

World War II

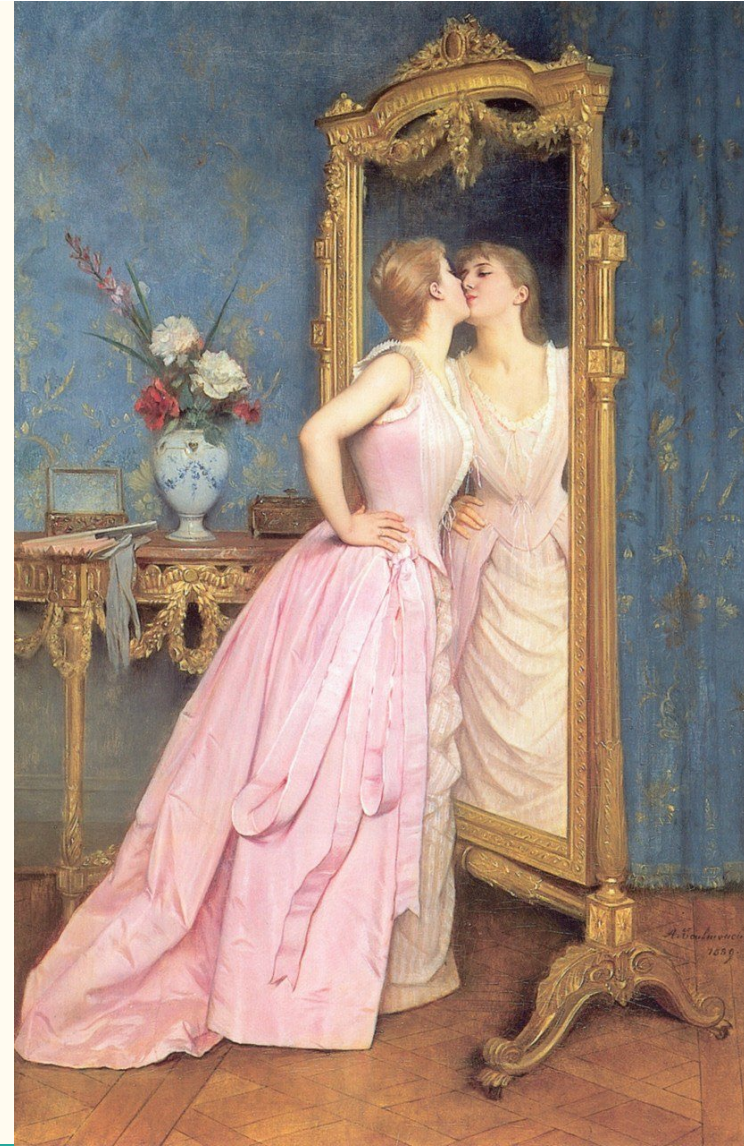


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Pride

- In our Catholic tradition, pride is one of the seven deadly sins. Pride is a disordered love of self, which causes us to consider ourselves, explicitly or implicitly, as our first beginning and our last end.
- According to the Catechism, pride is defined as “undue self-esteem or self-love, which seeks attention and honor and sets oneself in competition with God.”



