

# CASTES AND RACES



EVOLA - SCHUON - GUÉNON

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# Preface

This publication contains materials devoted to two aspects of the most important issue regarding the differences between people: ‘vertical’ division by internal nature and ‘horizontal’ division by hereditary (physical and psychic) characteristics.

As a kind of introduction, the collection begins with a rather small article by the famous French Traditionalist thinker René Guénon (1886-1951) named ‘The Hindu Caste System’. Guénon briefly describes the caste system on the example of India, indicating that ‘the caste corresponds to the nature of each person, that is, to his profound vocation’.

Further on, the famous Italian Traditionalist Julius Evola (1898-1974) takes the baton: ‘The Doctrine of the Castes’ is the chapter from his fundamental work ‘The Revolt Against the Modern World’ (1934).

Julius Evola speaks about the distinction and division that make up the universal order – the cosmos – in opposition to confusion and chaos, and demonstrates the correspondences of the Indian caste system to the social systems of other civilizations, including European ones. Evola also identifies two main principles of the caste system: following one's own and not others' nature and vocation, and reuniting with the higher principle by means of following and acting for the sake of action, not for the sake of results. And if society falls into the casteless chaos of ‘equality’, forgetting the principle ‘to each his own’ and becoming a ‘society of opportunities’, it inevitably follows the path of decline, which we observe in modern European civilization.

The following material belongs to the pen of a ‘Guénonian school’ thinker, Frithjof Schuon (1907-1998). It is called ‘The Meaning of Caste’ and is a chapter from the book ‘Castes and Races’ (1959).

In addition to explaining the meaning of the caste system and the characteristics of the spiritual types that make up the castes, Schuon

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examines the caste system in a broader context, analysing civilizations in which the social caste hierarchy is absent or almost nonexistent. He points out the reasons for this absence and demonstrates the advantages and disadvantages of the social structure of such civilizations. The community can well exist without the caste institute; however, the differences in the inner nature of people, although not absolute, still exist. 'Natural castes can be destroyed only in a state of holiness', writes the thinker, but 'the absence of castes in the external sense ... demands conditions that neutralise possible shortcomings of such a lack of social differentiation'. And even if the principle of equality of people before God prevails in traditional civilization, it is very far from the modern ideals of 'democracy'. F. Schuon writes: 'The absence of castes proper in Islam and even the most distant of Indian traditions has nothing to do with the humanistic attitude in the present sense'; 'Modern equality [or equalization] – which can be called 'democracy' – means the opposite of theocratic equality of monotheistic religions, for it is based not in man's likeness to God, but in his animal nature and revolt'.

Next comes another chapter from the classic work of Julius Evola. It is devoted to the 'Regression of the Castes' – the law of historical involution: the transfer of power from one caste to another in descending order, simultaneously with the degradation of the castes themselves. Evola describes in detail the manifestations of such a transition in various areas: in the sphere of power, in the field of war, in architecture, in art, in relation to work, in entertainment, etc. If in the previous chapter, Schuon touched the decadent nature of modern civilization only occasionally, the Italian thinker does not spare words, demonstrating the squalor of modern Western society.

Moving from the theme of caste division to the racial theme, we again meet with the argument of F. Schuon. 'The Meaning of Race' also represents a chapter from the aforementioned book of the thinker. 'Caste is more important than race, because spirit is more important than form: race is form, and caste is spirit' – this is the first statement of the author. However, races are not accidental or unimportant: to understand the meaning of races, Schuon writes, 'one must realise that they come from the fundamental aspects of humanity'. He analyses the spiritual

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differences between the three great races – ‘white’, ‘black’ and ‘yellow’, linking certain physical and psychological characteristics and matching each race with their elements: ‘white’ race – fire, ‘yellow’ – water, and ‘black’ – the earth.

The theme of the race continues the work of Julius Evola ‘The Elements of Racial Education’ (1941).

Julius Evola often turned to the racial theme: he deals with it in the works ‘Myth of Blood’ (1937), ‘Synthesis of Racial Doctrine’ (1941) and numerous articles. In this work, the Italian thinker, unlike F. Schuon, focuses his attention on the physical types within the large European race, which he also calls races, and sets out the traditional understanding of the race as ‘breeds’, as an ideal. In addition to the habitual biological race (‘body race’), Evola also considers the ‘race of the soul’ and ‘race of the spirit’. ‘Everything that is formed in terms of character, receptivity, natural inclinations, “style” of action and reaction, attitude to one’s own experience belongs to the race of the soul. [...] The concept of the ‘race of the spirit’ [...] is occupied not by different types of man’s reaction to the environment and by the maintenance of ordinary everyday experience, but by his relationship with the spiritual, superhuman and divine world: how they manifest themselves in a form characteristic of speculative systems, myths and symbols, as well as for a wide variety of religious experiences’, he writes.

It should be emphasised here that, in contrast to racial theorists such as Hans F. K. Günther and modern popularisers of their ideas, Evola believed that the real correspondence between certain races of the body, soul and spirit is not at all a given (at least in modern conditions), but only an ideal to which one should strive. This is not an inborn trait of all people, but a kind of privilege of integral, harmonious beings that constitute the ‘race’ in the highest sense of the word, and the creation of conditions for their appearance and increase in number must be the main goal of racial policy. Moreover, such races of the soul and spirit are of great importance only in a society that has already lost direct contact with spiritual reality. Even after the war, Evola wrote an article, ‘Information on the spineless man’, in which he was forced to supplement the typology of spiritual races with another type –

accelerating, or mercurial (corresponding to the symbol of mercury): so often spineless and at the same time unprincipled, avoiding any constancy and firmly attaining people, regardless of their physical type.

Thus, biological determinism was deeply alien to the thinker. Stressing this, he writes: 'One should take a clear position against such racism, which considers all spiritual abilities and all human value to be a simple consequence of the race in a biological sense'. Here and later the reader should not be confused by the widely used word 'racism', which the author means rather as a certain hierarchy of values that is not directly related to skin colour, rather than what is widely understood by this term today.

This work has a specific character: Evola wrote it primarily for the practical purpose of popularising the racial aspect of his ideas in fascist Italy. Therefore, he touched on specifically Italian themes: the legacy of Old Rome and 'Latinism' in their racial aspect, Italian nationalism and the ideal Italian racial type. He believed that for Italy the main thing should be a heritage common to other Aryan roots, not Mediterranean and 'Latin' elements, and race as a breed has incomparably greater value compared to the nation. As is known, the thinker's hopes for the evolution of Italian fascism into something higher, including through the education of a new type of Italian, was not destined to materialise, but his ideas on this subject are of interest even today.

The collection is completed by Julius Evola's article 'The Hegemony of the White Races' (1936). This article was written as a review of the book by the German author Varhold Dracher, 'The Preeminence of the White Race', but this is much more than just a review.

Evola connects the historical process of the colonisation of the rest of the planet with the regression of castes. Having lost real contact with the divine, the West spewed its energy in conquering expeditions. The aspiration was replaced by a desire in breadth. At the next stage of the degradation of the colony, the colonies were regarded exclusively as sources of material wealth. Finally, as a result of Westernisation, the colonies cease to be such, becoming 'civilised' countries, borrowing many features of European civilization.

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But is this all a consequence of the superiority of the West? Without denying the obvious material and technical achievements of Europe, Evola turns to the spiritual side of the issue. 'You can not really guarantee the primacy and right of any race to absolute dominance, if there is no prerequisite for its real spiritual superiority', he points out. True superiority can only be spiritual – all the rest is just a consequence. But there is no real spiritual superiority, even before the non-European civilizations are in a state of decline, the materialistic West does not have.

Everything Evola said more than 70 years ago did not lose its relevance today. What spiritual excellence can the current West have – the civilization of fast food, nightclubs and gay parades? Over the years, the crisis has only worsened.

Julius Evola prophetically writes that the question of mastering 'coloured' peoples by technology invented by whites is just a matter of time. Today we are fully convinced of this – just look at China and India. Although the West still has an indisputable military and technical advantage, it is difficult to predict the events that can happen in 50-100 years, given, on the one hand, the difficult demographic situation in Europe, and the rapid modernization of Asian countries with a large number of people on the other.

The only chance for the West to gain real excellence is to survive the lowest point of the cycle and to ensure the beginning of a new cycle, a new ascent. But what are the real chances of a favourable outcome? If a new cycle begins in Europe, it can easily do without the descendants of the current Europeans. If current trends continue, the end of Europe is rather predictable and can happen quite soon by historical standards. However, a simple extrapolation of current trends for the future is not always justified, and one would like to think that there is still a chance for a new revival, however small it may be.



# Hindu Castes Doctrine

by René Guénon

One of the concepts less understood in the modern Occident refers to the Hindu Doctrine of Castes. Taking their own socioeconomic references and transposing them tendentiously, the Westerners criticise violently what they judge to be ‘the unjust system of castes’, as if it was a discrimination among socioeconomic classes, that exist, for instance, in the USA and Europe.

Actually, the caste is certain for each individual’s own nature, that is, your deeper vocation. In India, the caste is denoted by the word *varna*, which means nature or a particular quality of personality. Nobody will doubt that in a same family there are clear differences among the children and that they show it very early. One of them demonstrates, for instance, easiness for singing and musical instruments. Other, prefers to devote himself to mechanical or manual tasks. And other, with an introspective nature, is devoted to the studies with easiness. These differentiations are determined essentially and they announce the constitution of each one, constituting what we call his/her natural ‘vocation’ or ‘calling’.

In traditional India, the goal of education was to provide each person with the best means to ensure that his or her qualities could develop fully from an early age. There are four castes, and they are based on criteria that have nothing to do with the social and economic situation. These castes are: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. This division is based on the criterion of hierarchy, that is, on the distribution of qualities from the highest, spiritual, to the lowest, material.

The Brahmins are individuals whose vocation leads them irresistibly to the spiritual life. It is their sphere of authority to preserve and transmit metaphysical and religious knowledge. Their symbolic colour is white, which symbolises the purity and the spiritual light (the sun). Their

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direction is vertical, ascending. Their mental property is concentration. Their attainments are transcendental. Their symbolic metal is gold, as its qualities are constant, it does not deteriorate with time. They are identified with the Golden Age, the essence, the wisdom of the light, the sun, the priesthood, theocracy.

The Kshatriyas are those individuals whose own qualities qualify them to the functions related to the men's government and the defence instruments of this government. The kings and the armies are in this caste. Their symbolic colour is the red, related to the heat, the expansion. The Japanese flag is *par excellence*, a Kshatriya representation, as well as their feudal organization of the samurais. The direction is horizontal: it is expansion. This caste reports itself naturally to Brahmins and it is for this reason that, for instance, in the Mediaeval Ages, the kings were anointed by Pope. The real function, affirms the Taoism, is to unite the sky and the earth, establishing a government in agreement with spiritual principles. The Kshatriya reflects and orders (in the two senses of the word). They are identified with the Silver Age, the moon, the monarchy, the aristocracy.

The Vaishyas are the ones that naturally identify themselves with the commercial and industrial function. They are the 'material providers', we can say. The ones that work in the fields planting or breeding animals. The ones that build houses and other private or public constructions. They are engaged in crafts. And those that trade victuals, utensils, finally, everything that constitutes the material support so that the men's life is possible and that each one can accomplish his own function. In summary, the ones that produce and sustain. Symbolic colour is dark green or brown. They are identified with the Age of Bronze, which is their symbolic metal (constituted of red copper and grey tin). They are connected to the material world, earth, bourgeois democracy and sentimentalism.

Shudras the ones whose nature is devoted to the most varied functions of heavy manual labour. Workers. They are the ones that apply physical force in their professional occupations. They are identified with the Age of Iron, whose symbolic colour is the dark ash. The mental physiognomy of the Shudras is marked by the attachment to the

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appearance, to the emotion and the superficiality. This is the working class, socialism and communism, the realm of quantity.

As can be seen, none of this can be compared to a modern social division, marked by materiality and represented by the financial power. A Shudra can be rich, while a Brahmin, which happens with a certain frequency, entirely poor, materially speaking. There also exists a sub-caste, Chandala, which is characterised by the absence of any qualification. They perform the functions of agents of decomposition, decay, and destruction. These are blind forces, corrupting and disintegrating, dissolute, acting everywhere and on several levels.

‘Democratic’ equality not only does not exist, but it is also absolutely impossible among people. It completely contradicts the Indian doctrine of castes, which retains a complete resemblance to all true Eastern knowledge.

# The Doctrine of the Castes

by Julius Evola

The caste system is one of the main expressions of the traditional socio-political order, a 'form' victorious over chaos and the embodiment of the metaphysical ideas of stability and justice. The division of individuals into castes or into equivalent groups according to their nature and to the different rank of activities they exercise with regard to pure spirituality is found with the same traits in all higher forms of traditional civilizations, and it constitutes the essence of the primordial legislation and of the social order according to 'justice'. Conformity to one's caste was considered by traditional humanity as the first and main duty of an individual.

The most complete type of caste hierarchy, the ancient Indo-Aryan system, was visibly inspired by the hierarchy of the various functions found in a physical organism animated by the spirit. At the lower level of such an organism there are the undifferentiated and impersonal energies of matter and of mere vitality; the regulating action of the functions of the metabolism and of the organism is exercised upon these forces. These functions, in turn, are regulated by the will, which moves and directs the body as an organic whole in space and time. Finally, we assume the soul to be the centre, the sovereign power and the 'light' of the entire organism. The same is true for the castes; the activities of the slaves or workers (*shudras*) were subordinated to the activities of the bourgeoisie (*vaishyas*); higher up in the hierarchy we find the warrior nobility (*kshatriyas*); and finally the representatives of the spiritual authority and power (the *brahmins*, in the original sense of the word, and the leaders as *pontifices*). These groups were arranged in a hierarchy that corresponded to the hierarchy of the functions within a living organism.

Such was the Indo-Aryan socio-political system, which closely resembled the Persian system; the latter was articulated into the four *pishtra* of the Lords of fire (*athreva*), of the warriors (*rathaestha*), of the heads of the family (*vastriya-fshuyant*), and of the serfs assigned to manual labour (*huti*). An analogous pattern was found in other civilizations up to the European Middle Ages, which followed the division of people into servants, burghers, nobility and clergy. In the Platonic worldview, the castes corresponded to different powers of the soul and to particular virtues: the rulers (*ἄρχοντες*), the warriors (*φύλακες* or *ἐπικουροί*) and the workers (*demiurgoi*) corresponded respectively to the spirit (*νοῦς*) and to the head, to the animus (*θυμοιδέξ*) and to the chest, and to the faculty of desire (*ἐπιθυμητικόν*) and to the lower organs of the body regulating sex and the functions of excretion. In this way, as stated by Plato, the external order and hierarchy correspond to an inner order and hierarchy according to 'justice'.<sup>1</sup> The idea of organic correspondence is also found in the well-known Vedic simile of the generation of the various castes from the distinct parts of the 'primordial man' or *purusa*.<sup>2</sup>

The castes, more than defining social groups, defined functions and typical ways of being and acting. The correspondence of the fundamental natural possibilities of the single individual to any of these functions determined his or her belonging to the corresponding caste. Thus, in the duties toward one's caste (each caste was traditionally required to perform specific duties), the individual was able to recognise the normal explication as well as the development and the chrism of his or her own

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<sup>1</sup> 'Justice is produced in the soul, like health in the body, by establishing the elements concerned in their natural relations of control and subordination; whereas injustice is like disease and means that this natural order is inverted'. Plato, *Republic*, trans. B. Jowett, 444a, b.

<sup>2</sup> *Rg Veda* 10.90.10-12. This fourfold division became a threefold division when nobility was thought to encompass both the warrior and the spiritual dimensions and practiced in those areas in which residues of this original situation existed. This division corresponds to the Nordic division into *jarls*, *karls*, and *traells* and to the Hellenistic division into *eupatrids*, *gheomors*, and *demiurgs*.

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nature<sup>3</sup> within the overall order imposed 'from above'. This is why the caste system developed and was applied in the traditional world as a natural, agreeable institution based on something that everybody regarded as obvious, rather than on violence, oppression, or on what in modern terms is referred to as 'social injustice'. By acknowledging his own nature, traditional man knew his own place, function, and what would be the correct relationship with both superiors and inferiors; hence, if a *vaishya* did not acknowledge the authority of a *kshatriya*, or if a *kshatriya* did not uphold his superiority in regards to a *vaishya* or a *shudra*, this was not so much considered a fault but as the result of ignorance. A hierarchy was not a device of the human will but a law of nature and as impersonal a physical law as that according to which a lighter fluid floats on top of a denser fluid, unless an upsetting factor intervenes. There was a firmly upheld principle according to which 'Those who want to institute a process at variance with human nature cannot make it function as an ethical system'.<sup>4</sup>

What upsets modern sensitivity the most about the caste system is the law of heredity and preclusion. It seems 'unfair' that fate may seal at birth one's social status and predetermine the type of activity to which a man will consecrate the rest of his life and which he will not be able to abandon, not even in order to pursue an inferior one, lest he become an 'outcast', a pariah shunned by everybody.

When seen against the background of the traditional view of life, however, these difficulties are overcome. The closed caste system was based on two fundamental principles: the first principle consisted of the fact that traditional man considered everything visible and worldly as the mere effects of causes of a higher order. Thus, for example, to be born according to this or that condition, as a man or a woman, in one caste rather than in another, in one race instead of another, and to be endowed with specific talents and dispositions, was not regarded as pure chance.

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<sup>3</sup> *Bhagavad-gita* (18.41): 'The works of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras are different in harmony with the three powers of their born nature'. *The Bhagavad-gita*, trans J. Mascaró (New York, 1962).

<sup>4</sup> *Chung-yung*, 13.1. Plato defined the concept of 'justice' along similar lines (*Republic*, 432d. 434c).

All of these circumstances were explained by traditional man as corresponding to the nature of the principle embodied in an empirical self, whether willed or already present transcendently in the act of undertaking human birth. Such is one of the aspects of the Hindu doctrine of *karma*; although this doctrine does not correspond to what is commonly meant by 'reincarnation',<sup>5</sup> it still implies the generic idea of the pre-existence of causes and the principle that 'human beings are heirs of karma'. Similar doctrines were not typical of the East alone. According to a Hellenistic teaching, not only 'the soul's quality exists before any bodily life; it has exactly what it chose to have', but 'the body has been organised and determined by the image of the soul which is in it'.<sup>6</sup> Also, according to some Persian-Aryan views that eventually found their way to Greece and then to ancient Rome, the doctrine of sacred regality was connected to the view that souls are attracted by certain affinities to a given planet corresponding to the predominant qualities and to the rank of human birth; the king was considered *domus natus* precisely because he was believed to have followed the path of solar influences.<sup>7</sup> Those who love 'philosophical' explanations should remember that Kant's and Schopenhauer's theory concerning the 'intelligible character' (the 'noumenal' character that precedes the phenomenal world) relates to a similar order of ideas.

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<sup>5</sup> The idea that the same personal principle or spiritual nucleus has already lived in previous human lives and that it will continue to do so ought to be rejected. R. Guénon launched a devastating critique of this idea in his *L'Erreur spirite* (Paris, 1923). I followed suit in my *The Doctrine of Awakening*. Historically, the belief in reincarnation is related to the weltanschauung typical of the substratum of pre-Aryan races and of the influence exercised by them; from a doctrinal point of view it is a simple popular myth, and not the expression of an 'esoteric' knowledge. In the Vedas the idea of reincarnation is not found at all.

<sup>6</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, 3.4.5: 1.1.1. Plato wrote: 'No guardian spirit will cast lots for you, but you shall choose your own destiny. Let him to whom the first lot falls choose first a life to which he will be bound of necessity'. *Republic*, 617e.

<sup>7</sup> See Plato's *Phaedrus*. 10.15-16, 146-48b; and Emperor Julian's *Hymn to King Helios*, 131b. However, the nature of the elements that determine a given birth is as complex as the nature of the elements that constitutes a human being, who is the sum of various legacies. See my *Doctrine of Awakening*.

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And so, given these premises and excluding the idea that birth is a casual event, the doctrine of the castes appears under a very different light. It can be said therefore that birth does not determine nature, but that nature determines birth; more specifically, a person is endowed with a certain spirit by virtue of being born in a given caste, but at the same time, one is born in a specific caste because one possesses, transcendently, a given spirit. Hence, the differences between the castes, far from being artificial, unfair, and arbitrary, were just the reflection and the confirmation of a pre-existing, deeper, and more intimate inequality; they represented a higher application of the principle *suum cuique*.

In the context of a living tradition, the castes represented the natural 'place' of the earthly convergence of analogous wills and vocations; also, the regular and closed hereditary transmission forged a homogeneous group sharing favourable organic, vitalistic, and even psychic proclivities in view of the regular development on the part of single individuals of the aforesaid prenatal determinations or dispositions on the plane of human existence. The individual did not 'receive' from the caste his own nature; rather, the caste afforded him the opportunity to *recognise* or remember his own nature and prenatal will, while at the same time presenting him with a kind of occult heritage related to the blood so that he would be able to realise the latter in a harmonious way. The characteristics, the functions, and the duties of the caste constituted the traces for the regular development of one's possibilities in the context of an organic social system. In the higher castes, initiation completed this process by awakening and inducing in the single individual certain influences that were already oriented in a supernatural direction.<sup>8</sup> The *ius* of the single individual, namely, those prerogatives and distinct rights inherent to each of these traditional articulations, not only allowed this transcendental will to be in harmony with a congenial human heredity, but also allowed everybody to find in the social organism a condition that

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<sup>8</sup> 'Just as good seed, sown in a good field, culminates in a birth, so the son born from an Aryan father in an Aryan mother deserves every transformative ritual .... Seed sown in the wrong field perishes right inside it; and a field by itself with no seed also remains barren'. *The Laws of Manu*, 10.69.71.



really corresponded to their own nature and to their deepest attitudes; such a condition was protected against any confusion and prevarication.

