

Fruits of the 1920 Battle of Warsaw and the 1944 Normandy Invasion

(Insights of General J.F.C. Fuller and G.K. Chesterton)

(This article by Dr Robert Hickson, has been posted on the Apropos website: www.apropos.org.uk)

Epigraph:

“One other memory [of my April-May 1927 visit to Poland] I will add here. I made the acquaintance of a young [Polish] Count whose huge and costly palace of a country house...had been burned and wrecked and left in ruins by the retreat of the Red Army after the Battle of Warsaw [in the summer of 1920]....But [in response to this] the young man [the Count], who was very young in all his gestures, shrugged his shoulders and laughed, **at the same time looking very sad.** 'Oh, I don't blame them for that,' he said. **'I have been a soldier myself, and in the same campaign** [in the Polish-Bolshevik War after World War I]; **and I know the temptations.** I know what a fellow feels, dropping with fatigue and freezing with cold, when he asks himself what some other fellow's armchairs and curtains can matter, if he can only have fuel for the night. On the one side or the other, we were all soldiers; and it is a hard and horrible life. I don't resent at all what they did here [with my house]. **There is only one thing that I really resent. I will show you.**' And he led us out into a long avenue lined with poplars; and **at the end of it was a statue of the Blessed Virgin; with the head and hands shot off. But the hands had been lifted;** and it is a strange thing that **the very mutilation [of Mary] seemed to give more meaning to the attitude of intercession; asking mercy for the merciless race of men.**” (G.K. Chesterton, *The Autobiography of G.K. Chesterton* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1936), pp. 329-330—my emphasis added.)

“[Earlier] I was driving with **a Polish lady** [some time in May of 1927, during my visit there], who was **very witty and well-acquainted with the whole character of Europe, and also of England...**; and [then]...her tone changed [suddenly], if anything to a sort of coolness, **as we stopped outside an archway** leading to a side-street, and she said, 'We can't drive cars in here.'...As we walked under the arch, she said in the same colourless tone; 'You take your hat off here.' And then I saw **the open street.** It was **filled with a vast crowd, all facing me; and all on their knees on the ground....**I faced round, and saw in the centre of the [elevated] arch great windows standing open, **unsealing a chamber full of gold and colours;** there was a picture behind; but **parts of the whole picture were moving...**; and then I realised that from those shifting groups **there shone and sounded the ancient magnificence of the Mass.**” (G.K. Chesterton, *The Autobiography of G.K. Chesterton* (1936), p. 329—my emphasis added.)

“The implications of this slipshod slogan [i.e., “unconditional surrender,” made public at the Casablanca Conference in January of 1943] were even more fatal to the future of the western world than Woodrow Wilson's [national] 'self-determination' [in World War I]....Firstly, what unconditional surrender implied was that war was **no longer** to be considered as an instrument of creative policy—the

*establishment of a profitable and stable peace—but that it was to be an instrument of pure destruction. **From Casablanca a vulture was unleashed to batten on the entrails of Europe.***” (J.F.C. Fuller, *A Military History of the Western World*, Volume III, 1957, p. 508—my emphasis added.)

While recently reading some of G.K. Chesterton's written reflections in 1927¹ shortly after his return from his invited April-May visit to Poland, and then also some of his more abiding insights about the plight and character of Poland almost a decade later, in his posthumously published autobiography in 1936, I thought to bring to the further appreciation of a modern audience, by way of sobering counterpoint, what Major General J.F.C. Fuller also has written about the decisive Battle of Warsaw, 1920—and then also about some of the fruits of the 1944 Normandy Invasion and the vengeful 1945 conclusion of World War II, which further implemented what had been publicly stated in January of 1943, at the time of the decisive Battle of Stalingrad (which concluded on 2 February 1943): namely the fateful Declaration of “Unconditional Surrender” at Casablanca, in North Africa (by W. Churchill and F.D. Roosevelt).

As we approach the year of 2014 and the hundredth anniversary of the inception of World War I, we may also learn some things about the meaning of the 1920 Battle of Warsaw and about how things were to be a quarter of a century later when the same Bolsheviks who were earlier defeated by the Poles now occupied much of Eastern and Central Europe, and not only Poland, who had again been betrayed by her allies, and this time also militarily overwhelmed and defeated by her open enemy.

The true fruits of the Battle of Normandy

In order to capture our attention and even perhaps to stun us wholesomely at the outset—and deliberately so before we shall be considering the momentous events and implications of 1920—let us consider now what General Fuller trenchantly says about the true fruits of the 1944 Battle of Normandy. With his well-known lucidity and moral force, he will prepare us with some fundamental facts and then conclude his chapter with one especially acute and memorable paragraph. That is to say, his own well-considered summary view, as of 1957, is compactly stated in only one paragraph, coming from one of his masterpieces, *A Military History of the Western World*, Volume III.² First, his preparatory facts:

¹ G.K. Chesterton, *The Illustrated London News*, 1926-1928 (Volume XXXIV of G.K. Chesterton: *Collected Works*) (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991)—see the articles: “A Crucial Hour for Poland” (June 25, 1927); “The Polish Ideal” (July 2, 1927); and “the Mystical Cities of Poland” (July 9, 1927), pages 329-333, 333-337, 337-341, respectively. “The Polish Ideal,” an especially brilliant and generous-hearted piece, was later re-published under another title, “Two Words from Poland,” and put into G.K. Chesterton's anthology, *Generally Speaking* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1929—first published in London in 1928), pp. 49-55.

² J.F.C. Fuller, *A Military History of the Western World*, Volume III of three volumes (New York: Da Capo Press Paperback, 1992—an unabridged version of the original 1957 edition by Rutgers University Press), p. 589. Fuller dedicated his three volumes to Francis Neilson, the author on *How Diplomats Make War* (1915). On pages 587-589, he prepares us for his final summary paragraph, along with presenting us, on page 588, with an historical map of Europe comparing the Eastern Frontier of Charlemagne's Empire with the new 1945 Western Frontier of the Russian Empire. Henceforth, all emphasis in the cited texts from General Fuller's book will have been added by the current writer, unless otherwise indicated. The page references to the cited texts will be placed in parentheses in the main body of this essay.