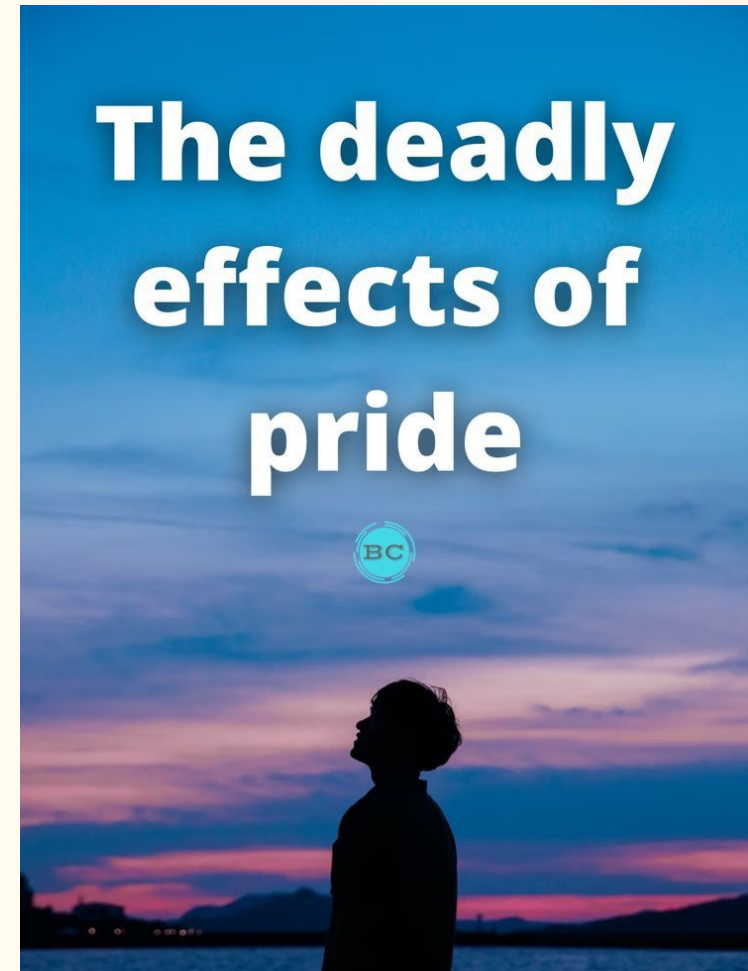
Pride

- In short, pride is **disordered self-love**. It is excessive self-love and a rejection of God's authority and sovereignty.
- Pride is the root of all other sins because it leads to a refusal to submit to God and thereby fosters other sins such as vanity, ambition, and disobedience.
- In Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the proud must carry boulders on their backs so that they must look at the ground. Lucifer's great sin was pride.



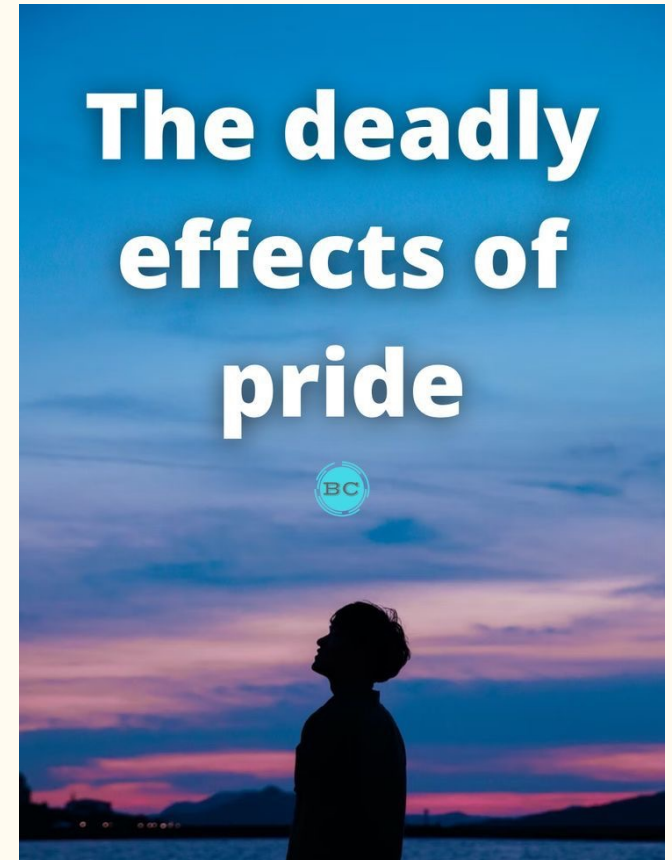
Effects of Pride

- Pride has profound negative impacts on us.
 - **Presumption:** Disordered desire to do things beyond your strength; think you have more to give than you do.
 - **Vanity:** Inordinate love desire for recognition and praise from others.
 - **Ambition:** The pursuit of honor and power beyond what is appropriate.



