CONSERVATIVE WRITERS ON IMPERIALISM

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BEFORE any talk of "the white man's burden" or other alleged imponderable motives for imperialism was heard, certain professors and publicists occupied themselves with furnishing some such rationale. J. R. Seeley is credited with having started the trend with his lectures on *The Expansion of England.* It was he who discovered that the English people had acquired their empire "in a fit of absence of mind." Seeley introduced the high moral tone into discussions of empire, ignoring the motives that originally took the British empire-builders into distant lands and assuming that once there, their "duty to the natives" in the great "civilizing mission" prevented them from withdrawing.

Others in the camp of the expansionists were, in the last half of the 19th century in the United States, John Fiske, Josiah Strong and John W. Burgess. In England, Walter Bagehot found a genteel way of saying that might makes right. "In every particular state of the world," he wrote, "those nations which are strongest tend to prevail over the others, and in certain marked peculiarities the strongest tend to be the best."[1] Most of the group preached a sort of crude Darwinism with racist overtones; Karl Pearson argued that the group that was the more mentally and physically fit tended to survive.[2]

Racism was more than an overtone in the works of Benjamin Kidd, the sociologist. His *Social Evolution,* published in 1894, sold a quarter of a million copies. In it he contended that the race which achieved primacy was the race that was socially most efficient and possessed in high degree the qualities of "a pure domestic life, hon-

1 Walter Bagehot, *Physics and Politics* (London, 1872); quoted from 1906 ed., New York, p. 43.

2 Karl Pearson, cited in *Edwardian England* (London, 1933), p. 245.

esty, courage, uprightness, and good judgment." It was, of course, the Anglo-Saxon race that showed these qualities.[3]

It was early seen that this kind of pseudo-Darwinism involved circular reasoning and unscientific assumptions; they have no claim, just as the Fascist "theories" of imperialism have no claim, to serious consideration. But it is not without interest that so many of the components of the Nazi cult should have had their origin outside of Germany.[4]

A semi-official statement of the theory that might makes right was given in 1916 by a former American Assistant Secretary of State, F. M. Huntington Wilson. He stated in an address:[5]

> Nature, in its rough method of uplift, gives sick nations strong neighbors and takes its inexorable course with private enterprise and diplomacy for its instruments. And this course is the best in the long run, for all concerned and for the world. . . . Life is priceless, but what of the investors, great and small?

When the debate about imperialism reached its climax in England and America between 1898 and 1902, the expansionists at first frankly admitted the exploitative nature of their aims. Charles A. Conant wrote, "The writer is not an advocate of 'imperialism' from sentiment, but does not fear the name if it means only that the United States shall assert their right to free markets in all the old countries, etc."[6] The *Washington Post,* in an editorial on January 14, 1900, saw even less objection to concealment of aims:

> We all know deep down in our hearts [it said] that these islands, groups, etc., are important to us only in the ratio of their practical possibilities. We value them by the standard of their commercial usefulness, and by no other. All this gabble about civilizing and uplifting the benighted barbarians of Cuba and Luzon is mere sound and fury, signifying nothing. Foolishly or wisely, we want these newly acquired territories, not for any missionary or altruistic purposes, but for the

3 Cited in W. L. Strauss, *Joseph Chamberlain and the Theory of Imperialism* (Washington, 1924), p. 120 f.

4 See, for example, G. A. Virgilj, *Il sentimento imperialista* (Milan, 1906).

5 Huntington Wilson, "The Relation of Government to Foreign Investment," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. lxviii, no. 157 (Nov., 1916), p. 307.

6 Charles A. Conant, *The United States in the Orient* (Boston, 1900), p.30.

trade, and the commerce, the power and the money there are in them. Why beat about the bush and promise and protest all sorts of things? Why not be honest? It will pay. . . .

