CHANGING HUMANITY:

A STUDY OF FOUR DYSTOPIAS AT THE DAWN OF THE BIOTECHNOLOGICAL AGE

DAVIDE BASILE

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

M. Phil.

I, Davide Basile, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Abstract

This thesis analyses two British and two German technological dystopias published between the First and Second World Wars: Konrad Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* (1920), John Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* (1921), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), and Paul Gurk's *Tuzub 37* (1935). While there has been a considerable amount of scholarly research into interwar British dystopias, German texts have rarely been analysed; furthermore, dystopian studies have often focused on a small number of novels that were considered canonical and particularly influential. This thesis compares Huxley's canonical *Brave New World* with Bernard's less known *The New Race of Devils* and the two German texts, reading all of them from the standpoint of the early twentieth-century crisis of the traditional notion of humanism.

Chapter 1 focuses on the two earlier novels and on their portrayal of the creation of 'perfect' workers and soldiers with the use of eugenics. Chapter 2 centres on the two later novels and on their depiction of a completely mechanized World State where citizens are mass produced and incapable of independent thought. The thesis shows that the four dystopias envision a radical change in the nature of men and women as a result of the mechanization of society, and concludes that they all speculate on the future of the human race once the traditional conceptualization of humanity has been destroyed by contemporary technology. Loele's and Bernard's texts introduce the idea of a partly artificial 'eugenic liminal being' who is difficult to fit into the established taxonomy of living beings. Huxley and Gurk highlight how the inhabitants of the technocracy will not be capable of meaningful action and traditional rebellion will become impossible. The four texts prove more radical than other contemporary technological dystopias and anticipate some of the most important issues of late twentieth-century posthumanism.

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Introduction

The present thesis deals with British and German dystopian fiction. I will analyse and compare four novels written in the period between the First and the Second World Wars: Konrad Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* (1920), John Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* (1921), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), and Paul Gurk's *Tuzub 37* (1935). As the next paragraphs will show, the interwar era saw the publication of a large number of dystopian novels in many European countries, and particularly in Britain and in Germany. However, the secondary literature on the subject has focused almost exclusively on a small group of English-language works, which have since become paradigmatic for the study of the genre. By analysing and comparing two British and two German dystopias written in the 1920s and 30s, I will be able to sketch a more varied and original account of the dystopian fiction of the interwar era, and to suggest that some of the German texts were comparable in quality and interest to the British novels. Furthermore, *The New Race of Devils*, one of the two British dystopias that I have chosen to analyse, has not enjoyed the popularity of *Brave New World* and is not very well known today. The present thesis will thus allow me to compare Huxley's canonical technological dystopia with other three contemporary novels that offer a particularly interesting view of the possible future role of science in human life but have never been analysed in any of the major surveys of the genre.

Several of the dystopias published in the interwar era, such as Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* (published in 1924), [1] Charlotte Haldane's *Man's World* (1926) and Thea von Harbou's *Metropolis* (1926), focus at least in part on the increasing mechanization of modern society. Together with the possible rise of a violent dictatorship, technological dehumanization has indeed been recognized as one of the 'two ideas' which 'have fed the dystopian discourse' from the beginning.[2] The four British and German texts that I have decided to analyse are particularly radical in their treatment of the possible mechanized future. *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* focus on the use of eugenics and on the artificial control of reproduction to depict the creation of new men and women generated in the laboratory; *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* portray a future world which is already completely mechanized and where men and women, like robots, are mass-produced and have a specific mechanical role to perform in the

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[1] *We* was written between 1919 and 1921, but could not be published in Russia because the authorities considered it critical of the Soviet regime. Manuscripts of the text immediately began to circulate among intellectuals in the West, and the novel was first published, in an English translation, by Dutton in New York in 1924. See Clarence Brown, 'Introduction – Zamyatin and the Persian Rooster', in Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We* (New York, NY: Penguin, 1993), pp. xi-xxvi (pp. xi-xii).

[2] Fátima Vieira, 'The Concept of Utopia', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 1-27 (p. 18). Krishan Kumar, in his *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), devotes one chapter to 'Science and Anti-Utopia' (pp. 224-287) and one to 'Politics and Anti-Utopia' (pp. 288-346).

World State. Together, these four dystopias are particularly interesting because they relate the common anxiety about the increasing mechanization of society to the factual possibility of a radical change in the nature of men and women. If the future human beings will be produced in a laboratory and at least in part via artificial scientific means, if their physical and mental characteristics will be decided before their birth, and if all their life experiences will follow a predetermined pattern and fall into a number of fixed categories, then perhaps these new men and women will not be 'human' in the same sense that was commonly given to the expression. In the next chapters I will analyse how the texts that I have chosen define and come to terms with these new citizens of the future mechanized state. This analysis will allow me to shed a new light on the early twentieth-century preoccupation with the end of the traditional human- and individual-centred society.

Before going into more detail about the four dystopias that I have chosen to analyse, it is first necessary to define what a dystopian novel is, sum up the state of research on the subject, and analyse the peculiarities of the British and German dystopian traditions of the interwar era. Dystopia is a literary genre which portrays negative societies, and has been described and defined in a number of ways over the course of the twentieth century.[3] Some critics have tried to give a simple but clear definition of the genre based on its subject matter and on the contrast between dystopia and utopia. In the first book-length study of dystopia, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (1962), Chad Walsh writes that a dystopia is a text which deals with 'an imaginary society presented as inferior to any civilised society that actually exists', while utopia focuses on an imaginary society presented as *superior* to any other.[4] In an influential article published in 1982, John Huntington describes dystopia as 'utopia in which the positive [...] [principle] has been replaced by a negative', the depiction of a fictional society which is the polar opposite of a utopia.[5] In 1994 Lyman Tower Sargent, building on arguments he had already expressed in 1975, [6] defines 'dystopia' (or 'negative utopia') as 'a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a

[3] The most significant scholarly texts that have proposed a definition of dystopia and that I have read before writing this chapter are, in chronological order: Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1962), Mark R. Hillegas, *The Future as Nightmare – H. G. Wells and the Anti-Utopians* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1967), Robert C. Elliott, *The Shape of Utopia – Studies in a Literary Genre* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970), Lyman Tower Sargent, 'Utopia: The Problem of Definition', *Extrapolation*, 16 (1975), 137-148, Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, Fredric Jameson, *The Seeds of Time* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994), Lyman Tower Sargent, 'The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited', *Utopian Studies*, 5 (1994), 1-37, Chris Ferns, *Narrating Utopia – Ideology, Gender, Form in Utopian Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), Erika Gottlieb, *Dystopian Fiction East and West – Universe of Terror and Trial* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), Caitríona Ní Dhúill, *Sex in Imagined Spaces – Gender and Utopia from More to Bloch* (London: MHRA and Maney Publishing, 2010), and Matthew Beaumont, *The Spectre of Utopia – Utopian and Science Fictions at the Fin de Siècle* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012). For an in-depth review of many of the definitions of the genre given in these texts, see Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky – Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), pp. 121-145.
[4] Walsh, p. 26.
[5] John Huntington, 'Utopian and Anti-Utopian Logic: H. G. Wells and His Successors', *Science Fiction Studies*, 27 (1982), 122-146 (p. 123).
[6] See Sargent, 'Utopia: The Problem of Definition', p. 138. In this article, Sargent describes the term 'u-topia' as referring to a general imaginary place, and the literary genres of 'eu-topia' and 'dys-topia' as narratives of a particularly good and particularly bad place respectively.

contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived', and 'eutopia' (or 'positive utopia') as the exact opposite. He also defines 'anti-utopia' as a separate genre which depicts 'a non-existent society [...] that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as a criticism of utopianism or of some particular eutopia'.[7] Sargent's definitions are taxonomically very precise, but his use of the term 'eutopia' instead of the more established word 'utopia' has not been very widely adopted by more recent scholars.

Other critics define dystopia as the attempt to portray – very negatively – the everyday reality of a hypothetical utopian society. Mark R. Hillegas, in his seminal work *The Future as Nightmare* (1967), describes dystopia as a twentieth-century reaction against the specific technological utopianism of H.G. Wells. Hillegas argues that all dystopias are 'admonitory satires' which depict the Wellsian future utopia as completely mechanized, authoritarian, and violent.[8] Twenty years later, Krishan Kumar defines dystopia as '[an] attempt to show, by as graphic and detailed a portrayal as possible, the horror of a society in which utopian aspirations have been fulfilled'.[9] Though Kumar sees dystopia as a reaction against modern utopianism, and not exclusively against its *Wellsian* form, his position is remarkably similar to that of Hillegas. Hillegas and Kumar argue that dystopian authors see the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century attempts to describe a better future society, and especially those largely based on scientific progress, as inherently dangerous. Starting with the Industrial Revolution and the great acceleration of the pace of technological progress, utopians had begun to see in the application of science and in minute social organization the practical means to bring about Utopia. Since the publication of *A Modern Utopia* in 1905, Wells had become the most famous and influential of these writers.[10] Critics like Kumar and Hillegas argue that dystopia was then born as a reaction against this modern form of utopia: according to them, the dystopian authors feared that such a rationally planned society would lead to authoritarianism and to the complete mechanization of all human activities. Important as modern technological utopianism (especially in its Wellsian form) surely has been for the conception of classic works such as *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), however, a definition of dystopia which relies too heavily on this aspect risks to take into consideration only the novels that follow the scheme of Huxley's and Orwell's works.

A third group of critics gives a more complex definition of the genre, which takes into consideration the dynamic relationship between 'utopia', 'anti-utopia', and 'dystopia'. In his study *The Seeds of Time* (1994), Marxist literary critic Fredric Jameson argues that 'Utopia' and 'Anti-Utopia' are two opposed concepts, one concerned with the creation of a (far) better future state and the other with pointing out 'the dangers involved in trying to create anything like a new society from scratch'.[11] In this system, Jameson argues, 'dystopia' is not opposed to the utopian texts, and is actually an entirely different form of literature. While utopian works are non-narrative texts, which furnish models for a better society, dystopias are 'always and essentially

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[7] Sargent, 'The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited', p. 9.
[8] Hillegas, pp. 82-83.
[9] Kumar, p. 109.
[10] For a study of Wells's technological utopianism, see Kumar, pp. 168-223, and Hillegas, pp. 56-81.
[11] Jameson, *The Seeds of Time*, pp. 52-54.

[...] "near-future" novel[s]' which 'tell the story of an imminent disaster [...] waiting to come to pass in our own near future'.[12] Jameson's considerations on utopia and anti-utopia originate from his earlier study of 'late capitalism' – that is, the historical moment that was created by the rise of multinational business organizations. In late capitalism, Jameson argues, 'all […] countercultural forms of cultural resistance and guerrilla warfare' are seemingly 'disarmed and reabsorbed' by an all-encompassing global socio-political system 'of which they themselves might well be considered a part'. In such a complex and monolithic system the individual struggles to relate his daily experience to 'that vaster and properly unrepresentable totality which is the ensemble of society's structures as a whole'.[13] The role of utopia is precisely to act as a form of cultural resistance which provides a blueprint for a possible *alternative* and better society: utopian visions are, in other words, 'a desperate attempt to imagine something else'.[14] In his more recent *Archaeologies of the Future* (2005), Jameson further expands on the role of utopianism in modern society and comes to the conclusion that utopia is not so much 'the representation of radical alternatives' as 'the imperative to imagine them'.[15]

Drawing on the same polar difference between utopia and anti-utopia as those outlined by Jameson, Tom Moylan assigns a more important role to dystopia, defining it as a genre which 'negotiate[s] the social terrain of Utopia and Anti-Utopia' by situating itself *between* these two extremes. Although all dystopian texts depict a negative future society, thus, 'some affiliate with a utopian tendency as they maintain a horizon of hope' and others 'retain an anti-utopian disposition'.[16] In 2003, in the collection of essays *Dark Horizons*, Moylan reiterates this position together with Raffaella Baccolini.[17] Jameson's, Moylan's, and Baccolini's definitions of dystopia have the merit of reflecting on the dynamic relationship between the genre and both utopian and anti-utopian thought, but probably lose in clarity and directness when compared to Sargent's taxonomic categories.

In the present thesis I am going to adopt a definition of dystopia which is largely based on Sargent's terms as he defined them in 1994: a dystopian novel depicts a non-existent society which is meant to be far worse than the society in which the author lives. This definition is very precise and at the same time broad enough to accommodate different types of text. I will also accept Sargent's definition of 'anti-utopia' as a text which presents a society that is a critique of utopianism. For reasons of convention, however, as mentioned above, I will use the term 'utopia' instead of Sargent's 'eutopia' to refer to positive utopias. When referring to *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37*, and to other texts with similar characteristics, I will also use the term 'technological dystopia'. I define as 'technological dystopias' those texts which portray a future

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[12] Jameson, *The Seeds of Time*, pp. 55-56.

[13] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (London and New York, NY: Verso, 1991), pp. 49-51.

[14] Jameson, *Postmodernism*, p. 208.

[15] Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future – The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions* (London and New York, NY: Verso, 2005), p. 416.

[16] Moylan, p. 147.

[17] See Raffaella Baccolini and Tom Moylan, 'Introduction. Dystopia and Histories', in *Dark Horizons: Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*, ed. by Moylan and Baccolini (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), pp. 1-12.

world in which society has been completely mechanized and the lives of all men and women are rationalized and planned from above.[18] By this definition, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* are interwar technological dystopias, as are Zamyatin's *We*, Haldane's *Man's World* and von Harbou's *Metropolis*.

Dystopia as a genre was born between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. While anti-utopian satires had already been popular since at least the late eighteenth century,[19] scholars agree that the first true modern dystopias were published as a reaction to the radical social, technological and political changes which started to take place in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.[20] The increasing mechanization of Western society, the rise of modern industry and modern technology and the introduction of mass production, the adoption of a scientific and materialistic worldview and the new pressing demands for radical political change (especially socialism) were seen by several contemporary authors as dangerous tendencies which were likely to change society for the worse. As Krishan Kumar writes, it was then above all the fact that these changes were largely seen as 'logical and more or less inevitable […] developments' rather than mere possibilities by their advocates that pushed the dystopian authors to abandon the simple satire of the new ideals and to depict in detail the future bad society.[21] In spite of the scholars' essential agreement on the modern origins of the genre, there is no clear consensus as to which texts should be considered the first modern dystopias. Gregory Claeys writes in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature* that the first true dystopian novels were a reaction against either eugenics (as in Walter Besant's *The Inner House* (1888)) or socialism (as in Charles Fairchild's *The Socialist Revolution of 1888* (1884)), and that H. G. Wells was later very influential for the development of the genre with novels such as *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) and *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1899).[22] Kumar assigns great importance to Edward Bellamy's extremely popular utopian novel *Looking Backward* (1888), which presents a future socialist and technologically advanced state, and considers it the first great literary catalyst for the birth of the modern dystopian novels.

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[18] While commentators have often acknowledged that some texts are more specifically concerned with technology and mechanization than others, a sub-genre of 'scientific' or 'technological' dystopias has never been clearly defined. In her *Dystopian Fiction East and West*, Gottlieb lists *Brave New World*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano* (1952) and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) as texts which explore 'the socio-political pathologies of capitalism' (p. 10). In *From Utopia to Nightmare*, Chad Walsh argues that E. M. Forster's 'The Machine Stops' (1909) and Vonnegut's *Player Piano* belong to the category of 'machinery that turns against its master' (pp. 83-88), and puts *We*, *Brave New World* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in a separate group (pp. 92-114).

[19] Gregory Claeys, 'The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, pp. 107-131 (pp. 109-110). Claeys argues that the dialectical relationship between utopian visions and anti-utopian responses emerged as a consequence of the utopian stances of the French Revolution.

[20] See Kumar, pp. 124-130, and Claeys, 'The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell', pp. 111-114. See also Lyman Tower Sargent, 'Themes in Utopian Fiction in English before Wells', *Science Fiction Studies*, 3 (1976), 275-285. Sargent writes that a 'significant addition' to the utopian tradition in the second half of the nineteenth century 'is in the numbers of anti-utopian novels that are produced' (p. 279).

[21] Kumar, p. 125.

[22] Claeys, 'The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell', pp. 111-114.

Looking Backward, Kumar writes, 'started that chain of challenge and response that largely makes up the history of utopia and [dystopia]' in the late-nineteenth and twentieth century.[23] Bellamy was an American author, and Kumar mentions Ignatius Donnelly's *Caesar's Column* (1890) and Jack London's *The Iron Heel* (1907), both published in the United States, as two of the earliest significant dystopian novels. Like Claeys, he also refers to some of Wells's earliest works of fiction, such as *The Time Machine* (1895) and *When the Sleeper Wakes*.[24] Tom Moylan, in his *Scraps of the Untainted Sky* (2000), analyses E. M. Forster's slightly more recent novella 'The Machine Stops' (1909), which criticizes modern mechanization and the centralization of political power, as one of the very first dystopian texts and as 'an early example of the dystopian maps of social hells that have been with us ever since'.[25]

Dystopias became particularly popular and influential in the period between the First and the Second World Wars. The 1920s, 30s and 40s are often described as 'the classic era of the "utopia in the negative"', the period in which dystopias replaced utopias as the principal mode of inquiry into the future of society.[26] The First World War seemed indeed to confirm the intellectuals' fears that modern science and modern politics were leading humanity to a catastrophic future. The subsequent mechanization and standardization of society to an even greater degree than in the pre-war years, the increasing tendency towards a strict central planning of all human activities, the financial crises of the late twenties and early thirties, the social unrest and the establishment of violent dictatorships in several European states strengthened this fear.[27] This process was particularly evident in Britain and Germany, where the socio-political crisis which followed the First World War led to a great surge in dystopian writing.[28]

Germany found itself in the more complicated and precarious material circumstances. The country, which had lost the war and suffered a very high number of military casualties, entered a protracted period of political crisis that in its first stages saw first the outbreak of a communist revolution and the deposition of the Emperor, and then the proclamation of the Weimar republic.[29] The moderate democratic government that emerged from these events was, from the beginning, heavily contested by both far-right and far-left parties, which had a strong popular

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[23] Kumar, p. 128.

[24] Michael Sayeau argues that the in *The Time Machine* Wells describes *two* possible future ends of society, one resulting from extreme technological progress (the static world of the Eloi of 802,701 AD) and the other caused by the eventual heat death of the universe. See Michael Sayeau, 'H. G. Wells's The Time Machine and the 'Odd Consequences' of Progress', *Contemporary Justice Review*, 4 (2005), 431-445.

[25] Moylan, pp. 111-112.

[26] Kumar, pp. 224-225.

[27] Claeys, 'The Origins of Dystopia: Wells, Huxley and Orwell', p. 107. See also Ferns, pp. 105-130.

[28] For some of the information included in this and in the following paragraph, see also Michael Howard, 'Europe in the Age of Two World Wars', in *The Oxford History of the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Michael Howard and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 103-116.

[29] For an outline of the generational break created in Germany by the fall of the Empire and the defeat in the First World War, see Jon Hughes, 'The (Re)generation Game: Discourses of Age and Renewal between Expressionism and *Neue Sachlichkeit*', in *Aesthetics and Politics in Modern German Culture – Festschrift in Honour of Rhys W. Williams*, ed. by Brigid Haines, Stephen Parker and Colin Riordan (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), pp. 25-38.

base and called for immediate political change.[30] In the same years, the Weimar Republic experienced the rise of modern industrial technology and rational planning and Berlin, which reached the peak of its urban growth during the interwar years, became a huge metropolis more and more identified with mechanization and capitalism.[31] This process was generally confronted by 'an intellectual tradition which was deeply hostile to the effects of industrialization', and generated anxieties about the dissolution of individuality in the new society.[32] As a consequence of all these changes, and starting from the early twenties, Germany saw the publication of a very large number of novels set into the future and speculating on the development of great scientific inventions, the increasing use of technology in everyday life, and the establishment of a new form of government – often the result of a tremendous European conflict. These novels are generally classified by critics as *Zukunftsromane*, a term which was used as a synonym of the English word 'science fiction' in the first half of the century and now refers specifically to those texts that were published in the interwar era and dealt with the possible future development of society.[33]

Among the *Zukunftsromane* that are more evidently dystopian in nature, Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* combines the anxiety over the future scientific control of reproduction with the portrayal of a dictatorial regime born out of the failed Weimar Republic. Von Harbou's *Metropolis* and Hans Richter's *Turmstadt* (1926) depict future cities in which everything is arranged according to the industrial principles of efficiency and productivity and the workers are ruthlessly exploited by the technocratic elite, while Gurk's *Tuzub 37* introduces the reader to a completely mechanized World State where men and women are mass-produced and incapable of independent thinking. Other dystopian novels of the interwar era are less concerned with the threat of technology and the scientist worldview and focus more directly on the possible future political situation of the state, especially after the stock market crash of 1929 precipitated the social collapse of Weimar Germany that ultimately led to the rise of Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party. The most reactionary dystopias portray the Weimar Republic as a corrupt state born out of Germany's shameful defeat in the First World War and secretly controlled by the Western powers. Works like Hans Heyck's *Deutschland ohne Deutsche* (1929) and Martin Bochow's *Revolution 1933* (1930) focus on the progressive deterioration of the everyday lives of the German citizens and the transformation of the country into an economically poor puppet state of the United States and its allies. Other authors envision the future (and imminent) victory of the radical parties, the collapse of the republic, and the outbreak of a new war to restore German prominence in Europe.[34] Joseph Maria Frank's *Volk im Fieber* (1932) bleakly foreshadows the

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[30] See Eric D. Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 13-37.

[31] See David Midgley, *Writing Weimar – Critical Realism in German Literature 1918-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 304-319.

[32] Midgley, pp. 305-306.

[33] For a definition of the *Zukunftsroman* genre and an in-depth analysis of its historical importance, see Peter S. Fisher, *Fantasy and Politics: Visions of the Future in the Weimar Republic* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), pp. 3-20, and Dina Brandt, *Der deutsche Zukunftsroman 1918-1945* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2007), pp. 2-24.

[34] See Fisher, pp. 163-181.

reinforcement of the Nazi Party and the increasing radicalization and militarization of the political clashes in the last years of Weimar. Arthur Zapp's *"Revanche für Versailles!"* (1924) and Hanns Gobsch's *Wahn-Europa 1934* (1931) broaden the scope to consider Europe-wide political scenarios and prophetically envision first the victory of the far right and then the outbreak of a new and even more destructive World War.

British writers and intellectuals during the interwar era were worried about similar social and political issues. Many dystopian authors were deeply concerned about the increasingly important role that science and mechanization were playing in human life and – above all – about the technological utopianism promoted by such influential intellectuals as H. G. Wells, J. D. Bernal and J. B. S. Haldane. The 1920s and 30s were indeed in Britain the years in which central planning and rational organization were seen by many as the key measures to bring about a safer and more efficient future society.[35] Reacting against what Krishan Kumar calls the 'scientific hubris' of Wells, Bernal and Haldane,[36] British dystopian authors started to portray possible future societies in which human life is completely subjugated to a purely industrial and mechanistic vision of the world. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* is the most famous example of interwar technological dystopia, but many other texts – such as Charlotte Haldane's *Man's World* – were written in response to the same basic fears. Charlotte Haldane was the wife of J. B. S. Haldane, and Huxley knew both them and the other important advocates of technological utopianism: *Brave New World* and *Man's World* both combine the depiction of the mechanized society with the portrayal of an apparently benevolent dictatorship which enforces the precepts of scientism. Rose Macaulay's *What Not* (1918) depicts in a less dark and more satirical tone a near-future Britain in which all citizens are divided into different classes according to their mental capabilities and only those marriages which guarantee the birth of intelligent babies are allowed by the government. Other authors foreshadow the attempt of future rulers to use science and technology to subdue the population of the state: in Bernard's *The New Race of Devils*, the German rulers experiment with eugenics to create a new breed of workers and soldiers with which to replace the traditional citizens, and in John Kendall's *Unborn Tomorrow* (1933) a future dictatorship similarly controls human breeding and uses science to subjugate its population.

Although Britain had won the First World War, many authors feared that a new and equally destructive conflict might have soon broken out. This fear was reinforced by the strengthening of radical national movements all over Europe. Concerns over the possible rise of a fascist party in Britain, in particular, had been common since the early 1920s, when the 'British Fascisti' were formed in response to Mussolini's success in Italy. Anti-fascist movements began to operate in London immediately afterwards, but it was only in the early 1930s that conflicts between Oswald Mosley's new British Union of Fascists and the anti-fascist forces began to escalate.[37] After the instauration of the Nazi dictatorship in Germany, Britain began to look with increasing apprehension at the reinforcement of anti-democratic fascist forces in many parts of Europe.

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[35] For an excellent description of the rise of scientism in Britain and the consequent fears of excessive mechanization of the 1920s and 30s, see Kumar, pp. 230-242.

[36] Kumar, p. 241.

[37] Nigel Copsey, *Anti-Fascism in Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 2-22.

The Nazis were correctly perceived to be the greatest threat to European peace and stability, and were seen as 'a regime basing its ideology on the necessity and value of war' and a 'conundrum that urgently required solving'.[38] British anti-Nazi dystopias written in this period include Storm Jameson's *In the Second Year* (1936), which depicts the rapid rise to power of a fascist party in contemporary Britain, and Katharine Burdekin's *Swastika Night* (1937), which imagines a future Europe fallen under the control of the Nazis after Hitler's victory in a second world war. Conversely, Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* (1940) is concerned with Stalinism and is set in Russia during the time of the Great Purge. Finally, the most famous and influential dystopia to focus on an authoritarian dictatorship, Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, was published in Britain soon after the end of the Second World War.

In addition to dystopias, the interwar era also witnessed the publication of anti-utopian texts, which cast a doubt over the general possibility of human progress and social improvement. Unlike novels such as *Brave New World*, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* or *Volk im Fieber*, these texts were not a direct reaction to any specific socio-political anxiety of the era – or, better, they were a response to all of them. The two most notable British and German texts which belong to this category are Alfred Döblin's *Berge, Meere und Giganten* (1924) and Olaf Stapledon's *Last and First Men* (1930). Depicting the future evolution of humanity over the unusually long span of several centuries (or even millennia), Döblin's and Stapledon's works seem to suggest that future history, just like the past, will alternate between eras of social and technological improvement and periods of crises and wars, with no overall discernible sense of progress from a lower to a higher status. In both novels, the evolution of human society is presented as an infinite succession of temporary improvements and unavoidable violent declines: in other words, the concept of utopian perfectibility is called into question.

As this survey highlights, thus, both Germany and Britain saw the publication of a large number of dystopias during the crucial years of the interwar era. In spite of this, however, as I am going to show, all the major critical studies of utopia and dystopia have been published in the English-speaking world and have focused almost exclusively on English-language texts. The first scholarly studies of dystopia appeared in Britain and the United States in the late 1950s and early 1960s, in the context of a more general first wave of academic interest in science fiction and other forms of literature set in the future.[39] British novelist and critic Kingsley Amis published his seminal study about science fiction and dystopia, *New Maps of Hell*, in 1960. The first two book-length studies dedicated entirely to dystopia, Chad Walsh's *From Utopia to Nightmare* and Mark R. Hillegas's *The Future as Nightmare*, were both published in the United States during the 1960s, and the Society for Utopian Studies was founded at Pennsylvania

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[38] Dan Stone, *Responses to Nazism in Britain, 1933-1939 – Before War and Holocaust* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 45. See also Copsey, pp. 42-80.

[39] The definition of science fiction is itself problematic. Like dystopia, science fiction (sf) is usually set in the future and depicts alternative societies. In 1972, in order to delimit the boundaries of the genre, Darko Suvin famously described sf as 'a literary genre whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative framework alternative to the author's empirical environment'. See Darko Suvin, 'On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre', *College English*, 34 (1972), 372-383 (p. 375).

State University in 1975.[40] Starting from this decisive and formative period, all major texts dealing with dystopia have been published in English, and particularly in the United States. This situation has been exacerbated by the fact that, while all the major 'canonical' English-language dystopias have been translated into German soon after their original publication, the vast majority of the German texts have never been translated into English.[41]

The first scholars of dystopian literature argued that the historical period that had started in 1914 – and which, according to them, extended into the present – was fundamentally irreconcilable with utopian aspirations. Writing in 1956, George Woodcock asserts that in the first half of the century 'there has been an expansion of human powers beyond even the wildest Wellsian dream, but in politics and in human relations generally there seems to have been [...] a dangerous retreat'.[42] Irving Howe writes that, to minds educated to the idea of progress, in the first decades of the twentieth century 'history itself has proved to be a cheat'.[43] Even more explicitly, Chad Walsh states that 'nightmare chaos' is 'a good, brief description of the world since 1914', and sees in the Cold War a continuation of the extremely negative political and social tendencies of the previous decades: 'two great world-powers', he writes, 'have the capacity to destroy not merely each other, but all mankind'.[44] For Woodcock, Howe, and Walsh, the rise of dystopia in literature is the result of this peculiar historical period. Woodcock calls the British authors Huxley and Orwell 'anti-utopians' (that is, 'dystopians', according to the terminology I have decided to use here) and refers to them as 'advocate[s] of the human race' against the distortion of recent history.[45] Howe focuses on Zamyatin, Huxley and Orwell and states that *We* is 'the first [...] of the anti-utopian novels'.[46] Walsh is the first critic who tries to broaden the canon of the dystopian authors, and (briefly) considers in his work novelists such as E. M. Forster, Ayn Rand, Kurt Vonnegut, and Vladimir Nabokov.[47]

In *The Future as Nightmare*, Hillegas proposes a dystopian canon that includes, together with *We*, *Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty Four*, also Forster's 'The Machine Stops' and C. S. Lewis's Space Trilogy (1938-1945). Hillegas's main interest, as I have noted above, lies in the history of the genre, which he identifies with either a response to or a satire of Wells's utopian visions. The dystopian authors, Hillegas argues, not only wrote their texts as a denunciation of what they thought a Wellsian utopia would look like 'from the inside', but also used Wells's earlier works of science fiction as a model for their novels. 'Odd as it may seem in

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[40] For a good survey of the secondary literature on utopia and dystopia, see Peter Fitting, 'A Short History of Utopian Studies', *Science Fiction Studies*, 36 (2009), 121-131.

[41] According to the online database of the Deutsche National-Bibliothek, *Brave New World* was translated into German (with the title of *Welt – wohin?*) as early as in 1932, while *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *Ape and Essence*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and *We* were all translated in the 1950s. Conversely, the British Library database indicates that von Harbou's *Metropolis* and Joseph Maria Frank's *Volk im Fieber* (1932) are the only German dystopias of the first half of the century to have had an English-language edition.

[42] See George Woodcock, 'Five who Fear the Future', *New Republic*, 134 (1956), 17-20.

[43] Irving Howe, 'The Fiction of Anti-Utopia', in *Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four: Text, Sources, Criticism*, ed. by Irving Howe (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963), pp. 176-180.

[44] Walsh, pp. 20-21.

[45] Woodcock, p. 19.

[46] Howe, p. 177.

[47] Walsh mentions, among other works, Forster's 'The Machine Stops' (1909), Rand's *Anthem* (1937) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), Nabokov's *Bend Sinister* (1947), and Vonnegut's *Player Piano* (1952).

view of the later widespread identification of Wells with scientific optimism', Hillegas writes, Wells's early science fiction often depicts very negative future societies.[48] The thesis of Wells as the non-dystopian initiator of twentieth-century dystopia has become very influential and has been reiterated in various forms by subsequent critics.[49] Like Walsh, Woodcock, and Howe, Hillegas writes of a 'cultural shift' towards dystopia brought about by the outbreak of the First World War and reinforced by the events of the following decades, including the Cold War and the possibility of a nuclear global conflict; however, he also admits that 'it is possible to find the first signs of a coming revival of […] utopia'.[50] By focusing, albeit briefly, on the new utopian tendencies of the last years of the decade, Hillegas anticipates the work of some of the critics of the 1970s.

The late 1960s and the 1970s saw a reawakening of the utopian impulse, evident both in the publication of new utopian novels (such as Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1974) and Marge Piercy's *Women on the Edge of Time* (1976)) and in the new faith in social progress epitomized by the anti-establishment cultural movements of the decade. 'The oppositional political culture of the late 1960s and 1970s', Baccolini and Moylan write, 'occasioned a revival of distinctly utopian writing', the first since the outbreak of the First World War.[51] In such a mutated cultural environment, Robert C. Elliott publishes his influential critical study *The Shape of Utopia* (1970). Elliott argues that the 'utopias' and the 'negative utopias' (i.e. those dystopias which are still concerned with happiness and prosperity, like *We* and *Brave New World*) have been superseded in the years after the Second World War by 'anti-utopias' (that is, those texts which describe utterly negative future societies, like *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and Huxley's *Ape and Essence*). Anti-utopia itself, Elliott concludes, has been challenged by what he calls the 'anti-anti-utopia': contemporary utopias which 'speak most cogently against despair' but have not forgotten the cautionary lesson of the anti-utopias.[52] The most important of these new novels, according to Elliott, is Huxley's *Island* (1962). Over the course of the decade, other utopian critics followed Elliott's lead and elaborated on his conception of the anti-anti-utopias. Peter Fitting and Tom Moylan, in particular, coined at the end of the 1970s the notion of the modern 'critical utopia' as a counterpart to the utopias and dystopias of the first half of the century.[53] Despite its new and influential theoretical approach, Elliott's study still bases its analysis of dystopia essentially on *We*, *Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Like Woodcock, Howe, and Walsh, Elliott still considers the genre to have its origins in the lack of faith in the

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[48] Hillegas, p. 17. For an analysis of Wells's earlier (and more pessimistic) science fiction see Bernard Bergonzi, *The Early H. G. Wells – A Study of the Scientific Romances* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1961).

[49] See, for example, Kumar, p. 225, and Claeys, p. 109.

[50] Hillegas, p. 173.

[51] Baccolini and Moylan, p. 2.

[52] Elliott, p. 97. For Elliott's discourse on negative utopias and anti-utopias, see pp. 68-75.

[53] See Phillip E. Wegner, 'Introduction (2012)', in Robert C. Elliott, *The Shape of Utopia – Studies in a Literary Genre* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013), pp. xxv-xxviii. The two essays in which Fitting and Moylan elaborate the theory of the critical utopia are respectively 'The Modern Anglo-American SF Novel: Utopian Longing and Capitalist Cooptation', *Science Fiction Studies*, 17 (1979), 59-76, and 'Beyond Negation: The Critical Utopias of Ursula K. Le Guin and Samuel R. Delany', *Extrapolation*, 23 (1980), 236-254.

future which began in the aftermath of the First World War and continued in the following decades; like Hillegas, he writes that dystopian literature is a 'distortion of the utopian impulse' which portrays 'Utopia itself' as the enemy.[54] Elliott's work, it must be noted, focuses on utopia more than dystopia; after Walsh's and Hillegas's early texts, no other major book-length critical study will focus exclusively on dystopia until the 1990s.

By the final years of the 1970s, with the end of the social and political environment which had characterized the previous decade, commentators became more negative in their analyses. As Tom Moylan writes, in the 1980s faith in social progress diminished, 'the capitalist system reached the end of its […] profit curve', and 'the political opposition and utopian imagination' faltered.[55] I. F. Clarke's critical study *The Pattern of Expectation, 1644-2001* (1979) is more pessimistic than Elliott's *The Shape of Utopia* in its analysis of twentieth-century utopias and dystopias. As other critics before him, Clarke associates the advent of dystopia with the First World War: after 1918, writers began to compose 'admonitory myths about the dangers that confront any technological civilization' and 'utopia became dystopia'. However, unlike Elliott, Moylan, and Fitting, Clarke does not see any substantial break in the tradition of 'the tales of ruin and desolation' which developed in the first decades of the century: novels set in the future have carried 'the same uncomfortable message' from the 1920s to the 1970s, from Edward Shanks's *The People of the Ruins* (1920) to Edmund Cooper's *The Last Continent* (1970).[56] Clarke's study does not focus exclusively on utopias and dystopias, and, in the context of the birth of science fiction studies, analyses in his work a wide range of novels which describe a future development of society. Unlike the majority of the critics before him, he indeed mentions (however briefly) numerous works published in the United States, Britain, France, Germany and other parts of Europe.

