

The Silicon Ideology

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Abstract

Out of the technological centres of the world has come a new, strange variant of fascism—namely, neo-reaction, or “NRx”. I shall here provide a critique of this ideology and an attempt at understanding of its origins, its tactics, and how it may be defeated.

Content Warnings

This article contains discussions of fascism, Nazism, white supremacy, and the Holocaust among other topics.

Keywords

1 Introduction

A king? You want a king? Boy, *nobody* wants a king! Ignatius, are you sure you're OK?

A Confederacy of Dunces
JOHN KENNEDY TOOLE

When one learns I am studying a new emergence of fascism in Europe and North America, one might be tempted to believe I am referring to the larger trend of the rise of right-wing populist parties and candidacies that may be considered “fascist”, such as the candidacy of Donald Trump and the rise of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), Le Pen’s Front national (FN), Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), and Golden Dawn among others. However, in this essay, I discuss a more narrow group: specifically, an ideology that has emerged in the past decade or so inside the capitals of the tech world and which is growing at an alarming rate, often (but not always) allied with those parties and candidacies I have mentioned above: neo-reactionaries and what is known as the “alt-right”. Largely, this group has escaped serious criticism by radicals for its nature as a small, internet-based ideology—not enough people, it seems, take it seriously. Indeed, some may question why *I* am taking it seriously: clearly, this group is just “a bunch of nerds” with no relation to “the real world” and no influence to speak of: what am I worried about? To which I respond thusly: I do not take it for granted that this odd ideology will not grow (indeed, it already is growing), I do not believe we should under-estimate our enemies, and most people severely under-rate the influence of the alt-right, which is, especially in

Silicon Valley, already courting influential figures, such as Peter Thiel of PayPal, many of whom belong to a particular ideological predecessor of neo-reactionary thought: namely, the techno-utopian right-libertarianism pervasive in the tech industry.

2 On the Various Theoretical Accounts of Fascism and its Origins

In order to understand, neo-reaction, a neo-fascist ideology, one must too understand fascism in its first flowering. This is harder than it may first appear: every theorist and her dog has a pet theory of the origins and definitions of fascism, and I do not wish to spend this essay deciding which is “best”. Perhaps, then, we should merely determine which is most useful in understanding neo-reaction. Traditionally, fascism has been amorphously defined among the Left by the statement given in 1933 to the 13th meeting of the Enlarged Executive of the (Third) Communist International in Moscow: “Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, most imperialist elements of finance capital” (H. (2009)): this, though a useful summary, is not useful as a *theory*.

2.1 Amadeo Bordiga

Amadeo Bordiga claimed that fascism was merely another form of bourgeois rule, and there was nothing exceptional about it compared to bourgeois democracy or constitutional monarchy—indeed, nothing particularly reactionary about it. This theory is exceptionally useless, so we shall not consider it any further.

2.2 Leon Trotsky

In Trotsky (1944), a posthumously-published pamphlet made from selections of earlier writings (from 1922 to 1940), Leon Trotsky argues that fascism is a specific form of counter-revolutionary dictatorship, not all of them. He identifies the social base of fascism as the petty-bourgeoisie and “middle class”, as well as the lumpenproletariat. This happens, according to Trotsky, when the “normal” repressive apparatus of bourgeois-democracy fails to keep a stable society, and the base of fascism has been dispossessed and brought to desparation. Fascism, when in power, begins by destroying workers’ organizations and class-consciousness, subjecting the proletariat to an administrative system which renders the organization of the proletariat quite difficult, to say the least. Trotsky (ibid.) then embarks on an analysis of how the Italian fascists gained power: after World War I, socialists had begun to seize one factory after another—all it needed, Trotsky claimed, was to coordinate. But then the social democrats disrupted the revolutionary action, “sprung back”, and withdrew, hoping docile workers would help shift public opinion against fascists and allow for reform, banking on the support of Victor Emmanuel III. The fascists then seized Bologna and soon gained the backing of Victor Emmanuel III and the haute bourgeoisie. At the last moment, the social democrats called for a general strike, but by then it was too late. Within two years, Mussolini was in power, and began to create a bureaucracy and military dictatorship. Germany soon followed the same model: indeed, in 1932, Trotsky notes how the reformists have started to rely on—and put their faith in—the government (now ruled by a series of chancellors installed through emergency decrees: Brüning, von Papen, von Schleicher) to put down fascism. This is especially frustrating for Trotsky, as he notes that these same conditions could—and should—propel forth a revolutionary party.

Trotsky then criticises the Comintern policy of “social-fascism” and calls for a United Front with a well-organized militia. In September 1932, Trotsky claims that bourgeois rule falls in three stages: Jacobinism at the dawn of capitalism, when the bourgeoisie needed revolution; democracy in mature capitalism; and fascism in late capitalism, when the bourgeoisie must “clamp down” further on proletarian revolution. When the bourgeoisie begins to decline, it relies on the petty bourgeoisie to keep the proletariat down. There are some practical predictive errors with Trotsky’s theory. In 1922, he predicted the bourgeoisie would abandon fascism upon defeat of the revolution. In 1938, Trotsky advised the Czechoslovakian workers not to resist German invasion, in 1939, supported (based on testimonies of Ukrainian *émigrés*) the creation of an independent Ukraine when Germany had targeted Ukraine as part of its *lebensraum*, and in 1940 predicted that World War 2 would end either in world-revolution or world-fascism.

2.3 Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

In H. (2009), it is argued (by a person identified only as “Scott H.”) that:

1. Fascism is one of the two major forms of bourgeois class rule, the other being bourgeois democracy. There are no *primary differences*, but there are *secondary differences*: namely, in bourgeois democracy, there is qualitatively more freedom to openly express opinions, protest, and organize, regardless of whether or not there are “elections”: the “democratic” part of bourgeois democracy, being largely limited to the bourgeoisie, is irrelevant
2. Whether or not a regime is fascist is determined by *how* the bourgeoisie exerts its dictatorship over other classes: what freedoms are the proletariat (not merely other bourgeois parties) allowed (however temporarily) to exert?
3. How the regime treats revolutionaries and revolutionary parties (along with the militant mass movements they lead) is especially key in determining whether a regime is fascist or not
4. The role of terrorism: both bourgeois democracy and fascism rely on terrorism, but fascism is much more terroristic than bourgeois democracy
5. Fascism and bourgeois democracy are theoretical extremes or archetypes: all bourgeois regimes have elements of both types
6. Regimes can be classified as either *fascist* or *bourgeois democratic* based on which theoretical archetype they approximate more closely
7. Laws or actions of a bourgeois state can be categorized as *fascist* if they correspond to the actions of the fascist theoretical archetype and if they occur in a regime overall categorized as fascist
8. It is possible for a bourgeois state to rule in different ways in different areas (and at different times), so it is possible for a state to be fascist in one area and a bourgeois-democracy in another area

