realities will not only go astray but will also betray themselves by the strident tone with which they speak precisely of what they consider germinal life; whereas he who really sees what wants to come into being involuntarily becomes quiet (as by the cradle of a newborn).

The theological critics of the 'Myth' have lacked any disposition to notice the reserve with which Rosenberg speaks of the essential. Instead of treating his phrases as expressions of a faith, they considered them finished and smooth formulas; instead of as allusions to an inexhaustible content, they took them as dogmatic statements. Even this had to be the final result of the habit of speaking dogmatically about faith: to no longer perceive real faith when one encounters it. None of the Christian churches today has the openness to welcome

living faith into its fold and appropriate it, an openness that once made the church a historical power.

The sense of reality of a powerful movement has shattered the barriers that in Western Christendom the churches imposed on the spiritual outbursts of the European nations. Once the Franciscan movement of Italy flowed into the Roman church, once the Pietistic current renewed Protestantism in Germany. Today, Christianity no longer manages to transform living faith into dogma, experience into institution. Powerless, the churches have to watch as the political and intellectual life of the era shapes itself outside their traditional forms. In the shadow of Versailles, facing the Jewish-Bolshevik danger, the Christianity of the churches has demonstrated its incapacity for a formative and creative intervention; it is indifferent how many adherents the Christian churches count today: whoever understands the language spoken by the history of peoples knows what is coming now. The churches have abandoned the peoples; spiritual powers do not overcome such defeats.

In this context, the struggle surrounding the 'Myth' reveals itself as an event of symbolic significance. The apologists of the Protestant church believed they could consider Rosenberg as an individualist and thus combat him, and 'refuted' the myth of blood from the basis of old dogmas and institutions as a new popular religion. *This whole intellectual game is nothing more than a superficial process; in the depths of reality, something quite different has been fulfilled.* Only in appearance did theology attack an individual; in truth, it was felt with precision that here an individual was not simply speaking with subjective authority and expounding a 'rational religion' invented by him, but that a new era had taken the floor. For the first time, the Christian church truly finds itself, not just in form, on the defensive. And that is the event of reforming significance that is linked with the 'Myth of the 20th Century': the greatest event of Western history, the separation of the European spirit from Christianity predicted by Nietzsche, is recognized in this book as a real historical process in the present German context and affirmed with a truthfulness that admits no compromises. *The total collapse of 1918 had to mean the end of the existence of the German people, if an advance toward a new form of existence did not take place.* Only a miracle could still save the German spirit. This miracle has been accomplished by the faith that the World War kindled in Adolf Hitler and some other brave men. The German people will always be grateful to the man who wrote these words in a politically desperate situation:

'We proclaim, after this experience, as the religion of the future German, that we, politically defeated today, humiliated and persecuted, have found the root of our strength, in reality we have discovered it for the first time and have revived it with a force like no previous generation. The mythical apprehension and the conscious recognition face each other today for the first

time, in the sense of German renewal thought, not as enemies but mutually stimulating each other: the most ardent nationalism no longer directed at tribes, dynasties, confessions, but at the primordial substance, at the essence bound to race, is the message that will one day fuse all dross to bring forth the noble and extirpate the ignoble' (Myth, p. 85).

It was to be expected that the theologians, the only ones who have seriously dealt with the 'Myth', would transfer the confrontation with Rosenberg to their terrain; however, this does not change the fact that their apologetic efforts do not do justice to the book to which they are dedicated. The theologian always starts from the assumption that Rosenberg arrives at his own position from a critique of Christianity. In reality, this critique is secondary; the position itself is primary. Rosenberg is not a biblical critic who approaches Christianity from a standpoint devised at the desk, but a man in the storm of the times, who passionately experiences the rebirth of the German people and who, in his endeavor to make comprehensible to others the position attained in combative existence and intellectual work, takes a stance towards the historical phenomenon of Christianity. *The 'Myth' is completely misunderstood if one asks what it has to say for or against Christianity and then judges it accordingly.* The author of the 'Myth' does not confront Christianity as a theologian confronts another theology; as a political man, he seeks to correctly understand the history of the German people. Since this purpose was not taken seriously, the theological literature of refutation has been papier-mâché from the outset; but where it was not 'refuted' in the abstract but asked concretely, it was also felt that the questioner was shaken by Rosenberg's vision and felt the ground shifting under his feet. *The myth of race and the discourse of revelation cannot be connected in any way.* The Roman church had no doubt about this. *It put the work on the Index of Forbidden Books and prohibited its servants from following its line of argument in any way. Its so-called scientific refutation was only a diversionary maneuver for the credulous and ignorant, with which it was to be concealed that no confrontation over the content was entered into.* The Vatican gave the instruction: this event has not taken place; race is not spoken of; we do not know an autonomous history of peoples! The German Protestantism does not have it so easy. Since it has distanced itself from Karl Barth, it is not willing to separate itself from German history. In general, it takes the problems of historical existence very seriously and recognizes that history must also be viewed under the aspect of race and blood. The question facing German Protestantism today as its question of destiny is: how is faith in a racially unbound revelation still possible once the idea of race has been generally recognized? The same thing happens with this thought as with gravitation. Like it, it cannot be suspended for a moment (in the interest of 'revelation') without everything bursting apart. One can only view the history of man in the light of an alleged revelation or in the light of racial thought. There is no

third option. The attempt at a synthesis always has to be something transitory and will ultimately necessarily lead to the racial-historical consideration of man. Without sacrificing his reason, today no one can renounce the historical interpretation of his own existence; the key to deciphering, however, lies in the recognition of man as a racially shaped character, not in a revelation that evades historical knowledge.