In 1987, Krishan Kumar analyses the history of utopia and dystopia in his *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*. Looking back at the previous two decades, Kumar acknowledges the importance of the 'ferment of [utopian] activity in the 1960s and 1970s' but also argues that the second half of the twentieth century has generally been a period dominated by dystopia. According to Kumar, dystopian novels have continued to thrive up until the present thanks to the 'political and social developments of the postwar decades' and the persistent 'shadow of a nuclear war' between United States and Russia.[57] Kumar thus devotes much of his work to the study of dystopia (which he calls 'anti-utopia'), and argues that the genre is 'a formal reversal of the promise of happiness in utopia' and has existed in one form or another since Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516). However, it was only in the nineteenth century, when it became obvious that utopias *could* be realized with the aid of technological progress, that dystopia became a fully separate genre. According to Kumar, then, dystopia was born before the First World War, with the main objective being to depict a future society which is 'a thinly disguised portrait of the contemporary world, seen as already […] halfway on the road to damnation'.[58]

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[54] Elliott, pp. 87-89.
[55] Moylan, pp. xiv-xv.
[56] I. F. Clarke, *The Pattern of Expectation, 1644-2001* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1979), pp. 227-228.
[57] Kumar, pp. 422.
[58] Kumar, p. 110.

In 1994, M. Keith Booker published *Dystopian Literature – A Theory and Research Guide*, one of the first critical studies focusing exclusively on dystopia since Hillegas's *The Future as Nightmare*. Booker tries to broaden the focus of dystopian studies to the examination of a greater number of texts from more than one country, but merely gives a list of titles that he only analyses quite briefly. Like Kumar, Booker describes dystopia as 'specifically that literature which situates itself in direct opposition to utopian thought' and which warns against 'the potential negative consequences of arrant utopianism'. However, he also broadens his definition of the genre by stating that dystopias are all those works that are characterised by a critical examination of 'both existing conditions and the potential abuses that might result from the institution of supposedly utopian alternatives'.[59] This definition allows him to include in his study brief analyses of works as diverse as James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914) and Karel Čapek's *The Absolute at Large* (1922). In 1999, in the closing year of what might be called the dystopian century, Chris Ferns neatly sums up in his *Narrating Utopia* the standard set of features that are usually associated with the canonical dystopian form. Dystopian novels, Ferns writes, present an oppressive and authoritarian society, stress conformity and uniformity, highlight the use of advanced science to enforce the will of the state leaders, and portray the attempt of some of the characters to rebel against the system. Dystopian fiction envisions a state that 'suppresses the emergence of individual identity in the interest of stability, security, conformity', is 'regimented and hierarchical', and is also plagued with 'an almost obsessive concern with surveillance, with the subjection of the individual to public scrutiny'.[60] Gradually realizing the appallingness of such a society, the novel's protagonist rebels against it first by repudiating 'the demand that life be lived primarily in public' and then by finding some sort of link with the (pre-dystopian) past. Dystopias, Ferns continues, usually begin *in medias res* and show the main characters in the middle of their daily activity in the negative world.[61] In *Narrating Utopia*, thus, Ferns tries to go beyond the simple definition of the genre and attempts to describe in detail all the main characteristics of the dystopian *narrative*. However, like virtually all critics before him, Ferns again bases his theories almost exclusively on the analysis of *We*, *Brave New World*, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.[62]

Ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Erika Gottlieb offers a comparative analysis of the dystopias produced in the Western and Eastern blocs in her *Dystopian Fiction East and West* (2001). Although she – again – limits her analysis of the 'Western bloc' to the novels produced in Britain and the United States, Gottlieb's work is the first major text of academic literature to focus prominently on a dystopian tradition outside

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[59] M. Keith Booker, *Dystopian Literature – A Theory and Research Guide* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), p. 3.

[60] See Ferns, pp. 109-121, and particularly pp. 112-113.

[61] Ferns, pp. 109-112. For a similar overview of the main characteristics of dystopia, see also Raffaella Baccolini, 'Breaking the Boundaries: Gender, Genre, and Dystopia', in *Per una definizione dell'utopia – Metodologie e discipline a confronto*, ed. by Nadia Minerva (Ravenna: Longo, 1992), pp. 137-146.

[62] In the closing pages of the chapter, Ferns does also analyse Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985). However, although he argues that the novel is original in its depiction of the protagonist Offred's effective use of 'passive resistance and satiric eye', Ferns also states that Atwood's dystopia is 'in very much the same tradition as its [...] predecessors'. See Ferns, pp. 130-138.

the English-speaking world. Gottlieb defines dystopia as a genre which depicts state dictatorships whose leaders present themselves as benign Messiahs; the protagonist goes on a 'nightmare journey to "unmask" the secrets held by the "High Priest" of the political system' but usually fails.[63] Her comparative view and her analysis of quite a large number of texts allow her to list what she defines as the major characteristics of the dystopias of the West and of the East. According to Gottlieb Western dystopias often describe failed utopian enterprises that have turned into stern dictatorships in which privacy is abolished and the State is idolized. Society conspires against its own people: the protagonist manages to find a link to the pre-dystopian past, but is put on trial and silenced. Eastern European dystopias were usually written under communist rule and censored by the authorities; as such, they often describe the actual reality of the dictatorship rather than a negative imaginary future. Gottlieb also argues that these dystopias focus less on the male-female relationship typical of the Western texts and more on the protagonist's political ideas.[64] *Dystopian Fiction East and West* is thus an extremely interesting work insofar as it suggests the existence of valuable dystopian literature outside the English-language canon.

Two of the most recent scholarly works about utopia and dystopia are Caitríona Ní Dhúill's *Sex in Imagined Spaces* (2010) and Matthew Beaumont's *The Spectre of Utopia* (2012). Ní Dhúill argues that 'both utopia and dystopia focus on the defects of [contemporary] society', and differ primarily in their methods of enquiry: while utopia 'highlights social problems by imagining their absence', dystopia 'extrapolates from them a nightmarish future […] society'.[65] In *Sex in Imagined Spaces*, Ní Dhúill centres mainly on the representation of sexuality in the utopian / dystopian imaginary worlds, and highlights how these texts have often been used as 'a framework for exploring alternative sexual and reproductive practices' that might be much better (or much worse) than the current ones. The author goes on to analyse several twentieth-century novels, showing how their imaginary re-organisations of the gender system have followed from time to time many different patterns, varying 'from critique to alternative' and 'from distorting mirror to playful fantasy'.[66] Beaumont's *The Spectre of Utopia* focuses mainly on late nineteenth-century utopian thought and on the seminal importance of Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. By analysing Bellamy's novel in the context of the emerging modern utopian/dystopian paradigm, Beaumont provides some useful insights on twentieth-century dystopia. Utopia, Beaumont argues, is a form of literature that traditionally 'articulates the tension between impossibility and practicability' in such a way that the solutions it offers to the current social problems are 'imaginable but, in the prevailing circumstances, unrealizable'.[67] *Looking Backward* is particularly important in the history of utopian thought because it is the text that more than any other '[reconfigures] utopia as an imaginable if not imminent future' and makes it 'a viable form of political propaganda'. At the same time – and in this Beaumont agrees with Kumar – the highly centralized model of state which Bellamy portrays as feasible and

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[63] Gottlieb, p. 6.
[64] Gottlieb, pp. 8-22.
[65] Ní Dhúill, p. 34.
[66] Ní Dhúill, pp. 54-55.
[67] Beaumont, p. 3.

desirable, and its potentially anti-democratic implications, form the basis from which much of the dystopian fiction of the following decades will develop. The 'rationalist dreams of the nineteenth century', epitomized by Bellamy, becomes thus, 'metastasized', the object of the dystopias of the twentieth.[68]

As it clearly emerges from the previous paragraphs, German dystopias have rarely been analysed – and hardly ever in any depth – in the major critical studies of the genre. Even recent German academic literature on the subject focuses overwhelmingly on the English-language novels. In his *Die anti-utopische Tradition*, for example, Stephan Meyer explicitly states that twentieth-century dystopia is a prevalently Anglo-American phenomenon,[69] and only deals peripherally with German texts. Götz Müller's *Gegenwelten* (1989), probably the most important critical study of German utopia, does devote a chapter to texts which depict a negative future, but is far more interested in anti-utopias than in true dystopias and only analyses texts produced since 1945.[70] While there is hardly any study of German *dystopia*, it is possible to find analyses of individual German *dystopias* – often not labelled as such – in the secondary literature about German science fiction.[71] In his seminal 1972 study, for example, Manfred Nagl mentions various dystopian texts, such as Werner Scheff's *Die Arche* (1917), Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* (1920) and von Harbou's *Metropolis* (1926).[72] In the recent *The Black Mirror and Other Stories* (2008), Franz Rottensteiner similarly mentions, albeit briefly, dystopian works such as *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, Gurk's *Tuzub 37* (1935) and Carl Amery's *Der Untergang der Stadt Passau* (1975).[73] The two most interesting texts which deal exclusively with interwar German science fiction are Fisher's *Fantasy and Politics* and Dina Brandt's *Der Deutsche Zukunftsroman 1918-1945*. Both books contain references to several dystopias, including Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, Gurk's *Tuzub 37*, von Harbou's *Metropolis* and Heyck's *Deutschland ohne Deutsche*. Fisher, in particular, devotes a whole section of his study to the bleak and pessimistic visions of the future created by the socialist and pacifist writers of the

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[68] Beaumont, pp. 97-100.

[69] Stephan Meyer, *Die anti-utopische Tradition – Eine ideen- und problemgeschichtliche Darstellung* (Frankfurt a.M.: Lang, 2001), p. 367. The German authors analysed by Meyer are Alfred Döblin, Franz Werfel and Ernst Jünger.

[70] Götz Müller, *Gegenwelten - Die Utopie in der deutschen Literatur* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1989), pp. 254-297. In the chapter on 'Antiutopien', Müller analyses Ernst Jünger's *Heliopolis* (1949) and *Gläserne Bienen* (1957), Hermann Kasack's *Die Stadt hinter dem Strom* (1947), and Arno Schmidt's *Schwarze Spiegel* (1951), *Die Gelehrtenrepublik* (1957), *Kaff auch Mare Crisium* (1960), and *Die Schule der Atheisten* (1972). Müller also analyses von Harbou's *Metropolis* (1927) but does not classify it as a dystopia: for Müller, it is only 'oberflächlich' an 'Antiutopie', and is actually 'nichts anderes als eine Wiederholung des christlichen Mythos'.

[71] It must be noted that the studies of German science fiction are themselves few in number. See William B. Fischer, *The Empire Strikes Out: Kurd Lasswitz, Hans Dominik, and the Development of German Science Fiction* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1984), pp. 9-10, and Franz Rottensteiner, 'A Short History of Science Fiction in Germany', in *The Black Mirror and Other Stories: An Anthology of Science Fiction from Germany and Austria*, ed. by Franz Rottensteiner (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), pp. xi-xxxix (p. xi).

[72] In spite of this, and in line with the major academic studies on the genre, Nagl states that hardly any dystopia was produced in Germany after the First World War. See Manfred Nagl, *Science Fiction in Deutschland* (Tübingen: Tübinger Vereinigung für Volkskunde, 1972), pp. 150-151.

[73] Rottensteiner, pp. xxi-xxii and xxxiii.

Weimar Republic. [74] Works like Fisher's and Brandt's, however, are rare and deal only incidentally with dystopias; for the most part, the history of the genre in Germany is still completely unexplored.

In the present thesis, as mentioned above, I will focus on the technological dystopias of Loele, Bernard, Huxley and Gurk. The most interesting (and radical) characteristic of the four texts that I have selected is that they look at the progressive mechanization of modern society as an ongoing process which might lead to a complete redefinition of the concept of humanity. A good way to analyse and compare the messages of these dystopias, I argue, is then to relate them to the twentieth-century crisis of humanism and to the subsequent rise of the posthumanist paradigm. Humanism is a cultural and ideological movement which first develops in Renaissance Europe and affirms human dignity and superiority over all other living beings. Men and women are unequivocally defined on the basis of their ability to reason and to think, their desire to pursue knowledge and their capacity to act and change their environment with their individual choices.[75] Humanism claims that humans are not only clearly distinguishable from all other living beings, but also that men's and women's essential characteristics are unchangeable over time. By affirming every human's dignity and intrinsic value, humanism also introduces the concept of 'human rights' in the modern sense – that is, those fundamental rights that pertain to men and women for the simple fact that they are humans. [76] After the Renaissance, humanistic ideas are vigorously reasserted by the philosophers and intellectuals of the Age of Enlightenment, starting with René Descartes's famous passage in the *Discours de la méthode* (1637) claiming that 'la raison […] est la seule chose qui nous rend hommes'.[77] Although humanism remains more or less firmly at the basis of Western thought up until the end of the Second World War (and its philosophical conceptualization of human nature is still often taken for granted),[78] the first vigorous challenges to its theoretical framework are raised already between the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. It is indeed in those decades that the development of modern science and technology starts to pose 'crucial ethical and conceptual questions about the status of the human'.[79] After Charles Darwin had introduced his theories of natural selection and human evolution in the second half of the nineteenth century,

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[74] Fisher, pp. 157-226.

[75] See Pramod K. Nayar, *Posthumanism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), pp. 5-6, and Neil Badmington, 'Introduction: Approaching Posthumanism', in *Posthumanism: Readers in Cultural Criticism*, ed. by Neil Badmington (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 1-10 (pp. 2-4).

[76] Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights – From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 64-65. See also Nayar, p. 6.

[77] René Descartes, *Discours de la méthode* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), p. 76. Neil Badmington argues that Descartes's 'influential account of what it means to be human' makes him 'one of the principal architects of humanism'. See Neil Badmington, 'Introduction: Approaching Posthumanism', p. 3.

[78] In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault argues that the concept of human as we still know it now (and, more generally, 'the entire modern *episteme*' that 'still serves as the positive ground of our knowledge') is the one that originated in the 'European culture since the sixteenth century'. See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things – An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 385-387.

[79] Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), pp. 39-40.

first questioning the fixity of humanity's place and role in the world, [80] Sigmund Freud's description of the unconscious and of its major influence on the rational mind, the development of eugenics and the artificial control of reproduction and the notion that science could be used to modify men's and women's mental and physical characteristics suddenly open up the possibility of a radical reconceptualization of human nature.

Züllinger und seine Zucht, *The New Race of Devils*, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37*, I argue, are all concerned about this progressive weakening of traditional humanism. However, Loele, Bernard, Huxley, and Gurk's texts were all written before the development of a clearly defined posthumanist framework, and, as the present thesis will show, are still informed by the theories and values of humanism. Posthumanism, intended as 'a philosophical and political theme' that actively 'rejects the view of the human as exceptional [and] separate from other life forms' and 'calls for a radical rethink of [the] species' uniqueness',[81] develops in its mature form only after the Second World War. The first true shift in paradigm, as N. Katherine Hayles shows in her celebrated text *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), occurs in scientific research in the late 1940s, when Norbert Wiener founds modern cybernetics as a discipline that connects biology with mechanical engineering and that thus applies equally – and indiscriminately – to animals, humans and machines. [82] In literature and philosophy, Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault first start to directly oppose the traditional humanist views and to mark them as obsolete in their works of the late 1960s and early 70s.[83] In 1977, literary theorist Ihab Hassan famously proclaims in the essay 'Prometheus as Performer' that 'five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end as humanism transforms itself into something we must helplessly call posthumanism'.[84] Over the following decades, posthumanism establishes itself as one of the major cultural and philosophical frameworks of contemporary literature.[85] In its modern and mature form, posthumanism 'studies

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[80] Writing more generally of 'anti-humanism' as the reaction against, and the negation of, the theories of humanism, Martin Halliwell and Andy Mousley identify a whole first phase of proto anti-humanists 'which stretches from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century' and includend thinkers such as Darwin, Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, Saussure and Weber. See Martin Halliwell and Andy Mousley, *Critical Humanisms – Humanist / Anti-Humanist Dialogues* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), pp. 5-7. See also Stefan Herbrechter, *Posthumanism – A Critical Analysis* (London and New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 70.

[81] Nayar, pp. 3-4.

[82] N. Katharine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman – Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago, IL, and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 6-10. Wiener's *Cybernetics: Or, Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine* (1948) is also generally considered a seminal text in the foundation of artificial intelligence research, itself obviously a field of study that undermines the traditional idea of the human as the only being capable of reason.

[83] Halliwell and Mousley, pp. 5-6. See also Cary Wolfe, *What Is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p. xii.

[84] Ihab Hassan, 'Prometheus as Performer: Towards a Posthumanist Culture?', in *Performance in Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Michael Benamou and Charles Caramella (Madison, WI: Coda Press, 1977), pp. 201-217 (p. 212).

[85] Among the many texts that have contributed to posthumanist studies in recent decades, some of the most important are the aforementioned *How We Became Posthuman* by N. Katharine Hayles, Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), Donna Haraway's 'A Cyborg Manifesto' (1991), Bruno Latour's *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991), Geoffrey Harpham's *Shadows of Ethics: Criticism and the Just Society* (1999), Peter Sloterdijk's *Regeln für den Menschenpark. Ein*

cultural representations, power relations and discourses that have historically situated the human above other life forms and in control of them' and tries to demonstrate how the difference between the 'normative human' and the 'non-human' is in most cases only conventional.[86] Aware of the fact that 'humanity' as a category has proved to be neither exclusive nor fixed, thus, posthumanist critics seek a more inclusive definition of life that might account for men's and women's evolution over time and for their continuously changing relationships with the other life forms and with all other elements of nature.

The four dystopias that I have decided to analyse anticipate many of the themes that will characterise posthumanist studies. *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, *The New Race of Devils*, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* interpret indeed the onset of what Elaine Graham calls the 'biotechnological age'[87] – that is, the new era characterised by the application of modern science to men and women and to their everyday activities – as a direct threat to the traditional human being. These four texts are particularly remarkable because they first perceptively link biotechnology and increasing mechanization with a radical reconceptualization of the human nature, and then describe in considerable detail the new men and women who might replace traditional humans. Unlike the robots of Čapek's *R.U.R.* (1920) and the android of von Harbou's *Metropolis*, the genetically modified workers and soldiers of *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* and the citizens of the World State in *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* are all humans who possess new characteristics and features rather than truly technological or otherwise artificial beings. In a basic sense, they are *post*-human first of all because they come *after* the traditional humans.[88] The point of view that the four novels adopt, however, is humanist: in Loele's, Bernard's, Huxley's and Gurk's texts the potential overcoming of the human intended as the living being guided by reason and distinguished from all other life forms and all other elements of nature is presented as a negative consequence of mechanization which might cause the end of everything that is worthy in men and women.

In *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*, eugenics and the artificial control of reproduction are singled out as the most obvious entrance points to the new society. The concerns over the use of eugenics for the creation of a new (and potentially subservient) breed of men and women drew, as I will show in the next chapter, from the state-led experiments which became particularly common in Britain and Germany in the interwar years.

Antwortschreiben zu Heideggers Brief über Humanismus (1999), Karen Barad's 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter' (2003), Cary Wolfe's *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species and Posthumanist Theory* (2003), Rosi Braidotti's 'Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards a New Process Ontology' (2006), Bruce Clarke's *Posthuman Metamorphosis* (2008), and Stefan Lorenz Sorgner's 'Nietzsche, the Overhuman, and Transhumanism' (2009).

[86] Nayar, pp. 3-5.

[87] Elaine L. Graham, *Representations of the post/human: Monsters, Aliens and Others in Popular Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 1-2.

[88] Halliwell and Mousley argue that one of the definitions of posthumanism considers it precisely 'as a periodising term that follows on from the discourse of humanism in the same way that the post-war period would follow on from wartime conflict'. See Halliwell and Mousley, pp. 187-188. In the present thesis, I will use from this point the term 'post-human' to refer to any society that comes chronologically after the elimination of the traditional humanist framework, and the word 'posthuman' to refer more specifically to posthumanist studies and theories.

Questions concerning the possible alteration of human features at birth through the implementation of artificial procreation were particularly important; as Angus McLaren notes, 'debates about the merits of subjecting humans to scientific surveillance and intervention necessarily and inevitably focused on reproduction'.[89] *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*, which were both published in the early 1920s and thus in the years in which the debate on eugenics reached its peak, clearly reflect these fears. The two novels envision, only one year apart, a future (German) dictatorship which manages to produce a new breed of genetically modified citizens that can serve the rulers and eventually replace the traditional masses. Expanding on the contemporary dystopian anxiety over modern reproduction control to an unprecedented degree, Loele and Bernard portray thus the creation of the eugenic liminal beings, hybrid creatures that do not belong to the 'human' category as it was traditionally defined but are still human in many ways. In the new biotechnological era, then, the idea of 'humanity' is not as immutable and clearly defined as in the past, and the boundaries between 'natural' and 'artificial' begin to falter. However, as I will show in the next chapter, rather than looking for a new and more inclusive definition of humanity, the major characters in the two novels try to either include the eugenic liminal beings in the traditional category of the human or to mark them out as artificial and inferior beings. Indeed, in both dystopias all the eugenic liminal beings that are not finally incorporated in the category of the human are presented – and treated – as *sub*-human monsters, lacking the complexity and the nobility of 'true' men and women. The protagonists of *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*, in other words, are not ready for the radical change in paradigm that, here more than in many other contemporary novels, is suggested by the development in science and technology.

Brave New World and *Tuzub 37* go even further than Loele and Bernard in their representation of the technologically modified humans. While in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* the production of the new men and women is still limited to a relatively small part of the population, and the state-produced workers and soldiers are meant to replace the ordinary citizens only in a more or less distant future, Huxley and Gurk introduce the readers to a fully mechanized society in which nobody, except a few isolated rebels, conforms to the traditional definition of the human being any more. In *Brave New World*, the citizens of the World State are mass produced in ectogenetic chambers placed in public 'hatchery centres', assigned specific (and virtually immutable) mental and physical characteristics and taught conformity and orthodoxy. Men and women are passive subjects of the technocracy, hold no personal opinions and are not interested in learning new knowledge. In *Tuzub 37*, citizens are similarly produced artificially and are incapable of thinking of themselves as individual beings rather than as parts of the society. Men and women are partly mechanical, and conformity is enforced to the point that citizens are referred to by a series of numbers and are physically almost indistinguishable from each other. In both *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37*, the new society that will emerge from the crisis of the traditional humanist ideas, made obsolete by the development of modern science and the rise of the biotechnological age, is depicted as a

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[89] Angus McLaren, *Reproduction by Design: Sex, Robots, Trees and Test-Tube Babies in Interwar Britain* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012), p. 10.

dystopia. The men and women who will inhabit such a society will gradually lose all the positive characteristics associated with the category of the human being, first among them their ability to reason independently and to change the environment with their individual choices, and will ultimately become mere mechanical parts of the State. This is particularly evident, I argue, in the two novels' depiction of the future dissent against the technocratic state. Unlike the vast majority of the contemporary dystopias, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* negate the possibility of an organised violent revolution against the technocracy: once citizens have been made incapable of individual thought and useful action, a traditional form of rebellion is not possible any more. As I will show in Chapter 2, both Huxley and Gurk move from these premises to engage with the possibility of dissent in the mechanized future in a very peculiar and original way.

In the next chapters I will also show how increased mechanization and the weakening of the traditional category of the human affect the relationships between men and women in the four selected dystopias. Posthumanist studies in the second half of the twentieth century have often argued that humanism, based as it is on a hierarchical ordering of all living things with the 'human' on top and in control of them, has led to the relegation of certain groups and races to lower categories of being.[90] Traditional humanism 'centres the white male as the universal human' and subsequently adopts an 'exclusionary strategy' that keeps from time to time women, blacks, Jews and other non-white ethnic groups outside the boundaries of the real 'standard' human and considers them lacking in some aspect.[91] Several feminist scholars have adopted the posthuman perspective and repeatedly called for the abandonment of the humanist hierarchy as a necessary prerequisite for the complete emancipation of women.[92] The four dystopias that I have selected do not follow this pattern, and their portrayals of the new gender relationships in the future mechanized society vary considerably. In *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* the implementation of eugenics and the scientific control of reproduction that lead to the weakening of the traditional humanist framework also bring to a decisive loss of power on women's part. In both novels the creation of the genetically modified workers and soldiers can essentially be read as the attempt of the male rulers to usurp women's role in reproduction and to gain the ability to produce new subjects as they see fit. Thanks to modern technology, these new subjects are endowed with the specific characteristics that the rulers need: the scientific control of reproduction is a powerful instrument of power, and the male dictators refuse to share its secret with the now weakened women. In *Brave New World* the future post-humanist society has brought about a higher degree of gender equality (though some of the most common sexist stereotypes are still in place) at the price of a more general devaluation of both men and women. The male and female citizens of the World State are all

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[90] See Cary Wolfe, *Animal Rites*, pp. 7-9, and Nayar, pp. 8-12.

[91] Nayar, pp. 11-12.

[92] Some of the most important texts that dealt with the issue of women's rights and the traditional categories of humanism are Carol J. Adams's *The Sexual Politics of Meat – A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (1990), Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble – Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), Donna Haraway's 'A Cyborg Manifesto' (1991), Susan Bordo's *Unbearable Weight – Feminism, Western Culture and the Body* (1993), and Cary Wolfe's *Animal Rites* (2003).

equally useful to the mechanized society and all equally incapable of thinking and acting independently. In the first half of the novel, as I will show in Chapter 2, Huxley seems to suggest that the male protagonists Bernard and Helmholtz will grow increasingly tired of the technocracy and will ultimately rebel against it. In the novel's second half, however, Lenina, who had been initially presented as a passive and conformist woman, gradually becomes the only real human agent capable to go against the principles of the World State. The future society of *Tuzub 37*, finally, has been so far removed from the traditional conceptualization of the human that the differences between the genders are no longer meaningful. The future world is populated by grey *Maschinenmenschen* (mechanical humans), and no distinction between 'Männer' ('men') and 'Frauen' ('women') is ever made in the novel. Even in this crucial aspect, the inhabitants of Gurk's forthcoming technological dystopia are more similar to machines than to human beings.

The present thesis is made up of two main chapters. In Chapter 1 I will analyse and compare Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* in the context of the aftermath of the First World War in Britain and Germany and of the heated debate about eugenics and artificial procreation. In Chapter 2 I will deal with Huxley's *Brave New World* and Gurk's *Tuzub 37*, highlighting the switch in focus from the planned control of human reproduction to the possible foundation of a worldwide technological state and discussing the implications that such a new prospect could have for the definition of the new men and women. I will conduct my study of Loele's, Bernard's, Huxley's and Gurk's dystopia from a socio-historical point of view, giving great importance to the environment in which these texts were written and published and to the literary scenes to which their authors belonged. I will base my analysis on close textual reading and on the systematic comparison of the novels' structures and main themes. The comparative nature of my study will highlight both the similarities between the four novels and the different and distinctive ways in which they deal with the impact of modern technology on the human society. Finally, in the Conclusion I will briefly sum up what has been discussed in the thesis and I will offer a clear outline of its main findings.

Chapter 1

Züllinger und seine Zucht and *The New Race of Devils*:
Eugenics and artificial reproduction in the dystopias of the early twenties

The dystopian literature of the interwar era was frequently concerned with eugenics and with the possibility that in the future reproduction might be scientifically controlled. The 1920s and 30s were indeed characterised by an increasing interest in possible eugenic measures in all the most scientifically advanced countries in the world, and by a heated ongoing debate over the necessity of such measures for the improvement of society.[93] Eugenics had been first defined by English anthropologist Francis Galton in the last decades of the nineteenth century and was understood as 'the rational planning of, and intervention into, human breeding' based on the understanding of the mechanisms of heredity.[94] Eugenics was thought as having a 'positive' and a 'negative' side, one concerned with the promotion of the reproduction of people with the desired genetic traits and the other with the curbing of the fertility of the citizens with undesirable characteristics. In this way, eugenicists argued, the best mental and physical traits of the single individuals could be passed on to the following generations, and society could be improved. Eugenic movements had started to form in Europe and in the United States since the late nineteenth century; however, it was only in the years which followed the First World War, and especially because of the supposedly dysgenic effects of the conflict which killed many of the fittest and best educated members of society, that eugenics started to receive more serious attention from the governments of those nations and became an important part of their social programmes.[95] As eugenics became progressively more influential at a political level, some sections of the society began to view it with increasing diffidence. Negative eugenics, with its task to limit the reproduction of selected individuals, was always generally opposed by the population, and was considered essentially 'anti-working class' by the labour movement.[96] The class and race bias of the more radical eugenicists became more and more clear during the interwar years, and many saw in their proposals a dangerous attempt to solve urban crime and social unrest by regulating the fertility of the (supposedly less fit) masses rather than by trying to promote a renovation of the social system.[97] A growing number of writers and intellectuals,

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[93] Philippa Levine and Alison Bashford, 'Introduction: Eugenics and the Modern World', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, ed. by Alison Bashford and Philippa Levine (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 3-24 (pp. 3-4). See also Stefan Kühl, *For the Betterment of the Race: The Rise and Fall of the International Movement for Eugenics and Racial Hygiene* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 29-46.

[94] Levine and Bashford, pp. 4-5.

[95] Kühl, pp. 33-36.

[96] Lucy Bland and Lesley A. Hall, 'Eugenics in Britain: The View from the Metropole', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, pp. 213-227 (p. 218).

[97] Mike Hawkins, *Social Darwinism in European and American Thought 1860-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 218-219.

indeed, were concerned 'whether births should be planned and controlled' at all, and what consequences these actions could have had for the development of society. The utopian and dystopian literature of the time often portrays future societies in which reproduction is completely controlled through scientific means and radical eugenic measures are implemented for the betterment of the nation.[98] These novels were part of the more general interwar reflection on the future role of science and technology in human life in the context of an increasingly mechanised world: in the years which immediately followed the end of the war, eugenics was the quintessential –and most extreme– example of this mechanisation of society. In the present chapter I will analyse Konrad Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* (1920) and John Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* (1921), two dystopias which were published shortly after the end of the war and thus at the moment in which the eugenic movement reached its peak. Loele's and Bernard's texts, I argue, are particularly interesting because they take the concerns about eugenics to the extreme and portray the state-led creation of a new breed of human beings generated in the laboratory and assigned some specific characteristics. The future rulers try to use eugenics and artificial procreation to create the perfect (and perfectly subservient) workers and soldiers, and plan to eventually replace the potentially troublesome masses with them.

The genetically modified human beings portrayed in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* radically problematize the traditional notions of humanity. As I have highlighted in the Introduction, the traditional humanist framework, which saw men and women as separated by all other life forms because of their ability to reason and act and considered them essentially immutable in their characteristics, was being challenged in the early twentieth century by the modern development of science and by the increasing mechanization of society. *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* are among the first novels to actually envision the appearance of new humans who *do not* fit the classic humanist paradigm, and to place it in the near future. As such, I argue in this chapter, they can be analysed and understood through the lens of late twentieth-century posthuman theory. At the same time, Loele's and Bernard's dystopias belong to the literary tradition that had started with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and depicts the creation of new living beings through scientific means. What distinguishes *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* from the previous texts in the tradition is the fact that in Loele's and Bernard's novels science is applied to the human beings themselves. The new workers and soldiers presented in the two dystopias are therefore both scientifically generated liminal beings – that is, creatures who are difficult to define and to classify – and humans. They are products of an age in which the new possibilities opened by genetics and artificial procreation have led to a previously unknown uncertainty

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[98] See McLaren, pp. 10-11. Early twentieth-century novels published in Britain and Germany which were concerned with eugenics and the control of reproduction include, in addition to *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*, Robert Hugh Benson's *Lord of the World* (1907), Joseph Ludwig Reimer's *Ein pangermanisches Deutschland* (1908), *Red England: A Tale of the Socialist Horror* (1909, published anonymously), Ernst Wachler's *Osning* (1914), Rose Macaulay's *What Not* (1918), Ernst Otto Montanus's *Die Rettung des Abendlandes* (1921), Alfred Döblin's *Berge, Meere und Giganten* (1924), Charlotte Haldane's *Man's World* (1926), Hans Heyck's *Deutschland ohne Deutsche* (1929), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), John Kendall's *Unborn Tomorrow* (1933) and Paul Gurk's *Tuzub 37* (1935).

concerning the 'boundaries between natural and artificial, born and made'.[99] In the present thesis, I will call this new problematic type of scientifically generated living being 'eugenic liminal being'.

In spite of their thematic similarities and common focus on state-led eugenic and genetic experiments, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* are different in style and originate in two distinct literary contexts. Loele's text was written in the aftermath of the failed communist revolution of 1918-19 and employs political satire and biting parody to portray a future Germany completely fallen under the control of the reactionary forces which have suppressed the uprising. The novel, although pessimistic and even bleak in tone, never loses its brilliant wittiness and its caricatural dimension. Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* is a much less subtle text which abounds with sensationalistic claims and depicts Germany as a country obsessed with war and the annihilation of its adversaries (and Great Britain in particular). Bernard's novel was published by the Anglo-Eastern Publishing Company, which specialised in popular pulp fiction. Both *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* are extremely interesting in their analyses of the future possible relations between eugenics, the scientific control of reproduction and an increasingly despotic central government. By linking all these themes together in a dystopian setting, Loele's and Bernard's novels offer an important insight into the ordinary citizen's anxiety over the new possibilities of science in the aftermath of the First World War.

Züllinger und seine Zucht

Konrad Loele was a German writer active during the first years of the Weimar Republic. Very little information is available on his life and literary career, to the point that not even his dates of birth and death are known for certain.[100] In addition to *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, he wrote at least three other novels, all published between 1918 and 1921: *Der Weg zum Haß*, *Der Krötenteich* and *Das spiritistische Kugelspiel*.[101] Loele had ties with the USPD, the German radical socialist party, of which he was probably a member after the end of the First World War.[102] Indeed, the four aforementioned books were all printed by publishers close to the socialist movement. *Der Weg zum Haß*, in particular, was published by the Verlagsgenossenschaft "Freiheit", which also printed the USPD journal *Die Revolution*. Peter Fisher suggests that Loele had believed in the social revolts of 1918-19 and was, like many other intellectuals, greatly disappointed by their failure.[103] In his dystopia *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, indeed, published only one year after the suppressed revolution, Loele describes a nation dominated by capitalists and reactionaries, in which all the socialist forces have been completely eradicated. Though not a bestseller, the novel had a certain degree of success at

[99] Susan Merrill Squier, *Liminal Lives: Imagining the Human at the Frontiers of Biomedicine* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 97.

[100] Richard Sheppard, 'Artists, Intellectuals and the USPD 1917-1922', *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch*, 32 (1991), 174-216 (p. 207).

[101] Konrad Loele, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* (Munich: Belleville Verlag, 1998), p. 4.

[102] See Fisher, p. 157, and Brandt, p. 201.

