I

THE ESSENCE OF FASCISM

by Karl Polanyi

VICTORIOUS FASCISM is not only the downfall of the Socialist Movement ; it is the end of Christianity in all but its most debased forms.

The common attack of German Fascism on both the organisations of the working-class movement and the Churches is not a mere coincidence. It is a symbolic expression of that hidden philosophical essence of Fascism which makes it the common enemy of Socialism and Christianity alike. This is our main contention.

All over Central Europe Socialist Parties and trade unions are being persecuted by the Fascists. But so are Christian Pacifists and Religious Socialists. In Germany National-Socialism is setting up definitely as a counter-religion to Christianity. The Churches are suffering oppression, not for some unchristian rivalry with the secular power, but because, in spite of all compromise with the world, they have not ceased to be Christian. The State is attacking the religious independence of the Protestant Churches, and, when they succeed in asserting their independence, it calmly proceeds to secularise society and education. Even the Roman Church is under heavy fire in Germany. There is reason to doubt whether the Lateran Treaty in Italy has fulfilled her expectations. Where she seemingly holds her own, as in Austria, her position is both politically and morally more than precarious.

Our picture may seem to over-stress the importance of the German developments and to ignore the fact that the

struggle between Fascism and the Churches is far from general. Undoubtedly, the Roman Church follows a different line of policy in different countries ; and even in one and the same country the attitude of the various Christian communities to the Fascist Party State varies. In the encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, the Pope opened an avenue of compromise with Fascist sociology ; though this happened before the victory of National-Socialism, it left no doubt about the direction in which Rome was eventually prepared to take its bearings on the future. Its experiment with a kind of Catholic Fascism in Austria proves this conclusively.

But these instances of the Catholic will to compromise seem rather to enhance than to diminish the significance of the German Church conflict, the seriousness and the reality of which should not be underrated. It bears out our conviction that it is to National-Socialism we must turn to discover the political and philosophical characteristics of full-fledged Fascism. Parallel movements in other countries are but comparatively undeveloped variants of the prototype. Italian Fascism, in spite of Mussolini, has no distinctive philosophy of its own ; indeed, it is almost characterised by a deliberate lack of it. Corporative Austria is marking time. Only in Germany has Fascism advanced to that decisive stage at which a political philosophy turns into a religion. National-Socialism is, indeed, almost as far ahead of Italian or Austrian Fascism as Socialism in Soviet Russia is of the tentative Socialist policies of Labour Governments in Central Europe.

But, even so, there are objections to using the German Church conflict as a proof of the inherent antagonism of Fascism to Christianity. There is, for one, the patent lack of identity between Christianity and the Churches ; secondly, the traditional feud between the Socialist Movement and the Churches on the Continent.

Undoubtedly, it would be impossible to argue that he who attacks the Christian Churches is attacking Christianity. Only too often has the opposite been true in the

course of history. Even in Germany to-day, Christian Pacifists and Religious Socialists are as far removed from the pale of the official Churches as ever; the same applies to Religious Socialists in Austria. Not even common persecution could bridge the gulf between the live faith of Christian revolutionaries and organised Christianity. However, as long as the Church in Germany stands up against Fascism in defence of her Christian faith, in the universality of her mission the significance of her witness cannot be denied. Incidentally, in this an important difference between the fate of the Western Churches in Germany and the Orthodox Church in Russia is revealed, where the Church suffered persecution not because she was faithful to her Christian mission, but because she was not; for who could deny that the Orthodox Church in Russia was the political mainstay of tsarist tyranny, at a time when the social ideal of Christianity was inherently on the side of revolution?

This helps to clear up the second objection: the reference to the traditional feud between the Socialist Parties and the Churches on the Continent. From the rise of the working-class movement this hostility existed.

But the Russian example should be a strong warning from adducing it as an argument. For in the eyes of the masses, also, the Western Churches were far from embodying the ideals of Christianity. Though organised Christianity paid cautious lip service to the idealist aims of Socialism, it fought its advance with all its power. At the present juncture, however, the Churches, though predominantly reactionary, are unconsciously bearing witness to that Christian content which they have in common with Socialism. Thus, not in spite of its antagonism to Marxian Socialism, but in consequence of it, is National-Socialism attacking them. This, however, is precisely our contention.

On the face of it, the argument is really extremely simple. No attack on Socialism can be permanently effective that fails to dig down to the religious and moral roots of the movement. But at these roots lies the Christian inheritance. The Fascists setting out to deliver mankind from the alleged

delusions of Socialism cannot pass by the question of the ultimate truth or untruth of the teachings of Jesus.

But politics does not deal with abstractions. That which may seem an insoluble contradiction in the realm of pure thought does not necessarily lead to a clash in reality. If Fascist Governments take great risks in order to infuse pagan elements into the Christian religion, they do this for compelling reasons of a purely practical order. What are these reasons? Are they accidental only, or do they spring inevitably from the efforts of Fascism to re-cast the structure of society in such a manner as to rule out for ever the possibility of the development towards Socialism? And, if so, why can they not eliminate this possibility without removing at the same time every vestige of the influence Christian ideals may have had on the political and social institutions of Western civilisation?

It is to the philosophy and sociology of Fascism we must turn for the answer.

I. FASCIST ANTI-INDIVIDUALISM

The common complaint that Fascism has not produced a comprehensive philosophic system of its own is not altogether fair to Professor Othmar Spann of Vienna. Half a decade before the corporative principle can be said to have emerged in Italian Fascist politics he made this idea the basis of a new theory of the State. In the subsequent years he amplified this theory into a philosophy of the human universe, and dealt, in detail, with politics, economics, sociology as well as general methodology, ontology, and metaphysics. But that feature of his system which makes it peculiarly relevant to our enquiry is neither its priority nor its comprehensiveness. It is the manner in which its author laid down as its basis the idea which in one form or another has become the guiding principle of all Fascist schools of thought of whatever description: the idea of *anti-individualism*.[1]

[1] "Moral decay in Liberalism, cultural paralysis through Democracy, and final degradation by Socialism," are then inevitable.

After having first broadly established this fact, we will enquire more closely into its less obvious implications.

Spann, the prophet of counter-revolution, starts on his career amid the middle-class ruin and despair of 1919. It is his belief we have come to the eleventh hour. We must make our choice between two world systems : Individualism and Universalism.[1] Unless we accept the latter, we cannot escape the fatal consequences of the former. For Bolshevism is but the extension of the individualist doctrine of the natural rights of man from the political sphere to the economic. Far from being the opposite of Individualism it is its consistent fulfilment. In spite of Hegel, Spann contends, Marx remained thoroughly individualist. In his theory of the State he is individualistic to the point of anarchist Utopianism. " That in Marxism the ' State dies off ' is the outcome of its inherent Individualism which regards society as being, essentially, lack of domination of human beings by human beings, a ' free association ' of individuals." The Socialist ideal is definitely the " State-free " society. Historically, it is by way of Democracy and Liberalism that Individualism leads to Bolshevism. The " barbaric, brutal, and bloody " rule of Liberal Capitalism, as Spann himself terms it, prepares the way for a Socialist organisation of economic life, a transition for which representative Democracy supplies the political machinery. Once we allow the universalist principle of medieval society to be finally destroyed by the individualistic virus, no other outcome is possible.

