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JANUS: THE TWO FACES OF FASCISM

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The years 1918-1945 are often and justifiably held to comprise a fairly coherent and well-rounded period of modern European history. In the decade or so after World War II the concept of totalitarianism was commonly advanced as the mark of identification, the determinant even, of this epoch. [1] This may have been in some measure a function of the Cold War, for it was undoubtedly convenient on one side of the Iron Curtain to equate Stalinist totalitarianism with that other sort presumably overthrown in 1945. Conversely, the relaxation of the Cold War seems to have given rise to the admission of vital distinctions between communism and fascism, and furthermore to a recognition of fascism itself as perhaps the predominant trait of the years 1918-1945. In turn, this has necessarily stimulated a number of recent enquiries into the nature of fascism. [2] In particular, attention has been directed to the basic question : Was fascism, in fact, a definable entity ? Or, on the contrary, were there not a variety of disparate national movements, all employing the word fascism ? It is to this problem that this paper is addressed.

Inevitably, in seeking the quintessence of fascism, one is drawn to a consideration of political concepts and social ideas. And immediately one encounters the difficulty that most fascists affected to scorn philosophical constructs. Deeds were deliberately exalted at the expense of theory; doctrine tended to be invented, if at all, in haphazard, opportunistic fashion. However, one may suspect that this emphasis on action for its own sake was mainly a propaganda device to give the fascist movements a vigorous, youthful, devil-may-care appearance. Moreover, fascists had a rough and ready notion of the ideal society at which they aimed, and the charismatic fascist leaders symbolized for their followers at least a generalized set of social and political attitudes. Fascist ideas constituted a vague *Weltanschauung*

[1] The best known examples are probably H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1st ed.; New York, 1951), and C. Friedrich (ed.), *Totalitarianism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954).

[2] See, for instance, F. L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (London, 1967); N. Greene (ed.), *Fascism: An Anthology* (New York, 1968); W. Laqueur and G. L. Mosse (ed.), "International Fascism, 1920-1945," *Journal of Contemporary History*, I (1966); E. Nolte, *Three Faces of Facism : Action Française, Italian Fascism, National Socialism*, trans. L. Vennewitz (New York, 1966); E. Weber, *Varieties of Facism* (Princeton, N.J., 1964); J. Weiss, *The Fascist Tradition* (New York, 1967); S. J. Woolf (ed.), *European Fascism* (London, 1968).

rather than, as in the case of Marxist-Leninism, an intellectual dialectic. Thus, we are dealing here, not with a precise ideology, but with the loosely formulated aspirations and inchoate impulses which motivated the fascist movements.

* * *

Of all forms of fascism the German National Socialist movement, for obvious reasons, has received most intensive study. Within the past few years, after a quarter of a century of scholarship, there appears to have developed something of a consensus on the fundamental nature and purpose of Hitler's regime. Old interpretations of Nazism – as a tool of monopoly capital, or as an embodiment of Prussian militarism, or as a mere expression of Hitler's personal will to power – have been, if not totally discredited, at least severely eroded. In their place has emerged a growing recognition of Nazism as nothing more nor less than a revulsion against the modern world and a total rejection of all its values. [3] Nazism's enemy was the whole complex of assumptions underlying the eighteenth century Enlightenment and the industrial revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. [4] Its ambition was regressive, to fly back to a past age where the complexities of modern life had no place. [5] The specific historical era to which the Nazis aspired to return was not clear. Maybe it was a feudal age; Hitler wrote with reference to the Teutonic knights: "We take up where we broke off six centuries ago." [6] But more likely, this ideal past society was something more primitive, compounded of the Wagnerian operas and ancient Germanic sagas that the *Führer* admired so much. Hitler aptly summarized his own vision in 1937. "The main plank in the National Socialist programme is to abolish the liberal concept of the individual and the Marxian concept of humanity, and to substitute for them the

[3] For an early indication of this emergent consensus, see the very useful bibliographical article by A. G. Whiteside, "The Nature and Origins of National Socialism," *Journal of Central European Affairs*, XVII (1957-58), 48-73.

[4] "The ideas [of Nazism] ... amounted to a rejection of the enlightenment of the eighteenth century on the political plane and the industrialization of the nineteenth century on the economic plane" (A. J. Nicholls, "Germany," in *European Fascism*, p. 67).

[5] "Millions of Germans had not got over their longing for a return to the primitive racial community of the folk which would rid them at one blow of all perplexities afflicting the modern world: capitalism, communism, liberalism, democracy, plutocracy, newspapers, elections, big-city life – the whole complex rigmarole of contemporary urban civilization" (G. Lichtheim, *The Concept of Ideology* [New York, 1967], p. 229).

[6] A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. R. Manheim (Boston, 1943), p. 654. R. Koehl, "Feudal Aspects of National Socialism," *American Political Science Review*, LIV (1960), 921-933, draws a parallel between the social ideas and party structure of Nazism and certain feudal concepts of medieval Europe. Although a perceptive interpretation in many ways, the comparison seems a little strained in places.

Volk community, rooted in the soil and united by the bond of its common blood." [7]

Antisemitism was central to this world view. In order to recapture the lost innocence of the past, it was necessary to purge contemporary society of its impurities. And the Jew, in Nazi thought, was not only the symbol but the source of all modern evils. The abuses of capitalism were ascribed to Jewish finance, and the class war and Marxism to Jewish intellectuals. [8] Even Christianity, which Hitler regarded as a perversion, was a Jewish plot : "The heaviest blow that ever struck humanity was the coming of Christianity. Bolshevism is Christianity's illegitimate child. Both are inventions of the Jew." [9] Hence, the destruction of the Jewish race became the Nazi prerequisite for a reversion to an uncorrupt past; "a matter... of political hygiene," one Nazi official called it. [10] Hitler was perfectly sincere when he said : "The Jew must clear out of Europe. Otherwise no understanding will be possible between Europeans. It is the Jew who prevents everything." [11]

That Nazism's true nature rested in its primeval and irrational racism is hardly a new contention. It is, for example, implicit in the substance and titles of two early works by the renegade Nazi, Hermann Rauschning : *The Revolution of Nihilism* and *The Voice of Destruction.* [12] But also this view has come to enjoy of late a deservedly expanded currency. This has been due in part to the scholarly attention recently paid to the *Völkisch* content of pre-Hitlerian German culture, which offered such fertile ground for Hitler's nihilistic experiment. In this connection, one thinks of G. L. Mosse's *The Crisis of German Ideology,* F. Stern's *The Politics of Cultural Despair,* and P. J. Pulzer's *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria.* [13]

The interpretation of Nazism as a throwback to a barbaric past has been further strengthened, and expressed in more sophisticated fashion than hitherto, by the philosopher-historian, Ernst Nolte, in

[7] Quoted in Weiss, p. 9.