Effects of Pride

- Pride has profound negative impacts on us.
 - **Poor decision-making:** Overconfidence from pride can lead to poor decisions and inability to recognize when a course of action is wrong.
 - **Hindered growth:** A prideful attitude can lead to refusal to collaborate with others, learn from mistakes, and change course.
 - **Isolation:** A “know-it-all” attitude leads to isolation as people are pushed away.



Hitler's Downfall

- We have seen examples of Hitler's overconfidence and arrogance, referred to as hubris, played a central role in his downfall.
- After his early military success, Hitler became increasingly convinced of his own military genius, leading him to ignore expert military advice and make catastrophic mistakes and ultimately lose the war.



Hitler's Downfall

When people attempt to rebel against the iron logic of Nature, they come into conflict with the very same principles to which they owe their existence as human beings. Their actions against Nature must lead to their own downfall.

~Adolf Hitler

Hitler's Downfall

- Adolf Hitler's arrogance led to poor judgment, fueled by hubris and disregarded expert military advice, led to a series of miscalculations that resulted in Germany's defeat and the death of millions.
- His most significant mistakes included his failure to advance at Dunkirk, invasion of the Soviet Union, and declaration of war on the United States.



Hitler's Downfall

Mistake	Explanation
Halting advance at Dunkirk (1940) (Vanity – wanted the glory)	After invading France, Hitler ordered his tanks to stop their advance, allowing British and French troops to escape to Britain. Hitler could have destroyed a large portion of the Allied armies and forced Britain out of the war.
Shift in bombing tactics during the Battle of Britain (Poor decision-making)	The Luftwaffe's initially focused on the Royal Air Force's (RAF) airfields and radar stations crippling Britain's air defense. In response to bombing of Berlin, Hitler attacked civilian targets allowing RAF to recover and win the battle of air superiority.

Hitler's Downfall

Mistake	Explanation
The disastrous Eastern Front (Overestimated ability)	In June 1941, Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa, resulting in a new front with Russia while still at war with Britain. Germany divided its forces and fought a vastly larger opponent with Russia.
Underestimated Soviet capabilities (Poor decision-making)	The German army failed to grasp the sheer size Russia (geography), the Red Army's manpower reserves, industrial capacity, quantity and quality of weapons (e.g., T-34 tanks), harsh winters, and Soviet resistance.

Hitler's Downfall

Mistake	Explanation
Micromanagement of military affairs (Refusal to collaborate, listen)	As the war progressed, Hitler increasingly relied on his own intuition and overruled his military generals. He made irrational decisions (e.g., refused tactical retreats, leading to the destruction of entire armies, most notably at Stalingrad).
Obsessed with Stalingrad (Poor decision-making, vanity)	In 1942, Hitler miscalculated by pushing his forces toward Stalingrad for symbolic reasons rather than focusing on the vital Caucasus oil fields. The defeat at the Battle of Stalingrad in 1943 was a turning point of the war.

Hitler's Downfall

Mistake	Explanation
Stand-fast orders at Stalingrad (Refusal to change in the face of evidence)	Hitler refused to authorize retreats in the face of a disaster at Stalingrad, which led to the catastrophic encirclement and defeat of the German Sixth Army in the winter of 1942-43.
Declared war on the United States (Poor decision-making)	Hitler's declaration on December 11, 1941, four days after the attack on Pearl Harbor woke up the "sleeping giant" and formally brought the United States' immense industrial and military power directly against Germany.

Effects of Pride

Pride Before the Fall

Leads to overconfidence – pride creates an illusion of superiority, causing one to make poor decisions and take unnecessary risks

Creates blindness – prideful people do not see their need for God as Creator, and become blind to their personal faults, weaknesses, sins, and shortcomings

Damages relationships – prideful individuals struggle to admit faults, apologize, reconcile with others, and push people away

Leads to conflict – pride results in jealousy, constant comparison with others, a critical spirit, which can lead to arguments, strife, and violence

Gideon's Army

- In the Lord's wisdom, He turns evil against itself for its own destruction.
- For example, in the Book of Judges (chapter 7), the Lord calls Gideon to gather an army against the Midianites.
- He initially gathers 22,000 before sending 12,000 home, then all but 300 after watching them drink water.