[103] Fisher, p. 157-159.

the time and was republished in 1923.[104] In the decades which followed the Second World War, however, it was rarely discussed by utopian and dystopian scholars.[105] It was only starting with Fisher's 1992 study *Fantasy and Politics* that *Züllinger und seine Zucht* began to receive greater critical attention. In his recent anthology *The Black Mirror and Other Stories*, for example, Franz Rottensteiner goes as far as to describe it as 'one of the best [science fiction] novels between the two world wars'.[106] At least in part as a consequence of this re-evaluation, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* was reprinted by Belleville Verlag in Munich in 1998.

The novel is set in a near-future authoritarian Germany, now pompously called 'Oberdeutschland', ruled by industry, organised religion and the traditional landed nobility, the Junkers. With the exception of the exploited masses, who have no political representation, the population of the country has been divided into two distinct classes: the 'Oberdeutsche' and the 'Halblinge'. The richest and most powerful men of the country, including all the representatives of the upper classes, are Oberdeutsche; the former members of the leftist parties and supporters of the republic, including many specialised workers, are Halblinge. As a response to the falling birth rates among the masses, the scientist Arnold Züllinger is assigned the task of creating so-called 'Züchtlinge', genetically modified human beings generated by the gametes of representatives of the working classes and gestated in artificial wombs. The Züchtlinge are programmed to be physically strong but mentally deficient, and are almost immediately exploited as slaves by the ruling classes. However, Züllinger, a former socialist eager for revenge against the Oberdeutsche, realizes that the creatures are capable of true learning and gradually manages to organise them in a powerful army. While the greedy and selfish members of the ruling class constantly fight among themselves to obtain more power, the enslaved Züchtlinge begin to rebel against their masters in many parts of the country. The artificially generated men, led by Züllinger, prove to be a formidable force and defeat the tyrants after a prolonged and bloody battle. The war, however, has no clear winners: almost all the Züchtlinge, and Züllinger himself, die in the clashes. The Oberdeutsche have been overthrown, but the masses of the workers have hardly participated in the revolution and are unable to organise and decide what to do. At the end of the novel, it is left to the armies of the neighbouring countries to intervene, enter Germany and imprison the surviving Oberdeutsche.

Züllinger und seine Zucht belongs to two different literary traditions. On the one hand, the novel – like *The New Race of Devils* – presents a variation of the theme of the creation of artificial life that had become increasingly popular in Europe since the last decades of the nineteenth century.[107] Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's *L'Ève future* (1886), Jerome K. Jerome's 'The

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[104] Fisher, pp. 262-263 n. 6. Fisher reports that the book reached a total print run of 12,000 copies, which he considers the minimum qualification for a novel to be considered successful in the Weimar period.
[105] The novel is only briefly mentioned, for example, on pp. 158-159 of Manfred Nagl's comprehensive study *Science Fiction in Deutschland*.
[106] Rottensteiner, pp. xi-xxxix.
[107] See George L. Hersey, *Falling in Love with Statues: Artificial Humans from Pygmalion to the Present* (Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press: 2009), pp. 137-153, and Graham, pp. 62-64. See also Chris Baldick, *In Frankenstein's Shadow – Myth, Monstrosity, and Nineteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 63-91.

Dancing Partner' (1893) and Gustave Le Rouge's *La conspiration des miliardaires* (1899-1900) all envision the creation of mechanical beings capable of moving and acting like humans. In 1881, Jacques Offenbach adapts E. T. A. Hoffmann's short story 'Der Sandmann' (1816), which introduces a highly advanced female automaton, for his popular opera *Les contes d'Hoffmann*. In *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), H.G. Wells depicts the creation of a new breed of human-animal hybrids obtained via surgery and vivisection. In Hanns Heinz Ewers's *Alraune* (1911), a scientist artificially impregnates a woman with the semen of a murderer and she gives birth to a girl who is able to influence other people's desires but cannot feel love. During the 1910s, the theme of the artificial humanoid creature is taken up by German cinema as well: Paul Wegener's *Der Golem* (1915) – in which the artificial being is animated by alchemy and magic rather than by technology – and Otto Rippert's six-part *Homunculus* (1916) are the most famous contemporary films to deal with the subject. In the same year in which *Züllinger und seine Zucht* is published, Karel Čapek portrays the creation and the mass production of robot servants and workers in his play *R.U.R.* (1920). Six years later, Thea von Harbou introduces the female android Maria, perhaps the most famous artificial being of the first half of the century, in her novel *Metropolis* (1926); the book is then adapted into a popular film by Fritz Lang in 1927.[108] Like all these works, as the next paragraphs will show, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* deals with the possibility of the generation of a new form of life which possesses many of the characteristics of the human being but cannot appropriately be termed 'human'.

On the other hand, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* belongs to the wave of German novels published after the end of the First World War that were set in the near future and envisioned a radical political change for the country. Since the last months of 1918, the socio-political situation in Germany had indeed become more and more chaotic: even before the end of the conflict, with the nation devastated by the war effort, a communist revolution had broken out in many cities and quickly resulted in the overthrow of Emperor Wilhelm II and the proclamation of the republic. The country was sharply divided between opposed political factions, with the extreme fringes of the socialist parties calling for a Soviet revolution and the far-right paramilitary groups pushing for a restoration of the monarchy. The communist armed forces were brutally put down in the first months of 1919, but the newly founded republic continued to face violent opposition from political extremists on the left and (more importantly) the right. The situation was exacerbated by the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, which forced Germany to accept responsibility for the World War and to pay huge reparations to the Allied powers. The German population, already exhausted by war and economic shortages, found the conditions of the Treaty humiliating, with many blaming the supposedly weak democratic republic for accepting them. Almost immediately, a form of popular literature set in the future and foreshadowing the end of the republic and the rise of a new social system began to flourish.[109]

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[108] For a review of the most important nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels and films centred on the creation of artificial beings, see Daniel Dinello, *Technophobia! – Science Fiction Visions of Posthuman Technology* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), pp. 40-57.

[109] Fisher, pp. 3-13. Fisher divides these novels into 'fantasies of the radical right' (which he analyses on pp. 21-103) and 'socialist visions' (upon which he focuses on pp. 157-226). See also Jost Hermand, *Old*

The authors of these novels did not belong to a unified or clearly defined literary scene,[110] but they shared a sense of urgency for socio-political change and the firm belief that such a change would inevitably occur, for better or worse, in the near future. In his *Fantasy and Politics*, the most exhaustive work to date to focus on Weimar's futuristic political fantasies, Peter Fisher argues indeed that in these novels the writers 'dismissed what was for them an overly complex, difficult, [or] demoralizing reality' and evoked a future Germany which could fulfil their need for 'revenge' or 'renewal'.[111]

Züllinger und seine Zucht is one of the earliest examples of such literature, which in the 1919-1922 period alone also saw the publication of texts such as Waldemar Haefner-Hainen's *Der Prophet von der Zugspitze* (1919), Ernst Otto Montanus's *Die Rettung des Abendlandes* (1921), Otto Autenrieth's *Bismarck II* (1921) and Walter Grassegger's *Der zweite Weltkrieg* and *Die rächende Stunde* (both 1922). The majority of these texts were utopian in nature, were written from a radical right-wing perspective, and envisioned an imminent return to monarchy and autocracy and the rapid overcoming of all the social and political problems of the nation. Under the lead of a new charismatic Emperor, Germany manages to reverse the conditions of the Treaty of Versailles and to regain its privileged position among the world powers, usually after a bloody but quick war against France and Great Britain. Among the novels mentioned here, only *Der Prophet von der Zugspitze* deviates (slightly) form this scheme by imagining that the quick resolution of all the problems of the nation and the return to power of the most conservative forces will not lead to the collapse of the republic. *Züllinger und seine Zucht* is an exception among the texts published in the first years after the end of the conflict because it foresees that the forthcoming socio-political changes will lead to the suppression of civil rights and the total exploitation of the working classes by a small minority of aristocrats and industrialists. However, like all the other contemporary political fantasies, Loele's texts is informed by the belief that the unstable equilibrium of the Weimar Republic could not last: in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* the Oberdeutsche come to power in 1927, only eight years after the formation of the Weimar Republic. According to Jost Hermand, the first and most radical wave of this politically charged futuristic literature ended in 1923, coinciding with the relative stabilisation of the socio-political situation of the Weimar Republic.[112] Later examples of the genre include Alfred Reifenberg's *Des Götzen Moloch Ende* (1925), Johannes R. Becher's *Levisite oder Der einzig gerechte Krieg* (1926), which envisions the rise of a German communist state, and Hans Heyck's *Deutschland ohne Deutsche* (1929). Heyck's text, written from a radical right-wing perspective, interestingly first portrays a near-future dystopia resulting from the deterioration of the institutions of the Weimar Republic and then, at the end, envisages the possible restoration of Germany's social well-being and political power.

Dreams of a New Reich: Volkish Utopias and National Socialism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), pp. 74-99.

[110] On pp. 299-301 of his *The Empire Strikes Out*, William B. Fischer goes as far as to argue that the entire German 'science fiction' of the interwar era (under which term he also includes these kinds of utopian and dystopian texts) is characterised by a 'distinct lack of cohesion as a literary tradition'.

[111] Fisher, p. 6.

[112] Hermand, p. 87.

Weimar's political fantasies – and Loele's novel in particular – assign a central role to eugenics in their portrayal of the new Germany. In doing this, they reflect the contemporary preoccupation with racial hygiene and the scientific control of reproduction. After the conclusion of the First World War, eugenics started to be seen as a necessary countermeasure to avoid the prospect of 'extermination by hunger and territorial loss'.[113] Eugenists believed that after 1918 'a significant proportion of the best, the bravest, and the healthiest had been eliminated for all time';[114] the falling birth rate among the upper and best educated classes, coupled with fears over the scarcity of resources and the general weakening of the surviving population as a consequence of the war,[115] made their claims all the more pertinent. Roughly two million Germans were killed and other four million were wounded in the First World War, corresponding in total to around 19 percent of the entire male population of the country.[116] Eugenists started to press for the reinvigoration of the nation through science and careful social planning: convinced of the fundamental importance of heredity in the determination of all the physical and psychological characteristics of the individual, they campaigned for the creation of financial incentives for the supposedly fittest families and the segregation and sterilisation of all 'deviants and undesirables'. The most radical eugenists even went as far as to suggest 'euthanasia' for the handicapped and the feebleminded.[117] None of these measures was actually implemented before the establishment of the Nazi dictatorship in 1933, and the governments of the Weimar Republic decided to counter possible degeneration with welfare-oriented measures such as improved housing and education and a better health system.[118] However, many of the most radical ideas of the eugenists were openly endorsed by a number of politicians of both Left and Right. Eugenic theories became particularly popular among intellectuals and in the universities: academic lectures in racial hygiene were held in Göttingen, Berlin, Freiburg and other major cities.[119]

In academic and scientific circles, a strong emphasis was put on the concept of race. The belief in the existence of clearly defined separate races, each possessing its own measurable value, and in the social Darwinist concept of their perpetual struggle for adaptation and survival in a changing environment, was linked to contemporary eugenic theories.[120] A substantial

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[113] Paul Weindling, 'German Eugenics and the Wider World: Beyond the Racial State', in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics*, pp.315-331 (p. 320). See also Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 8-9.

[114] Kühl, pp. 34-35.

[115] See Ruth Henig, *The Weimar Republic 1919-1933* (Oxon and New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), pp. 5-6, and Weitz, pp. 304-305.

[116] Weitz, pp. 8-9.

[117] Hawkins, pp. 232-237. See also Weindling, 'German Eugenics and the Wider World', pp. 315-321.

[118] Weindling, 'German Eugenics and the Wider World', pp. 320-321.

[119] See Hawkins, pp. 232-233, and Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism*, pp. 337-348. Hawkins also notes that although similar theories were being put forward also in Great Britain and in the other major European countries, in the aftermath of the First World War they obtained more widespread following in Germany than in other parts of Europe.

[120] On Social Darwinism and its relationship with interwar eugenics, see Hawkins, pp. 184-248. See also Diane B. Paul, 'Darwin, Social Darwinism and Eugenics', in *The Cambridge Companion to Darwin*, ed. by Jonathan Hodge and Gregory Radick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 219-245.

portion of the German eugenists of the time argued that the highly developed German race risked total extinction as a consequence of military defeat and the increasing amalgamation with supposedly inferior groups of people. Alfred Ploetz, who had launched the periodical *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie* in 1904 and founded the Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene in 1905, Fritz Lenz and Eugen Fischer were three of the most outspoken proponents of racist eugenics during the interwar era. The *Archiv für Rassen- und Gesellschaftsbiologie* was published continuously until 1944. Hans F. K. Günther was the author of the influential *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes* (1922), and publisher Julius Lehmann founded the journal *Volk und Rasse* in 1926.[121] The most influential textbook on heredity of the era, *Grundriß der menschlichen Erblichkeitslehre und Rassenhygiene* (1921), which Fischer and Lenz wrote together with Erwin Bauer, describes all the non-European ethnic groups – such as the 'negro races' and the 'Mongoloids' – as inferior and the 'Teutons' as the summit of human evolution. In order to maintain their superior qualities, the Teutons have to remain genetically pure and avoid racial mixing. The Jews, though relatively more developed than other races, are particularly dangerous because they live in a parasitic relationship with the Teutons and continually try to control them by inducing them to accept Jewish leadership.[122] In the socially and politically unstable years which immediately followed the First World War, indeed, anti-Semitism experienced a violent resurgence in Germany on the basis of the new racial eugenic theories: the Jews were portrayed as one of the inferior groups of peoples with whom pure Aryans should not intermingle.[123] It was precisely this kind of genetically motivated anti-Semitism which was taken over by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party and became an essential part of German policy after 1933.

Most of Weimar's political fantasies predicted that eugenic theories would be put into practice in the German nation that was to come. Werner Hillmann, the hero of Montanus's *Die Rettung des Abendlandes*, undertakes the mission to breed a pure 'germanische Rasse' – separated from 'den Romanen und allen südeuropäischen Mischvölkern' – in order to save 'das Abendland aus dem Einfluß der orientalischen Starrkrampfbazillen'.[124] In Heyck's *Deutschland ohne Deutsche* the protagonist Linus Koppelhuber lays the foundation of a new German nation formed only by 'denjenigen Deutschen, die noch Deutsche sind' and located in Scandinavia, a place which has not yet been racially contaminated by 'den Söhnen Afrikas' and 'dem

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[121] See Weindling, 'German Eugenics and the Wider World', pp. 315-321, and Robert N. Proctor, *Racial Hygiene – Medicine Under the Nazis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 48-63. See also Kühl, p. 50.

[122] Erwin Bauer, Eugen Fischer and Fritz Lenz, *Human Heredity*, trans. by Eden and Cedar Paul (London: Allen and Unwin, 1931), pp. 628-677. Bauer's, Fischer's and Lenz's text expands on some of the ideas about the Jews which had already been presented in Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1899), a book which enjoyed great popularity in the years following the First World War.

[123] Donald L. Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), p. 7. See also Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria* (London: Peter Halban, 1988), p. 230.

[124] Ernst Otto Montanus, *Die Rettung des Abendlandes* (Chemnitz: Focke Verlag, 1921), p. 300.

Judentum'.[125] Similarly, in *Des Götzen Moloch Ende* Alfred Reifenberg envisions the formation of a racially pure German Reich composed of 'allen deutschstämmigen Ländern' and completely opposed to multi-ethnic France –the country which has brought 'die schwarze Pest über die Völker Europas' by blending with the African races.[126] In the new state which will replace the Weimar Republic, these authors imagine, political leaders will only allow the presence and reproduction of people belonging to the superior German race.

Loele's treatment of eugenics and of the artificial control of reproduction differs from that of the other contemporary German political fantasies in various ways. The first difference is socio-political: the Oberdeutsche choose to use eugenics as an instrument of power rather than as a means to improve the health or racial purity of the nation.[127] Confronted by a sharp decline in the birth rates of the exploited working classes, the Oberdeutsche respond by creating new human beings endowed with the specific physical and mental characteristics that are more beneficial to *their* government. Contemporary discussions on eugenics remained extremely vague about the criteria by which a physical or mental characteristic should be considered desirable or undesirable.[128] In *Züllinger und seine Zucht* Loele portrays a future Germany in which despotic rulers determine these selection criteria arbitrarily and according to their needs. The Züchtlinge are not, as Dina Brandt writes, 'eine sich zur Perfektion entwickelnden Spezies'.[129] They are very strong, healthy and tireless and at the same time mentally impaired: in Oberdeutschland they can be used as very efficient and completely subjugated workers, servants and soldiers. Negative eugenics is then applied to make the Züchtlinge sterile: new specimens will be generated only when the rulers need them. Loele's creatures are, in other words, genetically more adapted than the other Germans to the socio-political conditions which the Oberdeutsche enforce and want to maintain: at least in the rulers' original plans, they are at the same time useful and naturally servile.[130] Being thus conceived at least in part as an improvement on the human stock from which they are generated, the Züchtlinge are presented as a possible replacement for the social classes which are considered more troublesome. In one occasion, a young Oberdeutscher indicatively argues that the rulers will soon get rid of the human workers because the Züchtlinge are more useful (Loele, 96). Such a radical depiction of future eugenics is absent from all other contemporary Weimar political fantasies.[131]

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[125] Hans Heyck, *Deutschland ohne Deutsche* (Leipzig: L. Staackmann Verlag, 1930), pp. 302-305. 'Germanen' have been transferred to Scandinavia by Linus for years, so that all the children who were born there possess superior German genetic traits (p. 304).

[126] Alfred Reifenberg, *Des Götzen Moloch Ende* (Wolfratshausen: Hoheneichen Verlag, 1925), p. 202.

[127] This is not to say that the Oberdeutsche do not consider themselves racially superior to the inhabitants of all other countries. In the novel, they are indeed explicitly called 'die Nachkommen der […] echt deutschvölkischen, wahrhaften Vaterlandspartei' (Loele, p. 7).

[128] Hawkins, p. 232.

[129] Brandt, p. 201.

[130] It is interesting to note that the same conclusion will be drawn by Bertrand Russell four years later in his treatise *Icarus, or The Future of Science* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1924), pp. 51-52. If the matter of eugenics and reproduction starts to be administered by 'State officials', Russell argues, they will probably 'breed a subservient population, convenient to rulers but incapable of initiative'.

[131] Brandt, p. 201. When considering the whole German utopian and dystopian production of the time, a similarly extreme portrayal of new scientifically engineered beings is present only in Alfred Döblin's *Berge Meere und Giganten* (1924). In Döblin's work, the tyrant Delvil orders the creation of strange

The second and more crucial difference between the use of eugenics in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and in the other contemporary German novels is that in Loele's text, as I mentioned above, eugenics leads to the creation of a new species that is difficult to fit in the established taxonomy and yet is still human in more than a way. With its very existence, this new species poses many complex problems of definition and delimitation for all the characters in the novel. Although they are created in the laboratory and effectively mass produced, the Züchtlinge are not completely artificial. Being the biological offspring of some of the members of the lower classes, they are indeed not mechanical like Karel Čapek's robots in *R.U.R.* and Thea von Harbou's Maschinenmensch in *Metropolis*. Züllinger's creatures are stronger and sturdier than normal humans, and new specimens can be made to have different characteristics according to the rulers' needs. However, they are not infinitely malleable and they need to be gradually taught new tasks like normal human beings. The Züchtlinge are bought and sold as commodities, but – thanks in part to Züllinger's intervention – they eventually acquire a sort of political consciousness and rebel against the Oberdeutsche. Such a striking combination of human and non-human features in the Züchtlinge is indicative of the uncertainty and confusion that the developments of eugenics and artificial reproduction were causing in the traditional classification of living beings. Loele's Züchtlinge – and, as it will become clear in the second part of the chapter, Bernard's 'new race of devils' – are then a new kind of eugenic liminal beings, different from the previous fictional artificial beings because they are products of a time in which 'evolution rather than engineering seemed the most promising vehicle of human aspirations'.[132] The era of 'eugenic aspiration', as Susan Merrill Squier writes, is indeed characterised by an 'obsessive concern with the boundaries of race and species' precisely because early twentieth-century scientific and technological progress begins to threaten all the established taxonomic categories.[133] If eugenics can indeed be applied to humans, and if it will become possible, as *Züllinger und seine Zucht* suggests, to create men and women in the laboratory and genetically modify them, then these new men and women will either have to be accommodated in the traditional category of the human being or will have to be defined in a different way.

Posthumanist studies, which develop in the second half of the twentieth century and thus in the period of the great expansion of biotechnology and genetic engineering, argue that the traditional nomenclature has gradually been made obsolete by the progress of science and technology, and should therefore be radically modified. Posthumanism suggests that a truly adequate definition of the human being should consider men and women 'as a congeries' whose origins are multispecies, and technology 'not as a mere prosthesis to human identity but

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giants made up of the bodies of several living organisms: 'Tierleiber Pflanzen Gräser' and 'zuletzt Menschen'. See Alfred Döblin, *Berge Meere und Giganten* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2006), p. 514. Döblin's hybrid beings, however, are not the result of a eugenic experiment, and ultimately are not really human in any recognisable way.
[132] Horst Albert Glaser and Sabine Rossbach, *The Artificial Human – A Tragical History* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), p. 106. See also Sidney Perkowitz, *Digital People: From Bionic Humans to Androids* (Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press, 2004), pp. 25-26.
[133] Merrill Squier, p. 101.

as *integral* to it'.[134] The characters in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, which was published at the beginning of the biotechnological era, attempt instead to preserve the classic humanist framework. As the following will show, the Oberdeutsche consider the Züchtlinge from the beginning completely non-human – and therefore too different from the other citizens to pose a threat to the established boundaries. Conversely, Züllinger tries in the second part of the novel to treat the creatures as conventional human beings, characterised by their use of reason and the ability to make decision and act independently. In spite of the characters' unwillingness to accept the shift in paradigm, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* anticipates some of the central questions of posthumanism by challenging the presumed immutability of human nature and the existence of clear boundaries between humanity and technology. In a society in which new workers and soldiers are artificially generated and then mass produced, the traditional nomenclature *does* seem obsolete. Loele's speculation on the possible future creation of the eugenic liminal beings in an era as decisive for the development of modern science as the interwar period, in other words, contributes to open the breach in classic humanism whose full implications will finally be acknowledged by posthumanism.

Loele's portrayal of the creation of the Züchtlinge in Chapters 1 and 2 anticipates the confusion between human and non-human features that will characterise all the subsequent appearances of the eugenic liminal beings. On the one hand, the process is described at length, with great attention to technical detail and the use of chemical and biological terminology. Loele writes about animal experimentation, mouse uteri, artificial placenta, external wombs, and scientifically induced growth. When he is issued with the order to create new workers for the Oberdeutsche, Züllinger first experiments with mice, then manages to fertilise human eggs artificially, gestate the resulting embryos in the laboratory and select for them the genetic traits desired by the rulers. The baby Züchtlinge are then referred to as the mere result of a scientific experiment: 'eine erste Serie wohlgebildeter, ungeheurer kräftiger Säuglinge war das Resultat' (Loele, 25). On the other hand, the passage unmistakably links the Züchtlinge to their human origins: when Züllinger sets out to create them, he selects the 'kräftigsten und gesundesten Mann und die kräftigste und gesundeste Frau aus dem Volke' and then experiment with their sex organs (Loele, 22-23). The method that the scientist uses to incubate the embryos is ectogenesis or extrauterine gestation, a form of artificial procreation that was envisioned for the first time in the years immediately after the end of the First World War and that, though still scientifically impossible, was being debated at the time as a viable future form of *human* reproduction.[135] When Züllinger finally succeeds in creating the Züchtlinge, these are portrayed as bigger and stronger than normal humans, but physically still essentially similar to them.

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[134] Nayar, pp. 8-9.

[135] The term 'ectogenesis' was only coined in 1924 by British physicist and biologist J. B. S. Haldane for his treatise *Daedalus, or Science and the Future* (indeed the process is never given a proper name in Loele's novel). The topic of extrauterine gestation, however, was widely debated in Germany and in the rest of Europe during the interwar years. See McLaren, pp. 109-110, and Christine Schreiber, *Natürlich künstliche Befruchtung? – Eine Geschichte der In-vitro-Fertilisation von 1878 bis 1950* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), pp. 240-250.

In order to avoid any form of confusion with the traditional German citizens, the Züchtlinge are immediately marked out by the rulers as a class of slave workers with a specific and delimited role and function in society. As a first measure, the Oberdeutsche choose for them the physical features which are most different from those possessed by the pure Germans. 'Selbstverständlich', Loele writes, the Züchtlinge must not resemble in appearance the genetically perfect 'Germanic type' and are forbidden to have blue eyes and blond hair. Thus, the Oberdeutsche settle on what they consider an inferior Slavic-Latin blend characterised by dark hair, black eyebrows and big, light eyes (Loele, 27). In addition to being genetically different from the ruling Oberdeutsche, the Züchtlinge receive a different education: they are not taught how to speak nor to understand language, they are forbidden to work in contact with nature and their manual and mental skills are stifled by a chemical solution invented by Züllinger (Loele, 29-30). The Oberdeutsche therefore assign great importance to the environment as well as to heredity in the determination of the characteristics of the individual. In the rulers' plans, the Züchtlinge will have to become the perfect race of slaves through both the selection of the genes and the post-natal influence of environment and education.

The discourse over the relative importance of heredity and personal experience was particularly prominent among eugenists in the first decades of the century. Francis Galton, the founder of modern eugenics, had been the first intellectual to reformulate the classic nature-nurture debate in these terms;[136] Leonard Darwin, president of the Eugenics Society from 1911 to 1928, expanded on Galton's theories and became the foremost advocate of the supremacy of heredity over environment. The eugenists who sided with Darwin, in other words, believed in biological determinism: human beings 'differ in fundamental abilities because of innate differences', and these differences are always 'biologically inherited'.[137] Biological determinists believe that men and women are solely the results of the genetic traits they receive at birth, and that education and experience cannot change their essential nature. 'Reform eugenists', by contrast, held that the genetic quality of the population could be also raised by intervening on the social and environmental factors which influence men and women after birth, and tried to promote health and welfare measures for all classes.[138] The discourse over heredity and environment reached its peak in the years which followed the First World War: as Dale Goldhaber writes, 'clearly, in the 1920s, the […] debate was in full flower'.[139] The attention that the ruling classes pay to the rearing and upbringing of the genetically modified beings in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* is directed at two main objectives: the precise categorisation of the Züchtlinge as a race whose abilities and power stand in contradistinction to the Oberdeutsche and the prevention of any possibility of a rebellion. The Züchtlinge must only possess the mental and physical abilities which are required by the particular task they are designed to carry

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[136] For a history of the nature-nurture debate in relation to twentieth-century eugenics, see Dale Goldhaber, *The Nature-Nurture Debates – Bridging the Gap* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 14-36.

[137] Richard C. Lewontin, *Biology as Ideology – The Doctrine of DNA* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1991), pp. 22-23.

[138] See Hawkins, pp. 218-219, and Bland and Hall, p. 216.

[139] Goldhaber, p. 22.

out: in this way they can best fit the socio-political needs of the rulers. A very similar portrayal of the pre- and postnatal conditioning of an enslaved working class, in the context of a more general attack to the increasing mechanisation of modern society, is present in Aldous Huxley's much later novel *Brave New World*. In *Brave New World*, which will be analysed in the second chapter of the present thesis, the subjugated workers of the Gamma, Delta and Epsilon classes are both assigned their specifically required genetic traits and hypnotised and drugged so as to become docile and unwilling to rebel.[140] Like the Züchtlinge, the working classes of the Brave New World (and, to a lesser extent, its Alpha and Beta citizens as well) are generated via ectogenesis and eugenics and duly labelled in order to fit in the lower echelons of a social system whose stability the leaders want to ensure.

In Loele's novel, the Oberdeutsche want both to employ eugenics to create an improved subservient population and to preserve a clear difference between what is human and what is not. In order to do this, they assign the Züchtlinge to a specific and separate biological species at the same time as they insert them firmly into the future German authoritarian society. As soon as they are generated, the Züchtlinge are designated as 'Kunstmenschen', and then as artificial 'Produkte' and 'Wesen';[141] they are never acknowledged as men and women but only as scientifically produced 'Geschöpfe'. Later on, in the eleventh chapter of the book, they are even called 'Züchtlingsvieh' and 'Züchtlingsschweine' (Loele, 99). As Chris Baldick demonstrates in an essay on Frankenstein's monster, which in Shelley's novel is called, in this order, 'monster', 'fiend', 'daemon', 'creature', and 'wretch',[142] the terms which are used to designate the liminal being are extremely important in the definition of its nature. The expressions used by the Oberdeutsche are more and more indicative of their intention to mark out the Züchtlinge as creatures who are – in spite of their origins – completely different from the real human beings. In a particularly telling passage of the novel, the 'Großgottschaftverweser' Götzenleuchter, the most important religious authority of Oberdeutschland, founds the difference between humans and Züchtlinge on the principle of the immortality of the soul: he affirms that the Züchtlinge do not possess a soul, and that they are therefore 'nur Fleisch und vergänglich wie Fleisch'. In a public speech to the other Oberdeutsche, Götzenleuchter distorts the Christian doctrine and asserts that the creatures, having all been generated 'auf künstlichem Wege' from the gametes of only two German workers, each have such a tiny fraction of the original souls of their biological parents that they can be considered completely inhuman (Loele, 48). In a new era in which science starts to blur the lines of demarcation between natural and artificial life, Götzenleuchter wants the Oberdeutsche to return to an earlier, religious paradigm. For similar reasons, every kind of romantic and sexual relationship between the Züchtlinge and the true German citizens is prohibited. When Isolde, the daughter of Züllinger's supervisor Knobbe, is

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[140] In the first chapters of the novel, for example, Huxley describes very eloquently the 'oxygen-shortage' which is used to 'keep a [specific] embryo below par' and the hot tunnels bombarded by X-rays which induce 'a horror of cold' in the embryos who 'were predestined to emigrate to the tropics'. See Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (London: Vintage, 2004), pp. 11-12.

[141] These expressions are first used, in this order, on pp. 26-28 of the novel.

[142] Chris Baldick, 'The Politics of Monstrosity', in *Frankenstein: Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. by Fred Botting (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 48-67 (p. 48).

discovered to be having an affair with a Züchtling whom she had secretly asked Züllinger to make sexually potent, she is immediately forced to break it off and to marry one of her suitors. In a later passage Züllinger deceives the 'Großjunkerschaftverweser' Januschalk, one of the greatest political authorities in Oberdeutschland, into thinking that the newborn son of the fertile Züchtling Hera is in fact his son. When Januschalk discovers the truth he ruthlessly kills Hera's child by smashing him against the floor (Loele, 85). It is not only personal honour which is at stake in this passage: the human and the non-human must be kept separate in their upbringing as well as in procreative terms. It is by drawing distinctions as sharp as these that the Oberdeutsche can continue to relegate the Züchtlinge to a separate biological species.

Loele's dystopia, as evidenced above, links the discourse on the future possibilities of eugenics and ectogenesis to the rise of a new despotic state rigidly controlled by the most violent and reactionary political forces. The author's portrait of the creation of the eugenic liminal beings is intimately connected with the specific German socio-political situation of the period: in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* the control of reproduction and heredity is only one of the foreseeable consequences – albeit possibly the most important one – of the imminent rise of a post-Weimar right-wing dictatorship. The future state Loele imagines in the immediate aftermath of the suppression of the 1918-19 revolution is indeed characterised as a direct continuation of the strongly centralised and politically aggressive German Empire which had collapsed only two years before the novel's publication.[143] More specifically, Loele explicitly links Oberdeutschland with the Empire's most reactionary, staunchly nationalistic and anti-democratic traits, all of which were traditionally associated with Prussianism.[144] In *Züllinger und seine Zucht* the Junker aristocracy, which had been the most powerful and 'inveterate bearer of traditional Prussianism' in the German Empire,[145] constitutes one of the three ruling classes of Oberdeutschland, together with organised industry and religion. The socialist and communist parties, historical enemies of the Junker class under Emperor Wilhelm II, have been defeated and made illegal. Eugenic measures, already planned by all major European nations at the time of the publication of the novel, become in such a state a major instrument of power and subjugation. In order to present this complex structure of political authoritarianism, virulent nationalism, and the extreme use of eugenics and artificial procreation, Loele uses satire and parody.

With its use of ridicule and mocking to attack the faults of society, satire demands, like dystopia, 'a high degree […] of commitment to and involvement with the painful problems of the

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[143] For an in-depth analysis of the socio-political situation of the German Empire, and in particular of the Wilhelmine era, see David Blackbourn, *History of Germany 1780-1918 – The Long Nineteenth Century* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 304-347, and Mark Hewitson, 'Wilhelmine Germany', in *The Short Oxford History of Germany – Imperial Germany 1871-1918*, ed. By James Retallack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 40-60. See also Volker R. Berghahn, *Imperial Germany 1871-1914 – Economy, Society, Culture, and Politics* (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1994), pp. 270-281.

[144] On the concept of Prussianism and how it was viewed in the first decades of the century, see Stefan Berger, 'Prussia in History and Historiography from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Centuries', in *Modern Prussian History: 1830-1947*, ed. by Philip G. Dwyer (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), pp. 21-42, and Emilio Willems, *A Way of Life and Death: Three Centuries of Prussian-German Militarism* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1986), pp. 72-98.

[145] Willems, p. 73.

world'.[146] Loele utilizes it in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* in relation to both the Oberdeutsche and the weak mass of the workers, and in so doing he places them in direct comparison with the Züchtlinge (who, as it will be showed, are gradually presented under a much more positive light). The militant but empty nationalism and the political aggressiveness of the ruling classes are evident in their constant rhetorical glorification of the 'dreimal heiliges' Fatherland and in the simultaneous denigration of all other European nations. While Oberdeutschland is identified with 'Gesundheit', 'Schönheit' and 'Sittlichkeit', the 'mixed peoples' who live outside Germany are barbarous and similar to animals (Loele, 46-47). Even the use of foreign words is prohibited in Oberdeutschland, so that all the citizens are forced to use improbably convoluted expressions like 'Geheimrätling der Stofflichkeitslehre' for 'Chemieprofessor'. Like the most extreme fringes of the German nationalists the Oberdeutsche blame the supposedly inferior neighbouring countries for the 'devilish' peace treaty imposed on them after the World War. In a public speech to the other Oberdeutsche, Knobbe explicitly refers to the day when they will rise against the enemy nations and conquer them (Loele, 75). The book also includes numerous drawings by Hans Albert Förster depicting deformed and grotesque state authorities wearing swastikas on their uniforms.[147] The same Oberdeutsche who utter all these discourses, however, conspire against each other throughout the novel to gain more personal power at the expense of national unity and harmony. Even the election of a new Emperor, in the twelfth chapter of the book, is described as having been secretly manipulated from above: the monarch has been personally chosen by Götzenleuchter as the most stupid of the descendants of Wilhelm II (Loele, 110).[148] Götzenleuchter, the most cunning of the ruling Oberdeutsche, also represents the corruption of the ecclesiastical authorities under the dictatorship – and his very name is an obvious sarcastic allusion to his religious and political role. As in the reality of the German Empire (where the state 'had the power […] to recruit the clergy, particularly the Protestant clergy, to perform ideological services')[149] organised religion is in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* a powerful tool in the hands of the dictators. The Oberdeutsche consistently refer to God in their public speeches to justify their actions, and their official manifesto begins with the motto 'Gott mit uns!' (Loele, 13). Derogatory or sarcastic speaking names are also used for other members of the ruling class: the name of the Großjunkerschaftverweser Januschalk is formed by the words "Janus", which evokes the Roman two-headed god and consequently two-facedness and hypocrisy, and "Schalk", which suggests that he is a mischievous trickster. Isolde, the name of Knobbe's daughter, obviously evokes ideas of romantic love and thus contrasts sharply with her decision to commission Züllinger with the creation of a sexually potent Züchtlinge for her private use.