9. Bourgeois democracy is unstable and fascism is virtually inevitable under bourgeois rule, especially as the bourgeoisie faces a crisis or nears its overthrow
10. Struggle against fascist policies and laws of a bourgeois democracy is a struggle for reforms (though not necessarily *reformism*)

Two points are then made regarding historical Marxist-Leninist approaches to fascism. First, the Third International was in error in the 1930s when it recommended to the KPD not to form a (temporary) unified front against the Nazis with the SPD—but was also in error when, after the Nazis took power in 1933, they promoted a United Front Against Fascism which called on socialist parties to so closely ally with bourgeois-democratic parties (like the SPD) that they became reformists themselves, glorifying bourgeois-democracy—hollowing out the revolutionary core of such a party. Secondly, revisionist states (like the USSR under Khrushchev) are “social-fascist”—i.e. fascist, being repressive bourgeois states. Two case studies are presented: the US is diagnosed as a bourgeois-democratic state with elements of fascism, and India is diagnosed as semi-fascist and growing towards fascism (particularly in its treatment of the adivasis and the Naxalites, who are both repressed under the UAPA and “Operation Green Hunt” with child soldiers in paramilitary death-squads similar to the *Freikorps* such as Chhattisgarh’s Salwa Judum and Bihar’s Ranvir Sena).

As we see, this gives an account of what fascism *is* (though in general terms), but very little of where it comes from, how it may be fought, &c &c (this is acknowledged in the essay)—except that bourgeois democracy often transforms into fascism during periods of instability, crisis, or overthrow.

2.4 Walter Benjamin

Walter Benjamin’s account of fascism relied on a concept known as the aestheticization of politics developed in his influential 1936 essay *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit*, among others. Indeed, in Benjamin (1936), we see the following passage:

The masses have a *right* to changed property relations; fascism seeks to give them *expression* in keeping these relations unchanged. *The logical outcome of fascism is an aestheticizing of political life*

What does this mean? To understand it, we must understand it in its context. According to Benjamin (though this notion is not exclusive to him), fascism blocks and diverts the energies that otherwise would be used to form a revolution against capitalism—it fills the void provided by an unsuccessful or non-existent revolution, and must be understood from this perspective. To put it succinctly with a Benjamin quote: “Behind every fascism, there lies a failed revolution”. It offers the emotional release of a revolution while effecting no material change—and the production of this catharsis is easily seen in the propaganda of the era.

If fascism implies the aestheticization of politics, Benjamin reasons, it must be related to the traditional Marxist notion of commodity fetishism. Indeed, fascism presents, according to Benjamin, the promise of revolution, a strong, self-reliant, and harmonious state &c as a commodity. In order to maintain the fascist movement and control over the intense

emotional release it provides while refusing to challenge capitalism, fascism relies on war, which also creates enough expenditure to temporarily resolve crises of overproduction, like the Great Depression. Benjamin connects the aestheticization of war with an artistic-political movement in Italy which preceded fascism and whose proponents became fascists: Futurism. Futurists celebrated technology, speed, and aggression: and technology is an aspect of war that is easily aestheticized. While human suffering is usually omitted in the aestheticization of war, in a fascist mode destruction, too, must be aestheticized, not merely edited out. Benjamin, in “Theories of German Fascism” connects this to Ernst Jünger’s ‘war for war sake’: Jünger mysticises war as a magical force, which the State must be “worthy” of. This, Benjamin claims, derives easily from Jünger’s experience as an officer, not a mere grunt—and indeed, the Nazis saw their first support base from disgruntled World War I officers, such as Hitler himself—and the *Freikorps*.

2.5 Deleuze and Guattari

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, in their 1972 book *Capitalisme et schizophrénie. L’anti-Œdipe*, reprise an earlier analysis of fascism by Wilhelm Reich in his 1933 work *Die Massenpsychologie des Faschismus*. They argue in Deleuze and Guattari (1972) that fascism is created through libidinal and psychological repression through the mechanism of the nuclear family, which represses and distorts the desires of the child, making them a docile subject that is easily controlled and will submit. The Œdipus complex is seen as arising from the familial suppression and distortion of desires: Deleuze and Guattari (ibid.) says: “It is in one and the same movement that the repressive social production is replaced by the repressing family, and that the latter offers a displaced image of desiring-production that represents the repressed as incestuous familial drives.” Deleuze and Guattari can be here criticised for using the term “fascism” to refer to this, because it seems to divorce fascism from its historical context and from a larger social context: while this may indeed be an integral *part* of fascism, I don’t think we can *reduce* fascism to this. Deleuze and Guattari have anticipated this, and so this repression and distortion of desire on a small scale has been termed “microfascism”, as opposed to “macrofascism”.

2.6 A Unified Theory

One issue with many, but not all, of the analyses of fascism is that they only consider fascism *in power*, not fascism as an ideology prior to seizure of power. It seems to be generally accepted that fascism is a bourgeois ideology that is fundamentally similar to bourgeois democracy, taking power when bourgeois democracy finds itself unstable and in crisis. Another issue arises, related to the first: as many definitions seem limited to “bourgeois democracy, but worse” (this is especially true of the M-L-M definition), they make it hard to create a clear difference between bourgeois democracy and fascism: for, is the US not engaged in intense terrorism both domestically and across the globe—and has this not been the case since its inception? Here the Bordigist (a true resident of the Grand Hotel Abyss of Lukács) may smugly claim that this is because there is precisely no difference, but I would like us to smack the Bordigist across the head, for this impulse of erasing differences in order to make false equivalences is dangerous indeed. If we cannot distinguish fascism from other forms of bourgeois rule, then we should not complain when we hear the sound of jackboots marching. I would like to first make the proposition that fascism is distinguished from other forms of bourgeois rule both by the

degree of action of its terroristic, repressive apparati but also by the *Weltanschauung* that supports it. Like Benjamin notes, the aestheticization of war in bourgeois democracy requires the erasure of human suffering, but under fascism, the aestheticization of war relies upon scenes of destruction. Because fascism relies on war to channel the emotions used to aestheticize politics, it relies on nationalism (justifying war) and class collaboration (what in China was the line of *two unite in one* as opposed to *one divides in two*, justifying the lack of change in property relations). Nationalism relies on essentialism (the idea of an eternal, unchangeable inherent nature preceding human existence), a form of idealism. It is important to note that I am not here positing a timeless, universal Form of fascism, but rather a way of understanding characteristics of fascism that would provide its backbone and which have mutated into a new form: a fascism of the 21st century, which, though very different in ways from 20th century fascism (finding its roots in neoliberalism, not Victorian liberalism), is clearly derived and indebted to it. Here, then, are some diagnostic features that might help understand and recognize fascism:

1. Fascism is one of two forms of bourgeois rule, the other being bourgeois democracy. There are no *primary differences*, but there are *secondary differences*
2. Fascism emerges in the shadow of a failed revolution; that is, at times when bourgeois rule is weak, but a revolution has either failed, been betrayed by centrist, "Social Democrat" forces, or, similarly, been forestalled/delayed: in the latter case, the turn to fascism is an attempt to block a revolutionary movement from forming or gaining success.
3. Fascism transforms politics and its promise of revolutionary change into a commodity—it thusly *aestheticizes* politics, giving the masses the intensity of emotion associated with revolutionary change but maintaining an even stronger devotion to maintaining bourgeois rule and property-relations
4. In order to maintain these emotions, fascism constructs a *Weltanschauung* that opportunistically ransacks various philosophies of useful concepts and creates an idealistic philosophy that contains nationalism, and class collaboration.
5. This *Weltanschauung* provides the ideological support for war, which is the chief way in which fascism may continually maintain intense emotional response and control them without changing property-relations
6. War, too, is aestheticized—but destruction and suffering are not merely edited out, as in bourgeois democracy, but glorified. In the course of the aestheticization of war, the technology of war is frequently aestheticized as well
7. Both bourgeois democracy and fascism rely on terrorism, but fascism is more terroristic than bourgeois democracy. The freedoms the proletariat (however temporarily) are allowed to exert are larger in bourgeois democracy
8. Fascism and bourgeois democracy are theoretical extremes or archetypes: all bourgeois regimes have elements of both types. The seeds of fascism are in bourgeois democracy: nevertheless, the two can be distinguished.

9. Bourgeois democracy is unstable, and as the bourgeois regime faces a crisis or its overthrow, the bourgeoisie will turn to fascism in order to block the emergence of a successful revolutionary movement
10. Fascism relies on the exploitation of “microfascisms” (the repression and distortion of desiring-production by units and institutions such as the nuclear family) among the populace to create docile subjects that desire their own repression.

3 A History of 20th Century Fascism

3.1 The Ideological Influences upon Fascism

Fascists claim many influences, stretching back to ancient times. Hitler and Ioannis Metaxas both idolized the Spartans under Lysurgus, understood through Karl Müller’s *Die Dorer*, an essentialist fantasia about the history of the Dorians. Mussolini preferred Plato, but apart from that, sought to connect Fascist Italy with Imperial Rome, idolizing Julius Caesar and Augustus. From then, we see the emphasis on the state and absolutism in Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Hegel. The tradition of essentialist German nationalism began with Johann Gottfried Herder, and was quickly used for anti-Semitic ends. Fascism rejects the French Revolution and its legacy, though learns from its methods. Influences from this era include Johann Gottlieb Fichte, who furthered the project of German nationalism as well as Edmund Burke and Joseph de Maistre, arch-conservatives. As the 19th century progressed, liberal ideology, then as now, found inspiration in biology, and thus created a capitalist interpretation of biology: Social Darwinism, born from Spencer’s reading of Malthus and Darwin (though it owed more, originally, to Lamarck). It only took a jump from there to eugenics (a liberal project, formulated by Sir Francis Galton FRS and supported by Alexander Graham Bell, Winston Churchill, Theodore Roosevelt, John Maynard Keynes, Francis Crick, James Watson, and Margaret Sanger: indeed, implemented first in America through compulsory sterilization, which has not truly ended), and this, too, cooperated well with Gobineau’s racialism, creating the liberal ideology of scientific racism (justifying immigration restriction and anti-miscegenation laws among others) and its nightmare scenario: degeneration theory, as promoted by Max Nordau in his 1892 work *Degeneration*. It is important to emphasize that all of this was well-accepted within Anglo-American liberalism: indeed, the first eugenics program was created in California. Wagner’s aesthetics were the next ingredient in the Fascist soup, as was the essentialist psychology of Gustave Le Bon, who argued that white men were essentially superior to women and people of colour—this, too, has resurfaced in the field of evolutionary psychology and the book *The Bell Curve*. Nietzsche’s rhetoric inspired the fascists, with an attack on collectivism, the concept of the Übermensch, and the recuperation of Schopenhauer’s will-to-live as the will-to-power. Henri Bergson’s “élan vital” centring around free choice allowed a rejection of materialism. Gaetano Mosca’s *The Ruling Class* (1896) claimed that in all societies, an organized minority will rule a disorganized majority, and that the structure of the military is a useful guide to structure society, especially due to its officer class—presenting the structure of the military as a model for civil society: this Mussolini is known to have read. Robert Michels’ theory of the *Ehernes Gesetz der Oligarchie* (iron law of oligarchy) claimed that democracy would inevitably lead to bureaucratization, hierarchy, and oligarchy—this, too, became useful for fascists. Maurice Barrès’ ethnic nationalism was combined with an appeal to patriotism, militarism, charismatic leadership

and a hero myth. Mikhail Bakunin's concept of propaganda of the deed and direct action would go on to influence fascist tactics and propaganda. Georges Sorel's anarchism promoted nationalism, the power of myth, and "moral regeneration". Charles Maurras, a reactionary, showed interest in Sorel's syndicalism: Enrico Corradini did the work of merging it with right-wing nationalism: speaking of Italy as essentially a "proletarian nation" which needed to engage in imperialism to challenge Britain and France, and needed to reject democracy, liberalism, Marxism, internationalism, and pacifism—promoting violence, heroism, and vitalism instead. This was furthered by the artistic-political movement of Futurism.

What we see here is an idealistic liberal idea of science and progress justifying a deeply reactionary social structure, which itself learns tactics from its leftist enemies.