The aspect of the content of Rosenberg's confrontation with Christianity, put in the foreground by the theological critics, is not at all decisive for the total understanding of the 'Myth'. Rosenberg did not initiate this confrontation; it has a venerable prehistory whose context and significance to characterize was certainly not in the interest of the apologists. Since the great doctrinal disputes of the Middle Ages, since Count Gottschalk and Master Eckhart (to whom the 'Myth' not without reason accords a decisive place), the German spirit has grappled with the paradoxes of Christianity. It sought the inner center that a foreign religion could not give it. It has accomplished tremendous things in the endeavor to inwardly appropriate the paradox of the cross, the mystery of the incarnation and the doctrine of the trinity, until at least in part it succeeded in giving even the most strange and contradictory a Germanic face. These efforts never reached an end, and the history of German philosophy represents the monumental proof that there was always something that did not let the German man rest and again and again sent him on a pilgrimage in search of the truth. Since Kant, the search for the inner center of the German soul has entered a 'critical' stage. Only those who do not want to see could fail to recognize that an inner necessity reigns in the confrontation of German thought with Christianity. From Kant and Fichte there leads a straight line to Lagarde, Chamberlain and Rosenberg. In making this observation, one must bear in mind that here we are not speaking of the National Socialist Rosenberg and the core of his work, but solely of the spiritual context in which his confrontation with Christianity is inscribed. *Neither Fichte nor Chamberlain, neither Lagarde nor Nietzsche can be identified with National Socialism, for National Socialism does not exist before Adolf Hitler.* But those men were already on the front on which, through the great spiritual movement of our time, the decisive victory has been won.

On the path of the Germanic spirit towards itself, critical philosophy is the decisive achievement. With veneration Rosenberg names Kant, he refers to the critique of knowledge. Through his critique of knowledge, Kant laid the philosophical foundations for the definitive liberation of the spirit from the fantasy of ecclesiastical dogmas; through his ethics of duty he restored honor to man. Although the revolution provoked by Kant remained limited to the sciences and philosophy, the critique of knowledge ultimately became, in its effects, the precursor of a Europe after the middle Ages. And yet, alongside the harshest judgments on

ecclesiastical institutions, in Kant there is not a word against Christian doctrine. Kant, on the contrary, strives to bring the content of his ethics into harmony with the teachings of Christ, and defines religion as the 'fulfillment of our duties as divine commands'. This turn can be considered a classic formula of the era of reconciliation between independent Germanic philosophy and the Christian tradition. Duty, that is, action, comes first for the German thinker; although the moral law is grounded in man independently of God, he nevertheless considers the fulfillment of this as religion and endeavors to demonstrate the conformity of its demands with the teachings of Christ.

The priority of action stemming from inner freedom, the veneration of the person of Jesus, the rejection of the Old Testament and the apostle Paul, the struggle against dogma and the sacraments, against the ecclesiastical notion of office and hierarchy, are fundamental invariable traits in the confrontation of the German spirit with Christianity for the past 150 years. It was quite crude on the part of the church apologists to pretend that Rosenberg had raised new assertions in this regard. The author of the 'Myth' never thought of presenting himself as a theologian. As a German man, he arrived at the same free conception of Christianity that has been in the possession of the revolutionary minds of his people since Leibniz and Lessing. The idea of a non-ecclesiastical Christianity is the ultimate and most delicate result of a secular labor of the European spirit on the medieval tradition. On German soil, this labor has found its crowning, and here too it has been ended. That the Germans clung to a Christianity that had passed through the Nordic spirit, liberated from all magic and purified of Judaism, that they sometimes finally identified Germanity and Christianity, cannot surprise a historical observer.

The little understanding that Rosenberg's adversaries showed towards his inner attitude and the lack of justice they evidenced is illustrated by the fact that they did not have a word for the spiritual development that issues in the 'Myth'. Precisely Rosenberg's relationship with Christianity reveals that he was never an iconoclast. He contemplated with veneration the image of Christianity coined in German history. For the German it is so easy to rediscover himself in the Germanized Christianity. Only gradually did he recognize that the transfer of Christianity to the Germanic world of the north was a fateful destiny, and only slowly did he come to the conviction that no religious power resides even in the person of the founder of Christianity. Finally, the person of Jesus became for him a mere venerable memory, a figure who by virtue of his historical-universal effect is better kept out of any confrontation with historical Christianity. Towards the Germanized Christianity, Rosenberg has refrained from any hurtful attack; he has always followed the principle that he formulated in a speech in Aachen (1939): 'that all the great movements that were once shapers of history

are already ennobled by the mere fact that Germans believed in them'.

His internal confrontation with Christianity was essentially determined, as in many others, by the experiences that the national fighter had to undergo in Republican Germany with the political efficacy of the Christian confessions. The core religious and political problems clashed in the Jewish question. The decision had to fall in the face of the Jewish problem.

Rosenberg finds himself in agreement with the best of his people when in the most substantial of his early struggle writings, 'The Crime of Freemasonry', he defends the philosophical-Christian attitude of Lagarde and Chamberlain against modern disintegration and sees in the attacks of the Freemasons and Jews on the religion of these men an undermining of the foundations of our existence, Christianity ('The Crime of Freemasonry', p. 67). A weakening of Christianity, which is of course never equated with ecclesiastical Christianity, must be seen here as a weakening of Germanity, the defense of Christianity becomes a national duty. And when in his early writings Rosenberg emphatically points to Jesus, he does so because he believes he can rediscover the most ancient Aryan knowledge of the oneness and dignity of the personality in some phrases of the New Testament ('The Crime of Freemasonry', p. 177). It is the same motive that also guided Kant. The new thing is that Rosenberg has recognized the abysmal difference that separates Germanic-Christian metaphysics from the legalistic religion and lack of personality of Judaism.

This inclusion of Judaism means more than a mere enrichment of knowledge. Since emancipation, the Jewish race has been attacking the vital fabric of old Europe. It seeks allies among the possessive instincts of noble but tired and unproductive peoples and among all the disintegrating elements of modern society in order to finally realize in the age of the stock exchange the ancient dream of Jewish world domination. In such a situation, the religious decision becomes political and politics at the same time religious. The question of whether a Jew enters or does not enter the German popular community through baptism, for example, carries political and religious consequences by which the general state of our civilization is affected.

