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ADOLF HITLER

*Mein Kampf*

(1923)

Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) was the leader of one of the most powerful and brutal dictatorships in Western history. His father was a minor customs official in Austria, so Adolf grew up in a provincial town on the German border. His early years were spent pursuing an unsuccessful career as an artist against his father's wishes. In 1913 he left Austria in order to avoid military conscription and settled in Munich where, paradoxically, he became so caught up in war fever that he joined the German army. Hitler served in France, where he was wounded several times and eventually decorated for bravery. The war was the happiest period of his life; when he was demobilized after the German defeat, he joined and eventually led the right-wing National Socialist German Workers Party. His politics were a mixture of nationalism and racism that appealed especially to former soldiers who shared Hitler's view that Germany had not lost the First World War, but had been betrayed by its leaders. By 1932 the Nazi party was the largest in Germany; Hitler was named chancellor in 1933. Once in power, he began an economic and military recovery that restored Germany to its former position as one of the leading states in Europe. His territorial ambitions, however, led directly to the Second World War, and his racial attitudes led directly to the Holocaust. When Germany's military situation became hopeless, Hitler committed suicide in Berlin in 1945.

*Mein Kampf* was written while Hitler was in jail after an attempt to overthrow the German government. The title means "My Struggle"; this very long and turgid work is a combination of a memoir and a statement of political philosophy. It includes some of Hitler's characteristic racist and anti-Semitic ideas.

It is a futile enterprise to argue which race or races were the original bearers of human culture and, with it, the actual founders of what we sum up with the word "mankind." It is simpler to put this question to oneself with regard to the present, and here the answer follows easily and distinctly. What we see before us of human culture today, the results of art, science, and technology, is almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan. But just this fact admits of the not

unfounded conclusion that he alone was the founder of higher humanity as a whole, thus the prototype of what we understand by the word "man." He is the Prometheus of mankind, out of whose bright forehead springs the divine spark of genius at all times, forever rekindling that fire which in the form of knowledge lightened up the night of silent secrets and thus made man climb the path towards the position of master of the other beings on this earth. Exclude him—

and deep darkness will again fall upon the earth, perhaps even, after a few thousand years, human culture would perish and the world would turn into a desert.

If one were to divide mankind into three groups: culture-founders, culture-bearers, and culture-destroyers, then, as representative of the first kind, only the Aryan would come in question. It is from him that the foundation and the walls of all human creations originate, and only the external form and color depend on the characteristics of the various peoples involved. He furnishes the gigantic building-stones and also the plans for all human progress, and only the execution corresponds to the character of the people and races in the various instances. In a few decades, for instance, the entire east of Asia will call a culture its own, the ultimate bases of which will be Hellenic spirit and Germanic technique, just as is the case with us. Only the *external* form will (at least partly) bear the features of Asiatic character. It is not the case, as some people claim, that Japan adds European techniques to her culture, but European science and techniques are trimmed with Japanese characteristics. But the basis of actual life is no longer the special Japanese culture, although it determines the color of life (because outwardly, in consequence of its inner difference, it is more visible to European eyes), but it is the enormous scientific and technical work of Europe and America, that is, of Aryan peoples. Based on these achievements alone the East is also able to follow general human progress. This creates the basis for the fight for daily bread, it furnishes weapons and tools for it, and only the external makeup is gradually adapted to Japanese life.

But if, starting today, all further Aryan influence upon Japan should stop, and supposing that Europe and America were to perish, then a further development of Japan's present rise in science and technology could take place for a little while longer; but in the time of a few years the source would dry out, Japanese life would gain, but its culture would stiffen and fall back

into the sleep out of which it was startled seven decades ago by the Aryan wave of culture. Therefore, exactly as the present Japanese development owes its life to Aryan origin, thus also in the dim past foreign influence and foreign spirit were the awakener of the Japanese culture. The best proof of this is the fact that the latter stiffened and became completely paralyzed later on. This can only happen to a people when the originally creative race nucleus was lost, or when the external influence, which gave the impetus and the material for the first development in the cultural field, was lacking later on. But if it is ascertained that a people receives, takes in, and works over the essential basic elements of its culture from other races, and if then, when a further external influence is lacking, it stiffens again and again, then one can perhaps call such a race a "*culture-bearing*" one but never a "*culture-creating*" one.

We see this most clearly in that race that cannot help having been, and being, the supporter of the development of human culture—the Aryans. As soon as Fate leads them towards special conditions, their latent abilities begin to develop in a more and more rapid course and to mold themselves into tangible forms. The cultures which they found in such cases are nearly always decisively determined by the available soil, the climate, and—by the subjected people. The latter, however, is the most decisive of all factors. The more primitive the technical presumptions for a cultural activity are, the more necessary is the presence of human auxiliary forces which then, collected and applied with the object of organization, have to replace the force of the machine. Without this possibility of utilizing inferior men, the Aryan would never have been able to take the first steps towards his later culture; exactly as, without the help of various suitable animals which he knew how to tame, he would never have arrived at a technology which now allows him to do without these very animals. The words "*Der Mohr hat seine Schuldigkeit getan, er kann gehen*" [The Moor has

one his duty, he may go] has unfortunately too deep a meaning. For thousands of years the horse had to serve man and to help in laying the foundations of a development which now, through the motor-car, makes the horse itself superfluous. In a few years it will have ceased its activity, but without its former cooperation man would hardly have arrived at where he stands today.

