Consciousness and Society

H. Stuart Hughes, Stanley Hoffman
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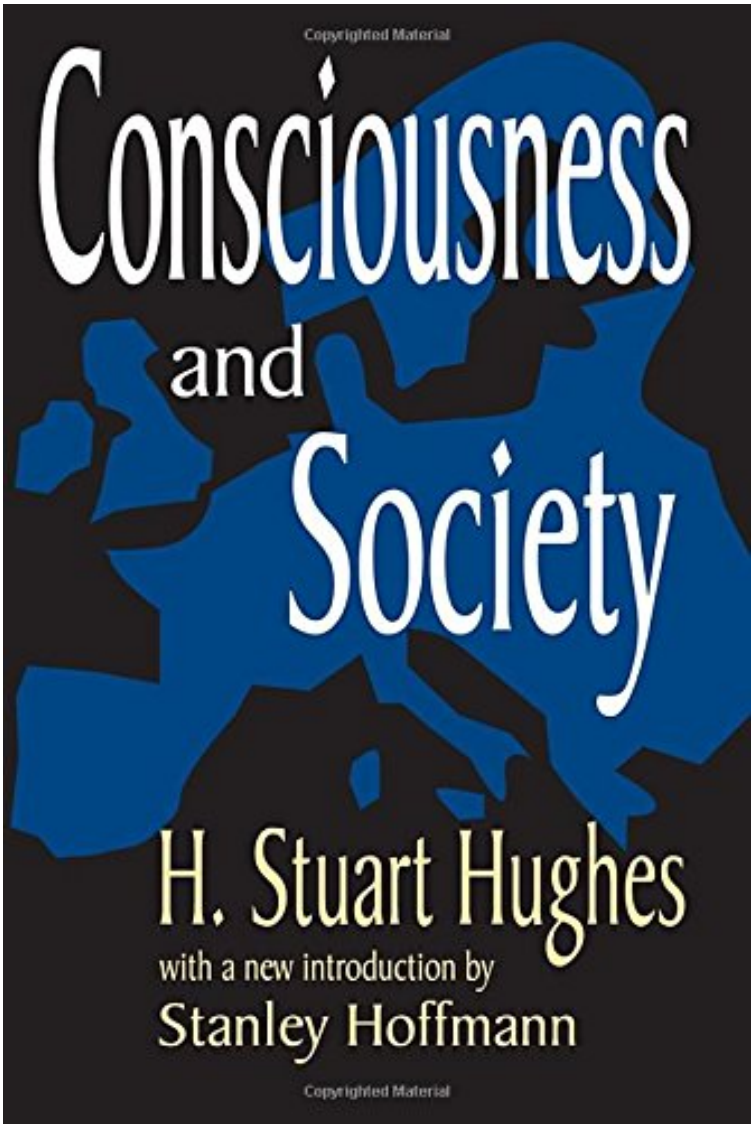

#1073757 in Books H Stuart Hughes 2002-03-31Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.02 x 1.04 x 5.98l, 1.60 #File Name: 0765809184466 pagesConsciousness and Society | File size: 16.Mb

H. Stuart Hughes, Stanley Hoffman : Consciousness and Society before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Consciousness and Society:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Todays thoughts fin de sicle foundersBy T. PeterTodays thoughts fin de sicle foundersWhy should we still care about what a few European thinkers and writers said a century ago? Do fin de sicle ideas still have any real interest?The late Harvard (later Stanford) historian H. Stuart Hughes (1916-1999) upheld their continuing relevance in Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-

1930, first published in 1958 but still illuminating today. The serious ideas of our time about history, society, and human behavior, Hughes argued, were developed in the years just before and after World War I by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), the German sociologist and economist Max Weber (1864-1920), the Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the French sociologist mile Durkheim (1858-1917), the Italian philosopher and historian Benedetto Croce (1866-1952), the Italian sociologist and economist Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), and the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941)above all by Hughes heroes, Weber and Freud. As a student of Italian history, Hughes also emphasized Croce and Pareto, not as large presences in American academia as Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Weber, or Durkheim.Alongside these main protagonists, Hughes also discussed Freuds wayward Swiss disciple Carl Jung (1875), the French anarcho-syndicalist social philosopher (and later admirer of both Lenin and Mussolini) Georges Sorel (1847-1922), the German social and cultural philosophers Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911)and Ernst Troeltsch (1865-1923), the Italian Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), the maverick French socialist/Catholic moralist Charles Pguy (1873-1914), and the post-World War I German sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893-1947). Their insights, he noted, were echoed in literature by Marcel Proust (1871-1922), Andr Gide (1869-1951), Thomas Mann (1875-1955), Henri Alain-Fournier (1886-1914), Hermann Hesse (1877-1962), and Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936). He also treated the Italian political theorists Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941)and Robert Michels (1876-1936), the German historian Friedrich Meinecke (1862-1954), the French essayists Julien Benda (1867-1956) and "Alain" (mile-Auguste Chartier, 1868-1951), the German Conservative Revolutionary historian and cultural philosopher Oswald Spengler(1880-1936), and the Austro-British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951). Hughes saw the philosopher and psychologist William James (1842-1910) as an American thinker echoing his European contemporaries, who in turn held him in high esteem. Noting that intellectual history deals with either a higher level of intellectually clear and significant statements or a lower one of popular effusions in the nature of slogans, he confined his study to the higher category. Hughes thus omitted the precursors of fascism or French and Italian nationalism or German racism, ignoring Charles Maurras Action Franaise (except in passing) and the German Vlkisch movement.Apart from the American James, Hughes saw Germans and Austrians and French and Italiansrather than Englishmen or Americans or Russiansas mainly providing the fund of ideas that has come to seem most characteristic of our own time. He portrayed France, Italy, Germany, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire as more deeply European in their institutions and cultural traditions as part of Western Europes heartland than more peripheral areas like the British Isles, Scandinavia, Russia, the Iberian Peninsula, or America. Hughes view here might be compared to Fritz Ringers observation in The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890-1933 (1969) that so many of the great debunking analysts of modern culture, like Marx, Freud, and Nietzsche, have been German or Austrian, not English or French. Hughes began his chapter on Neo-Idealism in History, focused on the heritage of Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886) and the contributions of Dilthey, Croce, Troeltsch, and Meinecke to historical thought, with an outline of The