The distinctive feature of Spann's system is the manner in which he attempts to locate this virus. Individualism is with him not a principle confined to social philosophy—it is a formal method of analysis. Basically it is responsible for the vicious causational approach to natural phenomena in modern science, and thus, ultimately, for the atomistic Individualism in terms of which we have, to our undoing,

[1] The meaning of this term with Spann has nothing in common with its accepted use as current with the Christian Churches to-day.

come to conceive of society. Spann's " Universalism "[1] professes to be the counter-method to this inclusive concept of Individualism.

The deep conviction of the individualistic nature of the forces working for Socialism to-day pervades Fascism in all its forms. Ernst Krieck, the leading German pedagogue, thus contrasts the National-Socialist revolution with the two stages of Individualism embodied in the last centuries of Western European development on the one hand, and Socialism on the other : from the time of the Renaissance, he says, " the People, the State, Society, Economic Life, were regarded as a mere sum of autonomous individuals. . . . With Marxism the dialectic move to collectivity supervenes. In Socialism the sum ranks higher than the component parts ; this is due to a coercive mechanism which lies, however, preformed in representative mass Democracy." Individualism, he asserts, is thus not overcome in Socialism ; there is only a shifting of the centre of gravity. In short : Socialism is preformed in Democracy. For Socialism is but Individualism with a different emphasis.

There is the same insistence amongst Italian Fascists on the individualist and Liberal origins of Socialism. Take Mussolini himself : " Free-Masonry, Liberalism, Democracy, and Socialism are the enemy." Or the Catholic Fascist, Malaparte : " It is originally Anglo-Saxon civilisation which has recently triumphed in democratic Liberalism and Socialism." Finally, the reactionary aristocrat, the Baron Julius Evola : " The Reformation supplanted Hierarchy by the spiritual priesthood of the Believers, which threw off the shackles of authority, made everybody his own judge and the equal of his fellow. This is the starting-point of ' Socialist ' decay in Europe."

But an identical attitude is apparent also in political National-Socialism. To quote Hitler : " Western democracy is the forerunner of Marxism, which would be entirely unthinkable without it." Similarly, Rosenberg : " Democratic

[1] The term Universalism is generic ; the specific term given by Spann to his philosophy is " Totalitarianism " (*Ganzheitslehre*).

and Marxian movements take their stand on the happiness of the *Individual*." And Gottfried Feder's semi-official commentary to the Party Programme curtly speaks of " Capitalism and its Marxian and bourgeois satellites "—a syncopated form of speech which hides under its apparent paradox a tactically well-considered amalgamation of Individualism and Socialism.

This unanimity is impressive. For a generation or two, Socialism has been assailed by its critics as the enemy of the idea of human personality. Although sensitive minds like Oscar Wilde discovered the fallacy, it remained a favourite charge with the writers of the day ; that Bolshevism is the end of personality is almost a standing phrase in middle-class literature. Fascism disclaims all solidarity with this facile school of criticism. It is too deadly serious in its will to destroy Socialism to afford to use as its weapons charges so misdirected as to be ineffectual. It has fixed upon a true one. Socialism *is* the heir to Individualism. It *is* the economic system under which the substance of Individualism can alone be preserved in the modern world. Hence the efforts to produce a systematic body of knowledge that could provide a background to a distinctively Fascist, i.e. radically anti-individualist, philosophy. It is under this heading that most of the work of psychologists like Prinzhorn, ethnologists like Baümler, Blüher, and Wirth, philosophers of history like Spengler, are relevant to our problem. It would be safe to say that the invisible border-line dividing Fascism from all other shades and variants of reactionary anti-Socialism, consists precisely in this irreducible and extreme opposition to Individualism. No spiritual ancestry of this idea, however august, is safe from the ruthless onslaught of the Fascist, and invariably he will found his attack on the charge that Individualism is responsible for Bolshevism.

The new State-supported religious movements in Germany, whether based on racial or tribal or only national and super-patriotic tenets, turn against Individualism even when they do not profess to have discovered a complete

dispensation from ethics. Thus, Friedrich Gogarten's *Politische Ethik*, the non-nationalist trend of which was very far from foreshadowing the subsequent rôle of its writer in the German Christian Movement, was aimed at redefining social ethics in a pointedly anti-individualistic sense. No wonder that even the Catholic Church, which of all Christian persuasions is known to be least inclined to overstress the individualist elements in its teachings, complains of the unchristian leanings in Fascism predominantly on the grounds of the lack of appreciation in Fascism for the human individual as such.

The German Faith Movement, lastly, is free from all the embarrassing ambiguities inherent in the German Christian position. It is German, not Christian. It prides itself on its choice between these self-styled alternatives. It can thus proceed to proclaim the fundamental inequality of human beings in the name of religion. Thus the ultimate aim is reached. For obviously the democratic implications of Individualism spring from the affirmation of the *equality of individuals as individuals*.[1] This is the Individualism on which Democracy is based, and on the destruction of which Fascism is bent. It is the Individualism of the Gospels.

We are back to our starting-point again. We noted Spann's insistence that Democracy is the institutional link between Socialism and Individualism. This singles out representative Democracy as the point of attack for Fascism. It is of signal importance to realise that the underlying political belief is solidly founded in fact.

In Central Europe, if not in the whole of Europe, universal suffrage increased enormously the impact of the industrial working class on economic and social legislation, and, whenever a major crisis arose, Parliaments elected

[1] Wilhelm Stapel, in his "Theology of Nationalism" (as the subtitle of *Der Christliche Staatsmann* runs), proves an almost injudiciously frank despiser of ethics, which, as he propounds, "are indebted for their existence merely to the sentimentality of those who are not yet capable of surrendering illusions." Even Ernst Krieck contends, in his handbook on *Education*, that "we cannot allow any imperative ethics to lay down for us the values and laws upon which we should act."

on a popular vote invariably tended towards Socialist solutions. The steady progress of the Socialist Movement, once representative Democracy is allowed to stand, is the dominating historical experience of the Continent in the post-war period. It is the main source of the conviction on the Continent that, if only the authority of representative institutions is left unimpaired, Socialism must come. Thus, if Socialism is not to be, democracy must go. This is the *raison d'être* of the Fascist movements in Europe. Anti-individualism is but the rationalisation of this political outlook.

But the anti-individualist formula meets also the practical requirements of this movement most adequately. By denouncing Socialism and Capitalism alike as the common offspring of Individualism, it enables Fascism to pose before the masses as the sworn enemy of both. The popular resentment against Liberal Capitalism is thus turned most effectively against Socialism without any reflection on Capitalism in its non-Liberal, i.e. corporative, forms. Though unconsciously performed, the trick is highly ingenious. First Liberalism is identified with Capitalism ; then Liberalism is made to walk the plank ; but Capitalism is no worse for the dip, and continues its existence unscathed under a new alias.

II. ATHEIST AND CHRISTIAN INDIVIDUALISM

But we are not primarily concerned here with politics. We hope to have succeeded in establishing the fact that anti-individualism is, broadly speaking, the cue of all Fascist schools of thought. But what exactly is the Individualism at which the Fascist attack is aimed, and what is its relationship to Socialism and Christianity ?