[8] "The Jewish train of thought in all this is clear. The Bolshevization of Germany – that is, the extermination of the national folkish intelligentsia to make possible the sweating of the German working class under the yoke of Jewish world finance – is conceived only as a preliminary to the further extension of this Jewish tendency of world conquest" (Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* p. 623).

[9] *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941-1944,* trans. N. Cameron and R. H. Stevens (London, 1953), p. 7.

[10] Quoted in Weiss, p. 108. On antisemitic persecution as an act of social purification, see N. Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide* (London, 1967), pp. 261-262.

[11] *Hitler's Table Talk,* p. 235.

[12] (New York, 1939) and (New York, 1940).

[13] (New York, 1964), (Berkeley, Calif., 1961), and (New York, 1964).

his *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche,*[14] translated as *Three Faces of Fascism.* The crux of Nolte's argument is to be found in his use of the concept of transcendence. Transcendence is split into two categories :

> Theoretical transcendence may be taken to mean the reaching out of the mind to beyond what exists and what can exist toward an absolute whole; in a broader sense this may be applied to all that goes beyond, that releases man from the confines of the everyday world and which, as an "awareness of the horizon," makes it possible for him to experience the world as a whole.
>
> Practical transcendence can be taken to mean the social process, even its early stages, which continually widens human relationships, thereby rendering them in general more subtle and more abstract – the process which disengages the individual from traditional ties and increases the power of the group until it finally assails even the primordial forces of nature and history.[15]

Transcendence would thus appear to be equated with human development and progress. Practical transcendence represents the form that progress, especially Western progress, has taken over the last two centuries. However, as Nolte admits, resistance to this "is more or less common to all conservative movements." The peculiar character of fascism is revealed only in "its struggle against theoretical transcendence." For this constituted, not only the denial of past social progress, but also the denial of the intellectual capacity of the human species ever to achieve growth; in short, a denial of even the possibility of progress. In Nolte's summation, this was "the despair of the feudal section of bourgeois society for its traditions, and the bourgeois element's betrayal of its revolution."[16]

Such concepts are of undeniable value in discussing the anti-intellectual and antimodernist National Socialist movement in Germany. And patently Nolte's thesis is conditioned by his acquaintance with the fascist phenomenon in his native Germany. The question remains whether one can apply this construct of antitranscendence, as Nolte tries to do, to fascism at large. Here, it is clearly appropriate to turn to the second most prominent variety of fascism – that of Mussolini's Italy. For Mussolini's regime was always something of an exemplar for international fascism. As the first fascist by a wide margin to gain power, the *Duce* invited imitation. Even in the 1930's when the upsurge of fascism throughout Europe plainly owed much to the physical might of the Third Reich, fascists in search

[14] (Munich, 1963).

[15] Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism,* p. 433.

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 453. G. L. Mosse in his review article of *Three Faces of Fascism* in the *Journal of the History of Ideas,* XXVII (1966), 621-625, points out quite correctly that while Nazism rejected bourgeois transcendence, it substituted its own species of transcendence based on race.

of a foreign model turned at least as often to Fascist Italy as to Nazi Germany.

Very broadly speaking, Mussolini's fascism derived its inspiration from two sources, one for foreign and the other for domestic policy. Abroad, Italian Fascists were enjoined to recreate the glories of ancient Rome. At least one writer has seen in "the idea of Rome" an authentic totalitarian ideology.[17] However, whether this evocation of the past can be equated with Hitler's glorification of primitive, tribal nationalism is very dubious. For one thing, classical Rome was a cosmopolitan ideal, and Mussolini's imperialism lacked the fanatical racism of Nazi Germany.[18] (It was no coincidence that the official introduction of antisemitism into Italy in 1938 was met by disapproval and noncompliance on the part of Fascists and non-Fascists alike.[19]) Furthermore, while "the idea of Rome" recalled a concrete historical experience, Nazism's golden age of the past was a mythical, probably prehistoric one. By appealing to a familiar heritage, Mussolini exhorted his Fascists to emulate the deeds of antique Roman heroes; on the other hand, Hitler's use of a legendary past was calculated to induce his followers, not only to do what the distant Teutonic giants had done, but also *to be* those same tribal heroes, reincarnated in the twentieth century. The Nazi appeal to the past was part of a campaign to transform the very nature of modern man; as such, it was a value-laden concept. By contrast, Fascist Italian patriotism was limited and conventional. Set against the Nazi yardstick, it is difficult to dispute Hannah Arendt's dismissal of Mussolini's regime as "just an ordinary nationalist dictatorship."[20]

[17] D. Germino, *The Italian Fascist Party in Power* (Minneapolis, 1959), pp. 136-139. It is now fairly well established that Mussolini failed in his ambition to establish a genuine totalitarian regime; this is the conclusion reached by A. Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello Stato totalitario* (Turin, 1965). Cf. A. Cassels, *Fascist Italy* (New York, 1968), pp. 69-72.

[18] Weiss, p. 114, contends that Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia was racially motivated. But as much could be said of all European examples of the "new imperialism," and the concept of racism is thereby expanded and diluted almost to the point of uselessness.

[19] The most comprehensive work on antisemitism within Italy is R. De Felice, *Storia degli ebrei italiani sotto il Fascismo* (Turin, 1961).