In this situation, Rosenberg has posed the existential question to the Church. With intuitive certainty, he reduced the bewildering multiplicity of particular issues to the single and essential question that contains them all. His reasoning is of a persuasive simplicity: if there exists a value that is above national honor, then a struggle that must lead to the liberation and recovery of the people is impossible. Only a supreme value understood and affirmed by all is capable of engendering that decision which is necessary to break all resistance. Whoever truly wants the salvation of the German people from the Jewish embrace, will not be

diverted from the pursuit of their goal by anything. A community of struggle will form that will take possession of the law of action; the attitude of each individual towards this community of struggle will reveal their real position. Whoever is bound to values other than the honor and freedom of the nation will be left behind. The renaissance will be accompanied by a division of spirits. The Christian confessions cannot remain outside the struggle. If this were granted, a second supreme value would have been recognized, which contradicts the concept of supreme value and is therefore absurd. National honor, if taken seriously, cannot be a value among others; it can only be the supreme value or nothing. For this reason, the Christian confessions are faced with the demand to separate themselves not only from Rome but also from Jerusalem ('The Crime of Freemasonry', p. 159).

What Rosenberg did was not to attack the confessions and put a new confession alongside the old ones, but to place the confessions, and not only the confessions, before the decision. It is a mistake to assume that National Socialism was active from the beginning on the confessional question. Rather, in the early years of the political struggle, the Christian confessions were treated with all the consideration and respect corresponding to the German tradition. The question was whether the confessions would recognize what it was about. They would have had to let themselves be transformed by the New that was breaking into existence with such overwhelming force, if they still carried the future within them. *Only the Roman church, which had already been unable to absorb the movement unleashed by Luther into its bosom in the 16th century, immediately closed itself off to the utmost hostility.* The Protestant church had just been diverted from the path traced for it by Schleiermacher by the Calvinist Karl Barth. Absorbed in this internal crisis, it was unable to hear the call that was addressed to it. There were more than enough brave Lutherans, willing to give the nation the honor it was due. But the church was not open enough to find the way to life from Judaic theology.

For a moment, one believes one can feel how universal history contains the breath. The moment passes, in the churches no one has noticed anything. In Alfred Rosenberg's soul, all dreams and thoughts converge on the conception of the 'Myth'. When the book appears, it arrives just in time to make visible the situation that had formed in the first ten years of struggle. The Roman church is in open attack, Protestantism has refused the movement. It already carries within itself the tendency of the 'Confessing Church'. A universal-historical confrontation has begun. The clarity and decisiveness with which Rosenberg expounds the supra-political meaning of the present convulsion, proclaiming a 'myth rich in content, full of blood, a life-feeling that possesses a center around which everything forms and configures itself' (Myth, p. 613), causes the representatives of the confessions to go on the attack.

The serious question posed by Rosenberg's work is not heard, the 'response to the myth' becomes a task of church politics, the theological dispute begins. But intangible like a spirit, the book in which for the first time national honor is planted at the center of human existence passes through the combatants. The response to the 'Myth' does not occur from the pulpits; the question is directed at the 20th century; the century will respond.

Only that 'profound inner confidence in one's own kind' (Myth, p. 611) that integral peoples have and that we have unfortunately lost can be at the center of our civilization. The 'creation of a feeling of supreme value' (Myth, p. 611) is the prerequisite of all culture. Since the Christian confessions have been unable to prevent our political and intellectual life from falling into corruption, it would be a punishable illusionism to suppose that the restoration of the German people could arise from anything other than a new spiritual center.

'The prerequisite for all German education is the recognition of the fact that it was not Christianity that brought us civilization, but rather Christianity owes its enduring values to the Germanic character (which is the reason why it does not present these values in some states). Therefore, the values of the Germanic character are the eternal to which everything else must adapt. Whoever does not want this renounces a German renaissance and dictates to themselves the sentence of spiritual death. But a man or a movement that wants to help these values to total victory has the moral right not to be indulgent with the opposite. He has the duty to overcome it spiritually, let it wither organizationally, and keep it politically impotent. For if a cultural will is not made into a drive for power, it would be better if the struggle had not even begun' (Myth, p. 636). Let it be called intolerance if you will... without this intolerance nothing great has yet been created in the world.

A racial soul can only have one supreme value above it. When this value, from a certain point on, is not only felt unconsciously but also recognized and affirmed consciously, when the myth of blood has once entered into the historical consciousness of the people, then it becomes the most important internal task of the nation to create a type that corresponds to the myth. '...type is the plastic form, bound to an era, of an eternal racial-psychic content...' (Myth, p. 531). The myth of blood is in itself untouched by the conditions of time; blood is the source of all historical configuration, but in itself it is not a form bound to an era.

From the mythical maternal womb great creative personalities arise directly; the type, on the other hand, is not an immediate birth from the mythical basis, but the temporal-personal creation of great individualities acting with the full power of a historical mandate. Personality and the idea proclaimed and lived by it are the shapers of types. The primordial mythical basis constitutes the prerequisite for a genuine and

enduring type to be able to emerge. Names like Frederick the Great and Moltke designate at the same time German personalities and an idea. Elusive, mythical and yet real, the Germanic hereditary union stands behind them.

Each era is always posed anew with the task of producing a certain type. The task of our era is, after overcoming the dissolution of the 19th century, to first recover the myth, 'to create a new human type from a new life-myth' (Myth, p. 2). The myth itself cannot be created; its rediscovery is not action but experience, birth (comp. Myth, p. 481). This experience has been gifted to the German people by the fateful event of the World War. In August 1914, the supreme value of the Moltkean army became the supreme value of the entire people (Myth, p. 520). What was then a passing event must now, after the myth of blood has been reborn from the events of the Great War, become, from the unconscious depths of the racial substance and yet completely consciously, the goal of the education of the entire nation.