The answer which we will try to extricate from Spann's argument is of a highly paradoxical character. It is, in short, that the Individualism on which Socialism fundamentally rests, and against which Spann's attack must

necessarily be aimed, is an entirely different Individualism from the one against which his actual arguments are directed. Thus, as a critical contribution to Fascism, Spann's argumentation is a failure. Yet incidentally it reveals the true nature of the problem with exceptional clarity, i.e. that meaning of individualism which Socialism and Christianity have in common.

Spann's indictment of Individualism is based on the double assertion that its concepts both of the individual and of society are fictitious and self-contradictory. Individualism must conceive of human beings as self-contained entities spiritually " on their own," as it were. But such an individuality cannot be real. Its spiritual autarchy is imaginary. Its very existence is no more than a fiction. The same would hold good of a society that is made up of individuals of this kind. It might or it might not exist—according to whether the individuals decided to " form it " or not. This, again, would depend upon the more or less fortuitous circumstances of their feeling more sympathy or antipathy towards each other, whether they took a rational or irrational view of their self-interest, and so on. A society thus conceived must lack essential reality.

Nobody can deny the strength of these arguments. Indeed, they are conclusive. And yet they prove exactly the opposite of what they are intended to prove.

Spann's criticism of Individualism is vitiated by a fundamental ambiguity. What he is *aiming* to disprove is the Individualism which is the substance of Socialism. It is essentially Christian. His *actual* arguments are directed against atheist Individualism. Both these forms of Individualism are theological in origin. But the reference to the Absolute is negative with the one and positive with the other. In fact one is precisely the opposite of the other. No valid conclusions can be reached if we confuse them.

The formula of atheist Individualism is that of Kiriloff in Dostoevsky's *The Possessed* : " If there is no God, then I, Kiriloff, am God." For God is that which gives meaning to human life and creates a difference between good and

evil. If there is no such god outside myself, then I myself am god, *for I do these things.* The argument is irrefutable. In the novel, Kiriloff resolves to make his godhead actual and real by conquering the fear of death. He proposes to achieve this by committing suicide. His dying proves a ghastly failure.

Dostoevsky's ruthless analysis of Kiriloff leaves no doubt about the true nature and limitations of the spiritually autonomous personality. The Titanic Superman is the heir to the gods Nietzsche had proclaimed dead. In the mythological figures of Raskolnikoff, Stavrogin, Ivan, from whom Smardjakoff also derives, but, most forcibly of all, in Kiriloff, Dostoevsky provided us with an almost mathematically exact refutation of this concept of human personality. Spann's criticism of Individualism is but a belated attack on Nietzsche, with whose position Dostoevsky had dealt half a century earlier.[1] Historically, both Nietzsche and Dostoevsky had been anticipated by the lonely genius of Soren Kierkegaard, who, in a unique dialectic effort, had a generation before them created and wiped out again the Autonomous Individual.

But Othmar Spann does not only force open doors, he also gets through them into the wrong apartments. By his effective, though superfluous, attack on atheist Individualism he refutes what in corporate Capitalism he eventually intends to uphold : the Individualism of Unequals, and upholds unwittingly what he started to refute : the Individualism of Equals. For the latter is inseparably bound up with Christian as the other is with atheist Individualism.[2]

Christian Individualism arises out of the precisely opposite relation to the Absolute. " Personality is of infinite value, because there is God." It is the doctrine of the

[1] Partly, indeed, prior to the actual publication of *Zarathustra* itself.

[2] Titanic Individualism derives the value of personality from the assertion that there is no God. It is not to be confused with the Individualism of Luther or Calvin or Rousseau, the Individualism prescribed under its different aspects in the rise of Capitalism. It is the atheist Individualism of Kierkegaard's Seducer, of Stirner's Only One, of Nietzsche's Superman, the philosophy of a short transition period in which Liberal Capitalism was triumphant.

Brotherhood of Man. That men have souls is only another way of stating that they have infinite value as individuals. To say that they are equals is only restating that they have souls. The doctrine of Brotherhood implies that personality is not real outside community. The reality of community *is* the relationship of persons. It is the Will of God that community shall be real.

The best proof of the coherence of this series of truths lies in the fact that Fascism, in order to rid itself of one of the links finds itself constrained to renounce them all. It tries to deny the equality of Man, but it cannot do this without denying that he has a soul. Like different properties of a geometrical figure these statements are really one. The discovery of the individual *is* the discovery of mankind. The discovery of the individual soul *is* the discovery of community. The discovery of equality is the discovery of society. Each is implied in the other. The discovery of the person *is* the discovery that society is the relationship of persons.

For the idea of Man and the idea of Society cannot be dealt with separately. What Fascism is contending with is the Christian idea of man and Society as a whole. Its central concept is that of the person. It is the individual in his religious aspect. The consistent refusal of Fascism to regard the individual in this aspect is the sign of its recognition that Christianity and Fascism are completely incompatible.

The Christian idea of society is that it is a relationship of persons. Everything else follows logically from this. The central proposition of Fascism is that society is *not* a relationship of persons. This is the real significance of its anti-individualism. The implied negation is the formative principle of Fascism as a philosophy. It is its essence. It sets to Fascist thought its definite task in history, science, morals, politics, economics, and religion. Thus Fascist philosophy is an effort to produce a vision of the world in which society is *not* a relationship of persons. A society, in fact, in which there are either no conscious human

beings or their consciousness has no reference to the existence and functioning of society. Anything less leads back to the Christian truth about society. But that is indivisible. It is the achievement of Fascism to have discovered its whole scope. It rightly asserts the correlatedness of the ideas of Individualism, Democracy and Socialism. It knows that either Christianity or Fascism must perish in the struggle.

At first sight it seems almost inconceivable that Fascism should have undertaken a task which to our conventional minds seems so utterly hopeless. And yet it has. That its assertions and propositions are more startling than anything which Radicals of the Left have ever produced ought, however, not to surprise us. Revolutionary Socialism is but a different formulation and a stricter interpretation of truths generally accepted in Western Europe for almost two thousand years. Fascism is their denial. This explains the devious paths which it has been driven to explore.

III. THE SOLUTIONS

Let us restate the problem. How is a society conceivable which is not a relationship of persons? This implies a society which would not have the individual as its unit. But in such a society, how can economic life be possible if neither co-operation nor exchange—both personal relationships between individuals—can take place in it? How can power emerge, be controlled, and directed to useful ends, if there exists no individuals to express their wills or wishes? And what kind of human being is supposed to populate this society if this being is to possess no consciousness of itself and if its consciousness is not to have the effect of relating him to his fellows? In human beings endowed with the type of consciousness we know such a thing seems frankly impossible.

Indeed, so it is. Fascist philosophy deliberately moves on to other planes of consciousness. Their nature is suggested

by the two terms : Vitalism and Totalitarianism. As a biocentric philosophy Vitalism derives from Nietzsche, Totalitarianism from Hegel. But both terms are intended to convey here vastly more than mere systems of thought. They point to definite modes of existence. The Vitalist philosophy of Nietzsche has been carried by Ludwig Klages to an appalling extreme. It is usually referred to as the Body-Soul theory of consciousness. Hegel's philosophy of the Absolute Mind has been used in an equally extreme manner by Spann. It is known as the Totalitarian philosophy, sometimes also referred to by the wider term Universalism. It is in some ways an analogy to Hegel's theory of the Mind Objective, but with Totality instead of the Mind as the central principle.