The doom which, since the [June 1944] allied landings in Normandy, had threatened Hitler like the open jaws of some monster, closed with a snap. On April 29 [1945] General Heinrich von Vietinghoff, in command of the German forces in Italy, with nearly one million men, surrendered unconditionally to [British] Field-Marshal Alexander. At 3:30 P.M. on the following day Hitler shot himself, and **on May 2, the Russians established themselves in Berlin**. Two days later, Admiral Friedeburg and other representatives of the German High Command, at [British Field-Marshal] Montgomery's tactical headquarters on [in] the Lüneburger Heide [in Northern Germany], where in 1935 Hitler had held his first manoeuvres, signed an armistice providing for the surrender of the German forces in north-west Germany, Denmark, and Holland. Three days later [7 May] the instrument of the Wehrmacht's unconditional surrender was signed by Jodl and Friedeburg at Eisenhower's headquarters in Rheims; at midnight May 8-9 [1945] **hostilities ceased [sic], and on May 9 the Russians marched into Prague**. (587-589)

Apples of Sodom

After presenting these fundamental facts along with some maturely disciplined irony, General Fuller will now come out even more forthrightly with some of the implications for Europe of that purported cessation of hostilities:

For the United States and Great Britain, the fruits of the battle of Normandy were apples of Sodom, which turned to ashes as soon as they were plucked. Hitler and his legions were destroyed, and in their stead stood Stalin and his Asiatic hordes. Because "Victory—victory at all costs" [Winston Churchill's repeated words, especially after 22 June 1941] had been the western allies' aim, and because of their insistence that 'it was to be the defeat, ruin, and slaughter of Hitler, to the exclusion of all other purposes, loyalties and aims' [W. Churchill's own words, oft-repeated and maniacally so], Stalin, the supreme realist, whose [military] strategy [and grand strategy] had throughout kept in step with his policy, had been able to impose his messianic cult upon Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, part of Finland, Poland, eastern and central Germany, a third of Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Vienna, Prague, and Berlin, the vertebrae of Europe, were his, except for Athens, so was every capital city in eastern Europe. The western frontier of Russia had been advanced from the Pripet Marshes to the Thuringerwald, a distance of 750 miles, and as in the days of Charlemagne, the Slavs stood on the Elbe and the Böhmerwald. A thousand years of European history had been rolled back. Such were the fruits of the battle of Normandy, fructified by inept strategy and a policy of pure destruction. (589)

General Fuller later formulated, on the very last page of his last volume in 1957 (Volume III), the following challenge, in the form of interrogation:

The supreme question set by the Second World War is: Which [banner] will be hauled down ["the Stars and Stripes" or "the Hammer and Sickle"—i.e., now that, as of 1957, "the Union Jack, the banner of the Pax Britannica, has now been furled" (636)]? Is the future to see a Pax Americana or a Pax Tartarica? (636)

In his brief and cautious answer to his own question, General Fuller makes a reply, and then adds a concluding question which reminds us of two of this British general's own American contemporaries, Whittaker Chambers and James Burnham:

We hazard to suggest that the answer will be found, **not** in the contending **military** strengths of the United States and the Soviet Union, but in their **antagonistic** political, social, economic **and cultural** systems. Which of the two is **the more fitted** to solve the crucial problem set to mankind by the Industrial Revolution—the **status of man**, his government **and way of life** in a fully mechanized [and now the electronic or even a more fully “**technetronic**” (Z. Brzezinski)] world?

The Turks of the North

Because of the decisive, indeed turning-point battle of Stalingrad (late 1942-2 February 1943), General Fuller will also fittingly help our understanding of the consequent moral plight of the German military (and civilian) resistance to Hitler—especially after the harsh aim of “unconditional surrender” was publicly announced at the January 1943 Casablanca Conference, and the German resistance soon learned of it and had to deal with this new fact, given their living memories of the Treaty of Versailles (together with the Treaty of Trianon), which was, along with the one-year, post-War blockade, and unmistakably merciless and vengeful “Carthaginian Peace”:

*Stalingrad was a second Poltava [where Peter the Great of Russia surprised and defeated the powerful Swedes] in which Hitler was as much of the architect of his own ruin as was Charles XII [the Swedish King] in 1709. Into the minds of a hundred million Muscovites **flashed the myth of Soviet invincibility, and it forged them into the Turks of the North**. If they could overcome the legions of Hitler, what had they to fear from the nations he had trampled in the dust? The German victories had thrown Europe into chaos and so had blazed a trail for the Third Rome [i.e., Moscow]. **This decisive victory** [at Stalingrad], which came on the heels of El Alamein, and at the moment when in [strategic] Tunisia the Fascist cause had reached its nadir, **inspired propaganda-intoxicated peoples of the west**. Stalingrad exalted Stalin into the champion of all for which they [the west] so ardently yearned. Tragically they were to be disillusioned. (538)*

Why did the war not end in 1943?

Now General Fuller will lead us to a consideration of why the war was not ended soon after 2 February 1943, but was to go on, and so destructively, for more that two more years:

*In spite of the vastness of the German defeat, Stalingrad was only the signal of Hitler's ruin—it was not its cause. This, as described in Chapter 11 [“the Battles for Moscow”], was because in his blind arrogance **he had failed to differentiate** between potential friends among the subjugated peoples of the U.S.S.R. and his active enemies. Also, Great Britain and the United States **committed the same blunder when they did not distinguish** between the Nazi and anti-Nazi factions in Germany, **and did not establish a second front** [preferably an “inner front”] they were seeking **within instead of outside** the frontiers of the Third Reich. **Had they done so**, while still supporting [sic] Russia, the German débâcle at Stalingrad would have **opened** to them **the road which almost certainly would have led to the end of the war in the spring or summer of 1943**. (538)*

A failure or will not to communicate

Now what about the German military resistance to Hitler at the beginning of 1943, especially from some of the senior officers? General Fuller, in his combined research and moral analysis, will shed further light upon this important matter, I believe:

Because of the *pointless sacrifice of the [German] Sixth Army [at Stalingrad], never at any time during the war was revolt against Hitler nearer to success than in January, 1943. Generals Beck and Zeitzler and most of the field-m Marshals were involved, but without some assurance of British and American support* they had nothing to offer the large middle group of officers who wavered. After the war one of the conspirators said to Mr. Francis Russell: “Our conspiracy was a great tragedy. **We might have ended the war a year and a half earlier if your government had given us some encouragement....** We had our intermediaries in Sweden; we wanted to know what **the Anglo-American conditions** would be, **what terms they would give** a new [German] government **if** we succeeded in doing away with Hitler. They took our memorandum, it was given to Eden [the British minister and Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden]—but **there was never a reply.**” (538-539)

The death blow to hope

More specifically now, we should further consider how the Casablanca Conference affected the German Resistance which, even during their own nation's war, wanted, for the greater “common good,” to replace Adolf Hitler:

On January 22 [1943] the two main rebel factions—those who wanted forcibly to remove Hitler, which could only mean assassination, and those who wanted to subject him to the General Staff—met in the house of Count Peter von Wartenburg in Berlin-Lichterfelde to square their differences. Then, on the following day [23 January], before they had arrived at a decision, Roosevelt's and Churchill's proclamation of unconditional surrender came from Casablanca; “a formula which,” Görlitz declares “gave the death blow to any hope that may have been entertained either by the 'shadow government' or by oppositional elements in the General Staff, that their enemies would negotiate with a 'respectable' government.” (539)

Having just quoted the 1953 book, entitled *The German General Staff*, he adds another insightful quote from the book, *The Struggle for Europe*, by Chester Wilmot, who wrote:

*When the Allies proclaimed their demand for “Unconditional Surrender” even [German] commanders like von Kluge and [even] von [sic] **Manstein**, who foresaw where Hitler's policy was leading [and who was himself as an officer especially beloved by all his men], **refused to act against him.** Since it seemed that the Allies were determined to destroy the German military caste.... (539)*

Consequential grave losses

What grave consequences came out of this true tragedy, immediately and gradually and cumulatively! How many lives could have been spared and how many countries could have been spared from the heavy yoke of Communist oppression, if Germany would have (and could have) made a just peace with the West then—perhaps with the morally forceful (as distinct from invertebrate) intervention of the Papacy.

According to Elliot Roosevelt (in his own 1946 book *As He Saw It*), the U.S. President's son, who was present with his father at a small private meeting in Casablanca on 23 January 1943 with Churchill and Harry Hopkins, his father had said about their phrase “unconditional surrender,” as follows: “**Of**

course it's just the thing for the Russians. They couldn't want anything better. Unconditional surrender! Uncle Joe might have made it up himself." (506-507)

Falling into Goebbel's and Stalin's trap

In response to this likely reliable report, General Fuller's research shows otherwise:

*As to Uncle Joe, **though he never had any other intention** than the unconditional surrender of Germany, **he was not such a simpleton to inform his enemy of it.** A true disciple of Lenin, on February 23, 1943, he publicly said: "It would be ridiculous to identify Hitler's clique with the German people and the German state." And that "**it was a stupid lie and senseless slander**" to proclaim as the foreign press did, that the aim of the Red Army was "to exterminate the German people and destroy the German state." (507)*

To add to the moral forcefulness of his own commentary, General Fuller shows how Goebbels made some of his own realistic comments, like Stalin, about the implications of that January 1943 Proclamation of Unconditional Surrender and earlier analogous psychological themes or slogans:

*Goebbels—a past-master in propaganda—must have been overjoyed. On March 27, 1942, he had entered in his diary: "If I were on the enemy side, I should from the very first day have adopted the slogan of fighting against Nazism, **but not** against the German people. That is **how [Neville] Chamberlain began** on the first days of the war, but, thank God, the English didn't pursue this line." And, on April 12, 1943 [Goebbels wrote]: "But, after all, the English are **making the same mistake, no doubt at [Winston] Churchill's instigation.** They refrain from saying anything **tangible** about their **war aims.** I can only thank God; for if they were to put up a peace programme [the "peace aims"] on the line of [Woodrow] Wilson's Fourteen Points they would undoubtedly create great difficulties for us." (507)*

Nonetheless General Fuller leaves the last comment on the nature and effects of Casablanca's Declaration to a senior and well-placed English official, Lord Hankey, first saying about him and his long experience that: "Since 1906 Lord Hankey was successively Clerk of the Privy Council, Secretary of the Cabinet and Committee of Imperial Defence, and member of the War Cabinet." (509) Indeed, says Fuller, and fittingly now quoting Lord Hankey at length:

***Of all the judgments** which have been passed on **this monstrous and momentous slogan** ["unconditional surrender"], the **most** powerful is the one made by a statesman **the best qualified to make it.** In his book *Politics Trials and Errors* [published in 1950], Lord Hankey writes: "It embittered the war [and its aftermath, of course], rendered inevitable a fight to the finish, banged the door on any possibility of either side offering terms or opening up negotiations, gave the Germans and Japanese the courage of despair, strengthened Hitler's position as Germany's 'only hope', aided Goebbels' propaganda, and made inevitable the Normandy landing and the subsequent terribly exhausting and destructive advance through North France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Holland and Germany. **The lengthening of the war enabled Stalin to occupy the whole of eastern Europe**, to ring down the iron curtain and so to realize at one swoop a large instalment of **his avowed aims** against so-called **capitalism** [and further to manipulate and profit from the war of rival capitalisms!], in which he **includes social democracy.** By disposing of all the more competent administrators in*

*Germany and Japan this policy made treaty-making impossible after the war and retarded recovery and reconstruction, not only in Germany and Japan, but everywhere else. It may also prove to have poisoned our future relations with ex-enemy countries [in such an **embittered aftermath** of the war]. Not only the enemy countries, but nearly all countries were bled white by this policy [of “unconditional surrender”], which has left us all, except the United States of America, impoverished and in dire straits. Unfortunately also, **these policies, so contrary to the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount**, did nothing to strengthen **the moral position of the Allies** [which regrettably, with the permission of Pope Pius XII, included the U.S.S.R.]. (509)*

Exploitation of Western weakness and insanity

In his later brief summary of the momentous year of 1943, General Fuller, lest we missed his point, again trenchantly says:

*The year 1943 was one of decisive political changes that shaped the outcome of the war and radically influenced the course of history. It opened with the proclamation of unconditional surrender at Casablanca and by its **emphasis** on a war of annihilation **bereft** the **western allies' cause of a sane aim**, a decision which Stalin was not slow to capitalize. Stalin sought [for example] to exploit the West's enthusiasm over the Soviet victory at Stalingrad, and resorted to Lenin's maxim: “one step back to gain two steps forward.” On May 22 [1943] he **announced** the dissolution of the Comintern [the Communist “Third International”, which Lenin had founded in March, 1919] **and so deluded the British and American peoples and governments into a belief** that the Kremlin had abandoned for ever its policy of interference in the internal affairs of other countries....(543)*

A twenty year brake on Soviet invasion

If we now reflectively return a quarter of a century to what the Poles had to face in 1920 against the Bolsheviks of the time, we may come to appreciate what Europe was spared from, and what the Polish victory over the Bolsheviks, blocked for almost twenty years: until the Soviet Union invaded Poland on 17 September 1939, less than three week after the German attack. In one way, the Polish victory at the Battle of Warsaw, 1920, was a preventive war. For, it prevented the Bolshevik army under Mikail Tukhachevski from moving on to Germany. Some scholars are now convinced that the German attack into the Soviet Union, which began some twenty years later, on 22 June 1941, was also a preventive attack which also pre-empted what the Soviet legions, in offensive formations, were about to launch more broadly against a war-weary and exhausted Europe, intending to reach even further than where they finally did, in 1945. But, because this objective matter deals with Germany, it is still ideologically and often unjustly acrimonious and explosive. Sometimes, the topic seems to be so tabu that you cannot even say that the topic is tabu! So much for discipline and objective historical research which seeks to grasp the truth of the past in proper proportion, and not to read history backwards, as it were.

Now to return to Poland in 1920, less than two years after the Armistice of November 1918 and its own exhausting and embittered aftermath, with the dissolution of several long-standing empires.

In 1961, in one of his last books—a book which many think is his best—Major-General J.F.C. Fuller recalls to us the setting on the eastern frontier of Poland in 1920; and his mature words in 1961 are

worth our deep consideration before we return to his longer and earlier 1956-1957 *Military History of the Western World*. In General Fuller's later book, *The Conduct of War 1789-1961: A Study of the Impact of the French, Industrial, and Russian Revolutions on War and Its Conduct*,³ he says:

*The civil war [in Russia] reached its climax in the autumn of 1919 and the winter of 1920; one by one the White Russian generals were defeated, in part by Bolshevik propaganda, in part by the Red Army, but in the main because their aim [i.e., the aim of the White Russian generals and admirals] was to restore the old regime, and this lost to them the support of the peasants, who feared that their recently gained lands would be restored to their former owners. As the civil war petered out, the [multi-national, foreign] interventionist forces [a total of nearly 300,000 men by the end of 1918] were withdrawn, but Russia's troubles were not ended. On 25th April 1920, the Poles, under Marshal Joseph Pilsudski [1867-1935], advanced on Kiev [in the Ukraine]; were **driven back to Warsaw where between 16th and 25th August [1920], the [young and fierce] Bolshevik general Mikail Tukhachevski [1892-1937] was [surprised and] routed, and central Europe saved from a Soviet invasion.** (195-196)*

The Proletarian Revolution put in cold-storage

General Fuller, after first referring to Tukhachevski's own estimate of this decisive battle and his admitted defeat, goes on to summarize what Poland, by its unexpected military victory, specifically did and protected; and he also honors the British ambassador, Lord D'Abernon and his own 1931 book:

*Lord [Edgar Vincent] D'Abernon [1857-1941], British ambassador to Germany between 1920-1926, entitled his history of the campaign *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle in the World* [1931], which **in no way exaggerates its importance**, for had Poland succumbed [in the longer Polish-Bolshevik War], there was nothing to prevent Tukhachevski's **horde** from penetrating into Germany. Lenin's comment shows that **this** was his ultimate aim, he says: "By attacking Poland, we are attacking the Allies; by destroying the Polish Army, we are destroying the Versailles Peace upon which rests the whole system of present international relations. Had Poland become sovietized...the Versailles Peace [**"a hundred times more humiliating and rapacious than our Brest Peace** [i.e., the Brest-Litovsk Treaty of **3 March 1918** with the new Bolshevik government and Germany]"] would have been terminated, and the system built on the victory over Germany would have been destroyed likewise." (196)*

After these words by D'Abernon and by Lenin, who always considered Germany to be "**the strategical centre of gravity of Europe**," (335)⁴ General Fuller speaks in summary of the aftermath of the Battle of Warsaw, 1920:

³ J.F.C. Fuller, *The Conduct of War, 1789-1961* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1961)—it was soon reprinted in 1962, and also often thereafter, including in the United States, by Da Capo Press. This book is truly a classic, and one may not encourage its close reading and savoring often enough, I believe.

⁴ In his Volume III of his *Military History of the Western World*, General Fuller expresses this important strategic matter more fully: "**Germany was the hub** of the world revolution for Lenin and Trotsky because **she was the strategical centre of gravity of Europe**. Once she was won, the rest of Europe would become untenable [or at least "Finlandized"] and could be conquered. And when **Europe** was **reduced to a position of a Soviet satrapy**, the Mediterranean would also become untenable, and the Middle East could be Bolshevized and Africa subverted. Finally, when the whole of the Old World was sovietized, **the psychological conquest** of the New World could be undertaken and the Soviet Republic of the World established. (335-336)

On 12 October 1920 [after the desperate, even panicked, retreat of the Bolsheviks with their main Lines of Communication having been surprisingly cut by Pilsudski and his troops], an **armistice** was agreed between Poland and Russia, and on 18th March [1921], the following year, **peace** was signed at Riga [in Latvia], **and the hoped for proletarian world revolution was put into cold storage.** (196)

In his *Military History of the Western World* (Volume III), General Fuller had also said:

*From the earliest days of the revolution there was one assumption upon which all of the Bolshevik leaders were agreed; **the revolution could not survive unless it became world-wide.** It challenged the existing order of society, socially, politically, and economically. It not only offered the world a new way of life, but its adherents held that it could **not** be established permanently **until** the old way was destroyed. As early as April 14, 1917, Lenin had proclaimed that "World Imperialism cannot live side by side with a victorious Soviet Revolution." (334) [Lenin himself was to die less than seven years later, on 21 January 1924, three years after the conclusion of the Polish-Bolshevik War.]*