The fundamental concept of type for education can only be correctly understood if it is taken from the context in which it is introduced by Rosenberg. What a genuine type means, that is, one referred to a myth, can only be understood after clarifying the concepts of authority and freedom. As long as there was no notion of the racially formed personality, only abstract 'authority' could be contrasted with abstract freedom. However, 'authority without race' is just as chaotic and incapable of founding politics and education as freedom without race. Authority is only genuine and enduring where it is linked to life; a freedom not linked to life, on the other hand, is merely another word for anarchy. True freedom can always only be the freedom of life toward itself. Rosenberg calls this freedom 'organic freedom' (Myth, p. 529). Only a dominion that asserts the same vital values to which everyone feels inwardly obligated possesses true authority, and only a system of increasing freedom can be safe from both anarchism and despotism. The life-bound personality moves in full independence within the margin set for it by natural forces and dispositions.

It is their own living forces that demand guidance and direction, without which they are unable to have activity and elevation within the historical community. The stronger the personality, the stronger the demand for 'discipline and inner edification' (Myth, p. 530). The era that allowed individual forces to grow unchecked has passed. A new era of strict breeding of types has begun. 'Today the strongest personality no longer demands personality but type' (Myth, p. 531).

The type cannot be more distorted than by confusing it, as a great historical form which is naturally something completely different from a social 'type', with a schema. The type arises through the shaping power of great historical goals referred to living forces and corresponding to these forces. Within it, the greatest diversity is possible. For the individual grasps, those

goals from within themselves through their own imagination, understanding and will. The type is fiery and animating, the abstract schema is arid. It does not arise from the living forces themselves but is stamped upon them without consideration for their own character and stubbornness. The type is the vital form of freedom; schematization has been in all times a means of servitude.

The sociology of the past has counterposed the social principle to the individual principle and has ultimately believed it could trace all ideological antitheses back to the difference between individualism and universalism. It was a spiritual decision of high rank when Rosenberg opposed the abstract doctrine of totality and showed that an idealism of totality that does not recognize 'the racially bound soul of the people as the measure of all our thoughts, will-desires and actions, as the ultimate measure of our values' (Myth, p. 697), is not ideologically distinguished from the combated individualism. Universalism is only a twin brother of individualism (Myth, p. 695), both lack race and nature.

It is deceptive and dangerous to construct an 'organic' system in the realm of pure spirit, alien to blood and without a people, if the true organic center, the natural-historically unique racial soul of the people, does not constitute the starting point and end of the entire construction. Neither an abstract individualism nor an abstract universalism or socialism molds peoples 'descending as it were from the clouds'; racially healthy peoples know neither the one nor the other measure (Myth, p. 539). A state system is socialist when its measures serve the whole (Myth, p. 541). This political goal is not achieved through Universalist doctrines, but through National Socialist leadership and the education of everyone in an organic worldview at whose center stands the idea of the honor of the nation as a biological-spiritual unity. Socialism cannot be defined as the subordination of the individual to the will of any collective (Myth, p. 534 f). The subordination of the individual only makes sense when the collective has a true content and a fiery center. Subordination to a life-hostile power has nothing to do with socialism. Abstract principles, whether individualistic or universalistic, always lead to anarchy and decadence. 'Only their consequence can show whether a measure is socialist...' (Myth, p. 535). National Socialism does not want to realize nationalism and socialism, but to lead the German people to the supreme form contained within it. 'The German people does not exist to defend any abstract schema with its blood, but rather, all schemas, systems of thought and values are in our eyes only means to strengthen the vital struggle of the nation outwardly and elevate the internal strength through a just and appropriate organization' (Myth, p. 644).

Myth and type are the fundamental concepts of Rosenberg's work of thought. There are few books that include within the circle of their observation and

judgment so many problems of a religious, political, philosophical and practical nature as the 'Myth of the 20th Century'. Almost unfathomable is the diversity of life unfolded here, the abundance of mastered material. That this book nevertheless represents a victorious unity is due to the fact that it has arisen from a single spiritual decision that penetrates everything with its clarity and consequence and assigns each detail its place within the whole. The book that deals with personality is at the same time the imprint of a closed personality in the midst of thought. The reduction carried out here of everything that has happened and is still happening in the vast realm of historical being and life to the character of man is therefore convincing because the author confirms it by demonstrating it. His philosophy of action subjugates the reader because it itself is action.

Everything is developed from a single premise, what man creates and produces, communal orders and religions, buildings and symphonies, philosophical systems and technical solutions, is an expression of his character. It arises from an animistic center that is inserted into the organism of the natural-historical unity from which it originates. Every spiritual measure is false and in its ultimate consequences pernicious if it does not grow from the relation of the individual to the center of the racial-popular whole. From the lack of center of gravity and center of the past epoch stem all those phenomena of decomposition whose terrifying revelation in the time after the First World War caused the will for renewal to arise from the healthy core of the German popular being. While others were still trying to find positive aspects in decadence, the Führer saw salvation only in the renaissance of the nation. Through the force of his heart and will, National Socialism became the center of a new life. In place of unthinking customs and bloodless concepts came fiery communal forms and great ideas. The nation once again felt itself in the service of a historical task.

From the experience of the renaissance of the German people through National Socialism, Rosenberg took the strength to trace the chaotic situation into which modern Europe had fallen back to a few simple lines and lay the foundation for an ideational mastery of problems that seemed to have become insoluble. The principle that guided him in this has been expounded by us. It can be formulated in the following general formula: the value patterns of life and all its creations cannot be conceived as ideas or spiritual essences existing in themselves, without doing violence to life and putting it in mortal danger. For all the values that shape and elevate existence come from life and are bound to life. A thought that posits values and forms in absolute terms springs from a worldview that is hostile to life in its deepest foundation. Therefore, it must not be treated as an inaccessible guild matter immune to criticism but must be examined from the center of life. This examination was initiated by Rosenberg with a critique of the hypostasis of the aesthetic form. The result was that

absolute aesthetics is based on a misunderstanding of the aesthetic will. It constructs a beauty in empty space without consideration for living man, for whom alone beauty can exist. Every artistic creation refers to the man who produces it and thereby to the racial soul that determines his creation.