When the sense of personality is not focused on the ephemeral principle of human individuality, which is destined to leave behind nothing hut a 'shadow' at death, all this seems very natural and evident. It is true that much can be 'achieved' in a lifetime, but 'achievements' mean absolutely nothing from a higher point of view (from a point of view that knows that the progressive decay of the organism will eventually push one into nothingness) when they do not actualise the pre-existing will that is the reason for a specific birth; such a prenatal will cannot be easily altered by a temporary and arbitrary decision taken at a given point of one's earthly journey. Once this is understood, the necessity of the castes will become clear. The only 'self' modern man knows and is willing to acknowledge is the empirical self that begins at birth and is more or less extinguished at death. Everything is reduced by him to the mere human individual since in him all prior recollections have disappeared. Thus we witness the disappearance of both the possibility of establishing contact with those forces of which a given birth is just the effect, and the possibility of re-joining that nonhuman element in man, which being situated before birth, is also beyond death; this element constitutes the 'place' for everything that may eventually be realised beyond death itself and is the principle of an incomparable sense of security. Once the rhythm has been broken, the contacts lost, and the great distances precluded to the human eye, all the paths seem open and every field is saturated with disorderly, inorganic activities that lack a deep foundation and meaning and are dominated by temporal and particularistic motivations and by passions, cheap interests, and vanity. In this context, 'culture' is no longer the context in which it is possible to actualise one's being through serious commitment and faithfulness; it is rather the locus for 'self-actualization'. And since the shifting sands of that nothingness without a name and tradition that is the empirical human subject have become the foundation of that self-actualization, the claim to equality and the right to be, as a matter of principle, anything one chooses to be is therefore carried forward and strenuously advocated in modern society. No other difference is acknowledged to be more right and truer than that

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which is 'achieved' through one's efforts and 'merit' according to the terms of various vain, intellectual, moral, or social beliefs typical of these recent times. In the same way, it is only natural that the only things left are the limits of the most coarse physical heredity, which have become the signs of incomprehensible meanings and which are endured or enjoyed according to each case, as a caprice of fate. It is also natural that personality and blood traits, social vocation and function are all elements that have become increasingly discordant to the point of generating states of real, tragic, inner and outer conflict; from a legal and ethical perspective, they have also led to a qualitative destruction, to a relative levelling, to equal rights and duties, and to an equal social morality that pretends to be imposed on everyone and to be valid for all people in the same way, with total disregard for single natures and for different inner dignities. The 'overcoming' of the castes and of the traditional socio-political orders has no other meaning. The individual has achieved all his 'freedom'; his 'chain' is not short, and his intoxication and his illusions as a restless puppet have no limits.

The freedom enjoyed by the man of Tradition was something very different. It did not consist in discarding but in being able to re-join the deeper vein of his will, which was related to the mystery of his own existential 'form'. In reality, that which corresponds to birth and to the physical element of a being reflects what can be called, in a mathematical sense, the resultant [the vectorial sum] of the various forces or tendencies at work in his birth; in other words, it reflects the direction of the stronger force. In this force there may be inclinations of minor intensity that have been swept away and that correspond to talents and tendencies that on the plane of individual consciousness are distinct from both their own organic preformation and the duties and environment of one's caste. These instances of inner contradiction within a traditional political order regulated by the caste system must be considered an exception to the rule; they become predominant, though, in a society that no longer knows the castes and, in general, in distinct social organisms in which there is no law to gather, preserve, and shape talents and qualifications in view of specific functions. Here we encounter a chaos of existential and psychic possibilities that condemns most people to a state of disharmony

and social tension; we can see plenty of that nowadays. Undoubtedly, there may have been a margin of indetermination even in the case of traditional man, but this margin in him only served to emphasise the positive aspect of these two sayings: 'Know yourself' (complemented by the saying 'nothing superfluous'), and 'Be yourself', which implied an action of inner transformation and organization leading to the elimination of this margin of indetermination and to the integration of the self. To discover the 'dominating' trait of one's form and caste and to will it, by transforming it into an ethical imperative<sup>9</sup> and, moreover, to actualise it 'ritually' through faithfulness in order to destroy everything that ties one to the earth (instincts, hedonistic motivations, material considerations, and so on) – such is the complement of the abovementioned view that leads to the second foundation of the caste system in its closeness and stability.

On the other hand, we must keep in mind that aspect of the traditional spirit according to which there was no object or function that in itself could be considered as superior or inferior to another. The true difference was rather given by the way in which the object or the function was lived out. The earthly way, inspired by utilitarianism or by greed (*sakama-karma*), was contrasted with the heavenly way of the one who acts without concern for the consequences and for the sake of the action itself (*niskama-karma*), and who transforms every action into a rite and into an 'offering'. Such was the path of *bhakti*, a term that in this context corresponds more to the virile sense of medieval *fides* than to the pietistic sense that has prevailed in the theistic idea of 'devotion'. An action performed according to this type of *bhakti* was compared to a fire that generates light and in which the matter of the act itself is consumed and purified. The degree to which the act was freed from matter, detached from greed and passion, and made self-sufficient (a 'pure act', to employ analogically an Aristotelian expression) defined the hierarchy of activities and consequently the hierarchy of the castes or other bodies that corresponded to them as 'functional classes'.

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<sup>9</sup> The only modern thinker who has come close to this view, yet without being aware of it, was Nietzsche; he developed a view of absolute morality with a 'naturalistic' basis.

## The Doctrine of the Castes

Given these premises, which were not theoretical but experiential and thus at times not even openly expressed, the aspiration to go from one kind of activity to another (and therefore from one caste to another), which from a superficial and utilitarian perspective may be considered by some as a worthier and more advantageous step, was hardly considered in the traditional world, so much so that the heredity of functions was spontaneously established even where there were no castes, but only social groups. Every type of function and activity appeared equally as a point of departure for an elevation in a different and vertical rather than horizontal sense; and not in the temporal, but in the spiritual order. In this regard, by being in their own caste, in faithfulness to their own caste and to their own nature, in obedience not to a general morality but to their morality, or to the morality of their own caste, everyone enjoyed the same dignity and the same purity as everybody else; this was true for a *shudra* as well as for a king. Everybody performed their function within the overall social order, and through their own peculiar *bhakti* even partook of the supernatural principle of this same order. Thus it was said: 'A man attains perfection when his work is worship of God, from whom all things come and who is in all'.<sup>10</sup> The god Krishna declared: 'In any way that men love me in the same way they find my love: for many are the paths of men, but they all in the end come to me'.<sup>11</sup> And also: 'In liberty from the bonds of attachment, do thou therefore the work to be done: for the man whose work is pure attains indeed the Supreme'.<sup>12</sup> The notion of *dharma*, or one's peculiar nature to which one is supposed to be faithful,<sup>13</sup> comes from the root *dr* ('to sustain', 'to uphold') and it expresses the element of order, form, or cosmos that Tradition embodies and implements over and against chaos and becoming. Through *dharma* the

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<sup>10</sup> *Bhagavad-gita*, 18.46.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.11. In 17.3 n is stated that the 'devotion' of a man must be conformed to his nature.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.19. See also *The Laws Manu*, 2.9: 'For the human being who fulfils the duty declared in the revealed canon and in tradition wins renown here on earth and unsurpassable happiness after death'.

<sup>13</sup> *Bhagavad-gita*, 18.47: 'Greater is thine own work, even if this be humble, than the work of another, even if this be great. When a man does the work God gives him, no sin can touch this man'.

traditional world, just like every living thing and every being, is upheld; the dams holding back the sea of pure contingency and temporality stand firm; living beings partake of stability. It is therefore clear why leaving one's caste and mixing castes or even the rights, the duties, the morality, and the cults of each caste was considered a sacrilege that destroys the efficacy of every rite and leads those who are guilty of it to 'hell',<sup>14</sup> that is, to the realm of demonic influences that belong to the inferior nature. The people guilty of crossing the 'caste line' were considered the only 'impure' beings in the entire hierarchy; they were pariahs, or 'untouchables' because they represented centres of psychic infection in the sense of an inner dissolution. In India only the people 'without a caste' were considered outcasts, and they were shunned even by the lowest caste, even if they had previously belonged to the highest caste; on the contrary, nobody felt humiliated by his own caste and even a *shudra* was as proud of and as committed to his own caste as a *brahmin* of the highest station was to his. Generally speaking, the idea of contamination did not concern only the individual of a higher caste who mixed with a member of a lower caste; even the latter felt contaminated by such mixture.<sup>15</sup> When gold and lead are mixed together, they are both altered; they both lose their own nature. Therefore it was necessary for *everybody* to be themselves. Thus, mixing subverted the traditional order and opened the door to infernal forces by removing what Goethe called the 'creative limitation'. The goal was the transfiguration of the 'form', which

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1.42-44. In relation to the duty of remaining faithful to the specific function and to the customs of one's caste, we may recall the characteristic episode in which Rama killed a serf (*shudra*) who practiced asceticism, thus usurping a privilege of the priestly caste. Also we may recall the traditional teaching according to which the 'Iron Age' or 'Dark Age' will be inaugurated when the serfs will practice asceticism; this seems indeed a sign of our times, as some plebeian ideologies have come to see in 'labour' a particular kind of asceticism.

<sup>15</sup> Within certain limits, the idea of contamination did not apply to women; men of higher castes could marry women of lower castes without being contaminated. Traditionally the woman did not relate to a caste in a direct way but rather through her husband. *The Laws of Manu* (9.22): 'When a woman is joined with a husband in accordance with the rules, she takes on the very same qualities that he has, just like a river flowing down into the ocean'. This is, however, no longer the case when the existential traditional structures lose their vital force.

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was obtained through *bhakti* and *niskama-karma*, namely, through action as rite and as oblation; the alteration, the destruction of the 'form', no matter the way it was carried out, was considered as a degrading form of escapism. The outcast was just the vanquished – in the Aryan East he was called a *fallen one*, *patitas*.

This was the second principle on which the caste system was founded; it was a thoroughly spiritual foundation, since India, which implemented this system in one of its strictest versions (even to the point of becoming sclerotic), never had a centralised organization that could impose it by means of a political or economic despotism. Moreover, it is possible to find expressions of this second foundation even in the Western forms of Tradition. It was a classical idea, for instance, that perfection cannot be measured with a material criterion, but that it rather consists in realizing one's nature in a thorough way. The ancients also believed that materiality only represents the inability to actualise one's form, since matter (ύλη) was depicted in Plato and Aristotle's writings as the foundation of undifferentiation and of an evasive instability that causes a thing or being to be incomplete in itself and not to correspond to its norm and 'idea', (that is, to its *dharma*). In the Roman deification of the 'limit' (*termen* or *terminus*) implemented through the elevation of the god Terminus to the highest dignity (he was even associated with the Olympian god Jupiter) as a principle of order and also as the patron saint of the 'limits'; in the tradition (susceptible of being interpreted in terms of higher meanings) according to which he who knocked down or removed a single one of the territorial boundary stones was an accursed being to be killed on sight by anybody; and in the Roman oracle that announced that the era of the destruction of the limits erected against human greed will also be the *saeculum* of the 'end of the world'<sup>16</sup> – in all these elements we find the esoteric reverberation of the same spirit. Plotinus wrote: 'Each several thing must be a separate thing; there must be acts and thoughts that are our own; the good and evil done by each

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<sup>16</sup> The meaning of this oracle converges with the Hindu teaching according to which the Dark Age (*Kali Yuga*), which is the end of a cycle (*Maha-Yuga*), corresponds to a period of unrestrained intermingling of the castes and to the decline of the rites.

human being must be his own'.<sup>17</sup> The idea that to comply perfectly with one's own specific function leads to an identical participation in the spirituality of the whole, conceived as a living organism, can be traced back to the best Greco-Roman traditions; later on it eventually became part of the *organic* vision of the Germanic-Roman civilization of the Middle Ages.

The presuppositions for the sense of joy and pride in one's own profession (such that any job, no matter how humble it was, could be performed as an 'art'), which have been preserved in some European peoples until recent times as an echo of the traditional spirit, are not any different, after all. The ancient German peasant, for instance, experienced his cultivating the land as a title of nobility, even though he was not able to see in this work, unlike his Persian counterpart, a symbol and an episode of the struggle between the god of light and the god of darkness. The members of the medieval corporations and guilds were as proud of their professional tradition as the nobility was proud of its bloodline. And when Luther, following Saint Thomas, taught that to go from one profession to another in order to enhance one's position in the social hierarchy ran contrary to God's law because God assigns to each and every one his or her own state, and therefore people must obey Him by remaining where they are and that the only way to serve God consists in doing one's best at one's job, the tradition was faithfully preserved in these ideas, and the best spirit of the Middle Ages was reflected, although with the limitations inherent in a theistic and devotional schema.

Prior to the advent of the civilization of the Third Estate (mercantilism, capitalism), the social ethics that was religiously sanctioned in the West consisted in realizing one's being and in achieving one's own perfection within the fixed parameters that one's individual nature and the group to which one belonged clearly defined. Economic activity, work, and profit were justified only in the measure in which they were necessary for sustenance and to ensure the dignity of an existence conformed to one's own estate, without the lower instinct of self-interest

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<sup>17</sup> *Enneads*, 3.1.4.

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or profit coming first. Hence, we encounter a character of active impersonality in this domain as well.

It has been noted that in the caste hierarchy, relationships like those occurring between potentiality and act were re-enacted. In the superior caste, the same activity that in the inferior caste presented itself in a more conditioned form was manifested in a more pure, complete, and freer manner as an idea. This allows us to take issue with the modern demagogical ideas concerning an alleged 'flocklike mindedness' of individuals who lived in traditional societies, and concerning the alleged lack of that sense of dignity and freedom of every individual that only modern, 'evolved' mankind is supposed to have achieved. In fact, even when the hierarchical position of the individual did not proceed from the spontaneous acknowledgment of one's own nature and one's faithfulness to it, the subordination of the inferior to the superior, far from being an indolent acquiescence, was almost the symbolical and ritual expression of a faithfulness and a devotion to one's particular ideal and to a higher form of being that the inferior could not directly and organically live out as his own nature (*svadharma*), but which he could still consider as the centre of his own actions precisely through his devotion and active subordination to a higher caste.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, although in the East to leave one's caste was only allowed in exceptional cases and a fugitive was far from being considered a free man, it was still possible to create certain causes through the way one conducted oneself in thought, word, and deed. These causes, by virtue of the analogy with the principle or with the hierarchy to which one was subjected, could produce a new way of being that corresponded to that principle or to that hierarchy.<sup>19</sup> Besides the *bhakti* or *fides* that is aimed directly at the

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<sup>18</sup> 'If we say that people of this sort ought to be subject to the highest type of man, we intend that the subject should be governed not to his own detriment but on the same principle as his superior, who is himself governed by the divine element within him. It is better for everyone to be subject to a power of godlike wisdom residing within himself, or failing that, imposed from without'. Plato, *Republic*, 590d.

<sup>19</sup> In *The Laws of Manu* while on the one hand it is written: 'Even if he is set free by his master, a servant is not set free from slavery; for since that is innate in him, who can take it from him?' (8.414); on the other hand we read: 'The servant's duty and supreme good is nothing but obedience to famous priestly householders, who know the Veda. If he is



Supreme Principle, that is, at the Unconditioned, the *bhakti* that was centred on some other high principle was thought to have the real and objective power to resolve the elements of the one who had nourished it (following the fulfilment of his own *dharma*) into this same principle,<sup>20</sup> and thus to make that person ascend, not exteriorly and artificially (as is the case in the disorder and careerism of modern society), but from within, in a profound and organic way, from a lower to a higher degree of the spiritual hierarchy as a reflection of the passage of the transcendental principle of being from one possibility to another.

Regarding that kind of social order that had its centre in a sovereign and lasted up to the time of the Holy Roman Empire, there survives the principle (upheld by Celsus against the dualism of early Christianity) according to which the subjects may demonstrate their faithfulness to God through faithfulness to their ruler. The view of the subject as a being connected to the person of his sovereign through a sacred and freely chosen vow is an ancient Indo-European view. In the traditional world, this *fides* or personal devotion went beyond political and individual boundaries, and even acquired the value of a path leading to liberation. Cumont, in reference to Iran, observed that

The subjects dedicated to their deified kings not only their actions and words, but their very thoughts. Their duty was a complete abandonment of their personality in favour of those monarchs who were held the equal of gods. The sacred militia of the mysteries was nothing but this civic

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unpolluted, obedient to his superiors, gentle in his speech, without a sense of 'I', and always dependent on the priests and the other twice-born castes, he attains a superior birth in the next life' (9.334-5). And also (10.42): 'By the powers of their seed and their asceticism, in age after age these castes are pulled up or pulled down in birth among men here on earth'.

<sup>20</sup> We may recall Plotinus's teaching: 'When we cease to live, our death hands over to another principle this energy of our own personal career. That principle (of the new birth) strives to gain control, and if it succeeds it also lives and itself, in turn, possesses a guiding spirit'. *Enneads*, 3.1.3. In this instance, this 'guiding spirit' corresponds to the principle that has been made the object of one's active and loyal *bhakti*.

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morality viewed from the religious standpoint. It confounded loyalty with piety.<sup>21</sup>

This loyalty, in the brightest and most luminous forms of Tradition, was credited with the power of producing the same fruits faith is supposed to produce. Not too many years ago, the Japanese general Nogi, who had prevailed at Port Arthur against his Russian foes, killed himself with his wife after the death of his emperor in order to follow him in the afterlife.

All of this is self-evident since I have said that *faithfulness* is the second cornerstone of every traditional organization, in addition to the rite and an elite that embodies transcendence. This is the force that, as a magnet, establishes contacts, creates a psychic atmosphere, stabilises the social structure, and determines a system of coordination and gravitation between the individual elements and the centre. When this fluid, which is rooted in freedom and in the spiritual spontaneity of the personality, fails, the traditional organism loses its elementary power of cohesion, paths become precluded, subtler senses atrophied, the parts dissociated and atomised. The consequence of this degeneration is the immediate withdrawal of the forces from above, which thus abandon men to themselves, leaving them free to go to where they wish according to the destiny that their actions create and that no superior influence will ever be able to modify again. This is the mystery inherent in decadence.

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<sup>21</sup> F. Cumont, *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, 20.

# The Meaning of Caste

by Frithjof Schuon

Like all other sacred institutions the system of castes is founded on the nature of things or, to be more exact, on one aspect of that nature, and thus on a reality which in certain circumstances cannot but manifest itself; this statement is equally valid as regards the opposite aspect, that of the equality of men before God. In short, in order to justify the system of castes it is enough to ask the following question: does diversity of qualifications and of heredity exist? If it does, then the system of castes is both possible and legitimate. In the case of an absence of castes, where this is traditionally imposed, the sole question is: are men equal, not just from the point of view of their animality which is not in question, but from the point of view of their final end? Since every man has an immortal soul this is certain; therefore in a given traditional society this consideration can take precedence over that of diversity of qualifications. The immortality of the soul is the postulate of religious 'egalitarianism', just as the quasi-divine character of the intellect – and hence of the intellectual elite – is the postulate of the caste system.

One could not imagine any greater divergence than that between the hierarchical system of Hinduism and the levelling outlook of Islam, yet there is here only a difference of emphasis, for truth is one: indeed, if Hinduism considers first of all in human nature those fundamental tendencies which divide men into so many hierarchical categories, it nevertheless realises equality in the super-caste of wandering monks, the *sannyasis*, in which social origin no longer plays any part. The case of the Christian clergy is analogous in the sense that among them titles of nobility disappear: a peasant cannot become a prince, but he can become Pope and crown an Emperor. Conversely, some form of hierarchy appears even in the most 'egalitarian' religions: in Islam, where every

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man is his own priest, the Sherifs, descendants of the Prophet, form a religious nobility and are thus superimposed on the rest of society, though without assuming in it any exclusive function. In the Christian world a citizen of note might be ennobled, whereas in the Hindu system such a thing is altogether excluded, because there the essential object of the higher castes is the maintenance of a primordial perfection; it is the descending sense given to the origin of castes that explains why caste can be lost but not acquired.<sup>1</sup> Indeed this perspective of 'hereditary maintenance' is the very key to the caste system: it also explains the exclusiveness of admission to Hindu temples – the temples are not pulpits for preaching – and in a more general way the preponderant part played by rules of purity. The 'obsession' of Hinduism is not the conversion of unbelievers, but on the contrary the maintaining of a primordial purity which is as much intellectual as moral and ritual.

What are the fundamental tendencies of human nature to which castes are more or less directly related? They could be defined as so many different ways of envisaging an empirical reality: in other words, the fundamental tendency in a man is connected with his 'feeling' or 'consciousness' of what is 'real'. For the *brahmin* – the purely intellectual, contemplative and sacerdotal type – it is the changeless, the transcendent which is real; in his innermost heart he does not believe either in 'life' or in 'earth'; something in him remains foreign to change and to matter; broadly speaking such is his inner disposition – what might be called his 'imaginative life' – whatever may be the personal weaknesses by which it is obscured. The *kshatriya* – the 'knightly' type – has a keen intelligence, but it is turned towards action and analysis rather than towards contemplation and synthesis; his strength lies especially in his character; he makes up for the aggressiveness of his energy by his generosity and for his passionate nature by his nobility, self-control and greatness of soul. For this human type it is action that is 'real', for it is by action that things

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<sup>1</sup> The late Pandit Hari Prasad Shastri did, however, assure us that there could be exceptions to this rule, quite apart from the possible reintegration of a family through successive marriages, and cited the case of King Vishvamisra, companion of Rama. In that case one should no doubt take into account the quality of the cyclic period and the special conditions created by the proximity of an *avatar* of Vishnu.

are determined, modified and ordered; without action there is neither virtue nor honour nor glory. In other words the *kshatriya* believes in the efficacy of action rather than in the fatedness of a given situation: he despises the tyranny of facts and thinks only of determining their order, of clarifying a chaos, of cutting Gordian knots. Thus, just as for the *brahmin* all is in motion and unreal except the Eternal and whatever is attached to It – truth, knowledge, contemplation, ritual, the Path – so for the *kshatriya* all is uncertain and peripheral except the constants of his *dharma* – action, honour, virtue, glory, nobility – on which for him all other values depend. This perspective can be transposed onto the religious plane without any essential change in its psychological quality.