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[146] Matthew Hodgart, *Satire: Origins and Principles* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2010), p. 11.

[147] Loele, p. 4. The 1998 Belleville Verlag edition reprints all the original drawings.

[148] The passage describes the monarch as a 'Nachkomme Wilhelm Lehmanns'; 'Lehmann' was a popular nickname of Wilhelm II among the working classes. See Bernd Rabe, *Solidarität im Alltagsleben: Geschichte der Arbeiterwohlfahrt, Bezirksverband Hannover* (Hannover: Fackelträger, 1990), p. 25.

[149] Willems, p. 85. When he rallies the Züchtlinge against the Oberdeutsche, Züllinger explicitly tells them that organised religion is 'eine besonders schlaue Erfindung' of the rulers (Loele, 120).

Whereas the ruling classes of Oberdeutschland are violent and corrupt, the mass of the exploited workers is idle and inept. Loele uses satire to underline the complete failure of the working class to understand the gravity of their situation and the urgent need for an armed revolution against the tyrants. [150] This attitude is particularly evident in the behaviour of Züllinger's elderly cousins Ida, Thekla and Stephanie. The three women, 'drei hochbetagten, in gleich weiße, gestärkte und geplättete Kittel gekleideten Mädchen' (Loele, 7), are dull and harmless, and are content to wait passively for better times without realizing the role the dictators have in their misery. They are described as very religious and pious, but lacking personal initiative (Loele, 11). Even in the face of the most unfair social policies of the Oberdeutsche, Thekla only replies resignedly that it was God who wanted it that way. In spite of the blatant social inequalities to which all the workers are subjected, thus, in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* the masses never truly rebel against the rulers. Before the final battle against the Oberdeutsche, it is specified, the scientist's army consists of all the Züchtlinge and only some workers whom Züllinger had struggled to win for his cause (Loele, 104). When, after the first clashes, a disheartened Züllinger proposes to his soldiers to escape to a foreign country, the workers immediately accept his offer and quickly devise an escape plan (Loele, 116). On the contrary, all the Züchtlinge decide to stay in Germany and continue the fight. At the end of the novel, when he is about to die as a result of the battle, Züllinger again refers to the workers by murmuring: 'das hättet ihr vor vierzig Jahren selber besorgen sollen' (Loele, 133): a final indictment of the working class which failed to free itself from the tyrants without external aid.

In a future society where both the political rulers and the exploited masses are depicted negatively and satirically, the Züchtlinge stand out as a positive force for change. The eugenic hybrids, the liminal beings whom the Oberdeutsche immediately categorise as non-humans, reveal themselves to possess many of the qualities which the other classes lack. When the effects of the powerful drugs they have been administered start to wear off, the Züchtlinge begin to show both a sensitive nature and a fierce spirit. In the tenth chapter of the novel, the two Züchtlinge Ajax and Diana come into contact with nature and become happy and playful: they look with wonder at the trees and the grass, laugh and even jump into the foliage and start to play. Soon, Ajax and Diana fall in love with each other; none of the other major characters in the novel, it should be noted, is shown developing similar feelings. Loele indeed abstains in this passage from using satire and mockery and uses a more poetic language: '[Dianas] Herz wurde schwer von einem unverstandenen Gefühl, sie sank auf die Knie und weinte laut', and 'Ajax fühlte Mitleid, ohne es zu wissen' and 'Liebe, ohne Kenntnis, was Liebe sei' (Loele, 90-92). Immediately after having discovered love, the two Züchtlinge rebel against their violent masters, kill some of them and are in turn killed. In Chapter 11, the Züchtling Krollo is appalled by the cruelty and maliciousness of the young Oberdeutsche who use him as a slave. Tormented by his masters, Krollo reflects on the wickedness of humanity and on the strange nature of men and women (Loele, 97-98). In the end, like Ajax and Diana, Krollo rebels against the tyrants,

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[150] Peter S. Fisher argues that this lack of initiative of the German workers again echoes the failed revolution of 1918-19, when the working class 'had foolishly supported' the moderate political forces. See Fisher, p. 157.

fights bravely against them and manages to kill many before he is shot down. Whereas the German workers submit meekly to the Oberdeutsche, the Züchtlinge slowly come to understand the unfairness of their social situation.

The progressive change of tone in the presentation of the Züchtlinge is mirrored by the development of the way in which Züllinger sees them. At the beginning of the novel, he considers them as the potential agents of his revenge against the Oberdeutsche: the Züchtlinge are for him a means to an end, para-human creatures that he can use to change the German political situation. In the Züchtlinge, Züllinger sees a golden opportunity to satisfy his hatred for the rulers; in the first half of the novel they are for him, in other words, non-human agents to be used against human tyrants (Loele, 24). In the last chapters of the book, however, when he starts to gather them and to organise them into an army, Züllinger progressively changes his opinion. In contrast with the Oberdeutsche, who as seen above refer to the Züchtlinge by using expressions which mark out their supposed otherness, Züllinger comes to acknowledge in his language the creatures' humanity. The decisive factors in the scientist's change of attitude are the loyalty of the Züchtlinge, their commitment to the cause of freedom and – above all – their capacity to reason and learn. 'Hera und andere Züchtlinge, die denken konnten', the narrator recounts, assist Züllinger in all the most decisive moments of the revolution. In Chapter 12 Loele introduces a Züchtling named Pluto, whom Züllinger calls Plato because of his 'philosophischer Geist'. The scientist is impressed by Plato's intelligence and curiosity and explains to him how the Züchtlinge were generated. When Plato asks him what the difference between human beings and artificial objects is, Züllinger replies that 'Menschen [haben] die Gabe des vernünftigen Denkens' (Loele, 105-106). With these words, Züllinger returns to the traditional humanist framework which defines men and women primarily as beings who are capable of thought and decisions and includes the Züchtlinge in it. Since the eugenic liminal beings have proven capable of thinking and reasoning, and since they act decisively against the Oberdeutsche, they can be considered humans: the humanist paradigm is thus preserved. The most meaningful boundary, in Züllinger's view, becomes that between (free) humans and (slave) machines: his creatures, he declares, will not become machines again (Loele, 108). At the end of the novel, having found a solution to the question of the liminal beings diametrically opposed to that of the Oberdeutsche, Züllinger calls the Züchtlinge 'Kinder' (Loele, 119) and rebels against the tyrants together with them.

Züllinger und seine Zucht pushes the boundaries of the eugenic dystopia by shifting the focus from the state implementation of the new scientific procedures to the actual progress of identification and assimilation of the liminal beings into the future society. In doing this, Loele's text first acknowledges (and contributes to deepen) the crisis of the traditional conceptualization of humanity which followed the development of modern science and technology and then attempts to solve it by finding new ways to include the future artificial beings in the established taxonomy. Loele links this problem with the specific socio-political reality of the immediate aftermath of the First World War and thus, as noted above, belongs in many ways to the wave of German future fantasies which predicted the fall of the Weimar Republic and the establishment of a new autocratic Empire. However, he assigns a much more central role to the

control of reproduction in his portrayal of the future rulers' plans, and singles out eugenics and artificial procreation as major instruments of power. It is precisely this double concern with the possibility of the generation of new men and women through artificial means and the prospect that the future rulers might be able to completely control such a technology that makes *Züllinger und seine Zucht* particularly relevant among the early twentieth-century technological dystopias.

The New Race of Devils

John Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* was published only one year after *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and shares many similarities with Loele's text, in both plot and setting. *The New Race of Devils* takes place in Germany both before and after the end of the First World War and portrays the tyrants' attempt scientifically to create perfect soldiers endowed with great physical prowess but with no emotions. The novel is divided into three parts: in the first, set in 1915, Emperor Wilhelm II and his officials decide that the only way for Germany to triumph against all its adversaries is to use eugenics to produce subjects who are fitter for war and violence. Biologist Frederick Werner succeeds in isolating the mental and physical traits which are considered most desirable by the rulers – strength, brutality and lack of sensibility – and performs an operation of artificial procreation to transmit them to the first of the new children. Wilhelm II and his officials devise a long-term plan to build an army of super-soldiers, and secret experiments are immediately started throughout the Empire. The second part of the novel is set after the declaration of the Weimar Republic, between 1926 and 1932. The first of Werner's new soldiers, Arnauld, has been adopted by Major von Hartweg and is educated to the unconditional love of the fatherland and the hatred of all foreign enemies. The young Arnauld meets and befriends fellow aristocrat Elsa Siebert; when, returning from military school, he discovers that a lieutenant has proposed to Elsa, he forcibly seduces and then abandons her. In the last part of the novel, set in 1934 after the restauration of the Empire, Arnauld has become the most capable and feared official of the German army and Elsa the lady-in-waiting of Princess Louise. The new authoritarian Emperor August Wilhelm, the son of Wilhelm II, has continued his father's plans and is ready to invade England with a battalion of super-soldiers. Arnauld is selected as the leader of the new soldiers; however, in spite of the rulers' efforts to make him completely insensitive, he slowly starts to develop some feelings for Elsa. August Wilhelm's brother Eitel Friedrich, meanwhile, eager for power, secretly foments a popular revolt against the Emperor and reveals to Arnauld the truth about Doctor Werner's eugenic experiments. Arnauld first kills the Crown Prince William,[151] who was trying to court Elsa, out of jealousy, then rebels against the Emperor at the head of the other super-soldiers. Berlin is completely devastated by Werner's creatures, August Wilhelm is murdered and Elsa is killed by a bomb during the clashes. Arnauld, embittered by the revelation of his origins and distraught by Elsa's death, takes her body with him and flies in an aeroplane into the Baltic Sea.

The New Race of Devils was written by John Bernard and published by the Anglo-Eastern Publishing Company of W. N. Willis, an Australian-born publisher who specialised in cheap

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[151] The name of the Crown Prince is in English in Bernard's text.

popular fiction and melodramas.[152] Contrary to what Willis states in his 'Preface' to the book, Bernard was not a former soldier and prisoner of war in Germany with a good knowledge of science.[153] "John Bernard" is actually the pseudonym of Irish author Annie O'Meara de Vic Beamish (1883-1969),[154] who was born in Dublin and published her first novels in London in the early 1920s. De Vic Beamish was the daughter of a military chaplain and received an informal education at home. After leaving Ireland, she alternated between writing novels and founding and running language schools.[155] Beamish published most of her works under the name "Noel de Vic Beamish"; the male pen name "John Bernard" was used only for her two early novels, *The New Race of Devils* and *A Woman of Fire* (1923). Beamish subsequently settled in France, where she lived together with her partner Suzanne Allévy. During the Nazi occupation of the country she was forced, aged almost sixty, to retire to the small village of Roussillon, where she met and befriended Samuel Beckett.[156] Beamish died in Switzerland on 1 August 1969. She wrote and published most of her novels after the Second World War, in the last fifteen years of her life; the majority of these works were historical adventure novels set in the Middle Ages. *The New Race of Devils*, her only dystopia, has been described as 'especially rare',[157] and – in spite of its very peculiar and extreme depiction of eugenics – has never been analysed in the context of the contemporary discourse on the increasing mechanization of society. A direct comparison with Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht* will allow for a better understanding of how the application of modern science and technology to human life were popularly perceived in the early 1920s.

Like *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, *The New Race of Devils* links the discourse on eugenics with the specific socio-political anxieties which characterised the post-war era. Bernard's dystopia belongs to the genre of future war novel, and in particular to those which foreshadow the possibility of an invasion of Britain on the part of the German army. The genre had first risen to prominence in the 1890s and then became particularly popular in the decade which preceded the First World War, in conjunction with the radicalisation of the aggressive foreign policy of Emperor Wilhelm II and the progressive deterioration of the diplomatic relationship between Great Britain and Imperial Germany. Examples include Erskine Childers's *The Riddle of the*

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[152] For information about Willis and the Anglo-Eastern Publishing Company, see John Arnold, 'Australian Books, Publishers and Writers in England, 1900-1940', in *Australians in Britain: The Twentieth-Century Experience,* ed. by Carl Bridge, Robert Crawford and David Dunstan (Melbourne: Monash University ePress, 2009), pp. 10.1-10.19. See aso Douglas A. Anderson, 'Taking another Look at Rare Fantasy and Supernatural Literature', *Wormwood: Literature of the Fantastic, Supernatural and Decadent*, Spring 2012, 80-87 (pp. 83-85).

[153] W. N. Willis, 'Preface', in John Bernard, *The New Race of Devils* (London: Anglo-Eastern Publishing Company, 1921), pp. i-iv.

[154] Since the novel was published by Beamish under the pen name of John Bernard, in the present thesis I am going to refer to the author as 'John Bernard', and I will consequently use masculine pronouns when referring to him.

[155] Robert Reginald, Douglas Menville and Mary A. Burgess, *Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature*, 2 vols. (Detroit, MI: Gale Research, 1979), II, p. 812.

[156] James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1996), pp. 327-331.

[157] Anderson, p. 83. *The New Race of Devils* is, however, listed in Lyman Tower Sargent's extensive catalogue of *British and American Utopian Literature, 1516-1985* (New York, NY: Garland Publishing, 1988), p. 168.

Sands (1903), William Le Queux's *The Invasion of 1910* (1906), Arthur Perry Eardley-Wilmot's *The Battle of the North Sea* (1912) and Saki's *When William Came* (1913).[158] The majority of these novels are characterised by 'excited language', 'crude emotionalism', a journalistic eagerness for novelty and sensation and, above all, strong nationalistic undertones.[159] The future great war is presented as inevitable and the author often highlights the need to guard against the German threat and explicitly calls for a strengthening of the army. As I.F. Clarke notes, after the end of the First World War, which shocked the contemporary writers with its violence and destruction, future war fiction tended to become less nationalistic and belligerent in tone. Many of the authors of the 1920s, especially in Britain, 'rejected the old doctrine of inevitable conflict' and tried to campaign for peace; their works were meant above all as cautionary tales in which to show the horrors of a possible new war.[160] To a great degree, it should be noted, these works were parallel and complementary to the early Weimar political fantasies: whereas the German novels confidently portrayed a future resurgence of the Empire after a quick war against the Allies, many of the British works warned precisely against the growth of such radical – and bellicose – political ideas.

The New Race of Devils, one of the first future war novels published after the end of the First World War, does not conform to the new trend and largely maintains the characteristics which Clarke describes as typical of the pre-war years.[161] *The New Race of Devils* is still excited and sensationalistic in tone and quite drastic in its portrayal of the villainous German officials. Like Oberdeutschland, Bernard's Germany is a continuation of the Hohenzollern Empire which radicalises its most authoritarian and politically aggressive features. The future Germany in which Arnauld grows up is a nation which has 'brought militarism again to the fore' (Bernard, 117) and which is dominated by those anti-democratic traits which were stereotypically associated with Prussianism. The narrator explicitly inveighs against 'the iron hand of Prussian militarism, which even the European war had not been able to crush' (Bernard, 72). In the passages in which the Emperor and his men discuss the implementation of eugenics and the plans to invade Britain, they are described as 'Prussians' and as rulers of 'the kingdom of Prussia'; similarly, the rebellious citizens in various parts of the Empire identify their major enemy in 'that curse of [the] Fatherland, Prussian militarism' (Bernard, 142). Bernard even

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[158] See I. F. Clarke, 'Introduction: 'Horribly Stuffed with Epithets of War'', in *The Great War with Germany, 1890-1914*, ed. by I. F. Clarke (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), pp. 1-27. In particular, *The Riddle of the Sands* is analysed on pp. 116-128 of the volume, *The Invasion of 1910* on pp. 139-151, *The Battle of the North Sea* on pp. 381-384, and *When William Came* on pp. 368-376. See also I. F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War: Future Wars 1763-3749* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 56-60, and Brett Holman, *The Next War in the Air – Britain's Fear of the Bomber, 1908-1941* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 28-39.

[159] Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War*, pp. 57-59.

[160] Ibid., pp. 131-142. Although they adopt this different perspective, future war novels continue to be published throughout the 1920s and 30s; in the Appendix to *Voices Prophesying War*, for example, Clarke lists about seventy works published between 1920 and 1930. See also Michele Haapamaki, *The Coming of the Aerial War – Culture and the Fear of Airborne Attack in Inter-War Britain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014), pp. 26-29.

[161] Among the other British novels which maintained the characteristics of the works published before 1918 it is possible to mention Le Queux's *The Terror of the Air* (1920) and E.F. Spanner's *The Broken Trident* (1926).

decides to use the names of the real German rulers in his dystopia: the Emperor who orders the creation of the super-soldiers before the end of the World War is Wilhelm II, and his successor after the restauration of the Empire is his fourth son August Wilhelm. The former Emperor's second son, Eitel Friedrich, is the schemer who causes the revolution in the third part of the novel, and even Princess Louise, August Wilhelm's sister, is mentioned in more than one passage. Only August Wilhelm's son, Crown Prince William, is a completely fictional character.

As I.F. Clarke writes, the future war novels published before the First World War often 'opened with a statement of aims and intentions' to 'ensure that there could be no doubt about their meaning'.[162] In the Preface of *The New Race of Devils* the publisher W. N. Willis states that the novel portrays the actual 'Germans' temperamental hatred of their conquerors', and that 'the new race of devils is being deliberately bred in order to satisfy the Germans' insatiable hunger […] to bury their fangs deep in our own land'. Willis then appeals directly to the reader by urging him to abandon his 'sense of false security' and begin to worry about the possibility of a new war.[163] Although *The New Race of Devils* does not actually portray a war between Britain and Germany, the future conflict is thus presented as almost inevitable. Indeed, the book's radical portrayal of science and polarised view of international politics is very much in line with Willis's sensationalistic publication strategies. *The New Race of Devils* focuses on war and on the misuse of eugenics as the two most immediate dangers which threaten Europe, and enhances its dramatic effect with the frequent use of highly coloured language and shocking narrative passages.

In *The New Race of Devils* Bernard links the secret machinations of Imperial Germany against Britain with the discourse on the possible development of eugenics and artificial insemination. The other British future war novels of the time do not mention eugenics, and focus on science and technology only with regard to their capacity to create destructive vehicles and deadly weapons. Similarly to *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, *The New Race of Devils* suggests instead that genetic engineering could become in the future the most dangerous – and the most uncontrollable – weapon at the service of the tyrants. Bernard's depiction of the possible perversion of eugenics and artificial insemination echoes many of the anxieties of the period. As in Germany, the debate on eugenics, already prevalent among intellectuals in the first decade of the century, became particularly prominent in Great Britain immediately after the end of the First World War. More than 700,000 British soldiers died during the conflict, approximately six per cent of the nation's young male population; in total, almost 2,500,000 men were killed, wounded or taken prisoner.[164] Owing in part to the disproportionate number of dead among high-ranking officers, moreover, it was feared that the best educated and physically fittest section of society had perished in the war. At the same time, Britain was also experiencing a sharp fall in birth-rates – again particularly among the supposedly genetically fittest middle and upper classes.[165] As a solution to all these problems, eugenists advocated the 'rational' and scientific selection of genetic traits through education, financial incentives to the middle classes, marriage restrictions

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[162] Clarke, *The Great War with Germany, 1890-194*, p. 3.

[163] Willis, pp. ii-iii.

[164] Ian F. W. Beckett, *The Great War*, 2nd edn (Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2007), p. 440.

[165] Bland and Hall, p. 215, and Hawkins, p. 218.

and the sterilization of the 'feeble and tainted' and the poor. The Eugenics Education Society, which had been founded in 1907 and had H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw and Julian Huxley among its members, became more and more popular among 'doctors, scientists, lecturers […] and politicians'.[166] Already in the years immediately before the outbreak of the First World War, Winston Churchill and Arthur Balfour became members of the Society; as a 1910 letter to Prime Minister Herbert Asquith shows, Churchill was particularly concerned with 'the unnatural […] growth of the Feeble-Minded and Insane classes' and 'the steady restriction among all […] superior stocks'.[167] After the end of the War, many politicians of both Left and Right continued to advocate the implementation of eugenic measures; as Lucy Bland and Lesley Hall remark, 'eugenics was sufficiently protean to be harnessed to different ideological beliefs, ranging from the ultraconservative to […] the socialist'.[168] Although, as in Weimar Germany, the British government never enacted an actual law which regulated marriage and reproduction, the British eugenic movement became more and more prominent in the first decade after the World War. Seven years after the publication of *The New Race of Devils*, Leonard Darwin summarised the ideals of many of his contemporaries when he wrote in his popular guide *What is Eugenics?* about the desirability of 'the selection of exceptionally good stock' and the folly of 'allowing parents with bad natural qualities to have more children'.[169]

As it began to be more relevant to the society of the interwar era, eugenics became a more and more controversial topic in Britain, and many doubts were raised 'about the ultimate benefits of the encroachment of science on human life'.[170] This critical look at eugenics was particularly evident in fiction. Two of the first novels to confront the issue are Rose Macaulay's *What Not* (1918) and Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow* (1921). *What Not*, as I mentioned in the Introduction, is set in Britain 'some time after' the end of the World War and portrays a near-future society ruled by a semi-authoritarian government which classifies all men and women according to their intelligence and regulates their marriages. 'If you were classified A', the narrator explains, 'your brains were certified to be of the highest order, and you were recommended to take a B2 or B3 partner'. C1, C2, and C3 citizens, instead, are discouraged from having children 'unless [they] had diluted their folly with an A partner'. Finally, people 'below C3 (i.e. uncertificated)' are heavily fined if they decide to have children and even imprisoned 'for the third and subsequent infants'.[171] *Crome Yellow*, a satire on the British ideas and fashions of the time, contains a famous passage in which the rationalist philosopher Scogan foreshadows a future technological society that rests on the distinction between 'the

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[166] Bland and Hall, pp. 215-216. See also Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics – Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 98-99.

[167] See G. R. Searle, *Eugenics and Politics in Britain 1900-1914* (Leyden: Noordhoff International Publishing, 1976), pp. 107-108, and Calum MacKellar and Christopher Bechtel, *The Ethics of the New Eugenics* (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2014), p. 26.

[168] Bland and Hall, p. 216.

[169] Leonard Darwin, *What is Eugenics?* (London: Watts, 1928), pp. 18-19. In the same year, Julian Huxley published a collection of essays in which he argued that eugenics would soon become 'practical politics' used to 'alter the proportion of good and bad stock'. See Julian Huxley, *Essays of a Biologist* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1928), p. 51.

[170] McLaren, p. 10. See also Merrill Squier, pp. 149-150.

[171] Rose Macaulay, *What Not* (London: Constable, 1918), pp. 12-13.

Directing Intelligences' the 'Men of Faith' and 'the Herd'. Human beings 'will be separated out into distinct species' according to their intelligence, with no possibility of intermingling.[172] Four years later, Charlotte Haldane confronts the problem in her dystopia *Man's World* (1925), which portrays a society where all aspects of human procreation are completely controlled by the state and only women with the best physical and mental characteristics are selected as mothers and allowed to have children. Other intellectuals, like Bertrand Russell, warned that the progress of eugenics would probably lead to the creation of citizens genetically unable to rebel against the central government.[173]

The New Race of Devils envisions an Imperial Germany where all the most harmful and destructive possibilities open to eugenics have been exploited to the full. Not only do the Emperor and his officials arbitrarily select what they consider the most desirable genetic traits for the future German citizens; they also use eugenics as a tool to invade and conquer other countries. It is this most negative side of eugenics, against which Huxley and Russell warn, which is pursued in *The New Race of Devils*. All the contemporary anxieties about the scientific control of reproduction are taken to the extreme and projected into the (present and future) Germany of the Hohenzollern. The established codes of the future war genre offer a convenient framework for the portrayal of such a scenario: for Wilhelm II eugenics, far from being a means to improve the lives of his citizens, is the ultimate offensive weapon to be used in a future European conflict. If Imperial Germany is clearly presented in the novel as a model of how eugenics should not develop, the possibility of a different use of the new science in Great Britain is not completely excluded. W. N. Willis writes in the Preface that experiments in eugenics 'are being carried out in this country with startling results' and that 'tremendous possibilities lie in the direction of scientific examination'.[174] Theoretically, Willis argues, 'scientific breeding' *can* lead to the elimination of the negative characteristics of humankind and to the enhancement of its most positive features: what the novel depicts, and what should concern the readers, is the use that can be made of eugenics in a militaristic dictatorship. It is in this context that the scientific control of reproduction, as in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, can go as far as to create a 'new race' of para-human beings.

Generated as a result of an experiment in artificial insemination and assigned the specific features that the rulers want them to have, the super-soldiers pose to the characters in *The New Race of Devils* the same complex problems of definitions that the Züchtlinge presented in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*. Both Züllinger's and Werner's creatures are eugenic liminal beings, product of the new biotechnological age generated by the gametes of a man and a woman but originally designed (it could even be said, 'assembled') in their mental and physical characteristics by a scientist in the laboratory. They are genetically modified humans who do not fit easily in any of the established taxonomic categories and are thus potentially unsettling and dangerous for the social order. In Loele's novel the dilemma of the post-human was partially solved by Züllinger by acknowledging the capacity of the Züchtlinge to think and by including

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[172] Aldous Huxley, *Crome Yellow* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), pp. 163-165.

[173] Russell, pp. 51-52.

[174] Willis, pp. iii-iv.

them in the traditional category of the human being. In *The New Race of Devils*, the problem takes on even more complex and ambiguous forms. Arnauld and the other creatures are physically indistinguishable from normal humans, and are not aware of their diversity for much of the novel. Unlike the Züchtlinge, they are perfectly integrated into the German society and – at least in the case of Arnauld, adopted son of Major von Hartweg – even members of the Hohenzollern court. Only the Emperor, his family and his officials know the truth about their origins: up until the revolution at the end of the novel, there is nothing to explicitly mark them out as 'different'. As I will show in the next paragraphs, the super-soldiers are nonetheless marked out as 'non-humans' by both the narrator and the characters in the novel who know their secret origins.

The creation of the first of the super-soldiers, Arnauld, is portrayed in the first part of the novel. Unlike Loele, Bernard lingers on the description of the original ideas of Doctor Werner and of the material circumstances of the people involved in the experiment but does not give any specific scientific detail about the actual procedure. Werner and the Emperor's officials select a man and a woman who possess the specific characteristics that they want to transmit to the new child and then, according to the scientist's 'perfectly sound and logical theory of eugenics', they try to use 'fecundation without the union of the sexes' to generate beings which lack empathy and compassion (Bernard, 8-11). Arnauld's biological father is an unnamed fisherman who is physically very strong, 'perfectly healthy', extremely violent and 'absolutely without culture of any kind'. The selected mother, Lotta Wendt, has no 'sexual instinct' (meaning that she is not sentimental and romantic) and is very beautiful (Bernard, 12-15). The 'experiment' through which Werner hopes to generate a child with all these characteristics is not described in detail, but is evidently a form of artificial insemination: after Werner operates on Lotta, she becomes pregnant with Arnauld. Unlike Loele, thus, Bernard does not resort to some futuristic form of ectogenesis to portray the genesis of the super-soldiers. Artificial insemination by donor, the introduction of the sperm of a selected individual into the uterus of a woman, was already practised in Europe and America at the time: what Professor Werner does to Lotta Wendt is essentially an extension of this process based on his extreme eugenic theories.

Though it obviously lacks scientific accuracy, Bernard's portrayal of the possibilities open to eugenics is revealing of the uneasiness and apprehension with which the topic was viewed in Britain at the time. As noted above, artificial procreation was lauded by contemporary eugenicists as the most direct means to regulate the production of new individuals and select the most desirable genetic traits for the new generations. In Britain as in Germany, this attempt to control births through 'unnatural' methods was controversial and seen by many as potentially dangerous and profoundly unethical.[175] Children conceived through artificial insemination were sensationalistically termed 'test-tube babies' by the press (the term started to be applied to *in vitro* fertilisation only much later), with many articles including 'intimidating references to the possible eugenic effects of the technology and potential legal difficulties'.[176] In *The New Race of*

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[175] McLaren, pp. 109-110.

[176] Naomi R. Cahn, *Test Tube Families – Why the Fertility Market Needs Legal Regulation* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), p. 46. See also McLaren, pp. 109-114. McLaren also notes that, although

Devils Bernard links the process to the misuse of eugenics and completes an extremely negative (and frightening) portrayal of the possible future of the new science under a dictatorship. The monstrous character of the procedure is also underlined in the novel by Lotta's change of mind immediately before the experiment takes place, and by her persistent impression that the operation is immoral and wicked: 'there was something about Werner that made her want to cry out that it was all a mistake', the narrator comments (Bernard, 32). Werner impregnates her nonetheless while she is asleep, and later even tells her that the father is a gorilla from the zoo in order to avoid the formation of any kind of maternal bond. Lotta dies in childbirth at the end of the first part of the novel.

Arnauld and the other eugenic liminal beings are seen by the rulers as a race of soldiers biologically separated from the other German citizens. Being genetically more adapted than traditional humans to war and violence, in the first part of the book Werner's creatures are indeed described as *superior* to them. Arnauld and his companions are repeatedly called 'supermen' by the Hohenzollerns; Wilhelm II and his officials want to create 'a race who are indeed supermen', 'a race superior to and stronger than any race at present on the globe' and free from 'the usual weaknesses to which the human family is prone' (Bernard, 8-9). As in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, thus, the eugenic liminal beings are classified in their own 'non-human' taxonomic category (or 'race'); unlike what happens in Loele's novel, however, this category is not assigned any supposedly inferior characteristic. In *The New race of Devils*, it should be noted, the idea of breeding a superior race of soldiers is completely identified with contemporary Germany and with the supposed virulent nationalism and militarism of its rulers. The superman, in the words of one of the officials, is a 'dream' to be realized, and the creation of a 'race of Gods' the means through which 'the wings of the German eagle' will 'spread unto the uttermost ends of the earth' (Bernard, 8). Such a straightforward association between the ideal of the superman and Wilhelmine militarism is only understandable in the context of the British perception of the German society in the years around the First World War. Germany, Britain's main political rival in both actual history and in so much future war fiction, was seen in the first decades of the century as a nation whose society was permeated with Friedrich Nietzsche's 'bellicose ideas' and whose ruling class was shaped by 'bloodthirsty and expansionist ambitions'.[177] The most infamous of the ideas that were attributed to Nietzsche is precisely the doctrine of the 'superman'.

The notion of the 'Übermensch', which Nietzsche introduces in *Also sprach Zarathustra* (1883-1891), is in reality a philosophical and not a political concept. Nietzsche describes it as the condition that men and women will obtain when they will be able to overcome their present status (their 'humanity') and abandon their religious values and their nihilistic contempt for life. Whereas modern human beings, influenced by Christianity and by an ascetic view of the world, wrongly dismiss the present life as transitory and corrupt, the Übermensch will accept it in its

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the subject of artificial insemination was not discussed by 'mainline British medical journals' as much as by their equivalents in Germany (p. 118), debate on the topic was still very heated.

[177] Nicholas Martin, 'Nietzsche as Hate-Figure in Britain's Great War: "The Execrable Neech"', in *The First World War as a Clash of Cultures*, ed. by Fred Bridgham (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006), pp. 147-166 (p. 149).

entirety and will reshape itself as a self-creating and self-determining being.[178] In his description of the Übermensch, then, Nietzsche also stresses the need to abandon all metaphysical hopes and to reject Christianity, which according to him is an obsolete doctrine that negates the central importance of the physical body.[179] This idea is powerfully expressed in his famous statement that 'God is dead'.[180] After the outbreak of the First World War and the consequent rise of a strong wave of anti-German propaganda, Nietzsche's philosophical concept of the Übermensch was misinterpreted in Britain as a dangerous exaltation of a racially superior '*super*man' (the term which was used most frequently to translate the German word) rather than as a philosophically enlightened '*over*man'.[181]

Since the first months after the start of the conflict, some of the most important British newspapers and periodicals began to portray the Germans as brutal and war-mongering barbarians and to use nit-picked passages from Nietzsche's writings as an argument in their theories. In the first editorial about the war published in *The Times*, the Germans are called 'new Attilas' and their actions are compared to 'the march of the Huns'.[182] Only four days later, a new editorial identifies the origins of Germans' supposed brutality in the ideas of 'Treitschke and General Bernhardi' and 'in the change of moral values which Nietzsche desired'.[183] At the end of November, the German government is said to be founded 'on the philosophy of Nietzsche and on the doctrine that might makes right'.[184] In two articles published in the *Manchester Guardian* during the same months, Nietzsche's 'superman' is called a 'rhapsodical and insatiable' being 'unscrupulous in its dominance', and the philosopher's ideas are said to have 'made the war possible'.[185] In January 1915, an essay in *The Spectator* identifies Nietzsche as one the authors who contributed to the 'materialistic Prussianized Germany of today'.[186] Throughout the duration of the World War, the British press continues to demonise Nietzsche as the original theoretician behind Germany's violent expansionism, and to describe 'the superman idea' as 'the marvellous efficiency of all-conquering *Kultur*'.[187] Similar attacks could be found in the series of Oxford Pamphlets published during the war, two of which – written respectively by William Archer and

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[178] See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra – Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (Munich: Goldmann, 1992), pp. 9-21.

[179] Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, pp. 28-30. For the philosopher's ideas about Christianity and the 'despisers of the body', see also Friedrich Nietzsche, *Der Antichrist, Ecce Homo, Dionysos-Dithyramben* (Munich: Goldmann, 1990), pp. 7-86, and particularly pp. 64-75.

[180] Nietzsche's statement that 'Gott ist tot' was included for the first time in his 1882 work *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (Munich: Goldmann, 1987), pp. 109 and 120-121. The statement is also repeated, perhaps more famously, in several passages of *Also sprach Zarathustra*.

[181] Martin, pp. 156-158. See also Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche – Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th edn (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 8-9.

[182] *The Times*, August 29, 1914, 9.

[183] *The Times*, September 2, 1914, 9. As Nicholas Martin notes, claims of a sort of 'posthumous conspiracy' between Nietzsche, historian Heinrich von Treitschke and General Friedrich von Bernhardi – who were both indicated as Nietzsche's followers – became fairly common in the British press. See Martin, pp. 148-149.

[184] *The Times*, November 26, 1914, 9.

[185] *Manchester Guardian*, August 18, 1914, 4, and August 27, 1914, 10.

[186] *The Spectator*, January 16, 1915, 74.

[187] *The Times*, July 20, 1916, 7. See also Martin, pp. 151-154.

Ernest Barker – were eloquently titled *Fighting a Philosophy* and *Nietzsche and Treitschke: The Worship of Power in Modern Germany*.[188] Even celebrated Victorian realist Thomas Hardy and Britain's poet laureate Robert Bridges upheld this view in a series of letters written to *The Times*, the *Daily Mail* and the *Manchester Guardian*.[189] In one of these letters, Hardy claims that 'there is no instance since history began of a country being so demoralised by a single writer'.[190] Such a simplistic and stereotypical view of Nietzsche – and of Germany – was still relatively common during the interwar years and was reinforced by Hitler's rise to power in 1933.