German Idealist Tradition, declaring that To a German, an idealist philosophy was a kind of second nature, as positivism had never gained as great a hold in Germany as in France or Italy. He noted that despite his own temperamental leaning toward the reasonableness and humane ethic of England and France and his recognition of both the heady deceptions and the unparalleled critical contribution of German philosophy he had been drawn by historical study and reflection on method toward a quasi-idealist position.Hughes protagonists stressed the limited nature of our freedom as the basic characteristic of human experience, seeing people as masters of their fate only for limited periods and on strictly limited segments of their activity, dismissing as an antiquated illusion the 18th century image of man as a self-consciously rational being freely selecting among properly weighed alternatives. This conviction of the inevitable limitations of human freedom by physical circumstance or emotional conditioning was the unstated major premise of contemporary social science, of Sociologists and anthropologists, economists and psychologists, all at one in confining within narrow limits the realm of conscious choice. This conviction recalls American sociologist C. Wright Mills The Sociological Imagination (1959), defining the sociological imagination as a mental quality that enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals, and as a vivid awareness of the relationship between experience and the wider society.At the same time, however, Hughes also portrayed his fin de sicle thinkers as criticizing the more rigid, dogmatic, and fatalistic kinds of allegedly scientific determinism in vogue in the mid and late 19th century. Despite their stress on the inevitable limitations of human freedom, they nevertheless tried to defend a degree of conscious rational human freedom against the fashionable fatalisms of their time. Consciousness and Society emphasized three main themes shared by his thinkers: their confrontation with Marxism as the chief purportedly scientific 19th century doctrine of history and society, their revolt against the dogmatic 19th century scientism they called positivism, and their emphasis on the crucial role of beliefs, sentiments, values, and loyalties in human behavior both individual and collective.Hughes greatest thinkers, like Freud, Weber, and Croce, were not irrationalists but chastened rationalists, loyal critics of the humane, rational Enlightenment tradition, rather than disloyal ones like such second rank figures as Sorel. They wished not to think with the blood or ground their social philosophy in intuition, but rather to salvage as much as possible of the rationalist heritage, even as they modified it to make room for the new definition of man as something more (or less) than a logically calculating

animal. Hughes distinguished between irrationalists consciously attacking the humane values of the West, versus thinkers who by probing more deeply the problem of human motivation and the structure of society thereby tried to restate the Enlightenment tradition in terms that would carry conviction to a skeptical generation. Except for minor figures like Pguy and Jung, Hughes would not call his early 20th century thinkers neo-romantics. The truly great ones were hostile to neo-romantic tendencies, or, like Freud and Weber, sought to curb the romanticism they discovered within themselves. It was, rather, on the lower levels of thought, on the level of semipopular agitation, that the neo-romantic tendencies had their greatest effect.Hughes portrayed 19th century scientism or positivism (including scientific Marxism) as a crudification of the 18th century Enlightenment into a simplistic materialism, a dogmatic sensationist empiricism, and a nave faith in inevitable, automatic social, moral, and cultural as well as scientific and technical progress, a social progress often assimilated to Darwinian biological evolution. Hughes late 19th and early 20th century Continental European rebels against positivism and critics of Marxism all shared a common stress on the unavoidable importance of ideas, beliefs, myths, convictions and ideologies in our perceptions of our social worlds. While few of Hughes fin de sicle protagonists had any particular belief in traditional religion, they all had stressed the all-determining power of religious beliefs and sentimentsand of class, ethnic, national, and racial loyalties and prejudices. Men and women, Hughes protagonists believed, were motivated by far more than simple rational material self-interest. Rather, they were even more motivated by religious, national, or symbolic appeals, loyalties, and aspirations transcending rational self-interest, or else by the sub-rational family romance and