Art does not exist, nor religion, nor the State, nor the law; there exist only human characters and orientations of will, from which everything that presents itself to us in historical experience arises. Religious, legal, political and spiritual antitheses and struggles are ultimately struggles of psychic attitudes against each other. Universal history will never be comprehensible to us if we contemplate it as a development of 'humanity' towards some fabulous goal. Experience everywhere shows us only living centers of communities that seek to realize and carry forward their supreme value. All confusion and decomposition in the existence of peoples has its cause in the fact that men have hitherto not known the law that reigns in all living events and that knows nothing of arbitrary changes of innate orientations of the will. The constancy of character given with the continuity of blood is the primary phenomenon of the human-historical world. The religion and law, art and poetry, ethics and politics of a popular community are most closely intertwined with each other because they are only diverse manifestations of the same fundamental will. The concordance of these manifestations with each other constitutes the essence of the culture of a community. In the past, the unity of culture had to be wrested from opposed universalist tendencies, by which mixture and alienation were fostered. For centuries, the psychic-racial-popular characters managed to establish a unity of culture despite all universalist counter-effects. Finally, the strength was exhausted. The international Jew, taking advantage of monetary thought, rose to become the master of the world and threatened to destroy all fiery creative power; Bolshevism set out to physically annihilate the nations. Then the need of the time engendered in the most threatened people the will and knowledge that led to a renaissance. National Socialism put in place of the confused mixture of general representations and ideals that was designated as the spirit of humanity or the idea of Western culture, an organically founded worldview. It was not content with symptomatically curing decadence but attacked the evil at its root.

When Rosenberg recognized the idea of honor as the spiritual center of the Germanic world and determined national honor as the supreme value of all our creation and action, not only was the lost connection of our system of values with the mode of valuation of our ancestors restored. More happened than a mere correction of our measures of value: the reinstatement of the supreme value of honor brings with it a new hierarchical order of all values and at the same time a style of feeling and thinking values that makes a relapse into the universalist error of the past impossible.

The past Christian era elevated the idea of love (*caritas*), which is in inner connection with the virtues of mercy and humility, to the supreme value of Western culture. Although European history was always very far from corresponding in any way to this supreme value, it was a fictitious, not real supreme value; the hierarchy of values once established (by the Church) remained in force, although it was demonstrated time and again that this order of values had no constructive power, put the sick and weak before the healthy and strong, and moreover did nothing but favor hypocrisy. Modern humanitarian democracy has emerged from this ideology, whose morality was characterized by Nietzsche as the morality of 'descending life'. The overcoming of democratic decadence by National Socialism restored the aristocratism of nature. A social order that is not diverted from its essential tasks by the idea of love will also take care of the sick and weak, without having to construct its educational and value system on the care of the needy. After all, the institutions that serve the sick and weak are also created and sustained by those who do not belong to the sick and weak. Through the re-establishment of the aristocratic order of values, at the center of which stands honor, to which belong the virtues of valor and truthfulness, society is not only liberated from the unfruitful principle of compassion, but also redeemed from the spirit of untruthfulness that the idea of 'love' has brought upon all public life. For complete self-denial may well become a reality at some point in individuals of special constitution and lead to phenomena such as those we know from the history of some religions. But the healthy strength of a community can never be put into the service of breeding such individuals. They remain exceptions and may well serve a religious institution for recruitment, but never as models for a political community.

A fatal devaluation of all the values on which strong life stands, and an irremediable corruption of truthfulness and education, must result when love is introduced as the universal value of a social order and as a shaping power of types. Love may well be universalized (one can speak of love), but it can never shape a type, because it does not develop from natural forces, but can only be taught to them, which in the face of the persistence of human dispositions leads only to contradiction and insincerity.

It is one of the deepest insights we owe to Rosenberg that love and honor are the central values of two opposed systems of values, and that unlike the system of honor, the system of love has no inherent power to shape types (Myth, p. 158). The chaotic state that Western culture had reached by the end of the 19th century revealed the contradiction into which Germanic Europe had fallen because of the ideology of 'love'. Under the dominion of the idea of love, nowhere could a worldview and life order corresponding to real forces take shape. All power spoke the language of love, and

the more unnatural and violent its dominion was, the more loving its ideology was.

From the doctrine of the supreme value it follows that a people can only live happily if it shapes its existence in accordance with itself, that is, if all its thinking and acting springs from a single root. If religion and politics come from different roots, the contradiction, in other words fundamental untruthfulness, has to become a permanent state. Only after overcoming this contradiction is an authentic shaping of types possible, for the prerequisite of all real education is the unity of life and doctrine.

Considered as a shaper of history, and not in itself or in isolated individuals, the idea of love reveals itself under the aspect of education as the true misfortune of Western culture. The institution that introduced this idea into the formation of the European peoples has become the great school of disloyalty. 'The Church itself, as a form of discipline, could not and should not know any love in order to maintain itself and continue to impose itself as a type-shaping power. But it could conduct power politics with the help of love' (Myth, p. 159). Power politics with the help of love means debasing the idea to a mere means, thereby abolishing the unity of life and doctrine, politics and spirit, indispensable for the education of the Germanic-German man. Only a revolution that stripped the idea of love of its dominant position could create the prerequisites for a German education of Germanic character. By putting the idea of honor in place of the idea of *caritas*, Rosenberg restored to German education and at the same time to European culture the essence it should never have lost. The personality shaped by the supreme value of honor is the human type whose dominion will put an end to the split between politics and spirit. The era of the contradiction between the expansionist politics without ideas of great and small nations on the one hand and a 'democratic' humanitarian-charitable ideology on the other (its most hypocritical formula was Commonwealth) is over.