[20] Arendt, p. 256. Even Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, p. 370, is constrained to admit this distinction: "The swastika did not, like the lictor's bundle, recall a remote but nevertheless still tangible historical era: as an ancient and prehistoric symbol it was supposed to proclaim the future victory of 'Aryan man'." Cf. Koehl, *Amer. Pol. Sci. Rev.*, LIV, 921: "Behind the [Nazi] talk of a 'New Order' lurked the ghost of an empire long dead. But Mussolini's imagery was based upon a centralized, legalistic Roman Empire. Hitler's propaganda spoke of a second thousand-year Reich. Not the short-lived Bismarckian creation, but the fabled medieval empire of Ottonians and Hohenstaufens gleamed in the back of Hitler's mind. Indeed, to Nazi theorists, the Roman tradition as well as all modern state bureaucracy was anathema."

When we turn to prescriptions for social action on the home front, an even more significant distinction between the German and Italian forms of fascism is revealed. Mussolini's answer to the problem of the divisiveness of modern, class-ridden society was corporativism, a programme designed to obliterate old regional and class divisions by a reorganization of society along occupational lines. Although the *Duce* was highly successful between the wars in cornering the market in corporative philosophy, this aspect of Fascist Italian activity is often overlooked.[21] This neglect is no doubt due in part to the belated formulation of corporative doctrine, several years after Mussolini took office. Corporativism in Fascist Italy thus seemed an effort to apply a veneer of intellectual respectability to an otherwise unprincipled movement – although in fact corporative syndicates within the Fascist party antedated the March on Rome.[22] Perhaps a more important factor in the disregard of Facist corporativism is the simple truth that corporativism, even when put on paper and on the statute book, was never put into practice. In Mussolini's Italy, and indeed in all other fascist communities where corporativism was purportedly applied, the corporative structure proved to be no more than a cloak for ruthless exploitation of labour and a reservoir of jobs for party hacks.[23] Yet corporativism, however traduced, remained an ideal capable of firing the enthusiasm of a substantial portion of the interwar intelligentsia. Above all, corporativism pointed the direction in which Mussolini wanted to move, only to be thwarted by his own incompetence and the intractability of Italian society.[24] Constituting therefore an innate impulse in Italian fascism, corporativism offers us a guide to that movement's real nature.

Modern corporativism has two ancestors. First, the Catholic church has always regarded society as an organic, corporate whole. And towards the close of the nineteenth century the Vatican, in order

21 For example, in the index of Nolte's extensive *Three Faces of Fascism* there are only three brief entries under "Corporatism"; the index to I. Kirkpatrick, *Mussolini: Study of a Demagogue* (London, 1964), the most comprehensive biography of the *Duce* in English, reveals also a scant three references under "The Corporative State." For a proper evaluation of the role of corporativism in Italian Fascist ideology, see E. R. Tannenbaum, "The Goals of Italian Fascism," *American Historical Review*, LXXIV (1969), 1183-1204.

22 H. Finer, *Mussolini's Italy* (London, 1935), pp. 492-497.

23 A good recent exposé of the gulf between word and deed in Fascist Italy is D. Mack Smith, *Italy: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1959), pp. 389-435, *passim*.

24 See, for instance, Mussolini's remark after his fall in 1943: "The greatest tragedy in my life came when I no longer had the strength to repel the embrace of the false Corporativists, who were in reality acting as agents of capitalism. They wished to embrace the Corporative system only in order to destroy it" (quoted in Weiss, p. 91). Mussolini's standard self-apology constitutes his *Memoirs, 1942-1943*, ed. R. Klibansky, trans. F. Lobb (London, 1949), esp. Appendix III, pp. 231-243.

to rebut atheistic socialism and its advocacy of the class war, saw fit to refurbish and rebroadcast its traditional corporative ideas. However, Mussolini and most fascist leaders owed their corporativism more to the second source – that of syndicalist socialism. In particular, it was from Georges Sorel that they acquired their fascination with trade unionism and representation by vocation. The point is that both of these traditions, Catholic and socialist, fall squarely into the mainstream of Western thought. Consequently so does corporativism. Not surprisingly, corporativism faces the problems of a modern, industrial age in an eminently rational manner; in theory, it poses a positive and credible solution. It does not propose a retreat to a preindustrial, rural paradise; rather, in somewhat eclectic fashion, it tries to adapt from the recent past. This was readily admitted in the official statement of Fascist Italian corporativism contained in the 1932 edition of the *Enciclopedia italiana.* Here the authors – Mussolini himself and his erstwhile education minister, Giovanni Gentile – wrote :

> The Fascist negation of Socialism, Democracy, Liberalism should not, however, be interpreted as implying a desire to drive the world backwards to positions occupied prior to 1789.
>
> . . . .
>
> Fascism uses in its construction whatever elements in the Liberal, Socialist, or Democratic doctrines still have a living value.
>
> . . . .
>
> No doctrine has ever been born completely new, completely defined and owing nothing to the past; no doctrine can boast a character of complete originality; it must always derive, if only historically, from the doctrines that have preceded it and develop into further doctrines which will follow.[25]

Thus, Italian Fascism advertised itself as the heir to two centuries of scientific rationalism, and as a modern movement with a progressive social philosophy. It claimed to be, in this sense, a transcendental phenomenon. This, of course, afforded a stark contrast with Nazi Germany. To be sure, corporative ideas were not altogether absent from the Nazi programme; they are discernible as early as 1920 in the famous Twenty-Five Points.[26] But for Hitler, corporativism was mainly a propaganda device to keep certain intellectuals loyal to the movement. Once he gained power, corporativism became of no account; the Nazi Labour Front never approached a genuine corporative experiment, and Nazi economic policy fell into

25 "The Social and Political Doctrine of Fascism," *International Conciliation,* No. 306 (Jan. 1935), pp. 12-13.