As social philosophies Vitalism and Totalitarianism define different, or, rather, opposite, types of human existence. Vitalism represents the animal plane of a darker and more material consciousness ; Totalitarianism implies a vaguer, more shadowy and hollow consciousness. The substance of Vital consciousness is curiously enough called the " Soul " (a term introduced by Klages) ; that of Totalitarianism, the Mind. As a rule Fascist thought moves to and fro between the two. It is in the terms of the struggle of these two concepts that the partial insights and the fatal contradictions of Fascist philosophy can best be understood.

IV. "SOUL" *VERSUS* MIND

Let us begin by a broad contrast.

The first type of consciousness is the " Soul " ; it belongs to the plane of vegetative or animal life. There is no Ego. No movement towards self-realisation emerges because there is no self. The tide of consciousness does not reach out towards the faculty of intelligence ; its climax is in ecstasy. No vapour of the Mind hovers over the surface of the Soul and drives the wedge of the Will into the

tissue of animal instinct. Neither power nor value have crystallised in the day-dream of tribal existence. Life is immediate, like touch :

> *Touch comes when the white mind sleeps*
> *and only then.*
>
> . . . . . .
>
> *Personalities exist apart ;*
> *and personal intimacy has no heart.*
> *Touch is of the blood*
> *uncontaminated, the unmental flood.*[1]

Whether it is the rule of womanhood or that of manhood is doubtful ; in either case it is the communities of one sex alone which determine the flow of life whether in the clubs of the young men, or in matriarchal " sororities." The urge of sex runs like a thin thread through the rich flux of homoerotic emotionalism. Blood and soil are the metaphysical nourishment of this almost corporeal body-soul, which still adheres to the womb of nature. Such is the structure of consciousness in undiluted Vitalism.

The alternative type of consciousness is as far removed from this as can be imagined. The Mind is the chief actor in producing that other plane of existence in which there is society which is not personal relationship. Society which is the realm of Totality has not persons for its units. The Political, the Economic, the Cultural, the Artistic, the Religious, etc., are the units ; persons are not related to one another except through the medium of that sphere of Totality which comprises them both. If they exchange their goods they are fulfilling an adjustment Totality, i.e. the Whole ; if they co-operate in producing them, they are relating themselves not to one another, but to the product. Nothing personal has here substance unless it be objectified, i.e. has become impersonal. Even friendship is not an immediate relationship of two persons, but a relation of both to their common Friendship. What the individual person

[1] D. H. Lawrence, *Pansies.*

is supposed to contain as a subjective experience in himself, he thus encounters as colourless semi-translucent objectivity outside himself. Society is a vast mechanism of intangible entities, of Mind-stuff; the substance of personal existence is merely the shadow of a shadow. We are in a world of spectres in which everything seems to possess life except human beings.

The details of this broad contrast are more or less arbitrary, each of the opposites being the compound of the spirit of a whole school of thought. Yet the values and methods presented in them ultimately derive from Nietzsche and Hegel respectively. They are biocentric in the system referred to in the first picture, i.e. survivalist, amoral, pragmatist, mythological, orgiastic, æsthetic, instinctive, irrational, bellicose, or apathetic ; logocentric in the second picture, i.e. the values and ideas are related and graded, hierarchic, orientated on reason, a realm of the objective existence of the Mind and Spirit.

Both Nietzsche and Hegel were thinkers of great intellectual passion. But their present embodiments, though inferior in stature, surpass them by much in the capacity for a one-sided line of thought. Klages is Nietzsche without the Superman. Spann is Hegel shorn of his dialectic. Both omissions are so vital that they suggest a caricature rather than a portrait. But as with Klages so with Spann the change serves only to increase the reactionary effect. Nietzsche rid of anarchist-individualism ; Hegel deprived of revolutionary dynamics ; the one reduced to an exalted Animalism, the other to a static Totalitarianism : obviously the change enhances greatly the methodical usefulness of their systems from the point of view of Fascist philosophy.

V. SPANN, HEGEL, AND MARX

Spann's method in using Hegel's concept of the Mind Objective without his dialectic tends to produce a new kind of metaphysical justification of Capitalism.

This can be readily seen when contrasted to Marx's criticism of Capitalist society.

Marx starts from primitive Communism as the original state of mankind. Human relationships in daily life are here immediate, direct, personal.

In a developed market-society distribution of labour intervenes. Human relationships become indirect ; instead of immediate co-operation there is indirect co-operation by the medium of the exchange of commodities. The reality of the relationships persists ; the producers continue to produce for one another. But this relationship is now hidden behind the exchange of goods ; it is impersonal : it expresses itself in the objective guise of the exchange value of commodities ; it is objective, thing-like. Commodities, on the other hand, take on a semblance of life. They follow their own laws ; rush in and out of the market ; change places ; seem to be masters of their own destiny. We are in a spectral world, but in a world in which *spectres are real*. For the pseudo-life of the commodity, the objective character of exchange value, are *not* illusion. The same holds true of other " objectifications " like the value of money, Capital, Labour, the State. They are the reality of a condition of affairs in which man has been estranged from himself. Part of his self is embodied in these commodities which now possess a strange self-hood of their own. The same holds true of all social phenomena in Capitalism, whether it be the State, Law, Labour, Capital, or Religion.

But the true nature of man rebels against Capitalism. Human relationships are the reality of society. In spite of the division of labour they must be immediate, i.e. personal. The means of production must be controlled by the community. Then human society will be real, for it will be humane : a relationship of persons.

In Spann's philosophy it is precisely the self-estranged condition of man which is established as the reality of society. Thus pseudo-reality is justified and perpetuated. Social phenomena are universally represented as thinglike :

yet, it is denied that there is self-estrangement. Not only the State, Law, the Family, Custom, and the like are " objectifications," as with Hegel, but so is every kind of social group function and contact, including economic and private life. This leaves no foothold for the individual ; man is entrapped in his condition of self-estrangement. Capitalism is not only right, it is also eternal.

The anti-individualist implications of this position go far beyond Hegel. The reason for this is easily found. His apologia for State-Absolutism and his glorification of the semi-feudal Prussian State are restricted, after all, to the sphere of political ethics ; they do not affect the person. He proclaimed the State, not society, as " the Divine Idea as it exists on Earth." But the State is itself, for Hegel, a person, and as such can never entirely rid itself of the metaphysical substance of freedom—self-realisation. In order to eliminate the concept of freedom from man's world altogether, society—not the State—must be made supreme. In fact this is precisely the point of difference between Spann and Hegel. Spann relegates the State to a most modest position in his system (which, incidentally, is in accordance with medieval organic conceptions), and reserves Totality to society as a whole. By this subtle move he eliminates the very possibility of freedom. For even a slave-state is a State, and thus can become free. But a slave-society which was so perfectly organised that it could exist without the coercive power of the State could never become free ; it would lack the very machinery of self-emancipation. Thus, in spite of the use of the Hegelian method, the world of man in its totality is not a person ; it is a helpless body devoid of consciousness. There is no freedom and there is no change. It may be doubted whether a more complete absence of self-determination in society was ever conceived.