. . . We want Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Luzon, together with any other island in either ocean that may hereafter commend themselves to our appetite, because we believe they will add to our national strength, and because we hope they will some day become purchasers at our bargain counters. We might as well throw off the pious mask and indulge in a little honest candor. . . .[7]

In each decade since there have been some outspoken representatives of business in the same vein. In 1949 Austin Kiplinger declared in his column in the *Chicago Journal of Commerce,* "Rather than shrinking in fear from the word 'imperialism,' we would do better to meet it head-on and make a virtue of it." In 1940, Virgil Jordan, President of the National Industrial Conference Board, said, "Whatever the outcome of the war, America has embarked on a career of imperialism in world affairs and in every other aspect of her life."[8]

Even conservative writers find it comparatively easy today to spot and condemn the imperialism practised by other nations or advocated by those of their compatriots with whose policies they are at odds. Thus Herbert Hoover and Hugh Gibson, writing in 1943, stated that the purpose of the typical kind of imperialism was "to secure a superior living by exploiting other races and their resources."[9] And Patrick J. Hurley, who himself later took a stand for American imperialism in China, berated during the Second World War "those in the [U.S.] State Department who are opposed to the principles of the Atlantic Charter." These people, said Hurley (who had been commissioned by President Roosevelt to set things to rights in Iran), "are cooperating in furnishing Lend-Lease goods to the United Kingdom Commercial Corp. and its subsidiaries [in Iran] for the purpose of sustaining imperialism, monopoly and exploitation."[10]

7 Quoted from R. F. Pettigrew, *The Course of Empire* (New York, 1920), p. 339.
8 *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* (New York), Dec. 21, 1940.
9 Herbert Hoover and Hugh Gibson, *The Problems of Lasting Peace* (rev. ed., New York, 1943), p. 18; the reference is to nations other than the United States.
10 *U.S. News and World Report,* Sept. 28, 1951, p. 15.

None of the writers cited above developed a theory of imperialism or furnished answers to its crucial questions, which may be formulated as follows: What is the dynamic that makes some people start out on wars of conquest and end up by collecting tribute from an alien people on foreign soil? And what conditions, at home and abroad, are most fertile for the development of economic imperialism? Conservatives refrain from answering these questions.

Those who consider social relations under capitalism and imperialism to be based on harmony and justice will not regard imperialism as a historical phenomenon, and for that reason will not need a theory to explain and justify something that in their view flows from the very nature of man. This may account for the absence of useful conservative theories of imperialism.[11]

There is however quite a hodge-podge of theories about the causes of aggressive war that deserve a passing glance, theories liberal, radical and conservative. From them we learn that military aggression is caused by riches (excess capital)[12] and by poverty[13]; by the desire for thinly populated land[14] and for densely populated land[15]; by instinct[16] and by reason[17]; by religion,[18] race and nationality[19]; by climate[20] and by changes in climate[21]; by abounding energy[22] and by sickness[23]; by the desire to keep things the same[24] and by the desire for a change.[25]

11 Alfred Meusel, "Der klassische Sozialismus," in *Die Wandlungen der Wirtschaft im kapitalistischen Zeitalter,* ed. G. Briefs (Berlin, 1932), p. 46. What Meusel said in 1932 could be repeated with equal accuracy twenty years later.

Lukacs says of the conservative theorists of society: "[Their] starting point and [their] goal must always be, even if unconsciously, the apology for the existing order of things or at least the proof of its immutability." Georg Lukacs, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (Berlin, 1923), p. 59.

12 J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London, 1902).

13 Arthur Salz, *Das Wesen des Imperialismus* (Leipzig, 1931), p. 12, 53-65.

14 This is the argument that thickly populated imperialist countries need open spaces for their people to emigrate into; see Salz, *op. cit.,* p. 49 et al.

15 H. Grossman, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusamemenbruchsgesetz des kapitalistischen Systems* (Leipzig, 1929), p. 396 f.

16 Hobson, *op. cit.*

17 All the socialist theories are rationalist.

18 Max Handman, "War, Economic Motives and Economic Symbols," in *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 44, March 1939.

19 Fascists usually talk of "race" but what they describe is nationality.

The usual technique of many academic social scientists in trying to develop a theory of war or imperialism or peace is to list a number of "factors" or "causes" describing each, and at the end to express a preference for one or the other set of "factors." The list may be short, or so long as to preclude constructive selection. Thus, Werner Levi writes in *Fundamentals of World Organization*: "Peace is determined by biological, psychological, political, economic, social, cultural, ideological, metaphysical, military, institutional, technological, and probably many other factors, whose effect is modified by any number of combinations between them and their position in time and space."[26]

When such writers have listed certain non-economic factors that, they assure us, are absolutely fundamental, they feel they have refuted the economic interpretation of history. Thus Eugene Staley makes a great point of the fact that a certain associate of Cecil Rhodes named Alfred Beit was really interested in the building of the Cape-to-Cairo Railway, and left a part of his personal fortune for the advancement of this end.[27] Since Beit was not actuated solely by selfish motives, Staley thinks that is sufficient evidence against the Marxist theory of history. But Staley confuses Marx with the classical economists, who thought they had described the "economic man" by abstracting from him all motives except the selfish ones. Marx, on the other hand, described the social relations of production as the underlying factors that give direction to human history; and Marxists go beyond the mere analysis of these relations.