Bernard's *The New Race of Devils* conforms to this common view of Germany. Although Nietzsche is never mentioned by name, the portrayal of the super-soldiers and the description of the rulers' plans in the novel clearly reflect the contemporary British perception of the philosopher's views and of their alleged impact on German society. Arnauld and the other super-soldiers are presented in *The New Race of Devils* as 'supermen' who in the leaders' intentions 'will be master of the world' (Bernard, 9). In the rulers' words there is an almost delirious exaltation of physical strength over morality and of the blind obedience to the Emperor over traditional religion. Arnauld is a 'superman' precisely because he is physically stronger than all the other soldiers and lacks human sensibility – and the rulers' repeated claims that there is 'no god but the Emperor' recall and distort Nietzsche's rejection of Christianity. The negation of religion assumes extremely violent, almost monstrous connotations at the end of the novel, when the super-soldiers ravage the streets of Berlin: 'on the steps of a church', Bernard writes, 'half-a-dozen of them were toasting the crowd in the silver communion vessels they had looted from the sacristy'. When a priest tries to stop them, they 'laugh and shoot him dead' and then 'kick his body down the steps' (Bernard, 188). In *The New Race of Devils*, Bernard thus builds upon both the stereotypical image of the barbarous German influenced by the philosophy of Nietzsche and the supposedly eugenic implications of the Übermensch. The villainous Hohenzollern rulers, like the war-mongering Prussians described by the newspapers, are obsessed with the idea of the superhuman race who will help them defeat all their adversaries; modern eugenics is what gives them, for the first time, the possibility to actually create it. Arnauld and the other super-soldiers, then, fit perfectly into what might be called the new taxonomic category of the superman.

Even more than in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, the creation of the super-soldiers in *The New Race of Devils* is the result of both heredity and education. Nature and nurture are both considered extremely important by the rulers in the determination of the characteristics that the liminal beings will have to possess. When the Emperor and his officials first discuss the

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[188] See Ernest Barker, *Nietzsche and Treitschke: The Worship of Power in Modern Germany*, Oxford Pamphlets 1914, 20 (Oxford: Oxford University Press; London: Humphrey Milford, 1914), and William Archer, *Fighting a Philosophy*, Oxford Pamphlets 1914-15, 65 (Oxford: Oxford University Press; London: Humphrey Milford, 1915).

[189] See Martin, pp. 157-158, and Patrick Bridgwater, *Nietzsche in Anglosaxony – A Study of Nietzsche's Impact on English and American Literature* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1972), pp. 142-148. Dan Stone notes that a minority of intellectuals who defended Nietzsche's philosophy in Britain did exist: the most important of these authors were conservative writer Anthony Ludovici and German émigré Oscar Levy. See Dan Stone, *Breeding Superman – Nietzsche, Race and Eugenics in Edwardian and Interwar Britain* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2002), pp. 12-32 and 33-61.

[190] *Daily Mail*, September 27, 1914, 9, and *Manchester Guardian*, October 7, 1914, 7.

possibility of creating the super-soldiers, they underline the importance of physical strength and lack of compassion as well as that of absolute commitment to the values of the German Empire. The future soldiers must have 'no law, religion [and] no belief but the Fatherland' (Bernard, 8-9): these characteristics can obviously only be acquired via education and training. A few pages later, Major von Hartweg suggests that the majority of the new children 'could be taken over by the state' (Bernard, 10), and volunteers to 'bring up' the first of them to make him 'a fitting leader of others for the glory of [the] country'. Hartweg, like the other officials, argues that it is necessary to establish 'institutions for the upbringing' of the new beings in order to produce real super-soldiers, and forecasts that it will take approximately 'twenty years' time' to educate them (Bernard, 13-14). Whereas the Emperor and Major von Hartweg are convinced of the benefits of nurture and training, Doctor Werner is explicitly presented as a staunch advocate of biological determinism. As he explains to von Hartweg during their first meeting, Werner believes that the nature of a person 'is absolutely the result of the influence at work before birth'. The only education that really matters, he argues, is the one which the child receives 'before [his] birth', and all his character traits are 'transmitted to the embryo at the moment of impregnation' (Bernard, 11-12). It is precisely on the basis of these theories that Werner believes that the creation of a new race of strong, ruthless and completely amoral soldiers is entirely possible: once the specific genetic traits that will be passed on to the embryo are determined in the laboratory, the individual will not be able to develop in any other way.

The importance of education in the formation of the super-soldiers is reasserted in the second and third parts of the novel. The rulers pay great attention to the formal training of the new children, and Bernard describes at length some of the methods that are used to educate them. All Werner's creatures are sent to special military schools secluded by the urban centres and 'surrounded by a high fence of wooden stakes and barbed wire' at a very early age, so that 'at sixteen or seventeen they will be as well trained as many of [the Emperor's] older men' (Bernard, 64).[191] In the military schools, the super-soldiers receive the education that will allow them to become 'splendid soldiers for the Fatherland': while 'the question of 'Kultur'' is intentionally left 'very much in abeyance', the boys are taught how to fight and to use arms and are inculcated with a profound sense of belonging to the Empire and a 'deep and lasting hatred' of Germany's enemies (Bernard, 64-65). Bernard describes, in particular, the methods used in one of the largest institutions to educate the cadets to the contempt of Britain and France. Any boy committing a minor offence in such institution 'shall be forced […] to go about with a card pinned to his back with the words "I am a Frenchman" written on it'; if he commits a major infraction, the words are changed to 'I am an Englishman' and he is forced to wear a dunce's cap on his head and hold an English flag in his hand (Bernard, 65-66). Arnauld, who is destined

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[191] In imperial Germany and Austria-Hungary it was normal for the young sons of the upper classes to be sent to a military academy. However, Bernard makes it clear that the future super-soldiers are sent, when they are still 'almost infants', to 'special' schools where they sustain a particularly severe training. See Bernard, pp. 147-148.

to be the field leader of the army that will invade Britain,[192] is adopted by von Hartweg and receives a 'far superior' education (Bernard, 67). However, he is taught like the other boys to obey to the Hohenzollern, to despise all foreign enemies and, above all, to have 'no religion save the Fatherland' and 'no God but the Emperor' (Bernard, 108). Werner's creatures, it appears clear, can only become true super-soldiers through the combined use of genetics and education.

In the last part of the novel, when the secret of the super-soldiers is finally exposed, Arnauld and the other eugenic liminal beings are described in more negative terms. When they discover Arnauld's true origins, Eitel Friedrich and his men characterize him as 'nothing but one of Werner's experiments', 'a creature without name, without kith or kin, a mere nothing', and then again as 'a plaything, [...] a nothing' (Bernard, 129-130). The eugenic liminal being, who was depicted as a 'superman' distinct from but not inferior to the other human beings by the rulers, is here denied any form of meaningful or independent existence: in this sense, Eitel Friedrich solves the problem of the post-human by negating it. Interestingly, when Arnauld discovers his true origins, his own opinion about himself is very similar to that of Eitel Friedrich and his men. Turning furiously against von Hartweg, he described himself first as 'much less than cattle', and then as 'nothing but an Experiment' and 'an amusement for the Emperor' (Bernard, 173). Feeling that he is no longer part of the society, and that he will never be able to live as a man, Arnauld rebels against the rulers and leads the other super-soldiers on a rampage in the streets of Berlin. The savage nature of Werner's creatures becomes more evident and the Emperor and his men finally come to consider them dangerous subhuman brutes. As in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, the creation of the eugenic liminal beings ultimately proves to be the ruin of the ruling classes. While, however, in Loele's novel the Züchtlinge want freedom and a peaceful existence, in *The New Race of Devils* the super-soldiers merely want to be 'free to do what [they] will' and 'kill to please themselves' (Bernard, 177). The ferocious and uncontrollable nature of the super-soldiers, it should be noted, was already hinted at by the narrator in two previous passages in which Arnauld's behaviour was compared to that of a wild animal. At the military school, when he throws himself against a boy who had taunted him, Arnauld 'looks like some wild beast standing over his prey' and has 'a wolfish aspect' (Bernard, 77). Later, when he realizes that Elsa has received a marriage proposal from another man, the narrator comments that 'the sentiment that was dominating Arnauld [...] was the same as inspires any male animal to fight and try and destroy any other male that comes anywhere within sight, if a female is standing by' (Bernard, 84).

The eugenic liminal beings are similarly described in very negative terms by W. N. Willis in the novel's Preface. Willis begins alarmingly by referring to 'the horrible possibilities of producing a race of human creatures apart from Nature's way of reproduction', and then calls Werner's creatures 'a race of devils' and 'a species of devil-man' (Willis, ii-iii). The super-soldiers are for Willis living beings 'but one stage removed from the Gorilla' (Willis, i); with this

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[192] It is true that the first attack on Britain is presented as a suicide mission in which the super-soldiers will 'sacrifice their lives' for the Emperor, but it should be noted that the regular human soldiers were similarly 'sent to be massacred' in the war by the German rulers (Bernard, 4).

comparison, Willis decidedly separates the liminal beings from the 'true' humans and associates them with the animal kingdom and with an earlier evolutionary stage. [193] Following their European discovery in December 1847, gorillas had indeed increasingly been associated with the theory of human evolution – to the point that they '[played] a central part in the nascent evolutionary debates'. [194] Often portrayed as primitive monsters with some human-like characteristics and governed by a powerful and violent sexual drive, gorillas started to be featured in many adventure tales published in the second half of the nineteenth and in the first decades of the twentieth century. It was precisely during the interwar years that this trend reached its peak: portrayals of gorillas, as Ted Gott and Kathryn Weir note, 'litter the pages of scientific and popular literature from the 1920s and '30s'.[195] In *The New Race of Devils*, the narrator and the few characters who come to discover the origins of the super-soldiers adopt a point of view which is similar to Willis's.

In the passage which portrays the rebellion of the eugenic liminal beings, however, Bernard presents Arnauld under a final and new light. The boy's attraction for Elsa develops into true love, and he tries to save her from the other super-soldiers. When the girl is kidnapped by one of them, Arnauld tries to stop him, but refrains from attacking him for fear of hurting her. For the first time in the novel, Arnauld acts unselfishly, even risking his life for the sake of another person. When a bomb kills both Elsa and her kidnapper, Arnauld is even shown capable of a powerful – and extreme – romantic gesture: he takes Elsa's body, puts it on a plane and flies away with 'the woman he loved' (Bernard, 191). This final sympathetic portrayal of the novel's protagonist is important for his definition and categorisation. If, as repeatedly stated by the narrator and the Emperor's men, one of the main differences between Werner's creatures (be they 'supermen' or devilish brutes) and the other German citizens is the formers' inability to change their scientifically predetermined amoral nature, then Arnauld's love for Elsa shows that he might be capable to cross the boundary between human and non-human. Insofar as they do not deviate from the genetic blueprint designed by Professor Werner, the eugenic liminal beings are by definition only able to express their desire by means of violence and physical assault: the soldier who kidnaps Elsa and his companion refer to her as a 'tasty morsel' and a 'wench' to find and capture (Bernard, 188-189). The emergence of Arnauld's deeper feelings for Elsa, which the narrator attributes to his very peculiar life experiences and above all to 'the few months of love' that Lotta had given him before he was born (Bernard, 62), is thus explicitly contrasted with the scientifically induced savagery of the super-soldiers.

Perhaps more importantly, while the other hybrid creatures are often referred to by the Emperor's men and Eitel Friedrich as 'soulless creatures', the development of Arnauld's feelings for Elsa is also linked to the gradual emergence of a soul in him. At the end of the passage in which the two boys meet for the first time the narrator comments that 'although [Arnauld] did not know it, that morning awakened something in him which would influence his future life',

[193] See Graham, pp. 11-14, for an analysis of how 'the boundaries between humans and almost-humans' have often been defined on the basis of the separation between humans and animals and humans and artificial beings.

[194] Ted Gott and Kathryn Weir, *Gorilla* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), pp. 34-35.

[195] Gott and Weir, pp. 41-69.

something 'which might be called soul' (Bernard, 62). As he becomes more and more attracted to Elsa, Arnauld is increasingly affected by that 'awakened soul' which had started to stir in him after their first encounter. By the end of the novel, after the girl's death, he finally becomes completely different from the 'soulless' super-soldiers who devastate the streets of Berlin.[196] In *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, as noted above, the distinction between human and non-human is ultimately based on the subject's use of reason and initiative; the presence of a soul is only used as a discriminating factor by Götzenleuchter in a treacherous (and logically fallacious) attempt to mark out the Züchtlinge as inferior. Bernard, on the contrary, assigns a decisive role to the development of a soul in Arnauld. This is due, I argue, to the particular nature of the German superman as it was perceived by the British. Nietzsche had spoken of the soul as a part of the body, or as function of it: the Übermensch knows that he is 'Leib […] ganz und gar' and that 'Seele ist nur ein Wort für ein Etwas am Leibe'.[197] Nietzsche dismisses the Judeo-Christian opposition between soul and body and actually introduces the concept of 'spirit' ('Geist') as a non-supernatural, non-religious force which 'transfigures and perfects man's nature'. [198] The philosopher's opposition to the Christian concept of soul, however, was interpreted by the British commentators as yet another proof of the base materialism of modern Germany and of its exaltation of physical strength and of the law of the might. In *The New Race of Devils* the real superman, as the Hohenzollern rulers often repeat, must be completely soulless. By sympathetically depicting the gradual formation of a soul in Arnauld, the narrator implicitly opposes what was widely seen as the German dream of the perfect soldier and distances him from the other eugenic liminal beings. By the end of the novel, in other words, Arnauld cannot be considered a genetically modified 'superman' anymore and becomes a man. As in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, the eugenic liminal beings are either seen as a new and separate race or assimilated to the traditional category of the human: in both cases, the humanist framework is shaken but ultimately preserved.

Finally, it is interesting to note how in both *The New Race of Devils* and *Züllinger und seine Zucht* the use of eugenics and artificial reproduction inevitably leads not only to the creation of a new para-human species but also to the men's attempt to gain complete control over reproduction. The male rulers in both dystopias expropriate women's reproductive role and actively try to police every aspect of their sexuality. As Angus McLaren convincingly shows in his *Reproduction by Design*, the future position of women in the increasingly scientifically minded Western society was indeed one of the key questions associated with artificial reproduction during the interwar period.[199] Although contemporary opinions on the matter varied wildly, there was a common consensus among interwar writers and intellectuals that the role of women would change dramatically. In *The New Race of Devils* and *Züllinger und seine Zucht*

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[196] Writing about the protagonist's change in the last pages of the novel, Anderson argues that 'sentiment has at last overcome Arnauld's breeding' (p. 84).

[197] Nietzsche, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, p. 28.

[198] See Kaufmann, pp. 257-283.

[199] See McLaren, especially pp. 10-16. About the social changes which might be produced by the widespread use of artificial procreation, see also Irina Pollard, *A Guide to Reproduction – Social Issues and Human Concerns* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 376-388.

this social change takes on the form of a decisive loss of female power. In Bernard's novel women are used by the rulers to be the mothers of genetically modified soldiers, who are taken into custody by the state immediately after birth. Although they are selected by the Emperor and his men on the basis of their physical and psychological qualities, they do not have any active role in the eugenic plans of the Hohenzollerns: they are, in other words, pure vessels for the production of the German supermen. Werner indeed refers to them in the first part of the book as 'creatures of reproduction' (Bernard, 14). Lotta, Arnauld's mother and the first of the selected women, is lured by the promise of economic security in a time of war, deceived about the eugenic experiment by Werner and von Hartweg, and finally impregnated while asleep. All the other selected women suffer a similar fate, and are not even told that they are part of an experiment in artificial procreation: completely passive agents in the rulers' plan for a new society, they give birth to the children without knowing who their fathers are and are then forced to give them away to the state officials. Under these conditions, reproduction becomes a business of state completely administered – and even materially carried out – by men.

Significantly, in *The New Race of Devils* the women's loss of social status is often originally linked to their precarious circumstances in a time of war. In the first part of the novel, which is set during the First World War, the Emperor's men systematically exploit the women's need for food and material resources while their husbands are fighting in the trenches; as one of the selected mothers recalls while speaking with Eitel Friedrich, she accepted to follow the state officials because 'in those days, life was hard and money scarce' (Bernard, 102). The Emperor's men, the narrator specifies, always offer a substantial amount of money to the women. In *The New Race of Devils*, thus, the material circumstances of the World War, under the despotic rule of the Hohenzollerns, are presented as the first direct cause which allows for the debasement of women's status through eugenics and artificial reproduction. The first link between the lamentable material conditions of women and men's attempt to interfere with their reproductive role is established already in the novel's introduction with the story of Elsa Heiliger. Before artificial insemination begins to threaten women's place in German society, Elsa consciously decides to renounce motherhood. At the height of the World War (the scene is set in 1915), Elsa kills her child out of desperation and grief: she has just lost her husband at Verdun and does not want her son to be sent to a future bloody war by the militaristic Hohenzollerns. In this scene, the Emperor and his officials are described as men who try to control reproduction by letting women keep their sons 'until the first bloom of […] manhood' and then 'claiming [them] for cannon-fodder' (Bernard, 4). Bernard presents Elsa as a victim of German despotism (even her surname suggests that she is 'holier' than her accusers), and her violent act assumes the connotations of a last desperate attempt to prevent the rulers from taking over reproduction and using it exclusively for their political purposes. It is precisely as a consequence of Elsa's actions, and with the specific aim of '[killing the] maternal instinct' of the German women (Bernard, 8), that the Emperor sets out to control the generation of the new soldiers through science and technology.

The implementation of ectogenesis in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* can be similarly interpreted as a decisive step towards the exclusion of women from any active role in

reproduction. The development of extrauterine gestation introduces indeed the possibility of a complete disjunction between women and procreation: if all that is required for the generation of a new life is the female and male gametes of the parents, then women might be permanently dissociated from their role of mothers. What is perhaps more important, ectogenesis is discovered and carried out exclusively by men, and the details of its scientific procedures are never revealed to the Oberdeutsche women. Although in Loele's novel the rulers' intentions to replace the traditional modes of reproduction of the German citizens with the new techniques discovered by Züllinger are not as clear as in *The New Race of Devils*, ectogenesis is evidently perceived as a procedure which might change the nature of gender relationships. Loele refers to the problem in an interesting passage in the fifth chapter of *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, where men and women are explicitly divided into two different factions and put against each other. Having realised that the possibility for extrauterine fecundation and gestation exists, the women of Oberdeutschland gather to ask for the liberalisation of the procedure and the open mass implementation of ectogenesis. This passage reflects in part the contemporary debates about women's sexuality that were actually taking place in Germany, Britain and other European countries. In the context of the more general discussion on the scientific control of reproduction, feminist authors and organizations campaigned for the right of women to plan their sexual life (it was during the 1920s that the modern methods of birth control began to be viewed as socially acceptable) and to gain a more active role in the family.[200] Marie Stopes's *Married Love* (1918) was the first and most important contemporary text to focus on these topics. Stopes was a eugenicist who believed in the need for family planning, and in 1921 opened the first birth control clinic in London; *Married Love* and her other books were first translated in German in the early 1920s by foremost feminist author Franziska Feilbogen. Anita Augspurg, who was similarly active in the German women's movement, founded the influential periodical *Die Frau im Staat* in 1919. In *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, the future male rulers decide to oppose all the women's requests and formally convene a meeting to confront them. The men put forward a long series of religious, social and political reasons to refute the women's arguments, and finally succeed in scaring them and in consolidating their new authority without having to share the secret of Züllinger's experiments. From this moment on, the male rulers are free to produce new individuals whenever they see fit. As in *The New Race of Devils*, the state use of eugenics and artificial reproduction has also resulted in the change of the relative importance of men and women in society and in the latter's tangible loss of social power.

Both Loele's and Bernard's texts envision a future attempt to scientifically regulate procreation that is more extreme than those presented in any other contemporary dystopia. The Züchtlinge and the super-soldiers are, in different ways, new liminal beings who cannot be defined with ricourse to the traditional taxonomies. By introducing them, Loele and Bernard force the characters in the novels – and, most importantly, the readers – to reflect on the

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[200] See Mariken Lenaerts, *National Socialist Family Law – The Influence of National Socialism on Marriage and Divorce Law in Germany and the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), pp. 26-31, and Ingrid Sharp, 'The Disappearing Surplus: The Spinster in the Post-War Debate in Weimar Germany, 1918-1920', in *Aftermaths of War – Women's Movements and Female Activists, 1918-1923*, ed. by Ingrid Sharp and Matthew Stibbe (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 135-158 (pp. 148-154).

meaning and on the boundaries of the human in modern society. As I have shown in my analysis, all major characters in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* struggle to find a way to unequivocally define the liminal beings. Some, like Züllinger, try to define them as human; others, like the Oberdeutsche and Eitel Friedrich's men in *The New Race of Devils*, relegate them to the status of monsters. Wilhelm II and August Wilhelm, at least until the last part of the novel, see them as an improved race of supermen. Indicatively, none of these characters arrives at a definition of the eugenic liminal beings that can be considered fully satisfactory. The concerns raised by Loele's and Bernard's novels are remarkably modern and will resurface, in various forms, in much of the later debate on posthumanism. In this sense, more than in the explicit link between eugenic experiments and military dictatorships, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* show to have grasped the future role of science in human society perhaps better than other more famous and celebrated texts of the time.

Chapter 2:

Brave New World and *Tuzub 37*:
Visions of the scientifically planned future state

The progressive mechanization and dehumanization of modern life is one of the most central themes of interwar dystopia. Writers in both Britain and Germany portrayed in their works the future rise of a completely rational and scientistic society.[201] Whereas, as has been noted in the previous chapter, some of the dystopias written in the immediate aftermath of the First World War concentrate on eugenics as the most evident example of the increasing role of science in human life, by the late 1920s and early 30s many authors tended to broaden their point of view and focus on the whole social and political structure of the future technological state.[202] Texts like Charlotte Haldane's *Man's World* (1926), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), Hans Richter's *Turmstadt* (1926) and Thea Von Harbou's *Metropolis* (1926) portray a future society completely based on the extreme (and supposedly scientific) rationalization of all human activities and on a capitalist and industrial conception of life. Men and women are 'produced' by the state when necessary and then assigned a specific place in the society as cogs in a machine, in a perpetual process which maximizes efficiency and productivity and reduces waste and unorthodoxy. In this chapter I will compare Huxley's canonical dystopia *Brave New World* and Paul Gurk's less known *Tuzub 37* (1935), two of the most interesting and complex works of this kind produced in the interwar era. Huxley's and Gurk's novels, as I will show in the following paragraphs, link the possible rise of a completely mechanized World State with the fear of a radical change in the nature of men and women, ideally expanding Loele's and Bernard's discourse over the new genetically modified humans to a much wider scale. The forthcoming global societies envisioned by Huxley and Gurk are populated almost exclusively by citizens who do not fit in the traditional human category as it was conceptualized in the early twentieth century. Indeed, these new men and women are explicitly contrasted in the two novels with the very few characters who preserve some of the features of the old human beings.

The most important difference between the traditional and the future human beings is that the citizens of Huxley's and Gurk's World States are incapable of independent thinking and purposeful action. They are only able to reason and act within the parameters of their social role and of the task that has been assigned to them. Consequently, they are not able to rebel against the technocracy. In *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* there is no real attempt at an organised violent rebellion by any of the main characters: in the futures portrayed by Huxley and Gurk there are simply no resistance groups of any kind, and no specific plans to overthrow the

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[201] For an excellent study on the role of science in utopias and dystopias of interwar Britain, see Kumar, pp. 224-287. On the contemporaneous German technological visions, see Fisher, pp. 104-156, and Hermand, pp. 208-220.
[202] Kumar, pp. 224-230.

ruling technocracy. In most classic dystopias, the author creates a future alternative society and then introduces the reader to a small group of characters who – for various reasons – do not like it. In general terms, the main narrative of these texts is built around the struggle of the dissenting individuals against the totalitarian state, which they come to consider oppressive and unjust.[203] This structure is used not only in many of the most famous English dystopias, but also in German texts such as Thea von Harbou's *Metropolis* and Konrad Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht*. *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* deviate from this traditional form of the violent revolution: the figures of dissent in Huxley's and Gurk's novels are pointedly marked out as simple loners who, for one reason or another, decide to live in a more meaningful and less mechanical way than the rest of the society. They are unhappy with the technocratic state and feel out of place in it, but they also accept it as an immutable reality. The two characters who apparently attempt to start a violent rebellion against the mechanised society, the Savage in *Brave New World* and Renu in *Tuzub 37*, are actually moved by anger and despair rather than by careful consideration and organisation. Crucially, they are both alone in their efforts and immediately fail. In the absence of any real immediate challenge to the World State, Huxley and Gurk offer then their own unconventional solutions to the problem of the scientific and technological dystopia. Huxley uses the character of Lenina to introduce the possibility of a subtle but potentially far-fetched *individual* rebellion based on change of behaviour and personal development, and then contrasts it with the actions of the male protagonists of the novel. Gurk relegates to the margins of the text every form of human dissent against the mechanized society and in the novel's powerful finale portrays an apocalyptic end for the future technocracy which allows for the emergence of a new world and a new form of life.

Brave New World and *Tuzub 37* use two very different styles to describe and explore the future technocracy. Huxley's novel accepts the factual possibility of the victory of unbridled mechanization to portray a realistic and wholly coherent future world. Bernard, Lenina, John and even Mustapha Mond are three-dimensional characters who have to come to terms, each of them in his own way, with the rationally planned society. *Tuzub 37* is by contrast an avant-gardist text which develops the social critique of the interwar German city novels and projects it into a completely mechanized future. Gurk adopts, as my analysis shows, the experimental language and style of literary Expressionism and makes extensive use of fantastic and mythical elements. The mechanical men and women who inhabit his future world, moreover, are not analysed in their psychological motivations. In spite of these stylistic differences, however, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* are both interested in the possible rise of the technocratic rational state, scientifically organized in order to control the lives of its citizens and ensure global efficiency and productivity over human feelings and freedom of choice. In the next paragraphs, I will analyse Gurk's and Huxley's texts individually and highlight their main characteristics and the peculiar ways in which they deal with the interwar fear of mechanisation and with the increasing predominance of technology in all spheres of human life.

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[203] See Ferns, pp. 110-112, and Martin Schäfer, 'The Rise and Fall of Antiutopia: Utopia, Gothic Romance, Dystopia', *Utopian Studies*, 3 (1979), 287-295. On p. 287, Schäfer states that in dystopias 'the conflict is between the imagined world and [the novel's] protagonist'.

Brave New World

In *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley depicts a technocratic global state that has attained complete social stability and is based solely on industrial efficiency. The use of genetic engineering and applied psychology has allowed the rulers to bring about a population at once servile and happy, hard-working and goods-consuming. It is a technological dystopia which negates freedom and leaves its inhabitants in a perpetual state of stupefied euphoria. Since the Renaissance, traditional notions of humanism in the West have highlighted men's and women's ability to shape and mould their environment through the use of reason and as a result of their actions. Humans 'are able to plot [their] own course of action' depending on their needs, and produce history with these actions.[204] According to the classic conceptualization of the human being, thus, humans are agents who can 'actively do something' and need not be 'merely passive sufferers' of external forces beyond their control:[205] they are able to bring about events. Obnubilated by pre- and post-natal conditioning and genetically modified by eugenics, virtually all the inhabitants of the Brave New World lack this ability: they can only operate within the structures that the technocracy has built for them and do what they have been prescribed to do. Whereas in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* the new science led to the creation of a small army of genetically modified humans who could then be used by the rulers, in *Brave New World* the post-human beings have completely replaced the traditional citizens.[206] Peter Edgerly Firchow argues that history has 'ceased to exist altogether' in Huxley's Brave New World because complete mechanization promises to be the last and permanent stage of human evolution.[207] Indeed, if history is, as traditional humanism claims, essentially a product of human actions, then it cannot exist in Huxley's dystopia for the simple reason that future men and women do not act, but simply carry out the tasks that they have in the social system. In such a society, a form of violent rebellion against the technocracy based on strategic planning and organised action is not possible.

However, Huxley also shows in his novel how some of the citizens of the World State question social orthodoxy and start to look for alternative values and meanings. Much of the plot of *Brave New World* indeed revolves around the progressive estrangement of the main characters from the life in the technocracy, and the different forms of behaviour they subsequently engage in to manifest their dissent. The issue of the possibility of a rebellion against the rationally planned scientific dystopia has been central to many critical studies of *Brave New World*. In this chapter I suggest that Huxley follows in this matter a precise strategy of juxtaposition and counterpoint, based on the characters of Bernard, Helmholtz and Lenina. In

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[204] Nayar, p. 5.

[205] Erasmus Mayr, *Understanding Human Agency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 6. For an analysis of human agency and its relevance to classic humanism, see also Lewis Vaughn and Austin Dacey, *The Case for Humanism: An Introduction* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), pp. 72-79.

[206] The (few) inhabitants of the Indian Reservations, who live according to a primitive set of social rules, are not mass generated and conditioned like the citizens of the World State. However, the Reservations are controlled by the technocracy and used as a touristic attractions for the Brave New Worlders.

[207] See Peter Edgerly Firchow, *Modern Utopian Fictions from H. G. Wells to Iris Murdoch* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), pp. 68-96.

a somewhat similar way to his earlier *Point Counter Point* (1928), indeed, Huxley develops a contrapuntal narrative structure which stresses the main characters' different perspectives on the same reality.[208] The reflection on the possibility of dissent in a society where meaningful actions have been abolished is thus developed on two parallel planes, one for the Alpha-Plus specialists and one for the Beta nurse, throughout the course of the novel. This approach, I argue, consciously opposes Lenina's dynamic development to Bernard's and Helmholtz's ultimately more static characters. The Savage, who is a foreigner to the technological dystopia, works in this structure as the main catalyst for the growing dissent of the three Brave New Worlders.

Brave New World is Aldous Huxley's most famous novel, and is unanimously considered one of the few canonical texts in the dystopian genre; it has therefore been analysed by many critics over the years. Regarding the possible rebellion against the technocratic state, scholars' views may be divided into three groups.[209] Some critics consider the relatively unconditioned Alpha caste of specialists, taken as a whole and opposed to any specific character, to be the real potential element of rebellion of the novel. The directors and administrators of the future world, who need their intelligence to fulfil their role in society, cannot be fully controlled. 'If the Alphas are going to function with top intelligence', Chad Walsh writes as early as 1962, 'there is always the chance that they will […] cause trouble'.[210] George Woodcock similarly argues that the higher castes in *Brave New World* cannot be as closely conditioned as the Gamma or Delta workers, and that this relative freedom is the only real problem that the World Controllers have to face.[211] Krishan Kumar asserts in his *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times* that the social structure of Huxley's technological dystopia, with the relatively unconditioned Alphas at the top, clearly contains the seeds of potential dissent.[212] Some critics even suggest that there is no dangerous dissent at all in the Brave New World, or at least nobody who rebels against the order in any meaningful way. Woodcock writes that *Brave New World*, together with almost all of Huxley's novels, 'lacks heroes in the ordinary sense'.[213] Donald Watt, after having analysed the manuscript of the novel and the author's notes, concurs that Huxley chose not to employ any of

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[208] For an analysis of Huxley's contrapuntal style, especially with regards to *Point Counter Point*, see Ronald T. Sion, *Aldous Huxley and the Search for Meaning – A Study of the Eleven Novels* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010), pp. 58-74.

[209] Among the various critical studies I considered for this chapter, the most significant are: Robert S. Baker, *Brave New World – History, Science, and Dystopia* (Boston, MA: Twayne, 1990); Peter Bowering, *Aldous Huxley: A Study of the Major Novels* (London: Athlone Press, 1968); Peter Edgerly Firchow, *The End of Utopia – A Study of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1984); Krishan Kumar, *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*; Jerome Meckier, *Aldous Huxley: Satire and Structure* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969); Ronald T. Sion, *Aldous Huxley and the Search for Meaning*; Donald Watt, 'The Manuscript Revisions of "Brave New World"', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 77 (1978); George Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour – A Study of Aldous Huxley* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972); and the essay collection *Huxley's Brave New World: Essays*, ed. by David Garrett Izzo and Kim Kirkpatrick (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008).

[210] Walsh, pp. 95-96. On p. 113, Walsh reiterates that 'the only way [the] system could be overthrown is from the top'.

[211] Woodcock, pp. 177-181.

[212] Kumar, pp. 280-281.

[213] Woodcock, p. 61.

the main characters as the traditional rebel to the dystopian order.[214] Peter Edgerly Firchow argues in his 1984 study that Bernard and Helmholtz are not capable of real dissent and that the Savage 'is really no threat at all', while Robert S. Baker writes that the main characters are all 'so perversely abnormal and self-destructive' that they do not offer any alternative to Mond's scientistic order.[215] Recently, Andrew Milner, in his reading of *Brave New World* as a bathetic comedy and 'essentially a comic novel', has argued that both John and Bernard are repeatedly undermined in their actions against the state for satirical effects.[216] These readings of the novel deny that the dystopia's main characters present any real problem to the World State, and either locate the threat against the technocracy in the possibility that the Alpha caste as a whole will eventually acquire political consciousness or argue that the World State cannot really be challenged at all.

Many other critics identify dissent against the Brave New World mainly in the figure of the Savage, and see in his confrontation with Mond the rebellion of the last free man against the technological dystopia. Peter Bowering asserts that it is only in the Indian Reservation that the 'normal values of humanity' have survived, and that John 'becomes the symbol of the human spirit, opposed to Fordism and applied science'.[217] Gorman Beauchamp similarly argues that Huxley places the values that he sets against the Brave New World in the figure of John. Though he concedes that the character is portrayed somewhat inconsistently in the course of the novel, Beauchamp writes that John is nonetheless the bearer of the superior cultural values of the past.[218] Chris Ferns highlights many similarities in the pattern of resistance in the dystopian fictions of Huxley, Zamyatin and Orwell, and argues that the Savage, as 'the main opponent of the dystopian society', suffers a similar fate to those of Winston Smith and D-503.[219] Bradley Buchanan interestingly discusses John as a psychologically unstable oedipal figure thrown into a world that has reached stability by scientifically eliminating the Oedipus complex associated with intimacy. A maverick irreconcilable with the precepts of the global state, the Savage is consequently the only character who manages to voice his discontent with the technocratic system.[220] Ronald Sion describes John as 'the innocent eye figure' who is more free and better educated than the new world citizens; unlike them, thus, he rebels against the suppression of individuality of the scientific state.[221] Many of these authors recognize that John is ultimately not able to initiate any successful revolution against Mond and the other World Controllers, but insist that only the Savage has something meaningful to oppose to the scientific and mechanized structure of the Brave New World. The other characters, including

[214] Watt, pp. 367-382.

[215] See Firchow, pp. 20-22, and Baker, pp. 100-101.

[216] Andrew Milner, 'Need It All End in Tears? The Problem of Ending in Four Classic Dystopias', in *Critical Insights – Dystopia*, pp. 109-124 (pp. 117-118).

[217] Bowering, pp. 104-106.

[218] Gorman Beauchamp, 'The Shakespearean Strategy of Brave New World', *Utopian Studies*, 4 (1991), 60-64.

[219] Ferns, pp. 112-130.

[220] Bradley W. Buchanan, 'Oedipus Against Freud: Humanism and the Problem of Desire in *Brave New World*', in *Huxley's Brave New World: Essays*, pp. 26-45.

[221] Sion, pp. 128-129.

Bernard and Helmholtz, are at best dissidents or nonconformists unable to find a real reason to fight for.