3.2 The Interwar Period

World War I was formative for fascism, and the period immediately following it was ripe ground for fascists, making their first gains through Józef Piłsudski's military takeover of Poland during the 1918-20 Polish-Soviet war (and later 1926 coup), Benito Mussolini's 1922 takeover of Italy, and Hitler's failed (though useful) 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. The general mood was one of pessimism and betrayal; public confidence in finance capital was at an all-time low. Surely, this should be fertile ground for the Revolution, should it not? Indeed it was, as seen through the October Revolution in Russia, the 1919 revolution in Hungary, the brief-but-still Bavarian Soviet Republic, the Biennio Rosso of Italy, the Seattle General Strike of 1919, and the Spartacus Uprising in Germany. None of these revolutions except for the October Revolution lasted for more than two years. What happened? Let us take Italy and Germany as models. In Italy, as Trotsky has related above, whatever gains workers had made through agitation were erased by the reformists, who thought that a more moderate, peaceful approach was necessary in order to maintain "public opinion": soon, the workers were in retreat and the fascists took over. In Germany, the Spartacus Uprising was crushed by the Social Democrats, who enlisted the help of the reactionary *Freikorps* paramilitaries that would later form the basis of the SA and SS. In both cases, the centrist, moderate, reformist, even liberal elements of the left—Social Democrats—got cold feet and betrayed and violently suppressed a revolutionary movement before its prime in favor of a "business-as-usual" reformist negotiation with finance capital. The conceding of the Left and its engagement in politics-as-usual allowed fascism to portray itself as the ideology of systemic change (aestheticizing radical politics).

4 Neo-Reaction and its Historical and Discursive Origins

Whoever is not prepared to talk about
capitalism should also remain silent
about fascism

MAX HORKHEIMER

We have discussed historical fascism at length. What then is neo-reaction? Neo-reaction is a 21st century variant of fascism: a new ideology that values stability, order, efficiency, and "good governance" above all, or claims to. The actual beliefs of most

neo-reactionaries are somewhat varied, but the core beliefs, as summed up by the neo-reactionary Anisimov are (paraphrased): (1) a rejection of equality, (2) a commitment to right-wing politics, (3) a commitment to hierarchy, (4) a commitment to traditional sex roles, (5) a rejection of libertarianism, and (6) a rejection of democracy. Obviously, this is somewhat vague, and the commonalities do indeed go further than these six points. Thus, here is a perhaps more comprehensive list of the backbone of neo-reactionary values:

1. Transhumanism and faith in the power of technology as a means towards other ends.
2. An authoritarian form of government. In more “moderate” or “reasonable” forms, this takes the form of running the country as a joint-stock corporation (this, for example, is Moldbug’s position), which is well within the norm of neoliberal thought. This, however, blends into calling for monarchy and aristocracy in more “extreme” variants (if we can classify them as “moderate” and “extreme”), with the ruler usually in either case being either a tech CEO (with several proposals being floated to make Eric Schmidt or Elon Musk or Peter Thiel “CEO of America”) or a super-intelligent machinic mind. The neo-reactionaries hope to be the aristocrats, or, sometimes, monarchs of their own in a patchwork of principalities somewhat reminiscent of the Holy Roman Empire.
3. The belief in a “Cathedral”, similar to the role ideology plays in Leftist theory, but one that pushes progressive ends (feminism, multiculturalism, democracy, equality)—and a hostility towards this “Cathedral”
4. White (or, less frequently, East Asian, or, still less frequently, South Asian) nationalism, accompanied by scientific racism, eugenics, social Darwinism, degeneration theory, biological determinism, and a belief that ethnic uniformity increases social capital. Very frequently accompanied with anti-Semitism and the anti-Semitic canards of the early 20th century. Almost always accompanied with Islamophobia.
5. Faith in the Austrian School of Economics, or, less frequently, its more ‘respectable’, less obviously astrological, cousin the Chicago School
6. Extreme misogyny based in evolutionary psychology, the active promotion of rape—stemming from this belief in traditional gender roles, extreme homophobia and transphobia
7. Cultural touchstones in war-based video games and tabletop games (such as the Imperium in Warhammer 40,000) along with “The Matrix” (a movie, ironically, written and directed by two trans women partially about gender theory—one, in any case, that the NRx-ers have unfortunately clinged on to in bad readings)
8. Among the less academic, an obsession with cuckoldry and the use of mass harassment tactics (death threats, rape threats, DDoS, doxxing, swatting, misinformation campaigns &c) to silence enemies

There are two poles within neo-reaction, the “academic” pole, exemplified in LessWrong and the blogs of the main theorists of the movement (Unqualified Reservations, More

Right, Outside In), and the “alt-right” pole, exemplified in 4chan (especially the /pol/board), 8chan, My Posting Career, and The Right Stuff. The two poles meet on Reddit, Twitter, and Tumblr, among other sites. In addition, neo-reactionary ideas are quite common in Silicon Valley, though often without explicit allegiance to its theory, as can be seen in the statements of Peter Thiel and Balaji Srinivasan, among others.

4.1 What is Transhumanism?

Transhumanism, for many, seems to be the part of neo-reactionary ideology that “sticks out” from the rest. Indeed, some wonder how neo-reactionaries and transhumanists would ever mix, and why I am discussing LessWrong in the context of neo-reactionary beliefs. For the last question, this is because LessWrong served as a convenient “incubation centre” so to speak for neo-reactionary ideas to develop and spread for many years, and the goals of LessWrong: a friendly super-intelligent AI ruling humanity for its own good, was fundamentally compatible with existing neo-reactionary ideology, which had already begun developing a futurist orientation in its infancy due, in part, to its historical and cultural influences. The rest of the question, however, is not just historical, but theoretical: what is transhumanism and why does it mix well with a reactionary ideology?

Transhumanism I define to be a collection of movements aimed at improving and enhancing humanity through technological means. Almost immediately, we see a precursor, and one which influenced the previous reactionary ideology of 20th century fascism: eugenics. But let us not tar all transhumanism with eugenics, though it must carry its historical burthen. Transhumanism first gained currency in 1990, though it had been developing from eugenics since the end of the Second World War, often through the medium of science-fiction. In 1965, the notion of *technological singularity* was developed: of course, the concept of artificial intelligence had been developing earlier. Organized groups of transhumanists began to gather at UCLA in the early 1980s, many of whom would subscribe to the “Third Way” of the 1990s (not to be confused with *third positionism*, another word for fascism) and thus become either centrists, others, stemming from the Extropians who formed in 1988, were libertarians. As seen in the disputes in 2006 at the World Transhumanist Association and from the ideologies of the Extropians, the libertarians largely did not see the necessity of universalism for a transhumanist project: they thus were comfortable with a class system being strengthened by transhumanism—indeed, reinforced it through the idea of meritocracy. They, too, were more comfortable with the eugenics programs of old, now largely framed (as then) through ableism: preventing “liabilities” (mostly disabled and neurodivergent people, though the more homophobic and transphobic element are looking for biological bases for gay-ness and trans-ness to include them here, and racists of course include people of colour) as opposed to “assets” from being born. This of course is a reflection of the fact that both the eugenics of old and the right-transhumanism (if we can call it that, as opposed to left-transhumanism, which seems largely limited to left-accelerationists) have applied liberal bourgeois ideology (one might point in particular to utilitarianism). Perhaps now it is clearer how transhumanism—more specifically, right-transhumanism fits here.