26 "We demand . . . the formation of Diets and vocational Chambers for the purpose of executing the general laws promulgated by the Reich" (cited in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, 1922-1939,* ed. N. H. Baynes [London, 1942], I, 102).

the pragmatic hands of Hjalmar Schacht. More to the point, the ideas and the very names of Nazism's corporative theorists — Gottfried Feder, Walther Darré, Otto Strasser — passed out of circulation after 1933. Unlike Fascist Italy, where at least lip service was always paid to corporative ideals, Nazi Germany dispensed with not only the practice but also the theory of corporativism.[27] This was only natural, not to say inevitable. For it would have been totally inconsistent for the Nazi movement, whose spirit lay in the mythical past, to embrace a socio-economic creed based on a rational appraisal of the modern world.

* * *

Let us summarize the contrast drawn so far. On the one hand, Nazism, whose *Führer* had perhaps more scorn for the masses than any other fascist leader, consciously derided man's intelligence and proffered as substitute the cult of primitive feeling. On the other, Italian Fascism, by clinging doctrinally to corporativism, disclosed a faith in human reason and in the Enlightenment vision of the perfectibility of man. To simplify drastically, one might term these two sorts of fascism, respectively, backward-looking and forward-looking.[28] Next, a reason for this cleavage within the ranks of international fascism needs to be suggested.

Since the Berlin Götterdämmerung of 1945, scholars and publicists have been fascinated by the abnormal fury and extremism of German National Socialism. They have customarily and properly ascribed it to the extraordinary dislocation produced in German life by the technological advances of the period 1871 to 1933. These occurred so swiftly that social patterns and culture were left hopelessly in arrears. In this historical pattern, the failure of the Weimar Republic to produce the expected and urgent social transformation of Germany was shattering. Thus David Schoenbaum writes:

> What complicated solution in Germany was not a failure to recognize the structural inadequacies of industrial society, but rather

[27] H. Holborn, "Origins and Political Character of Nazi Ideology," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXXIX (1964), 548-549, writes of Hitler after his accession to office: "He quickly stopped the activities of the party in favor of artisans, small businessmen, and the like, and before very long gave up the attempt at building a corporative state. What came into being is probably best called a 'command economy,' a term coined by Franz L. Neumann. . . . Italian fascism, too, was of no significance for the growth of Nazi ideology. . . . The adoption of corporatism by Italian fascism found some imitation among National Socialists, but it did not become official policy after 1933." Cf. Nicholls in *European Fascism*, pp. 63-64, 77-80, and Weiss, pp. 103-104.

[28] Weber, p. 16, expresses something of this notion in terms of the contradictory expectations of fascism's mass following, "some envisaging a return to a sort of Jeffersonian golden age, while others wanted to forge ahead, through revolution, to a new collectivist social order."

> a failure to find an alternative social model adequate to correct them. Advancing literacy, urbanization, industrialization, and the development of overseas agriculture all pointed to the liberal society envisaged by the Weimar Convention. But the main currents of social thought since at least the constitution of the Reich pointed away from it. [29]

And in the same vein the German sociologist, Ralf Dahrendorf:

> But the parties of the Weimar coalition did not want the social transformation that they needed.... Insofar as the Weimar parties had ideas of social reform at all, these were largely directed at the transformation of the authoritarian welfare state into its republican version; but most of them regarded the national question as more important than the social question. [30]

Now, if the ferocity of Nazism responded to the gulf fixed between the material conditions of German life and the nation's social mores, then presumably a different set of socio-economic factors should have given rise to a different sort of fascism. In other words, the nature of fascism, it might be suggested, was relative to the stage of economic development reached by the national community in which each fascist movement occurred. [31]

By 1933, Germany had experienced a full measure of industrialization, whereupon the Nazis in a fit of destructive rage used the tools of a technological age to attack the very society which industrialism had created. [32] But in 1922 Italy was, by comparison, an industrially underdeveloped country. [33] And the ambition of Italian patriots was to emulate the more advanced nations, both nationalistically and economically. The traditional Right in Italy, however, wanted to have its cake and eat it; it wanted modernization but without the attendant evils of liberalism, democracy, and even socialism, which had afflicted the industrializing states of the nineteenth century. This, in effect, is what Mussolini promised to accomplish. To cite the *Enciclopedia italiana* (1932) once more:

> Fascism is the doctrine best adapted to represent the tendencies and the aspirations of a people, like the people of Italy, who are

[29] *Hitler's Social Revolution* (New York, 1966), p. 14.

[30] *Society and Democracy in Germany* (New York, 1967), p. 398.

[31] For some perceptive suggestions on the correspondence of fascism to economic growth, see W. Sauer, "National Socialism: Totalitarianism or Fascism?" *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, LXXIII (1967), 415-422. Sauer does not, however, arrive at the antithesis between the Hitlerian and Mussolinian brands of fascism presented here.

[32] "... the problem of an arrested bourgeois-industrial society, convinced by its guilt-feelings and its impotence of its own superfluousness, and prepared to destroy itself with the means of the very bourgeois-industrial society it aimed to destroy" (Schœnbaum, p. 300).

[33] A. F. K. Organski, *The Stages of Political Development* (New York, 1965), pp. 9-13, 122-125, 134-135; Sauer, *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, LXXIII, 419, 421. The best appraisal in English of Italy's economic conditions in the first quarter of the twentieth century is to be found in S. B. Clough, *The Economic History of Modern Italy* (New York, 1964), chaps. 3-6.