The revolution of National Socialism does not consist in replacing one ideology with another, but in redirecting the thinking and acting of the German man to the living center from which all human creations flow. That center is what the word worldview points to. By worldview, National Socialism understands that unity conditioned by the racial disposition of the psychic attitude on which is founded the possibility of mastering all problems of life and thought.

Under the supreme value of honor, life and doctrine, politics and spirit, can only unfold unitarily. 'The idea of honor, national honor, will be for us the principle and end of all our thinking and acting. It tolerates no center of equal force beside itself, neither Christian love, nor Masonic humanity, nor Roman philosophy' (Myth, p. 514).

In the world of the German soldier, honor has always been the supreme value. Rosenberg's work consists as little as Kant's ethics in having found a completely new principle, which certainly counts as a dubious merit in the realm of ethics. However, new and audacious is the knowledge that honor is the center of being and life not only of an estate but of the entire nation, and the clear vision of the central position of the idea of honor in its relation to other values.

The supreme value of honor impels the personality to achieve the utmost in performance. That is the reason why this supreme value radiates over the entire life of the individual as well as the community. The fundamental values closest to honor are those of loyalty and duty.

Honor is first and foremost always the honor of a concrete personality; it is inseparable from the will to self-affirmation and the real existence of the one who possesses it. Honor can never become universal: honor can always only be the honor of this or that particular man; honor does not exist. In this is founded that under the dominion of the supreme value of honor that decadence of morals which was inevitable under the dominion of the Universalist idea of love cannot arise. The idea of love can be abused as a means, the idea of honor can only ever be realized in concrete personal representation. An existence under the supreme value of honor has to be a life in truthfulness.

Extending from the center of personality ('personal honor, honor of lineage, honor of the tribe, popular honor', *Myth*, p. 162), honor remains always linked to personality and opposes an insuperable resistance to any universalization and absolutization. Within the Germanic-German vital order, no other value can occupy the place of the supreme value. The idea of honor is inseparable from the idea of freedom (*Myth*, p. 532). The personality conscious of honor cannot exist except in freedom; the Germanic-German forms of dominion are always at the same time forms of freedom. The deepest reason that the Nordic soul cannot but behave in protest against the Roman Church lies in the fact that the Church aspires to dominion over souls. 'The Church wanted to reign through love, the Nordic Europeans wanted to live free through honor or die free with honor' (*Myth*, p. 146).

Will, honor, freedom, which is the heroic triptych in which the unitary personality unfolds. In considerations on the concept of personality, the central concept of the cosmopolitan's awakening, we have found the germ of the 'Myth of the 20th Century'. Volition has revealed itself, on closer examination, as the fundamental character of the human being; in honor we find the supreme value of the will and in freedom the fundamental value of all the political and spiritual creations of man existing under the idea of honor. The

common opposing point of reference of will, honor and freedom is destiny. According to the Germanic-German conception, I and destiny face each other without the I being able to subjugate destiny or destiny oppress the I. 'In the fulfillment of the self-generated law of honor, old Hildebrando sees at the same time the prevailing destiny' (*Myth*, p. 399). Destiny and personality are always referred to each other, destiny cannot be understood without personality, personality not without destiny. With this observation, Rosenberg reaches the highest point of the latent philosophical system that is perceptible everywhere in his work of thought.

The 'Myth of the 20th Century', which was elaborated in its current form towards the middle of 1928, was published in October 1930. Until then, through his speeches and struggle pamphlets, through the 'Völkischer Beobachter' and 'World Struggle', Rosenberg had tirelessly promoted the spiritual revolution of the German people and the formation of the party's will. In the 'Völkischer Beobachter' and 'World Struggle' the National Socialist speakers found an essential part of the material they needed to channel the formation of political opinion in the German people, led astray by a thousand false doctrines, onto new paths. What a writing like 'The Evolution of the Party Program' ('Essence, Principles and Objectives of the NSDAP', 1922) meant for the internal union of the party can hardly be overestimated. For the isolated fighter in the countryside as in the midst of the human masses of the big cities, who daily faced a torrent of questions and problems, Rosenberg's speeches, articles and writings were like a constellation that invariably pointed to the Führer's will as the North Star. In 1932 the writing 'Essence, Principles and Objectives of the NSDAP' was completed with the closed expositions of the work 'The Essential Structure of National Socialism'.

With the publication of the 'Myth' a new era began in Rosenberg's activity. After the immediate success of this book, surprising given the difficulty of the work, the book slowly gained, inside and outside the party, the position alongside the Führer's work. In 1930 Rosenberg founded the 'National Socialist Monthly Notebooks'. Their task was and remains today the positive continuation of the cultural work of National Socialism and the treatment of all questions of the movement that require discussion and exposition.

In the midst of an extraordinarily broad and intense literary activity, Rosenberg has always been present as an active political fighter as well. He has never fallen into the old German error of forgetting, absorbed in intellectual work and the treatment of domestic political issues, the fact that the German people has to assert itself in the struggle with other nations and in friendly relations with kindred national aspirations in the world. The fighter for ideology and borders Rosenberg, for whom the intellectual and political action of man springs from the same attitude, always keeps foreign

policy with its problems at the center of his attention. In 1927 he published the bold book titled 'The Future Path of a German Foreign Policy'. As the NSDAP's representative on the Foreign Policy Commission of the German Reichstag, he delivered two speeches on the Polish question. In November 1931 and May 1933 he was in London to awaken understanding for the German revolution in circles of the English people, an attempt which, faced with the opposing Jewish-reactionary forces, had to be denied success. A culminating point of his political activity is the speech he delivered in November 1932 at the Volta Congress of the Italian Academy. In this speech ('Crisis and New Birth of Europe') he characterized with impressive force the peculiar character and position of the four great nations in Europe and called for the conclusion of the four-power pact, that is, the only policy capable of avoiding war among the European peoples. With the founding of the Foreign Policy Office of the NSDAP under the command of Reichsleiter Rosenberg, this activity was put on a broader organizational footing. In the new office, problems of the East received special attention, without the office's activity being limited to the East. The founding of the Nordic Society based in Lübeck bears witness to this. For obvious reasons, however, nothing more precise can be said today about the initiatives of the Foreign Policy Office in the different realms.