- 10,000 remained (courageous)
- 300 lapped up water like dogs drinking (vigilant)

Gideon's Army

- Gideon and his 300 men surround a massive Midianite camp at night.
- Armed with trumpets, empty jars, and concealed torches, they blew their horns, smash their jars, and shouted.
- The Midianite soldiers are thrown into panic wherein the Lord causes the them to **turn their swords on each other**.



Operation Barbarossa

- June 22, 1941 – December 5, 1941.
- Largest land invasion in recorded history. Over 3.8 million Axis troops, including more than 3 million Germans, crossed into Soviet Territory in a stunning surprise attack.
- No formal declaration of war. No warning. Goal was to destroy the Soviet Union in a matter of months.



Operation Barbarossa

- The goal was brutally clear: destroy the Soviet Union in a matter of months, shatter the Red Army, seize critical industrial and agricultural zones, and crush Communism at its source.
- Hitler envisioned a vast German Empire, fed by Ukrainian grain, fueled by Caucasian oil, and cleared of what he considered “undesirable” populations.



Operation Barbarossa

- Three-pronged attack:
 - **Leningrad**: Ideological target, cradle of the Russian Revolution; 872-day siege from 1941 – 1944.
 - **Moscow**: Political capital; most direct and largest attack.
 - **Ukraine**: Economic target – secure farmlands of Ukraine and oil fields of the Caucasus.



Operation Barbarossa



Operation Barbarossa



Prisoner of War Camp in Russia



Two Evil Ideologies

Fascism

Ultrnationalist: Prioritizes the state and nation above the individual. Often militaristic and imperialistic, fascists believe in the superiority of one's own nation or race.

Hierarchical: Fascism views life as a struggle and maintains strict social and gender roles, with a charismatic leader at the top.

Communism

Internationalist: Communism seeks a global workers' revolution to abolish national borders and create a worldwide, classless society.

Egalitarian: Its ultimate goal is a stateless, classless society where all are equal.

Two Evil Ideologies

Fascism

Capitalist: Fascism allows for capitalism, but the government dictates how private property is used to serve national interests. Industries collaborate with the ruling regime.

Reactionary: Fascism seeks to return to a "golden age" of national greatness (e.g., blood and soil) by removing corrupting modern influences.

Communism

Centrally Planned Economy: Private property and the means of production are abolished and become collectively owned.