Making the English whale dance

We may glimpse how some of the Western European countries effectively "played into Lenin's hands" after the harsh cessation of World War I and its Armistice of November 1918:

*In order **to make this [revolutionary] subversive war world-wide**, in March, 1919 [i.e., less than a year before the decisive 1920 Battle of Warsaw], Lenin founded the Third International, or **Comintern; an instrument to unite all communist parties outside Russia in the struggle for world revolution, and its first task was to establish a communist régime in Germany.** On the **insistence** of Poincaré, Clemenceau, Foch [?], and Klotz in France, and others in Great Britain, **Germany was still under blockade** [and starving, with many innocent children mercilessly dying during this cruel year], **and out of desperation many Germans had turned to Bolshevism. So completely did the Paris peacemakers play into Lenin's hands** that, in his own words, his plan was "To unite the proletariat of industrial Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia with the proletariat of Russia, and thereby **create a mighty agrarian and industrial combination** from Vladivostok to the Rhine, from the Finnish Gulf to the blue waters of the Danube, capable of feeding itself and confronting the reactionary capitalism of Britain with a [Bolshevized-Sovietized] **revolutionary giant**, which with one hand would disturb the tranquillity of the East [Asia?] and with the other **beat back the pirate capitalism of Anglo-Saxon countries.** If there is anything that could compel **the English whale to dance**, it would be **the union of revolutionary Russia with a revolutionary Central Europe** [hence Germany as well as Poland]." (334-335)*

Internal rot and self-destruction

Before General Fuller will vividly introduce us to the Tartar-like Mikail Tukhachevski, he wants to recapitulate Lenin's strategic goal and consequent revolutionary methods of conducting war:

*Because world revolution was **Lenin's strategical goal**, his **tactics** also had to be revolutionary.*

Their aim was not to persuade the enemy to change his mind by force of arms, **but by force of ideas—in other words to rot him internally and bring him to destroy himself.** Before the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk [3 March 1918] he had said, **“Let us give way in space, but gain time,”** because he saw that once revolution was kindled in the west it would give back to Russia **the space she had bartered, and without a fight.** (335)

We again, in this light, should consider the results to be seen in Europe in 1945, some twenty years after Lenin's death, and after the Second World War seemingly ended in Europe. We may well contemplate the Sovietized-Tartarized hordes as they were then strategically in place in Europe, while the United States, in some dire straits, soon had to return fully to Asia and to the war against the tenacious and valorous Japanese.

General Fuller will now help us consider what the Poles temporarily saved us from, what he calls “the Asiatic side of Bolshevism” (339) and what one might expect from a new Genghis Khan's militarized Horde (628) and its “Pax Tartarica” (636):

*The civil war in Russia threw up a remarkable general—Mikail Tukhachevski [1892-1937]. An able soldier, **his outlook on civilization so closely reflected the Asiatic side of Bolshevism** that to understand the future trend of the Russian Revolution it is worthwhile to examine it. Born in 1892 of a noble family which traced its descent back to the Counts of Flanders, although his mother was Italian, **in character he was Tartar.** From her he inherited his Latin looks, black hair, **and the quick wit which enabled him to probe the Russian within him and the Tartar within the Russian.** In 1914 he was gazetted a sub-lieutenant in the Imperial Guard, and in the following year was taken prisoner by the Germans [and “incarcerated in Ingolstadt,” in Lower Bavaria]. (339)*

Un Russe tartare and the destruction of civilisation

Basing his own assessment of a close 1928 study by Pierre Fervacque, a fellow prisoner with him in Germany, entitled *Le chef de l'armée rouge, Mikail Tukachevski*, General Fuller leads us into a deeper depiction of this Tartarized Russian:

*By instinct he was a romantic barbarian who **abhorred western civilization.** He had **the soul of Genghis Khan, of Ogdai and of Batu.** Autocratic, superstitious, romantic and ruthless, he loved the open plains and the thud of a thousand hoofs, **and he loathed and feared the unromantic orderliness of civilization. He hated Christianity and Christian culture** because they had obliterated paganism and barbarism and had deprived his fellow countrymen of the ecstasy of the god of war and the glamour of “the carnival of death.” Also he loathed the Jews because they helped inoculate the Russian with “the pest of civilization” and “the morale of capitalism.” He said: “The Jew is a dog, son of a dog, who sows fleas in every land.”....He said to Fervacque, a fellow prisoner: “A demon or a god animates our race. We shall make ourselves drunk, **because we cannot yet make the world drunk. That will come.**”....“Do not laugh,” replied Tukhachevski, “I have told you that **the Slavs are in want of a new religion. They are being given Marxism; but aspects of that theology are too modern and too civilized.** It is possible to mitigate that disagreeable state by returning to our Slav gods [Daschbog, Stribog, Wolos, and “also Pierum, the god of war and lightning”], who were deprived of their prerogative and strength; nevertheless they can soon regain them....For long I have hesitated to choose my particular god; but, after reflection, I have accepted Pierum [as of 1915], because **once Marxism is thrust upon Russia, the most devastating wars will be let loose....We shall***

enter chaos and we shall not leave it [chaos] until civilization is reduced to total ruin.” (339-340)

This depiction reminds one of having read Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Lenin in Zurich*⁵, thereby also getting inside the mind of a destructive revolutionary, as one once did, too, in the novels of Dostoevski.