> rising again after many centuries of abasement and foreign servitude. But empire demands discipline, the co-ordination of all forces and a deeply-felt sense of duty and sacrifice: this fact explains many aspects of the practical working of the regime, the character of many forces in the State, and the necessarily severe measures which must be taken against those who would oppose this spontaneous and inevitable movement of Italy in the twentieth century. [34]

Fascism was supposed to bring Italy into the twentieth century, but without disturbing the privileges of the conservatives. Mussolini's propaganda envisaged an industrialized nation state capable of playing the role of a major European power, while his strident anti-communism guaranteed the status of the traditional upper classes. Corporativism was chosen to fulfil this dual undertaking; corporative theory could be paraded as an up-to-date method of increasing national efficiency, and although inconsistent with absolute *laisser-faire,* it was nonetheless quite compatible with the preservation of capitalism and the *latifondi.*

If this analysis is correct, we have created in embryo two prototypes of fascism. One sprang up in advanced societies, and was nihilistic and backward-looking in the style of Nazism. The other emerged in relatively underindustrialized communities like early twentieth-century Italy, was forward-looking, and promoted itself as an agent of modernization along corporative lines. Now, to apply this hypothesis in a conscientious way to the entire spectrum of fascist movements would be a Herculean task, far beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, what follows apropos non-German and non-Italian kinds of fascism is of necessity put forward in a most tentative and generalized manner.

Looking first at the less advanced nations, one is confronted by the phenomenon known as clerical-corporative fascism. This is perhaps a misnomer if only because it suggests that the Catholic church played a more active role than, in fact, it did. The church, on balance, was passively tolerant of the fascist movements, and the measure of clerical support fluctuated considerably from one country to another. However, the phrase "clerical-corporative" gives at least a rough indication that in the relatively backward states fascism bore a Mussolinian, rather than a Hitlerian, stamp. [35]

[34] *International Conciliation,* No. 306, p. 16. The equation of corporativism with modern industrial rationalization was made most explicitly by Mussolini's Minister of Justice, Alfredo Rocco (Tannenbaum, *Amer. Hist. Rev.,* LXXIV, 1195-1199).

[35] H. Trevor-Roper, "The Phenomenon of Fascism," in *European Fascism,* pp. 18-38, divides fascism into two categories, "dynamic" and "clerical conservative." But then, inexplicably, he proceeds to put Mussolini's Italy into the same camp as Nazi Germany, offering both as examples of dynamic fascism.

Wherever fascism appeared in the underdeveloped Latin world, for example, it showed a marked resemblance to the corporative variety encountered in Fascist Italy. In Spain, this was predictable for the Falange, or Spanish Fascist party, grew out of an alliance between Left-wing proponents of national syndicalism and conservative Christian corporativists. [36] For a brief time in 1935-36 the Falange enjoyed an independent existence under José Antonio Primo de Rivera. Its objective, as described by Stanley Payne, was "to create a nationalist, élitist culture based on modernized Spanish values, harmonizing tradition with the revolutionary demands of the twentieth century." [37] But then the movement was quickly swallowed up in Franco's coalition. Since the eclipse of the Axis in World War II, the Falange has occupied a declining position in Franco's regime. Significantly, however, the one feature of Falangist policy which has been incorporated into Franco's Spain is the institution of Spanish corporativism known as national syndicalism. [38]

Across the frontier in Portugal a strong tradition of corporativism goes back at least as far as the founding of the movement *Integralismo Lusitano* in 1914. [39] It was on this that Antonio Salazar built after establishing his authoritarian rule in 1932. It is, of course, debatable whether Salazar's paternalistic dictatorship should be termed fascist at all. But insofar as Portugal veered towards fascism, it was towards a fascism consciously modelled on Mussolini's Italy. The framework of the "new state" of 1933 was proudly proclaimed "the first Corporative constitution in the world." [40] A "second corporative drive" was announced in 1956 as part of a programme to update Portugal's economy. Salazar's corporative regime has been authoritatively summed up as "an 'industrializing' and 'modernizing' dictatorship." [41]

A third version of Latin corporative fascism occurred in Argentina between 1946 and 1955. Here, corporative ideas took the title of *Justicialismo*, which Juan Perón liked to describe as the Third Position, a compromise between individualism and collectivism. *Justicialismo* served Perón as a somewhat imprecise "national doc-

[36] Hence, the lengthy title of Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista (JONS), which fused with the Falange in 1934; see S. G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism* (Stanford, Calif., 1961), pp. 10-48, *passim*.

[37] *Franco's Spain* (New York, 1967), p. 96.

[38] "Something very similar to national syndicalism was the only device that could be used to harness the Spanish working class after the outbreak of the war in 1936. This was the indispensable contribution of *falangismo* to the Franco regime. To be sure, the syndical system was organized entirely as the government saw fit, but it was vital nevertheless" (Payne, *Falange*, p. 267).

[39] H. Martins, "Portugal," in *European Fascism*, pp. 302-312.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 315.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 332.

trine," ideally suited to hold together the heterogeneous coalition of social forces on which his power rested. Nevertheless, like Fascist Italian corporativism, Argentinian *Justicialismo* held out the prospect of reform and progress in a recognizably fascist style. [42]

All of these Latin examples of fascism or quasi fascism were nationalistic; occasionally they were moved by memories of historic imperial splendour; there were traces of antisemitism. But in no case were any of these movements inspired by a racial vision of the past, nor did any seek a refuge in mythology as did Nazi Germany. [43]

Austria, as constituted after 1918, was another underindustrialized country, but here Pan-Germanism was a rampant force. All fascist groups were therefore bound to indulge in racist nationalism more or less. In this context, it is perhaps remarkable to what extent Austrian fascism conformed to the corporative pattern we have traced for economically retarded areas. Of course, the Austrian Nazi party, from 1925 a mere appendage of Hitler's movement, [44] must be ruled out as representative of Austrian fascism. Instead, the most indigenous Austrian fascist movement was undoubtedly that of the *Heimwehr*. During the 1920's the *Heimwehr* accumulated about it a good deal of corporative doctrine. Its chief theoretician was Othmar Spann whose ideal was a *Ständestaat*, a state based on professional representation. The *Heimwehr's* corporativism was elevated into a sort of party platform by the Korneuburg Oath of 1930. In 1933 the *Heimwehr* brought corporativism to the Fatherland Front, rather in the way the Falange contributed corporativism to Franco's regime; and the following year Dollfuss declared Austria to be a Christian corporative state. [45] The *Heimwehr* remained loyal to Mussolini, who supplied the movement liberally with funds and arms, and Dollfuss and his successor, Schuschnigg, remained true to the corporative version of fascism. All of which goes some way

[42] A. P. Whitaker, *Argentina* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.), pp. 132-134.