20 Ellsworth Huntington finds that certain climates are more likely than others to stimulate men to action, including military conquests.

21 E. Huntington, *The Pulse of Asia* (Boston and New York, 1907); H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History* (New York, 1920).

22 Fascist theorists again.

23 A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (New York and London, 1947 f), Vol. 3, p. 134.

24 Senator Depew of New York, as quoted by Conant, *op. cit.*, p. 176; Cecil Rhodes in 1895, as quoted by Lenin: "If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists" (Lenin, *Selected Works*, New York, 1935-38, Vol. V, p. 72).

25 Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (Chicago, 1941), p. 286.

26 Werner Levi, *Fundamentals of World Organization* (Minneapolis, 1950), p. 45.

27 E. Staley, *War and the Private Investor* (Garden City, 1935), p. 196, note, quoting G. Seymour, *Alfred Beit* (London, 1932), Ch. I, II, p. 80-84.

The "theories" that proceed by listing "factors" do not fall in the category of economic interpretations even when they concede the superiority of "economic factors" over others. They can not show the organic connection among events, the rise and fall of long-run movements, the dynamics of imperialism; and this approach is characteristic of many conservative writers.

Another technique of conservative theorists is to define imperialism in such a way as to avoid the main question. Imperialism, in their terms, is something innate and therefore inescapable. Ernest Seillière is an example. This prolific French writer of the early 20th century defined imperialism as a "primordial tendency of human nature driving *individuals* and more or less extensive social groups to prepare . . . a future of tranquility and well-being by the exercise and rational increase of their power."[28] This definition enables Seillière to discover imperialism in the individual, the race and the class, and even to give it credit for the creation of morals and law.[29] On this definition imperialism would be as inevitable as the rainfall. Indeed, Edward Rod, a disciple of Seillière, claims that "We can fight only against the excesses of imperialism, we cannot fight against its essence. Imperialism always has been and always will be."[30] What Seillière and other such theorists omit is the element of exploitation, which is not inevitable.

Some American writers have held somewhat similar theories. The late Willard Waller thought that wars were a social malady resulting from "movements of public opinion . . . war fever . . . largely beyond control."[31] Walter Sulzbach presents a "psychological" theory of war and heaps scorn on those who believe that "capitalistic warmongers" have anything to do with imperialism.[32] The late Max Handman also presented a psychological interpretation

28 Ernest Seillière, *L'impérialisme démocratique* (Paris, 1907); Vol. III of *La philosophie de l'Impérialisme;* p. 4. Emphasis in original.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

30 Quoted by M. Pavlovich, *The Foundations of Imeperialist Policy* (London, 1922), p. 17-19.

31 Willard Waller, *War in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1940), p. 17.

32 Walter Sulzbach, "'Capitalistic Warmongers': A Modern Superstition," *Public Policy Pamphlets No. 35,* preface by Harry D. Gideonse (New York, 1942).

of war by defining "economic motives" so narrowly as to exclude the quest for goods.[33]

It would be unfair to put the blame on psychology for its misuse by theorists of imperialism. During the First World War it was common to hear that war was due to an "instinct of bellicosity," rooted in the nature of man. Psychologists have been unable to locate this "instinct." In any event, although instincts are part of the data of social science, they change only gradually over long periods and can not well be used to explain phenomena like the growth of imperialism. And "human nature," conditioned by institutions, can be varied within wide limits. Because a society based on the exploitation of one class by another will quite likely engage in filibustering expeditions, it does not follow that the same type of behavior will characterize a society with essentially different, non-exploitative institutions. Even within the general framework of capitalist civilization we find some societies and nations more aggressive and others less so. The psychological and biological schools must explain the difference, but can not.