In January 1934, Rosenberg was charged by the Führer with overseeing all the ideological and spiritual formation and education of the NSDAP. At the 1937 party congress, Rosenberg was decorated by the Führer, as the first among the living, with the newly instituted National Prize for Art and Science. It is not our task here to take even a cursory look at the subsequent development of Rosenberg's manifold activity. For the defense against the pseudo-scientific attacks by the Roman church, Rosenberg published in 1934 the writing 'To the Pope and the Roman Church', which once again set forth the position of National Socialism towards obscurantism and hostility to culture. In 1937 the writing titled 'The Protestant Forgers' followed this. In the lively discussion that accompanied the internal confrontation of the National Socialist worldview with the spiritual forces of the German tradition, Rosenberg intervened decisively time and again in the years from 1933 until the

outbreak of the Second World War. With constant readiness to turn towards all sides, he watched that not only every open attack but also every falsification or trivialization of the spiritual will of the party that approached 'in rubber slippers' was immediately rejected. In doing so, he never contented himself with merely defending or denying. Each of his rectifications was at the same time an interpretation of the essential. His critique was never impressionistic and in no case limited itself to symptoms, it always aimed at the center of the issue. Even in the period after the seizure of power, his awareness of the problems of the era and the demands of the day remained highly alive. The current occasion was always for him merely an opportunity to develop and deepen the worldview of National Socialism in certain directions. What took the form of critique was always at the same time a 'shaping of the idea' in the thick of the present. To the impulses ever anew emanating from Rosenberg, the party formation owes its determined attitude and its clear ideological orientation.

The image of history outlined in the 'Myth' was developed by Rosenberg in some of its features and fundamentally shaped. Here, above all, the speeches 'The First German Reich' (1935), 'The Expansion of the German Image of History' (1935) and 'The Struggle for the German Past' (1939) must be mentioned. In a speech at the Sports Palace on German law (1934), Rosenberg coined that formula which illuminates the course of German history, and which can help some apolitical contemporaries understand the meaning of the NSDAP's ideological struggle: 'One can never wage a great struggle in world history with a prospect of lasting success if one still remains within the ideology and worldview of one's adversaries'. In this phrase, fraught with meaning, we can see summarized at once the political strategy and the ethics of its author. Later, a subsequent era will venerate Rosenberg as one of the greatest German educators. Some believe, because they do not know what history is, or because they even confuse history with a train schedule, that the future can be 'made'. The fighter Rosenberg triumphed because he understood German history, because he understood what the German spirit is. It was always a heartfelt certainty for him that the truth of a conviction is proven solely in struggle.

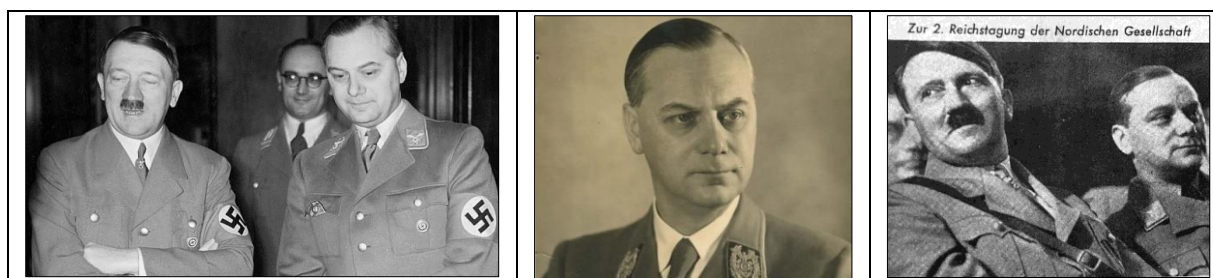


Figure 6: Alfred Rosenberg

Plastically, Rosenberg has delimited from the historical thought the spirit of the popular community

versus the charitable spirit of bourgeois society in a speech at the Sports Palace on law and equity. 'Today

we do not give out of clemency but give out of duty. We no longer hand over our donations with condescension, but conscious of the equal value of the recipient. We no longer sacrifice by grace, but by obligation towards the people to which we belong. We want to build a new world community'.

Special importance corresponds to the speeches that Rosenberg has delivered at the cultural gatherings of the Reich Culture Chamber directed by him. From the very first moment after the seizure of power, he took a stance against the degeneration of German culture. On different occasions he set forth the principles that have determined the movement's struggle against the Jewish and intellectualist disintegration of German culture. With the finest understanding he has always conceived of technology and its future task.

Of the commemorative speeches that Rosenberg has dedicated to great Germans in order to keep them in the memory of the Germans, those on Fichte, Kepler, Kant, Ulrich von Hutten, Gutenberg and Lagarde should be mentioned. That the grandest of these commemorative speeches was dedicated to Arthur Schopenhauer, the man and fighter (delivered on February 22, 1937), corresponds to the spiritual essence of its author.