Some scholars analyse the potential rebellion in the novel as the result of many different factors, and attach greater importance to the actions of the other dissident protagonists. Ferns acknowledges that Bernard and (above all) Helmholtz are critically aware of the severe restrictions of the technocratic society, and that they function in many ways as the novel's rebels before the introduction of the Savage.[222] Robert Baker notes that Bernard is presented in the first chapters as 'an error in World State calibrations', a character so out of tune with the mechanical stability of the dystopia that he 'threatens to disrupt the stately movement of the Fordian production line'. Bernard is in Baker's view the quintessential 'new romantic' character struggling to transcend the modern values of collectivism and mechanization; John, who takes his place in the second half of the novel, is an 'old romantic' figure who seeks individual self-expression and freedom. Huxley consciously opposes the two characters in order to show the two possible reactions to the age of scientific progress and social planning.[223] Jerome Meckier argues that, apart from the Savage, there are at least three characters from inside the Brave New World who may be seen as potentially dangerous misfits: Bernard, Helmholtz, and Lenina.[224] However, almost all these critical studies suggest that the tentative rebellious actions of the Brave New Worlders are completely superseded in the second half of the book by the much more significant dissent voiced by the Savage.

In this chapter, I would like to propose an alternative reading of the articulation of the resistance against the technocratic society in *Brave New World*. Huxley, I argue, builds from the first chapters of the novel a narrative structure based on the symmetrical juxtaposition of the actions of Bernard (and Helmholtz) on the one hand and Lenina on the other. This structure is established before the introduction of the Savage and continues more or less unaltered after it. A simple examination of the novel's sequences clearly shows how the main focus of the narration continually shifts from Lenina to Bernard and then back to Lenina. The novel starts with a guided tour of the London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, and with the separate introduction first of the popular Lenina and then of the social misfit Bernard. Lenina accepts Bernard's invitation to the Savage Reservation and Bernard goes to speak with Helmholtz, who is presented as his friend and a similarly unorthodox citizen of the World State. The narration then follows Lenina on a night out with Henry Foster, before shifting again to Bernard for his evening at the Solidarity Service. In the following chapter Lenina ponders over the 'odd' date she had with Bernard, and then Bernard is seen asking his superior for permission to go to the Reservation. The two protagonists finally fly to New Mexico together and meet John; this is the centre of the novel's symmetric structure, and indeed presents Bernard and Lenina together. After this chapter, the alternation of Bernard's (and Helmholtz's) and Lenina's scenes restarts and becomes even more evident. First, Bernard returns to the Brave New World with the

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[222] Ferns, p. 124-125. Ferns, however, also highlights that Bernard becomes more and more the object of satire as the novel goes on.

[223] Baker, pp. 99-107. For Huxley's definitions of old and new romanticism, see Aldous Huxley, *Music at Night* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1949), pp. 211-220.

[224] Meckier, pp. 178-180.

Savage and becomes famous. Then, Lenina goes on a date with John and begins to feel attracted to him. Immediately afterwards, Bernard loses his new celebrity status when John refuses to show up at his party. Later, Lenina, now in love with the Savage, tries to seduce him but is violently rejected. The sequence of the riot at the Park Lane Hospital and of John's, Helmholtz's and Bernard's confrontation with Mustapha Mond follows. Finally, the novel ends with Lenina's last encounter with the Savage and the subsequent scene of collective sensual frenzy.

Bernard, Helmholtz and Lenina, as the next paragraphs will show, possess some of the features that are traditionally associated with the human being, and that the other characters in the novel lack. The two Alpha-plus specialists and the Beta nurse are able to think of themselves as individuals rather than mere parts of the mechanized society, and as a consequence they are able to reason and change their opinions. It is through them, and through the juxtaposition of their very different reactions to the main events of the story, that Huxley articulates the reflection on the possibility of the dissent in the Brave New World. The Savage, an external force thrust almost by chance into the technocratic society in the middle of the novel, functions as a catalyst for the characters' changes and hastens a more direct confrontation with the rules of the scientific state. But what should primarily interest us is the *internal* opposition of the World State citizens. If this is a story about 'the horror of the Wellsian utopia and a revolt against it', as Huxley himself defined it at the time of its composition,[225] then it implies a serious reflection on the possibility of dissent on the part of the Brave New Worlders.

Unlike virtually all other inhabitants of the World State, then, Bernard, Helmholtz and Lenina are indeed capable of some form of agency. As I will show in the next paragraphs, however, in Bernard's and Helmholtz's case this potential ability is never exploited to the full: even after John's riot at the Park Lane Hospital, the two Alphas never really go beyond their initial condition of embittered citizens aware of the limitations imposed on them but essentially inconsequential in their actions. Lenina, on the contrary, evolves from being a fully integrated (and unthinking) citizen of the World State to a complex unorthodox figure who willingly disobeys to the technocracy's most basic rules. The capacity for agency, which, as noted above, is one of the most important traditional markers of the human being, has often been associated with men more than with women.[226] According to the classic humanist paradigm, in fact, competent agency is only possible through the use of reason and independent thinking; unlike men, however, women have usually been linked with the body and the 'vacuous bodily activities', which were thought to interfere with their rational capacities.[227] At the same time as

[225] Aldous Huxley, Letter to Mrs Kethevan Roberts (18 May 1931), in *Letters of Aldous Huxley*, ed. by Grover Smith (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969), p. 348.

[226] Letitia Meynell, 'Introduction – Minding Bodies', in *Embodiment and Agency*, ed. by Sue Campbell, Letitia Meynell, and Susan Sherwin (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2009), pp. 1-21 (pp. 4-5). For an analysis of the categories of agent and body in relation to the social position of women, see also Deborah Orr, 'Thinking through the Body: An Introduction to *Beliefs, Bodies and Being*', in *Belief, Bodies and Being – Feminist Reflections on Embodiment*, ed. by Deborah Orr and others, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), pp. 1-10.

[227] Meynell, pp. 1-6. See also Robin Redhead, *Exercising Human Rights – Gender, Agency and Practice* (Abingdon and New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), pp. 39-45.

the idea of the human as a rational being capable of meaningful action became the philosophical basis for modern Western thought, thus, women were being partially excluded from such a category.[228] By contrasting Lenina's personal development with Bernard's and Helmholtz's passivity, I argue, Huxley defies the traditional notions of male and female agency. In a future society in which hardly anybody is capable of thinking of himself as an individual, Lenina is the character who most closely comes to resemble a traditional human being.

Before analysing the characters' behaviour in the text more in detail, it is necessary to make a preliminary consideration. The main problem with the evaluation of dissent in the technological dystopia is that one must first define what constitutes a rebellion and what really goes against the technocratic state. In the case of *Brave New World*, it must be noted, Huxley gives us an accurate and comprehensive list of rebellious activities in the form of hypnopaedic slogans. Constantly repeated in almost every chapter of the book, these sentences are self-evident axioms for the characters in the novel – and to the reader they appear as a readily available catalogue of laws. But these slogans actually also disclose much about what Huxley sees as possible dissent against the World State. By telling people how to act in every possible situation, the hypnopaedic slogans implicitly reveal what is really dangerous for the scientific dystopia – or more accurately, what the Controllers consider a source of threat. When they stress that 'every one belongs to every one else' and that 'we can't do without any one', the slogans show that the World State cannot tolerate individualists and loners (and, even less so, monogamists). When they obsessively repeat that 'everybody's happy now' and that citizens should 'never put off till tomorrow the fun [they] can have to-day', they reveal that dissatisfaction and – above all – delayed gratification are the real enemies of the technocracy. When they say, more generally, that 'when the individual feels, the community reels', they recognize that truly violent passions have the potential to shake the equilibrium of the whole scientistic order. And when the Brave New Worlders repeat that 'one cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy sentiments', they acknowledge the strength of soma as the ultimate pacifier of all anti-social feelings: to refuse to take it is to go directly against the indications of the state.[229] If we want to analyse the articulation of dissent and rebellion in *Brave New World*, we have to measure the actions of the World State citizens – of Bernard, Helmholtz and Lenina – against these internal laws of the community.

This stress on the hypnopaedic slogans is crucial. Huxley's global dystopia, in which a specific set of rules is given for the everyday life of all men and women, is not based on traditional physical coercion or fear; on the contrary, citizens are controlled and docile precisely because they are happy with their conditions and satisfied in their desires. In the World State, going against the precepts of the hypnopaedic slogans and refusing to become a happily oblivious and stupefied citizen have the same value that acts of more openly political rebellion

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[228] Nayar, pp. 11-12, and Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, pp. 67-68.

[229] The hypnopaedic slogans are repeated by various characters throughout the novel; for what concerns the slogans mentioned here, 'every one belongs to every one else' is quoted on pp. 34, 37 and 40, 'we can't do without any one' on pp. 64 and 78, 'everybody's happy now' on p. 65, 'never put off till tomorrow the fun you can have to-day' and 'when the individual feels, the community reels' on p. 81, and 'one cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy sentiments' on pp. 46, 52 and 77.

have in *We* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It is in unorthodox behaviour and thinking of this kind, and not in the futile hope in an armed revolution, that Huxley locates resistance against the World State.

Bernard and Helmholtz, as many commentators have noted, are initially presented as the two most obvious potential rebels of the scientific state. They are both expert in hypnopaedia and mass conditioning, and they have long discussions about the flaws in the social order of future London. More importantly, they are not satisfied with the immediate material happiness advocated by the World State and look for something more meaningful. In this, at least at the beginning of the novel, they do not conform to the slogans of the technocratic society. Bernard, shunned by the upper-caste girls because physically inadequate, objects to his colleagues' treatment of Lenina 'as though she were a bit of meat'.[230] He thinks of his date with her as a 'private affair', hidden from his colleagues, and even tries to experiment with feeling 'more on [his] own' and 'not just a cell in the social body' (*Brave New World*, 77-79). Helmholtz similarly complains about the World State's vacuity, and decides to cut 'all [his] committees and all [his] girls' in order to analyse the effects of a non-orthodox behaviour. In a passage in Chapter 4, quoted in many critical studies, Huxley writes that 'the two men shared […] the knowledge that they were individuals' in a society made of mechanized conformism (*Brave New World*, 56-58). Bernard and Helmholtz, the major male dissenters in the novel, are therefore associated with the mind and the use of reason: as men, they are initially presented as traditional 'rational agents' able to use their judgment and free will to act and possibly change their position in the World State.[231] Bernard, it is true, is depicted as fearful and insecure, while Helmholtz appears more determined and strong-willed; some critics have indeed seen in Helmholtz a more serious threat to Mond's order.[232] I suggest here, however, that in the novel's overall narrative structure their forms of rebellion are similar – and programmatically opposed to that of Lenina.

Lenina is initially presented as an orthodox citizen of the scientific society, a sociable and outgoing girl who is perfectly happy with her condition (and conditioning) in the World State. Unlike Bernard and Helmholtz, she is a Beta and thus allowed comparatively less freedom and less education.[233] As the Alpha workers in the Hatchery Centre declare, she is 'uncommonly pretty', 'wonderfully pneumatic', and very popular: when she enters the lift of the Alpha changing room in the Centre, she is 'greeted by many friendly nods and smiles' (*Brave New World*, 49).[234] At the beginning of the novel, like all other women, she is depicted as the perfect product of the

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[230] Huxley, *Brave New World*, p. 39.
[231] For an analysis of how men have traditionally been regarded as more rational than women, see also Londa Schiebinger, *The Mind Has No Sex? Women in the Origins of Modern Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 1-9.
[232] See for example Ferns, pp. 124-125, who argues that 'of the rebels, the only one who is not also the object of satire is Helmholtz'. Kumar, on p. 279, describes Helmholtz as being 'made of sterner stuff' than Bernard.
[233] The fact that Lenina is a Beta is never explicitly stated, but it is possible to infer her caste from her profession and activities. Critics generally agree that she is indeed a Beta worker: see for example Firchow, p. 81, and Ferns, p. 117.
[234] Caitríona Ní Dhúill notes that, although at first sight women are more emancipated in the dystopia than in real-life Britain, *Brave New World* reproduces many of the contemporary sexist stereotypes and the portrayal of women is 'dominated by details of their physical appearance, sexual attractiveness, dress and grooming'. See Ní Dhúill, p. 56.

Brave New World's hypnopaedic slogans, a healthy and unquestioning girl who is dependent upon soma and fails to understand Bernard's requests for abstinence and delayed gratification. In the first chapters of the dystopia, in other words, Huxley seems to endorse the traditional sexist view which sees women as less rational than men and thus less capable of becoming real agents. The vast majority of men in *Brave New World*, it is true, are similarly childishly happy and unthinking; indeed, almost everybody in the novel conforms to the constantly repeated precepts of the World State. Women, however, are virtually always seen only in the background acting as mindless – even indistinguishable – cogs in the social machine; apart from Lenina, no other female character in the novel is conceded any real room to develop. Among men, on the contrary, Bernard, Helmholtz, John and Mustapha Mond (and in a couple of scenes even Henry Foster and the Director of the Hatchery Centre) are analysed at least in part in their desires and motivations. June Deery writes that in the Brave New World we generally find an 'importation of the sexist norms of Huxley's own society'; this situation makes women 'more objects than subjects', and renders them unable to 'break through […] Huxley's two-dimensional characterization, as some of the men begin to do'.[235]

Lenina has indeed rarely been examined in depth in the critical studies, and hardly ever as a rebellious character. Robert Baker dismisses her as having 'no role to speak of' and existing 'only as an object of desire'.[236] June Deery, as mentioned above, argues that Lenina is only a two-dimensional character, and Chris Ferns writes that in the novel 'there is no counterpart to the subversive females of Zamyatin and Orwell'.[237] Even those critics who acknowledge that she plays quite a substantial role in the book only attribute some limited anti-social tendencies to the figure: Peter Firchow, for example, writes that Lenina is a 'fairly complex' character, but is bound never to realize 'what it is that has happened to her'.[238] Only Krishan Kumar suggests that Lenina might play a bigger role in the resistance against the Brave New World, but he does not go on to examine the issue more deeply.[239] The main focus, in both recent and older texts, is on the male protagonists of the novel.

This is the situation in the first five chapters of the novel. However, things soon begin to change for all the main characters. Beginning with Chapter 6, Huxley starts to examine the nature of Lenina's and Bernard's relationship with the World State in more depth and to record their changing attitudes and beliefs. Lenina, who has a slightly 'indecent' tendency to date her Alpha co-workers for too long (*Brave New World*, 33-35), is soon depicted as more complex and less orthodox than expected. After her first date with Bernard, who is unable to hide his unhappiness and frequently asks her to do things in private, she becomes concerned and puzzled; however, she decides to keep going out with him nonetheless, even against the advice of her more orthodox friends. 'All the same', she insists at the end of every discussion, 'I do like

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[235] June Deery, 'Technology and Gender in Aldous Huxley's Alternative (?) Worlds', in *Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations – Aldous Huxley's Brave New World*, ed. by Harold Bloom, (Broomall, PA: Chelsea House, 2003), pp. 129-145 (pp. 133-134). See also Ní Dhúill, pp. 55-57.
[236] Baker, p. 137.
[237] See Deery, pp. 129-136, and Ferns, p. 117.
[238] Firchow, pp. 22-23.
[239] Kumar, pp. 286-287.

him' (*Brave New World*, 75-82). Lenina's attraction to such an obviously nonconformist citizen of the World State is the first sign that Huxley might alter the initial simple opposition between the male Alpha rebel and the unquestioning female Beta worker. After this scene, at the end of which Lenina decides to finally accept Bernard's invitation to the Savage Reservation, the novel's depiction of the two citizens' dissent against the World State becomes indeed more and more complex.

The trip to the Reservation is the central event that defines Bernard's and Lenina's different developments in the second half of the novel. For the first (and last) time, the two characters appear together: the trip to New Mexico is the structural and symmetrical centre of Bernard's and Lenina's development, the moment at which they briefly evade the World State together, before separating again to take two very different paths. The Lenina and Bernard who visit the Savage Reservation, though, are essentially still in the first stage of their development. Bernard is still a deeply unsatisfied Alpha professional who looks with contempt at the world around him and underlines his eccentricity with pointed remarks. When he sees two Indian mothers breast-feeding their sons – a 'revoltingly viviparous scene' for a Brave New Worlder – he tries to be 'deliberately outrageous' by commenting: 'What a wonderfully intimate relationship, [...] and what an intensity of feeling it must generate!'. Lenina, for her part, is still bewildered by everything that does not conform to the standards of the World State, and immediately resorts to hypnopaedic slogans or soma every time a potentially unsettling situation arises. When she meets a very old, derelict man in the Reservation, she looks in her pocket for her soma and whispers: 'It's awful. We ought not to have come here' (*Brave New World*, 92-96).

The catalyst for the changes that occur in the two Brave New Worlders in the second half of the novel is John the Savage. A hybrid offspring of the novel's primitive and future cultures, John has lived all his life outside the realm of technocratic civilization; he provides an external point of view on the dystopian reality of A.F. 632, a future man still linked to the older values of tribal religion and the great works of literature. In the second part of the novel, he always appears either in the company of Bernard (and Helmholtz) or with Lenina, and influences their relationships with the Brave New World in different ways.

The first remarkable change that occurs after the Reservation sequence involves Bernard. Thanks to the presence of the Savage, the nonconformist psychologist who openly shunned crowds and public sports becomes a glamorous Alpha, intent on organizing events and asking women on dates. Indeed, Huxley makes every effort to show us that Bernard tries to be as promiscuous as possible: he sleeps with six girls on the first week after his return from Malpais, goes out with Lenina's friend Fanny and then arranges a date with Miss Kate, the Head Mistress of Eton (*Brave New World*, 135-142). In a brief scene, he even bickers with Helmholtz, who finds his new lifestyle too superficial, and decides to end his relationship with him. Bernard clearly wants to be accepted and popular, but at the same time he tries to combine his new alignment to the World State principles and slogans with the manifestation of discontent against some of its practices. When he writes his reports about the Savage to the World Controller Mustapha Mond, he inserts suggestions for the improvement of society and even criticizes some of the features of the World State. 'I must admit', we can read in one of his letters, 'that I

agree with the Savage in finding civilized infantility too easy'. Bernard also 'parade[s] a carping unorthodoxy' in front of his new friends, trying to denounce (mildly) the scientistic organization of the Brave New World while enjoying some of the most obvious consequences of its extreme materialism (*Brave New World*, 136-138). As a good Alpha-Plus citizen, he is actually happy, sociable and promiscuous. His rebellious voice, thus, though still present, is never entirely credible.[240] The second phase of Bernard's development as a key character of *Brave New World* actually sees a reconciliation with the hypnopaedic regulations of the World State.

To this negative portrayal of the new Bernard Huxley juxtaposes, in the second part of the same chapter, the development of the figure of Lenina. The promiscuous and glamorous Beta nurse, who was so shocked by the sight of poverty and disease in Malpais, nonetheless starts to like the young savage John. This is not, however, the flimsy physical and sexual attraction that might be expected from a citizen of the World State. Lenina is puzzled by the behaviour of the Savage, who is shy and reserved in her presence, and starts to 'like him more and more'. As she confesses to Fanny, Lenina is both bewildered and upset by John and for days looks for a way to spend some time *alone* with him. When she receives the news that she will have to accompany him to the feelies for a night out, she is so happy that 'her high spirits overflow in song' (*Brave New World*, 144). At the end of the night, after the feely, Lenina thinks 'exultantly' at the moment when she will finally enter her apartment with John, even though he has behaved 'queerly', according to World State standards. But the Savage, bound to a code of sexual restraint nobody would recognize in the new London, leaves her and returns home. On the point of crying, Lenina takes a massive dose of soma to cure her affliction (*Brave New World*, 143-149).

The first pages of the following chapter are even more indicative of her new state. Having gone to Bernard's party to see John, she sinks into a state of near-depression when he does not show up. 'Pale, her blue eyes clouded with an unwonted melancholy', she sits in a corner 'cut off from those who surround her'. She wants to talk to John and tell him that she likes him more than anybody she has ever known. Even when she goes away with the Arch-Community-Songster of Canterbury, Lenina is still so preoccupied with John as to be 'wholly insensible of the honour done to her' (*Brave New World*, 151-154). Superficially, it looks like the character of Lenina is still conforming to the traditional category of the body-driven female, and that Huxley is again endorsing the sexist clichés of his time. Indeed, as feminist theory has highlighted, strong 'emotions, or "passions"' have often been considered typically feminine bodily states 'that required very strong control by the rational faculties'.[241] Lenina's behaviour, however, is thoroughly unorthodox for a Brave New Worlder. Whereas Bernard begins to conform to the hypnopaedic slogans and the global standard of promiscuity and sociability, Lenina starts to go flatly against the Brave New World principles. Lenina's violent passion for the Savage is, by any World State standard, indecent. If 'every one belongs to every one else', then nobody is allowed to like somebody more than the others, let alone 'more than anybody [s]he has ever known' (*Brave New World*, 151). But Lenina goes even further. At Bernard's party she is evidently

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[240] See also on the matter, Ferns, pp. 116-118, and Kumar, pp. 278-279.
[241] Meynell, p. 3.

depressed and anti-social, unable and unwilling to mingle with the other guests, respect the caste system and have the fun she is supposed never to put off. 'No civilization without social stability' and 'no social stability without individual stability', Mustapha Mond had solemnly declared in the third chapter of the novel (*Brave New World*, 36). Lenina has lost precisely the individual stability so prized and so essential for the overall structure of the World State. In this sense, she has become a rebel against the technocratic order. Huxley, in other words, plays with gender clichés in the description of Lenina by making her behave – apparently – like a stereotypical romantic woman and by highlighting her love and anguish for the Savage. In practice, then, he shows how her behaviour is actually much more resolute and unorthodox than that of the other male protagonists.

This process, again, has not been highlighted by the vast majority of the critics. Commentators have often argued that Lenina does not understand her feelings for John and is incapable of experiencing love beyond pure sexual attraction. Ronald Sion writes that she desires John 'lustily' and only seeks immediate physical pleasure: as a crowning achievement of the utopian society, she is 'forever sensual'. [242] George Woodcock describes Lenina's attraction to the Savage as a comic 'lapse into an old-fashioned infatuation'. [243] Unable to understand her feelings Lenina may well be, but Huxley certainly describes her as being attracted by John beyond physical appearance. This, however, is not the point. Most critics, by accepting Lenina's apparently submissive and stereotypical character and taking for granted her static nature, have become in a way complicit with the sexism which Huxley manages to undermine from the inside. For them, Lenina *is* an acquiescent girl unwilling to challenge social authority and unable to make her own decisions. For Huxley, she is not.

Having described Lenina's development of her new and unsanctioned tendencies, the novel immediately shifts back to Bernard and to his re-found friend Helmholtz, who from this moment starts to partake more actively in his vicissitudes. After the events of the evening party attended by the Arch-Community-Songster, Bernard loses his celebrity status and is forced to rethink his troubled relationship with the World State. Helmholtz, for his part, has written and read to his class some poems about solitude and melancholy, and has therefore been severely reprimanded by his superiors. The presence of the Savage, who is increasingly dissatisfied with the scientific society and becomes more and more uncontrollable, brings the two Brave New Worlders' nonconformity dangerously close to a complete rift with the authorities. In a further twist, however, Huxley undermines the strength and credibility of this new manifestation of the two characters' dissent: John's ideas and behaviour do not have the same ground-breaking effect on Bernard and Helmholtz as they had on Lenina. The two discontented Alpha-Plus specialists are too static and apathetic to completely transcend their original sterile form of rebellion; neither of them goes beyond an anguished coexistence with the rules of the technocratic society. Bernard, in particular, is explicitly said to have returned to 'his old self' after the party incident (*Brave New World*, 155), and again decides to give vent to his discontent in daily conversations with Helmholtz and bitter remarks about the technocratic society. Helmholtz,

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[242] Sion, pp. 148-149.
[243] Woodcock, p. 179.

who appears more dynamic and combative, is actually similarly incapable of going beyond his frustrated quest for inspiration and cannot completely overcome his psychological conditioning. [244] In a particularly indicative scene, he breaks out 'in an explosion of uncontrollable guffawing' when the Savage reads him the sequence in *Romeo and Juliet* where the Capulets 'force [their] daughter to have someone she didn't want' (*Brave New World*, 161). Helmholtz completely fails to understand the need for an exclusive relationship, and the existence of any intimate bond between two different citizens. 'It won't do', he concludes: in order to contrast the purely mechanical social structure of the World State 'we need some other kind of madness and violence' (*Brave New World*, 162). Helmholtz reveals himself to be still surprisingly orthodox, in precisely the field – love and intimacy – where Lenina has managed to breach the precepts of the Brave New World. On the way back from the Savage Reservation, Bernard had already shown himself to be similarly adverse to any notion of romantic love; at the mere question by John whether he and Lenina were married, he had laughed and resolutely replied: 'Ford, no!' (*Brave New World*, 120-121). The hypnopaedic notion that 'every one belong to every one else', it seems, is predominant even in the minds of two of the most exceptional Brave New World citizens. Even after their encounter with the Savage, their use of reason and independent thinking does not turn them into real agents.

Lenina's personal journey beyond the norms and the conventionality of the global state, by contrast, continues and becomes more intense in the thirteenth chapter of the novel, which follows the description of Helmholtz's perplexity at *Romeo and Juliet*. In the third stage of her development, Lenina becomes hysterically impulsive and incapable of working together with her colleagues. When Henry Foster asks her to go to a feely and whether she is dating anybody else at the moment, she simply '[shakes] her head without speaking' (*Brave New World*, 163). Henry immediately detects 'the weariness in [her] eyes' and 'the sadness at the corners of [her] unsmiling [...] mouth': Lenina's frustration and dissatisfaction have ceased to be exclusively private. Henry continues to talk to her nonetheless, and she becomes nervous and verbally aggressive: 'Oh, for Ford's sake, shut up!', she shouts, and then turns her back to him (*Brave New World*, 165). Lenina is an integral part of London society and is frequently shown interacting with other World State citizens, especially inside the Hatching Centre; her odd behaviour now influences the correct functioning of the institute. Having dismissed Henry, she even forgets to give a dose of sleeping-sickness injection to one of the embryos. Twenty-two years later, the narrator comments, 'a promising young Alpha-Minus administrator' will die because of her mistake. In a world totally committed to social stability and scientistic efficiency, Lenina's melancholy and carelessness are extremely dangerous. One of the most important hypnopaedic slogans identifies the duty of the citizens to be 'adults [...] during working hours' and childishly happy 'where feeling and desire are concerned' (*Brave New World*, 81); stunned by her feelings for John, Lenina indeed does the exact opposite. In quite a literal way, to paraphrase another slogan, her individual 'feeling' is making the community 'reel'. Unlike Bernard and Helmholtz, Lenina is changing and developing, and with her individual actions she

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[244] On p. 279 of *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, Kumar notes that Helmholtz 'wants something different from the life of Brave New World, but is totally incapable of knowing what'.

is violating the rules of the Brave New World in a much more profound way than the other two male protagonists.

According to Ronald Sion, in spite of some odd behaviour in the second part of the novel, Lenina 'is true to her conditioned self and resorts to soma to excise the tentacles of the aesthetic and the humane'.[245] But Huxley explicitly writes, only one page after the scene with Henry, that the World State drug is not sufficient to expunge her new anti-social feelings: Lenina does take soma to forget John, but 'in the intervals [she] still likes him'. Indeed, regardless of her conditioning and education, she says to Fanny that she 'will *always* like him' (*Brave New World*, 165). It is in this mood that she finally decides to go and talk to John – and is rejected. The Savage, despite being in love with her, is too distant from the World State's concept of physical attraction and too influenced by the idea of chastity he has learned from Shakespeare and from the New Mexico reservation. Ironically, when Lenina tries to seduce him in order finally to find peace, he refuses to 'take' her and even attacks and strikes her (*Brave New World*, 165-172). Thus, at the end of the chapter, Lenina remains an estranged, unstable and melancholy citizen of the World State, a danger – as the hypnopaedic slogan would put it – for the whole technocratic community.

Immediately after having rejected Lenina, the Savage finds out that his mother is dying and rushes to the hospital. This is the prologue to the last scene involving Bernard and Helmholtz, the one which finally shows them facing the World State's authority. The two characters first come to the rescue of John, who has started a riot in the hospital out of grief and frustration at his mother's death, and then are arrested and confronted by Mustapha Mond. Even more than in the previous sequence, Bernard is shown as timid and insecure and Helmholtz is depicted as more energetic and proactive. This difference in character and personality, however, once again conceals a deeper affinity in the two characters' understanding of dissent and rebellion. In spite of everything that has happened to them, Bernard and Helmholtz remain committed to their original form of resistance against the technological dystopia. As at the beginning of the novel, they are aware of the processes adopted by the World State to control its citizens and want to replace its empty values with something else; in actual practice, however, they do not know how to act. In front of Mustapha Mond, Bernard is unable to speak and 'start[s] and look[s] horrified' at John (*Brave New World*, 188-192). Helmholtz manifests his indecisiveness, less evidently, in his lack of a clear objective or reason to fight for. When he participates in the Savage's riot, he simply acts out of frustration at a stalemate he does not know how to overcome; he has no plan and no specific intention. Moments before, he was discussing with Bernard how they might 'nip across to Biarritz in [his] four-seater sporticopter'; when he sees John fighting, only one page later, he 'pushes his way through the crowd' with 'a laugh of exultation' and joins him (*Brave New World*, 186-187). As Krishan Kumar writes, Helmholtz 'remains gloomy and oppressed throughout, but he is unable to achieve any understanding of his position'.[246] Unprepared and unsure as they are, the two dissenters are easily dealt with by Mond in the trial scene.

[245] Sion, p. 148.
[246] Kumar, p. 279.

In many ways, Bernard's and Helmholtz's final confrontation with Mustapha Mond reads like an example of how a rebellion against the technocratic dystopia should *not* be carried out. Not only are the two characters embroiled in a riot they did not start or plan, they also lack any clear line of argument. Indeed, from the beginning of the trial it is John, the foreigner, who asks the most poignant questions and does most of the talking. Bernard is still paralysed by fear and indecision and Helmholtz can only repeat the question, to himself more than to Mond, what is the alternative to the idiotic 'writing when there's nothing to say' (*Brave New World*, 194). In the end, Bernard and Helmholtz are completely dismissed with (their rebellion being only a 'pathetic, half-baked affair')[247] and Mond continues his discussion only with the Savage. The subject of the talk, however, immediately shifts to the organization of society and the need for religion and free will. In the classic utopias of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the visitor to the utopian society discusses about the merits of the new social order with a native guide; these dialogues 'provide most of the explicit intellectual arguments that convince the visitor' to convert to the utopian order.[248] In the final dialogue between John and Mustapha Mond, similarly, the controller of the World State and the puzzled foreigner talk about their opposite views of the mechanized society. But in the end, like Bernard and Helmholtz, John is not a real threat to the Brave New World (and, unlike them, he does not seem to care about it). The unorthodox behaviour of the two Alpha-Plus specialists, even when pushed onward by the Savage's raw energy, does not achieve any good result against the dystopian regime. The articulation of their dissent, so evident in the first pages of the novel, turns out to be a circular journey that leaves them in the same frustrated state they were before the beginning of the narration – and gets them banished from England.

However, the novel does not end with Bernard's and Helmholtz's trial. In a final, dramatic and extremely important scene, Huxley contrasts Lenina's behaviour for one last time with that of the Alpha-caste protagonists. Ronald Sion suggests that, after the trial, Lenina will probably continue to be engaged 'in a daily stream of sexual […] relationships';[249] this is not, however, what the novel's last chapters seem to imply. The Beta nurse, far from having resumed her everyday life, goes to find John in his hiding place near London. When she looks at him, she has 'an uncertain, imploring, almost abject smile' on her face; when he shouts at her again, and before he begins to strike her, 'tears roll down her cheeks' and she whispers something, 'inaudibly' (*Brave New World*, 227). Apparently, again, Huxley perpetuates in this scene the sexist stereotype of the woman driven only by her feelings: unlike the other male characters, Lenina is – literally – inaudible. As a matter of fact, however, Lenina has done the unthinkable: contrary to all the conditioning and brainwashing of the World State, she has run after the one man who had physically attacked her. Lenina's actions flatly contradicts what Bernard himself had previously described as the 'natural' and hypnopaedically self-obvious 'impulse to recoil from an unpleasant object' (*Brave New World*, 139). Her act is the most complete – and

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[247] Kumar, p. 277.
[248] Kenneth M. Roemer, 'Paradise Transformed: Varieties of Nineteenth-Century Utopias', in *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, ed. by Gregory Claeys (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 79-106 (p. 92).
[249] Sion, pp. 148-149.

dangerous – manifestation of dissent in the novel: if immediate pleasure and satisfaction is the fundamental principle of the World State, the cement that holds the social structure together, Lenina's final appearance qualifies her not only as an agent, but also as a real threat to stability. Such a high-ranking Alpha citizen as the Director of the Hatchery Centre, it should be noted, had explicitly said that 'no offence is so heinous as unorthodoxy of behaviour', because 'it strikes at Society itself' (*Brave New World*, 128-129). With this last scene, Lenina becomes, once and for all, completely unorthodox in her actions.

Huxley describes in his novel two different but intertwined manifestations of dissent against the future technocratic dystopia. Bernard's and Helmholtz's attempt to live as individuals in a mechanized world crashes against their inability to change and develop, and the final riot in which they participate fails to create any real threat. Lenina's more personal, subtle rebellion, which hardly anybody recognizes in the novel and among the critics, in the end turns out to be the only possible way to break free from the World State's precepts. Unlike what happens in *We*, armed dissent is not even taken into consideration by the World Controllers; what *Brave New World* suggests, and what is clear from the analysis of Lenina's and Bernard's vicissitudes, is that the way out of the technological dystopia – if possible at all – can only pass through those personal behaviours and ways of thinking which go against the state-prescribed conduct. At the end of the novel, when the Savage dies, it is not clear what will happen to Lenina, and perhaps it does not matter. She has broken out of her psychological conditioning and is no longer able to see things as the World State would like her to: in other words, she has become an independent human being. The process is probably not reversible. If all this has occurred to the 'perfectly conditioned and pneumatic' Lenina, the World State may well worry. The physical and psychological control of the scientific state over its citizens might not be completely unbreakable.

Tuzub 37

Paul Gurk's technological dystopia *Tuzub 37*, which was published in Germany only three years after Huxley's *Brave New World*, stems from a different cultural background. Gurk, as I suggest in this chapter, develops his idea of a future rational and mechanized state out of the *Großstadtromane* of the Weimar era, which portrayed the life of the individual in the modern industrialized metropolis. Gurk had contacts with many of the Berlin writers of the 1920s, among them Alfred Döblin and Alfred Kerr,[250] and he himself published *Großstadtromane* in which the critical attitude towards mechanization is particularly evident. Moreover, while *Brave New World* was part of a specific tradition of utopian and anti-utopian works which focused on the problematic relations between technology and progress, *Tuzub 37* is not directly related to any of the trends of contemporaneous German speculative fiction. Gurk's novel is equally distant from the Weimar political utopias and dystopias (such as Montanus' *Die Rettung des Abendlandes* and Konrad Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht*) and the more naïve works focusing

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[250] See Imgard Elsner Hunt, 'Die Berlin-Romane Paul Gurks: Mythos Stadt, Mythos Mensch', in *Autoren damals und heute: literaturgeschichtliche Beispiele veranderter Wirkungshorizonte*, ed. by Gerhard Peter Knapp (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1991), pp. 547-570.

on fantastic scientific inventions (like Hans Dominik's *Die Macht der Drei* and Reinhold Eichacker's *Der Kampf ums Gold*). Like *Brave New World*, *Tuzub 37* is instead primarily concerned with the scientific standardization of modern society, and envisions a future world devoid of traditional human beings and inhabited by dull and unquestioning human-machine hybrids.