Bathing in the fresh spring of ignorance

General Fuller continues with his manifold revealing commentary on Tukhachevski, “this strange volcanic man, whose soul was in revolt with civilization” (340) and who was “destined to cross swords with Pilsudski, who was as violently anti-Russian as he was anti-European [especially anti-German].” (340) Concerning Tukhachevski, Fuller says:

*In his eyes, destruction justified everything because it unlocked the door which led to the road back to Seljuk [the 11-13th century Turkish Dynasty in Central Asia], Tartar, and Hun. “Seriously,” he said, “it would be good for humanity were all books burnt, so that we could bathe in the fresh spring of ignorance. I even think it is the sole means of preventing human-kind becoming sterile.” What he yearned for was a return to Ivan the Terrible [1530-1584]; “then Moscow will become the centre of the world of barbarians.” “Had Nicholas II [1868-17 July 1917] but [more autocratically] followed in the footsteps of Peter the Great and Catherine II, how docile the Russians would have been, **for they love a despot.**” “If Lenin is **able to disencumber** Russia from the old scrap iron of prejudices **and de-westernize her**, I will follow him. **But he must raze all to the ground**, and deliberately hurl us back into barbarism.” (340)*

Facing the manic combination

What a grave “Binary Weapon” Poland and the West would have had to face in this manic combination of Lenin **and** Tukhachevski. But Tukhachevski did not long survive Lenin's death—thirteen years later the barbarian general would also die, at forty-five years of age. For, it is so that, “**In 1937 Stalin shot him**, and in goodly company; for with Uborovitch, Primokov, Putna and others **he returned to his god—Annihilation.**” (340)

In part, as is fitting, Tukhachevski had to “cross swords” with another man of genius and strong character, Joseph Pilsudski, who, with his surprise maneuver against him across the Vistula River, saved Europe from Bolshevism in 1920. About Pilsudski himself (who died in 1935, two years before Tukhachevski), Ambassador Lord D'Abernon, “who had exceptional knowledge of him,” (340) says the following, as quoted by Fuller:

*“An ardent patriot and **a man of immense courage and force of character.** A pronounced sceptic about orthodox methods, whether applied to military affairs or politics; **he loves danger**, his pulse only beating at a normal rate when he is in imminent personal peril....Next to danger, he is said to love intrigue—a revolutionary by temperament and circumstances, **his ingrained proclivity is to the secret and indirect.**” It was these characteristics—courage, unorthodoxy, and secrecy—coupled with success, which made Pilsudski a legendary figure. (340-341)*

⁵ Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *Lenin in Zurich* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976)

General Fuller's entire 32-page treatment (331-363) of the background to, and the battle of Warsaw should be closely studied and re-read—both his Chronicle 9 (The Russian Revolution) and its sequel Chapter 9 (The Battle of Warsaw, 1920). He then makes some concluding remarks:

Eventually, on August 25 [1920], the remnants of the Soviet Army of the West reached the line Grodno—east of Brest-Litovsk—Wlodawa where the [Polish] pursuit ended....In spite of this great victory [in the Battle of Warsaw] the campaign was not ended, and two separate operations followed, one in the south and the other in the north....The second [to the north] was led by Pilsudski who, after a [i.e., another!] masterful manoeuvre, attacked Tukhachevski on 20 September, destroyed the Soviet Third Army in the battle of Niemen....This victory was followed by the battle of the Shara (Szczara), in which the remnants of the Soviet Armies were driven back to Minsk [300 miles distant from Warsaw, and the place of Tukhachevski's own main-campaign Headquarters]. In these two battles [alone] Pilsudski took 50,000 prisoners and 160 guns. On October 10 [1920] an armistice was agreed, and on March 18, 1921, by the Treaty of Riga [the capital of Latvia] the eastern frontier of Poland was fixed as it stood until 1939. (360)

That is to say, after all of this fighting, the eastern frontier stood only for slightly more than eighteen years, until 17 September 1939 and the return Soviet invasion, which also targeted Warsaw.

Temporary stability

Nonetheless, this Peace Treaty of Riga enhanced Polish morale and confidence, and at least provided a temporary stability of boundaries; and, more broadly in military history, says Fuller:

This marked the end of a remarkable campaign, fought between improvised armies of limited size in a vast theatre of war. It was a campaign of mobility and surprise, totally different from most of those fought during the World War [1914-1918]. It was a contest between armies led mostly by young generals, and in which cavalry [Nota Bene, especially the Polish cavalry!] played an important part and field trenches no part at all, and above all it was a war in which men were more important than matériel, and generals more important than their staffs. (360)

Significance lost on Western Europe

As we draw fittingly to our conclusion, we must carefully consider the honest and revelatory witness of two important persons, along with the wise commentary of General Fuller himself, from whom we still have so much to learn, and who now says:

The influence of this decisive victory [in the Battle of Warsaw, 1920] was fully appreciated by Tukhachevski, who lost it, and by Lord D'Abernon, who watched it. Yet, strange to say, its importance was little grasped by western Europe, and since has remained little noticed. (360-361)

First, we consider the candid and honest Tartarized Barbarian General, Tukhachevski, who, “soon after his defeat,” wrote, as follows, when he was not quite thirty years of age:

“In all European countries Capitalism was staggering; the workers were lifting their head and rushing

to arms. There is not the slightest doubt that, **had we been victorious on the Vistula**, the revolution would have set light to the entire continent of Europe....Exported revolution is possible...**and had it not been for our strategical mistakes and our defeat on the field of battle**, perhaps the Polish war would have been the link which would have united the revolution of October [1917] to the revolution of Western Europe.....There cannot be the slightest doubt that **had we succeeded** in disrupting the Polish Army of bourgeois and lords, the revolution of the Polish class workers would have been a fait accompli, and **the conflagration would not have halted on the Polish frontiers**. Like an overwhelming torrent it would have swept into Western Europe. **The Red Army will never forget this [failed] experiment in exported revolution, and if ever the bourgeoisie of Europe invites us to new struggles, the Red Army will succeed in destroying it and [in] fomenting revolution in Europe.**" (361)

Poland the barrier to Asiatic invasion

Later, and one year before he published his own book⁶ on the Battle of Warsaw, "in an article published in the *Gazeta Polska* of August 17, 1930, Lord D'Abernon set down his judgment as follows" (361):

"The history of contemporary civilization knows no event of greater importance than the Battle of Warsaw, 1920, and none of which the significance is less appreciated. The danger menacing Europe at that moment was **parried**, and the whole episode **forgotten**. Had the battle been a Bolshevik victory, it would have been a turning point in European history, for there is no doubt at all that the whole of Central Europe would at that moment have been opened to the influence of Communist propaganda and a Soviet invasion, which it could with difficulty have resisted The events of 1920 also deserve attention for another reason: victory was attained, above all, thanks to the strategical genius of one man [Joseph Pilsudski] and thanks to the carrying through of **a manoeuvre so dangerous** as to necessitate **not only genius, but heroism**....It should be the task of political writers to explain to European opinion that **Poland saved Europe in 1920**, and that it is necessary to keep Poland powerful and in harmonious relations with Western European civilization, **for Poland is the barrier to the everlasting peril of an Asiatic invasion** [to include "**the Asiatic side of Bolshevism**" (339)]."⁷" (361)

Reverting to the historic Russia

Adding a brief supporting comment to Lord D'Abernon's acute judgment, General Fuller adds:

Further, by **shielding** Central Europe from **the full blast of Marxist contagion**, the battle of Warsaw **set back the Bolshevik clock**. It **deprived** Russia of the plunder she badly needed to stem her desperate economic crisis **and dammed the outward flow of discontent and almost**

⁶ Lord Edgar Vincent D'Abernon, *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World: Warsaw 1920* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931), 178 pages. D'Abernon's original 1931 text was later reprinted in the United States, in 1977, by the Hyperion Press of Westport, Connecticut.