[43] In the beginning *Integralismo Lusitano* was quite racist and backward-looking, but had lost these traits by the 1930's (Martins, in *European Fascism*, pp. 308-312). José Antonio Primo de Rivera had hopes for a revival of Spanish imperialism, but he was more immediately concerned with the task of curbing Catalan and Basque separatism (Payne, *Falange*, pp. 80-81). Perón's nationalism was to a great extent anti-Americanism, and an important reason for his fall was that he deserted the cause and struck a deal with Standard Oil of California (Whitaker, pp. 145-150). On the limited antisemitism of Spanish and Argentinian fascists, see Payne, *Falange*, p. 126, and Whitaker, p. 13.

[44] A. G. Whiteside, "Austria," in *The European Right*, ed. H. Rogger and E. Weber (Berkeley, Calif., 1965), p. 333.

[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 334-344. Cf. L. Jedlicka, "The Austrian Heimwehr," *Jour. of Contemp. Hist.*, I (1966), 127-144, who stresses the Christian orientation of Dollfuss' experiment, and also K. R. Stadtler, "Austria", in *European Fascism*, pp. 88-110.

towards explaining why by 1938 Austria's corporative fascists had been outflanked by the extreme racist, Berlin-dominated Austrian Nazis.[46]

It is not until one turns to Eastern Europe that the correspondence of underindustrialized community and the corporative style of fascism is seriously disturbed. Hungary and Rumania were certainly backward in economic terms, and both produced native fascist movements. In Hungary fascism was represented by the regime of General Gömbös from 1932 to 1936 and also by Ferenc Szálasi's Arrow Cross organization; their Rumanian counterpart consisted of the series of brotherhoods founded by C. Z. Codreanu, culminating in the Legion of the Archangel Michael and its political arm, the Iron Guard. These groups did not eschew corporativism. Gömbös was an avowed imitator of Mussolini and all his works; Szálasi, put into power in Budapest in 1944 by the Nazis, talked of "national capitalism," by which he implied a kind of corporativism. And it was from the Iron Guard that there sprang Mihail Manoilescu, one of the foremost corporative theorists of the 1930's.[47] However, there was one overriding factor in the Danubian situation which prevented these movements from developing in the corporative direction taken by the fascisms of other backward countries. This was the intensity of racial feeling in the area, which naturally in the interwar period expressed itself in a fierce antisemitism. Rumanian antisemitism had been deep-seated for generations, while in Hungary the prejudice stemmed largely from the Béla Kun episode of 1919. In both countries, in fact, the Jew was equated with bolshevism and, as in Nazi Germany, Hungarian and Rumanian fascist movements preoccupied themselves with the purging of the national society of these alien elements. In the process their objective became, not to build a rationally conceived corporative state of the future, but to recreate some racially pure society out of the legendary past. Thus, Gömbös and Szálasi dreamed and spoke of a "Carpathian-Danubian Great Fatherland," conceived in terms of mythical "Turanianism" or "Hungarism."[48] Even more firmly rooted in an imaginary past was Codreanu's "mystic nationalism."[49] Writes the Rumanian Zevedei Barbu :

[46] Whiteside in *The European Right*, pp. 344-362.

[47] For good over-all descriptions of Hungarian and Rumanian fascism, see, respectively, I. Deák, "Hungary," in *The European Right*, pp. 364-405, and E. Weber, "Romania," *ibid.*, pp. 512-573.

[48] Deák in *The European Right*, pp. 377-378, 388-395. Carsten, pp. 175-176, makes an explicit comparison between these "queer tribal patterns" in Hungary and German *Völkisch* ideas.

[49] E. Weber, "The Men of the Archangel," *Jour. of Contemp. Hist.*, I (1966), 105, refers to Codreanu's "mystic nationalism, the only reality of which was a ferocious antisemitism."

> For example, Codreanu identified himself with the "people," an idealized community which he never defined save in vague and abstract terms such as "unity," "purity," "Christianity." It was an unhistorical entity including all Rumanians who had existed in the past and would exist in the future. [50]

The elemental nature of this vision was symbolized by the bag of Rumanian soil which each member of the Iron Guard was expected to wear about his neck. [51] The similarity to the primeval, tribal nationalism of the Nazis is striking.

Danubian fascists resembled the Nazis in some respects because of the common factor of racial thinking. But if the identity of Nazism was in reality determined by the stage of economic development attained by Germany, then it is to the advanced states of Western Europe – France, Belgium, and Great Britain – that one must turn for a genuine parallel. [52]

The French scene is complicated by the fact that, although fascism undoubtedly existed in France, it never coalesced into a single movement or doctrine. Of the so-called leagues of the 1930's, some were unmistakably fascist, but none succeeded in providing the nucleus for an integrated fascist front. For this reason fascism in France remained "a mood, an anticonformist spirit," or in the best-known metaphor, "a fever," which infected much of the traditional Right and a substantial portion of the Centre too. [53] This meant that French fascism was conditioned, not so much by outright fascist groups, as by others on the far Right which displayed fascist inclinations. Certainly the most prominent of these was the *Action Française*, [54] which can at best be called protofascist.

If one takes the *Action Française* and the dictums of its archpriest, Charles Maurras, to be symptomatic of the French fascist fever, then it becomes clear how alike were the fascisms on both banks

[50] "Rumania," in *European Fascism*, p. 163.

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[52] The argument which follows naturally denies the assertion that "the German crisis was *sui generis*" made by, among others, Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology*, p. 315.

[53] Robert Brasillach is generally held to have given currency to the notion of a fascist fever (E. Weber, *Action Française* [Stanford, Calif., 1962], p. 514, and the same author's "France," in *The European Right*, p. 108). Also on the intangibility of French fascism, see R. Girardet, "Notes sur l'Esprit d'un Fascisme français," *Revue Française de Science Politique*, V (1955), 529-546, and R. J. Soucy, "The Nature of Fascism in France," *Jour. of Contemp. Hist.*, I (1966), 27-30. On the adoption of fascist tenets by French non-fascists, see R. Rémond, *The Right Wing in France*, trans. J. M. Laux (Philadelphia, 1966), pp. 273-299.

