

Daniel Gasman
Professor of History
John Jay College and the Graduate Center – City University of New York
445 W. 59th Street
New York, New York 10019
212-237-8827
dgasman@jjay.cuny.edu

Education:

Brooklyn College, BA in History, 1955
Brown University, Graduate Studies in History, 1955-1957
University of Chicago, Ph.D., 1969, Modern European Intellectual History

Academic Positions Held:

Instructor in History, 1960-1966, State University of New York at Stony Brook

Instructor, 1966-1969, and Assistant Professor of History 1969-1970, Yeshiva University, New York, New York.

Assistant Professor, 1970-1972; Associate Professor; 1972-1980; Professor of History, 1980-2006, John Jay College.

Appointed to the Graduate Center, CUNY History Faculty, 1980.

Appointed Directeur d'Études associé, June, 1987, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris.

Summary of Scholarly Work:

I am an internationally recognized authority on the life and career of the German zoologist, Ernst Haeckel, as well as a leading intellectual historian specializing in the cultural and scientific history of modern society. As such, I have transformed important areas of the intellectual landscape of the past few decades. I have contributed to the theoretical and historical understanding of National Socialism and Fascism; the history and growth of Developmental Biology [evo-devo], a major branch of contemporary biology; and the history of anthropology and Social Darwinism. In general, I have also influenced the intellectual content of modern historiography by stressing the social dimension of science, especially as it relates to the birth of National Socialism and Fascism. In addition, my research has led to new understandings of his history of psychology, especially regarding the writings of CG Jung, Sigmund Freud, and Richard Semon, as well as providing fresh insights in to the history of eugenics, medicine, ecology, Marxism, positivism, Syndicalism [Georges Sorel], and the birth of avant-garde

art and literature. Mention should also be made to my contributions to the study of the origins of modern sociology, regarding such thinkers as Robert Michels, Ludwig Gumplowicz, Gustave Le Bon, and Vilfredo Pareto. As such, I have played a notable role in recasting key aspects of the intellectual and political aspects of modern German, French, and Italian history. More recently, my work has been applied to new interpretations of the history of Indian nationalism and the origins of Japanese Fascism and has had some bearing also on the career of Albert Einstein. The general debate on the relationship between evolution and religion that has dominated the public mind in recent decades also reflects the influence of my writings. [See, for example, Simon Conway Morris, *Life's Solution: Inevitable Humans in a Lonely Universe*, Cambridge: CUP, 2003].

A recently published work, *Haeckel's Monism and the Birth of Fascist Ideology*, offers a new theoretical framework for explaining the nature of the relationship between National Socialism and Italian and French Fascism, and has reformulated the historical chronology of the two movements. It is a work that revises the study of the origins of Italian and French Fascism and seeks to clarify the influence of Haeckel not only on Fascism, but also on the birth of twentieth century avant-garde modernism. This book calls into question prevailing theories about the origins of Fascist ideology and it offers as part of the discussion insights into the history of modern painting, positivism, Marxism, revolutionary syndicalism, and modernism in general. As the prominent American historian of Italian Fascism, Alexander de Grand, has noted in a review of the book in the *American Historical Review*, '[Gasman's work] has recast a vast segment of intellectual history.' [AHR, June 2000, p. 883]. Paul Weindling, the noted historian of science and medicine, in a review in the *British Journal for the History of Science*, described the book as a 'tour de force' in the history of ideas. [BJHS, 2002, v. 35, p. 117].

In the early 1970s, my well-known work in the history of science, *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism*, helped reshape key areas of contemporary historical and biological science. I suggested that insights gained from the history of science could explain more successfully than any other theoretical framework the origin and nature of Nazi ideology and has over the course of time proven to be an invaluable guide for the study of modern totalitarian political and ideological movements. Nazi ideology, I argued, closed paralleled the teachings of the German zoologist, Ernst Haeckel, and reflected as well demands articulated in the public programs of the German Monist League, an internationally influential organization that Haeckel launched in 1906, in the years prior to World War I. Other sources of Nazism were also recognized, but its ideological substance was most clearly apparent in the way that Haeckel had formulated his idiosyncratic Weltanschauung. I have sought to demonstrate that National Socialism, which superficially considered appears to be an anti-rational movement highly skeptical of science, reveals rather a profound connection with certain heterodox traditions of scientific thought – above all, the tradition of Haeckel. Innumerable studies now, in fact, concentrate on the intimate relationship between science and National Socialist ideology, and it is apparent that my work has played a determining role in this historiographical development.

It should also be noted that *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism*, to which can be credited a myriad of intellectual influences, has served, in addition to its theories about National Socialism, as a recognized source for the redirection of some aspects of recent biological thinking and research. Professor Scott Gilbert, a leading American developmental biologist, has commented on the formative role of *The Scientific Origins* in helping in the 1970s, to launch the field of developmental biology along with Stephen Jay Gould's *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* [1977], a book influenced by the general by the general philosophical, political, and scientific evaluation of Haeckel undertaken in *The Scientific Origins* [*Developmental Biology*, V. 173, 357-372, 1996]. My book, it has been noted, helped to awaken biologists in the 1970s to reexamine the foundations of evolutionary theory along theoretical lines initiated by Haeckel a century earlier.