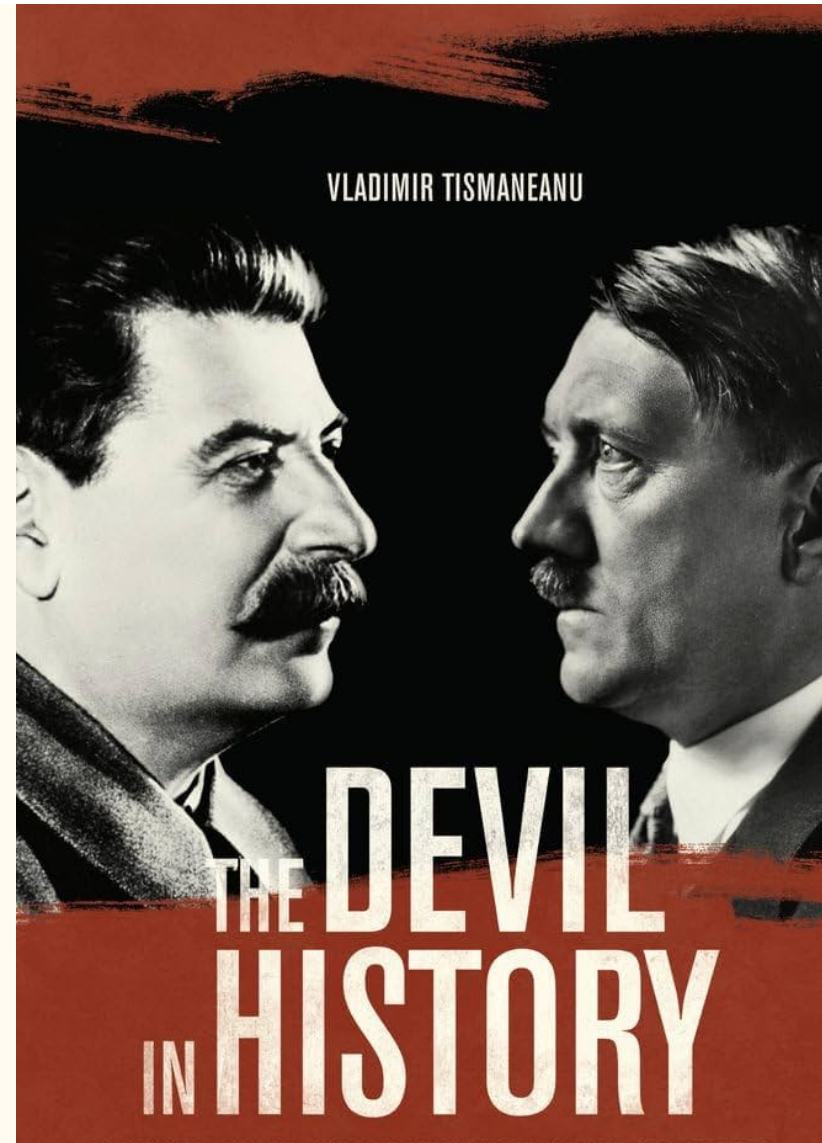
Revolutionary: Communism aims to overthrow the existing social order and advance a society to a new, more progressive stage.

Two Evil Ideologies

Fascism	Communism
Far-Right: Vehemently opposed to communism, liberalism, and democracy.	Far-Left: Defined by its opposition to capitalism and class division.
Racial or National Struggle: Fascism views history as an unending conflict between nations or races for dominance.	Class Struggle: Communism views history as a conflict between the oppressing (bourgeoisie) and oppressed (proletariat) classes.
Minorities and Internal Enemies: Fascism often scapegoats specific groups (e.g., Jews), blaming them for national decline.	Social Classes: Communism targets and seeks to abolish the entire capitalist class. The goal is to create a “workers’ paradise” or a utopia of collective ownership.