For the *vaishya* – the merchant, the peasant, the artisan, the man whose activities are directly bound up with material values not merely *de facto* and accidentally but by virtue of his inner nature – it is riches, security, prosperity and well-being that are ‘real’; in his instinctive life other values are secondary and in his innermost heart he does not believe in them; his imagination expands on the plane of economic stability, of the material perfection of work and the return it yields, and when this is transposed on to the religious plane it becomes exclusively a perspective of accumulating merit with a view to posthumous security. Outwardly this mentality is analogous to that of the *brahmin* by reason of its static and pacific character; but it is remote from the mentality both of the *brahmin* and the *kshatriya* because of a certain ‘narrowness’ of the intelligence and will;<sup>2</sup> the *vaishya* is clever and possesses common sense,

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<sup>2</sup> In the nineteenth century the bourgeois laity in Europe had for reasons of equilibrium to realise in their turn the qualities of the classes that had been eliminated; we are not referring here to the fact of belonging to the bourgeois class, which is in itself unimportant, but to the bourgeois spirit, which is quite a different thing. The preoccupation with science in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, proves, not indeed that humanity has progressed, but that the ‘intellectuality’ of men of mercantile type is hardly able to rise above the level of mere facts. The current illusion that man can re-join metaphysical realities by dint of scientific discoveries is quite characteristic of this heaviness of spirit and only goes to prove that, as Guénon wrote, ‘the rise of the *vaishya* spells intellectual night’. Moreover ‘civilization’, without any qualifying epithet and taken as *the* civilization, is a typically *vaishya* concept, and this explains on the one hand the current hatred for all that is considered ‘fanatical’ and on the other hand an

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but he lacks specifically intellectual qualities and also chivalrous virtues, idealism in the higher sense of the term. Here it must be repeated that we are speaking, not of 'classes', but of 'castes', or, to be more precise, of 'natural castes', since institutions as such, though they retrace nature, are never wholly free from the imperfections and vicissitudes of all manifestation. One does not belong to a particular caste because one follows a certain profession and is the issue of certain parents, but – at any rate under normal conditions – one follows a particular profession because one belongs to a certain caste and the latter is largely – though not absolutely – guaranteed by heredity; at least this guarantee is sufficient to render the Hindu system possible. This system has never been able to exclude exceptions, which as such confirm the rule; the fact that the exceptions have attained the largest possible number in our days of overpopulation and of the 'realization of impossibilities' could not in any case vitiate the principle of hereditary hierarchy.

The 'twice-born' (*dvija*), namely the three castes of which we have spoken, might be defined as a spirit endowed with a body, and the *shudra*, who represents the fourth caste, as a body endowed with human consciousness; in fact the *shudra* is the man who is properly qualified only for manual work of a more or less quantitative kind and not for work demanding greater initiative and broader, more complex aptitudes; for this human type, which is still more widely separated from the preceding types than is the *vaishya* from the noble castes, it is bodily things that are 'real'; it is eating and drinking which in this case strictly constitute happiness, these and their psychological concomitances;<sup>3</sup> in the innate perspective of the *shudra*, in his 'heart', all that lies outside the realm of bodily satisfaction smacks of luxury, not to say of 'illusion', or in any case seems something 'alongside' of what his imagination takes for reality,

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element of extreme affectation which forms a part of the oppressive system of the civilization in question.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning which the words 'reality' and 'realism' have acquired for many of our contemporaries is highly significant; 'reality' has become synonymous with banality and even triviality, and thus with ugliness and brutality; in such a 'realism' there is no longer room for truth, nobility or beauty, for values, that is, which elude quantitative measurement.

namely the satisfaction of immediate physical needs. It might be objected that the knightly type is also a pleasure-seeker, but this is not the point; here the question is above all the psychological function of enjoyment, the part it plays in an assemblage of compossibles; the *kshatriya* readily turns poet or aesthete, he lays very little stress on matter as such. The central and at the same time elementary place held by enjoyment in the innate perspective of the *shudra* explains his often carefree, dissipated and 'instantaneous' character through which he rejoins, by a curious inverted analogy, the spiritual carefreeness of the man who is beyond caste (*ativarnashrami*), the *sannyasi* who likewise lives in the 'present moment', does not think of the morrow and wanders without apparent object; but the *shudra* is too passive in relation to matter to be able to govern himself and therefore remains dependent on a will other than his own; his virtue is fidelity, or a kind of massive uprightness, no doubt opaque but simple and intelligible.

The qualities of *vaishyas* are often confused with those of *brahmins* and vice versa for the simple reason that both these castes are peaceable; and in the same way *shudras* are apt to be confused with *kshatriyas* because of the aspects of violence proper to both castes; these errors are the more harmful inasmuch as we live in a civilization that is half *vaishya* and half *shudra*, the values of which render such confusions easy. In such a world it is impossible to reach an understanding of the *brahmin* without having first come to understand the values of the *kshatriya*. If facile confusions and unwarrantable assimilations are to be avoided, it is essential to differentiate sharply and on every plane between the higher and the lower, the conscious and the unconscious, the spiritual and the material, the qualitative and the quantitative.

It now remains for us to consider the case of the man who is 'without caste'; here again it is a natural type, a basic human tendency, that we have in mind and not merely the categories that in fact occur in the Hindu system. We have seen that the typical *shudra* can be opposed, because of his lack of real interest in what transcends his bodily life and the resulting lack of constructive aptitudes, to the three higher castes taken together; in a similar way the 'outcast', by reason of his chaotic character, can be opposed to all men of homogeneous character. The 'untouchable'

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exhibits a tendency to realise those psychological possibilities which are excluded for others: hence his proneness to transgression; he finds his satisfaction in what others reject. According to the Hindu the extreme type of the casteless man – the *chandala* properly so called – is the offspring of a *shudra* father and a *brahmin* mother; here the basic idea is that the maximum of impurity – or in other words of psychological dissonance due to congenital incompatibilities – arises from a maximum difference between the castes of the parents; the child of *shudra* parents is ‘pure’, thanks to their mental homogeneity, but the child born of the mixture of a *shudra* and a noble woman is ‘impure’ to the very degree of the superiority of the woman's caste over that of her husband. In Christian countries, as almost everywhere else, an illegitimate child, the ‘fruit of sin’, is in practice regarded as ‘impure’; from the Hindu standpoint, which is centred in a kind of organic purity, this initial sin is hereditary in the same way as to be noble-born in Europe, or as ‘original sin’ is in the Christian perspective.<sup>4</sup> All things considered the pariah,

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Illicit mingling of castes, marriages contrary to the rules and the omission of prescribed rites are the origin of the impure classes’, says the *Manava Dharma Shastra* (X. 24). According to Shri Ramakrishna ‘the rules of caste are automatically effaced for the man who has reached perfection and realised the unity of all things; but as long as this sublime experience has not been obtained no one can avoid feeling superiority towards some and inferiority towards others, and all ought to observe distinctions of caste. If a man in this state of ignorance feigns perfection by trampling on caste distinctions and living without restraint, he is certainly like an unripe fruit that has been made to ripen artificially. . . . Those who invoke the Name of God become saints. Krishna Kishore was a saintly man of Ariadaha. One day he went on a pilgrimage to Vrindavan. During his journey he became thirsty and, seeing a man near a well, asked him to draw a little water. The man excused himself, saying he was of a very low caste, being a cobbler and so unworthy to offer water to a brahmin. Krishna Kishore then said to him: “Purify yourself by pronouncing the Name of God! Say: Shiva! Shiva!” The man obeyed and then offered him water to drink and that orthodox brahmin drank it! How great was his faith! . . . Chaitanya and Nityananda used to transmit the Name of Hari (the initiation into ritual invocation, *japa yoga*) to everyone including pariahs and embraced them all. A brahmin without this love is no longer a brahmin; a pariah with this love is no longer a pariah. Through *bhakti* an untouchable becomes pure and is raised up’ (*L'Enseignement de Ramakrishna*, published by J. Herbert). Here is an illustration of the particular virtue of *bhakti* with which we dealt in our *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*. If account be taken of the inevitable difference between the principle of caste and its social and



whatever his ethnic origin and cultural background, constitutes a definite type which normally dwells on the fringe of society and exhausts those possibilities which no one else is willing to touch.

When he has talents – and one might say he is then capable ‘of anything and of nothing’ – he often appears equivocal, unbalanced, sometimes simian, and protean if he is gifted; often he appears as a chimney-sweep, comedian or executioner, not to mention illicit occupations; in a word he shows a tendency either to follow bizarre or sinister activities; or simply to neglect established rules, in which he resembles certain saints, though of course by inverse analogy. So far as ‘impure’ or ‘contemptible’ trades are concerned it might be thought hypocritical to abandon to certain men activities one is not willing to pursue oneself though one has need of them, but it must not be forgotten that society has a right to protect itself against tendencies which could be harmful to it and to neutralise them by exercising them through the intermediacy of men who in a way embody them. As a ‘totality’ society has ‘divine rights’ which an individual as such – and inasmuch as he is a ‘part’ – does not possess; in some cases the converse is also true. An individual may refrain from condemning; society is obliged to condemn.

Even unvarying situations may, however, become attenuated with the passage of time: the casteless mass of India benefits from the cosmic law of compensation through having become quite numerous and because of the resulting collective homogeneity; number itself acts as an absorbent substance, for the mass as such has something of the levelling innocence of earth; just as, according to Islamic esoterism, the flames of hell will in the end become cold – God being ‘essentially’ and not ‘accidentally’ good – so the congenital transgression of the pariah, his ‘impurity’, must become attenuated at the end of the age and even completely reabsorbed in many cases, though without the heredity of

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historical crystallization, it will readily be understood that an individual brahmin may be intrinsically heretical – as were Dayananda Saraswati and Ram Mohan Roy – and that a pariah may be a saint through Knowledge, as was Tiruvalluvar, who is venerated by brahmins as an *avatar* of Shiva; inferiority can arise within the framework of superiority and vice versa.

## The Meaning of Caste

which the individual remains a link or part<sup>5</sup> being on that account abolished. For these individuals the fact of being a pariah is an aspect of *karma* – a consequence of ‘former actions’ – exactly as is a disease or any other kind of misfortune for a member of a higher caste. On the other hand this same exclusion – a bit like the condition of widows – has a certain religious value for the pariahs themselves, and this explains the refusal of most of them to escape from their condition by abandoning the Hindu world;<sup>6</sup> as a general rule such men are proud to belong to their particular pariah ‘caste’, this being true even of *chandalas*.

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<sup>5</sup> According to the *Manava Dharma Shastra*, ‘a man who belongs to a base class may be recognised by his actions. . . . The absence of noble feelings, coarseness of speech, cruelty (malice) and a forgetfulness of duties denote, here below, the man who owes his birth to a mother deserving of contempt’. These criteria can clearly no longer be directly applied to the whole mass of the casteless any more than it can be said that all members of higher castes possess the virtues appropriate to their respective *dharma*s. It may be added that this aspect of the problem is independent of the question of temple entry; even if it be admitted that a certain social formalism may be suppressed by reason of new cyclic conditions, which is incontestable, such an easing of external forms would remain independent of any question of knowing whether pariahs should have access to *brahmin* sanctuaries. A Hindu temple is something very different from a church or a mosque; it is not a place of obligatory worship but the dwelling place of a Divine Presence. The principle of ritual exclusion, with the unquestionable dogmatic rights it implies, is moreover known in all religions; one need only recall the Temple enclosure at Jerusalem and the iconostasis of Orthodox Christian churches.

<sup>6</sup> The Shankaracharya of Kanchi has spoken of this as follows: ‘The caste system, while exercising the role of a rigid discipline conducive to the general well-being of society, is neutralised in the case of highly developed personages such as Nandanar the pariah Saint, or Dharma Vyadha, or Vidura of the *Mahabharata*. Nandanar, even in his state of spiritual ecstasy, refused to enter the precincts of the temple, but he felt himself transported by joy simply by seeing the sanctuary tower; and the Brahmin of the temple respected Nandanar as the Brahmin of Brahmins. . . . Diversity of *acharas*, including food, marriage, etc., has a purpose which in the end profits the whole of humanity. . . . The Shudra did sternly refuse to allow a Brahmana or a Kshattriya to live in his house and a Chandala would stubbornly resist a Brahmin's entrance into his quarters and, if a Brahmin happened to enter his locality even accidentally, the Chandalas of the locality would go through some purificatory ceremonies. This indicates that the responsibility for the preservation of the respective disciplinary *acharas* of any caste did not lie with the concerned caste alone but was a collective one that lay with every component part of the society at large’ (‘Our Spiritual Crisis’, *The Hindu*, July 1956).

## Castes and Races

Caste is the centre of gravity of the individual soul; the extreme pariah type is without centre and so lives on the periphery and in inversion; if he tends to transgression, that is because in a sense it lends him the centre he lacks and thus in an illusory way frees him from his equivocal nature. His is a decentralised subjectivity, centrifugal and without recognised limits; he flees from the law, the norm, because that would bring him back to the centre which by his very nature he avoids. The *shudra* type is also 'subjective', but this subjectivity is opaque and homogeneous and bound to the body which is an objective reality; the *shudra* has the quality, and the defect, of being 'solid'. This can also be expressed as follows: the *brahmin* is 'objective' and centred in 'spirit'; the *kshatriya* tends towards 'spirit', but in a 'subjective' way; the *vaishya* is 'objective' on the plane of 'matter'; the *shudra* is 'subjective' on that same plane. The first three castes – the 'twice-born' of Hinduism – are therefore distinguished from the *shudra* either by 'spirit' or by 'objectivity'; only the *shudra* combines 'matter' with 'subjectivity'. Like the *shudra*, the *vaishya* is a materialist, but his is a materialism of wider interests; like the *brahmin*, the *kshatriya* is an 'idealist', but his 'idealism' is more or less worldly or egocentric.

The lower caste not only lacks the mentality of the higher, but cannot even conceive of it exactly; besides, few things are more painful than psychological interpretations which attribute to the superior man intentions he could never possibly entertain. Such opinions merely reflect the small-mindedness of their authors, as can be observed *ad nauseam* in historical criticism or in the science of religions; men whose souls are fragmentary and opaque pretend that they can instruct us in the 'psychology' of greatness and of the sacred.

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It was stated at the outset that the system of castes is based on the nature of things, that is to say on certain natural properties of humankind

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and of which it is a traditional application;<sup>7</sup> now, as always happens in such a case, the traditional system ‘creates’ – or helps to create – those very factors of which it is itself an application. The Hindu system results from spiritual or intellectual differences and at the same time creates types that are all the more sharply differentiated; whether this is an advantage or a disadvantage or both at once, it is a fact and an unavoidable fact at that. In the same way, where there is a traditional absence of castes, the latter perspective not only derives from the real absence of differentiation between men but also actualises it, that is to say, it eliminates in a certain sense those factors which, in the opposite perspective, give rise to the system of castes. In Islam, where there is no priestly caste either in a hereditary or in a vocational sense, every man has in him something of the priest and none is wholly a layman or is even describable as ‘the common man’. To take another example, it can be said that if every Moslem is ‘something of a priest’, every Red Indian is ‘something of a prophet’, at least in certain conditions and by reason of the particular structure of the Red Indian tradition which distributes the prophetic quality throughout the collectivity, though without thereby abolishing the prophetic function properly so called. If anyone were minded to reproach Hinduism for having ‘created’ the pariah, the West could just as well be reproached for ‘creating’ sin, since here as elsewhere the concept contributes to realizing the thing itself by virtue of a concomitance that is inevitable in the case of any formal crystallization.

If Westerners have difficulty in understanding the caste system it is, however, chiefly because they underestimate the law of heredity, and this for the very simple reason that it has become more or less inoperative in an environment as chaotic as the modern West where almost everyone aspires to climb the social ladder – if indeed such a ladder can still be said to exist – and where hardly anyone follows his father’s calling. A century of two of such conditions have been enough to render heredity highly precarious and unstable, and all the more so since heredity was not in the past turned to account by a system as strict as that of the Hindu castes; but even where crafts transmitted from father to son did exist, machines

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<sup>7</sup> Gandhi pointed out that ‘the caste system . . . is inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply made a science of it’ (*Young India*).

have practically abolished heredity. To this must be added, on the one hand, the virtual elimination of the nobility and, on the other, the creation of new 'elites'; the most disparate and 'opaque' elements have been turned into 'intellectuals' with the result that, as Guénon would have said, hardly anyone is any longer 'in his proper place'; nor is there anything surprising in the fact that 'metaphysical knowledge' has now come to be envisaged in accordance with the perspective of *vaishya* and *shudra*, a change which no amount of clap-trap about 'culture' can conceal.

The problem of castes leads us to open a parenthesis here: how is the position or quality of the modern industrial worker to be defined? In the first place the answer is that 'the worker's world' is a wholly artificial creation due to machines and the popular diffusion of scientific information connected with their use; in other words machines infallibly create the artificial human type called 'proletarian', or rather they create a proletariat, for here it is essentially a question of a quantitative collectivity and not of a natural caste, namely one that is based on a particular individual nature. If machines could be suppressed and the ancient crafts restored with all their aspects of art and dignity, the 'problem of the workers' would cease to exist; this is true even as regards purely servile functions or more or less quantitative occupations, for the simple reason that machines are in themselves inhuman and anti-spiritual. The machine kills not only the soul of the worker, but the soul as such and so also the soul of the exploiter: the pair exploiter-worker is inseparable from mechanization, whereas the crafts by their human and spiritual quality prevent this gross alternative. The universe of the machine means, in short, the triumph of ponderous and treacherous iron-mongery; it is the victory of metal over wood, of matter over man, of cunning over intelligence;<sup>8</sup> expressions such as 'mass', 'block' and 'shock' that occur so commonly in the vocabulary of industrialised man, are very significant in a world more proper to insects than to humans. There is

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<sup>8</sup> Somewhere we have read that only the advances in technology can explain the new and catastrophic character of the First World War, and this is very true. Here it is machines that have made history, just as moreover they are making men, ideas and an entire world.

## The Meaning of Caste

nothing surprising in the fact that the 'workers' world', with its mechanico-scientific and materialistic psychology, is particularly impermeable to spiritual realities, for it presupposes a 'surrounding reality' which is quite artificial: it requires machinery and therefore metal, din, hidden and treacherous forces, a nightmare environment, incomprehensible comings and goings, in a word an insect-like existence carried on in the midst of ugliness and triviality. In such a world, or rather in such a 'stage set', spiritual reality comes to be regarded as an all too obvious illusion or a luxury to be despised. In no matter what traditional environment, on the contrary, it is the 'problem of the workers', and so also of mechanization, which is devoid of persuasive force: in order to make it convincing, a world of stage sets corresponding to it had first to be created, in which the very forms suggest the absence of God; Heaven has to be implausible and talk of God has to sound false.<sup>9</sup> When the industrial worker says he has no time to pray he is not so wrong, for in this way he is merely expressing what is inhuman or, one might say, subhuman in his condition. The ancient crafts were eminently intelligible and did not deprive man of his human quality, which by definition implies the faculty to think of God. Some will doubtless object that industrialism is a fact and must be accepted as such, as though the character of being a fact took precedence over truth. People easily mistake for courage and realism what is their exact opposite: that is to say, because some calamity cannot be prevented, people call it a 'good' and make a virtue of their own inability to escape from it. Error is deemed truth simply because it exists and this fits in well with the dynamism and existentialism of the mentality of a machine age; everything that exists, thanks to the blindness of men, is called 'our time', just as if this fact by

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<sup>9</sup> The great mistake of those who in Europe seek to lead the industrial masses back to the fold of the Church is that they confirm the worker in his 'dehumanization' by accepting the world of machines as a real and legitimate world and even believing themselves obliged to 'love that world for its own sake'. To translate the Gospels into slang or to travesty the Holy Family in the guise of proletarians is to make a mockery not only of religion but of the workers themselves; it is in any case base demagoguery or, let us say, weakmindedness, for all these attempts betray the inferiority complex of 'intellectuals' when they meet the sort of 'brutal realism' characteristic of the industrial worker. This 'realism' becomes the more easy the more its field is limited, gross and so also unreal.

itself constituted a categorical imperative. It is all too clear that the impossibility of escaping from an ill does not prevent that ill from being what it is; in order to find a remedy it is necessary to consider the ill quite apart from our chance of escape or our desire not to perceive it, for no good can arise in opposition to truth.

There is a common mistake, and one characteristic of the positivist or existentialist mentality of our times, which consists in believing that the establishing of a fact depends on knowing its causes or the remedies for it as the case may be, as if man had not a right to see things he can neither explain nor modify; to point out an evil is called 'barren criticism' and one forgets that the first step towards a possible cure is to establish the nature of the disease. In any case, every situation offers the possibility, if not of an objective solution, at least of a subjective evaluation, a liberation by the spirit; whoever understands the real nature of machinery will at the same time escape from psychological enslavement to machines, and this is already a great gain. We say this without any optimism and without losing sight of the fact that the present world is a necessary evil whose metaphysical root lies in the last analysis in the infinity of Divine Possibility.