Tuzub 37, as I will show more in detail in the next paragraphs, portrays the future technocratic World State by using an experimental and avant-gardist language. I refer here to the terms 'avant-garde' and 'experimental literature' in their broadest historical sense. Avant-garde is art practice 'that [seeks] to say something new in its time', by claiming aesthetic and narrative autonomy;[251] experimental literature refers more specifically to the written texts that emphasize innovation and are 'unconventional' and 'iconoclast'.[252] In the present chapter I will use these terms as synonyms, as it is frequently done in secondary literature,[253] to refer to Gurk's unconventional and innovative language and unusual narrative structure. This experimental style, I argue, is heavily influenced by Expressionism. Literary Expressionism has been defined in a number of ways and applied to many different contexts, but it is generally agreed that German Expressionist prose is characterised by a specific set of stylistic features. The novels of the most important German authors, such as Alfred Döblin, Carl Einstein and Kasimir Edschmid, tend towards stylistic concision and unmediated intensity.[254] Expressionist writers often use a strongly paratactic style, even going at times as far as to remove any kind of narratorial comment and psychological explanation from their works: only what actually happens is reported. Sentences are brief, elliptic, and reduced to their most basic syntactic elements. Gurk adopts all these stylistic features in *Tuzub 37* and manages to create an experimental dystopia in which the language used is as important as the socio-political message of the novel. Finally, and at a more general level, the influence of Expressionism on *Tuzub 37* extends to the novel's main themes and ideas. The aversion to technology and mechanization, the perceived need for the general renewal of humanity, the personification of the elements of nature and the use of fantastic elements and of an allegorical form of narration are all major themes of Expressionist poetry, prose and drama[255] – and they are all present, as the next paragraphs will show, in *Tuzub 37*.

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[251] David Cottington, *The Avant Garde: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 4. See also Matei Călinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 95-97.

[252] Joe Bray, Alison Gibbons and Brian McHale, 'Introduction', in *The Routledge Companion to Experimental Literature*, ed. by Joe Bray, Alison Gibbons and Brian McHale (Abingdon and New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), pp. 1-18 (pp. 1-2).

[253] Bray, Gibbons and McHale, for example, write that 'the terms function roughly synonymously'. See Bray, Gibbons and McHale, p. 1.

[254] For a recent study of Expressionist prose, see Walter H. Sokel, 'The Prose of German Expressionism', in *A Companion to the Literature of German Expressionism*, ed. by Neil H. Donahue (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005), pp. 69-88. See also Ingo Roland Stoehr, *German Literature of the Twentieth Century – From Aestheticism to Postmodernism* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2001), pp. 71-74.

[255] See Francis Michael Sharp, 'Menschheitsdämmerung: The Aging of a Canon', pp. 137-155, and James Rolleston, 'Choric Consciousness in Expressionist Poetry: Ernst Stadler, Else Lasker-Schuler, Georg Heym, Georg Trakl, Gottfried Benn', pp. 157-183, both published in *A Companion to the Literature of German*

Gurk is interested in the end of the traditional human-centred society and in the forthcoming rise of the age of complete rationalization. In the future mechanical state every activity will be scientifically planned and organized from above; individual agency and value will be reduced to a minimum, and citizens will be identical and interchangeable. Gurk was not the only author to be concerned with the progressive mechanization of life: many German intellectuals of the first decades of the century believed that 'the era of the individual was over'.[256] Novelists such as Alfred Döblin, Erich Kästner and Hans Fallada and dramatists such as Georg Kaiser and Ernst Toller perceived the new industrialised society, with its emphasis on mechanical standardisation, central planning and mass production, as anonymous and impersonal. In the new social system, the individual is important only insofar as he is part of a much larger profit-driven urban collectivity. Nowhere was this more evident than in Berlin, the only true German metropolis of the time. Hermann Kesser, writing in *Die neue Rundschau* in 1929, describes Potsdamer Platz as a place where both 'Menschen und Wagen' are mere 'Glieder einer geometrischen Gleichung' and 'die Techniker fabrizieren alles', including 'die Wahrheit'. The new idols of the city, Kesser continues, are 'Gott Handel, Gott Commerce, Gott Business'.[257] Joseph Roth similarly emphasizes the anonymity of the metropolis and its lack of attention for the individuals who fall outside the capitalist industrial system in his articles for the *Neue Berliner Zeitung* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Roth, who in the early 1920s still displays a positive attitude toward technological progress, moves by the end of the decade to the apocalyptic vision of 'a world ruined by the commercial exploitation of technology'.[258] Berlin is thus stigmatized in many texts as 'a city without character', where people, 'associated in a merely mechanical fashion', live and behave in a standardized way.[259]

In order to understand *Tuzub 37* and the complexity of its themes, I argue, it is first necessary to see how the looming image of the increasingly technological and depersonalized city was already present in novels such as Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929), Kästner's *Fabian* (1931) and Fallada's *Kleiner Mann, was nun?* (1932), and in Gurk's earlier works *Berlin* (written between 1923 and 1925, published in 1934) and *Laubenkolonie Schwanensee* (completed in 1936). While Gurk was never a member of any particular literary group in the strict sense, some of his Berlin novels clearly had indeed many similarities with the *Großstadtromane* of Fallada, Martin Kessel, Kästner and Döblin.[260] The city novels published by these authors in the 1920s and 30s portray Berlin as 'a soulless place where people just go to

Expressionism. For a good analysis of the German Expressionist works in relation with mechanization and technology, see also Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, pp. 305-319.

[256] Burton Pike, 'Images of the city', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Modern German Novel*, ed. by Graham Bartram (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 110-122 (p. 113).

[257] Hermann Kesser, 'Potsdamer Platz', *Die neue Rundschau*, 40 (1929), 397-409 (pp. 397-399).

[258] For a detailed analysis of Roth's attitude towards modern technology and the mechanization of life, see Jon Hughes, *Facing Modernity: Fragmentation, Culture and Identity in Joseph Roth's Writing in the 1920s* (Leeds: Maney, 2006), pp. 113-142. The phrase quoted in the paragraph is taken from p. 114. See also Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, pp. 270-273.

[259] Midgley, *Writing Weimar*, p. 264.

[260] Almost all the contemporary *Großstadtromane* were set in Berlin. At the peak of its growth, in 1919, the metropolis counted 3.7 million inhabitants. See Charles W. Haxthausen and Heidrun Suhr, 'Introduction', in *Berlin – Culture and Metropolis*, ed. by Charles W. Haxthausen and Heidrun Suhr (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), pp. xi-xxiii (p. xv).

work, where people's lives have no purpose beyond business activity' and where the 'rationalisation and intellectualisation of life' is most evident.[261] Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, Kästner's *Fabian* and Fallada's *Kleiner Mann, was nun?*, in particular, belong to what Holger Klein calls the 'little man in the big city' sub-genre.[262] They focus on the experience of the lone individual, often an outsider to the technological and industrial world, in the depersonalized metropolis. Gurk's *Berlin* and *Laubenkolonie Schwanendee* belong to the same genre of Döblin's, Kästner's and Fallada's novels. *Berlin* and *Laubenkolonie Schwanensee* focus on the struggle of the solitary individual – respectively the old bookseller Eckenpenn and the retired 'Präparanderlehrer' Graumann – against the dehumanising forces of modernity. Both Eckenpenn and Graumann are embittered intellectuals who wrote poems and plays in their youth but were ignored by critics and public. In *Berlin* and *Laubenkolonie Schwanensee* they function as uninvolved commentators on the new impersonal and mechanical society.

Tuzub 37, I suggest, expands on the themes of Gurk's city novels and projects them into the future to create a powerful apocalyptic dystopia. The modern 'big city' is indeed portrayed in *Berlin* as a gigantic and chaotic ensemble of buildings and factories, motorcars and electric lights. As in *Tuzub 37*, its spirit is that of the machine age, which homogenizes the lives of the citizens and makes them behave more and more like automata. Old Eckenpenn is bewildered by the modern toil and bustle of the city, and feels 'als Nummer, als ein Gegenstand'.[263] The metropolis and its buildings seem to him a 'Kraken' which extends its 'Fangarme […] in das reiche Land' (*Berlin*, 162). In *Laubenkolonie Schwanensee*, which was written immediately after the publication of *Tuzub 37*, Gurk returns to this critique of the industrial society and similarly presents Berlin as a 'große Stadt' which 'atmet nicht', 'fühlt nicht' and 'hat einen Motor in sich' like a machine.[264] The protagonist Graumann retires to an allotment colony outside the city precisely to flee the materialism and mechanization of the metropolis. The colony on the outskirts of Berlin becomes for a while a refuge from the mechanical repetition of the life in the city, a new 'home' in a natural environment for Graumann and the other residents.[265] At the end of the novel, however, the allotment colony is destroyed by the city authorities to make space for a new road. In the mechanized society, Graumann sadly realizes, man 'ist nur dazu da, ausgeschlachtet zu werden' until he is ready for the 'Müllkute' and the 'Massengrab' (*Laubenkolonie Schwanensee*, 156). It has been suggested that the old Berlin intellectuals Eckenpenn and Graumann are both literary counterparts of Gurk;[266] the name 'Graumann', in particular, is probably a reference to 'Franz Grau', the pseudonym the author used in the 1930s.

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[261] David Midgley, 'City Mythologies: Berlin and Vienna', in *Vienna Meets Berlin: Cultural Interaction 1918-1933*, ed. by John Warren and Ulrike Zitzlsperger (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), pp. 169-182 (p. 174).

[262] Holger Klein, "The Little Man in the Big City in Earlier Twentieth-Century English and German Novels: Notes towards a Comparative Study", in *The Novel in Anglo-German Context – Cultural Cross-Currents and Affinities*, ed. by Susanne Stark (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), pp. 287-305.

[263] Paul Gurk, *Berlin* (Berlin: Holle, 1934), p. 97.

[264] Paul Gurk, *Laubenkolonie Schwanensee* (Ravensburg: Peter Selinka, 1987), p. 7.

[265] See Axel Goodbody, *Nature, Technology and Cultural Change in Twentieth-Century German Literature – The Challenge of Ecocriticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 231-232.

[266] See for example Hunt, pp. 548-549.

Certainly, the rise of the modern technological society which the two characters witness was of great interest to Gurk, and, as I will show, assumes a dystopian form in *Tuzub 37*.

The main characters of the other contemporaneous city novels experience a similar sense of disorientation in the industrial city. Kästner's Fabian sees it as a 'verrückter […] Steinbaukasten' and a 'hoffnungsloses, unbarmherziges Labyrinth'.[267] Fallada's Berlin in *Kleiner Mann, was nun?* is a place where people continually have to struggle 'durch die Wirrnis von Fußgängern und Elektrischen' and everybody is too busy with his job to pay attention to others.[268] As the protagonist Johannes Pinneberg soon realizes, he is only 'einer von Millionen' (Fallada, 175). Franz Biberkopf in Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* is similarly bewildered when he walks the streets of the city at the beginning of the novel. 'Gewimmel, welch Gewimmel', he exclaims, and is appalled by the number of people who run in all directions.[269] In *Berlin*, Gurk even refers to the metropolis as an 'ungeheure Stadt' which 'frisst Menschenfleisch' (*Berlin*, 319) and whose electric lights resemble 'tausendmal tausend Dämonenaugen' (*Berlin*, 158). In the city novels as in *Tuzub 37*, the technological metropolis becomes a place in which 'der Wert des Individuums ist […] auf ein Minimum reduziert' and 'die Personen bleiben austauschbar'.[270] Eckenpenn, a romantic and melancholic figure with a strong affinity for the natural world, cannot survive in such a cold and depersonalized society. He gradually realizes that he belongs to an outdated generation and, in the end, commits suicide. Similarly, in the final pages of *Laubenkolonie Schwanensee*, Graumann dies in an explosion he himself had provoked after the authorities close the Berlin allotment colony.

The portrayal of the large industrial city as a place of social decay and impersonal relationships is common to most of the German *Großstadtromane* and to many other contemporary accounts of the metropolis. Unbridled technological progress and the scientistic rationalization of life were for these authors only specific aspects of the more general degeneration of the modern city. Their novels attack the inhumanity of the new metropolitan environment made up of large businesses and anonymous crowds. They depict a world in which everything, as Johannes Pinneberg notes, is reduced to 'eine ganz einfache geschäftliche Transaktion' (Fallada, 175). In Gurk's *Berlin*, however, the criticism of industrial mechanization occupies a more central position. Appalled by the logic of scientific organization, Eckenpenn imagines the masses of people in the metropolis as forming an 'endlose Kette' on a 'große, schwarze Band' (*Berlin*, 98), a huge conveyor belt of human beings: men and women even have 'Maschinenherzen' in their bodies. Eckenpenn envisions, in other words, a future post-human society whose inhabitants are completely different in their most basic characteristics from the traditional men and women of the pre-mechanical age. What is only a metaphor in this passage will become in *Tuzub 37* the reality of the technological society: the citizens of the World State are called 'Maschinenmenschen' and their bodies are in part mechanical. The process of mass production is also described in impressive terms in *Berlin* as a

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[267] Quoted in Klein, p. 298.

[268] Hans Fallada, *Kleiner Mann, was nun?* (London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 151-152.

[269] Alfred Döblin, *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (Olten: Walter, 1961), p. 13.

[270] Regine Zeller, *Einer von Millionen Gleichen – Masse und Individuum im Zeitroman der Weimarer Republik* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2011), p. 142.

monumental 'Polyphemhöhle', a cyclops' cave in which workers are continually devoured. The modern world, it is explicitly stated, is ruled by grey technology and rationality (*Berlin*, 99-100). Similarly, the population of the future state of *Tuzub 37* wears grey metallic clothes and is repeatedly called 'das graue Geschlecht'.

Eckenpenn's friend Fox Randolfini goes as far as to imagine and describe the forthcoming rationally planned society of mechanization. In the hyper-technological future described by Fox there will be 'farbige Glaspaläste' and 'künstliche Sonnen' and nobody will have any more 'irrationale Gefühle'. Spoken language will be considered a 'nutzlose Energieverschwendung', and men and women will communicate through 'Lautsprecher der Gedanken'. In such a society, Eckenpenn thinks, 'es wird gefährlich und unrationell sein, zu fühlen' (*Berlin*, 102-103). In its themes and even in its expressions, this is a direct anticipation of the world of *Tuzub 37*. The philosopher Scogan in Huxley's *Crome Yellow* (1921), as has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, similarly foreshadows in his speeches many of the characteristics of the future society of *Brave New World*.[271] Like *Berlin*, *Crome Yellow* is not a dystopian novel, but the future visions of Scogan and Fox clearly anticipate the mechanized societies of *Tuzub 37* and *Brave New World*. Gurk and Huxley, in other words, seemed already to have quite a definite idea of what a technological dystopia would look like in their works of the twenties.

After Herbert Günther had included an excerpt in the 1929 anthology *Hier schreibt Berlin*, Gurk's *Berlin* was finally published one year before *Tuzub 37*.[272] The two novels indeed appear to describe respectively the present and the future of the technological society. *Tuzub 37* portrays a mechanized future world in which humanity sets out to extirpate nature and homogenize the whole planet; men and women have become human-machine hybrids called 'Maschinenmenschen' and are almost indistinguishable from each other. Even more explicitly than in *Brave New World*, thus, the future inhabitants of the World State are not traditional 'humans' anymore. In *Tuzub 37* citizens are mass-produced and endowed with the same specific characteristics: they are 'gleich groß' and all part of a 'unendliche Reihe, in der jedes Glied gleich eins ist'.[273] Like common, inorganic industrial products, the mechanical humans are 'metallisiert und unverfallbar gemacht' (*Tuzub 37*, 38). And like any other metallic object, they are discarded when they become obsolete: cancelled from the official registers, they are 'übergeführt' in 'das Reich des Anorganischen' via chemical means (*Tuzub 37*, 12). What was only adumbrated (though all too clearly) in the visions of Eckenpenn and Fox is fully realized by the future mechanical men. The criticism of the soulless technological city present in *Berlin* becomes in *Tuzub 37* an attack on the idea of scientism and the mechanized state. As the first words of the novel declare, the dystopia is set 'zu der Zeit […], da die Menschen sich mit Ziffern bezeichnen' (*Tuzub 37*, 5). The sense of depersonalization of the technological society, so significant in the city novels of the interwar era, is taken to the extreme in *Tuzub 37*; men and women have become a grey, uniform mass – the 'graues Geschlecht' – and the adjective

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[271] See Kumar, pp. 251-252, and Meckier, pp. 176.

[272] In *Drehbühne der Zeit* (Hamburg: Christian Wegner, 1957), pp. 284-288, Günther explains how he contacted Gurk.

[273] Paul Gurk, *Tuzub 37* (Meitingen: Corian Verlag, 1983), p. 6.

'farbig' is used to connote any form of individualised behaviour.[274] In order to eliminate all the differences and variations, the mechanical men have even blended together their 'Völker und Rassen' so that 'jeder ist die Zahl 1' (*Tuzub 37*, 6). Technology and rationality, which were identified in *Berlin* as the driving forces of the new era of industrialism, motivate and underlie in *Tuzub 37* all the decisions of the World State: the grey humanity pursues only progress, which is described in a striking oxymoronic image as 'das rollende Viereck, das kein Zurück kennt, nur ein Vorwärts' (*Tuzub 37*, 39). The image of the quadrilateral is repeated throughout the novel, and becomes one of the symbols of the mathematical homogeneity of the world of mechanical men. The society of *Tuzub 37* has continued on the path set by twentieth-century mass capitalism and has reached the point at which it is difficult to distinguish between man and machine.

Gurk, as mentioned above, adapts in *Tuzub 37* the experimental style of Expressionist literature to the portrayal of the mechanized future. While *Brave New World* relies on satire and builds an intertextual dialogue with other British utopian authors,[275] the avant-gardist language becomes in Gurk's novel a way to express more directly and intensely the inhumanity and absurdity of a society ruled only by technology and rationality. As in many of the prose works of German Expressionism, syntactic subordination is almost completely absent from Gurk's dystopia. The vast majority of sentences in *Tuzub 37* are short and terse. When they are used to describe the World State and its society, they simply present the necessary information to the reader without going into detail and without supplying any sort of narratorial commentary. At the beginning of the novel, for instance, the future society is introduced in a series of short statements that define some of its major characteristics. The reader is informed that 'es gibt nur eine Form der Häuser auf der Erde', 'von oben nach unten laufen Fahrstuhlschächte', 'es gibt keine Treppen' and 'jetzt führen die Straßen der Beförderung unter der Erde entlang' (*Tuzub 37*, 11). The narrator also states that 'die Metallisierung der Menschen läßt Krankheiten kaum noch zu' and that 'der Ausdruck Tod ist veraltet' (*Tuzub 37*, 12). When sentences in *Tuzub 37* describe the actions of the main characters, they similarly refer only to what actually happens. This is particularly evident in the scenes which feature the nine controllers of the technocratic world, the 'Schreiber': the narrator often introduces their words by simply acknowledging that they are talking ('Ohr spricht', 'Mund spricht', 'Hirn denkt nach'). The passage in which the mechanical men begin their attempt to fill up the ocean, then, tersely reads: 'nun kommen die Grauen und eröffnen den Kampf' (*Tuzub 37*, 72). Even when – less frequently – the sentences Gurk adopts are indeed a bit longer and less concise, he always uses a paratactic style and juxtaposes events and actions in quick succession and without commenting them. An example is the sentence 'Renu sieht auf und erblickt einen riesigen Raketenwagen mit ungeheuerer Geschwindigkeit durch den Raum brennen, aber er fliegt nicht im flachen weiten Bogen über große Strecken, um unten zu landen, sondern er schießt steil auf und verschwindet im Grau'

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[274] Total uniformity, as has been frequently noted, is a major characteristic of all the most famous dystopian works (and not only of the overtly anti-technological texts). See for example Ferns, pp. 112-114.

[275] See for example Hillegas, pp. 111-118, and Gorman Beauchamp, 'All's Well That Ends Wells: The Anti-Wellsian Satire of *Brave New World*', *Utopian Studies*, 2 (1989), 12-16.

(*Tuzub 37*, 109). Moreover, specific words which have a particular importance for the mechanical society, like 'Fortschritt' and 'Ziel', are repeated frequently throughout the novel. In some cases Gurk even substitutes common German words with more technical and precise neologisms, such as 'Menschenfortreihung' for 'Reproduktion' and 'Kraftausatmung' for 'Energie'.

The strong use of parataxis and the lack of a commenting narrator help Gurk to convey the mechanical nature of the society he describes to the reader. Extremely concise and devoid of any unnecessary embellishment, the expressions adopted in *Tuzub 37* indeed read at times as if produced by a machine.[276] They describe with almost mathematical precision exactly what happens in the story: 'im Sektor R treffen alle zusammen. Es ist kein Gewässer auf der Erde. Meer ist besiegt', the narrator explains after the ocean has been filled up by the grey humanity (*Tuzub 37*, 115). Gurk often repeats the same expressions to describe actions that happen more than once, and at times favours the recurrence of nouns instead of pronouns as the subject of a sentence. The Schreiber, for instance, are introduced for the first time in the following passage: 'Der erste Schreiber heißt Hirn, der zweite Schreiber heißt Auge. Der dritte Schreiber heißt Ohr' (*Tuzub 37*, 16). Gurk's peculiar presentation of the Schreiber as the symbolic mind and limbs of the social body, it can be noted, recalls directly Nikolai Evreinov's 1911 avant-gardist drama *The Theatre of the Soul*. Evreinov uses a similar form of symbolism based on bodily functions and describes in the play the three 'leaders' of the modern human soul as 'the rational self', 'the emotional self' and 'the psychical self'.[277] Gurk's world controllers in *Tuzub 37* are similarly divided into three groups, but they correspond to the three *physical* sections of the body: head, upper limbs and lower limbs.

Gurk, it must be noted, is also able to balance his experimental and mechanical use of language with more vivid and articulate passages. Sentences in *Tuzub 37* often become less short and concise when they focus on Nature as standing in the way of mechanical progress. Some of these passages possess a high degree of lyricism: animals and plants talk gently to each other and are united by a common and ancestral sense of belonging to the Earth. In the first pages of the novel, the Thrush and the Lilac address each other with the names 'Frühsingende' and 'Maiblühender'. They comment on the action of the mechanical men, who – as they reveal – consider useless 'was singt oder blüht' and have imprisoned them (*Tuzub 37*, 5-6). In another similarly expressive passage in the first half of the novel, the ocean talks to the earth using long and colourful sentences: 'Luft zog sich zurück, die verdünnte Angst, das Scheue, das nur noch tückisch im Wirbel herabstößt und seine Feinde streichelt' (*Tuzub 37*, 49). In passages like these, Gurk's dystopia creates a contrast between the articulate voices of nature and the dry, monotonous retelling of the history of the grey humanity. When he portrays the immense public gatherings of the mechanical men, Gurk also refers to the style of the

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[276] Klaus Geus notes that the language of *Tuzub 37* is 'bewußt monoton' and 'uniform', and that 'besonderes Merkmal ist die technizistische, hyperkorrekte Sprache, die bis zu Neologismen […] reicht'. See Klaus Geus, 'Zwischen Widerstand und Anpassung: Die Kritik am Nationalsozialismus in Paul Gurks dystopischem Roman Tuzub 37', *Das schwarze Geheimnis*, 4 (1999), 105-114 (pp. 110-111)

[277] Nikolai Evreinov, *The Theatre of the Soul - A Monodrama in One Act* (London: Hendersons, 1926), p. 14.

popular *Sprechchor* of contemporary German theatre. 'Speaking choruses' were frequently used in the interwar era in politically charged public performances organized by both left and right, and were characterized by a strong identification with the mass audience and the common citizens.[278] As in these real-life theatrical performances, the public assemblies of *Tuzub 37* constantly refer to the mechanical men as an organized community united by a common objective, thus blurring the lines 'between theatre and politics' and 'between organized religion and politics'.[279] In the huge gathering portrayed in the first pages of the novel 'ein grauer Mensch tritt vor' and speaks, and 'das Gewimmel der Grauen […] streckt die Arme hoch als Zeichen der Anbetung' (*Tuzub 37*, 7-8). The mechanical men recognise themselves as the civilization created by technological progress, worship the first combine harvester and burn the old 'Schriften der Dichter und Denker' in front of it. All together, with an almost religious fervour, the citizens of the rational state declaim: 'Wir beten dich an, Mähdrescher! Von dir ab erhob sich eine neue Zeit!' (*Tuzub 37*, 8-9). Scenes like this are depicted throughout the novel: Klaus Geus goes so far as to claim that Gurk was referring specifically to the Nazi public *Thingspiele*, which were characterized by a strong use of the *Sprechchor* and became popular precisely between 1933 and 1935.[280] At a stylistic level, I want to suggest here that the novel's language, though consciously dry and mechanical in most passages, is capable of sudden variations and changes of tone that make it much more lively and vivid.

In the radically mechanized future portrayed by Gurk, the artificial control of reproduction still plays a prominent role but is by no means the sole chief preoccupation of the technocratic rulers. In *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* artificial procreation is indeed only one of several prominent aspects of a society which has become in its entirety rational and scientistic. In Huxley's dystopia, as most readers know, children are produced in 'Hatchery Centres' where human ova are artificially fertilized outside the womb and then put into incubators 'where the Alphas and Betas [embryos] remain until definitely bottled' and the Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons are cloned in order to create batches of several identical twins (*Brave New World*, 2-5). In *Tuzub 37* the reproduction of the mechanical men is similarly automatic and impersonal: while already at the beginning of the novel there is no 'Fortzeugung […] im eigentlichen Sinn', technicians are said to be working towards a completely mechanical production of new individuals. Gurk specifically uses the word 'Retortennachwuchs' to refer to the mechanical men that would be created in this way (*Tuzub 37*, 24-26). The expression 'Retortenbaby' is the German equivalent of 'test-tube baby': albeit less specifically, Gurk refers to the same type of artificial reproduction that was portrayed in *Brave New World*. It is also explicitly stated that there are exactly as many individuals in the world as the society can afford to maintain; as the global resources become more plentiful, the narrator explains, the number of the mechanical

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[278] See Eleftheria Ioannidou, 'Chorus and the *Vaterland*: Greek Tragedy and the Ideology of Choral Performance in Inter-War Germany', in *Choruses, Ancient and Modern*, ed. by Joshua Billings, Felix Budelmann and Fiona Macintosh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 327-345.

[279] Dirk Schumann, 'Political Violence, Contested Public Space, and Reasserted Masculinity in Weimar Germany', in *Weimar Publics / Weimar Subjects: Rethinking the Political Culture of Germany in the 1920s*, ed. by Kathleen Canning, Kerstin Barndt and Kristin McGuire (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2010), pp. 236-253 (p. 248).

[280] Geus, p. 112.

men is increased (*Tuzub 37*, 6). *Tuzub 37* and *Brave New World* certainly share the idea of a future automation of human reproduction, which in the two novels follows the more general rules of the modern industrial factory. While texts such as *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* focused almost exclusively on the use of eugenics and artificial procreation on the part of the dystopian rulers, in *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* the automation of reproduction is a consequence of the extreme mechanisation of the World State. The conveyor belt of human beings described in *Berlin* starts in the two dystopias with the birth of the new individual, and continues up until its 'passage into the inorganic realm' at the prescribed end of its life. In *Brave New World* this happens at sixty years of age: 'youth almost unimpaired till sixty', Bernard explains, 'and then, crack! the end' (*Brave New World*, 95). In *Tuzub 37*, as the narrator states, 'Inabgangstellung durch Ausstanzung' is enforced at fifty (*Tuzub 37*, 12). In both cases, the logic of industrial production has come to dominate the lives of the citizens of the future state. More and more similar in aspect and behaviour to the machines, Gurk's future men and women even turn in the end from 'Maschinenmenschen' into 'Menschenmaschinen' (*Tuzub 37*, 85). In this new state, they lose many of the traditional human characteristics that they still possessed and become largely inorganic hybrid beings which need lubrication and electrical energy instead of food.

Similarly to the future society of *Brave New World*, the world of *Tuzub 37* is also organized as a global state and divided into different sectors. Each sector is identified with a letter of the alphabet, and each city is assigned a specific number. The complex scientifically planned World State administers and coordinates the activities of all the mechanical men, and guides them towards an incessant pursuit of technological progress. The 'Fortschritt' pursued by the grey humanity increases the homogenization and mechanization of society, and ultimately leads to the transformation of the whole planet into a huge aseptic factory. The global society is so completely mechanized that even differences in power and authority have been eradicated. While in *Brave New World* the future scientific elite has resolved to divide society into rigid castes according to their members' role in the state, in *Tuzub 37* the mechanical men, bar a very small group of controllers, really have equal status. The citizens of every sector of the state gather in turns at regular interval to discuss their social plans. Gurk stresses again the mathematical precision of the state procedure when he writes that 'der Rat dieses Sektors' is composed of a hundred members who rotate 'alle sechs Stunden'. In '43 Minuten' the numbers '62 107 bis 62 206' will be substituted by the numbers '62 207 bis 62 306' (*Tuzub 37*, 11-12). In Gurk's dystopia technology and scientism will indeed eliminate social and class differences, but they will do so by levelling all men and women into a mechanical and uniform existence.

The world of *Tuzub 37* is indeed governed by the 'Schreiber' who guide and regulate the evolution of the World State, but these rulers – as noted above – are impersonal and anonymous, and 'die allermeisten Grauen' do not even know of their existence.[281] In *Brave New*

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[281] It is interesting to note how almost every dystopia of the interwar period depicts a state completely controlled by a self-titled 'enlightened' elite. In his *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, Kumar traces this tradition back to Dostoyevsky's 'Legend of the Grand Inquisitor', arguing that 'no [dystopian author] seems to have been able to resist […] the picture of a helpless […] people playing under the strict but benevolent eye of their all-powerful rulers' (p. 122).

World the technocratic elite is interested in power and control, and society is organized in a traditional pyramidal hierarchy; in *Tuzub 37* the Schreiber live in secret hideouts and simply lead technological advance from a distance. The controllers are nine in total, three for every 'Drittel der Erdplanwirtschaft'. They monitor everything that happens in the world; when they discover that something deviates from the norm they have established, they intervene to correct it (*Tuzub 37*, 16-17). As previously mentioned, they are referred to in the novel solely with names of bodily organs. While Huxley portrays Mustapha Mond as a psychologically complex and interesting figure, Gurk's presentation of the nine Schreiber is stylized and schematic. The Schreiber are, however, similar to the controllers of *Brave New World* in their technocratic "utopian" ideals. Their ultimate goal, the narrator reveals, is the transformation of all citizens into self-replicating machines and the total homogeneity of the whole world (*Tuzub 37*, 27). They thus engineer the passage from mechanical men to human machines, and finally plan to turn all the citizens into 'Maschinenmaschinen'. They look forward to a time in which the grey humanity will be 'materialewig, motorewig, betriebsstoffewig, schichtewig!' (*Tuzub 37*, 100). In order to achieve this global homogeneity, the controllers set out to level the whole planet and to eliminate all its distinctive physical characteristics.

In a series of huge technological undertakings described at length in the novel, the mechanical men gradually flatten the mountains and fill up the oceans. Nature is not only, as in *Brave New World*, exploited for its potential benefits and adjusted to the necessities of the technological society: it is directly opposed and destroyed. The elimination of the last mountains is particularly long and harsh and is carried out in the sector B of the planet, 'das Land, das früher das Dach der Erde genannt wurde' (*Tuzub 37*, 43). Gurk anthropomorphizes the forces of nature and the symbolic objects of the past which are ideally and materially opposed to the dystopia of automation. Not only, as I mentioned above, do animals and plants talk to each other and comment on the events, but the Himalayan Mountains are populated by 'Bergdämonen' which are variously described as 'Windgötter', 'Eisriesen', 'Hagelschleuderer' and 'Wolkenjäger' (*Tuzub 37*, 58). When the mechanical men first try to destroy the mountain belt, the mountain demons laugh and strike against the opposing army (*Tuzub 37*, 60). The metaphorical battle between the grey humanity and the forces of nature is transfigured into a real war between two belligerent factions, each determined to destroy its adversary. When the mechanical men finally succeed in their plans, the demons are portrayed as defeated and mortally wounded enemies. The old culture of the pre-mechanical age is similarly anthropomorphized when one of the Maschinenmenschen decides to burn a book. The letters of the book begin to lament their death and accuse the 'Tier ohne Geheimnis, ohne Ehrfurcht, ohne Gedächtnis' of having set out to destroy the world (*Tuzub 37*, 34).

The mechanical men finally succeed in their intentions: 'die noch vorhandenen Berge' of the Himalayas are completely levelled and the entire planet is reduced to a uniform metallic grey plane (*Tuzub 37*, 132). The philosophy of progress for progress' sake has reached its utmost limit. The huge tower which gives its name to the novel, Tuzub 37, is built at the centre of sector B; it is a monument to the final victory of hyper-technology over the forces of nature. Once the global technological progress has reached its final end, the controllers simply wither

away. As explicitly stated at the beginning of the novel, the technocrat's final 'vorzügliche Aufgabe' is his own obsolescence (*Tuzub 37*, 16). In *Tuzub 37*, in other words, scientific rationalization and technological progress are so predominant that ultimately there is no practical need for a strict control of potential dissidents.

Tuzub 37 and *Brave New World*, which were published only three years apart, display thus in many ways a similar vision of the mechanized future, and a similar interest in the possibility of individual dissent in a global technocracy. Even more than Huxley, Gurk describes a future World State in which all human activities are so automated and all facets of society are scientifically planned from above to such a degree that it is impossible to organize any form of violent revolution: in Gurk's dystopia there are no agents in the traditional sense. As in *Brave New World*, the organization of a real armed rebellion against the technocracy is not possible, and the few characters who feel out of place in the mechanized world and are ideologically opposed to its principles never become a real threat to the World State. While the absence of any form of narratorial commentary does not allow for the characters in *Tuzub 37* to have a psychological depth and a personal background similar to those shown in *Brave New World*,[282] the behaviour of the dissenters in Gurk's dystopia and their personal development (or lack of it) are extremely interesting. In the second and third chapters of the novel, in particular, Gurk introduces the figures of the 'letzter lebendiger Dichter' and the 'letzter lebendiger Philosoph'. The two nonconformist characters are 'quiet' rebels who do not directly clash with the mechanical men: they simply choose to abandon material work and production in order to focus on study and writing. They are, in other words, obsolete 'farbige Graue' in a time of complete, 'colourless' homogenization. Their personal and intimate form of rebellion against the scientific state, it can be noted, is in many ways similar to that of Bernard and Helmholtz in *Brave New World*. Like the two Alpha citizens, the last living poet and the last living philosopher are from the beginning unsuited to live in the technological age, isolated from the rest of the society and unable to change their inclinations. Like traditional humans, they can use reason and independent thinking to understand their subordinate position in the technocracy; unlike them, they cannot translate their considerations into meaningful actions. At the beginning of the novel the last poet and the last philosopher are questioned by the Schreiber and a council of mechanical men. The last living poet writes poems, and is therefore guilty of 'Zweck- und Sinnlosigkeit' (*Tuzub 37*, 14). He and the philosopher are both considered by the grey humanity to be 'Narren' and, ultimately, 'Maschinen mit verbogenem Gelenk'. Completely unsuited to live in the future rational state, just as old Eckenpenn was in modern Berlin, they are condemned and imprisoned in what Gurk evocatively calls the 'Schaugefängnis der letzten lebendigen Geschöpfe' (*Tuzub 37*, 17-22).