instinctual conflicts explored by Freud. They agreed on the simplistic navet of positivist epistemology. We do not, they believed, directly perceive reality in an absolutely objective sense, but rather a socially and culturally constructed image. We inhabit and perceive not only a physical world affecting our sense organs, but also a socially and culturally constructed mental world of social relationships (as small as the nuclear family, or as large as the nation or the capitalist economy) and of cultural concepts and values.Hughes felt that 19th century positivism had abandoned the optimistic 18th century Enlightenment "conviction that the problems of man in society were readily capable of a rational solution," so that "heredity and environment replaced conscious, logical choice as the main determinants of human action." This resulted in "a kind of scientific fatalism," the "antithesis of the buoyantly optimistic attitude that had characterized the philosophers of the eighteenth century or the English utilitarians of the first part of the century following." Positivism ironically changed an originally "ultra-intellectualist doctrine" into a philosophy of radical anti-intellectualism." Hughes thus highlighted the Enlightenments tension of two concurrent themesthe naturalist view of Man as a natural creature in a natural world, subject to certain natural laws, and the rationalist view of Man as a rational being, capable of using his reason to understand himself and the natural world, and of applying his knowledge to improve his material and social conditions so as to increase the sum of human happiness and to reduce or eliminate much avoidable, remediable suffering. French philosophes like Diderot, Helvtius, and Condorcet, English Utilitarians like Jeremy Bentham, and American Founding Fathers like Franklin, Paine, and Jefferson had all emphasized the optimistic meliorist rationalist theme, confident in Mans ability to use his reason to promote "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," reforming state and society in the name of Libert, galit, Fraternit, of "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."This optimistic rationalist note, however, was muted in 19th century positivism and Social Darwinism, which emphasized rather the naturalist note of Hughes "scientific fatalism" urging submission to natures stern, inflexible laws, of Stoic resignation to scientifically proven inevitable, unremediable misery. Positivism and Social Darwinism decoupled the Enlightenment devotion to scientific fact and rationality from the benevolent humanitarianism and the basic if often sadly flawed and compromised egalitarianism of Enlightenment thinkers like Diderot, Helvtius, Condorcet, Bentham, Franklin, Paine, and Jefferson. A devotion to scientific rationality no longer always meant a faith in Libert, galit, Fraternit, 19th century positivism showed. Positivism and Social Darwinism thus paved the way for what Jeffrey Herf called reactionary modernism in Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich (1984), for ideologies of science- or technology-worship divorced from democracy or even from liberalism, indeed explicitly devoted to authoritarianism, elitism, hierarchy, militarism, and class, ethnic, or racial exclusivism. Positivism likewise encouraged the rise of anti-intellectual, anti-rational, "practical" scientism and technophilia, as Hughes noted in observing the change of the Enlightenments "ultra-intellectualist doctrine" into "a philosophy of radical anti-intellectualism." Hughes greatest protagonists tried to forestall such a reactionary modernism, in both its anti-liberal and its anti-intellectual aspects.Hughes traced contemporary social thought in sociology, anthropology, economics, and psychology to his fin de sicle protagonists revolt against positivism. Still, in one area we may have seen a recent return to positivism. Hughes originally wrote Consciousness and Society in 1958, when Freud was still at the peak of his cultural prestige and influence, and Freud (with Weber) was one of Hughes chief intellectual heroes. Since that time, however, the American psychology and psychiatry have largely turned from psychodynamic explanations and talking cure treatments of neuroses and psychoses to genetic, neurological, or biochemical explanations and pharmaceutical treatments, in a revival of the 19th century psychiatric biologism William James decried as medical materialism. Cultural anthropologist Tanya Marie Luhrmann described this conflict of psychodynamic and biomedical models of psychiatry inOf Two Minds: The Growing Disorder in American Psychiatry, 2000), seeing the new biological psychiatry as reviving the views of the