[54] On the enormous influence of the *Action Française* in French conservative circles, see Rémond, pp. 233, 245-253, and Weber, *Action Française*, pp. 517-522.

of the Rhine.[55] From its appropriate beginning in the Dreyfus Affair the *Action Française* was a dedicated foe of the whole French Revolutionary tradition. The corruption of French life began in 1789; particularly resented were Jacobin centralization and the Revolution's egalitarianism which provided opportunities for the Jews. Maurras did not originate but he elaborated skilfully on the notion of two France's – one, the *pays légal;* the other, the *pays réel.* In the latter, which existed before 1789, some indeterminate Latin and Catholic culture reigned supreme.[56] So once more we come across the hankering after a vague, romanticized past characteristic of Nazi Germany. Maurras' *pays réel* was the equivalent of Hitler's *Volksgemeinschaft.*

Although in eclipse during the 1930's, the *Action Française* came to the fore again after the fall of the Third Republic in 1940. Maurrassian ideas infused the National Revolution of Vichy France. Antisemitism was legalized. The Vichy intellectuals derided the vice of modern French rationalism.[57] Such corporative doctrines as were espoused drew inspiration, not from modern syndicalist socialism, but from medieval communalism. Marshal Pétain recalled the French people to the ancient verities of earth and fatherland.[58] The over-all regressive tendency of Vichy has been well summed up by René Rémond :

> Although the needs of the moment required the regime to make use of all the nation's resources, the theme of a return to the land was in tune with the basic direction of the agrarian feelings and

[55] Nolte has been criticized for placing the *Action Française* in the same category as National Socialism and Italian Fascism; see the reviews of *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche* by F. Stern, *Journal of Modern History,* XXXVI (1964), 225-227, and by E. Weber, *Amer. Hist. Rev.,* LXIX (1964), 741-743; see also Sauer's comments, *ibid.,* LXXIII, 414-415. For my part, I can accept Nolte's explanation (*Three Faces of Fascism,* pp. 25-26) for the inclusion of *Action Française* in a study of antitranscendental phenomena. As this paper has already demonstrated, I differ with Nolte over his equation of Mussolini's fascism with Hitler's Nazism.

[56] Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism,* pp. 100-141; Rémond, pp. 234-245; Weber, *Action Française,* pp. 522-534.

[57] See, for example, P. Drieu La Rochelle, *Notes pour Comprendre le Siècle* (Paris, 1944), p. 50: "France was destroyed by the rationalism to which her genius had been reduced. Today, rationalism is dead and buried. We can only rejoice at its demise. The destruction of the monster that had been gnawing away at the very soul of France was the *sine qua non* of her revival." Another such intellectual was Gustave Thibon; Rémond, p. 314, writes: "The slogan Work, Family, Country, sums up this program, and its substitution for the Republican triptych has a symbolic value. Against abstract principles which generate dissension, the National Revolution was pleased to oppose concrete and elementary realities which form the warp and woof of existence. It reproved so-called sterile and corrosive intellectualism; it preached a return to actuality – this was the title of a book by Gustave Thibon."

[58] R. Aron, *The Vichy Regime,* trans. H. Hare (New York, 1958), pp. 150-156; P. Farmer, *Vichy – Political Dilemma* (New York, 1955), pp. 223-256, *passim.*

thought that went to make up the traditionalist organicism. It was the ancient rural society that emerged from the depths of the past.[59]

By 1944 the Maurrassians themselves had been replaced by the thoroughgoing collaborationists with the Nazi occupation forces. But the change was more one of degree than of kind; to execute the National Revolution, it was found necessary to employ Nazi political methods.[60] The dream of the *Action Française*, of the Vichy government, and of most Frenchmen stricken with the fascist fever was to return to a blissful, racially pure, preindustrial age. The difference with the German National Socialists lay not in purpose, but in a certain reluctance to use brutal means to achieve the goal.

Belgium, another fairly industrialized nation, also produced fascist groups whose vision was directed to the past rather than the future. For instance, Jean Degrelle came to fascism through Maurras' *Action Française*, and significantly his Rexist party's newspaper was called *Pays réel.*[61] The Rexist movement was short on programme and philosophy, little more in fact than an emotional reaction against the modern world.[62] An idealized "popular community" was set against "the concept of the individual which forms the erroneous philosophical foundation of the present regime and which was born of the catastrophic ideologies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries."[63] Degrelle gave as his paragon the ancient Burgundian community. Other Walloon fascists aspired to a recreation of the sixteenth century union of Holland, Flanders, and Luxemburg. Flemish fascists propounded union with their racial kin in Holland and even Germany.[64] In short, all rejected the twentieth century; all betrayed a longing for nationalism of an ancestral, tribal sort.

But, of course, Great Britain is the touchstone of the technologically developed nations of Western Europe. If fascism in advanced communities did indeed take on the form of a complete and nihilist rejection of modernity, then this should certainly have been evident in industrialized Britain. In Sir Oswald Mosley British

[59] Rémond, p. 315.

[60] S. Hoffmann, "Quelques Aspects du Régime de Vichy," *Revue Française de Science Politique,* VI (1956), 46-69.

[61] Weber, *Varieties of Fascism,* pp. 125-126.

[62] Rexist policy was summed up in the phrase anti-*pourris*; *pourris* signified both corrupt parliamentary politicians and the brooms with which they were to be swept away (J. Stengers, "Belgium," in *The European Right,* pp. 157-163).

[63] J. Denis, *Bases Doctrinales de Rex* (Brussels, 1936), pp. 9-10.