There is yet another objection to be reckoned with: some will say there have always been machines and those of the nineteenth century are merely more perfect, but this argument contains a radical error that one encounters again and again in varying forms; it arises from a lack of any feeling for 'dimensions' or, to put it in another way, from an inability to distinguish between qualitative and 'eminent' differences and those which are quantitative or accidental. The old looms, for example, even when highly perfected, are a kind of revelation and a symbol which by its intelligibility allows the soul to breathe, whereas a mechanised loom is suffocating for the man who serves it; the genesis of the craft of weaving goes hand in hand with spiritual life – as also appears from its aesthetic quality – whereas a modern machine on the contrary presupposes a mental climate and a labour of research incompatible with sanctity, not to speak of its resemblance to some giant arthropod or to a magic box, a fact which also counts as a criterion. A saint might construct or perfect a windmill or a water mill, but no saint could invent a machine, precisely

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because technical progress of this kind implies a mentality contrary to spirituality, and this criterion is evinced with brutal clarity, as has just been said, in the very forms of mechanical constructions.<sup>10</sup>

It must be emphasised that in the realm of forms, as in that of the spirit, everything is false which is not consonant either with virgin nature or with a sanctuary; everything legitimate is connected with nature on the one hand and with the sacred on the other. One striking characteristic of machines is that they feed insatiably on materials, these being often of a tellurian and darksome character, instead of being set in motion by man alone or by some natural force such as wind or water; in order to keep them 'alive' man is forced to resort to a wholesale pillaging of the earth, and this is not the least aspect of their function of disequilibrium. A man must be blind indeed not to see that neither speed nor overproduction is a benefit, not to mention the reducing of the people to a proletariat and the disfigurement of the world.<sup>11</sup> But the basic argument remains the one first mentioned: such technology can only be born in a world without God, a world in which cunning has taken the place of intelligence and contemplation.

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After this digression let us return to our fundamental theme: it is easy for a Westerner to understand how the equality of men before God springs from the very nature of things, and all the more so since the monotheistic religions – as well as Buddhism – by their very structure

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<sup>10</sup> Attempts which, in antiquity and in the Middle Ages, came nearest to mechanical inventions were those that served chiefly for amusement and were regarded as curiosities and thus as things which became legitimate by very reason of their exceptional character. The ancients were not like feckless children who handle anything within reach, but on the contrary like men of ripe judgment who avoid certain orders of possibilities whose disastrous consequences they foresee.

<sup>11</sup> We can well guess that some would refuse us the moral right to make use of modern inventions, as if the economic structure and rhythms of our period would allow one to escape from these inventions or as if it were useful for one man to escape when no one else is able to do so. This refusal would moreover be logical only if all those values which the modern world has destroyed were restored to us.



neutralise the inconveniences which can result from human inequalities; the fact that they accept these on the lay or worldly plane and on the other hand also create religious hierarchies, in no way impairs their fundamental perspective. Some may ask themselves why, granted that such a 'levelling' is spiritually possible, Hinduism could not adopt the same point of view and abandon caste; now Hinduism as such, in other words as a totality, has neither the right nor the power to do this, since it goes without saying that, if a sacred institution exists, that is because it is metaphysically possible and therefore necessary, and this implies that it offers advantages which could not be realised otherwise.<sup>12</sup>

In fact, the pure and direct character of Vedantic metaphysics would be inconceivable apart from the caste system; in India the most transcendent intellectuality enjoys complete liberty, whereas in other traditions this same intellectuality has to accommodate itself to an

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<sup>12</sup> Moreover the caste system proves its legitimacy by its results: 'We do not think' wrote a missionary on the subject of the brahmins, 'that there exists in the world an aristocratic family or even a royal family which has defended itself so pitilessly against every contagion, every misalliance, every physical or moral taint. That is why, personally speaking, we cannot conceal the fact that our contact with this splendid caste has left us truly dazzled and, from the bottom of our heart, profoundly sympathetic. . . . To the prestige of plastic beauty the brahmin visibly unites that of intelligence. Especially is he gifted to an extraordinary extent for the abstract sciences, for philosophy, and above all for mathematics. A man who on this score is certainly one of the most celebrated in South India, being a member of the higher council of professors of the Madras University, the Rev. Father Honouré, declared to us that the average level of the countless brahmin pupils he had taught during half a century as a teacher was far above, not only the average, but even the highest category of students in European universities' (Pierre Lhande: *L'Inde Sacrée*). 'There is no doubt that caste (sub-castes of *vaishya* and *shudras* are meant here) offers many advantages to its members. It makes their work as easy, agreeable and honourable as possible; it excludes competitions properly so called, distributes a given quantity of work among the largest possible number of available persons, looks after them in case of unemployment and defends their interests by the most varied means. . . . On the other hand, the fact that a profession is transmitted from father to son in many respects guarantees the quality of the work; through his heredity a man reaches an almost organic qualification for a particular activity which would be difficult to realise in any other way; at the same time technical secrets are handed on which enable craftsmen to produce masterpieces with most primitive means. Lastly the caste system has greatly contributed to the stabilization of Hindu society and the preservation of its civilization. . . .' (H. von Glasenapp: *Der Hinduismus*).

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esoterism more or less sibylline or even 'tortuous' in its formulations and often also to certain sentimental restraints; this is the price paid for simplification of the social order. In the Semitic religions esoterism is closely bound up with exoterism and vice versa; the absence of castes imposes a certain mental uniformity which, from the point of view of pure metaphysics offers disadvantages not less than those the caste system offers from the point of view of the imponderables of human nature; exoterism is very apt to trespass on esoterism and this leads to an oscillation between these two planes to which a man like Omar Khayyam, an orthodox Sufi, replied by paradox and irony.<sup>13</sup> Where there exists a sharply defined exoterism, esoterism can hardly avoid 'walking on exoteric stilts', although in reality it represents the essence of truth which transcends and incidentally shatters forms, as is shown by a case like that of Al-Hallaj, a lover of God whom the Hindus would assuredly not have condemned. It must not be forgotten that the collectivity represents a principle of tending to increase density and complexity; it is always ready to lend an absolute character to facts, and this is the tendency of which religious dogmatism takes account from the outset. If esoterism can infuse into the mass something of its mysteries and graces, the mass in return lends it – to the extent that esoterism opens itself to the mass – its own tendencies to both 'density' and 'dissipation', whence a doctrinal simplification and a need for external activities which are the very antipodes of intellection and contemplation. For example, in Islam four levels must be distinguished: first there is exoterism as such (*shari'ah*), which includes the ideas and means proper to its nature; then there is esoterism (*haqiqah* or *tasawwuf*) within exoterism, comprising whatever exoterism has been able or even compelled to assimilate of the former, the division between the two levels not being absolute; but such assimilation always remains a personal and mystical matter and in no way affects the sacred law. Then there is the inverse situation in which the exoteric perspective infiltrates into esoterism through a partial

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<sup>13</sup> If religious hypocrisy is an inevitable fact, the contrary must also be possible, and moreover hypocrisy provokes it: namely wisdom and virtue hiding under appearances of scandal. Among the Moslem *malamatiyah* (the 'people of blame') an attitude of this kind even forms part of their method.

popularization that is historically inevitable; this is a perspective of activity and of merit, of fear and of zeal combined with esoteric ideas;<sup>14</sup> finally there is an 'esoterism within esoterism', if such an expression is possible, which is nothing other than gnosis disengaged, not indeed from all form, but from all inward formalism and all mythological absolutism.

As for the positive aspects of Moslem 'levelling', Islam not only neutralised differences of caste, it also abolished racial oppositions. Perhaps no other civilization has mingled races so much as the Islamic one: in general the mulatto appears in Islam as a perfectly 'pure' and honourable element, not as the pariah he is in practice among peoples of Christian origin; it could be said that for the Moslem the turban or fez is what a white skin is for a European. For Islam the determinations of nature are accidents; slavery is an accident and therefore has no relation to any caste system; humanity was originally without castes and without races; this is what Islam wishes to restore in conformity with the conditions of our millennium.<sup>15</sup> In Christianity and Buddhism the situation is similar: any man of sound mind can become a priest or monk; the clergy correspond to a vocational caste, not a hereditary one like the nobility, but the absence of a hereditary character is compensated by celibacy. We have already hinted at the fact that, on condition of celibacy, Hinduism would admit that in principle a non-*brahmin* could become a *brahmin* by virtue of his individual aptitude and his vocation, for the risk of negative atavisms would then be eliminated; something of the kind does in fact exist in the state of the *ativarnashrami*, who is beyond the

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<sup>14</sup> It cannot be denied, for instance, that the Sufism of Al-Ghazali includes a popular aspect which, though providential in its way, necessitates new inward adjustments.

<sup>15</sup> The Prophet, after his victorious entry into Mecca, made many declarations, one of which is the following: 'God has removed from you the pride of paganism and pride of ancestry; you all descend from Adam and Adam was dust. God said: 'Oh men, We have created you from a single man and a single woman, and We have divided you into peoples and tribes in order that you might know yourselves; he is the most honoured of God who fears God the most'. The Caliph Ali expressed it thus: 'Nobility is derived from high qualities and not from the mouldering bones of ancestors'. What Islam aims at restoring is, to be more precise, the religion of Abraham, the primordial form of the Semitic current and thus an image of the primordial tradition in its absolute sense, the tradition of the 'Golden Age'.

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castes but only on the condition of withdrawing his person from the living body of society. The fact that there are orders of *sannyasis* which admit only *brahmin* in no wise hinders any man from becoming a *sannyasi* outside these orders. It should also be noted that three of the *avatars* of Vishnu, namely Rama, Krishna and the Buddha, were *kshatriyas* and not *brahmins*, though clearly they must have possessed the brahminical nature in the highest degree; here can be seen a manifestation of universality as well as a compensation, for God, in His direct and flashing manifestations, does not submit to pre-existing frameworks, a derogation demanded by His infinitude.

To forestall any misinterpretation, it is important to note here that the absence of proper castes in Islam, and even in most non-Hindu traditions, has nothing to do with a 'humanitarian' attitude in the current sense, and this for the simple reason that the point of view of tradition is that of the global interest of human beings, not just of what is pleasant; it has no use for a pseudo-charity that saves bodies but kills souls.<sup>16</sup> Tradition is centred on what gives meaning to life, not on an immediate 'welfare' that is partial and ephemeral and conceived as an end in itself; it does not deny the relative and conditional legitimacy of such welfare but subordinates all values to the final ends of man. Unfortunately spiritual welfare is for most men not compatible with an earthly welfare that is too absolute; human nature has need of trials as well as consolations. A particular individual, whether rich or poor, may be sober and detached by his own will, but a collectivity is not an individual nor is

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<sup>16</sup> The Gospels say: 'Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul' and, again, 'What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' We certainly have no wish to criticise genuine charity such as springs from a total and not from a fragmentary vision of man and of the world. What is culpable is the exaggerated and specifically modern humanitarianism founded on the error that 'the totality of all living beings is the Personal God. . . If only I can adore and serve the only God that exists, the sum total of all souls' (Vivekananda). This philosophy is doubly false, first, because it denies God by decisively altering the notion of the Divine and, secondly, because it deifies the world and thus restricts charity to the most external level; one cannot see God in one's neighbour if one reduces a priori the Divine to the human. Nothing then remains but the illusion of 'doing good', of being indispensable, and the contempt for those who 'do nothing' even if they are saints whose presence sustains the world.

it endowed with a single will; it always has something of the nature of an avalanche held in check and it maintains its balance only with the help of constraints, and indeed the hereditary virtues which strike us in some particular ethnic group are preserved only thanks to a continual struggle, whatever the plane on which this is carried out; this struggle itself forms part of happiness provided it remains close to nature, which is maternal, and does not become abstract and treacherous.

On the other hand it must not be forgotten that 'welfare' is by definition something relative; once an exclusively material point of view is adopted the normal balance between spirit and body is destroyed and appetites are unleashed which carry with them no limiting factor. It is this aspect of human nature which humanitarians, in the usual sense of the term, either deny or deliberately ignore; they believe in man as good in himself, thus apart from God, and they arbitrarily ascribe his defects to unfavourable material conditions, as if experience did not prove not only that human malice does not depend on any outward factor, but also that it often develops in the midst of well-being, and sheltered from all elementary cares; the deviations of 'bourgeois culture' exemplify this to repletion. For the religions the 'economic norm' is expressly the state of poverty, in which the Founders have always set the example – a poverty that stays close to nature, not of a denudation rendered unintelligible and ugly by the servitudes of an artificial and irreligious world; as for riches, they are tolerated because they are a natural right and exclude neither detachment nor sobriety – but they are never regarded as an ideal as is practically speaking the case in the modern world.

In this respect Hinduism is particularly strict: according to the *Shastras* luxury properly so called – which envisages only physical well-being and keeps adding to it fresh needs – is a 'theft from nature'; its opposite, simplicity, clearly means, not a privation of what is necessary, but a refusal of whatever is superfluous from the point of view of physical comfort, not a rejection of property as such; it is true that this stage of simplicity has been transcended in India itself, as elsewhere, and has been so for many centuries. Be that as it may, people today far too readily include under the common denomination of 'misery' both an ancestral simplicity of life and mere lack of food, a confusion that is far from

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unbiased; the catchword 'underdeveloped countries' is from this point of view highly significant in its candid perfidy. A scientific machine-age 'standard of living' has been invented and the aim is to impose this on all peoples,<sup>17</sup> above all on those who are classed as 'backward' whether they be Hindus or Hottentots. For these believers in progress happiness means a host of noisy and ponderous complications calculated to crush out many elements of beauty and hence of well-being; in wishing to abolish particular 'fanaticisms' and 'horrors' these people forget that there are also atrocities on the spiritual plane and that the so-called humanitarian civilization of the moderns is saturated with them.

In order to be able to accurately judge the quality of happiness of an ancient world one would have to be able to put oneself in the place of the men who lived in it and adopt their way of evaluating things and so also their imaginative and sentimental reflexes; many things to which we have become accustomed would seem to them intolerable constraints to which they would prefer all the risks of their milieu; just the ugliness and the atmosphere of triviality of today's world would seem to them like the worst of nightmares. History as such cannot give a full account of the soul of some distant epoch: it chiefly registers calamities, leaving aside all the static factors of happiness; it has been said that happiness has no history, and this is profoundly true. Wars and epidemics – no more than certain customs – clearly do not reflect the happy aspects of the lives of our ancestors, while their literary and artistic works do so. Even if one supposes that history could tell us nothing about the happiness of the Middle Ages, the cathedrals and other artistic manifestations of the medieval world provide an indisputable witness in that sense, which is to say they do not give the impression of a humanity more unhappy than that of today to say the least; like the Orientals of old the ancestors of the present Europeans would no doubt have preferred, given the choice, to

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<sup>17</sup> The Shankaracharya of Kanchi has pointed out in the text already quoted that 'the very idea of raising the standard of living . . . will have the most injurious effects on society. Raising the standard of living means tempting people to encumber themselves with more luxuries and thus leading them ultimately to real poverty in spite of increased production. *Aparigraha* meant that every man should take from nature only so much as is required for his life in this world'.

be unhappy after their own fashion than happy after ours. There is nothing human which is not an evil from some point of view: even tradition itself is in certain respects an 'evil', since it must handle evil things in man and these human ills invade it in their turn, but it is then a lesser evil, or a 'necessary evil', and, humanly speaking, it would obviously be far truer to call it a 'good'. The pure truth is that 'God alone is good' and that every earthly thing has some ambiguous side to it.

No doubt some will say that humanitarianism, far from being materialistic by definition, aims at reforming human nature by education and legislation; now it is contradictory to want to reform the human outside the divine since the latter is the essence of the former; to make the attempt is in the end to bring about miseries far worse than those from which one was trying to escape. Philosophical humanitarianism underestimates the immortal soul by the very fact that it overestimates the human animal; it is somewhat obliged to denigrate saints in order to better whitewash criminals; the one seems unable to go without the other. From this results oppression of the contemplatives from their most tender years: in the name of humanitarian egalitarianism, vocations are crushed and geniuses wasted, by schools in particular and by official worldliness in general; every spiritual element is banished from professional and public life<sup>18</sup> and this amounts to removing from life a great part of its content and condemning religion to a slow death. The modern levelling – which may call itself 'democratic' – is the very antipodes of the theocratic equality of the monotheistic religions, for it is founded, not on the theomorphism of man, but on his animality and his rebellion.

The thesis of indefinite progress moreover comes up against the following contradiction: if man has been able to exist for thousands of years under the domination of errors and stupidities – supposing that the traditions are merely such, in which case the error and stupidity would be well-nigh measureless – the immensity of this deception would be

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<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, by a kind of compensation, professional life more and more assumes a 'religious' air in the sense that it claims the whole of man, his soul as well as his time, as though the sufficient reason for the human condition were some economic enterprise and not immortality.

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incompatible with the intelligence with which man as such is credited and with which he must be credited. In other words, if man is intelligent enough to arrive at the 'progress' which our period embodies – assuming there is any reality in such progress – then man must have been a priori too intelligent to remain for thousands of years the dupe of errors as ridiculous as those which modern 'progressivism' attributes to him; and if he is on the contrary stupid enough to have believed in them so long, then he must also be too stupid to escape from them. Or again, if present day man had at long last arrived at truth, he would have to be proportionately superior to the men of former times, and the disproportion between the two would be almost absolute. Now the least that can be said is that the men of ancient or medieval times were neither less intelligent nor less virtuous than modern man, far from it. The ideology of progress is one of those absurdities that are as remarkable for the lack of imagination as for the total lack of sense of proportion they display; this is, moreover, essentially a *vaishya* illusion, rather like that of 'culture', which is nothing more than an intellectuality stripped of intelligence.

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To return now to the question of castes: the absence of outward castes – for natural castes can be annulled only in sanctity, at least in certain respects – this absence requires conditions which neutralise the possible disadvantages of such a social indifferentiation; in particular it requires a code of behaviour safeguarding the spiritual liberty of every man; by this is meant, not liberty for error, which obviously has no spiritual character, but liberty for a life in God. Such a code of behaviour is the very negation of an egalitarian levelling, for it concerns what is highest in us: men are enjoined to dignity and should treat one another as potential saints; to bow to one's neighbour is to see God everywhere and to open oneself to God. The opposite attitude is the 'camaraderie' which denies one's neighbour all mystery and even any right to mystery; it means putting oneself on the level of human animality and reducing one's neighbour to that same level, forcing him into a stifling and



subhuman flatness. An absence of social differences can only exist on a religious basis: it can be brought about only from above, first by attaching man to God and then by recognizing the presence of God in man. In a civilization such as Islam there are, strictly speaking, no 'social milieus' properly so called; the rules of good conduct form part of religion and it is enough to be pious in order to know them; a poor man therefore feels at ease among the rich, the more so in that religion is 'on his side' since poverty, viewed as a state, is a perfection; nor is a rich man shocked by any lack of education or 'culture' among the poor, for there is no 'culture' apart from the tradition whose point of view moreover is never quantitative. In other words, the poor man can be an 'aristocrat' beneath his rags, whereas in the West it is 'civilization' itself which prevents this. It is true that one may meet peasant aristocrats even in present-day Europe, especially in the Mediterranean countries, but they give the impression of being survivals from another age; the modern levelling everywhere destroys the beauties of religious equality, for the former being the caricature of the latter, they are incompatible.

Caste, as we mean it, has in essence two aspects, one of 'degree' and the other of 'mode' of intelligence, a distinction due, not to the essence of the intellect, but to accidents of its manifestation. Intelligence may be contemplative or inquiring, intuitive or discursive, direct or indirect; it may be simply inventive or constructive; or it may amount to no more than elementary common sense; in each of these modes there are degrees so that one man may be more 'intelligent' than another while remaining inferior to him from the point of view of mode. In other words intelligence may be centred on the intellect, which is transcendent and infallible in its essence, or on reason, which has no direct perception of transcendent realities and consequently cannot provide a guarantee against a passionate element intruding into thought; reason may be to a greater or lesser extent determined by the intellect, but it may also be limited to things of practical life or even to life's most immediate and rudimentary aspects. Now, as has already been explained, the caste system derives essentially from a perspective of intelligence and so of intellectuality and metaphysical knowledge, hence the spirit of exclusiveness and purity so characteristic of the Hindu tradition.

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The equality, or rather the indifferenciation, realised by Buddhism, Islam and other traditions is related to the pole of 'existence' rather than to that of 'intelligence'; existence, the being of things, neutralises and unites, whereas intelligence discerns and separates. Existence by its very nature is an 'exit' (*ex-sistere, ex-stare*) out of Unity and thus is the plane of separation, whereas intelligence, being Unity by its intrinsic nature, is the ray leading back to the Principle. Both existence and intelligence unite and divide, but each does so in a different relationship, so that intelligence divides where existence unites and vice versa. This could be put in another way: for Buddhism – which does not expressly deny the castes but rather ignores them – all men are 'one', first of all in suffering and then in the Path to Deliverance; for Christianity all are 'one', first through original sin and then in baptism, the pledge of Redemption; for Islam all are 'one', first because they are created from dust and then in unitary faith; but for Hinduism, which starts from Knowledge and not from man, it is above all Knowledge which is 'one' while men are diverse by the degree of their participation in Knowledge and so also by the degree of their ignorance; it might be said that they are 'one' in Knowledge, but Knowledge in its intrinsic purity is not accessible save to an elite, whence the exclusiveness of the *Brahmins*.

The individual expression of intelligence is discernment; the individual expression of existence is the will. As we have seen, the perspective which gives rise to castes is based on man's intellectual aspect; man, for this perspective, is intelligence, discernment; on the other hand, the perspective of social indifferenciation, which relates to the pole 'existence', starts from the idea that man is will and distinguishes between two tendencies in the will, the one spiritual and the other worldly, just as the perspective of intellect and caste distinguishes between different degrees of intelligence or ignorance. In this way it can be understood why *bhakti* practically speaking ignores caste and may allow initiation even of pariahs:<sup>19</sup> it is because *bhakti* sees in man a priori will and love and not intelligence and intellection; consequently there is, side by side with the castes based on 'knowing', another hierarchy based

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<sup>19</sup> There are doubtless also such exceptions in *jnana*.

## Castes and Races

on 'willing', so that human categories cross one another like the threads in a weaving; spiritual 'willing' is, however, met with far more often where there is a 'knowing'.