German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), who ascribed psychiatric disease to biological and genetic malfunction. Kraepelin's theories, reflecting the 19th century positivism rejected by Hughes protagonists, dominated psychiatry in the early 20th century, later displaced by Freud's psychodynamic influence.0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. worthwhile for the perspectiveBy travel light and smilingI have researched consciousness for some 50 years. In different eras, the nature of consciousness seems to change, andI'm not sure that the "conscious" people of one time or place are necessarily aware that their perceptions of conscious experience line up with those of other times and places.By reading this book, I got a more in-depth exposure to Vilfredo Pareto and Georges Sorel. I went on to read more of Pareto.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One Man's view of the Revolt Against Positivism at the turn of the 19th CenturyBy Herbert L CalhounMy Review of Consciousness and Societyby H. Stuart HughesThe Revolt Against Positivism at the turn of the 19th CenturyAt the turn of the 19th Century, Hughes, among many others, saw a revolt developing against positivism: The ideology of rationality that positivism offered was no longer seen as adequate to capture existing reality. Consciousness or irrationality had to be added to the mix to get a complete picture of how the science of man and the structure of intellectual history really worked. We now needed ways of penetrating behind the fictions of political action to get down to what was motivating them.Into this intellectual void walks Marxism in the form of dialectic materialism, but in this treatment, Marxism is not seen for what it really was: a profound critique of capitalism. 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Croce used Marx just long enough to "stand up" his own theory, and then quickly abandoned him. From Marx, Sorel embraced a kind of subjectivist, irrationalist psychological attitude to political action that greatly impressed Hughes, but then he removes Marxism from the domain of science and re-casted it as social poetry. And while it is clear that Hughes falls in love with Gramsci, as his Marxist of choice, and gives Luckas only a passing glance, it is less clear, based on Gramsci's theoretical results, why he did so?The French Psychologist Bergson picked up the ball and ran with it for a brief spell until he morphed into a Fascist and lost all credibility. And finally, like many of the rest of us, Hughes too was seduced by Freud, who he correctly saw as a first-rate analyst and a brilliant theorist. However, Hughes was not so blinded by Freud's brilliance that he failed to see his flaws, which he argued were many and often naive enough to be embarrassing to an otherwise first-rate Scientist.Seeking closure in those who surrounded Freud, like the rest of us, Hughes too soon gravitated to and fixated on Jung, who Hughes saw as having a greater sensitivity to history than Freud -- as best reflected in what Hughes referred to as Freud's fairy tale about the development of civilization through his "Totem and Taboo." However, that did not make up for the fact that Jung was not very good at science and was a much lesser theorist than his mentor. Hughes finally belatedly uncovered Jung for what he was and coined him a "Mystagogue." In Hughes' eyes, this forever condemned him to the dust bin of history as both a charlatan and a reactionary.Hughes then spends an undue amount of time on Sorel, but comes up more confused and empty-handed than before he started. After Sorel, it was of course then time for Hughes to come up for air.What did this all mean? What was driving social science development at the turn of the 19th Century? What were all these theorists in search of?I believe history would confirm that the unmistakably clear subtext of the pre-war era was always the struggle going on just beneath consciousness across Europe between Fascism and Socialism. With the scent of Monarchical Feudalism still hanging heavily in the air, all of these theorists were profoundly aware of this struggle, and its influences found their way into each of their respective theories in unobtrusive ways.The way Hughes sees it is that the Communists "got Socialism wrong," for in the 1917 Russian experiment, the revolutionaries had begun as little more than proto-Fascists, and then tried to backtrack, or "tack" backwards to Socialism? Under Stalin, the original Fascist, it did not work. Plus, this failed experiment, begun with so much optimism and hope for the success of the Russian revolution, in retrospect, can be seen as being as much responsible for the rise of Hitler and WW-II as anything else. In short, at the turn of the century, everyone was choosing up sides and scurrying for the hills, without really acknowledging