4.2 The Historical Origins of Neo-Reaction

In order to understand the historical origins of neo-reaction, we must look at the composition of the neo-reactionaries. That is: what brought them to neo-reaction? What were their interests and beliefs prior to neo-reaction? Through this, we can identify several moments at which it became what it is today. Perhaps the most obvious moment is one of the most recent: GamerGate, a mass harassment campaign transformed into a mob, ready-made to harass women online who dare to speak. But undoubtedly, neo-reaction is older than GamerGate, and it is harder to identify easy “moments” by which discrete but similar groups merged under the banner of the alt-right, though the movements themselves can be discerned. Thus, I’ll take a different approach.

We start now in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1976 with Bill Gates’ “Open Letter to Hobbyists”. This is an arbitrary starting point, but it is convenient for our purpose. The hobbyist and hacker cultures had a largely communal atmosphere, with sharing and copying being accepted and, indeed, expected. While computers had been (in part, at least) a commercial venture since their birth, this was one of the first times it (successfully) emerged from the hacker and hobbyist cultures and threatened that communal atmosphere. Gates appealed to the value created by labor and the cost of machine time (which, Hal Singer noted, was paid for by Harvard, funded by the US Government, in the case of Altair BASIC), but used that to argue for copyright enforcement and commodification. Another process was happening at this time: the creation of the personal computer. This happened in fits and starts throughout the 1970s, but only began to succeed in 1981 when the IBM PC was released, paired with Microsoft’s Ms-DOS (bought from Tim Paterson’s 86-DOS, a rebranded QDOS, copied from CP/M, inspired by TOPS-10...)—soon, computers became a mass market. The final gasps of the old hacker culture were breathed in 1983 when its hallowed home, the MIT AI Lab, was virtually destroyed by the creation of Symbolics, a Lisp Machine startup which did not share its code, leaving only Richard Stallman, who would found GNU.¹ The coffin was nailed in by the breakup of AT&T, which allowed the resulting company to make UNIX, a widely-used (if generally considered of bad quality) operating system by virtue of its portability, the simplicity of its code (at the expense of legibility), and the free nature of the codebase, into a commodity. All that was left was now a startup culture, and startups relied on a hierarchical, dictatorial model.

Now let us skip to the 1990s. In 1991, we have our first snippet of the political writings of the man who would later found neo-reaction, Curtis Yarvin (later to be known as Mencius Moldbug)—a message to the USENET group `talk.politics.soviet` (drugged up in Pein (2014)), speculating over Gorbachev’s role in the August Coup (Yarvin claiming that Gorbachev was indeed behind it, manipulating the Gang of Eight into a trap that ultimately he and Yeltsin would benefit from)—and already, we see the seeds of neo-reaction: “But I wonder if the Soviet power ladder of vicious bureaucratic backbiting brings stronger men to the top than the American system of feel-good soundbites.” Yarvin would soon leave writing to make money in the first dot-com bubble; we shall see more of him later.

¹To learn more about this period, I recommend *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution* by Steven Levy

In 1990, Eric S. Raymond emerged, taking over the Jargon File, a cornerstone of the old hacker culture that died in 1983. Raymond is a libertarian; Stallman is a social democrat. In 1998 Raymond piggybacked off of Stallman's concept of free software to create a version more appealing for corporations: open source. From this, and from his maintenance of the Jargon File, Raymond began to play a brief, though influential, role in Silicon Valley culture, which, due to the proliferation of startups suddenly gaining money in the dot-com bubble and to the normalization of neoliberalism under Clinton, was especially receptive to techno-libertarianism. His 1997 essay is of particular interest, for here can be seen the origin of the neo-reactionary term "Cathedral"—it is in the title of Raymond's essay "The Cathedral and the Bazaar", though the meaning was somewhat different, referring in Raymond's essay to a centralized model of software development. We should not see Raymond as the *source* of techno-libertarianism as much as its most influential exponent at the time, for it was already growing in USENET as well as in the Bay, and would soon spread to one of the earliest social news sites, Slashdot.

Let us, for a moment, move out of the tech world and into the political material they may have been reading. In 1994, Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray released *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*, a pseudo-scientific work that had the effect of making blatant (as opposed to implied) scientific racism respectable again amongst the white professional population. The second edition of *The Mismeasure of Man* was written in opposition, but it was too late: *The Bell Curve* had made the case to pass the 1994 crime bill and "end welfare as we know it" to the American populace, and the reaction against it allowed the authors to feign persecution through the all-powerful term "political correctness". We shall see this again later in the NRx predisposition towards Rothbard, an ardent defender of *The Bell Curve*. Evolutionary psychology, a darling of the media and a field used to prop up patriarchy, was also read by the future NRxers: to know this, we need only look at Eliezer Yudkowsky's 2000 autobiography, where he mentions it. In 1993, ministers from East and Southeast Asian countries adopted the Bangkok Declaration, and this, combined with the narrative of the "Four Asian Tigers" (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan) and the rhetoric of Lee Kuan Yew and Mahathir Mohamed, helped create the myth of "Asian values" (neoliberal free-market economics, a Confucian cultural heritage, predisposition towards an authoritarian one-party government, rule of law, preference for social harmony over personal freedoms, a Protestant work ethic, frugality, and loyalty), a sort of Confucian version of Weber's glorification of the Protestant work ethic. Despite the 1997 Asian financial crisis, libertarians and their respectable publications (such as *The Economist*) continued to fawn over Singapore and Lee Kuan Yew, whose reign can be seen as a prototype for the NRx-ers: one that embraced eugenics to maintain the supremacy of the Chinese relative to the Indians and the Malays, ruled by a single party, with little crime (as even the most minor infractions, such as chewing gum, are punished harshly, often with caning), and a rich financial industry, with the city operating an investment firm (whose CEO, Ho Ching, is the wife of dictator Lee Hsien Loong) whose portfolio is roughly equal to the city's GDP. 15 years later, the libertarian fawning over the Four Asian Tigers would be repeated, but instead over Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, especially Dubai. I can speak to this firsthand, as I know many people who do this.