During the 1930's the University of Chicago spent large sums on a full-dress study into the causes of war. The final summary, in two volumes by Quincy Wright, bore the title *A Study of War*. Prof. Wright's list of "factors" making for war included nearly everything except exploitation. The "factor" he chose to underscore, since he returned to it in a later chapter after an already lengthy emphasis, was boredom![34] Wright's book can be summarized as a labored and unoriginal pluralistic argument against the economic interpretation of history. However, much can be learned about the history of modern imperialism from the monographic

33 Max Handman, "War, Economic Motives and Economic Symbols," in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 44 (March, 1939), p. 640. According to Handman, an economic motive is "that tendency in human beings to calculate the costs and the returns involved in pursuing a certain desirable end and to choose that line of action which will give one the greatest return in proportion to the effort involved." (p. 630).

34 Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (Chicago, 1941), Vol. I, p. 286, note. On boredom see also Vol. II, p. 726 f. "That economic factors are relatively unimportant in the causation of war was well understood by Adolf Hitler," says Wright, and continues quoting *Mein Kampf* with approval,*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 1293 f.

material that grew out of the Chicago study. Especially useful, for all its tendentiousness, is Eugene Staley's *War and the Private Investor* (1935). This book and several others that appeared about the same time have set the tone for modern conservative discussion of imperialism. The writers no longer make head-on assaults like Sulzbach's on the Marxist interpretation; their attitude, instead, is one of cautious and carping reserve.

Staley's main argument is derived from F. M. Huntington Wilson, who had written:

> The duty of government is to measure the protection to be given any investment first of all by the advantage of that investment to the nation; and secondarily to mete out that protection in proportion to the right of the investor to expect protection.[35]

It was the first of these points that Staley selected for emphasis: namely, the advantage of private investment to government policy. Says Staley: "The government's political plans and policy determine its attitude to any particular investment."[36] Thus it is no secret that the oil industry has received special diplomatic protection from the governments of Great Britain, the United States, and other countries. The reason, says Staley, is not the great financial resources of the oil companies and their influence with their respective governments, but the fact that oil is vital for war. American oil companies (e.g.) must be supported diplomatically if the United States is to be strong militarily.

Staley did something toward bringing into the bourgeois literature on imperialism the conception of the interpenetration of economics and politics. His book is a mine of source material to show the close relations between big business and government. References to exploitation, however, and to social classes as such are noticeably absent from his work. In spite of his effective efforts at integration, he repeatedly stresses political and other motives as though they were something separate from economics proper. He implies that the State can have a policy and a dynamic of its own apart from the classes that compose it. Staley argues that some

35 Wilson, *Annals*, Nov., 1916, p. 298.
36 E. Staley, *op. cit.*, p. 71 f., 365 f.

foreign policies of the government are actively distasteful to certain sections of the capitalist class; Rupert Emerson upholds the same contention in a detailed study on *Malaysia.*[37] It is true that a government by taking over a profitable farm in order to build a naval base on the site, may injure the farmer who is engaged in economic activity, but that does not sustain the contention that the "military interpretation of history" rivals or supersedes the economic. In major questions of policy, affecting a class as a whole, small individual differences are overridden.

Lionel Robbins of the London School of Economics, making a detailed criticism of Lenin's *Imperialism* in 1939, devotes the main part of his argument to proving that economic imperialism is not necessarily associated with a surplus of capital seeking investment. This is a valid point against Hobson, rather than against Lenin, who merely said that in the period of imperialism the export of capital had become very important. It was Lenin's basic contention that capital export alone did not cause wars, but that competition among capitalist powers for investment outlets and other profit opportunities, in a world already divided up, led to wars for the redivision of the world.

Robbins took the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Scandinavia as examples of "highly-developed capitalist countries" that had played no part in the expansionist game at the end of the 19th century.[38] He apparently overlooked the fact that the Dutch already had an empire, left over from their conquests in the period of mercantilism; and that Dutch capitalists, in association with the British, were not only engaged in exploiting their own empire but were participating in the expansionist activities of the British. Thus the oil imperialists of the Royal-Dutch-Shell Oil Co. were as much Dutch as British. It proves nothing to cite a small non-industrial country like Switzerland; and Sweden, which had shown no special expansionist proclivities while occupied in developing its industry, developed a kind of economic imperialism during the 1930's in the activities of Ivar Kreuger, the match millionaire, whose enter-

37 (New York, 1937).
38 Lionel Robbins, *The Economic Causes of War* (London, 1939), p. 56.

prises extended over a score of countries before they finally collapsed.