On repeated occasions Rosenberg has given strong personal expression to his love for philosophy. In a speech on science and research (1936) he voiced the conviction that one day there will exist a National Socialist philosophy. Before Humboldt University he said: "National Socialism does not demand the renunciation of the object and subject of scientific attention and endeavor; the scientific spirit is an essential moment of the National Socialist worldview itself." To the cognitive audacity of the Nordic man, Europe owes having been liberated from the oppression of medieval superstition. But even in the world already illuminated by science, obscurantist forces attempt to infiltrate by manifold detours. Against all these enemies of reason, Rosenberg opposed himself with biting clarity, with the awakened consciousness that there is scarcely anything more important for our civilization than the freedom of research. It belongs to the most brilliant aspects of his work that he makes its historical place in the struggle of Germanic knowledge for the conquest of our worldview. Of the speeches that Rosenberg has delivered on the theme of worldview and science, two must be especially highlighted. On November 7, 1934 he spoke (at the University of Munich) on the freedom of science. On February 16, 1938 he professed in a major speech (at the University of Halle) on 'The Struggle for the Freedom of Research' his adherence to the spirit that sees the essence of science in the exploration of the inner lawfulness of things. Formative knowledge, he says in this speech, differs from mere empirical and magical contemplation of this world. It is fantasy to bid farewell to causal investigation conquered by great minds under any

pretext. If we were to attack causality and wanted to transfer concepts from the inner moral realm to the universe, he continued expounding in the speech on Copernicus and Kant, 'then the enthusiasts of our time would consequently, from their vision, also have to declare that in the end our Earth revolves around the Sun out of duty and the Moon accompanies the Earth out of love'.

The political revolution cannot be separated from the spiritual revolution; but the political separation from the past occurs abruptly, while the spiritual overcoming of the past can only take place through internal confrontations. Therefore, the time scale of the two revolutions is different. In the Halle speech he says: 'The replacement of one world conception by another is subject to very different lapses of time than a political revolution...'. The measure imposed by this understanding on the ideological confrontations of our days has never been exceeded by Rosenberg. If nevertheless he belongs to the admiration of all National Socialist fighters, this is based on the fact that within the limits imposed by the era and the nature of man he has inflexibly advocated for what he has recognized as correct. When he underscores the special time scale of spiritual revolutions, no one fears that this is happening in order to beat retreat. He simply expresses the recognition of the law of the matter.

In two lectures (1936 and 1938), Rosenberg has addressed the error that confuses the popular community with the mass. The comradeship that unites all members of a living people does not exclude the individual having a right to solitude. No creator can exist without hours of recollection, and solitude relates to comradeship as exhalation to inhalation. The life of the community too, like all life, is bound to polarities. The overcoming of individualism does not mean the abolition of personality. Only through the implacable extirpation of all false adoration of individuality can personality enter into its rights. Not only can a new art arise solely from the cultivation of the 'silent forces'; the new way of life that we hope for can also only come from within, from an 'impalpable state of mind which is nevertheless more solid than granite in a firm person'. Through external doing and the accumulation of masses, no culture arises. Culture can only ever be the enveloping form that the pressing force of an inner form constructs around itself.

If Rosenberg has been able to say so much essential and convincing precisely on the problems of cultural formation, this is due to his incredible sense of what he himself has called the 'law of the inner form'. His independent thinking began with the understanding of the importance of personality; in the ever-renewed demonstration by new paths that in all realms of life only the pure personality, obedient to its inner law, can be creative, it finds its culmination. In the powerful spiritual convulsion that we experience today, Rosenberg stands as one of the most vigorous defenders of all that to which

Indo-Germanism has owed its greatness and world-historical influence in all times. The Western world has fallen into formlessness through the cult of empty forms; Bolshevism has annihilated the form-shaping principle wherever it could. The new world can only be born from the re-establishment of the form-shaping soul. National Socialism did not arise from the analysis of the world and man, but from a new contemplation of the world and man. The spiritual development of Alfred Rosenberg that we have outlined offers a great example of this observation. *Rosenberg has fulfilled in an exemplarily German way Goethe's demand that distinguishing and uniting must always go together.* The union of tradition and revolution that characterizes the Führer's work is also the decisive feature of his spiritual labor.

REFERENCES

- Baeumler, A. (1943). *Alfred Rosenberg Und Der Mythos Des 20. Jahrhunderts*. München: Hoheneichen-Verlag.
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). About Alfred Baeumler's Nietzsche. 2. 'The Solitude of Nietzsche'. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7(10), 402-408. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i10.005
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). About Alfred Baeumler's Nietzsche. 3. 'Bachofen and Nietzsche'. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7(11), 474-485. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i11.005
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). About Alfred Baeumler's Nietzsche. 4. 'Hellas and Germania'. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7(11), 486-494. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i11.006
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). About Alfred Baeumler's Nietzsche. 5. 'Nietzsche as an existential thinker'. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7, 533-549. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i12.002
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). About Alfred Baeumler's Nietzsche. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7, 283-295. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i08.006.
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). Political Philosophers in Germany, 1943. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7, 555-583. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i12.004
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2023). Towards the Complete Man: Consciousness, Psyche, Mind, Memory, Soul, and Spirit. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 7(9), 351-371. doi:10.36348/jaep.2023.v07i09.005
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2024). 'Nietzsche, the philosopher and politician', by Alfred Baeumler. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 8(3), 107-155.
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2024). Alfred Rosenberg on Friedrich Nietzsche and Ludwig Klages. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 8(2), 54-69.
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2024). Alfred Rosenberg on Gutenberg, Copernicus, Kant, Freedom of Research and Worldview and Science. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 8(1), 13-31. doi:10.36348/jaep.2024.v08i01.002
- Gómez-Jeria, J. S. (2024). Biology and Philosophy. IX: Biologizing Nietzsche. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 31(3), 707-721.
- Rosenberg, A. (2004). *The myth of the twentieth century: an evaluation of the spiritual-intellectual confrontations of our age*. Sussex, England: Historical Review Press.
- Rosenberg, A., & Scholle, A. V. (1999). *Le Mythe du XXe siècle: bilan des combats culturels et spirituels de notre temps*. Paris: Éd. Déterna.