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Psychologically speaking a natural caste is a cosmos; men live in different cosmoses according to the 'reality' on which they are centred; it is impossible for the inferior really to understand the superior, for he who really understands 'is' what he understands. On the other hand it can be said that all these human categories are found again in some way, even if it be in a quite indirect or wholly symbolical manner, not only within each of the aforementioned categories but also in every man. There is likewise a certain analogy between castes and ages in the sense that the lower types are found in certain aspects of childhood while the passionate and active type is represented by the adult and the contemplative and serene type by the aged; it is true that in the case of a coarse man the process is often reversed, for he retains, after outgrowing the illusions of youth, only his materialism, and he identifies with those illusions what little of nobility youth had once lent him. But we must not forget that each of these fundamental types has virtues which characterise it, so that the non-brahminical types have a significance that is not merely privative; the *kshatriya* has nobility and energy, the *vaishya* honesty and practical cleverness, the *shudra* fidelity and diligence; the contemplativity and detachment of the brahminical type contain all these qualities in an eminent degree.

The principle of caste is reflected, not only in the ages of man, but also in a different way in the sexes: woman is opposable to man, in a sense, as the chivalrous type is opposable to the sacerdotal, or again, in another relationship, as the 'practical' type is opposable to the 'idealist', one might say. But, just as the individual is not absolutely bound by caste, neither can he be bound in an absolute way by sex: the metaphysical, cosmological, psychological and physiological subordination of woman is apparent enough, but woman is nonetheless the equal of man from the point of view of the human condition and so also of immortality; she is

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his equal in respect of sanctity, but not in respect of spiritual functions; no man can be more holy than the Blessed Virgin, and yet, any priest can celebrate the Mass and preach in public, whereas she could not. From another angle woman assumes, with regard to man, an aspect of Divinity: her nobility, compounded of beauty and of virtue, is for man like a revelation of his own infinite essence thus of what he 'wishes to be' because that is what he 'is'.

Finally we would like to touch on a certain connection between the actualization of castes and sedentarism: it is an undeniable fact that the lower types are less frequently found among warrior nomads than among sedentary peoples; adventurous and heroic nomadism results in the qualitative differences becoming as it were submerged in a generalised nobility; the materialistic and servile type is kept in abeyance and in compensation the priestly type does not become completely distinct from the chivalric type. According to the conception of these peoples, human quality – nobility – is maintained by a fighting mode of life: no virtue, they say, without virile and therefore perilous activity; man becomes vile when he ceases to look suffering and death in the face; it is impassiveness which makes a man: it is the event, or, adventure one could say, that makes life. This perspective explains the attachment of these peoples – Bedouins, Tuaregs, Red Indians and ancient Mongols – to their ancestral nomadic or semi-nomadic condition and the contempt they feel for sedentary folk and especially for town-dwellers; the deepest evils from which humanity is suffering do in fact come out of the great urban agglomerations and not from virgin nature.<sup>20</sup>

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In the cosmos all things present at the same time an aspect of simplicity and an aspect of complexity, and in every sphere there are perspectives related to either the one or the other of these aspects;

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<sup>20</sup> A certain easing of the Hindu system among the Balinese can be explained by facts qualitatively analogous to nomadism, namely their insular isolation and the necessarily restricted number of the inhabitants; also the Balinese show a proud and independent character which makes them akin to the nomads.

synthesis and analysis alike are in the nature of things, and this is true of human societies as of other orders; it is therefore impossible that castes be found nowhere, or that they nowhere be absent. Strictly speaking Hinduism has no 'dogmas', in the sense that in it every concept may be denied provided the argument is intrinsically true; but this absence of 'irremovable' dogmas in the strict sense at the same stroke prevents social unification. What makes such unification possible, in particular in the monotheistic religions, is precisely dogma which serves as a transcendent Knowledge accessible to all. If to the majority of men Knowledge as such is inaccessible, it yet imposes itself on all in the form of faith, so that the believer is something like a virtual or symbolical *brahmin*. The exclusiveness of the *brahmin* in regard to the other castes is repeated, *mutatis mutandis*, in the exclusiveness of the believer in regard to unbelievers or to the 'unfaithful'; in both cases it is 'Knowledge' which excludes, whether it be a matter of hereditary aptitude for pure Knowledge or the fact of a symbolical and virtual knowledge, that is to say a religious belief. But both in the case of a revealed faith and in that of an instituted caste, the exclusion – conditional and 'offensive' in the former case and unconditional and 'defensive' in the latter may be only 'formal' and not 'essential', for every saint is a 'believer' whatever his religion and a '*brahmin*' whatever his caste. It should perhaps be made clear as regards dogmas that the doctrinal pillars of Hinduism are in part 'variable dogmas'; which is to say that they lose their absolute quality at higher levels while preserving it unshakably on the level to which they relate, aside from all question of legitimate divergences of perspective. But in all this no door is left open to intrinsic error, for otherwise the tradition would lose the very reason for its existence. Once we discern between the true and the false, 'heresy' becomes possible, whatever may be our own reaction to it; it corresponds on the level of ideas to material error on the level of facts.

In its spiritual sense, caste is the 'law' or *dharma* governing a particular category of men in accord with their qualifications. It is in this sense, and only in this sense, that the *Bhagavad-gita* says: 'Better for each one is his own law of action, even if imperfect, than the law of another, even well applied. It is better to perish in one's own law; it is perilous to

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follow the law of another' (III, 35).<sup>21</sup> And similarly the *Manava-Dharma Shastra* says: 'It is better to carry out one's own proper functions in a defective manner than to fulfil perfectly those of another; for he who lives accomplishing the duties of another caste forthwith loses his own' (X, 97).

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<sup>21</sup> The *Bhagavad-gita* cannot mean that every individual must, when he meets a traditional teaching, follow his personal opinions and tastes, otherwise Hinduism, which is a tradition, would long ago have ceased to exist.

# The Regression of the Castes

by Julius Evola

As my intent was to offer a bird's eye-view of history, in the previous pages I have presented all the elements necessary to formulate an objective law at work in the various stages of the process of decadence, that is, the law of the regression of the castes.<sup>1</sup> A progressive shift of power and type of civilization has occurred from one caste to the next since prehistoric times (from sacred leaders, to a warrior aristocracy, to the merchants, and finally, to the serfs); these castes in traditional civilizations corresponded to the qualitative differentiation of the main human possibilities. In the face of this general movement anything concerning the various conflicts among peoples, the life of nations, or other historical accidents plays only a secondary and contingent role.

I have already discussed the dawn of the age of the first caste. In the West, the representatives of the divine royalty and the leaders who embody the two powers (spiritual and temporal), in what I have called 'spiritual virility' and 'Olympian sovereignty', belong to a very distant and almost mythical past. We have seen how, through the gradual deterioration of the Light of the North, the process of decadence has

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of regression of the castes, which I had previously referred to in my pamphlet *Imperialismo Pagano* (Rome, 1927), was detailed by V. Vezzani and by R. Guénon in his *Autorité spirituelle et pouvoir temporel*; finally, it has been expounded in an independent fashion by H. Berls in *Die Heraufkunft des fünften Standes* (Karlsruhe, 1931). This idea has an analogical correspondence with the traditional doctrine of the four ages, since each of the four traditional castes embodies the values that have predominated during the quadripartite process of regression.

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unfolded; in the Ghibelline ideal of the Holy Roman Empire I have identified the last echo of the highest tradition.

Once the apex disappeared, authority descended to the level immediately below, that is, to the caste of the warriors. The stage was then set for monarchs who were mere military leaders, lords of temporal justice and, in more recent times, politically absolute sovereigns. In other words, regality of blood replaced regality of the spirit. In a few instances it is still possible to find the idea of 'divine right', but only as a formula lacking a real content. We find such rulers in antiquity behind institutions that retained the traits of the ancient sacred regime only in a formal way. In any event in the West, with the dissolution of the medieval ecumene, the passage into the second phase became all-encompassing and definitive. During this stage, the *fides* cementing the state no longer had a religious character, but only a warrior one; it meant loyalty, faithfulness, honour. This was essentially the age and the cycle of the great European monarchies.

Then a second collapse occurred as the aristocracies began to fall into decay and the monarchies to shake at the foundations; through revolutions and constitutions they became useless institutions subject to the 'will of the nation', and sometimes they were even ousted by different regimes. The principle characterizing this state of affairs was: 'The king reigns but he does not rule'. Together with parliamentary republics the formation of the capitalist oligarchies revealed the shift of power from the second caste (the warrior) to the modern equivalent of the third caste (the mercantile class). The kings of the coal, oil, and iron industries replace the previous kings of blood and of spirit. Antiquity, too, sometimes knew this phenomenon in sporadic forms; in Rome and in Greece the 'aristocracy of wealth' repeatedly forced the hand of the hierarchical structure by pursuing aristocratic positions, undermining sacred laws and traditional institutions, and infiltrating the militia, priesthood, or consulship. In later times what occurred was the rebellion of the communes and the rise of the various medieval formations of mercantile power. The solemn proclamation of the 'rights of the Third Estate' in France represented the decisive stage, followed by the varieties of 'bourgeois revolution' of the third caste, which employed liberal and



democratic ideologies for its own purposes. Correspondingly, this was characterised by the theory of the social contract. At this time the social bond was no longer a *fides* of a warrior type based on relationships of faithfulness and honour. Instead, it took on a utilitarian and economic character; it consisted of an agreement based on personal convenience and on material interest that only a merchant could have conceived, Gold became a means and a powerful tool; those who knew how to acquire it and to multiply it (capitalism, high finance, industrial trusts), behind the appearances of democracy, virtually controlled political power and the instruments employed in the art of opinion making. Aristocracy gave way to plutocracy, the warrior, to the banker and industrialist. The economy triumphed on all fronts. Trafficking with money and charging interest, activities previously confined to the ghettos, invaded the new civilization. According to the expression of W. Sombart, in the promised land of Protestant puritanism, Americanism, capitalism, and the 'distilled Jewish spirit' coexist. It is natural that given these congenial premises, the modern representatives of secularised Judaism saw the ways to achieve world domination open up before them. In this regard, Karl Marx wrote:

What are the mundane principles of Judaism? Practical necessity and the pursuit of one's own advantage. What is its earthly god? Money. The Jew has emancipated himself in a typically Jewish fashion not only in that he has taken control of the power of money, but also in that through him, money has become a world power and the practical Jewish spirit has become the spirit of the Christian people. *The Jews have emancipated themselves insofar as the Christians have become Jews.* The god of the Jews has become secularised and has become the god of the earth. The exchange is the true god of the Jews.<sup>2</sup>

In reality, the codification of the traffic with gold as a loan charged with interest, to which the Jews had been previously devoted since they had no other means through which they could affirm themselves, may be said to

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<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *Deutsche-französische Jahrbücher* (Paris, 1844), 209-12.

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be the very foundation of the acceptance of the aberrant development of all that is banking, high finance, and pure economy, which are spreading like a cancer in the modern world. This is the fundamental time in the 'age of the merchants'.

Finally, the crisis of bourgeois society, class struggle, the proletarian revolt against capitalism, the manifesto promulgated at the 'Third International' (or Comintern) in 1919, and the correlative organization of the groups and the masses in the cadres proper to a 'socialist civilization of labour' – all these bear witness to the third collapse, in which power tends to pass into the hands of the lowest of the traditional castes, the caste of the beasts of burden and the standardised individuals. The result of this transfer of power was a reduction of horizon and value to the plane of matter, the machine, and the reign of quantity. The prelude to this was the Russian Revolution. Thus, the new ideal became the 'proletarian' ideal of a universal and communist civilization.<sup>3</sup>

We may compare the abovementioned phenomenon of the awakening and gushing forth of elemental subhuman forces within the structures of the modern world to a person who can no longer endure the tension of the spirit (first caste), and eventually not even the tension of the will as a free force that animates the body (warrior caste), and who thus gives in to the subpersonal forces of the organic system and all of a sudden reacts almost magnetically under the impulse of *another* life that replaces his own. The ideas and the passions of the demos soon escape men's control and they begin to act as if they had acquired an autonomous and dreadful life of their own. These passions pit nations and collectivities against each other and result in unprecedented conflicts and crises. At the end of the process, once the total collapse has occurred, there awaits an international system under the brutal symbols of the hammer and the sickle.

Such are the horizons facing the contemporary world. Just as it is only by adhering to free activity that man can truly be free and realise his own

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<sup>3</sup> D. Merezhkovsky, *Les Mystères de l'Orient* (24): 'The word "proletarian" comes from Latin proles, which means posterity, generation. Proletarians "produce" and generate with their bodies, but are spiritual eunuchs. They are not men or women, but anonymous "comrades", impersonal ants which are part of the human anthill'.

self, likewise, by focusing on practical and utilitarian goals, economic achievements, and whatever was once the exclusive domain of the inferior castes man abdicates, disintegrates, loses his centre, and opens himself up to infernal forces of which he is destined to become the unwilling and unconscious instrument. Moreover, contemporary society looks like an organism that has shifted from a human to a subhuman type, in which every activity and reaction is determined by the needs and the dictates of purely physical life. Man's dominating principles are those typical of the material part of traditional hierarchies: gold and work. This is how things are today; these two elements, almost without exception, affect every possibility of existence and give shape to the ideologies and myths that clearly testify to the gravity of the modern perversion of all values.

Not only does the quadripartite regression have a socio-political scope, but it also invests every domain of civilization. In architecture the regression is symbolised by the shift from the temple (first caste) as the dominant building, to the fortress and castle (caste of the warriors), to the city-state surrounded by protecting walls (age of the merchants), to the factory, and finally to the rational and dull buildings that are the hives of mass-man. The family, which in the origins had a sacred foundation, shifted to an authoritarian model (*patria potestas* in a mere juridical sense), then to a bourgeois and conventional one, until it will finally dissolve when the party, the people, and society will supersede it in importance and dignity. The notion of war underwent analogous phases: from the doctrine of the 'sacred war' and of the *mors triumphalis* a shift occurred to war waged in the name of the right and of the honour of one's lord (warrior caste); in the third stage conflicts are brought about by national ambitions that are contingent upon the plans and the interests of a supremacist economy and industry (caste of the merchants); finally there arose the communist theory according to which war among nations is just a bourgeois residue, since the only just war is the world revolution of the proletarian class waged against the capitalist and the so-called imperialist world (caste of the serfs). In the aesthetic dimension a shift occurred from a symbolic, sacred art closely related to the possibilities of predicting future events and magic (first caste), to the predominance of

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epic art and poems (caste of the warriors); this was followed by a shift to a romantic, conventional, sentimentalist, erotic, and psychological art that is produced for the consumption of the bourgeois class, until finally, new 'social' or 'socially involved' views of art begin to emerge that advocate an art for the use and consumption of the masses. The traditional world knew the superindividual unity characterizing the orders: in the West first came ascetic, monastic orders; these were followed by knightly orders (caste of the warriors), which in turn were followed by the unity sworn to in Masonic lodges, which worked hard to prepare the revolution of the Third Estate and the advent of democracy. Finally there came the network of revolutionary and activist cadres of the Communist International (last caste), bent on the destruction of the previous socio-political order.

It is on the plane of ethics that the process of degradation is particularly visible. While the first age was characterised by the ideal of 'spiritual virility', initiation, and an ethics aimed at overcoming all human bonds; and while the age of the warriors was characterised by the ideal of heroism, victory, and lordship, as well as by the aristocratic ethics of honour, faithfulness, and chivalry, during the age of the merchants the predominant ideals were of pure economics, profit, prosperity, and of science as an instrument of a technical and industrial progress that propels production and new profits in a 'consumer society'. Finally, the advent of the serfs corresponds to the elevation of the slave's principle – *work* – to the status of a religion. It is the hatred harboured by the slave that sadistically proclaims: 'If anyone will not work, neither let him eat' (2 Thess. 3:10). The slave's self-congratulating stupidity creates sacred incenses with the exhalations of human sweat, hence expressions such as 'Work ennobles man'; 'The religion of work'; and 'Work as a social and ethical duty'. We have previously learned that the ancient world despised work only because it knew *action*; the opposition of action to work as an opposition between the spiritual, pure, and free pole, and the material, impure pole impregnated only with human possibilities, was at the basis of that contempt. The loss of the sense of this opposition, and the animal-like subordination of the former to the latter, characterises the last ages. And where in ancient times every work, through an inner transfiguration

owing to its purity and its meaning as an 'offering' oriented upwards could redeem itself until it became a symbol of action, now, following an upheaval in the opposite direction (which can be observed during the age of the serfs), every residue of action tends to be degraded to the form of work. The degeneration of the ancient aristocratic and sacred ethics into the modern plebeian and materialistic morality is expressively characterised by such a shift from the plane of action to the plane of work. Superior men who lived in a not so distant past, either *acted* or *directed* actions. Modern man works.<sup>4</sup> The only real difference today is that which exists between the various kinds of work; there are 'intellectual' workers and those who use their limbs and machines. In any event, the notion of 'action' is dying out in the modern world, together with that of 'absolute personality'. Moreover, among all the commissioned arts, antiquity regarded as most disgraceful those devoted to the pursuit of pleasure (*minimaeque artes eas probandae, quae ministrae sunt voluptatum*),<sup>5</sup> this, after all, is precisely the kind of work respected the most in this day and age. Beginning with the scientist, technician, and politician, and with the rationalised system of productive organization, 'work' supposedly leads to the realization of an ideal more fitting for a human animal: an easier life that is more enjoyable and safer with the maximization of one's well-being and physical comfort. The contemporary breed of artists and of 'creative minds' of the bourgeoisie is the equivalent of that class of 'luxury servants' that catered to the pleasure and distractions of the Roman patriciate and later on, of the medieval feudal lords.

Then again, while the themes proper to this degradation find their most characteristic expressions on the social plane and in contemporary life, they do not fail to make an appearance on the ideal and speculative plane. It was precisely during the age of humanism that the antitraditional and plebeian theme emerged in the views of Giordano

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<sup>4</sup> O. Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (1918; London, 1926), vol. 1. The term 'action' is here used as synonymous with a spiritual and disinterested activity; thus it may be applied to contemplation, which in the classical idea was often regarded as the most pure form of activity; it had its object and goal in itself and did not need 'anything else' in order to be implemented.

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, *De officiis*, 1.42.

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Bruno who, by inverting traditional values, extolled the age of human effort and work over and against the Golden Age (of which he knew absolutely nothing) in a masochistic fashion and with authentic stupidity. Bruno called 'divine' the brutish drive of human need, since such a drive is responsible for producing 'increasingly wonderful arts and inventions', for removing mankind further from that Golden Age that he regarded as animalistic and lazy, and for drawing human beings closer to God.<sup>6</sup> In all this we find an anticipation of those ideologies that, by virtue of being significantly connected to the age of the French Revolution, regarded work as the main element of the social myth and revived the messianic theme in terms of work and machines, all the while singing the praises of progress. Moreover, modern man, whether consciously or unconsciously, began to apply to the universe and project on an ideal plane the experiences that he nurtured in the workshops and factories and by which the soul became a *product*.

Bergson, who exalted the *élan vital*, is the one who drew the analogy as only a modern could between technical productive activity inspired by a mere practical principle and the ways of intelligence itself. Having covered with ridicule the ancient 'inert' ideal of knowledge as contemplation,

The entire effort of modern epistemology in its most radical trajectories consists in assimilating knowledge to productive work, according to the postulates: 'To know is to do' and 'One can only really know what one does'.<sup>7</sup>

*Verum et factum convertuntur.* And since according to the unrealism typical of these currents, (a) 'to be' means 'to know'; (b) the spirit is identified with the idea; and (c) the productive and immanent knowing process is identified with the process of reality, the way of the fourth caste is reflected in the highest regions and posits itself as their foundational 'truth'. Likewise, there is an activism on the plane of philosophical

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<sup>6</sup> Giordano Bruno, *Spaccio della Bestia trionfante*, dialogue 3.

<sup>7</sup> A. Tilgher, *Homo Faber*, 120-21.

theories that appears to be in agreement with the world created by the advent of the last caste and its 'civilization of work'.

Generally speaking, this advent is reflected in the abovementioned modern ideologies of 'progress' and 'evolution', which have distorted with a 'scientific' irresponsibility any superior vision of history, promoted the definitive abandonment of traditional truths, and created the most specious alibis for the justification and glorification of modern man. The myth of evolutionism is nothing else but the profession of faith of the upstart. If in recent times the West does not believe in a transcendent origin but rather an origin 'from below'; and if the West no longer believes in the nobility of the origins but in the notion that civilization arises out of barbarism, religion from superstition, man from animal (Darwin), thought from matter, and every spiritual form from the 'sublimation' or transposition of the stuff that originates the instinct, libido, and complexes of the 'collective unconscious' (Freud, Jung), and so on – we can see in all this not so much the result of a deviated quest, but rather, and above all, an alibi, or something that a civilization created by both lower beings and the revolution of the serfs and pariahs against the ancient aristocratic society necessarily *had* to believe in and wish to be true. There is not a dimension in which, in one form or another, the evolutionary myth has not succeeded in infiltrating with destructive consequences; the results have been the overthrow of every value, the suppression of all sense of truth, the elaboration and connecting together (as in an unbreakable magical circle) of the world inhabited by a deconsecrated and deluded mankind. In agreement with historicism, so-called post-Hegelian Idealism came to identify the essence of the 'Absolute Spirit' with its 'becoming' and its 'selfcreation' – this Spirit was no longer conceived as a Being that is, that dominates, and that possesses itself; the self-made man has almost become the new metaphysical model.

It is not easy to separate the process of regression along the way of gold (age of merchants) from the regression along the way of work (age of serfs), since these ways are interdependent. For all practical purposes, just as today work as a universal duty is no longer perceived as a repugnant, absurd, and unnatural value, likewise, to be paid does not

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seem repugnant but on the contrary, it seems very natural. Money, which no longer 'burns' the hands it touches, has established an invisible bond of slavery that is worse and more depraved than that which the high spiritual 'stature' of lords and conquerors used to retain and justify.

Just as any form of action tends to become yet another form of work, so is it always associated with payment. And while on the one hand action reduced to work is judged by its efficiency in contemporary societies, just as man is valued by his practical success and by his profit; and while, as someone has remarked, Calvin acted as a pimp by seeing that profit and wealth were shrouded in the mysticism of a divine election – on the other hand, the spectre of hunger and unemployment lurks upon these new slaves as a more fearful threat than the threat of the whip in ancient times.