the real reasons why. Somehow, even if through intuition, they knew that the rubber had met the road, and inexorably it was leading directly to Nazi Germany and the little Austrian Corporal.Hughes filled in the blanks by focussing-in on the increasing schizophrenia of bourgeois European society. It was this schizophrenia that gave rise to the philosophical bifurcation of positivism and irrationalism. The accumulating tensions of bourgeois society and capitalism, morphing into its highly monopolistic imperialist phase, is what had a profound impact on intellectuals, forcing them into a defensive subterranean psychological position of confrontation with the reified world of mechanized routine, industry, and bureaucracy, that was ideologically personified in positivism. Only around the time of the Frankfurt School did social theory mature to the point of being able to handle these tensions in a more sophisticated way. But here too the going

was not easy. There were the failures of Herbert Marcuse, the ill-conceived framework of the Horkheimer-Adorno Dialectic of Enlightenment, and the failure of the whole tradition to adequately engage the natural sciences.For sure, the generation of 1905 was very different from, and broke radically away from, the generation of the 1890s. The younger generation was irrationalist and bellicose. Nietzscheanism and Bergsonism ran rampant. A religious resurgence followed an earlier period of anti-clericalism. After the war, the lid was off and dissonance as well as forbidden psychological territory were opened up across the landscape for further exploration.Hughes reviews here how nationalism had affected the various intellectuals during the war. Most of them went along with it -- more or less in tune with the general populations of which they were a part, and with the divergent conditions affecting them. While the war changed things, it was only in Germany where the postwar intellectual scene became radically different from before. In Germany, the cultural status quo collapsed. The surviving elders tried to deal with the mess by trying to keep humane values alive in post-war German politics, but the young conservatives were vicious. Plus it was much too easy in the post-war environment for nationalism and imperialism to take hold.Summing up, Hughes found the 1890s generation as the last group of European intellectuals to know social stability. From that point onwards, reality was no longer making sense. The order of the status quo would no longer prevail: Consciousness would become the connective tissue from man, to society and from society to history. And although the influence of this new attitude continued to spread across the globe well into the 1920s, it was fraught with tensions. Although the generation of the 1890s had delved into the irrational, they still were not about to reject rationalism. Theirs was a delicate balancing act, and some of these intellectuals lost their balance and fell into mysticism, Jung for instance. Croce and Freud too had trouble managing the line between intellectualism and fantasy, going in opposite directions. But Hughes saves his last kudos for his hero Weber, who he says had been acutely aware of the danger all along.In his effort to transcend the positivist-idealist polemic, Weber had striven for formulations that would keep together the sphere of logic and the sphere of value (his own clever reformulation of the irrational or unconscious). 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Hughes' biographical, rather than analytical accounts of this cohort group, betrays both the frailties of the individuals involved and the bankrupt nature of bourgeois European society more generally. How could it have been headed toward anything but disaster? But it was precisely these analyses of the causes, coupled with a nuanced understanding of Marxism, that needed to be performed here?Despite this, Hughes nevertheless gives us one man's map, however abstract, of a complex terrain, that when left to our own devices, we might be able to interpolate across the past half century since the book was written, and reconstruct the ideological trajectory of the late 19th and early 20th century. Four stars for the excellent history and biographies.My Review of Consciousness and Societyby H. 