VI. KLAGES, NIETZSCHE, AND MARX

If the Mind Objective suggests a kind of consciousness in human individuals which does not link them up in personal relationships, Vitalism implies human beings with no rational consciousness whatever.

It was the philosophy of Ludwig Klages which presented the lure of this startling line of thought to the younger generation in Germany.

Klages derives his thought from Nietzsche. But of the two different visions present in Nietzsche's mind, he follows up only one ; and with the utmost consistency. Nietzsche had, if unconsciously, divided his allegiance between the Superman and the Blond Beast ; Klages decided for the latter. He sums up both the greatness and the limitations of his master thus : " Nietzsche was the philosopher of the Orgiastic ; the rest was no good." The " rest " means Zarathustra, Titanic Individualism, the Superman.

Klages is appalled at Nietzsche's inconsistency. He rails against Christianity—this feeble-nerved, vile, and cowardly religion of slaves in rebellion against the laws of Nature and Life, and yet refuses to comply with these laws himself, fatuously pursuing the phantom of some " higher " and " nobler " form of existence. Nietzsche, for all his passionate aversion to Christianity, Klages suspects, never quite overcame the Christian superstition that animal life was not enough. His philosophy of Natural Values is contaminated by spiritual elements. Klages made it the task of his life to decontaminate it.

He deduced from Nietzsche's orgiastic line of thought an anthropology comprising a theory of consciousness of human character, prehistoric culture, and mythology. J. J. Bachofen's antithesis between the chthonic and the solar principles in prehistoric culture inspires much of this work.

The core of Klages's anthropology is between the *Body and the " Soul "* on the one hand, the *Mind* on the other.

Body and "Soul" belong together; for the "Soul" signified with Klages not *anima*, but *animus*: the physiological companion of the Body. The Mind stands apart; it is the principle of consciousness. It is an inimical irruption into the Body-Soul world; in fact, a disease. Before this fateful intrusion occurred man remained in animal harmony with his environment, a life-pervaded part of Nature. With its occurrence, consciousness starts. The Ego emerges. The "Soul" is gripped by the Mind, becomes a person—a form of parasitism on Life in which the "Soul" is reduced to a mere satellite of the Ego. But the main form in which the Mind takes hold of Life is the Will; for domination is inherent in the Mind; it is the source of all Will to Power. The urge of animal instinct is not purposive; it is more akin to the forces at work in parturition: like the ἀνανκή of the Greeks. Conscience and ethics are the symptoms of a Mind-process of which Christianity is the most pernicious form. That which it calls the Spirit is poison to the "Soul"; it is Will to Power bent on the destruction of life. When it has succeeded, the end of mankind will have come.

For Klages, psychology is emphatically not a theory of consciousness. Life is unconscious. He distinguishes six fundamental concepts in psychology; only two of which are conscious. The Body finds expression in the process of sensation and the impulse to movement; the "Soul," in the process of contemplation and in the impulse to form (i.e. the magical or mechanical realisation of images); the Mind, in the act of apprehension and the act of volition. The first four relating to the Body and "Soul" can take place without consciousness; they are "genuine" processes which in their totality constitute animal and human vitality. Apprehension and Will are conscious; they are the product of that extraneous and life-destroying principle, the Mind.

This is a far cry from Nietzsche's voluntarism. According to Nietzsche volition is a natural function of life; the Will to Power, the very embodiment of vitality. With Klages,

the Will is a product of the Mind ; but the Mind is not a genuine part of vitality, it is the parent of that deadliest of all parasites of life, the Spirit which Nietzsche himself denounced in Christianity as the enemy.

Here, then, is the Source of all the inconsistencies in Nietzsche. In vain did he try to oppose the Will to Power to Christianity, for fundamentally they are akin. In affirming the Will to Power, Nietzsche unwittingly reaffirmed Christianity in disguise. In the ethics of Love, the danger is not in Love, but in the Ethics. Yet, are the ethics of Zarathustra no less ethics for being antichristian ? Personality is a parasite of Life, whether it is the personality of man or the Superman. Thus a mistaken psychology leads from contradiction to contradiction. For either we must accept Will as a natural expression of vitality—and then we must affirm what Nietzsche refuses to affirm, moral conscience and ethics—or we must deny, like Klages, that the Will and the Mind are natural to man, and then we can consistently refuse, as he does, to submit to domination of the Christian " Spirit " of Love over life. Fundamentally it is the choice between two concepts of man : man endowed with consciousness and man devoid of it. The position of Vitalism cannot be doubtful : natural man and natural society do not involve the individual consciousness. The reality of man lies in his capacity not to be a person.[1]

Two theories of community can be said to be in accordance with Vitalism. The one is based on Karl Schmitt's " Enmity " principle : Politics, according to him, is a category based on the phenomenon of enmity. The State being the foremost institution of a political kind, its precondition is the acknowledged necessity of the physical destruction of the enemy. The State is thus synonymous with an instrument of armed struggle. It exists only in so far as this is its hypothetical task. A world-State is a

[1] The formation of images by the still uncorrupted " Soul " is a central part of this anthropology. It is part of a theory of the Eros which is presented as an emotional ecstasy of a universal and essentially non-possessive nature, only superficially related to sexuality.

contradiction in terms, for such a State could not be at war for lack of an enemy. Ethical or economic alternatives to war are conceptually excluded from politics.

Schmitt's theory of politics fits in well with the Tribalism inherent in the social approach of the Vitalist.[1] It is a typical product of that *morale close* which Bergson has shown to be the expression of the instinctive tribal morality of fear. The counterpart to it is the *morale ouverte* of Christianity.

But the enmity theory of politics does not account for the undoubtedly existing content inside human community. Even though the killing of non-nationals be the logical justification of the national State it cannot be denied that there are also elements of harmony in community. Hans Prinzhorn, Klages's chief disciple, explains this phenomenon thus : The animal instincts of man refer us to an order of things in which perfect harmony reigns. Every animal is certain to end in the belly of another animal. This is the existential background to that pervading feeling of complete assurance which is a feature of all animal life in its natural environment. The principle of a " fixed sequence of devouring " together with lack of consciousness are the natural preconditions of that state of bliss which is associated with the memory of original community.

This theorem of the nature of human community suggests that Klages was not unsuccessful in his efforts to disinfect Nietzsche of his alleged Christianism. Eventually, he removed from Nietzsche every vestige of Individualism. The vast influence of Nietzsche on modern National-Socialism is due to a considerable extent to the conviction induced by Klages's life work that Nietzsche's Vitalism can be—logically, must be—detached from Individualism. Thus it can serve as the other alternative to a society which is not a relationship of persons.

The rediscovery of Bachofen by Klages deserves some notice. It is always a suggestive fact when a line of thought

[1] We do not wish to imply that Karl Schmitt himself belongs to the Vitalist school.

unconsciously takes off at a point that proves to be a cross-road.