[64] Weber, *Varieties of Fascism,* p. 122. The *Dietschland* ideal – a Dutch-speaking union of Flanders and Holland – was advanced by Van Severen's *Verdinaso* fascist movement, until Van Severen embraced the objective of a *Dietsche Rijk* – recreation of the old union of Holland, Belgium, and Luxemburg. Whereupon the *Dietschland* programme became largely the property of the Flemish *Vlaamsch National Verbond* (Stengers, in *The European Right,* pp. 150-156).

fascism possessed certainly the most intellectually able of all the fascist leaders, and one who imposed his unmistakable personal stamp on the movement. On the surface, Mosley was far from an emotional admirer of bygone times. His first book, written in conjunction with John Strachey in 1925, bore the title *Revolution by Reason.* His answer to the Great Depression was couched in rational, progressive terms, and consisted of a mixture of corporativism and what would later be called Keynesian economics. And his speeches were punctuated with pleas for a "modern" approach. [65] True, he was prone to speak of the British "race," and to attract people like A. K. Chesterton, the novelist's brother, who "saw Mosley as the man who would remove the stain of industrialism from England's green and pleasant land." [66] However, nothing really foretold the drastic change that Mosley and his British Union of Fascists underwent in 1934. In the space of a year or so the intellectual concentration on concrete economic problems gave way to an irrational and rabid antisemitism, which was accompanied by the deliberate use of violence. The most likely explanation for this shift is that it was a strategy designed to transform the B.U.F. into a mass movement. Hitherto, Mosley and his adherents had been regarded as a useful ginger group on the flank of the conventional political parties. It was only with the adoption of antisemitism that the B.U.F. was able to poll close to twenty per cent in some working-class districts (although at no time did it represent a power in national politics). [67] In response to this new racist orientation, Mosley's speeches grew more demagogic, and rang with increasing references to English "stock," "soil," "heritage" [68] – words redolent of all those fascists enraptured by *Völkisch* and other tribal myths.

[65] C. Cross, *The Fascists in Britain* (London, 1961), pp. 23-25, 38-40, 44-45, 73-74; O. Mosley, *The Greater Britain* (London, 1932), pp. 149-160. Mosley retains his belief in a modified form of corporative economics; see his *My Life* (London, 1968), pp. 332-334, 361-362. A. Skidelsky, "Great Britain," in *European Fascism,* p. 233, attributes Mosley's economic ideas to his acquaintance with the "interventionist state" of World War I.

[66] Cross, p. 79. B.U.F. funds came to a considerable extent from individual donations by members of "the minor landed gentry" who seemed to believe that fascism was the way back to a rural Merrie England (*ibid.,* p. 90). On Mosley's latent racism, see J. R. Jones, "England," in *The European Right,* p. 65.

[67] Cross, pp. 119-168, *passim.*

[68] See, for instance, his speech in favour of appeasement in 1939: "They shall not die but they shall live to breathe the good English air, to love the fair English countryside, to see above them the English sky, to feel beneath their feet the English soil. This heritage of England, by our struggle and our sacrifice, we shall give to our children. And, with that sacred gift, we tell them that they come from that stock of men who went out from this small island in frail craft across the storm-tossed seas to take in their brave hands the greatest Empire that man has ever seen" (*ibid.,* pp. 189-190).

Oddly, Mosley himself did not seem to recognize the enormity of the change wrought in himself and British fascism after 1934. He has always protested – sincerely in all probability – that his movement was never antisemitic.[69] It was rather as though he stumbled into racism accidentally. Which is to say that in 1933 or 1934 Mosley came to the subconscious realization that for a fascist movement in industrial Britain to expand, it would have to capitalize on resentment against the current environment by turning its back on the modern world and all its philosophical assumptions. The token of Mosley's conversion was his embrace of the anti-Enlightenment forces of racism and violence. Thus, it is possible to see in the British experience too the congruence of advanced economic development with fascism of a regressive variety.

Thomas Mann wrote of fascism in 1938 that it was "a disease of the times which is at home everywhere and from which no country is free."[70] Fascism at large was a reaction against the liberal pluralism and Marxian dogma of an age of materialism. But if the generic cause of the fascist movements was uniform, the results varied. Where the perplexities of an industrialized community became overwhelming, fascism responded in an antitranscendental, atavistic fashion. It propounded a radical reordering of society, and its logical conclusion was a totalitarian regime. In practice, this occurred in Nazi Germany alone. In neither Great Britain nor Belgium did the fascists come close to winning power, and in France the Vichy Regime was more fascist-oriented than genuinely fascist. In industrial Western Europe fascism only promised and hinted at the primitive barbarism that Hitler actually realized. On the other hand, we have several examples of fascism in practice in less advanced societies. There, fascist movements remained mostly within a modern, rationalist framework; and perhaps because of this partial attachment to traditional values, they were able to cooperate with traditional conservatives. Thus, the Spanish Falange became a part of Franco's coalition of monarchists, aristocrats, clerics, and military nationalists. The Austrian *Heimwehr* in its heyday was directed by Prince Starhemberg, scion of the old Austrian nobility. The Iron Guard shared power briefly in Rumania with the nonfascist General Antonescu. Hungarian fascists relied on the favour of Admiral Horthy, the regent and true representative of the Magyar "historic classes." Even in Fascist Italy, Mussolini never succeeded in displacing the twin pillars of the establishment – the monarchy and the church; at best he neutralized them by co-operation.

[69] Mosley, *My Life*, pp. 336-347.

[70] Quoted in Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, p. 7.

In summary, then, the division of fascist movements according to socio-economic environment reflects on another question often asked of fascism : Was it a revolutionary or a conservative phenomenon ? In industrial states fascism was racist, backward-looking, and tended to reject the power structure which emerged from the nineteenth century. Fascism here achieved a species of radicalism, although whether of the Left or the Right would be hard to say. But in underindustrialized nations, by assuming a more transcendental, forward-looking stance, fascism remained relatively conventional and tied to establishment forces. This kind of fascism inevitably took on the appearance of an agent of traditional conservatism.

The hypothesis that fascism wore two faces has been advanced here as a working model to facilitate investigation. Our comprehension of the years 1918-1945 still requires further analysis of the most vital component of this epoch of fascism — or fascisms.