In a letter to the Chair of the John Jay History Department, Professor Michael K. Richardson, the Van der Leeuw Professor of Developmental Biology at the University of Leiden, observed that 'Gasman's "Scientific Origins of National Socialism" [1971] is widely recognized by historians and biologists to be a classic. It re-explored the historical and political influence of Haeckel, and led to important new conclusions about the influence of biological theory on European politics.' Professor Richardson went on to write that the "'Scientific Origins" can be seen as a major influence on SJ Gould, who published his classic "Ontogeny and Phylogeny" in 1977.' In Richardson's 'view, it was through this route that Gasman inspired biologists to make a major reassessment of evolution and development, a subject which had lain dormant since Gavin de Beer's "Embryos and Ancestors" in the 1950s.' And Stephen Jay Gould, in a letter to me in 1997, commented that he was a 'great admirer' of *The Scientific Origins* and went on to note that the book was 'greatly useful to me when I wrote *Ontogeny and Phylogeny*, and I greatly appreciated the insights that you provided to my own historical and biological studies.'

I am now at work on a new research project, 'Haeckel's Monism and the Transformation of Marxism, 1866-1933.'

Major Publications:

The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League, London and New York: Macdonald and American Elsevier, 1971.

Haeckel's Monism and the Birth of Fascist Ideology, New York: Peter Lang: 1998.

Introduction to Alfred Fried, *Handbuch der Friedensbewegung*, New York: Garland Press, 1972.

'Is There a German Pacifism?' Review article, Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a World Without War, Peace and Change*, Fall 1977.

'Haeckel's Scientific Monism as Theory of History,' *Theory in Bioscience*, 121(3): 260-279.

New edition and Introduction to *The Scientific Origins of National Socialism*, New Brunswick: Transaction Publishing, April 2004.

New Edition and Introduction to *Haeckel's Monism and the Birth of Fascist Ideology*, New York: Lang, 2007.

Five entries for CP Blamires (ed.), *World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia*, Santa Barbara, Ca., ABC-Clio, September 2006. Entries on 'Organicism and Nazism', 'Vitalism', 'Gustave le Bon', 'Syndicalism', and 'Positivism'.

In Progress;

Haeckel's Monism and the Transformation of Marxism, 1866-1933.

Reviews:

Alfred Kelly, *The Descent of Darwin*, Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1981; *American Historical Review*, February 1982. And reply to Stanley Payne concerning the review of Kelly, AHR, December 1982.

Annette Wittkau-Horgby, *Materialismus: Entstehung und Wirkung in den Wissenschaften des 19. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998; *American Historical Review*, 104(4): 1999, 1369-1370.

Richard Weikart, *Socialist Darwinism*, San Francisco: International Scholar's Publications, 1999; *Central European History*, 34(4): 2001, 573-575.

Corinna Treitel, *A Science for the Soul: the Occult and the Origins of the German Modern*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, Spring Issue 2005, 132-134.

Bernd Gausemeier, *Natürliche Ordnungen und politische Allianzen: Biologische und biochemische Forschung an Kaiser-Wilhelm-Instituten 1933-1945*, Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005. *American Historical Review*, V. 111, December, 2006, 1619-1621.

Public Lectures:

Rochester University, Colloquium on the Social Studies of Science, February 1982. Lecture on Haeckel and the Social Studies of Science.

International Congress of the History of Science, Berkeley, Summer 1985. Paper presented on 'Haeckel's Monism: its Cultural Impact.' Lecture outlined a new theory of Italian and French Fascism and its relationship with National Socialism; cited by Peter Bowler in his 1987 book, *The Non-Darwinian Revolution*.

Appointed Directeur d'Études at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris. Seminars offered on Haeckel and modern culture, June 1987.

International Congress of the History of Science, Hamburg, Summer, 1989. Paper read on 'Haeckel and the Origins of Fascism in Italy.'

Invited Participant: National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts; 'The Design and Management of the Environment under Authoritarian Regimes: 1920-1950;' 15 December 1995.

Joint British and American summer meeting of the History of Science Society, St. Louis, summer 2000. Paper read on the history of 'Haeckel in Italy.'

Sixth International Congress of Morphology, University of Jena, Germany, July 2001. Symposium on Haeckel and Modern Biology. Paper read: 'Haeckel's Biology as Historical Theory,' and recently published in *Theory in Bioscience*.

Courses taught at the City University of New York Graduate Center:

History of Modern Germany,
Modern European Intellectual History,
Seminar: Theories of Fascism.
Research Courses and Thesis Supervision

Reader of the Following Ph.D. Dissertations:

Daniel Kurtzer, Columbia University, Political Science Dept., 'The Arab-Israeli Conflict;' Dr. Kurtzer was, until recently, American Ambassador to Israel; André Markovitz, Columbia University, Political Science Dept., 'Liberalism and Contemporary Politics;' Corinna Treitel, Harvard University, History Dept., 'Avatars of the Soul.' [I was an early advisor and not a reader of this dissertation]; Stanislao Pugliese, CUNY Graduate Center, History Dept., 'Carlo Roselli and Fascism;' [This dissertation was subsequently published by Harvard University Press and won the Silone Medal for excellence]; Christopher Mack, CUNY Graduate Center, History Dept., 'A History of Modern Sports in Germany.'

Recognition:

The Scientific Origins: subject of an essay question; Tripos Exam in the Natural Sciences, Cambridge University, 1999.

The Scientific Origins: recommended reading for the Final Honors Program in History, Oxford University.

The Scientific Origins: recommended in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* since 1974 as basic reading for research on Ernst Haeckel.

Who's Who in America
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