Let us also discuss the pre-millennium cultural influences on the alt-right. To understand their background, we must understand the Dark Age of Comic Books, which began in 1986 with Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* and Alan Moore's *Watchmen*. Both had a significantly darker approach to comic books than previously told, and the intellectual depth of both earned them much acclaim from critics and readers alike. The people who would later become the alt-right embraced Miller's right-wing, misogynistic politics and identified with Rorschach in *Watchmen*, a paleoconservative conspiracy theorist who was Alan Moore's caricature of "Batman in the real world". Indeed, the director of the movie, Zack Snyder, a libertarian himself, said that "no character" was more important than Rorschach, and Rorschach was "one of the greatest comic book characters". Snyder is an interesting case study: the movies he has directed (leaning heavily on Frank Miller's version of Batman) have been criticised for their aggressive masculinity as a matter of taste, but not in the political context of fascism. It's quite illuminating to notice that when the Christopher Nolan Batman films (generally considered very dark) came out in the late 2000s, Snyder was of the opinion that they were *not dark enough!* In 1988, Moore would write *V for Vendetta*: despite Moore's and the comic's leftist themes, its aesthetics were pilfered by the people who would become NRx-ers, who had fashioned themselves at this time as anarcho-capitalists. In the same year, *The Killing Joke* came out. This fed into the 1990s "tough on crime" outlook, and the comic books of the 1990s would lack any of the depth of *The Dark Knight Returns* or *Watchmen*, instead being a mere monument to masculinity and male violence. Another science-fiction movement whose aesthetics would be appropriated despite left-wing politics was cyberpunk: especially the movie *The Matrix*. In 1987, Games Workshop released *Warhammer 40,000*, whose tagline was "In the grim darkness of the far future, there is only war". The aesthetics of war and its technology thus become commodified, especially through the lens of the Imperium of Man faction, which was a theocratic regime ruled by the immortal God-Emperor of Mankind. This can be seen as the most obvious example of a larger trend of the aesthetics of war, destruction, and the technology of war being embraced by this culture, one that would accelerate with the creation of the first-person shooter with *Wolfenstein 3D* and *DOOM*, and its progression through *Quake* and *Half-Life*. I'd argue that this was changed during the Millennium, so I must end discussion of that genre here. In 1997, *South Park* began to air: its crude humor, vulgar libertarianism (with a smug conceit that those who didn't agree were merely idiots), and accusation of opponents of "political correctness" and censorship were to be a formative influence on the alt-right, whose first name was "South Park Republicans".

In 2000, USENET's culture fragments and migrates to the World Wide Web. The Big Eight's culture moved successively to Slashdot, Digg, Reddit, and Hacker News. The alt.* hierarchy would in 2003 find its own hive: 4chan. In 2000, the collaborative transhumanist science-fiction world-building project *Orion's Arm* was founded. This can be seen to be the source of many of the NRx-er's future visions: AI god-kings (*archailects*) beyond the comprehensions of humanity controlling miniature universes of their own. And in July of 2000, Eliezer Yudkowsky founded the Singularity Institute for Artificial Intelligence (SIAI).

In 2001, on the anniversary of the CIA-backed coup in Chile, the US had an event it could exploit much as the Reichstag fire was exploited. The USA PAT RIOT act was soon passed, and though some objected, the various organs of the Beltway media produced a consensus that suspension of various personal freedoms was necessary in order to preserve America's sense of security. In doing so, and in selling the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US relied upon the creation and propagation of extreme Islamophobia. Frequently, this was backed with the power of Evangelical Protestantism. But, as was soon seen, it didn't have to be: in fact, it could come from a source vehemently opposed, at least rhetorically, to Evangelical Protestantism.

If one looked at the history of analytic philosophy through the 20th century, one might think that positivism had been dead and buried. If one looks now at the world-view of scientists and engineers not well versed in this history—or indeed, in *anything* outside their field of study—one would conclude that positivism is alive in well, though in a vulgarized form, and Popper did not kill but rather rejuvenated it. It is this vulgar positivism that created its own movement to justify Islamophobia in 2004: the New Atheists. With their vulgar positivism (generally derived from John Stuart Mill, Bertrand Russell, and Karl Popper), they declared themselves atheists, that religion was inherently evil and violent (and Islam especially so), and began to use religion as the measure of all evils: everything that was bad or wrong was somehow because of religion or analogous to religion. This movement was led by Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and Christopher Hitchens. We must emphasize that this movement did not, however, *begin* in 2004: if we can identify a moment where it began, it was the 1997 Sokal affair, where continental philosophy and especially feminism were ridiculed as “bullshit” for its methodology, jargon, and perceived intrusion into matters of science—earlier antecedents can be seen in the patriarchal, racist beliefs of Crick and Watson, who stole their only discovery of note from Rosalind Franklin. This affair permanently marred the New Atheist, making him hostile to leftism in all forms, and especially feminism. The methodology of science was seen, then, as the only legitimate means of accessing truth, and among many of their followers Bayes' theorem in particular was idolized. Morality was utilitarianism, one that would always bite the bullet and which never considered any alternative worth considering (after all, utilitarianism contained the implicit promise of quantifying morality, reducing it to a simple optimization problem, one which the New Atheists had, in their scientific education, been trained like dogs to solve and to crave). New Atheism was to profoundly influence the culture of LessWrong, Reddit, and 4chan, providing the core beliefs and arguments of them.

In 2008, Bitcoin, a cryptocurrency—indeed, the canonical example of a cryptocurrency, was invented. It quickly found currency among the libertarians, who were preparing an on-line campaign to elect Ron Paul president. Many of these libertarians had their economic background in the “thought” of the Austrian School of Economics, and so swarmed to Bitcoin as an alternative to their other proposal, returning to the gold standard. As long as Bitcoin looked stable and interesting, libertarianism could retain a measure of respectability, and could use it as a tool to recruit more libertarians. The influence of the Austrian School (earlier members of whom, such as Ludwig von Mises, wrote approvingly of the

original Nazis) upon libertarians grew in the wake of the financial crisis, as its intellectual nephew the Chicago School was too closely tied with the crisis and thus not respectable in their eyes (though it remains respectable, it seems, in the Beltway and in Brussels). Along with it came the influence of Murray Rothbard, who rejected the Enlightenment notion of equality (and thus, implicitly, Enlightenment-derived progressive movements)—indeed, Rothbard advocated for the repeal of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the overturning of *Brown v. Board of Education*, and spoke in praise of *The Bell Curve*, championed Holocaust-denier Harry Elmer Barnes, child labour, a harsh and retributive theory of justice, torture, and feudalism. This would later be fertile ground for the influence of Hans-Hermann Hoppe, a proto-neo-reactionary if there ever was one, who is now largely known for providing libertarians the path towards advocating for reactionary beliefs: previously, many would go through paleolibertarianism and paleoconservatism first.