Bachofen's work on matriarchy was, apart from Morgan, the main source of the Marxian vision of primitive society. Marx and Engels might have been as much fascinated as Klages himself by its poetic emphasis on the alleged unity of human existence in prehistoric times. But their impulses lie in opposite directions. Nietzsche's Dionysian principle and Klages's Body-Soul represent a move backwards to the blissful regions of undeveloped harmony. Marxism represents the move onward towards a higher replica of the primeval harmony of man with his environment. Thus, Socialism and Fascism appear for an instant on the same plane, representing alternative roads, as it were, to the conditions of closer human community. But the reactionary road is illusionist. Regression—but how far back? German Nationalists proposed to go back beyond 1918. Reactionary romantics like Moeller van der Bruck made it 1789. Spann and the German Christians proclaimed a counter-Renaissance, thus extending the recession to half a millennium. The German Faith Movement realised that unless we put back the clock by full two thousand years there is neither safety nor permanence in reaction. It is Klages's achievement to have shown that the destruction of Christianity is not enough; ten thousand years is nearer the mark!

The revolutionary solution was based on realities. The counter-revolutionary one leads to an endless regression.

Let us return to Vitalism and Totalitarianism. There is no need to regard them as logical alternatives. Yet their striking contrast proves that there is more than a superficial opposition between them; it suggests some measure of polarity. Vitalism is preconscious and prehistoric; Totalitarianism is post-conscious and post-historic. With the one, history has not yet started; with the other, "it has been." With the one, there is no necessity of change; with the other, there is no possibility of it. With the one, the "Soul" is the reality, the Mind is a fatal deviation; with the other, the Mind is the reality, and it is the vestiges of the "Soul"

that cause the trouble. With the one, the person is not yet born into society ; with the other, he has already been absorbed in it. With the one, there is no dialectic, because the " Soul " is undialectical ; with the other, there is none because Capitalist society does not lead onward to a higher personality, but back to the unconscious social organism. The one flees from the present into an animal past ; the other is an apotheosis of the inhuman present. Indeed, the Vitalist's vision of a life sapped and destroyed by impersonal entities of the Mind-world is not entirely fictitious ; it is that condition of things in a market-society which is seen in Totalitarianism. But in a highly developed society of the machine age there is no alternative to Capitalism but Socialism. Consistent Vitalism is the end of civilisation and culture of any kind whatsoever. Totalitarianism thus signifies the perpetuation of the loss of freedom in self-estrangement and unreality ; Vitalism, the return to the fumbling blindness of the cave. If there is one thing which could justify either of them, it is the appalling alternative presented by the other.

VII. RACIALISM AND MYSTICISM

Actual Fascist thought is in continuous oscillation between the two poles of Vitalism and Totalitarianism. Both succeed in establishing that which is the main requirement of Fascist philosophy—the concept of a human society that would not be a relationship of persons. They attain this end by presenting us with a vision of man's existence which, if accepted, would force our consciousness into a different mould from that which was created by the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man. Yet, the trend in Fascism is distinctly towards Vitalism. It is in this tendency that the deepest roots of its irreducible enmity to Christianity become apparent.

It is in the German scenery that Fascism reveals its Vitalist bent most consistently. Racialism and mysticism

are the corollaries of this development. They enable Vitalism to meet two essential requirements of corporative Capitalism which in itself it fails to satisfy, i.e. technological rationality and nationalism.

It is a curious fact that both Vitalism and Totalitarianism leave in their conceptual structure but scant room for nationalism. Klages claims the discovery of anthropological laws of the general validity ; Spann's method of the Mind Objective cannot stop short of mankind. Indeed, both Nietzsche and Hegel were emotionally anti-nationalist.

However, with the help of a fiction, the idea of the nation can be easily fitted into the materialist pattern of Vitalism. The concept of the race acts as a common denominator to tribal reality and the artificiality of the modern nation. National-Socialist philosophy is Vitalism using the race as a substitute for the nation. The pivotal character of race and nation in Fascist thought will emerge later on.

The need for rationality raises deeper issues. It is its reality, not its concept alone, which must be secured if modern machinery is to be run in corporative Capitalism. In producers of all grades there must be use of the intellect and the Will directed towards achievement, i.e. the organised consciousness of the psychological Ego. But Vitalism is an affirmation of the non-conscious functions of life ; it seeks the reality of man in his capacity not to be a person ; and it is precisely this principle which singles it out as the philosophy of Fascism. Yet how can rational-consciousness be re-introduced without re-establishing the person ? And how can the Ego emerge without a responding Thou ? The need for rationality inseparable from technological civilisation endangers the whole fabric of Fascist philosophy.

The problem is obviously a religious one. Indeed, it is the philosophic problem of Fascism in its religious form. It is this : Is it possible to give a meaning to my life without finding it ultimately in that of the other ?

The Fascist solution is in pseudo-Mysticism. True Mysticism is a product and proof of faith ; not a substitute for it. Without it Mysticism degenerates into a formal state

of a mind, which can be filled with almost any æsthetic or religious content. Such a Mysticism does not belong to the sphere of the Spirit but to that of the Soul. Whether it is the orgiastic Mysticism of paganism or the fashionable Mysticism of modern æstheticism, it is psychological, not spiritual. The use of this method in order to assert the reality of the Soul (or even the animal body) against the Spirit is pseudo-Mysticism. From the point of view of religion, which is inherently social, it is a negative phenomenon. For mysticism is the communion of God and Man ; thus it is also the separation of man from man by God. Mystic man has God at hand ; he is separated by Eternity from his fellow. Mystic experience encompasses the whole Universe except my neighbour ; the mystic Ego has no human Thou to correspond. Thus, in reaffirming medieval German mysticism, only this time as an alternative to faith, Fascism uses mysticism as an outlet for religious and æsthetic emotions that is safe against any aberration into ethics. In the mystic state of mind the most exalted valuation of reason and will, a very deification of the faculties of the soul, is coexistent with a complete dissolution of personality itself. But the rationality and will thus mystified remain essentially unsocial. In Eckehart's Christian faith mysticism was the expression of the yearning of the medieval soul to continue in his seclusion in spite of a new world calling imperatively for contact and wider companionship. In National-Socialism it serves to build an artificial centre of rational consciousness for the individual without establishing him as a social unity. For in the mystic system of Eckehart God Himself is born in the human soul ; its laws govern God Himself—no stronger safeguard for the rationality of Nature is conceivable. Thus pseudo-Mysticism meets perfectly the requirements of a curiously circumspect irrationalism which combines extreme rationality in the relations of man to nature with a complete lack of rationality in the relations of man to man. Eventually the adoration of the blood and the race provides for this mystic vessel a content closely homogeneous to Vitalist philosophy

which is transformed thus into a faith. It is National-Socialist religion in the making.

VIII. VITALISM VICTORIOUS

The tendency of National-Socialism to produce a political religion is manifest in Rosenberg's work. He calls this creating a mythus. His efforts mirror all the different aspects of Fascist thought with which our analysis has made us familiar : the double dependence upon Vitalism and Totalitarianism ; the adaptation of Vitalism to the needs of the machine age ; the trend towards vitalist supremacy ; and anti-individualism as the final test of adequacy.

Rosenberg tried to define his own philosophical position by rejecting both the systems of Klages and Spann. Yet there is an important difference to be noted : while, in spite of his criticism of Klages, Rosenberg remains himself deeply committed to Vitalism, his rejection of Spann cuts very much deeper.