⁷ For a thoughtful and well-differentiated consideration of the Asiatic (Mongol et al.) influence and stamp on Russian culture and cruelty, see James H. Billington's *The Icon and the Axe: An Interpretive History of Russian Culture* (New York: Random House-Vintage Books, 1970—first published in 1966).

drowned the Bolshevik experiment. In 1920, life in the U.S.S.R. had reached **bedrock** [i.e., proximate destitution]....On October 17, 1921, Lenin openly admitted his failure....On January 21, 1924, Lenin died at Gorky, near Moscow, and **power passed to Stalin** (Joseph Dzhugashvili, 1879-1953), who, **because of his unbridled brutality**, had been made secretary-general of the [Communist] Party by Lenin. What remained of Marxism was **grafted by him to the Russian Asiatic-Byzantine tradition**, totalitarian State Capitalism was rapidly developed [along with the various and specious "N.E.P.s"—"New Economic Policies"] and everyone [almost] reduced to a proletarian level. The Political Bureau became **dictator, with the secret police as its instrument of rule**, and the **ever-growing** bureaucracy emerged as **the new middle class**....As Tukhachevski had foreseen, Marxism [except, perhaps, for its foundational "Historical and Dialectical Materialism," indeed "the Dogma of 'DIAMAT'"] was found to be **a theology too modern and too civilized** for the Russians and **a return** was made to their old Slav gods. The U.S.S.R. **reverted** to the historic [cultic, largely messianic] Russia of "**the Third Rome**" [purporting to replace, but on a basis of immanentist-secular power, both sacred Rome and sacred Constantinople].... (362-363)

These compact insights, full of many truths in just proportion, will help us now to recall what we have already, with the help of General Fuller, come to see about the results of World War II in 1945 and the advance of brutal, partly Asiatic Bolshevism into the heart of Europe: "the fruits of the battle of Normandy" (589)—the "apples of Sodom, which turned to ashes as soon as they were plucked." (589)

General Fuller's concluding insights will likely also incline a truth-seeking student of history to read Lord D'Abernon's 1931 book, *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World: Warsaw 1920*. Although less than two years later, in January of 1933, both Franklin Delano Roosevelt first fatefully became the U.S. President **and immediately recognized the Soviet Union**; and Adolf Hitler, slightly later, first came to power in Germany **by appointment (not yet by election)**, it is doubtful that either man read Lord D'Abernon's important and cautionary book. But, I am not sure, and it now seems that I have no way of knowing that fact, nor its possible influence on them, if they actually read it, or were informed about it.

Moreover, something that the English, strategic-minded military historian, B.H. Liddell Hart—a friend of General Fuller—later wrote in 1954 (and again in 1967) teases us and even gives us a hint of the possible provocation and analogous source for D'Abernon's own trenchant title about the 18th Decisive Battle of the World. For, in his 1954 Preface to his classic book, *Strategy*, B.H. Liddell Hart wrote:

*My original study of "the strategy of the indirect approach" was published in 1929—under the title The Decisive Battles of History. The present book [merely entitled Strategy] embodies the results of twenty-five years further research and reflection, together with an analysis of the lessons of World War II—in strategy and grand strategy.*⁸

⁸ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York: New American Library—A Meridian Book, 1991)—the Second Revised Edition was previously published in New York, by Praeger, in 1967, itself a second revision of the already revised 1929 book, first published in 1954.

However, what Liddell Hart does not say in this historical and bibliographical commentary is that, neither in his original book nor in its expansions and revisions does he at all mention the Battle of Warsaw, 1920, much less call it a decisive battle of history. This fact should make us further thankful for General Fuller's own supplementary strategic reflections.

A new devil to enter the unfurnished soul

Another strategic-minded military historian, admired by Liddell Hart and Fuller, is Theodore Ropp, who wrote the following in his *War in the Modern World* (1959, rev. 1962) about the moral and spiritual vacuum in Europe **after** World War I, especially in Western Europe. It comes just before his own Chapter 9, entitled “The Long Armistice (1919-1939)”:

*A more thoughtful comment had been made thirteen years before [in *Disenchantment* (London, 1922), pp. 195-197] by **the great journalist**, C.E. Montague, who **at forty-seven** had dyed his grey hair to enlist **as a private**. He saw **these attitudes of mingled horror and disgust** [from the protracted trench warfare and futile combat of 1914-1918] might make it far more difficult to preserve the peace [sic] which had been **won with such suffering**. “**Civilization itself** [he wrote]...**wears a strange new air of precariousness**. Even before the war a series of melancholy public misadventures had gone some way **to awake the disquieting notion that civilization, the whole ordered, fruitful joint action of a nation, a continent, or the whole world, was only a bluff**. When the world is at peace and fares well, the party of order and decency, justice and mercy and self-control, is really **bluffing a much larger party of egoism and greed that would bully and grab it** [so-called civilization] **if it dared** [like Tukhachevski]....The bad men are not held down by force; they are only bluffed by the presence of it [civilization]. **They have got the tip now....**The plain man, so far as I know him, is **neither aghast nor gleeful at this revelation**. For the most part **he looks somewhat listlessly on....A sense of moral horror does not come easily when you have supped full of horrors on most of the days of three or four years....Some new god, or devil, of course, may enter at any time into this disfurnished soul**. Genius in some leader might **either possess it with an anarchic passion [as in Tukhachevski] to smash... all the old institutions or fire it with a new craving to lift itself clear of the wrack [and ruin]....For either a Lenin or a St. Francis there is a wide field to till [as in the Parable of the Sower], cleared, but of pretty stiff clay.**”⁹ (273-274)*

What if

We may now better imagine what might have happened had the Bolshevik hordes defeated the Poles in 1920 and moved into this very moral and spiritual vacuum in Post-World War I Central and Western Europe.