The 'Schaugefängnis' built by the mechanical men is a closed space, halfway between a prison and a museum, in which the grey humanity confines the last residues of the pre-mechanical age. In characteristics and function, it is similar to the Savage Reservation of *Brave*

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[282] Expressionist literature, it should be noted, and especially drama, often presents its characters as 'essential human beings' defined only by their family relationships or social status. See Ernst Schurer, 'Provocation and Proclamation, Vision and Imagery: Expressionist Drama between German Idealism and Modernity', in *A Companion to the Literature of German Expressionism*, pp. 231-254.

New World: both places are cut off from the technological state but administered by the world controllers, and both contain men and women who live by rules that are not those sanctioned by the scientistic community. In the Schaugefängnis the poet, surrounded by the last living animals and plants (in such a prison he has, indeed, 'mehr von Farbigem, als er sich jemals abseits bereiten konnte' (*Tuzub 37*, 37)), continues to write and to reflect on the differences between the natural world of the past and the global mechanized state. He continues, in other words, to behave exactly as he did when he lived among the Maschinenmenschen: like with Bernard and Helmholtz in *Brave New World*, his heterodoxy and internal dissent never really become productive and never appear to threaten the stability of the technological society. After he writes his last poem in the sand, the narrator comments, the poet 'sieht nicht mehr zurück auf das Geschriebene' and does not even know with certainty what he has written. Soon after having completed the poem he dies and is immediately reintegrated, as inorganic material, into the physical structure 'der Hochstädte C 17, C 18, C 19 und C 20' (*Tuzub 37*, 37-39). In such a passage, Gurk makes clear that the efforts of the last living poets and philosophers, who cling to past values which have been displaced and forgotten, cannot have any effect on the new society.

The only character in the novel who eventually tries to act against the technocratic order is Renu, the 'Menschenmaschine R Nr. 127 475'. Born (or 'produced') when the citizens of the world state have already become almost completely mechanical, he suddenly and unexpectedly begins to perceive himself as an individual: as the narrator eloquently claims, he starts '*er* zu werden, nicht *es* zu sein' (*Tuzub 37*, 105). Not only does he start to think of himself as more than a machine, he also acquires –as the opposition between the verbs 'werden' and 'sein' highlights – a new capacity for change and development. He thus drives to the edges of the technological state, manages to catch a glimpse of 'das wilde, organische, sich windende, tötende, saugende, zeugende Leben' which still survives, and decides to call himself Renu (*Tuzub 37*, 107-108). Although he has shown the capacity to change, however, and in spite of having seen a reality which is different from the grey monotony of the World State, he remains a passive character almost until the end of the novel. Renu, the last living being who possesses some of the characteristics traditionally associated with the human category, develops a profound hatred of the technocracy and always retains a vivid memory of the day in which he discovered his difference, but does not try to communicate with the other Menschenmaschinen or to elaborate further on his ideological opposition to the mechanized society. In his daily life, he is 'in der Schicht und nicht in der Schicht' at the same time (*Tuzub 37*, 118), and even participates with the other Menschenmaschinen in the construction of the tower Tuzub 37. It is indicative in this sense that the narrator continues to call him 'Renu R Nr. 127 475', as if to highlight both his diversity and his inability to separate himself from the technocratic society.

Renu finally decides to rebel only at the end of the novel, when the world has already been completely flattened and mechanized. Like the Savage in *Brave New World*, Renu acts out of sudden desperation and rage, and never tries to conceive any actual plan. The passage in *Tuzub 37* even bears significant similarities with the scene of the hospital riot in Huxley's dystopia: just as John tries to speak to the Deltas to make them realize their servile condition,

so Renu addresses the other human machines, calls them 'gefallene Brüder' and urges them to stop their work (*Tuzub 37*, 152). John, who has come to despise the scientific society, urges the Delta workers not to take their soma rations and desperately shouts at them: 'I come to bring you freedom!' (*Brave New World*, 186). In *Tuzub 37* Renu similarly tells the other human machines: 'Arbeit *dient* euch nicht, sondern *beherrscht* euch!'. As in *Brave New World*, however, the citizens of the mechanized state fail to comprehend him: Renu does not speak in the language made up of letters and digits used by the human machines (*Tuzub 37*, 153). As a last desperate measure, Renu strikes one of the machines, and the Savage throws the Deltas' soma rations out of the window. They both fail, however, to convince the other citizens to join them. After their acts of disturbance, they are instead forced to pay the price of their audacity: the Savage is arrested together with Bernard and Helmholtz, and Renu is immediately slain by the other human machines. If the last living poet's personal dissent bears many similarities with that of Bernard and Helmholtz, and Renu resembles the Savage in his sterile act of rebellion, what the society of *Tuzub 37* lacks is perhaps a figure like that of Lenina. The evidence given by the text, however, seems to suggest that even the subtle but steady change of mind and values described by Huxley would not have had any tangible effect on the technocracy of *Tuzub 37*. Gurk's future World State has progressed so far down the road of mechanization and dehumanization that the possibility of any kind of successful rebellion is completely negated.

In the absence of any real human agent in the story, Gurk's dystopia envisages an end to the mechanized state only in the final annihilation of all life on Earth and in the subsequent creation of a new world. At the end of the novel the Metaller, the powerful machines which the future humanity uses in its technological undertakings, rebel against the citizens of the World State and quickly exterminate them. The planet is finally left, as Jost Hermand eloquently puts it, 'so completely ravaged that it will take centuries before it can even begin to recover'.[283] After a very long time, however, Nature recognizes that 'jeder Weg wird Kreis' and 'es gibt keinen Irrweg' (*Tuzub 37*, 164-165): life can thus begin its cycle again. The new Earth, it is explicitly stated, has no memories of the human machines and of the gigantic tower Tuzub 37. Gurk's apocalyptic vision of modern technology and of the ultimate fate of humanity also strongly evokes the works of many German authors of the previous two decades. The experience of the apocalyptic *Weltende* and the strong 'outcry for a messianic renewal of mankind', as mentioned above, are important characteristics of Expressionist literature written after the First World War, and especially of drama and poetry;[284] in *Tuzub 37* they are adapted to a more current anti-technological dystopian framework. Indeed, in the works of German Expressionism modern technology and scientism are often seen as the most obvious and immediate threats to the future of humanity. In Kaiser's emblematic *Gas* trilogy (1917-1920) the figures of the 'Ingenieur' and of the 'schwarze Herren' of German business become the symbols of relentless technological progress and cynical materialism. As in *Tuzub 37*, the mass of the workers build day by day, with mechanical repetition, the foundation of the industrial society. The idealistic

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[283] Hermand, p. 216.
[284] See, for example, Klaus Weissenberger, 'Performing the Poem: Rituals of Activism in Expressionist Poetry', in *A Companion to the Literature of German Expressionism*, pp. 185-228 (p. 186).

characters who try to stop the race to complete mechanization and the enslavement of humanity to purely capitalist principles (the 'Milliardärssohn' and the 'Milliardärarbeiter') are defeated by the forces of modernity. Humanity is in need of redemption and a more direct contact with nature (the Milliardärssohn in *Gas I* proposes to his worker a return to an agrarian existence), but does not manage to evade the logic of modern industrialism: at the end of the trilogy, a devastating technological war between 'Blaufiguren' and 'Gelbfiguren' causes the annihilation of the human race. In *Tuzub 37* a similarly dull "grey humanity" destroys itself and ravages the world.[285] The modern, 'soulless' era of science and mechanization which was announced in city novels like *Berlin*, then, ends up provoking the total extinction of humanity in *Tuzub 37*. The new, young world which emerges from the ruins of the technological society, however, is finally pure again.

Tuzub 37 and *Brave New World* try to envision a future global society in which complete mechanization and the scientific organization of life have led to a radical change in the nature of humanity. The citizens of Huxley's and Gurk's World States are mass produced, treated as mechanical objects and considered replaceable and interchangeable, and their lives follow the rules of the modern factory. The vast majority of the Brave New Worlders and the Maschinenmenschen have lost all the most important characteristics that were traditionally attributed to the human being, to the point that they are unable to think of themselves as individuals. The few unorthodox characters who manage to achieve independent thinking and begin to oppose the ideals of the World State do not know how to become real agents and how to use their decisions and free will to change their positions in the society – or society itself. The analysis of the possibility of dissent in the two technological dystopias becomes thus crucial for the determination of the degree to which the citizens of the technological society differ from traditional humans. In *Brave New World* Huxley discredits Bernard's and Helmholtz's static form of dissent but leaves a glimmer of hope in Lenina's ability to perform meaningful actions outside the logic (and the rules) of the World State. In *Tuzub 37* Gurk only portrays the passive resistance of the last living artists and the secret and ultimately sterile form of rebellion adopted by Renu: in such a completely mechanized world, it is impossible to turn personal dissent into real action. Huxley and Gurk warn against the possibility that modern science and technology will lead not only to the emergence of a different kind of human being (as was already dramatized in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*), but also to the eventual replacement of all traditional citizens by the new genetically modified and partially artificial men and women. This double concern with a radical change in the traditional humanist paradigm and the possible extinction of humanity itself – or at least of what was commonly conceived as 'human' – makes *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* still very relevant today.

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[285] The apocalyptic finale of *Tuzub 37* is also indicative of the novel's peculiarity when compared to the most famous classic dystopias. As Fátima Vieira writes, in most cases at the end of the novel 'there is still a chance for humanity to escape'. See Vieira, pp. 1-27 (p. 17).

Conclusion

In the present thesis I have shown how the early twentieth-century concern over the progressive mechanization of society was taken up by four British and German dystopias of the interwar era. The four texts that I have selected – Konrad Loele's *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, John Bernard's *The New Race of Devils*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Paul Gurk's *Tuzub 37* – are particularly radical in their portrayal of the possible future applications of modern science and technology. In Loele's and Bernard's novels the future German rulers order the creation of a new breed of genetically modified men and women; in Huxley's and Gurk's works modern technology and rational planning are put at the basis of the whole social structure. At the beginning of the thesis, I made the assumption that the four dystopias explore the possibility that excessive mechanization and the increasing role of science in everyday life will eventually lead to a radical change in the nature of men and women. *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, *The New Race of Devils*, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37*, I suggested, might be interested in the possible obsolescence of the traditional conceptualization of the human being. As I have highlighted in the Introduction, indeed, the four dystopias were published at a time when the classic humanist paradigm was beginning to be challenged by new theories and new beliefs.

I decided then to read Loele's, Bernard's, Huxley's and Gurk's dystopias from the perspective of the shift from the classic conceptualization of men and women to the rise of a new taxonomy brought about by scientism and technological development. Humanism, the dominant European cultural and philosophical framework since the Renaissance, defines men and women as rational beings capable of meaningful action, immutable in their major characteristics and radically distinguished from all other life forms. In the Introduction and at the beginning of the two main chapters, I posed the question whether the future genetically modified and partially artificial men and women portrayed in the four dystopias might be interpreted as new human beings deviating in their basic characteristics from the humanist definition. If this is the case, then the four selected novels are among the first works of fiction to try to envision what might happen to men and women after the occurrence of such a radical paradigm shift. This preoccupation would anticipate many of the concerns that will characterize posthumanist studies starting from the last decades of the twentieth century. The next questions to which I tried to find an answer in the thesis all develop from this first main issue. I decided to analyse how Loele's, Bernard's, Huxley's and Gurk's texts define the post-human beings, how they come to terms with them, and whether the four novels actually adopt and endorse a posthumanist perspective. I also set out to explore the main differences between the representation of the new men and women in the two dystopias of the 1920s and in those of the 30s. Finally, I decided to analyse whether the selected texts portray any change in future gender relationships as a consequence of the overthrow of the humanist paradigm.

The comparative analysis of *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* in Chapter 1 shows that the two novels are indeed concerned with the scientific creation of new men and women who do not fit into the traditional category of the human being. I decided to call the peculiar types of scientifically generated liminal beings presented in Loele's and Bernard's novels 'eugenic liminal beings'. The first crucial step in my analysis was to note that, although they are variously identified in the novels as mindless slaves, soulless monsters, superhuman warriors and mere scientific experiments, the Züchtlinge and the super-soldiers are in fact human: they are the biological offspring of some of the citizens of future Germany. Unlike the scientifically created forms of life which appeared in several works of fiction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Loele's and Bernard's creatures are the result of the application of modern science and technology to human beings. I have shown that this idea reflects the contemporary debate over the use of eugenics in Britain and Germany. During the interwar years, eugenics and the scientific control of reproduction were seen as a way to manipulate and change the mental and physical characteristics of the citizens so as to obtain a fitter population. In *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* the future German rulers use this scientific knowledge to produce a new breed of men and women equipped with the specific genetic traits – and the specific characteristics – that they personally find more useful. The second step was to highlight how the Züchtlinge and the super-soldiers, although essentially human, differ from what was seen as the prototypical human being in a number of ways. Loele's and Bernard's creatures are assembled in their basic features in the laboratory and then assigned to a specific task; at least in the rulers' original intentions, they are unable to change and develop new characteristics. When needed, other specimens can be produced to perform similar tasks; Loele makes it particularly evident in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* that they are mass-produced and bought and sold like commodities. The Züchtlinge and the super-soldiers are specifically designed to be stronger and fitter than normal humans, and Bernard's creatures also lack kindness and compassion.

Züchtlinge and super-soldiers are thus extremely difficult to fit in the established taxonomy. In Chapter 1, I have shown how the Oberdeutsche in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* immediately try to mark out the Züchtlinge as inferior beings completely separated from normal humans. This is evident not only in the words that the rulers use to refer to them, but also in the education that they receive: the Züchtlinge are not taught how to speak and are numbed by a special chemical substance. They are brought up, in other words, to be a (separate) race of perfect slaves. Furthermore, any kind of intimate relationship between the Züchtlinge and the other citizens is forbidden. In order to strengthen the strict boundaries that the rulers have set, the Christian authorities of Oberdeutschland even claim that the Züchtlinge lack a proper soul: Züllinger's creatures are separated from traditional human beings on religious grounds. The Emperor and his officials in *The New Race of Devils* similarly assign the eugenic liminal beings to a separate taxonomic category. Although the super-soldiers are initially labelled as superior – and not inferior – to the normal German citizens, my analysis shows that Werner's creatures are simply considered more suited than traditional humans to the particular field that most interests the rulers: war. The super-soldiers possess the characteristics that the British propagandists of the

time associated with the Nietzschean concept of the Übermensch, and as such are not only marked out as 'supermen' characterised by selfishness, tenacity and great physical strength, but are also described as very different from the other citizens (and from the rulers themselves). In the last part of the novel, when the super-soldiers rebel against the Emperor, they are portrayed even more strongly as violent monsters dominated by lust and hatred. In both *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*, the rulers who order the creation of the eugenic liminal beings attempt then to preserve the traditional humanist framework by refusing to recognize any real link between the new creatures and the ordinary citizens.

My analysis also highlights how the last parts of Loele's and Bernard's novels suggest a solution to the problem of the eugenic liminal beings in many ways antithetical to the one found by the rulers. In *Züllinger und seine Zucht* the protagonist Züllinger, the scientist who created the Züchtlinge, comes to recognise them as traditional human beings on the basis of their ability to reason and act. Züllinger realizes that the Züchtlinge are capable of meaningful decisions and are not willing to accept their servile condition; he consequently decides to rebel against the Oberdeutsche together with them. It is through their combined efforts that the tyrants are finally defeated. In *The New Race of Devils* Arnauld, the first of Werner's creatures, gradually falls in love with his childhood friend Elsa and, after having discovered his true origins, tries to save her from the other super-soldiers and flee with her. The novel closes with Elsa's death and Arnauld's decision to take her body and fly away with her until he is finally shot down. The narrator explicitly states that Arnauld has gradually developed a soul: I argue in Chapter 1 that the concept of soul is introduced in the novel to definitively separate the protagonist from the taxonomic category of the superman. The anti-German propagandists of the time associated Nietzsche's criticism of the Judeo-Christian idea of an immaterial soul with the supposed plans of the German rulers to breed a racially superior race: in *The New Race of Devils* the Emperor tries thus to make the new eugenic liminal beings 'soulless'. By stating that Arnauld indeed has a soul in the Judeo-Christian sense, the narrator distances him from the other super-soldiers and finally assimilates him to the traditional category of the human.

I came to the conclusion that both perspectives on the eugenic liminal beings – the one adopted by the rulers and the one presented in the last sections of the two novels – operate within the classic humanist paradigm. If Züchtlinge and super-soldiers are isolated and relegated to a different taxonomic category, then the definition of the human is not in danger of being changed; if they are uncritically assimilated to traditional humans, irrespective of their different characteristics, then again there is no need for a reassessment of the traditional categories. Although they implicitly acknowledge the possibility of an imminent crisis of humanism, thus, *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* do not adopt a real posthumanist point of view and actually attempt to find ways to reinforce the classic paradigm at the dawn of a new biotechnological era.

At the end of Chapter 1 I also read Loele's and Bernard's novels from the perspective of the possible change in gender relationships that might result from the introduction of the new para-human beings. I showed how in both *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils* the implementation of eugenics and the artificial insemination leads to a decisive female

loss of power. Modern technology gives men the power to gain complete control over reproduction: Züchtlinge and super-soldiers are essentially engineered and produced by male rulers and scientists, with women relegated to the position of unknowing and unwilling victims in *The New Race of Devils* and completely excluded from the process in *Züllinger und seine Zucht*. The invention of ectogenesis in Loele's novel, in particular, allows men to dissociate women from their reproductive role and to create new individuals by simply fertilising human eggs in the laboratory. Conscious of their new power, the male Oberdeutsche refuse to reveal the secret of extrauterine gestation to the German women. I concluded that this change in the relationships between men and women is not directly linked to the crisis of the traditional humanist framework (which, as mentioned above, the two novels attempt to perpetuate); instead, it is seen as a consequence of the attempt to scientifically control reproduction that characterised the governments of the major European nations during the interwar era.

In Chapter 2 I similarly showed that the future inhabitants of Huxley's and Gurk's World States are human beings who deviate from the classic humanist paradigm. *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* portray future global societies in which all citizens are mass-produced and assigned specific (and virtually immutable) characteristics. Immediately after birth, they become part of the mechanized society and are taught that they have no value and no meaning outside of it. Whereas in Loele's and Bernard's texts the new men and women formed a special group of workers and soldiers to be used by the rulers, in *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* the World State is almost entirely composed of genetically modified human beings generated in the laboratory. Like the Züchtlinge and the super-soldiers, the Brave New Worlders and the Maschinenmenschen are not completely artificial: they are, indeed, the descendants of traditional men and women. The main difference between the citizens of the global society and the prototypical human beings defined by classic humanism, I highlighted in the chapter, is that the vast majority of Brave New Worlders and Maschinenmenschen are not capable of thinking of themselves as individuals, making independent decisions and acting in any meaningful way. They are only able to perform the tasks to which they have been assigned. As a consequence, they cannot be real agents and are unable to rebel against the technocracy.

The major characters in Huxley's and Gurk's dystopias differ from the other citizens of the World State precisely because they preserve some of the most important features traditionally associated with the human being. Bernard, Helmholtz and Lenina in *Brave New World* and the two last living intellectuals and Renu in *Tuzub 37* are (or become) aware of their individuality and refuse to blindly accept all the precepts of the technocracy. They use their reason and free will to question the society they are forced to live in and to disobey to some of its most basic rules. In both novels these exceptional individuals are favourably contrasted with the other citizens, who are portrayed as incapable of personal development and are consequently never analysed in their thoughts and motivations. In *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37*, the post-human civilization brought about by excessive mechanization is thus strongly characterised as dull, shallow and insensitive; the positive values of culture, knowledge, free thinking, empathy and love are conversely associated with the few dissenters – and consequently with traditional humanity. My analysis shows that, even with their exceptional qualities, the two novels'

protagonists are essentially unable to go beyond a passive form of resistance and organize a violent rebellion against the World State. This is particularly true of the future of *Tuzub 37*, which is depicted as even more mechanized and impersonal than the Brave New World and where all the Maschinenmenschen are finally slain by the powerful robots that they built to fill up the oceans and level the mountains. The only character in the two novels who actually manages to become an agent against the technocracy – and is not stopped by the World State – is Lenina. Lenina's personal form of rebellion leads her to openly defy the World State's precepts and to eventually overcome her mental conditioning; tellingly, her unorthodox behaviour is triggered by love, one of the most important values of the pre-mechanical world.

The rise of the mechanical post-human civilization in *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* has changed the traditional relationships between the genders. In Huxley's dystopia women have gained full access to the job market and seem to enjoy an equal status with men. The implementation of ectogenesis and the elimination of the traditional family have freed them from their role of mothers and wives, and the relaxation of sexual mores allows them – and even actively encourages them – to choose all the male partners that they like. Even though some of the sexist stereotypes of the early twentieth century are indeed present in the novel, they are counterbalanced by the (often overlooked) development of the figure of Lenina. The World State is not interested in undermining the individuality and free will of women *per se*, but in controlling the lives of all human beings. The mechanized Brave New World, I suggest, devalues men and women in equal measure because it needs both of them to be efficient and unthinking cogs in the state machine. Differences in gender are even less important in *Tuzub 37*, where the World State is inhabited only by "neuter" Maschinenmenschen completely identical to each other in physical appearance and social status. All the mechanical humans, with no distinction, work to homogenize the planet and reduce it to a uniform metallic plane. In both Huxley's and Gurk's technological societies, the potentially troubled relationships between the genders are dispensed with in the name of mechanical efficiency and productivity.

The present thesis has allowed me to compare Huxley's canonical technological dystopia *Brave New World* with three interesting texts that have rarely been analysed in the secondary literature. I have shown that the concerns over the increasing mechanization of life and the attempt to scientifically control reproduction were common to many texts of the interwar era, and that the four selected novels interpret them as a crisis of the traditional society centred on the individual. Although they do not really embrace a posthumanist perspective and never try to give a new definition of the human being, Loele, Bernard, Huxley and Gurk acknowledge the possibility that the new biotechnological age could lead to a radical change in the nature of men and women. In *Züllinger und seine Zucht*, *The New Race of Devils*, *Brave New World* and *Tuzub 37* the authors give a detailed portrayal of the future post-human beings and imagine how the mechanized society will adapt to them. In this thesis I have decided to analyse the four dystopias in chronological order, and to read Huxley's and Gurk's post-human societies as an ideal continuation on a global scale of the experiments already started in *Züllinger und seine Zucht* and *The New Race of Devils*. The comparative study of Loele's, Bernard's, Huxley's and Gurk's texts has helped me to shed a new light on how the possible development of science

and technology was seen by some of the most interesting dystopian texts of the interwar era. In order to come to more general conclusions, I hope that this thesis will only be considered as a first step and that other studies will continue on the path that I have outlined, and analyse a greater number of British and German dystopias.

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Appendix:
A Timeline of Historical Events, 1900-1950

1905: in January the Russian Cossacks open fire on a crowd led by Father Gapon, who reached to the Winter Palace to present a petition to the tsar ("Bloody Sunday"). The masses declare a general strike and demand the instauration of a democratic republic (Russian Revolution of 1905). "Soviets" (councils of workers) appear in most cities to direct revolutionary activity.

October 1905: Nicholas II issues the October Manifesto, which concedes the creation of a national Duma (legislature). The right to vote is extended and no law is to go into force without confirmation by the Duma.

1908: Jack London publishes *The Iron Heel*, generally considered to be the earliest of the modern dystopias.

1909: E. M. Forster publishes *The Machine Stops.*

1911: by this year Wilhelm II has completely picked apart the careful power balance established in Europe by Bismarck; United Kingdom and France form the Entente Cordiale.

1912: the Social Democrats become the largest political party in Germany. The government remains in the hands of a succession of conservative coalitions supported by right-wing liberals and heavily dependent on the Kaiser's favor.

1914-1918: First World War

1915: as a consequence of the World War and of the shortages of food and fuel, strikes among low-paid factory workers increase in Russia. In Germany, an increasing number of workers begin to associate with parties of the political left, such as the Social Democratic Party and the more radical Independent Social Democratic Party.

8th-12th March 1917 (23rd-27th February in Russia): February Revolution: on the 8th March, thousands of women workers in Petrograd walk out of their factories protesting the lack of food. Within days, nearly all the workers in the city go on strike and street fighting breaks out. The February Revolution starts when the tsar orders the Duma to disband and the military troops to shoot against the strikers. Nicholas II abdicates and the Duma proclaims a Provisional Government, headed by Prince Lvov. The socialists organize elections among workers and soldiers to form "soviets" (councils).

7th–8th November 1917 (25th– 26th October in Russia): October Revolution: the Bolsheviks rebel against the Kerensky provisional government in Petrograd and then launch an assault on the Winter Palace. They manage to seize power and Russia becomes a socialist state. The success of the Russian Revolution inspires several other revolutionary parties all over Europe.

1918: Treaty of Brest-Litovsk: Russia signs an armistice with Germany and ends its participation to the World War. The Russian Constitution comes into force.

September–October 1918: Red Terror: the Bolsheviks conduct a campaign of mass arrests, executions and atrocities against their social and political adversaries.

1918–1922: Russian Civil War: prolonged conflict between the Bolsheviks and their opponents (socialist revolutionaries, right-wing "whites" and many peasants). The Allied powers send armies to support the anti-communist forces. By 1921, the Bolsheviks have defeated their internal enemies and brought most of the newly independent states under their control.

1918-1919: German Revolution. In October 1918, units of the German Navy mutiny against the Emperor, initiating a revolt which spreads to other cities, in many of which workers' and soldiers' councils are established. The Kaiser abdicates and on 9th November a new Republic is proclaimed. On the 11th November the new government agrees to an armistice. A coalition government consisting of MSPD (moderate SPD) and USPD (revolutionary SPD) members is established. Tensions between the new government and the communist Spartacist League, led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, escalate into an armed conflict. Luxemburg and Liebknecht are killed.

1919: the MSPD wins a solid majority at the general election. The government signs the Treaty of Versailles, which forces Germany to disarm, pay for huge war reparations and accept full responsibility for the World War. At the Paris Peace Conference, Italy is denied some of its territorial demands; this causes widespread indignation among Italian nationalists.

1919–1920: *biennio rosso* in Italy: mass strikes and factory occupations take place. In Turin and Milan workers councils are formed. Ageing Prime Minister Giolitti is reappointed in 1920 in a desperate attempt to solve the situation, but his cabinet is weak and threatened by the socialist opposition. Giolitti allies with the Fascists in an attempt to use them to protect the monarchy.

1920: Edward Shanks publishes *People of the Ruins*

1920: Konrad Loele publishes *Züllinger und seine Zucht*

1920: Karel Capek publishes *R.U.R.*

1921: the Bolsheviks implement the New Economic Policy (NEP). Small private businesses are formed and peasants are allowed to sell their surplus on the market. As a result Russia becomes the world's greatest producer of grain; factories, however, badly damaged by civil war and capital depreciation, were far less productive. The left opposition criticizes the rich peasants (or "kulaks") who benefit from the NEP.

1921: Ernst Otto Montanus publishes *Die Rettung des Abendlandes*

1922: Alexander Moszkowski publishes *Die Inseln der Weisheit*

1922: Hans Dominik publishes *Die Macht der Drei*

October 1922: Mussolini takes advantage of a new general strike to announce his intentions to seize political power. With no immediate response from the monarchy, a group of Fascists

marches on Rome. King Vittorio Emanuele III, forced to choose between Mussolini's Fascists and the Marxist Italian Socialist Party, hands power to Mussolini.

December 1922: creation of the USSR.

1923: H. G. Wells publishes *Men Like Gods*

January 1923: the Weimar Republic claims it can no longer afford the reparations payments required by the Treaty of Versailles. French and Belgian troops occupy the Ruhr region, Germany's most productive industrial center. Strikes are called, and passive resistance is encouraged. The strikes last eight months, further damaging Germany's economy.

March 1923: as a consequence of Lenin's increasingly ill health, a troika made up of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev is formed to succeed him at the head of the Russian communist party. Stalin keeps Lenin in isolation and increases his control over the party.

1923: Acerbo Law in Italy: two thirds of the seats are to be assigned to the party that achieves at least 25% of the votes.

November 1923: the introduction of the Rentenmark marks the beginning of the end of Germany's hyper-inflation. Reparation payments resume, and the Ruhr is returned to Germany.

1924: Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We* is published in English in the United States

1924: H. G. Wells publishes *The Dream*

1924: Alfred Döblin publishes *Berge, Meere und Giganten*

January 1924: Lenin dies. Trotsky is removed from the position of People's Commissar of War.

1924: the Dawes Plan is created to help Germany meet its financial obligations. During the tenure of Gustav Stresemann as foreign minister (1923-1929) Germany experiences a period of relative stability.

1924: the Fascist Party uses violence and intimidation to achieve the 25% threshold in the Italian general elections, thus obtaining control of Parliament. Socialist minister Giacomo Matteotti is assassinated after denouncing the violence used by the Fascists

1925: Charlotte Haldane publishes *Man's World*

1925: Franz Kafka's *Der Process* is published posthumously

1925: Zinoviev and Kamenev begin to fear Stalin's power. Stalin forms an alliance with Bukharin and isolates Zinoviev and Kamenev. A Stalin personality cult begins to develop.

1926: Johannes Richter publishes *Turmstadt*

1926: Thea von Harbou publishes *Metropolis*

1926: Franz Kafka's *Das Schloß* is published posthumously

1926: In Italy, local governments are dissolved and Fascist officials replace elected mayors and councils.

1927: Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev are expelled from the Central Committee. In December Zinoviev capitulates to Stalin and denounces his own previous activities as "anti-Leninist".

1928: all Italian political parties other than Fascism are banned.

April 1928: Stalin approves the implementation of the First Five-Year Plan, designed to strengthen the nation's economy between 1928 and 1933.

1929: Andrei Platonov writes *Chevengur*; the novel will remain unpublished for decades

1929: Stalin orders the formation of the kolkhozes, collective farming systems formed by hundreds of peasants. The creation of collective farms destroys the kulaks as a class; kulaks are forcibly resettled to Kazakhstan and Siberia.

1929: Lateran Treaty: Italy recognizes the Vatican as an independent state and Catholicism as the sole official religion of the nation. In turn, the pope pledges to perpetual neutrality in international relations.

October 1929: the Wall Street Crash marks the beginning of the Great Depression. After the American banks withdraw their loans to the German companies, unemployment starts to increase dramatically.

1930: Olaf Stapledon publishes *Last and First Men*

1930: Werner Illing publishes *Utopolis*

1930: Walter Müller publishes *Wenn wir 1918... Eine realpolitische Utopie*

1930: Andrei Platonov writes *The Foundation Pit*; the novel will remain unpublished for decades

1930: the Gulag system is established, and will continue to exist until the end of the fifties.

1930: Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party enters the Reichstag with 19% of the votes and makes the fragile coalition system unworkable. The Nazis begin to rely increasingly on violence.

1931: Hanns Gobsch publishes *Wahn-Europa 1934: Eine Vision*

1931: Friedrich Freksa publishes *Druso oder die gestohlene Menschenwelt*

1932: Aldous Huxley publishes *Brave New World*

1932-1933: the great Soviet famine, caused in part by the forced implementation of the First Five-Year Plan, kills between three and ten million people.

1932: after a series of inconclusive political elections in Germany, the Nazis become the country's largest party.

1933: H. G. Wells publishes *The Shape of Things to Come*

1933: Margaret Maud Brash publishes *Unborn Tomorrow*

1933: on the 30th January President Hindenburg appoints Adolf Hitler as the new German chancellor. On the 27th February Hitler uses the Reichstag Fire, blamed on the communists, as a pretext to indefinitely suspend most civil liberties. On the 23rd March, the parliament passes

the Enabling act, which gives the cabinet the right to enact laws without the consent of the parliament. All political parties other than the Nazi Party are suppressed.

30th June 1934: Night of the Long Knives: the Nazis carry out a series of political murders. Leading figures of the left-wing faction of the Nazi Party, as well as other political opponents, are assassinated.

1934: Stalin launches the Great Purge. Political opponents, rebellious peasants and even leading members of the ruling party are prosecuted as "counter-revolutionaries" and "enemies of the people".

1935: Sinclair Lewis publishes *It Can't Happen Here*

1935: Shamus Frazer publishes *A Shroud As Well As a Shirt*

1935: Paul Gurk publishes *Tuzub 37*

1935: Mussolini decides to invade Ethiopia. The Italo-Abyssinian War results in the international isolation of Italy.

1935: the Reichstag passes the Nuremberg race laws: Jews lose their German citizenship.

1935: Stalin begins to urge the formation of a Popular Front against Fascism.

1936: Margaret Storm Jameson publishes *In the Second Year*

1936: Karel Capek publishes *Der Krieg mit dem Molchen*

1936: outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. The army and the far right-wing parties, led by General Francisco Franco, start an armed revolution against the democratic leftist government. The Republican forces lose many territories to Franco.

1936: first Moscow Trial. A number of former Bolshevik party leaders, among them Zinoviev and Kamenev, are accused of having assassinated Sergey Kirov and plotted to kill Stalin. They are all executed.

October-November 1936: Anti-Comintern Pact between Nazi Germany and Japan

1937: second Moscow Trial. Seventeen former members of the communist party are either executed or sent to labor camps.

1937: Katharine Burdekin publishes *Swastika Night*

November 1937: Fascist Italy joins the Anti-Comintern pact

1938: Ayn Rand publishes *Anthem*

1938: A. G. Street publishes *Already Walks Tomorrow*

1938: third Moscow Trial, the most famous of the Soviet show trials. The execution of several former members of the Party alienates many Western communist sympathisers.

1938: German troops march into Austria. Four weeks later, 99% of Austrians vote in favor of the annexation ("Anschluss"). The Munich Agreement, negotiated in September by the major powers of Europe, allows Germany to annex part of Czechoslovakia.

1938: the anti-Semitic racial laws are passed in Italy.

1939: in March Hitler takes over the rest of Czechoslovakia as the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

1939: the Spanish Civil War ends with the victory of the anti-democratic Nationalist forces. Francisco Franco is proclaimed dictator and left-wing parties and trade unions are banned.

May 1939: Italy and Germany sign the Pact of Steel.

August 1939: USSR and Germany sign the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact

1939-1945: Second World War

1940: Arthur Koestler publishes *Darkness at Noon*

1940: Karin Boye publishes *Kallocain*

1943: Herman Hesse publishes *Das Glasperlenspiel*

1945: Following the end of the Second World War, the United States and the Soviet Union emerge as the two dominant superpowers. The Cold War, a state of military tensions between the Western and the Eastern Blocs that will last until the early 1990s, begins.

24th October 1945: the United Nations are formed.

1946: Franz Werfel publishes *Stern der Ungeborenen*

1947-1948: the United States draft the Marshall Plan, an initiative to financially help Western European countries in order to rebuild their economies and prevent the spread of communism. Stalin prevents the USSR's satellite states from entering the plan.

1947: Vladimir Nabokov publishes *Bend Sinister*

1948: Aldous Huxley publishes *Ape and Essence*

June 1948-May 1949: Berlin Blockade. The Soviet Union, which controls the Eastern part of Germany, blocks all accesses to West Berlin. The blockade is lifted on the 12th May 1949. On the 23rd May, the three Western Allied zones of occupation form the Federal Republic of Germany. On the 7th October, the German Democratic Republic is established in the Soviet-occupied zone.

4th April 1949: the United States, Canada, and ten Western European countries, including Italy, France and the United Kingdom, form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The division of Europe into Western and Eastern Blocs becomes more pronounced.

1949: George Orwell publishes *Nineteen Eighty-Four*

1949: Oskar Maria Graf publishes *Die Eroberung der Welt*

1950: Friedrich Heer publishes *Der Achte Tag*

1950: Walter Jens publishes *Nein*

1951: Arno Schmidt publishes *Schwarze Spiegel*