Rosenberg turns sharply against Klages's " pessimistic outlook on civilisation." " The forces of pre-civilisation cannot be pressed into the service of super-civilisation," he comments. He is fully aware of the hopelessness of the attempt to run modern Capitalism on the basis of a human consciousness fashioned on the pattern of paleolithic man. Neo-Vitalism, he complains, has not improved on Nietzsche by proscribing also the Will to Power as Nietzsche also had done with the Gospel of Love. He is conscious of the debt of gratitude National-Socialist thought owes to Klages's discovery of the original unity of Body and Soul, and of that state of " complete assurance " in which the human animal enjoys a harmony untroubled by moral conscience. But, apart from Klages's reactionary prejudice against progress, Rosenberg protests against his obnoxious tendency to set up general laws of human development. This is entirely contrary to the basic tenets of racialist philosophy, which holds that nothing is good or bad, but race makes

it so. Rosenberg proceeds to recast Klages's anthropology on racialist lines. According to him, both the harmony of the Body and Soul which Klages attributes to primitive man and the radiant qualities of the Mind and Spirit, which in other races are so destructive of that harmony, should be credited to the Nordics. For with them the higher forms of consciousness never degenerate into those pathological excretions of the Mind with which Christianity presents us. These are the outcome of the bad blood of the lower or mixed races such as inhabited Asia Minor, Syria, and the Mediterranean basin in historic times. The mind of the Nordic " is naturally Vitalist " ; his religion is Sun-worship—a sound persuasion which never falls a victim to Oriental magic, wizardry and superstition.

However, Rosenberg finds it difficult to suit Klages's anthropology to the needs of Aryan mythology. There is more than a suspicion that the idealised " Soul " of complete natural assurance and harmony was deduced by Klages from the religious, mythological, poetic, and archeological documents of the peoples of Asia Minor in the pre-Hellenic days, i.e. precisely that " Syrian " race and " Mediterranean medley " so despised by the anti-Semite and anti-Catholic ideology of Rosenberg. Also, Klages happened to believe in Bachofen's theorems on primitive matriarchy. Rosenberg believes in patriarchism for the Nordics ; he is adamant on this point.

Rosenberg's own philosophy is essentially Vitalist. " Truth is that which the organic principle of life determines as such." Or : " The highest values in logic and science, in art and poetry, in morals and religion are but the different aspects of the organic truth of the race." His theoretical and practical aims are perhaps best summed up in the phrase that " all true civilisation is but the shaping and moulding of consciousness according to the vegetative and vital characteristics of the race." It is important to note that this concept of the race is not in itself necessarily a biological one. Although as a rule the race is identified with blood, it is just as often regarded as consisting of various

different elements, of which ancestry is only one, even if the dominant. Thus, not the Body but the "Soul" is the bearer of the race—an extension of this concept which makes it very much easier to graft Nationalism on the race theory than would otherwise be the case.

But while Klages's system is banned only to triumph as the unconscious basis of Rosenberg's own philosophy, the latter's rejection of Spann is infinitely more downright. Rosenberg turns with hate and scorn against Universalism. The Old Testament and the Jewish mind, the New Testament and the Christian mind, the Roman Church and Marxian Socialism, Pacifism and Humanism, Liberalism and Democracy, Anarchism and Bolshevism are all in turn denounced as Universalist. This series includes almost everything the author despises from the Psalms to the Sermon on the Mount and the *Communist Manifesto*. An understanding of the precise meaning Rosenberg attaches to this term is almost indispensable to a full grasp of that passionate hostility to Christianity which is apparent in the Vitalist line of Fascist thought.

To start with, it has nothing in common with Spann's "Universalism," the general term by which the Vienna philosopher describes his own Totalitarian system. Universalism, in Spann's terminology, denotes a method of logical analysis inspired by the Aristotelian, "The whole is before the parts," or the Hegelian, "The truth is the whole." When Rosenberg describes this system as Universalist, he uses the term in an entirely different sense. Indeed, his meaning roughly corresponds to the accepted use of the term as current, e.g. with the Churches, when they denounce racialism for its implied denial of the Universalism inherent in their Christian mission. Negatively, Universalism is thus more or less synonymous with non-racialism. Its positive meaning, as deduced from the most extensive use Rosenberg makes of it in his *Mythus*, is that of an idea implying the concept of mankind. In other words, it is the claim of an idea to apply to mankind as a whole, i.e. to all individuals or groups of individuals constituting

it. In fact it is the strict opposite of the racialist principle which makes the different value of different races axiomatic, and thus implicitly denies both the concept of the equality of individuals and of the unity of mankind alike. In this sense, Universalism and Individualism, far from being opposites, are correlative terms. Accordingly Rosenberg proclaims that the ultimate antagonism in philosophy is that between the racial-national principle on the one hand, the individualist-universalist principle on the other.

This explain Rosenberg's criticism of Spann's Totalitarian philosophy. He arraigns it as being " Individualist because it is Universalist." This may sound astonishing when we remember that Spann made anti-individualism the guiding principle of his system. However, Rosenberg rightly contends that no line of thought which refuses to accept the racial-national principle (as Spann does) can entirely escape the individualist implication of human equality. What Spann refutes is only the rationalist, materialist Individualism of the nineteenth century, not Individualism as such. Indeed, we used exactly the same argument ourselves when attempting to show that Spann's attack missed its object : the refutation of Christian Individualism.

A clear-cut anti-individualist philosophy must reject the concept of mankind in any but the barest zoological sense. Hence the vehemence with which Fascists of all shades inveigh against its very ideas. The racial-national principle is thus entrusted with the double function of resisting both the individualistic and the universalistic poles of the idea of humanity as a community of persons. The Fascist denial of Internationalism is but the counterpart of its denial of Democracy. Corporative Capitalism is both authoritarian and nationalist ; it asserts the inequality of individuals and the inequality of nations alike. " Internationalism and Democracy are inseparable," announced Hitler, in his still insufficiently noticed Düsseldorf speech on the foundations of National-Socialism.

The racial-national opposition to the individualist-universalist principle goes to the heart of the religious problem. The race or the nation is the supreme value in Fascism, whether National-Socialist or otherwise; the individual and mankind are the two poles of the Christian ideology in the sphere of the human world as a whole. Accordingly the consciousness of the inevitability of the oncoming religious conflict was apparent with National-Socialism from the start. If the original programme of the party declared for positive Christianity, events have shown that this plank in its platform was not to be adhered to more strictly than other planks since entirely dropped. Hitler's own philosophy did not only include racialist convictions that were obviously contrary to Christianity, but also an endorsement of the principles of Machiavellian tactics, which allowed him to act upon those convictions, while continuing to do lip service to positive Christianity, without being seriously open to the charge of insincerity on this account. Indeed at a comparatively early date Gottfried Feder's comments on the party programme referred to the eventuality of the emergence of a new religion inside the orbit of the National-Socialist movement. This hint at a possible mental reservation with the authors of the programme was followed by what amounted to a declaration of war on "positive Christianity" in Rosenberg's *Mythus*. He ingeniously termed the Christianity of the Gospels "negative Christianity"—suggesting by this simple device to bridge the gulf which divides an undertaking to uphold Christianity from a policy directed towards its deliberate substitution by a new form of paganism. Rosenberg's appointment as "the Führer's Commissioner in matters relating to the philosophy of life" took place at a time when the *Mythus* had revealed to the whole of Germany the philosophic outlook of its author. It is doubtful whether the existing differences in tone and shade between the public expression of Hitler's and Rosenberg's views are not mainly accounted for by their respective positions and functions. The religious wars of the