What might have happened if Stalin's hordes, in seeming offensive formations, had carried out their strategic plan operationally in 1941, instead of after Stalingrad in February of 1943, or in 1945? We might at least be more willing now to read the various books of Viktor Suvorov (the pen name of

⁹ Theodore Ropp, *War in the Modern World* (New, Revised Edition) (New York: Collier Books—Macmillan Publishing Company, 1962), 404 pages of text—first published in 1959 and then again, as a revised edition, in 1962 by Duke University Press of Durham, North Carolina. Professor Ropp taught for many years at Duke University in the History Department, and was a gracious and excellent teacher.

Vladimir Rezun, b. 1947), not only his *Icebreaker: Who Started the Second World War?* (1990) and *The Chief Culprit: Stalin's Grand Design to Start World War II* (2008)¹⁰; but also the German scholar, Joachim Hoffmann's own conscientious book, *Stalin's War of Extermination, 1941-1945: Planning, Realization and Documentation* (1999, in German; 2001, in the first English edition).¹¹

In any case, we have seen in the documentation of this essay what some of the results were in Central and Eastern Europe in 1945. And this overall result was (and still is) considered victory? It certainly did not look that way to the Poles and the others who were effectively handed over to the Soviet yoke, many countries of which were of Catholic heritage and culture, at least in large part.

For many years we have wondered what the Catholic Church's Popes have thought and written and done about this manifold situation, especially Pope Pius XII, and the extent to which they later also revised their earlier judgments and strategic policies (at least privately, or secretly, if not with contrite and corrective, public action).

With G.K. Chesterton's keen perceptiveness and deep faith let us recall the "statue of the Blessed Virgin" he saw in the countryside of Poland "with the head and hands shot off" by the Bolshevik military, and her very "hands had been lifted" in such a gesture that "the very mutilation [of Mary's statue] seemed to give **more** meaning to [her] attitude of intercession; [the Blessed Mother herself] **asking mercy for the merciless race of men.**"

The spirit of adventure and chivalry of the Polish cavalry which Chesterton saw and admired would have well understood the mercy of Our Lady and that faithful heart of their magnanimous and compassionate English visitor.¹²

CODA

Cardinal Ratti, who deliberately and courageously remained in Warsaw during the decisive battle of 1920 against the Bolsheviks, was less than two years later elected as Pope, taking the name "Pius XI." He certainly knew about the nature and dangers of Bolshevism-Communism, and, toward the midpoint of the intensely destructive Spanish Civil War (February 1936-February 1939) he wrote *Divini Redemptoris* (On Atheistic Communism) and promulgated that forceful Encyclical on 19 March

¹⁰ See Viktor Suvorov, *The Real Culprit* (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2008).

¹¹ The revised and supplemented German edition was published in 1999, in Munich, Germany. The first English edition was published in Alabama, by Theses & Dissertations Press, P.O. Box 64, Capshaw, Alabama 35742. The author, Dr. Joachim Hoffmann was born in 1930 in Königsberg, East Prussia; and he is a professional historian, having worked for the German military between 1960-1995 in its Research Department for Military History.

¹² Anthony S. Fraser of Scotland recently sent to the writer an excellent, brief but substantial article on the abiding spirit and resourcefulness of the Polish cavalry, especially in September-October of 1939. It was published originally in *The Polish-American Journal* in July of 2008, and entitled "Solving the Myth: Polish Cavalry Charge Against German Tanks," especially near a threatened "key railroad junction in the village of Krojanty about four miles northeast of Chojnice...in the Tuchola Forest **about 165 miles northwest of Warsaw.**" The article gracefully covers many related matters, to include the Germans' own use of cavalry, as well as of horse-drawn logistics wagons, even in the Soviet Union later. The Blue Link that my colleague and friend sent is: <http://www.polishsite.us/index.php/history-and-people/modern-history/395-solving-the-myth-polish-cavalry-charge-against-german-tanks.html>

1937. He said therein that, under no circumstances, should Catholics—or the Church—at all collaborate with Communism. But, in World War II, especially after 22 June 1941, that firm principle was seemingly abandoned, under great pressure from Roosevelt's America and Churchill's Britain (and others), and a new policy of compromise was gradually adopted, under the pretext of “expediency.” Pope Pius XII was then the Pope. He not only acquiesced, but publicly supported the forging of a strategic alliance with Stalinist Russia.

However, what did Pope Pius XII earlier say about the 17 September 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland? What of the concurrent and ongoing Soviet invasions of the Baltic States and Finland?

What did Pius XII say about Britain's Declaration of War against heroic little Finland (and its courageous leader, Marshal Mannerheim), on 6 December 1941 (one day before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor)? That atrocious declaration of war, moreover, was soon followed (and publicly supported) by all the British Commonwealth Nations (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Canada), but did the Pope, even then, have any private diplomatic or public response? What do the scholars tell us about Pius XII's views and actions, in view of the declared hostilities here against a country fighting a just defensive war against the Bolsheviks, “our new Ally”?

What did Pius XII say, from the outset and later, about the Allied Strategic Bombing—to include “terror-morale bombing” against civilians—which started in Britain, under Churchill, in June of 1940 after Churchill himself had just come finally back to power; and then what did Pius XII a year and a half later say and do (or not do) after the momentous Declaration of “Unconditional Surrender” at the January 1943 Casablanca Conference?

Should not faithful, loyal Catholics now know—or soon learn—the answers to these questions—instead of just again and again hearing a seemingly distracting repetition about the sufficiency of Pius XII's relations with Jews of all kinds?

The evidence of this essay should at least give truth-seeking students an array of trenchant, but reasonable, questions to pose to both Church Historians and scholars of public and secret Vatican Diplomacy, and to strategic-minded Military Historians, as well.

--Finis--

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