In any event, it is possible to distinguish a general phase in which the yearning for profit displayed by single individuals who pursue wealth and power is the central motif (the phase that corresponds to the advent of the third caste) from a further phase that is still unfolding, characterised by a sovereign economy that has become almost independent or collectivised (the advent of the last caste).

In this regard, it is interesting to note that the regression of the principle of 'action' to the form proper to the inferior castes (work, production) is often accompanied by an analogous regression with regard to the principle of 'asceticism'. What arises is almost a new asceticism of gold and work, because as it is exemplified by representative figures of this phase, to work and amass a fortune become things that are yearned for and loved for their own sake, as if they were a vocation. Thus we often see, especially in America, powerful capitalists who enjoy their wealth less than the last of their employees; rather than owning riches and being free from them and thus employing them to fund forms of magnificence, quality, and sensibility for various precious and privileged spectacles (as was the case in ancient aristocracies), these people appear to be merely the managers of their fortunes. Rich though they may be, they pursue an increasing number of activities; it is almost as if they were impersonal and ascetical instruments whose activity is devoted to gathering, multiplying, and casting into ever wider nets (that sometimes affect the lives of millions of people and the destinies of entire nations)



the faceless forces of money and of production.<sup>8</sup> *Fiat productio, pereat homo*, Sombart correctly remarked when noticing that the spiritual destruction and emptiness that man has created around himself, after he became '*homo economicus*' and a great capitalist entrepreneur, force him to turn his activity (profit, business, prosperity) into an end in itself, to love it and will it for its own sake lest he fall victim to the vertigo of the abyss and the horror of a life that is totally meaningless.<sup>9</sup>

Even the relationship of the modern economy to machines is significant with regard to the arousal of forces that surpass the plans of those who initially evoked them and carry everything along with them. Once all interest for anything superior and transcendent was either lost or laughed at, the only reference point remaining was man's need, in a purely material and animal sense. Moreover, the traditional principle of the limitation of one's need within the context of a normal economy (a balanced economy based on consumption) was replaced with the principle of acceptance and multiplication of need, which paralleled the so-called Industrial Revolution and the advent of the age of machines. Technological innovations have automatically led mankind from production to overproduction. After the 'activist' frenzy was awoken and the frantic circulation of capital – which is multiplied through production in order to be put again in circulation through further productive investments was set in motion, mankind has finally arrived at a point where the relationship between need and machine (or work) have been totally reversed; it is no longer need that requires mechanical work, but mechanical work (or production) that generates new needs. In a regime of superproduction, in order for all the products to be sold it is necessary that the needs of single individuals, far from being reduced, be maintained and even multiplied so that consumption may increase and

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<sup>8</sup> See M. Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religion und Soziologie* (Tubingen, 1924), vol. 3, in which the Protestant roots of such an 'ascetical' version of capitalism are discussed. Originally there was a separation between earning as a 'vocation' and the enjoyment of riches, the latter being looked down upon as a sinful element of the deification and pride of the human creature. Naturally, in the course of history the original religious considerations were eliminated; today we only find purely secular and unscrupulous forms. [Evola is referring to Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.]

<sup>9</sup> W. Sombart, *Il Borghese*, Italian trans. from the French (Paris, 1926), 204-22; 400-409.

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the mechanism be kept running in order to avoid the fatal congestion that would bring about one of the following two consequences: either war, understood as the means for a violent affirmation by a greater economic and productive power that claims not to have 'enough space', or unemployment (industrial shutdowns as a response to the crisis on the job market and in consumerism) with its ensuing crises and social tensions precipitating the insurrection of the Fourth Estate.

As a fire starts another fire until an entire area goes up in flames, this is how the economy has affected the inner essence of modern man through the world that he himself created. This present 'civilization', starting from Western hotbeds, has extended the contagion to every land that was still healthy and has brought to all strata of society and all races the following 'gifts': restlessness, dissatisfaction, resentment, the need to go further and faster, and the inability to possess one's life in simplicity, independence, and balance. Modern civilization has pushed man onward; it has generated in him the need for an increasingly greater number of things; it has made him more and more insufficient to himself and powerless. Thus, every new invention and technological discovery, rather than a conquest, really represents a defeat and a new whiplash in an ever faster race blindly taking place within a system of conditionings that are increasingly serious and irreversible and that for the most part go unnoticed. This is how the various paths converge: technological civilization, the dominant role of the economy, and the civilization of production and consumption all complement the exaltation of becoming and progress; in other words, they contribute to the manifestation of the 'demonic' element in the modern world.<sup>10</sup>

Regarding the degenerated forms of asceticism, I would like to point out the spirit of a phenomenon that is more properly connected to the plane of 'work' (that is, of the fourth caste). The modern world knows a sublimated version of work in which the latter becomes 'disinterested',

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<sup>10</sup> The word 'demonic' is obviously not to be understood in the Christian sense of the word. The expression 'demonic people' found in the *Bhagavad-gita* applies very much to our contemporaries: 'Thus they are beset with innumerable cares which last long, all their life, until death. Their higher aim is sensual enjoyment, and they firmly think that this is all' (16.11).

disjoined from the economic factor and from the idea of a practical or productive goal and takes an almost ascetic form; I am talking about *sport*. Sport is a way of working in which the productive objective no longer matters; thus, sport is willed for its own sake as mere activity. Someone has rightly pointed out that sport is the 'blue collar' religion'.<sup>11</sup> Sport is a typical counterfeit of action in the traditional sense of the word. A pointless activity, it is nevertheless still characterised by the same triviality of work and belongs to the same physical and lightless group of activities that are pursued at the various crossroads in which plebeian contamination occurs. Although through the practice of sport it is possible to achieve a temporary evocation of deep forces, what this amounts to is the enjoyment of sensations and a sense of vertigo and at most, the excitement derived from directing one's energies and winning a competition – without any higher and transfiguring reference, any sense of 'sacrifice' or deindividualizing offering being present. Physical individuality is cherished and strengthened by sport; thus the chain is confirmed and every residue of subtler sensibility is suffocated. The human being, instead of growing into an organic being, tends to be reduced to a bundle of reflexes, and almost to a mechanism. It is also very significant that the lower strata of society are the ones that show more enthusiasm for sports, displaying their enthusiasm in great collective forms. Sport may be identified as one of the forewarning signs of that type of society represented by Chigalev in Dostoyevsky's *The Obsessed*; after the required time has elapsed for a methodical and reasoned education aimed at extirpating the evil represented by the 'I' and by free will, and no longer realizing they are slaves, all the Chigalevs will return to experience the innocence and the happiness of a new Eden. This 'Eden' differs from the biblical one only because work will be the dominating universal law. Work as sport and sport as work in a world that has lost the sense of historical cycles, as well as the sense of true personality, would probably be the best way to implement such a messianic ideal. Thus, it is not a coincidence that in several societies, whether spontaneously or thanks to

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<sup>11</sup> A. Tilgher, *Homo Faber*, 162.

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the state, great sports organizations have arisen as the appendices of various classes of workers, and vice versa.

# The Meaning of Race

by Frithjof Schuon

Caste takes precedence over race because spirit has priority over form; race is a form while caste is a spirit. Even Hindu castes, which were in origin purely Indo-European, cannot be limited to a single race: there are Tamil, Balinese and Siamese *brahmin*.<sup>1</sup> It is not possible, however, to hold that race is something devoid of meaning apart from physical characteristics, for, if it is true that formal constraints have nothing absolute about them, forms must nonetheless have their own sufficient reason; if races are not castes,<sup>2</sup> they must all the same correspond to human differences of another order, rather as differences of style may express equivalence in the spiritual order while also marking divergencies of mode.

Thus the thinking of a white man – whether a Westerner or an Easterner – is incisive and animated like his idioms and his facial features; one might say that there is something ‘auditory’ about it, whereas the thinking of men of the yellow race has a more or less ‘visual’ character<sup>3</sup> and works by discontinuous strokes. The spirit of the Far East may be called both static and aerial; its conciseness is compensated by its symbolical quality and its dryness by intuitive delicacy. The languages of white peoples, whether they be Hamito-Semitic or Aryan, are inflected

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<sup>1</sup> The Siamese brahmins are a survival of Brahminism in the midst of a Buddhist civilization.

<sup>2</sup> This is true at any rate of the major races, white, yellow and black, and of intermediary races such as the American Indians, the Malayo-Polynesians, the Dravidians and the dark-skinned Hamites; but it is always possible for quite small racial groupings to coincide broadly speaking with castes.

<sup>3</sup> Chinese writing, which is the most important script in the case of the yellow race and was conceived by them alone, is essentially ‘visual’ and not ‘auditive’; it conveys pictures and not sounds.

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and move in mental arabesques, productive of long, rich, incisive sentences. Those of yellow peoples, whether they be agglutinative or monosyllabic, disdain what we call 'eloquence' and their mode of expression is sober and often elliptical; here beauty is lyrical rather than dramatic, for the yellow man lives in nature – in the visible and spatial – rather than in the human and temporal; his poetry is anchored in virgin nature and has no Promethean quality.<sup>4</sup>

The mental process of the yellow man is in a sense like his face, and, as was said above, the same is true of the white man and also of the black man. The black race bears in itself the substance of an 'existential wisdom'; it asks for few symbols; it needs only a homogeneous system: God, prayer, sacrifice and dancing.

Fundamentally the blacks have a 'non-mental' mentality, whence the 'mental' importance for them of what is corporal, their physical sureness and their sense of rhythm. In all these characteristics the black man may be contrasted both with the white man and with the yellow.<sup>5</sup>

The originality of each of the various races is especially apparent in the eyes: those of the white man, generally deep-set, are mobile, piercing and transparent; his soul 'goes out' in his look and at the same time shines, in its passivity, through it. The eyes of yellow men are quite different: physically at skin level, they are generally indifferent and impenetrable; their look is dry and light like a brush-stroke on silk. As for the black man, his eyes are slightly prominent and heavy, warm and moist; their look reflects the beauty of the tropics and combines

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<sup>4</sup> Partisans of the short sentence want to treat our morphological languages like Chinese. Certainly the short sentence has a legitimate place in the languages of the white race, but their habitual mode of expression is by complex sentences: in Arabic a whole book is theoretically a single sentence. For the white man a sentence is a bundle of thoughts grouped around a central idea; for the yellow man, who is less exteriorised, it is a 'suggestion', a 'gong-stroke'. Clearly those white peoples who speak Mongolian tongues – Finns, Magyars and Turks – use them differently than did their still Mongolian ancestors.

<sup>5</sup> We refer to the black race as such, which is independent of the degeneration of particular tribes. In general, it must not be forgotten that the present state of black Africa gives hardly any idea of those flourishing civilizations which impressed European and Arab travelers just after the close of the Middle Ages and which later were destroyed.

sensuality – sometimes ferocity – with innocence; it is the deep and latent look of the earth. The black man's eyes express what his face is, that is, a sort of heavy contemplativity, while in the case of the white man, who is more 'mental', the face seems to express the living fire of his eyes; in the case of the yellow man the eyes pierce, like flashes of impersonal lucidity, through what is static or 'existential' in the face. One of the chief charms of the Mongolian type is the complementary relationship between the existential passivity of the face – a certain 'femininity' it might be said – and the implacable lucidity of the eyes, a cold and unexpected fire lighting up a mask.

In order to understand the meaning of races, one must first of all realise that they are derived from fundamental aspects of humanity and not from something fortuitous in nature. If racism is something to be rejected, so is an anti-racism which errs in the opposite direction by attributing racial difference to merely accidental causes and which seeks to reduce to nothing these differences by talking about inter-racial blood-groups, or in other words by mixing up things situated on different levels. Moreover, that the isolation of a race may have contributed to its elaboration certainly does not mean that this race can be explained in terms of its isolation alone, nor that the isolation was fortuitous and thus something which might not have happened. Again, the fact that there is nothing absolute in nature and that races are not separated in completely watertight compartments in no way means that pure races are not to be found as well as mixed ethnic groupings. Such an opinion has no meaning for the simple reason that all men have the same origin and that humanity as a whole – often wrongly referred to as the human race – constitutes one single species. Racial mixtures may be good or detrimental according to the case: mixing may 'aerate' an ethnic stock that has become too 'compact', just as it may bastardise a homogeneous group endowed with precise and precious qualities. What is never understood by those who have a passion for racial purity is that there is a greater qualitative difference between the psychic heredity of different natural castes – even if the race be the same – than between that of members of the same caste of different races; fundamental and personal tendencies have more importance than racial modes, at any rate insofar

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as the major races or their healthy branches are concerned, and not degenerate groups.<sup>6</sup>

Certain racial traits, which the white man tends to take for signs of inferiority, actually mark either a less mental – though not less spiritual – disposition than that of the average European or else a greater racial vitality. Here we must draw attention to the error of regarding prognathism, relatively low forehead or thick lips, as belonging to an obviously inferior type. If the white man looks on the yellow types as inferior to his own because they appear to him to share certain characteristics of the facial expression of the blacks, the yellow man could, with equal logic, see in the white and black types two divergent forms of degeneration between which his own type holds a right balance, and so on. As for the forehead, its height or cranial volume denotes – if it denotes anything, which depends on a variety of factors – by no means always an intellectual quality, but more often a capacity which is solely creative or even merely inventive, a capacity which may, by luciferian deviation, become a veritable hypertrophy of the mind – a specific propensity to ‘thinking’, but not at all to ‘knowledge’. No doubt the forehead should not be too low, but there is an adequate size suitable even to the most spiritual of men; if it is surpassed, that is in any case without any relation to pure intelligence.

Prognathism itself shows vital force and existential fullness, and thus a consciousness centred on ‘being’, whereas the orthognathous type corresponds to a consciousness relatively detached from that pole, more

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<sup>6</sup> A certain ‘segregation’ of white and black people would be neither ill-judged nor unjust if it were not unilateral, that is to say, if it were conceived in the interest of both races and without prejudice of superiority; for it is clear that to abolish ‘segregation’ altogether means increasing the probability of racial mixtures and vowing one's own race, whether it be white or black, to a kind of disappearance. In North Africa, where mixtures between black and white are more or less in the nature of things, as they have been for thousands of years, the problem is different: here the white people are as it were absorbed by the climate as well as by the African quality of the surroundings so that mixtures have given birth to perfectly harmonious human groups; moreover in this case the white element is a Mediterranean one and not Germanic as in North America. Africans make a clear distinction between Mediterranean and Nordic white men, feeling themselves less far removed from the former than from the latter; it is also very probable that mixtures between human types as divergent as the Nordic and the Black are not very happy ones.



or less 'rootless' or 'isolated' in relation to 'being' and for that very reason 'creative'.<sup>7</sup> An orthognathous face is generally more 'open' or more 'personal' than one that is prognathous; it exteriorises its contents rather than its whole being, and this is as much as to say that it more readily shows what it feels and thinks; the nose is prominent as if to compensate for the retreating of mouth and eyes, all of which means a psychic tendency to 'extroversion'. This characteristic of the nose which often gives rise to the aquiline type – and the latter is met within all races and always suggests analogous characteristics – indicates a cosmic connection with birds, and so with flight, with the skies and winds; there is an aspect of soaring and mobility, but also one of instability and fragility. The spirit of the white man – especially in the West where these features are generally more marked than in the East – has something of the quality of a restless and 'devouring' fire; in its working it alternately 'goes out' and 'turns in on itself'; it 'opens up' like fire, whereas the spirit of the yellow man is 'closed in on itself' like water. The black man, for his part, seems an incarnation of the massiveness, at times volcanic, of the earth, whence comes the serene heaviness, or heavy serenity, that characterises his beauty; his face can have the majesty of a mountain. Insofar as this both rough and sweet massiveness translates an aspect of Existence and can, for this reason, become the support for a contemplative attitude, it certainly is not a mark of inferiority. Let us add that the lugubrious side of Negro art and of animism in general as well as the sometimes rumbling, breathless and spasmodic tonality of African music are both connected with the element 'earth', either in its cavernous, subterranean aspect or in its aspect of fertility and thus of sexuality.

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the faces of Bushmen and Melanesians are more or less orthognathous, while Malays and Indo-Chinese are often markedly prognathous, and this shows the absurdity of the current view that a prognathous type goes with barbarism. If the fact that the peoples just mentioned are orthognathous does not give rise in their case to the same psychological consequences as it does in white peoples this is because it is neutralised by other racial factors, though without losing its significance: every form has meaning, but the meaning is not always actualised in the same way. It is not possible to interpret in a few lines the numerous combinations to which human types are liable, and moreover such is not our intention.

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The white race, whose thinking is more exteriorised, shows, when taken as a whole, a greater 'disequilibrium' than the yellow or black races; within the yellow race there is perhaps no greater difference than that between the Mongols and the Malays, but this difference is less than that between Europeans and White Orientals; to go from France to Morocco is almost like traveling to another planet. The fact that a collectivity in general so little contemplative as the Europeans and another which is the most contemplative of all, the Hindus, can both belong to the same white race shows the essentially 'differentiated' character of that race: a Tibetan would feel infinitely less 'lost' in Japan – we mean ancient Japan – than a Hindu or an Arab in England – even in the England of the Middle Ages; but from another angle there is a profound mental difference between Hindus and Arabs. The radical diversity of religions among white peoples reflects their mental diversity, that character of theirs at once uneven and creative which, within the framework of European humanity, turns into disequilibrium and hypertrophy: the Mediterranean and Nordic races and then the pagan and Christian mentalities have never ceased throughout history to come into collision, for they have never been able to give birth to a sufficiently homogeneous humanity.

Here it is important to note that the religions created by the yellow race,<sup>8</sup> namely the tradition of Fo-Hi and the I-Ching, then Confucianism and Taoism connected with this, and finally Shintoism, did not give rise to fundamentally and irreducibly different civilizations as did the great religions of the white race: Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, not to mention the Greco-Roman West, Ancient Egypt and the other white civilizations of antiquity. Confucianism and Taoism are the two complementary branches issued from a single 'prehistoric' tradition and share the same sacred language and the same ideograms; as for Shintoism, it does not concern all spiritual possibilities and so is not a total 'religion' but requires a superior complement which Buddhism has provided, so that we find in Japan a traditional symbiosis such as is not to

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<sup>8</sup> This only in a manner of speaking, for it goes without saying that a religion is revealed by Heaven and not created by a race; but a revelation always conforms to a racial genius, although this by no means signifies that it is restricted to the specific limits of the race in question.

be found among white people; something similar could be said of Buddhism and Shamanism in Tibet and other countries. Be that as it may, what we want to underline here is that the difference between yellow-race civilizations is far less than that between West and East in the world of the white race;<sup>9</sup> to greater equilibrium, greater stability, there must correspond lesser differentiation.

The yellow and black people taken together are distinct from the whites in respect of their vitality and their lesser mental exteriorization, the yellow in a manner that is dry and light and the black in one that is heavy and humid; compared to these two races the white man is 'hypersensitive'. The yellow man, however, while being 'static' like the black man has not the same 'inertia', for he is both creative and industrious. What distinguishes the yellow man from both the white and the black is his intuitive delicacy, his artistic faculty of expressing imponderables, his passionlessness without inertia and his effortless equilibrium; he is more 'dry', more impenetrable and less highly strung than the white man and 'lighter', more agile and more creative than the black. Perhaps it might also be said that the white man is essentially a 'poet'; his soul is at the same time animated and as it were 'furrowed'. The yellow man is first of all a 'painter', an intuitive who visualises things; his psychic life, as we have said, is more 'smooth' and static and less 'projected forwards' in the sense that things are viewed in the soul instead of the soul being projected into things. As for the black man, he is neither a 'cerebral' nor a 'visual' type but 'vital', and so a born dancer; he is 'profoundly vital' as the yellow man is 'delicately visual', both races being existential rather than mental as compared to the white race. All these expressions can be no more than approximations, for everything is relative, especially in an order of things as complex as race. A race may be

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<sup>9</sup> The only fundamental division in the Far East is that marking the separation of Northern Buddhism in Tibet, Mongolia, China, Manchuria, Annam, Korea and Japan, from Southern Buddhism in Burma, Siam, Cambodia and Laos; Northern Buddhism has been absorbed by the genius of the yellow race whereas in the South it is the racial genius that has been absorbed by Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism in India became yellow, whereas the Theravadins of Indo-China are yellow people become Indians, as it were.

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compared to a whole style of art with many forms rather than to one exclusive form.