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Hughes' biographical, rather than analytical accounts of this cohort group, betrays both the frailties of the individuals involved and the bankrupt nature of bourgeois European society more generally. How could it have been headed toward anything but disaster? But it was precisely these analyses of the causes, coupled with a nuanced understanding of Marxism, that needed to be performed here?Despite this, Hughes nevertheless gives us one man's map, however abstract, of a complex terrain, that when left to our own devices, we might be able to interpolate across the past half century since the book was written, and reconstruct the ideological trajectory of the late 19th and early 20th century. Four stars for the excellent history and biographies.At the turn of the 19th Century, Hughes, among many others, saw a revolt developing against positivism: The ideology of rationality that positivism offered was no longer seen as adequate to capture existing reality. Consciousness or irrationality had to be added to the mix to get a complete picture of how the science of man and the structure of intellectual history really worked. We now needed ways of penetrating behind the fictions of political action to get down to what was motivating them.Into this intellectual void walks Marxism in the form of dialectic materialism, but in this treatment, Marxism is not seen for what it really was: a profound critique of capitalism. Even though early on it is rather self-evident that Marxism is poorly understood by this author, it still filled the gap at least in part, by introducing in the form of a package of psychological factors the notion of "subjectivity." However owing to the fact that no one really understood Marxism until Lukacs' "History and Class Consciousness" arrived in 1923, Marxism hardly served as more than just a "placeholder," a "stand-in" as it were, for the time when a better explanation would come forward. This is unfortunate because the role of Marxist was omnipotent.Marxism did nothing if not inspire a moral passion to explore subjectivity further. In short order, it metastasized into many hopefully spin-offs. Durkheim, first inspired, and then stymied by Marx, finally developed sociology in an entirely different direction, devoid of Marxism altogether. Pareto opposed and attacked Marx, making him the "darling theorist" of the elite. Croce used Marx just long enough to "stand up" his own theory, and then quickly abandoned him. From Marx, Sorel embraced a kind of subjectivist, irrationalist psychological attitude to political action that greatly impressed Hughes, but then he removes Marxism from the domain of science and re-casted it as social poetry. And while it is clear that Hughes falls in love with Gramsci, as his Marxist of choice, and gives Luckas only a passing glance, it is less clear, based on Gramsci's theoretical results, why he did so?The French Psychologist Bergson picked up the ball and ran with it for a brief spell until he morphed into a Fascist and lost all credibility. And finally, like many of the rest of us, Hughes too was seduced by Freud, who he correctly saw as a first-rate analyst and a brilliant theorist. However, Hughes was not so blinded by Freud's brilliance that he failed to see his flaws, which he argued were many and often naive enough to be embarrassing to an otherwise first-rate Scientist.Seeking closure in those who surrounded Freud, like the rest of us, Hughes too soon gravitated to and fixated on Jung, who Hughes saw as having a greater sensitivity to history than Freud -- as best reflected in what Hughes referred to as Freud's fairy tale about the development of civilization through his "Totem and Taboo." However, that did not make up for the fact that Jung was not very good at science and was a much lesser theorist than his mentor. Hughes finally belatedly uncovered Jung for what he was and coined him a "Mystagogue." In Hughes' eyes, this forever condemned him to the dust bin of history as both a charlatan and a reactionary. Hughes then spends an undue amount of time on Sorel, but comes up more confused and empty-handed than before he started. After Sorel, it was of course then time for Hughes to come up for air.What did this all mean? What was driving social science development at the turn of the 19th Century? What were all these theorists in search of?I believe history would confirm that the unmistakably clear subtext of the pre-war era was always the struggle going on just beneath consciousness across Europe between Fascism and Socialism. With the scent of Monarchical Feudalism still hanging heavily in the air, all of these theorists were profoundly aware of this struggle, and its influences found their way into each of their respective theories in unobtrusive ways.The way Hughes sees it is that the Communists "got Socialism wrong," for in the 1917 Russian experiment, the revolutionaries had begun as little more than proto-Fascists, and then tried to

