

state of chaos approaching the annihilation of being, that stimulates the brain to reconstruct a sense of order via the production of a standard set of unifying symbols. I have termed this process the "apocalypse complex." The ego normally adapts to external change by creating new relationships of order and, consequently, new patterns of meaning. However, when change is so radical and occurs so rapidly, the ego may be incapable of restructuring its perception of external reality. Order appears to have become chaos, and all sense of meaning — a subjective perception of order — is lost. It is at this point that the Self, what Jung called the archetype of wholeness and order, asserts itself. Without such a compensatory mechanism for reconstructing a sense of order, humans would be incapable of adapting to change.

The symbols of the apocalypse are those of eternity, immortality, and invincibility — and therefore of immutable order. The messiah figure is that individual whose particular expression of this symbology not only accurately conveys the archetypal, but clothes it in ways that strike a contemporary or culturally-specific chord — for Hitler it was his soteriology [salvation doctrine] of race. Large numbers of individuals searching for a new conception of order to replace their perception of chaos may accept this visionary as their longed-for savior — the messiah figure itself being a symbol of the Self. Therefore, while most individuals who feel the call of the apocalyptic project it outward and look for a savior to create the new order, the messiah is that rare person who introjects the messiah symbol, identifies with it, and accepts the call as his or her own. Seen in this light the apocalypse complex is not so much a psychopathological response to rapid change, but an instinctual attempt to reconstruct a sense of order in a chaotic situation. The apocalypse complex, therefore, can have therapeutic results. Unfortunately, the dualistic vision of a battle between good and evil (the forces of order and chaos), combined with a fear of change and a heightened paranoia, often leads to tragic consequences.

When prophesized apocalyptic events fail to occur, true believers often enact, consciously or unconsciously, the End Time scenario themselves. Hitler's Armageddon, the final battle for world domination between Aryans and Jews with the extermination of the losing race, became a horrible reality with World War II and the Holocaust — both the *Endkrieg* and the *Endlösung* were

conceived as eschatological events. For David Koresh and the militiamen who see in him a kindred spirit, it was and is the fear of being attacked by evil government forces. In Waco the stockpiling of arms in preparation for the apocalypse led directly to the ATF [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms] assault. One could argue that the assault justified the arming, but in reality it was the stockpiling for an event that was never going to happen that precipitated the event's actually occurring. In the same way, Asahara Shoko, obsessed with Hitler's gassing of Jews, developed a paranoid delusion that the CIA (it could just as well have been a secret association of Freemasons and Jews) were about to gas his compound and, consequently, he struck first. The mass suicides at Jonestown and, recently, the Solar Temple, as well as Charles Manson's attempt to precipitate the "coming" race war, likewise followed the induced-apocalypse pattern.

When I hear about militiamen who justify their arming and bomb-making because they believe that a conspiracy of Jews and government officials will one day line them up and shoot them into trenches — they often betray a fear of having done to them what their hero Hitler did to the Jews — it sounds frighteningly like the reasoning of Asahara Shoko. The next step to getting "them" before they get "us" is a short one indeed. The need to understand this apocalyptic mentality is more important now than ever. For, if modern life is marked by anything, it is the ubiquity of rapid and radical change. Apocalyptic thinking may become more a social norm than a social aberration.

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Why Stalin Couldn't Stop Laughing

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Alexander Orlov was an officer in the Soviet secret police force in the 1920s and 1930s, when it came to be called the NKVD. He subsequently defected, and in 1953 published a book, *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes*. In it

he presented a succession of oral recollections by himself and several of his NKVD acquaintances, showing how Stalin organized the arrests, trials, and executions of many Russian Communists.

One of *Secret History's* recollections is of the events at a banquet that Stalin gave on December 20th, 1936, the 19th anniversary of the creation of the NKVD. Those present included Karl Pauker — who for years had been head of Stalin's bodyguard — and other NKVD chiefs, some of whom had witnessed the executions of Zinoviev and Kamenev, two formerly prominent Communists. In August, 1936, Zinoviev and Kamenev had confessed to falsehoods in a public trial in Moscow, on the promise of Stalin that if they made these confessions he would spare their lives. After the trial Stalin had broken his promise and had them shot in the NKVD cellars on August 25th (Orlov, pages 122-143, 169-177).

In Stalin's December banquet, after those present had become moderately drunk, Pauker gave an impromptu performance of how Zinoviev, as he was being dragged to his execution, grabbed the legs of one of his guards and implored that Stalin be called so that the promise to save his life could be honored. Stalin's reaction to Pauker's performance is described in *Secret History* as follows:

Stalin watched every move of "Zinoviev" and roared with laughter. When they saw how Stalin enjoyed the scene, the guests demanded that Pauker repeat the performance. Pauker obliged. This time Stalin laughed so boisterously that he bent down and held his belly with both hands. And when Pauker introduced a new improvisation and, instead of kneeling, raised his hands to heaven and screamed: "Hear, Israel, our God is the only God!" [which is, traditionally, the final utterance of Orthodox Jews before death], Stalin could no longer bear it and, choking with laughter, began to make signs to Pauker to stop the performance (page 350).