Robbins in fact concedes Lenin's main point by admitting that profit opportunities are becoming more and more restricted and that the capitalists of the leading countries struggle for the best opportunities. The immediate cause of conflict, he says, is "the desire of governments to maintain or extend their power—a national not a sinister interest."[39] Here we can only assume that Robbins considers that anything done in the name of the nation is by definition not sinister. He ends up with a pluralistic theory on the conventional model, and a plea for the removal of restrictions on trade and investment. Thus he missed the point of Lenin's essay, which showed the futility of Hobson's plea for free trade.

Bertrand Russell's assault on the economic interpretation of imperialism is of the card-stacking variety. He argues as follows:

> When a moderate degree of comfort is assured, both individuals and communities will pursue power rather than wealth; they may seek wealth as a means to power, or they may forego an increase in wealth in order to secure an increase in power, but in the former case as in the latter their fundamental motive is not economic.[40]

How is it possible, we may ask, to get an increase in wealth without at the same time securing an increase in power, in a world where money is power? Aristotle, who distinguished economics or getting a living, on the one hand, from chrematistics or the accumulation of wealth, on the other, would have been profoundly shocked by Russell's proposition. For this modern philosopher does not disprove any economic interpretation; he simply refuses to meet it.

With the possible exception of Staley's source book, the most distinguished conservative contribution to the theory of imperialism in the period since Lenin's work has been *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty,* by R. G. Hawtrey, economic adviser to the British Treasury. This book, written in 1930, supplements Lenin's Law of Uneven Development under Capitalism.

Hawtrey demonstrates that diplomatic prestige is sought not for

39 *Ibid.,* p. 91.
40 Bertrand Russell, *Power: A New Social Analysis* (New York, 1938), p. 12.

its own sake but for the sake of the economic gains that may be secured by means of prestige around the diplomatic bargaining table.[41] He also shows that the distinction between "old" and "new" countries is purely factitious as far as the imperialist politicians are concerned. What is important from their point of view is the opportunity any given territory offers for profitable economic development, and this opportunity may be greatest either in a country with an old civilization and an antiquated economic system, or in a so-called "new" country. "The problems of sovereignty," he writes, "are by no means confined to the politically vacant land. They are liable to arise wherever the sovereign power of any economically eligible land is in a state of weakness or decay."[42] He also points out that as between two hostile imperialist powers, one desiring something that the other has, the second can not yield to the first lest that be interpreted as a sign of weakness, to be followed by still further demands. Any concession on the part of the weaker power may jeopardize its right of independent decision. The only way to restore its sovereignty, Hawtrey points out, will be by force of arms. Hawtrey's contention that a major imperialist power will never willingly surrender its power of independent decision is in line with Lenin's, namely that imperialist rivalry can end only in war.

Hawtrey hard-headedly sweeps away the distinction between economic and other factors in causing war. He disposes of the idea that "religious wars" are caused by religion or "ideological" wars by ideas,[43] stating flatly "The distinction between political and economic causes of war is an unreal one."[44] In the same manner he

41 R. G. Hawtrey, *Economic Aspects of Sovereignty* (London, 1930), p. 95 f.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 52. Continuing, Hawtrey says, "The decadence of sovereign powers is a recurrent problem. . . . The inferior governments are always in danger of falling disastrously behind, and whenever that occurs, their dereliction offers a temptation to their more efficient and more powerful neighbors to step in and gain control, and so to confer on their own adherents the profits to be derived from overtaking arrears of development" (p. 59 f). This is a more complete statement of the Law of Uneven Development, not inconsistent with Lenin. The formerly advanced countries may themselves become fields for economic penetration by the new great powers. Fifteen years after Hawtrey wrote, a "new" great power from overseas undertook to penetrate economically not only England but the whole of Western Europe.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 121 f.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

disposes of "nationality" as a cause of war. Such wars, he tells us, "are merely a particular case of the conflict of power," and power in the modern world, he argues, is basically economic, just as the ultimate aims of the warmakers are explicable in terms of economic power.

Hawtrey's book, however, does not present an adequate theory of imperialism or aggressive war. For example, he finds that "the principal cause of war is war itself."[45] In a later work he distinguishes between the pursuit of power and the pursuit of welfare as aims of national policy, and implies that the two aims can continue indefinitey without one overshadowing the other.[46] The power relationships he describes so well are those under capitalism and apply to it alone.