backtrack, or "tack" backwards to Socialism? Under Stalin, the original Fascist, it did not work. Plus, this failed experiment, begun with so much optimism and hope for the success of the Russian revolution, in retrospect, can be seen as being as much responsible for the rise of Hitler and WW-II as anything else. In short, at the turn of the century, everyone was choosing up sides and scurrying for the hills, without really acknowledging the real reasons why. Somehow, even if through intuition, they knew that the rubber had met the road, and inexorably it was leading directly to Nazi Germany and the little Austrian Corporal.Hughes filled in the blanks by focussing-in on the increasing schizophrenia of bourgeois European society. It was this schizophrenia that gave rise to the philosophical bifurcation of positivism and irrationalism. The accumulating tensions of bourgeois society and capitalism, morphing into its highly monopolistic imperialist phase, is what had a profound impact on intellectuals, forcing them into a defensive subterranean psychological position of confrontation with the reified world of mechanized routine, industry, and bureaucracy, that was ideologically personified in positivism. Only around the time of the Frankfurt School did social theory mature to the point of being able to handle these tensions in a more sophisticated way. But here too the going was not easy. There were the failures of Herbert Marcuse, the ill-conceived framework of the Horkheimer-Adorno Dialectic of Enlightenment, and the failure of the whole tradition to adequately engage the natural sciences.For sure, the generation of 1905 was very different from, and broke radically away from, the generation of the 1890s. The younger generation was irrationalist and bellicose. Nietzscheanism and Bergsonism ran rampant. A religious resurgence followed an earlier period of anti-clericalism. After the war, the lid was off and dissonance as well as forbidden psychological territory were opened up across the landscape for further exploration.Hughes reviews here how nationalism had affected the various intellectuals during the war. Most of them went along with it -- more or less in tune with the general populations of which they were a part, and with the divergent conditions affecting them. While the war changed things, it was only in Germany where the postwar intellectual scene became radically different from before. In Germany, the cultural status quo collapsed. The surviving elders tried to deal with the mess by trying to keep humane values alive in post-war German politics, but the young conservatives were vicious. Plus it was much too easy in the post-war environment for nationalism and imperialism to take hold.Summing up, Hughes found the 1890s generation as the last group of European intellectuals to know social stability. From that point onwards, reality was no longer making sense. The order of the status quo would no longer prevail: Consciousness would become the connective tissue from man, to society and from society to history. And although the influence of this new attitude continued to spread across the globe well into the 1920s, it was fraught with tensions. Although the generation of the 1890s had delved into the irrational, they still were not about to reject rationalism. Theirs was a delicate balancing act, and some of these intellectuals lost their balance and fell into mysticism, Jung for instance. Croce and Freud too had trouble managing the line between intellectualism and fantasy, going in opposite directions. But Hughes saves his last kudos for his hero Weber, who he says had been acutely aware of the danger all along. Four stars

Hughes' ideas, and the way they are expressed in Consciousness and Society, have become paradigms of twentieth-century scholarship. In dealing with the changing social thought after 1890 in Europe, Hughes covers a wide array of thinkers and issues in a scholarly, yet graceful manner. His is a study of the "cluster of genius" of Europe at that time: Croce, Durkheim, Freud, Weber, and Nietzsche, as well as other great European minds. The book explores questions that are still relevant in today's society: Is the separation of facts and values tenable, or even desirable? Can rationality accommodate the ideas of a Bergson or a Freud? Is there, or should there be, a relationship between science and religion? And does history have any ultimate meaning for later generations?

About the Author H. Stuart Hughes is emeritus professor of history at the University of California at San Diego. He was formerly professor of history at Harvard University. Among his many books are Prisoners of Hope: The Silver Age of the Italian Jews, Consciousness and Society, Between Commitment and Disillusion, and Sophisticated Rebels. Stanley Hoffmann is Buttenwieser University Professor at Harvard University's Center for European Studies. He is the author of Primacy or World Order: American Foreign Policy since the Cold War, World Disorder: Troubled Peace in the Post-Cold War Era, and In Search of France, among others.