When the events of the above episode are collated with information in several biographies of Stalin (Medvedev, *Let History Judge* [1989]; Radzinsky, *Stalin* [1996]; Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary* [1973] and *Stalin in Power* [1990]; Vaksberg, *Stalin Against the Jews* [1994]; and Volkogonov, *Stalin: Triumph and Tragedy* [1991]), it seems likely that Stalin had his fit of

laughing because Pauker's re-enactments of Zinoviev's death, along with the effects on him of alcohol, and the support and mirth of his NKVD guests, stimulated him to have intensely pleasurable thoughts about sadistic acts that he had done, and that he contemplated doing.

Although Stalin had been beaten by both his parents in his childhood, engaged in many violent acts in the years when his political power was growing (Radzinsky, pages 24-5, 60-64), and had sometimes impressed his political comrades as a "touchy character" displaying "arrogance, aloofness and uncomradely behavior" (Tucker [1973], pages 84, 163), I know of no record that he had openly displayed sadistic behavior towards those whom he had contacts with prior to the following incident.

In 1923, when he was drinking wine with Kamenev and Dzerzhinsky, then head of the NKVD, and discussing personal tastes and predilections, Stalin said, "The greatest delight is to mark one's enemy, prepare everything, avenge oneself thoroughly, and then go to sleep" (*Trotsky's Diary in Exile* [1976], page 64). Later in the 1920s an acquaintance called this Stalin's "theory of sweet revenge," and viewed it as his need to vindictively revenge himself on those individuals who had opposed him and whom he envied (Tucker [1973], pages 211, 423). Two such individuals were Zinoviev and Kamenev, whom he had defeated politically in 1927, and envied as writers and speakers, for their knowledge of European languages and cultures, and for the closeness of their relationships with Lenin.

After securing absolute power in the 1930s Stalin revenged himself in phases on Zinoviev and Kamenev: imprisoning them on false accusations in 1935, coercing them into agreeing to confess to new false accusations by promising not to execute them, staging their August, 1936, Moscow trial, secretly observing their debasing confessions at the trial, and then receiving reports from their executioners on their last minutes. Afterwards, having experienced the "greatest delight" of a "thorough" revenge, Stalin went on a holiday. With the executions having broken a taboo against killing Communists, he began anticipating new vindictive acts against other Communists (Tucker [1990], pages 366-73 and Medvedev, pages 354-56).

Four months later, in December, 1936, Pauker's re-enactments first caused Stalin to laugh

twice over the delight he had experienced in August. When Pauker (who was Jewish and therefore acquainted with Jewish customs and the anti-Semitism of his boss) acted out Zinoviev's declaration of faith in the God of Israel, his emphasis on Zinoviev's Jewishness further humored Stalin, perhaps because it made his victim appear more hateful and more helpless. It has been suggested that Pauker, while accurate in his other details about Zinoviev, invented the latter's Jewish declaration because he knew that it would please Stalin (Vaksberg, pages 40-43).

As Stalin laughed over Pauker's reenactments of his past vindictiveness he may also have been laughing over his anticipations of future vindictive acts that had now evolved into plans, and over the likely fate of his bodyguard. His plans became realities in the years 1937-1938, with arrests, trials, and executions of Communists. As Stalin daily signed lists of those to be executed — including many individuals whom he knew well — he showed his outward feelings by continuing his usual pleasurable routine of going to the theater, watching movies in his dacha, and having midnight suppers, sometimes with friends (Volkogonov, pages 292-3). (No record is available of the talk at these suppers.)

At this time there were also arrests and executions in the NKVD, involving the replacement of the older group of agents by a newer group that was more willing to torture prisoners than its predecessor had been and that was "responsible only to Stalin personally" (Tucker [1990], pages 376-78). Because he belonged to the older group, Pauker was arrested on April 21, 1937, and executed on August 14, less than eight months after he had acted out Zinoviev's execution. Stalin's only known reaction to the killing of his ex-bodyguard, who had long carried out his "most intimate errands" and become "almost a member of his family" (Orlov, pages 338-42), was to accuse the Jewish Pauker of having been a spy for the Gestapo (Vaksberg, page 42). Stalin's cruel actions against those he ruled over would continue for the rest of his life.

Tucker has offered an explanation for Stalin's cruelty by speculating that there was a mental conflict between Stalin's idealized view of himself as a great leader and his many negative qualities — including his "failures, faults, errors, miscalculations, shortcomings, ugly traits, [and]

wrongdoings" — that he hated and repressed; and that in hating others he projected onto them "all that he hated within himself, including the very fact that he felt this hate" (Tucker [1990], pages 163-65).