Mauritz Hallgren's *The Tragic Fallacy,* published in 1937, takes a position that is in keeping with Lenin's theory; and even the State Department itself occasionally utilizes this theory.[47]

Conservatives are practically precluded by the nature of their general approach from arriving at any adequate theory of imperialism. The geopoliticians may also be mentioned in this connection. Fundamental to their doctrine is the belief in the necessity for expansion. An expanding nation, or civilization, is a healthy one. A static or contracting condition, on the other hand, is a sign of declining health.

45 *Ibid.,* p. 105.

46 "The supply of organized force presents itself as an end of economic action; it is an alternative to the promotion of welfare." R. G. Hawtrey, *Economic Destiny* (London, 1944), p. 142.

47 "The monopolistic organization of German industry has served indirectly as a cause of aggression. Monopoly leads to high prices, reduced output and excess capacity with resultant pressures to engage in dumping or to enlarge the protected market through territorial conquest. In addition a monopolistic industrial structure tends to increase the rate of profit and therefore of savings while at the same time reducing opportunities for industrial investment. Under normal conditions of private capitalism this situation typically aggravates the problem of unemployment and maldistribution of income and makes for political instability and extremism." —"American Policy Concerning Monopolies," by Isaiah Frank, Chief of the Special Areas Section, Industry Branch, International Resources Division, Office of International Trade Policy, Department of State; *Department of State Publication 2889,* Commercial Policy Series 103 (Washington, 1947), p. 1. (Reprinted from State Department *Bulletin,* May 11, 1947, p. 213).

Friedrich Ratzel, the geographer, was the intellectual parent of this school. However, his "law of the growth of spaces," stressing the trend toward giant empires, has not met with favor in scientific circles. It had no better claim to scientific standing than "manifest destiny" or the pseudo-Darwinism of Benjamin Kidd.

The influence of the school is not in question. Alfred Rosenberg, who studied at Goettingen under one of the original geopoliticians, Paul de Lagarde, was high in the Nazi councils. Friedrich Naumann's widely-read *Mitteleuropa* (1915) furnished a rationale for the aggressions of Kaiser Wilhelm. The expositions of Haushofer, with his doctrine of the strong strategic position of the "heartland" and the weak position of the periphery, have influenced military theory in certain quarters.

It is in fact chiefly as a theory of military strategy that the writings of the geopoliticians are known in Anglo-Saxon countries. Sir Douglas Mackinder, from whom Haushofer got his ideas, and the American N. J. Spykman, a much later writer, did not so much prove the necessity of expansion as assume it. To the same school belonged James Forrestal, first American Secretary of Defense, who made no special study of the chance that a socialist state would wage aggressive war, but simply assumed that it would. Such an assumption may not be unexpected in a military man, but there is no room for it in a serious study of the dynamics of imperialism.

Karl Renner, once President of Austria and a long-time leader of the Social Democratic Party of that country, published a work at the end of the First World War in which he presents arguments for what came to be known as "social imperialism." Nominally, he argues against imperialism; but he is more ardent in defending than in refuting it. He trusts that colonization will not be "forcible," that native labor will be "protected" against exploitation, that the colonies will have the "greatest possible" political autonomy; but he has no workable plan for securing these ends, merely suggesting that Labor should take over the direction of the colonies. He accepts the idea that "the expansion of the European economic system over the world is historically necessary, unavoidable and culturally promising."[48] Accordingly he offers the same defense of

48 K. Renner, *Marxismus, Krieg und Internationale* (Stuttgart, 1918), p. 361 f.

imperialism that German revisionists had given before the First World War.

Adolf Grabowsky elevated Renner's "social imperialism" to what he preferred to regard as the third imperialist stage.[49] According to Grabowsky, imperialism had passed through the phases of "feudal imperialism" and "commercial imperialism." "Social imperialism" need not be accompanied by the realization of socialism in the country in question; it corresponded merely to an adoption of imperialist viewpoints on the part of the proletariat.[50]

Whereas Schumpeter sought to explain the aggressiveness of the capitalist state by survivals from the feudal psychology, Grabowsky followed the historian Ranke in maintaining that any state has within it the seeds of aggression, and these sprout when the state becomes strong enough. All the great powers in the epoch of imperialism are necessarily aggressive, Grabowsky argues. But just as Schumpeter considered capitalism to be essentially peaceful because trade and business require peace, so Grabowsky's "stage" of commercial capitalism is by his account an essentially peaceful one, or will tend to become so as fast as the remnants of nationalism and the national state die out in a coming world federation. He sees military aggression giving way to peaceful business rivalry.