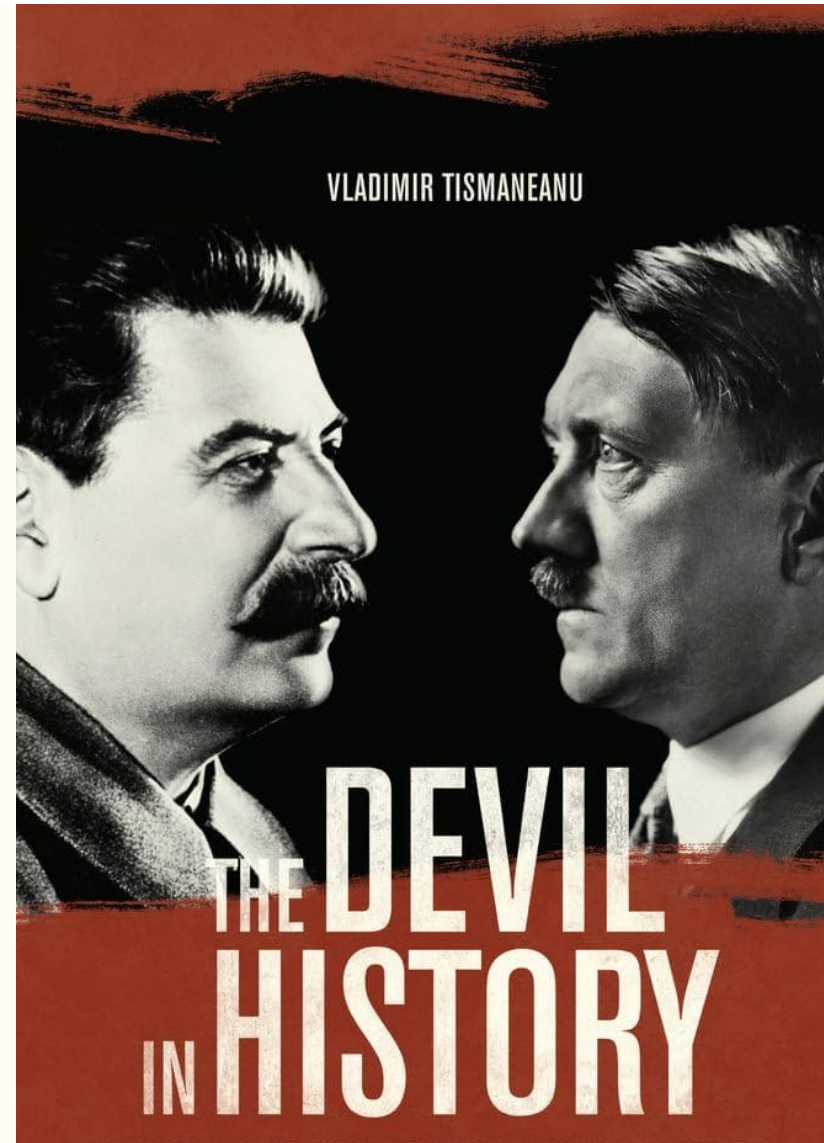
Two Evil Ideologies

- Despite their differences, Fascism and Communism exhibit many of the same totalitarian tactics to enforce their rule:
 - **Governance:** Both rule by a single, all-powerful party that suppresses all political opposition.
 - **Cult of Personality:** Both typically feature a charismatic and authoritative leader who is revered as nearly god-like.



Two Evil Ideologies

- **Use of Terror:** Both employ terror tactics, secret police, and suppress rights to maintain control and defend their rule.
- **Propaganda:** Both control mass media and disseminate an official ideology to shape public opinion.
- **Mobilize the Masses:** Both rely on mass mobilization and youth indoctrination to build popular support for the state.



Two Evil Ideologies

- Despite their ideological differences, Fascism and Communism fight over the same turf.
- Once they gain power, they become authoritarian, seeking to glorify the state or ruling party, control means of production, stamp out opposition, and use propaganda to shape public opinion to build support for the ideology.
- **Key:** Both have 100% track record of misery.



Two Evil Ideologies

- The German and Soviet armies lost **massive** casualties on the Eastern front.
- It is estimated that the Soviet military lost 8.7 – 11.4 million on the Eastern Front.
- It is estimated that Germany lost 4 million, which accounted for about 80% of German military deaths.
- The Eastern Front was the site of the largest and most brutal land battles in history.



Leningrad



Leningrad



Stalingrad



Stalingrad

The phrase “we bit the earth” is a reference to the devastating and brutal urban combat of the Battle of Stalingrad. Fighting took place in the rubble of the city. Soldiers fought from house to house, room to room, and even in sewers, resulting in a type of warfare where life expectancy was measured in hours. The Battle of Stalingrad had two million casualties.

Stalingrad



Stalingrad

- Initially 220,000 Axis troops were encircled at Stalingrad. After months of fighting, 91,000 remained alive to surrender. Only 5,000– 6,000 returned to Germany after the war (2 – 3%).



Eastern Front Battles

- World War II on the Eastern Front was deeply ideological and conducted with **extreme brutality**.
- Hitler's intention was just to beat the Soviet Union but to erase it from the map. However, the Soviet Union's resolve resulted in staggering numbers of casualties, including death from combat, starvation, and disease for soldiers and civilians on a scale that dwarfed other theaters of the war. In short, ideas have consequences!



Future Classes

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| ● The Jewish Question | November 4 |
| ● The Holocaust | November 18 |
| ● D-Day & the Atomic Bomb | December 2 |
| ● Ending the War & Lessons Learned | December 9 |