seventeenth century that turned Germany into a wilderness are, for Hitler, the true analogy to that cleavage of minds and spirits which is the feature of our time ; blood and nation, strife and survival are the ultimate realities with the one religion, while the other is their persistent denial in the name of the pernicious delusions of human equality and the unity of mankind. The Commissioner reiterates his conviction that the morbid strain of pacifism and humanitarianism engrained in the European mind is due to the Christian virus. He rightly traces the inveterate internationalism of Russian Communists to that spirit of infinite devotion to the service of mankind which is apparent both in Tolstoi's and Dostoevsky's poetic embodiments of the Christian inspiration, For the Socialist Russian Revolution in Russia is for him but a new eruption of that " spirit of the desert " which has sapped the life-force of the West during the course of its history : a remission into the spiritual plague that has stricken the heathen soul of Teuton Europe—Christianity.

The Churches, in bearing witness to Universalism, stand for the essence of their faith. But so do, also, the German Fascists in denying human equality to the last. The battle is engaged between the representatives of the religion which has discovered the human person and those who have made the determination to abolish the idea of the person the centre of their new religion.

IX. THE SOCIOLOGY OF FASCISM

Fascist philosophy is the self-portrait of Fascism. Its sociology is more in the nature of a photograph. The one presents it as it is mirrored in its own consciousness ; the other in objective light of history. How far do the two pictures correspond ?

If the philosophy of Fascism is an effort to create a vision of the human world in which society would not be a conscious relationship of persons, its sociology proves it to be an

attempt to transform the structure of society in such a manner as to eliminate any tendency of its development towards Socialism. The pragmatic link between the two is found in the political field ; it lies in the necessity of the destruction of the institutions of Democracy. For, in the historical experience of the Continent, Democracy leads to Socialism ; thus if Socialism is not to be, Democracy must be abolished. Fascist anti-individualism is the rationalisation of this political conclusion. It is thus essential to Fascist philosophy to regard Individualism, Democracy, and Socialism as correlated ideas deriving from one and the same interpretation of the nature of man and society. We had no difficulty in identifying this interpretation as the Christian one.

However, in this order of things there is not only the sociological nature of the Fascist Movement, but also that of the Fascist System to be considered. Obviously Fascism must aim at more than the mere destruction of Democracy ; it must attempt to establish a structure of society which would eliminate the very possibility of its reversion to Democracy. But what is the precise nature of the tasks entailed in such an attempt? And why does it compel Fascism to continue in that attitude of radical anti-individualism which is the necessary ideology of its militant phase ? The answer entails at least a cursory view of the nature of the Corporative State.

The mutual incompatibility of Democracy and Capitalism is almost generally accepted to-day as the background of the social crisis of our time. Differences of opinion are confined to formulation and emphasis. Mussolini's *Dottrina* has it succinctly that Democracy is an anachronism, " for only an authoritative State can deal with the contradictions inherent in Capitalism." In his conviction the time of Democracy has passed, but Capitalism is only at the very beginning of its career. Hitler's Düsseldorf speech, to which we have already referred proclaims the utter incompatibility of the principle of democratic equality in politics and of the principle of the private property of the means of

production in economic life to be the main cause of the present crisis; for "Democracy in politics and Communism in economics are based on analogous principles." Liberals of the Mises school urge that the interference with the price system practised by representative Democracy inevitably diminishes the sum total of goods produced; Fascism is condoned as the safeguard of Liberal economics. It is the common conviction of "Interventionist" and of "Liberal" Fascists that Democracy leads to Socialism. Marxian Socialists may differ from them on the reasons but not on the fact that Capitalism and Democracy have become mutually incompatible; and socialists of all creeds denounce the Fascist onslaught on Democracy as an attempt to save the present economic system by force.

Basically there are two solutions: the extension of the democratic principle from politics to economics, or the abolition of the Democratic "political sphere" altogether.

The extension of the democratic principle to economics implies the abolition of the private property of the means of production, and hence the disappearance of a separate autonomous economic sphere: the democratic political sphere becomes the whole of society. This, essentially is Socialism.

After abolition of the democratic political sphere only economic life remains; Capitalism as organised in the different branches of industry becomes the whole of society. This is the Fascist solution.

Neither the one nor the other has yet been realised. Russian Socialism is still in the dictatorial phase, although the tendency towards Democracy has become clearly discernible. Fascism proceeds but reluctantly towards the setting up of the Corporative State; both Hitler and Mussolini seem to think that a generation which has known Democracy cannot be trusted to be ripe for corporative citizenship.

Roughly the sociological content of Socialism is the fuller realisation of the dependence of the whole upon individual

will and purpose—and a corresponding increase of responsibility of the individual for his share in the whole. The State and its organs work towards an institutional realisation of this end. Encouragement of the initiative of all producers, discussion of plans from every angle, comprehensive oversight of the process of industry and of the rôle of the individuals in it, functional and territorial representation, training for political and economic self-government, intensive Democracy in small circles, education for leadership, are the characteristics of a type of organisation which aims at making society an increasingly plastic medium of the conscious and immediate relationship of persons.

The sociological content of Fascism is a structural order of society which rules out the dependence of the whole on the conscious will and purpose of the individuals constituting it. If this is to be achieved, such a will and purpose must not come into being. The objection is not to the form of Democracy, but to its substance. Whether it takes the form of universal suffrage and parliamentary Democracy ; of organised public opinion based on Democracy in small groups ; of the free expression of thought and judgment in municipal and cultural bodies ; of religious and academic freedom guiding society through channels peculiar to this kind of influence ; or any combination of these—in Fascism they must equally disappear. In this structural order human beings are considered as producers, and as producers alone. The different branches of industry are legally recognised as corporations, and endowed with the privilege to deal with the economic, financial, industrial, and social problems arising in their sphere ; they become the repositories of almost all the legislative, executive, and judicial powers which formerly pertained to the political State. The actual organisation of social life is built on a vocational basis. Representation is accorded to economic function ; it is technical and impersonal. Neither the ideas and values nor the numbers of the human beings involved find expression in it. Such a structural order cannot exist on the basis of human consciousness as it is known to us. The period of

transition to another type of consciousness must be necessarily long. Hitler measures its length in terms of generations. The Fascist Party and State work by all means towards an institutional realisation of this change. Unless they succeed in achieving this end, an abrupt transition of society to Socialism is almost inevitable.

A bare outline of the objective nature of Fascism thus tends to support our interpretation of its philosophy. The Fascist system has to carry on persistently the task begun by the Fascist Movement : the destruction of the democratic parties, organisations, and institutions in society. Fascism must then proceed to attempt to change the nature of human consciousness itself. The pragmatic reasons for its clash with Christianity are due to this necessity. For a Corporative State is a condition of things in which there is no conscious will or purpose of the individual concerning the community, nor a corresponding responsibility of the individual for his share in it. But neither such a will nor such a responsibility can pass from our world altogether so long as we continue to conceive of society as a relationship of persons.