The yellow type has this in common with the black that both are marked by a certain existential indifference – not by intellectual preoccupation, a ‘going out of oneself’, by ‘research’, or ‘penetration’ – though in the yellow type this indifference is intuitive and lucid, not vegetative and passionate as in the case of the black type. We are almost tempted to say that the yellow man thinks in pictures, even abstract ones, rather than by speculations, while the black man thinks through ‘forces’. The black man's wisdom is dynamic, it is a ‘metaphysic of forces’. Note the very great importance among black peoples of tom-toms, the function of which is central and quasi-sacred: they are the vehicle for rhythms which, when communicated to human bodies, bring the whole being into contact with cosmic essences. However paradoxical it may seem, it is the intelligence rather than the body of the black man which is in need of rhythms and dances, and that precisely because his spirit has a plastic or existential and not an abstract way of approach;<sup>10</sup> the body, for the very reason that it is the limit of crystallization in the demiurgic process, represents ‘being’ as opposed to ‘thought’, or ‘our whole being’ as opposed to our relatively particular preoccupations or to our outward

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<sup>10</sup> To allow the black man to dance while subjecting him to a civilization in which dancing has no serious function is wholly inefficacious, for the black man can then use only ‘permitted dances’ or ‘tolerated rites’ or what is patronised as mere ‘folklore’. He needs rhythms of bodies and of drums which he can take seriously, and this both Islam and Abyssinian Christianity offer him. We would readily believe that a particular black man, even in Africa, might not suffer consciously from not being able to dance to the sound of tom-toms; but this is not the question, for we speak of a collective integration and not of individual adaptation. In the case of the American blacks this need for bodily and musical rhythms has been maintained but can now be expressed only in trivial mode: that is the posthumous vengeance of a racial genius that has been trampled underfoot. In the same order of ideas, such a movement as the Mau-Mau is, in the final analysis, explained, not by ‘ingratitude’ as some have stupidly asserted, but by the simple fact that black men are black men and not white men, to use a somewhat elliptical expression; and it is clear that something like this can be said of other similar cases. Let us add that there are no human beings devoid of all value; this is as much as to say that if men are allowed the right to exist they must also be allowed – in an effective way – the right to certain elements of their own culture.

consciousness. The roll of tom-toms marks, like heaven's thunder, the voice of Divinity: by its very nature and by its sacred origin it is a 'remembrance of God', an 'invocation' of the Power both creator and destroyer and thus also liberator, through which human art canalises the divine manifestation and in which man participates through dancing; he thus participates with all his being in order to regain the heavenly fluidity through the 'analogical vibrations' between matter and the Spirit. The drum is the altar, its roll marks the descent of God and the dance the ascent of man.<sup>11</sup>

To return now to the white race, we could, at the risk of repetition, characterise it by the terms 'exteriorization' and 'contrast'; what is exteriorised tends towards diversity and richness, but also towards a certain 'creative rootlessness' which explains why the white race is alone in having given birth to a number of profoundly different civilizations, as has already been pointed out; further, the contrasts which among white people as a whole are produced 'in space' and in simultaneity, have been produced in the case of Westerners 'in time', during the course of European history. Let us add that, if the white man is a restless and devouring 'fire', he can also be – as in the case of the Hindu – a calm and contemplative flame; as for the yellow man, if he is 'water', he can reflect the moon but can also be unleashed in violent storms; if the black man is 'earth', he has, besides the innocent massiveness of that element, the explosive force of volcanoes.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> We meet with the same symbolism in dervish dances and, in principle, in every ritual dance. Love dances, harvest dances, or war dances are designed to abolish the barriers between different levels of existence and to establish a direct contact with the 'genius' or 'divine Name' in question. Human infidelities do not in any way change the principle or take away the value of the means: whatever may be the importance given to utilitarian considerations or to magical procedures in the case of some Negro animism or some Siberian or Red Indian shamanism, the symbols remain what they are and the bridges towards heaven are doubtless never altogether broken down.

<sup>12</sup> These correspondences are founded on the visible elements, three in number. We do not know the source of the following classification: white race, water, lymphatic, north, winter; yellow race, air, nervous, east, spring; black race, fire, sanguine, south, summer; red race, earth, bilious, west, autumn. While this picture includes some plausible elements it calls for serious reservations. The fact that the red race includes a type not to be found anywhere else so precisely marked or so widespread does not authorise us to

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Each of the three great races, and each of their great intermediate branches, produces perfect beauty, beauty incomparable and in a sense irreplaceable; it is necessarily thus because each of these types is an aspect of the human norm.<sup>13</sup> Compared to white beauty, yellow and black beauty seem much more sculptural; they are much nearer to substance and to femininity than the white type, a femininity which the black race expresses in tellurian mode and the yellow in celestial mode. At its peak yellow beauty realises an almost immaterial nobility, often sweetened by a flower-like simplicity; white beauty is more personal and no doubt less mysterious because more explicit, though for that very reason very expressive and also marked at times by a kind of melancholy grandeur. It should perhaps be added that the Negroid type, at its finest, is not reducible merely to 'earth'; it amounts rather to earth's precious concretions and thus escapes its primal heaviness: it then realises a nobility like basalt, obsidian or jasper, a kind of mineral beauty which transcends the passional and evokes the immutable.

At the boundaries of the great races there is also a tropical type, more or less Negroid, passing like a weft through the white and yellow types in equatorial regions; this seems to indicate the important, though not exclusive, part played by climate in the elaboration of the black type. There is on the other hand no Nordic type found in the other races, so that it may be concluded that differentiation in the white and yellow races is due only to fundamental divergences of an inner order. However, broadly speaking, there is a Nordic temperament which is opposed to the tropical temperament: outside Europe and its ethnic dependencies the former is represented by the North American Indians – whose type is introvert and but little sensual – and the latter particularly by the Dravidians and Malays.

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look on it as a fundamental race, for it also includes types that are found in the yellow and white races.

<sup>13</sup> According to a too common opinion the norm is identical with the average, which amounts to saying that principle is reduced to fact or quality to quantity; mediocrity and ugliness become 'reality'. Now in ugliness the genius of the race is imprecise, for beauty alone is typical, it alone represents what is essential and intelligible.

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The subtle and frenetic art of drumming, the passion of dance and its more or less sacred character and then the innocent pride, or proud innocence, of the naked body in both sexes – all these are features relating Africans to Dravidians and Balinese, except that among the Balinese the gamelan – an instrument of Mongolian type – replaces the Afro-Indian drum. As with the black people of Africa so also in the soul of the tropical Asiatics in question we find – though in lesser proportion and on a sacerdotal basis – something of the element ‘earth’, something of its fertility, of its sensuality, its joy and its heavy indifference.

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According to a common error there exists an Italian, a German and a Russian ‘type’ and so forth; in reality there is within each people a series of types, very divergent and of unequal importance, but all characteristic of that people; then there are types which can also be found among other peoples of the same race and, finally, one or more psychological types that are superimposed on these. For instance, in the series of types which are specifically Japanese one face may come much closer to a given Chinese type than to other Japanese faces; in the same way there are to be found among every people of the white race heads describable as ‘European’ or ‘Arab’ or ‘Hindu’: the psychological significance of these conformations is generally quite secondary and is frequently neutralised by other factors, whereas a certain significance of ‘mental style’ always remains valid. A similar error, much more widespread because bound up with political feelings and regional pride, is that which confuses a people with the political state in which the majority of them are living, and believes that groups accidentally found outside the frontiers of that state form other peoples. Thus only the inhabitants of France – including groups foreign to the French people – are called ‘French’ and only inhabitants of Germany are called ‘Germans’, whereas in the past people rightly spoke of ‘the Germans’. The idea that the Walloons are different from the ‘French’ is a case in point, as though Normans were not different from Gascons or as though some Germans (or rather ‘Germanics’) in the South were not far more different from Prussians than from Alsatians or

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German Swiss, the Alemannic tribe having been divided by several political frontiers as has also happened with the Bavaro-Austrian tribe. Regionalists also often cite mental differences due to secondary causes, exaggerating their importance; they forget, not merely that far greater differences occur within each country between different confessions, political parties, cultural levels and so forth, but also that political mentalities may be modified from one generation to another. In the same way, a pacific nature is often attributed to a particular people, or to an autonomous fraction of a people, just because they have no motive for making war, or are in no position to do so, or else because they only fight with 'coloured people' and so on; but there is no end to the confusions of this kind.

So far as real ethnic mentalities within Europe are concerned it is no exaggeration to say that Latins are rational and Germanics imaginative: generally speaking, an argument must be addressed either mainly to reason or to imagination according to whether it is intended for French or for German audiences. These traits may be good qualities – it would indeed be ungracious to reproach some Rhineland mystic for his spiritualised imagination – just as they can be defects, and in the latter case we say that a rationalism both 'passional' and devoid of imagination, or in other words both arbitrary and sterile, has no greater worth than an intemperate imagination that is also passional; we are almost tempted to say that for the average Frenchman grandeur is folly, while for a German folly is grandeur, rather as La Fontaine distinguished Frenchmen from Spaniards by saying of pride that 'ours is much more stupid and theirs much more mad'. And as for language, one knows that Latin words 'define' whereas those of Germanic tongues 're-create' so that in the latter there is frequent onomatopoeia; Latin discerns, separates and isolates whereas Germanic languages are 'existential' and symbolical, remaking things and suggesting qualities. A further example of these mental differences is furnished by German or Gothic script, which well expresses what the German genius has of imaginative, 'vegetative', 'warm' and 'intimate' qualities (as shown in such words as *traut*, *heimatlich* and *geborgen*), whereas the Latin lettering by its mineral coldness and geometrical simplicity exteriorises the clarity and



somewhat unimaginative precision of the Romans. The importance of Gothic characters in the Middle Ages goes hand in hand with that of Germanic influence, against which the Renaissance battled and which the Reformation reaffirmed in its own fashion. The medieval cities of Northern Europe with their narrow houses, often outlandish in shape with the joinery showing, similarly express what is both of the intimate and of the whimsical in the Germanic soul.

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In art the white man, or at any rate the Occidental, tends to detach man from nature, even to oppose him to it; the yellow man remains in nature, which he spiritualises and never destroys, so that the buildings of the yellow people always retain something of the spirit of the forest, and this is true even of Hinduised Indo-Chinese with whom a Hindu perspective has become integrated into a Mongolian way of seeing and feeling. In general it can be said that the material civilization of the yellow race remains close to the vegetable kingdom and to what is 'natural', being associated with wood, bamboo and pottery rather than with stone, which the yellow man seems in general to distrust as being too 'dead' and 'ponderous' a material.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, nothing is further from the genius of the yellow race than the muscular and dramatic nudes of the Westerners;<sup>15</sup> the yellow man sees primordial and celestial sublimity, not

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<sup>14</sup> The great stone temples of Angkor Wat and Borobudur are Indian monuments executed by yellow men Indianised.

<sup>15</sup> There is a narrow-minded classicism which, because it has no objectively valid criterion and is as lacking in imagination as in intelligence and taste, sees in Chinese civilization only pettiness and routine: the Chinese are deemed inferior because they never produced a Michaelangelo or a Shakespeare, or because they did not create the Ninth Symphony and so on; now, if there is nothing Promethean in the greatness of the Chinese civilization, that is because it takes its stand on points where the classical prejudice cannot understand it; on the purely artistic level there are ancient bronzes which show more greatness and profundity than the whole of European nineteenth century painting. The first thing to be understood is that there is no true greatness apart from truth, and that truth certainly has no need of grandiloquent expressions. In these days we see a new reaction against classicism in the wider sense, but this reaction, far

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in the human body, but in virgin nature: the deities of the yellow race are like flowers, their faces like the full moon or the lotus; even the celestial nymphs of Buddhism combine their nudity – which still remains wholly Hindu in its marked sexuality and rhythm – with the flower-like grace lent them by the yellow genius. The serenity of Buddhas and the translucency of landscapes in the yellow man's art denote qualities of expression not to be found anywhere else in the same degree, qualities which are the very opposite of the tormented genius of the white peoples of Europe. Far Eastern painting has an aerial grace, the inimitable charm of a furtive and precious vision; by compensation, the terrifying presence of dragons, genii and demons adds to the art of the Far East a dynamic and flamboyant element.

Despite evident or possible analogies with the Western knight, the Japanese hero<sup>16</sup> keeps the laconic quality of the Mongol soul, while compensating this by a lyrical quality that is certainly moving but of a visual rather than auditive character and always inspired by nature. The Samurai is terse and subtle and does not forget, even in his sublimest moments, either practical sense or courtesy; he has impetuosity, a cold discipline and the delicacy both of an artist and of a Zen contemplative; the classical theatre represents him as a sort of celestial insect whose astonishing capers and hieratic inflexibilities are far indeed from the hero of Greek or Shakespearean drama. In the yellow man's soul, which is little given to declamation, the smallest things unveil their secret greatness: a flower, a cup of tea, a precise and transparent brush-stroke; the greatness pre-exists in things, in their primary truth. This is also expressed in the music of the Far East: shrill sounds which form beads like the spume of a solitary cascade in a kind of morning melancholy; gong-strokes like the throbbing of a mountain of brass; chants surging from the intimacies of

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from being wholesome, on the contrary comes from below, according to the usual rhythm of a certain kind of 'evolution'.

<sup>16</sup> It is sometimes said that the Japanese have 'European souls' which is just as false as asserting that the Russians have 'Asiatic souls'; had the spirit of Japan been like that of the West, Mahayana Buddhism could never have been planted there, still less could it have been preserved intact; the same is true of Buddhist art, which found in Japan one of its most highly spiritual expressions.

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nature, but also from the sacred, from the solemn and golden dance of the Gods.

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Despite the reservations which have to be made a priori, we should perhaps return at this point to the analogy established above between the three fundamental or 'absolute' races on the one hand and the three visible elements on the other<sup>17</sup> by relating this to the Hindu theory of the three cosmic tendencies, the *gunas*. The Hindus attribute fire, which rises and gives light, to the ascending tendency, *sattva*; water, which is transparent and spreads horizontally, to the expansive tendency, *rajas*; and earth, which is heavy and opaque, to the descending or solidifying tendency, *tamas*. The precarious nature of the ascending tendency explains both the Greco-Roman and the modern deviations: that which is intellectual penetration and contemplativity among Hindus has become mental hypertrophy and inventiveness among Westerners; in both cases the accent is on 'thought' in the widest sense, but the results are diametrically opposed. The white race is 'speculative' both in the true and in the improper sense: it has strongly influenced the spirit of other races, not only through Brahminism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, but also through the modern deviation, without having been reciprocally influenced, except perhaps slightly. The yellow race is contemplative without laying stress on the dialectical element, that is, without feeling any need to clothe its wisdom in complex and highly mobile 'mentalizations'; this race gave birth to Taoism, Confucianism and Shintoism; it created a writing unique in kind and an art that is original, profound and powerful, but it has not determined any foreign

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<sup>17</sup> The two invisible elements, air and ether, are comprised in the visible elements, the former in a 'horizontal' and 'secondary' sense, the latter in a 'vertical' or 'primordial' sense; fire and water are absorbed into air which is as it were the basis on which they live, whereas ether penetrates all the other elements, being their *materia prima* or quintessence (*quinta essentia*). It must be clearly understood that in speaking of 'elements' we are not thinking of chemical analysis but of the natural and immediate symbolism of appearances, which is perfectly valid and even 'exact' from the point of view here adopted.

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civilization; it has received a profound impression from Buddhism, a wisdom of white origin – it is not, of course, the wisdom that is racial but the human vehicle of the Revelation – while imprinting on that tradition the mark of its own powerful and subtle genius.<sup>18</sup> The conquests of the yellow peoples swept along like a tidal wave throwing down everything in their path but not transforming their victims as did the white man's conquests;<sup>19</sup> the yellow races, whatever their impetuosity, 'conserve' like water and do not 'transmute' like fire; as conquerors they allow themselves to be absorbed by the vanquished of foreign civilizations. As for the black race, they are, as we have said, 'existential' and this explains their passivity and inaptitude for radiating outwards, even within the fold of Islam; but this characteristic becomes qualitative and spiritual through the intervention of the contemplative element deep-rooted in every man and which gives its value to every natural determination.

It could also be said that the white and yellow races, insofar as they respectively correspond to the elements 'fire' and 'water', meet in the element 'air'. Air has the two qualities of lightness (*sattva*) and mobility (*rajas*), whereas fire is characterised by luminosity (*sattva*) and heat (*rajas*) and water by fluidity (*rajas*) and weight or passivity (*tamas*); but there is also destructiveness (*tamas*) in fire and transparency (*sattva*) in water, so that inasmuch as 'transparency' predominates in the yellow race, in its contemplativity and in the art in which this quality is

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<sup>18</sup> Here the pre-Columbian civilizations of America should also be mentioned, though in this case there was, alongside the Mongol element, an Atlantean element perhaps anterior to the great differentiation of races, or connected to the white people by an affinity with the ancient Egyptians and the primitive Berbers. America shows, both racially and culturally, a sort of mixture of Mongolian Siberia and ancient Egypt; hence the Shamanism, the conical tents, the leather robes adorned with fringes, the magical drums, the long hair, the feathers and, in the South, the pyramids, the colossal temples with their static form, the hieroglyphs and the mummies. Between the three great races of humanity there are doubtless not only types due to admixtures but also, it would seem, types which remained more or less undifferentiated; it can also be supposed that, while primordial humanity did not as yet know different races, it sporadically included highly differentiated types which as it were prefigured the races of today.

<sup>19</sup> Caesar Romanised Gaul, the Moslems Islamised parts of Africa, Europe and Asia and the Europeans have Europeanised America, but the Mongols never 'Mongolised' any country. Their spiritual genius is too implicit to be able to so deeply affect other races.

materialised, it comes 'nearer to Heaven' than the white race inasmuch as the latter takes on the aspect of destructiveness (*tamas*). The element 'earth' has the two aspects of heaviness or immobility (*tamas*) and fertility (*rajas*) but also adds to these, through minerals, a luminous possibility which might be termed 'crystallinity' (*sattva*); the spirituality of black men often has a static purity and turns to account all that the black mentality contains of the stable, the simple and the concrete. That which is 'inertia' (earth) in the black man becomes 'equilibrium' (water) in the yellow man, and one of the most striking traits of that race is indeed its faculty of holding the balance between extremes. As for the instability (fire) of the white man, it is significant that the Hindus have neutralised this by the caste system in order to obviate from the outset the danger of deviation inherent in the fiery cosmic quality (*sattva*);<sup>20</sup> among the Semites, and among Europeans influenced by the Semitic spirit, this instability is compensated by religious dogmatism.<sup>21</sup> Ether has the intrinsic quality of principial immutability or ipseity (*sattva*) and the extrinsic aspects of differentiation (*rajas*) and solidification (*tamas*); in this play of correspondencies it would then represent primordial man or – by derivation – man as such. This 'alchemy' will not seem strange to our regular readers and will above all show them – if there is need for such demonstration – that in each racial determination there is a positive aspect which, in case of need, is able to neutralise a baneful aspect.

In any case, if the white race can claim a relative pre-eminence, it can do so only through the Hindu group which in a way perpetuates the

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<sup>20</sup> We refer here to a theory according to which fire, inasmuch as it tends to rise and to illuminate, corresponds to *sattva*, whereas water, inasmuch as it spreads horizontally and fertilises can be assimilated to *rajas*, earth then corresponding to *tamas* owing to its inertia and compressive power; but it goes without saying that in another respect fire is *rajas* through its consuming and passionate heat, in which case light alone corresponds to *sattva*; this is the trend not of the visible elements – fire, earth – but of the sensory functions of the sun-fire; luminosity, heat and negatively, darkness. Pure luminosity is cold through its transcendence; darkness is cold only through privation.

<sup>21</sup> As for those groups of yellow and black people who are adherents of Semitic religions, dogma appears in their case, not in its stabilizing function, but in its simplifying function, the danger for them being, not one of ideological divagation, but of ignorance and materialism.

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primordial state of the Indo-Europeans and, in a wider sense, that of white men as a whole. The Hindus surpass every other human group by their extraordinary contemplativity and the metaphysical genius resulting from this; but the yellow race is in its turn far more contemplative than the Western branch of the white race, and this makes it possible, looking at things as a whole, to speak of spiritual superiority in the traditional East, whether white or yellow, also including in this superiority the Messianic and Prophetic outlook of the Semites, which runs parallel with the Aryan *avatar* outlook. All these facts are now called into question because of the modern spirit, which has the power so to shake or upset all values that a natural propensity to spirituality may lose all its efficacy, and such that spirituality may in the end come to be actualised in a quarter where it could least have been expected. This leads us once again to underline the conditional nature of all hereditary superiority: if one takes account of the part played by religions and ideological influences as well as of the interplay of compensations in both space and time, if one observes, for instance, that some group held to be barbarian may be incontestably superior to some other group held to be civilised (not to mention the possibility of a personal superiority of individuals of any group whatsoever) then one must recognise that the question of racial superiority is in practice pointless.

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It will have been gathered from what has been said above that for us the question is not: 'What is our racial heritage?' but rather: 'What are we making of that heritage?' To talk about a racial value is, for the individual, quite meaningless, for the existence of Christ or of the Vedantic doctrine adds nothing to the value of a white man with a base nature any more than the barbarism of certain African tribes takes anything away from a black man of saintly soul; and as for the effective value, not of a race, but of an ethnic atavism, this is a question of 'spiritual alchemy', not of scientific or racist dogmatism.

In one respect the metaphysical reason for races is that differences cannot be merely qualitative as in the case of castes; differences can and

must also arise 'horizontally', from the point of view simply of modes and not of essences. There cannot be only differences between light and darkness, there must also be differences of colour.

If each caste is in some way to be found in the other castes, the same thing can be said of races, for the same reasons and apart from any question of racial admixtures. But besides castes and races there are also four temperaments, which Galen relates to the four sensible elements, and the astrological types, which are related to the planets of our system. All these types or possibilities are present in the human substance and form the individual by determining him in many different ways: to know the aspects of man is one way of better knowing oneself.

Races exist and we cannot ignore them, less than ever now that the time of closed universes has come to an end and with it the right to purely conventional simplifications; in any case what it is above all important to understand is that racial determination can only be relative, man thus determined never ceasing to be man as such.