The process by which the working class and the people in general have been led to support imperialism is for Grabowsky a necessary consequence of the nature of imperialism itself. For a state that seeks to carry on an expansionist policy must be strong internally; it must not be rent by class conflict and disaffection. England became a "welfare state," he believed, primarily in the interests of foreign policy.[51] Imperialism and democracy—at least in in the imperialist country—are not only not incompatible: they are necessarily and causally connected.[52]

49 A. Grabowsky, "Das Wesen der imperialistischen Epoche," in *Zeitschrift für Politik*, Bd. XII (1922), p. 30 f.

50 A. Grabowsky, *Der Sozialimperialismus als letzte Etappe des Imperialismus* (Basel, 1939), p. 34 f.

51 Grabowsky in *Zeitschrift für Politik, loc. cit.*, p. 56.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Grabowsky's social imperialism can properly be catalogued with the conservative theories. For his assumption is that capitalism is essentially democratic and is capable of earning the enthusiastic backing of the entire nation. But it may be asked of Grabowsky whether the dominant group continues to preserve democratic forms during a crisis when disaffection spreads. And it may also be asked whether the dominant group can count on similar support from the colonies.

Hobson had found that imperialism was primarily the search for new markets for capital investment; in other words, that imperialism was a result of excess riches. Arthur Salz maintained on the contrary, summing up the German discussion of the 1920's, that imperialism resulted directly from poverty. It was the means of solving the problem of securing subsistence. Since capitalism, by its great productivity, resolves the same problem better, capitalism is the antithesis of imperialism.[53] "Capitalism," he says, "has made imperialism largely superfluous."[54]

In emphasizing that imperialist aggression may result from a consciousness of relative scarcity, Salz was making a point that Lenin had already made in his Law of Uneven Deveopment. But in implying that poverty was the main cause of such aggression, Salz went further than he had been prepared to go in 1923. For in that year he had contrasted Europe with the United States. Europe, he said, had never had any surplus of either strength or capital. The United States, on the other hand, is seeking room for capital expansion, and this form of American imperialism, he believed, was oriented exclusively on finance capital and as such was boundless.[55]

Salz declared that not the capitalists but the workers have most to gain from imperialism, which furnishes them with new areas for emigration. Salz, like Schumpeter, is at some pains to absolve the big bourgeoisie from responsibility for imperialist policies. Who are the Pan-Germans? he asks. And his answer is: school-teachers,

53 A. Salz, *Das Wesen des Imperialismus* (Leipzig, 1931), p. 36.
54 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
55 A. Salz, "Der Imperialismus der Vereinigten Staaten," in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft &c.*, 50 Bd., 3. Heft (1923), p. 568 f., 572.

small-fixed-income-receivers, and government officials. Capitalism is in principle more anti-imperialist than pro-imperialist.[56] Countries have been driven to imperialism not by capitalism but by the lack of it.

Salz sees no connection between imperialism and the internal structure of the State. Monarchies, autocracies and democracies have all been imperialist, and there is no evidence that one has been any more so than the others. A country that can overcome its internal contradictions and establish internal unity can exert more power.[57] Modern imperialism, Salz holds, is an outgrowth of nationalism. This vague ascription of origin permits him to place socialism in the imperialist category,[58] since according to his argument it paves the way for a more exclusive nationalism. The reason is, he says, that planned economy must be more exclusive than capitalism in order to work.[59]

In his abstract way, Salz deals with real problems with a wide historical sweep. But neither the starting-point for his analysis nor his definition of terms can be considered adequate. He attaches great importance to a theory of "honor" that the Nazis might have welcomed. And it is surprising that his major work, *The Nature of Imperialism,* designed as an attack on Marxism, shows little study of its best representatives. The "Marxists" that Salz attempts to refute are, specifically, Lassalle, Sternberg, Norman Thomas and Bertrand Russell.

German expansionism would not have got very far if it had depended for its sustenance on the few pfennigs and the pitiful propaganda efforts of the Pan-German League, or even on the somewhat more potent landed interest. The big capitalists in all countries supported imperialism in Germany. In doubting this fact Salz is merely taking big business at its own valuation, as it is the tendency of conservative theorists to do.

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56 *Das Wesen des Imperialismus,* p. 49.
57 *Ibid.,* p. 184.
58 *Ibid.,* p. 76.
59 *Ibid.,* p. 154, 184.