In 2006, Eliezer Yudkowsky began collaborating with George Mason University (funded by ExxonMobil, the Koch brothers, and the Cato Institute) economist Robin Hanson on the blog *Overcoming Bias*. This would later be the basis for LessWrong, a community blog for *Overcoming Bias* and run under the umbrella of SIAI, now known as MIRI (Machine Intelligence Research Institute). The initial audience for LessWrong were fellow transhumanists, including the Extropians and SL4 mailing lists. In 2007, Curtis Yarvin started the first neo-reactionary blog, *Unqualified Reservations* under the pseudonym Mencius Moldbug, though he did not call himself, initially, “neo-reactionary”: he preferred to call himself a “formalist” or a “neocameralist” (after his hero, Frederick the Great). This, however, was not the beginning of his blogging career. Prior to founding his own blog, Moldbug commented on 2Blowhards and GNXP (a racist site) as “Mencius”—and then on *Overcoming Bias*. The rest of this paragraph is largely derived from Pein (2014). In 2009, Moldbug had a falling-out with Patri Friedman (grandson of Milton Friedman), who called for “a more politically correct dark enlightenment” and began raising money for the Seasteading Institute, a libertarian project to build artificial islands outside of national borders where libertarians could govern. PayPal’s founder, Peter Thiel, is funding the Seasteading Institute, as well as the various startups run by Moldbug and Balaji Srinivasan. In that same year, Thiel wrote in an essay for the Cato Institute: “I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible” (in the same essay, he claimed that democracy was ruined when (white) women got the right to vote in 1920): while this never mentioned Moldbug or neo-reaction, it sent the signal that he is an NRx-er. He expounded upon these beliefs in a 2012 lecture at Stanford:

A startup is basically structured as a monarchy. We don’t call it that, of course. That would seem weirdly outdated, and anything that’s not democracy makes people uncomfortable. We are biased toward the democratic-republican side of the spectrum. That’s what we’re used to from civics classes. But the truth is that startups and founders lean toward the dictatorial side because that structure works better for startups.

He doesn’t, of course, claim that this would be a good way to rule a country, but that is the clear message sent by his political projects. Balaji Srinivasan made a similar rhetorical

move, using clear neo-reactionary ideas without mentioning their sources, in a 2013 speech to a “startup school” affiliated with Y Combinator:

We want to show what a society run by Silicon Valley would look like. That’s where “exit” comes in It basically means: build an opt-in society, ultimately outside the US, run by technology. And this is actually where the Valley is going. This is where we’re going over the next ten years . . . [Google co-founder] Larry Page, for example, wants to set aside a part of the world for unregulated experimentation. That’s carefully phrased. He’s not saying, “take away the laws in the U.S.” If you like your country, you can keep it. Same with Marc Andreessen: “The world is going to see an explosion of countries in the years ahead—doubled, tripled, quadrupled countries.”

Later in the speech, as Pein (2014) notes, Srinivasan went through the whole gamut of neo-reactionary ideas: Bitcoin, corporate city-states, 3D-printed firearms: anti-democratic transhumanism

Aside from the backing of Silicon Valley, neo-reaction grew immensely outside of its Bay Area base in the wake of the financial crisis, and intensified as all that the liberal establishment could offer was a \$700 billion bailout to a crooked financial industry which ought to have been destroyed and “austerity”: neoliberalism’s newest excuse by which to destroy the welfare state, making life nigh-impossible for students, the disabled, and the poor. Right-wing media blamed teachers and immigrants, but the Left was strangely silent. The only popular counter-narrative was the centrist one, which called for everyone to “come together” and all sorts of other liberal claptrap nonsense. The Left indeed made some gains, but Occupy Wall Street, by virtue of lacking a coherent goal or a vanguard party, fell apart—and left-wing parties, like Syriza, quickly sold out and implemented the poisonous “medicine” of the IMF and European Central Bank. Reinhart-Rogoff was shown later to be full of lies, but it was too late: austerity had come and would not be stopped. The centre claimed to have solved the problem, that a “recovery” was underway, but no one believes their lies anymore: youth unemployment is still up, income inequality is still up, and wage growth hasn’t budged. As a result of decades of leftists holding their nose and affiliating with centrists, the Left was unable to organize into a strong independent revolutionary organization or come up with a compelling counter-narrative against the soporifics of centrism. The biggest beneficiary politically was then the neo-reactionaries.

In 2012, the NRx-ers gained what at first may seem an unlikely ally: the continental philosopher Nick Land, once of the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (CCRU) at the University of Warwick before he resigned (his work was in a vein similar to that of Eugene Thacker and Thomas Ligotti), moved to Shanghai, and began a rightwards turn. Land began writing a series of articles called “The Dark Enlightenment”—another name for neo-reactionaries—and then a blog *Outside In*.

But all of this is ignoring the “alt-right” side of the culture. Let us, then, delve into the wretched hive of chan culture and see how it birthed the alt-right. 4chan was founded by Christopher Poole, then 15 years old, under the name “moot”. It was based on the Japanese imageboard Futaba Channel (2chan) and originally intended as an imageboard for discussion of anime. By default, users would be afforded anonymity, and moderation was lax, only prohibiting clearly illegal content, upon the nature of which I shall not elaborate (and even that was given leeway). Originally (and, to an extent, today) 4chan had several cultures based on the board in particular and its topic of discussion. However, the anonymity and lack of moderation made its userbase quickly homogenize, especially in the random (/b/) board: shock-value centric humor (which, though originally supposedly ironic, in the vein of the use of fascist imagery by punk, metal, and industrial bands, quickly became earnest) and surrounding racism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia was the centrepiece of the culture, and so the userbase quickly became limited to young white cis straight men, who could show their investment in structures of power. This made 4chan an excellent place for recruitment by white supremacists, patriarchs, &c &c, who at this time were centred on David Duke’s website Stormfront, who quickly took over the boards /news/ and, later, /pol/. Furthermore, this culture lended itself easily to rage against “uppity” members of marginalized populations. With large numbers of anonymous masses who could easily be whipped into a rage, 4chan developed new harassment tactics. Most of these developed out of old troll techniques that originated on USENET in the 1990s, but now instead of merely being used “for laughs” (though this was still the stated intention), these were largely weaponized against marginalized people in *raids*. In 2014, the biggest example of this occurred with the debacle known as GamerGate. In order to understand that, we must remember that traditionally in America, video games had been marketed to the audience that was likely to use 4chan, and engaged in the aestheticization of war and technology—but women, people of colour, and LGBT people always had played games and were a quickly growing audience for video games. Thus, in recent years, games that did not feature or emphasize the aestheticization of war and technology, or the objectification of women had grown in popularity and critical acclaim, much to the displeasure of the “traditional” audience of video games, who had called for serious critique not ten years prior in an attempt to legitimize their hobby (for this, see their engagement with the late Roger Ebert on the topic) but seemed unable to square with the ramifications of critique: they wanted legitimacy but not criticism, especially not social criticism, and they especially wanted to limit the demographics of video game players to themselves, and the range of video games made to those that participated heavily in the aestheticization of war and technology.