While Stalin may have feared that his negative qualities made him vulnerable to criticisms from others, and while he may have defended himself against this fear by aggressively hating these others, it is questionable whether his hatred involved a projection of feelings of self-hate. Such hate is produced by a conscience which, along with self-punitive thoughts, also produces feelings of guilt, doubt, and remorse. The evidence indicates that Stalin lacked any manifestations of a conscience. When he was signing the lists of those to be killed he displayed an "absolute lack of feeling" or, as has been seen, feelings of pleasure which suggest sadistic pleasure. He never, at any time, expressed doubts or remorse over any of the individuals who had been executed (Volkogonov, pages 292-3).

Similar objections to the concept of Stalin's self-hate have been made by George Kennan in a letter to Tucker. Kennan argued that Stalin did not have pity and other humane qualities that are the opposite of hate, and that while he could give

a good performance of respecting ... these qualities when he thought this might be useful to his purposes ... he was devoid of the emotional background out of which they could have found real basis in his behavior (quoted in Kennan, *A Century Ending*, pages 240-44).

While the unconscious meanings that Stalin attached to his cruelty are unknown, his main conscious motivations for being cruel were his unlimited ambitions for gaining and holding power, which were combined with his vindictive feelings of envy, suspiciousness, and anger — feelings that he expressed through his control of others. His methods of control ranged from verbal rebukes and imprisonments to killings. Sometimes he would intimidate individuals in his entourage by arresting and imprisoning their wives or relatives, while continuing to have the individuals work for

The Communism: The Dream
that Failed Research Group probes the
psychological dimensions of what drew

him and meeting with them officially and socially (Medvedev, pages 547, 863). His "misanthropic" need to maintain the smallest degree of control was shown in the case of Alexander Svanidze, his boyhood friend and his (then deceased) wife's brother. When he learned that Svanidze has been sentenced to death as a German spy he said, "Let him ask for forgiveness." Svanidze refused, saying "What's there to be forgiven for? I haven't committed any crime," and was then executed. Afterwards, Stalin said, "See how obstinate he was; he'd rather die than ask for forgiveness" (Medvedev, page 549 and Volkogonov, page 340).

Since the occasions when Stalin imposed his controls onto others were often the realizations of some of his longest-held political and vindictive wishes — increasing his political prestige and power, and destroying those whom he envied because they made him feel inferior — these occasions may have frequently stimulated him to experience delight and laughter. Kennan has observed that whenever he "encountered the slightest evidence of superiority to himself on the part of any other person ... in any field," and he could not impose his controls on that person, an "insane and clearly uncontrollable jealousy and resentment ... took possession of him..." (Kennan, page 241). Often Stalin's reaction was to kill what he could not control and on at least one occasion to then laugh uncontrollably with pleasure.

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Sherman's Rage, Sherman's War: The General as Society's Delegate

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commercial capital of the New South. In preparation for the Olympic Games, Atlantans were in the process of restoring the apartment building in which Margaret Mitchell lived when she wrote *Gone With the Wind*, only to see it destroyed by arson for a second time. Bill Campbell, the latest in a series of African-American mayors of Atlanta since 1980, distressed over this second arson at the Mitchell home, offered it as a symbol for contemporary Atlantans.

"We've been scarred by fire in the past," Campbell said. "We've risen from it and we'll go forward again." Stille reports that Pearl Cleage, a black playwright, responded in print: "He can't be talking about that time Gen. Sherman marched through Georgia as part of the effort to defeat the Confederacy, and with it, the institution of slavery, can he?"

Atlanta, Stille points out, is both the birthplace and home of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the location of the Stone Mountain Monument, the Southland's version of Mt. Rushmore, only with the likenesses of Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson carved thereupon. The descendants of the Confederacy who built the monument were responsible (along with Margaret Mitchell's novel) for indicting General Sherman, from generation to generation, as the nation's first war criminal. In the last two decades, a number of historians and journalists have come to agree with that indictment, adding to it the charge that Sherman was either the progenitor or the precursor of "total war" as it has been practiced in the twentieth century.

The events that were to make General Sherman an icon for Northerners and a villain to Southerners after the end of the Civil War all took place within a period of less than six months, from September, 1864, to February, 1865. By mid-summer 1864, the Army of the Potomac, under U.S. Grant, was bogged down in the siege of Petersburg, Virginia, after a two-month campaign, from the Wilderness through Spotsylvania and North Anna to Cold Harbor, that cost more than 60,000 Union casualties. Southern hopes depended upon Northerners' giving-in to war weariness and refusing to bear the human costs any longer. When General Jubal Early raided Pennsylvania and burned Chambersburg to the ground on July 30 after the town was unable to pay the ransom demanded, Lincoln himself began to anticipate his defeat for re-election in November by the Democratic candidate, General McClellan, running on a platform of a negotiated peace.

In May, as Grant's troops had become enmeshed in their ghastly war of attrition in the Wilderness, Sherman had moved his 100,000-man army from the outskirts of Chattanooga to begin his march on Atlanta. Engaging in a frontal assault only once (a costly attack at Kenesaw Mountain which Sherman broke off after two hours since he was unwilling to take further losses), Sherman