Therefore, for the formation of higher cultures, the existence of inferior men was one of the most essential presumptions, because they alone were able to replace the lack of technical means without which a higher development is unthinkable. The first culture of mankind certainly depended less on the tamed animal, but rather on the use of inferior people.

Only after the enslavement of subjected races, the same fate began to meet the animals, and not *vice versa*, as many would like to believe. For first the conquered walked behind the plow—and after him, the horse. Only pacifist fools can again look upon this as a sign of human baseness, without making clear to themselves that this development had to take place in order to arrive finally at that place from where today these apostles are able to sputter forth their drivel into the world.

The progress of mankind resembles the ascent on an endless ladder; one cannot arrive at the top without first having taken the lower steps. Thus the Aryan had to go the way which reality showed him and not that of which the imagination of a modern pacifist dreams. The way of reality, however, is hard and difficult, but it finally ends where the other wishes to bring mankind by dreaming, but unfortunately removes it from, rather than brings it nearer to, it.

Therefore, it is no accident that the first cultures originated in those places where the Aryan, by meeting lower peoples, subdued them and made them subject to his will. They, then, were the first technical instrument in the service of a growing culture.

With this the way that the Aryan had to go was clearly lined out. As a conqueror he subjected the lower peoples and then he regulated their practical ability according to his command and his will and for his aims. But while he thus led them towards a useful, though hard activity, he not only spared the lives of the subjected, but perhaps he even gave them a fate which was better than that of their former so-called "freedom." As long as he kept up ruthlessly the master's standpoint, he not only really remained "master" but also the preserver and propagator of the culture. For the latter was based exclusively on his abilities, and, with it, on his preservation in purity. But as soon as the subjected peoples themselves began to rise (probably) and approached the conqueror linguistically, the sharp separating wall between master and slave fell. The Aryan gave up the purity of his blood and therefore he also lost his place in the Paradise which he had created for himself. He became submerged in the race-mixture, he gradually lost his cultural ability more and more, till at last not only mentally but also physically he began to resemble more the subjected and aborigines than his ancestors. For some time he may still live on the existing cultural goods, but then petrification sets in, and finally oblivion.

In this way cultures and realms collapse in order to make room for new formations.

The blood-mixing, however, with the lowering of the racial level caused by it, is the sole cause of the dying-off of old cultures; for the people do not perish by lost wars, but by the loss of that force of resistance which is contained only in the pure blood.

All that is not race in this world is trash.

All world historical events, however, are only the expression of the races' instinct of self-preservation in its good or in its evil meaning.

The Jew forms the strongest contrast to the Aryan. Hardly in any people of the world is the instinct of self-preservation more strongly devel-

oped than in the so-called "chosen people." The fact of the existence of this race alone may be looked upon as the best proof of this. Where is the people that in the past two thousand years has been exposed to so small changes of the inner disposition, of character, etc., as the Jewish people? Which people finally has experienced greater changes than this one—and yet has always come forth the same from the most colossal catastrophes of mankind? What an infinitely persistent will for life, for preserving the race do these facts disclose!

Also the intellectual abilities were schooled in the course of centuries. Today the Jew is looked upon as "clever," and in a certain sense he has been so at all times. But his reason is not the result of his own development, but that of object lessons from without.

Never did the reverse process take place.

For, even if the Jewish people's instinct of self-preservation is not smaller, but rather greater, than that of other nations, and even if his spiritual abilities very easily create the impression as though they were equal to the intellectual disposition of the other races, yet the most essential presumption for a cultured

people is completely lacking, the idealistic disposition.

But how far the Jew takes over foreign culture, only imitating, or rather destroying, it, may be seen from the fact that he is found most frequently in that art which also appears directed least of all towards invention of its own, the art of acting. But here, too, he is really only the "juggler," or rather the ape; for here, too, he lacks the ultimate touch of real greatness; here, too, he is not the ingenious creator, but the outward imitator, whereby all the turns and tricks he applies cannot deceive us concerning the inner lack of lowers man, and never again can its consequences be removed from body and mind.

Only upon examining and comparing, in the face of this sole question, all the other problems of life, one will be able to judge how ridiculously small the latter are as compared with the former. How all of them are only temporal, while the question of the preservation of the blood is one of human eternity.

All really important symptoms of decay of the pre-War time ultimately go back to racial causes.

## QUESTIONS

1. What is the role of the Aryan race in human history, according to Hitler?
2. Why are the Japanese, in Hitler's theories, a "culture-bearing" rather than a "culture-creating" people?
3. Hitler believed that cultural progress was necessarily aggressive. Why? How might these views have applied to his own policies in later years?
4. How are Jews said to destroy cultures?
5. Did Hitler view the defeat in World War I as inevitable? Was the Allied victory a good or a bad thing, in Hitler's view?