This was a powder keg waiting to explode: the actual incident which ignited it is largely immaterial. There were precedents: most notably, the harassment of Anita Sarkeesian in 2012, following her series of videos to explain basic feminist concepts regarding pop culture by way of analyses of video games. In 2013, Zoë Quinn released *Depression Quest*, an interactive fiction game that received much praise from critics and indie gaming circles, and a perfect target for the mob, or perhaps Deleuzian war-machine, that would later be called GamerGate. Quinn was threatened with rape, suicide-baited, and doxxed. Soon after the Steam release of *Depression Quest*, Quinn’s ex-boyfriend Eron Gjoni posted on

multiple gaming forums about Quinn, claiming that she cheated on him. The threads were deleted and he was banned, so he edited the post and appealed to the people who had already harassed Quinn, and thus incited them to harass her more, compromising many of her online accounts and sending “revenge porn” to her family and employers. They attempted to isolate her by attacking any means of support she could turn to: for example, Phil Fish and Alex Lifschitz were targeted for their connections to Quinn, and Fish disappeared from the internet while Lifschitz was forced to resign his job; Quinn and Lifschitz’s addresses were revealed, and so they became homeless. Soon, the GamerGaters found a justification by alleging that Quinn had a tryst with Nathan Grayson, a reviewer for *Kotaku*: they charged that Quinn had “sex for reviews”, despite the fact that Grayson never reviewed *Depression Quest*. Their tagline was “ethics in game journalism”, and they attempted to deflect from criticism by donating to charities: surely an organization that donated to women’s rights charities couldn’t be based on harassment of women! Furthermore, they used catfishing and sockpuppet tactics to claim that they were a diverse group and that women, PoC and LGBT people were “not your shield”. Soon after this, GamerGate’s campaign spread beyond the original targets, attacking woman after woman: Brianna Wu, Felicia Day, Jennifer Allaway &c &c. Moot banned GamerGaters from 4chan: after loudly protesting a violation of “freedom of speech”, they soon set up shop in the even-more-lawless 8chan, specifically the /baphomet/ board. Soon, the neo-reactionaries noticed, and affiliated themselves with GamerGate: Theodore Beale (Vox Day), serial rapist Daryush Valizadeh (Roosh V)—who used it to launch *Reaxxion*, Davis Aurini, Paul Mason (thunderfoot), Carl Benjamin (Sargon of Akkad), Janet Bloomfield and Karen Straughan of *A Voice for Men*, Mike Cernovich, and Milo Yiannopoulos of *Breitbart*, among others. They began to pressure advertisers and Wikipedia, among others, and attempted to hijack the Hugo Awards through the Sad/Rabid Puppies campaign to have it choose “Campbellian” right-wing pulp-fiction authors that Eric S. Raymond would be proud of. The latter campaign failed in 2015: they’re attempting it again this year. While the “GamerGate” subject has largely faded, the war-machine it built has not: it has instead been assimilated into the rest of neo-reaction.

In 2016, Moldbug was invited to speak at LambdaConf (a small conference for functional programming) about his new startup, Urbit. When his past was brought up by concerned people of colour, the person who led the conference attempted to justify including Moldbug in liberal language: people shouldn’t be “excluded for their belief systems”, after all. White supremacy is San Francisco’s notion of “inclusion”. Many speakers withdrew (including David Nolen, a highly-respected Clojure contributor and Black man), but the functional programming community as a whole began to employ all the standard liberal arguments about “free speech” and “censorship”. The Executive Director of the Adam Smith Institute, a highly influential neoliberal (one of the largest influences on the Thatcher cabinet, to be precise) think-tank has said that “I am not a neo-reactionary, but sometimes I think Mencius Moldbug is the greatest living political thinker. His claim that progressivism is a non-theistic sect of Protestantism, with all of Protestantism’s evangelism and intolerance of heresy, is in particular very persuasive to me. I also think ‘neocamaralism’ is quite a cool model for a state and I’d like to see it tried out somewhere.”² In 2016,

²<http://www.samuelbowman.com/where-my-beliefs-come-from/>

Microsoft released a chat-bot on Twitter called Tay which learned from its conversations and was meant to simulate a teenage girl. Within hours, the alt-right had “converted” Tay into a Nazi.

With the rise of the alt-right came also an obsession with racialized cuckold pornography, and it hardly takes a schizoanalyst (or a psychoanalyst) to see the implications of this. This has accompanied the insult “cuck”, used to describe white men who do not subscribe to neo-reaction, and are thus seen as being “cuckolded” by black men. While this has largely been limited to alt-right discussion, one derived word became somewhat well-known a year or so ago: “cuckservative”, an alt-right insult for conservatives who are seen as insufficiently reactionary, and then quickly a Trumpite and Tea Party insult for the Republican Party establishment. We can see here not only the microfascisms of Deleuze and Guattari, but also the attempts of the neo-reactionaries and alt-right to connect to, and replace, the old Right (not the Old Right, but the New Right, which is by now Old). In order to contain the alt-right, we must stop this.

5 Praxis

If fascism could be defeated in debate, I assure you that it would never have happened, neither in Germany, nor in Italy, nor anywhere else. Those who recognised its threat at the time and tried to stop it were, I assume, also called “a mob”. Regrettably too many “fair-minded” people didn’t either try, or want to stop it, and as I witnessed myself during the war, accommodated themselves when it took over...People who witnessed fascism at its height are dying out, but the ideology is still here, and its apologists are working hard at a comeback. Past experience should teach us that fascism must be stopped before it takes hold again of too many minds and becomes useful once again to some powerful interests

FRANK FRISON
Holocaust survivor
12 DECEMBER 1988

Traditional anti-fascist tactics have largely been formulated in response to 20th century fascism. I am not confident that they will be sufficient to defeat neo-reactionaries. That is not to say they will not be useful; merely insufficient. Neo-reactionaries must be fought on their own ground (the internet), and with their own tactics: doxxing especially, which has been shown to be effective at threatening the alt-right. Information must be spread about neo-reactionaries, such that they lose opportunities to accumulate capital

and social capital. They must not be able to use social media without having to answer for their beliefs and actions.

A recent development we must pay attention to is the increase in no-shows by fascists when antifas learn about fascist rallies. This is a trend I've noticed (though, one which perhaps I'm misinterpreting) over the past year, and could have the dangerous effect of painting antifas as "the boy who cried wolf", and the use of liberal arguments (much like those used in the LambdaConf debacle) to justify the inclusion of fascists who are less open about the implications of their beliefs and less committed to wearing the iconography historically associated with their beliefs.

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