The modern movement towards uniformity, which causes the world to become smaller and smaller, seems able to attenuate racial differences, at any rate at the mental level and without speaking of ethnic mixtures. In this there is nothing surprising if one reflects that this standardizing civilization is at the opposite pole from any higher synthesis, based as it is solely on man's earthly needs; human animality provides in principle a rather facile ground for mutual understanding and favours the breaking down of traditional civilizations under auspices of a quantitative and spiritually inoperative 'culture'. But the fact of thus depending on what gives mankind a 'low level solidarity' presupposes the detaching of the masses, who are intellectually passive and unconscious, from the elites who legitimately represent them and in consequence also incarnate both the tradition, insofar as it is adapted to a given race, and the genius of that race in the most lofty sense.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> If we write 'elites' in the plural it is not because we believe in the existence of some other elite besides that which is intellectual or spiritual – without a foundation of truth and thus intellectuality no spirituality can exist – but solely in order to show that the elite includes modes and levels which run through a people as arteries run through a body; if the elite is first of all sacerdotal in substance, it is nonetheless true that sections of the

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Let us take the opportunity to insert here, alongside these considerations about races and not unconnected with them, some remarks on the opposition – true or false – between West and East. First of all, there is in both cases an inner opposition between the sacred patrimony and whatever actively or passively moves away from that patrimony; this shows that the distinction between East and West is not absolute, that there is a ‘Western East’ as there was – and perhaps still is within certain frameworks – an ‘Eastern West’, as at Mount Athos or in some other relatively isolated phenomenon. In considering the East we must thus start by differentiating – if we are to avoid inextricable contradictions – between Orientals who owe nothing, or almost nothing, to the West and have every right and reason to resist it, and those who on the contrary owe, or imagine they owe, everything to it, but who also too readily spend their time in enumerating the colonialist crimes of Europe, as though Europeans were the only men to have conquered countries and exploited peoples. The blind haste with which westernised Orientals of every political colour press on with the westernizing of the East proves beyond all question how thoroughly they themselves are convinced of the superiority of modern Western civilization, that very civilization which engendered colonialism as also the cult of machines and Marxism. Now there are few things so absurd as the anti-Westernism of those who are themselves westernised. A choice must be made: either that civilization is worthy of adoption, in which case Europeans are supermen to whom unbounded gratitude is owed, or else Europeans are malefactors deserving contempt and then they and their civilization fall together and there is no reason for imitating them. But in practice the West is being completely and whole-heartedly imitated even in the most pointless of its caprices; far from limiting themselves to modern armaments for purposes of legitimate defence or to an equipment of economic tools capable of meeting the situations created by an overpopulation that is itself partly due to the biological crimes of modern science, Eastern

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elite are to be found at all levels of society, just as inversely, there is no sacerdotal body without its Pharisees, but this fact in no way abolishes the normal hierarchy.



nations adopt the very soul of the antitraditional West to the point of seeking in the 'science of religions', in psychoanalysis and even in surrealism the keys to the age-old wisdom of the East. In a word, they believe in the superiority of the West but reproach Westerners for having believed in it.

Let us leave this paradoxical aspect of modernism and inquire of the timeless soul of Asia and Africa. In the eyes of non-Western men who remain faithful to their traditions, what makes Western colonialism more odious than other yokes physically more cruel, is precisely those characteristics which are found only in modern civilization: firstly a materialism that is not merely confined to the physical realm but also claims the realm of the spirit – materialism *de jure* and not only *de facto* – secondly the mixture of hypocrisy<sup>23</sup> and perfidy which stems from this materialism and thirdly the fact that everything is made trivial and ugly; but above all it is their political invincibility and cultural inassimilability which confer on the 'whites' – in the conventional sense of the term – a character never before seen, something as it were extra-human or almost 'Martian'.<sup>24</sup> Neither Mongols nor Moslems showed this strange

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<sup>23</sup> It is, for instance, a biased hypocrisy to call a people 'barbarous' because they 'did such and such things' and to deny them on that account rights considered to be elementary, while attributing the same kind of actions in other favoured cases to the 'period' or to 'circumstances', according to whether they be past or present. Again, when people cannot avoid applying the term 'barbarism' to European adversaries, the same hypocrisy often makes them add the epithet 'Asiatic' as though the Europeans as such – considered, that is, apart from any affinity with the rest of humanity – were incapable of evil-doing.

<sup>24</sup> The metropolitans take a far too summary view of their colonies in the sense that they think only of 'benefits conferred' – or what seem so in their eyes – and forget, not only the scale of values of the foreign civilization, but also the special mentality of the colonial settlers, which is necessarily deformed by their own abnormal and psychologically 'unhealthy' situation. The question is endlessly discussed whether the colonial peoples are 'good' or 'bad', 'grateful' or 'ungrateful', and it is forgotten that, being men, they cannot fail to have certain reactions in certain circumstances. Colonial settlers inevitably have an absurd superiority complex, as Lyautey noted with regret, and the 'natives' cannot fail to suffer because of it; there are some things in the human soul which cannot be replaced by means of roads and hospitals and it is astonishing that Europeans, who are such 'idealists', should be so slow to perceive this. If Europeans believe that they offer to those they 'protect' liberties they never knew, they do not take

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antitraditional spirit; their military power was not absolute; Mongols and Manchus were turned into Chinese, other Mongols were absorbed by Islam or, in the West, by Christianity. The conquering thrust of the Moslems finally came up against its natural limits, but what is far more important is that the Islamic mentality was traditional and in its deepest tendencies reconcilable with Hinduism: Moslem spirituality could even give a fresh impetus to Vaisnavite mysticism, just as Buddhism had been able, a few centuries earlier, to revivify certain aspects of Hindu spirituality. The very least one can say is that the modern spirit includes nothing of the kind – given its professed principles and its tendencies and in spite of current illusions – and that the Western threat to the most sacred things of the East on the contrary knows no limits, as is proven precisely by the antitraditional spirit of ‘young Orientals’ or by what comes to the same thing, the present suicide of the East.

For ‘youth’ the final humiliation is to be weak and thus open to ‘colonization’; weakness is then often seen as synonymous with tradition, as if no question of truth need arise either in the evaluation of Western strength or in the interpretation of traditional values. What is ‘true’ is strength, even if it leads to hell; ancient corruption is succeeded by an angry and even diabolical virtue; they would ‘liberate’ a people even at the price of what gives meaning to its existence and readily accept the idea that ‘we must move with the times’, as if there could be an imperative requiring man to abdicate his intelligence, or indeed permitting him to do so. If error is inevitable, so, just as much, is intellectual opposition to error, and this, quite apart from any question of what may be opportune or presently effective; truth is good, not because it is opportune or efficacious, but because it is true, not forgetting that truth coincides with reality and that, therefore, *vincit omnia Veritas*.

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into account that these liberties exclude other modes of liberty of which they themselves hardly conceive any longer; they give good things, but at the same time impose their own conceptions of what is good, and this comes back to the ancient saying that might is always right. This mentality first dams up and then releases in the colonial people all that is basest in collective man; everything possible has been done to compromise the tradition, whose ruin was always wished for, and then people are astonished at the evil springing from its disintegration.

All these considerations call to mind the disappointment felt by some when they see how easily age-old traditions crumble despite the contemplative mentality of the peoples concerned, a mentality which they had believed would offer sure guarantees. But two things are forgotten: in the first place, there are not only contemplative Orientals and 'activist' Westerners, there are also, whatever the traditional setting, men who are spiritual and men who are worldly; in the second place, only a minority in any civilization consciously and actively participates in the spirit of the tradition, the majority remaining more or less 'fallow', open, that is, to receive influences of no matter what kind. It is well known how easily many Hindus, Malays and Chinese accepted a spiritual form so foreign to them as Islam, and this is proof of a certain detachment from their native traditions; when there is joined to this detachment – or this passivity, as the case may be – a materialistic and worldly spirit (and God knows how many Orientals can be 'in fact' materialists) there is no reason to be astonished when traditions are abandoned and materialistic ideologies adopted. Worldliness in the widest sense, love of pleasures or greed of gain, or in short the overestimation of the things of this world, has always been a door open to error; an intellectual capacity is far from being absolute as a criterion and absolute guarantee. Here it should be added that the spiritual minority which consciously and 'actively' participates in the tradition is to be found in every layer of society, and this amounts to saying conversely that 'passive', 'unconscious' and 'worldly' people are also to be found everywhere.

In an analogous order of ideas we should wish to say this: whatever may be the defects of modern man it cannot be said that he enjoys no kind of at least virtual or conditional superiority over 'ancient' man, even if it be relative, which we could specify in the following way: suppose a Western man of today came to recognise all the errors that surround him and suppose he could return to the Middle Ages or live in no matter what wholly traditional world and adopt its ways of thinking and acting, even then, despite everything, he would never become quite a medieval man; his spirit would retain the imprint of experiences unknown to the generality of non-modern men. Here we have in mind especially a critical sense which is developed only thanks to obstacles and of which a

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traditional world is ignorant because certain obstacles never appear there; certain functions of intelligence are hardly ever deployed except in struggle and disappointment. In traditional worlds a certain tendency to exaggeration and to its accompanying illogicalities, as well as to facile prejudices, is inevitable and is explained precisely by the too 'compact' character of ideas and tastes; in other words, there are realms of his being in which ancient man never suffered just as there are things he never saw called into question. Man is made in such a way that he is never fully actualised within the limits of his possibilities except with the help of constraints, otherwise he would be perfect; where there is no brake there is exaggeration and unconsciousness. If what has just been said cannot be applied to the chosen vessels of the ancient wisdoms, it does apply to the common run of men and it is they who necessarily give their imprint to the whole civilization.

\* \* \*

In conclusion let us return to the question of race: if ethnic differences only too often provide illusory motives for hatred, more normally they include reasons for love: by this we mean that foreign races have something complementary in relation to ourselves without there being in principle any 'lack' in us or in them either. Assuredly it would be senseless to love a whole race or to love some individual just because he belongs to a foreign race; but it is clear that one could not understand some particular racial beauty without understanding and consequently 'loving' the race which is its substance – any more than one could love a woman without loving femininity – and this is all the more true on the level of the soul: the qualities which make a particular human being lovable at the same time make the genius of his race lovable. In the final analysis one can only love the Self, for there is nothing else in the Universe to love; now a man of another race, supposing he corresponds to us by analogy or by complementarism, is like a forgotten aspect of ourselves and thus also like a rediscovered mirror of God.

# The Elements of Racial Education

by Julius Evola

## Foreword

The title of this small volume expresses clearly our intentions regarding its form and its purpose.

Here we offer neither an abstract, scientific exposition of the theory of race, nor a survey of the various racial doctrines. To achieve that purpose, we would have had to repeat things which we have already written, because we have already carried out this project in our book 'Il Mito del Sangue', published a few years ago by Hoepli.

We do not intend to proceed to a doctrinal and critical examination of the fundamentals of racism, biological, philosophical or spiritual, either, since the reader will be able to find these matters discussed in a more recent work of ours, also published by Hoepli, namely 'Sintesi di Dottrina della Razza', while, for a general account of some of the historical and traditional perspectives linked with the problems of race and 'Aryanity', he can always refer to our main work, 'Revolt against the Modern World', again published by Hoepli.

Our task in this small volume is more specialised: it does not include abstract expositions which would be used as bases of a generic 'education' and information, nor considerations designed to give more depth to the doctrine, but rather it aims to clarify the ideas – we may say the 'key ideas' – needed in order for the educator to carry out, with respect to racism, his true task. Simple notions, but clear and suffused with suggestive force, able to act on the souls of the young people rather than

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on their intellects, so as to promote a certain formation of their will and a certain orientation of their best vocations.

The educator must bear in mind, in this connection, the essentially political and ethical value which the theory of race must have in Fascism, and thus in the Fascist school. He must understand fully that the 'race' in question is something very different from the one of which biology and anthropology spoke until very recently. Our racism goes far beyond the limits of such disciplines, which are, in fact, basically, in their most common, positivistic, and scientific formulations, in sharp contrast to the true racist idea. True racism is a frame of mind rather than a specialised discipline: its influence thus extends to fields which, according to general opinion, and especially that of the so-called 'intellectuals', would seem to have nothing to do with problems of this kind.

The instructions of Mussolini are precise: 'You must know, and everyone must know, that, even in regard to the question of race, our aims will be precisely calculated'. He has added, alluding to certain well-known insinuations: 'To say that Fascism is imitating someone, or something, else, is simply ridiculous'. However, we must not conceal from ourselves the fact that, despite these instructions, in the two and a half years which have passed since the declaration by Fascism of its official racial stance, not much has been done. The reasons for this are, more or less, as follows:

First of all, there is the assumption, already mentioned, that racism is merely a branch of natural science, to which, for contingent or even opportunistic reasons (as, for instance, with respect to the Jewish problem), a certain role has to be conceded, a bit larger than it would normally be expected to have, alongside the other disciplines, which exist unaffected and are to be left the way they are.

Secondly, many have suspected, and still suspect, that racism is an imported product, having little bearing either upon serious culture, or upon our tradition, the characteristics of which they hold to be 'Latinity', as opposed to 'Aryanity', and universalism, as opposed to dependence upon any given race.

Finally, there is a technical reason, related to lack of competence and preparatory study. Various causes have seen to it that, until now, racism in Italy has been mainly the product of a propaganda campaign conducted by incompetents who have become Fascists or anti-Semites overnight, and for whom sloganising has served as a substitute for principles and serious information.

These causes for delay must be removed. It is necessary to persuade ourselves, and to convince others, that, rather than being a flash in the pan whose day is almost done since, nowadays, there are so many very different things to think of, the racist idea has a precise future, not only for its own intrinsic reasons, but also for historical reasons related to the epoch into which we are entering, as we have argued elsewhere.

Now, in order to achieve any real progress in the racial field, we must commit ourselves to developing formative and educative activity among the new generations, both within the youth organisations of the Party and in the schools. It is essential that we do not delude ourselves about the effect of merely journalistic propaganda on a public such as ours which, in this field, is unprepared if not downright sceptical. Equally, it cannot be claimed that elements in which fixed views and mental habits have already crystallised can sincerely change their orientation and adopt ideas alien to them, which they had fought against, or had not known at all, until a moment before.

We must count entirely upon the new generations: new generations both of educators and of pupils. And, let us repeat, here we speak about the formation of a mentality and of a sensibility, not of intellectual schemes or of classifications of natural science.

It is to this end that we have written this small volume, in which we will present in the most living and direct manner the fundamental essence of the ideas which integrate the racist orientation into the main issues of the ethics and the general world-view of Fascism. Those readers who wish subsequently to go further into any of the various arguments will find what is needed to satisfy their wish both in our own works, already mentioned, above, and in those of the authors from whom we shall have occasion to quote here and there, below.

## What 'Race' Means

What does 'race' mean? Here are some of the best known definitions: 'race is a living unity of individuals of common origin, with the same bodily and spiritual features' (Woltmann); 'it is a human group which is distinguished from any other human group by a characteristic combination, and which reproduces elements always having this same combination, of physical features and psychic gifts' (Günther); 'it is a hereditary type' (Topinard); 'it is a stock defined by groups with the same "genes" (that is, of hereditary potentialities), not of men outwardly similar in form' (Fisher, Lenz); 'it is a group defined not by the possession of these or those bodily or spiritual characteristics, but by the style which manifests itself through them' (Clauss).

We have mentioned at random these definitions of race. There is a sort of progression from each one to the next, related to that which has been taking place in the past years in the theory of race. Originally, race exhausted itself in an anthropological concept, 'anthropology' here being a discipline which has ceased to have the ancient and etymological meaning of the 'science of man' in general, in order to assume that of a special natural science considering man only in the sense in which his is one natural species among many others.

At first, there was thus a purely naturalistic, descriptive concept of race: just as the various animals and plants were described in their obvious inequality, human beings were gathered in various categories based on the greater recurrence which essentially bodily, somatic characteristics presented in one or the other. The criterion was therefore 'statistical' and quantitative: the common characteristics which could be found in the greater number of individuals were considered as racial characteristics.

The earliest anthropological research thus focused on the most obvious features of outward appearance: the colour of the skin, of the hair, of the eyes, stature, features of the face, proportions, cranial conformation. The first development from this was the introduction of measurement: the bodily proportions were fixed in numbers, cranial indices and facial angles were measured. That is to say that the



descriptive sought to 'become positive' by means of numerical formulae. There followed the contribution of psychology: the attempt was made to identify the gifts which in the most recurrent way corresponded or were presumed to correspond to the various human groups.

Early anthropology had also considered the hereditary element: once the morphological differences between living human beings were observed, it was naturally assumed that the constancy of such differences had existed in the ancestors as well as in the descendants. Nevertheless, the particular importance of the 'heredity' element is peculiar to the most modern anthropology, already close to racial theory in the strict sense of the word. Hence the definitions of Topinard, Lenz and Fisher we have just referred to. *In current racial theory, the theory of heredity constitutes a cornerstone.* It is asserted in it, contrarily to the views of earlier anthropology, that not all the characteristics or gifts which can be found in a given human group are to be attributed peculiarly to a race, but only those likely to be transmitted hereditarily.

There is more. After having observed some external modifications (also called *paravariations*) that a given type can undergo for various reasons, without, however, their becoming transmissible hereditarily, the important distinction between the *gene* and its *phenotype* was formulated. The 'gene' is, so to speak, a *potentiality*: it is the force which produces a type or a series of types, which can fluctuate within certain limits. The external form (external in a general sense, since the theory of heredity applied to man considers not only the morphological characteristics, but also the psychic gifts), which, from birth to birth, derives from the 'gene', can indeed be varied and, in appearance, it can grow more remote from the normal original type, to the point of becoming unrecognisable. This external form is called *phenotype*. In natural species, it was observed that the modifications concerning the 'phenotype' do not affect the essence. Under influences extraneous to it (whether subjective or environmental), the potentiality of the 'gene' behaves almost as an elastic substance: it seems to lose, within certain limits, its form, but it returns to it as soon as the stimulus stops, in the types to which it gives rise in the following generations. Here is a typical

example taken from the plant realm: the Chinese primrose at normal temperature produces red flowers; in an overheated environment it produces, on the contrary, white flowers. One of these primrose plants is put in a hothouse and if the seeds are transplanted once again into an overheated environment, there will be again, in the series of the new plants, white flowers. But if, after a certain time, a seed of these plants is taken and planted in an environment at normal temperature, a plant with red flowers will re-appear, just like its ancestor. The variation of the 'phenotype' is therefore not essential, but temporary and illusory. The potentiality remains intact, similar to the original type.

So what is hereditary, and, according to the most recent views, 'racial', is not the external forms in themselves, but the potentialities, the constant way of reacting, albeit in a manner which varies in accordance with varied circumstances, but always in conformity with certain laws.

This is the base of the most recent conception of race. With the definition, mentioned above, of Clauss, the creator of so-called psychoanthropology, we move forward towards a certain spiritualisation of what has been called the 'gene': the essence of race is sought in a 'style', in a way of being. Race here becomes a sort of constant 'line', which expresses itself not only through the physical characteristics, that is to say through the race of the body, but also in the way of using the various psychic qualities or gifts, as will be examined more closely later on. On the basis of this style, itself hereditary, a given group of individuals is defined, a group which, in relation to other groups with a different style, constitutes a 'race'.

## Inner Meaning of Race

If we have thus provided a brief summary of what race has come to mean in the most modern research, we still have not moved beyond the most abstract definitions, as we must in order to state what 'race' must mean, today, for the individual, and, therefore, what 'racial consciousness' must mean. However, this is the decisive point, for which it is necessary to refer to direct experience.

From antiquity onwards ordinary language has spoken of *thoroughbred men*. In general, this was an aristocratic concept. From the mass of common and mediocre beings stand out 'thoroughbred men' as superior, 'noble' beings. Such a nobility, however – it is useful to remember this – did not necessarily have a heraldic meaning: types of the countryside or of any straightforward and sane people could give that impression of 'race' in the same way as worthy representatives of a true aristocracy. There is a reason to this: just as in the nobility some inner traditions have protected the purity of blood, so also, special favourable conditions in the countryside and in nature, in sane customs and in sane occupations, have been able to produce the same effect also in other parts of any given people besides the nobility.

Not only the word 'race', but also the word 'blood', have had in ordinary language a living and precise meaning, far from any biological and scientific reference. One may say 'good blood does not lie', or speak of an 'instinct of the blood'. There are insults which are bloody. There are conditions against which 'the blood itself' rebels. What does all this mean? In the depths of each human being, far beyond the area of abstract concepts, of discursive reasoning, or of conventions derived from social life, there are instincts with a determined form, there is the capacity for direct and absolute reactions, which are normal in the 'thoroughbred' man but which manifest themselves only sporadically in the common man, in the borderline cases, in the most serious tests in life.

Are we speaking here about impulses which belong to pure animal and biological life? It would be unwise to affirm this. The forces in question, the instincts of the 'thoroughbred man', far from being appendices to the animal instincts, often refute them and impose on existence a higher norm, making natural and spontaneous both the obedience to a certain 'line' and a certain style of mastery, of inner tension, of assertion. The reactions of race have in common with animal instincts only the character of immediacy and precision: they do not derive from reasoning and intellectual consideration, but are on the contrary spontaneous and manifest the whole of a being. Indeed, they override the intellect, since they manifest themselves in special, direct, forms of sensitivity, of judgment, of acknowledgment. Man is led by race,

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by blood, to evidences which are unquestionable; which, on their own plane, are as direct as those which are provided by sane and normal senses. Just as no one questions why the red colour is red, so, equally natural and precise evidences are peculiar to the 'thoroughbred' man, whereas the 'modern' intellectualised and degenerated man gropes his way forward, so to speak, seeking to remedy the lost faculty of seeing with that of a *touching* with the help of the discursive intellect, often with the result that he goes from one crisis to another or that he adopts mere conformist criteria.

It is on this plane that race must be understood and *lived*. Race lives in blood, or rather deeper than in blood, in a depth where individual life communicates with a life more than individual, not to be understood, however, in a naturalistic way, as 'life of the species', but as an order in which spiritual forces are at work.

This the Ancients knew well in their veneration of the Lares, the Penates, the archetypal heroes, the 'demon' of a *gens*, entities which conceal the whole mystery of blood and the mystical forces of race.

Science can highlight the importance of race, through the results attained by genetics and the theories of heredity, demography, and pathology. All this can contribute to the awakening of the feeling of race, but it cannot create it. The feeling of race is an inner reaction for the occurrence of which, a 'myth' – myth as 'idea-force', as driving idea – is more helpful than scientific considerations. What this myth is we have indicated: race means superiority, fullness and self-confidence of life. *There are common beings and there are 'thoroughbred' beings.* Whichever social class they are from, such beings form an aristocracy. A remote and mysterious centuries-long heritage still lives in them.

This is why racism has the value of a test, of a reagent, even in its most general formulations. The reactions of this or that person towards the racist idea are a sort of barometer which show us the 'quantity' of race which is found in the person in question. *To say yes or no to racism is not merely to differ intellectually, it is not something subjective and arbitrary.* The one who says yes to racism is the one in whom race still lives: the one who has been internally defeated by the anti-race and in whom the original forces have been stifled by ethnic waste, by processes of cross-

breeding and degeneration, or by a bourgeois, weak, and intellectualistic style of life which has lost for generations any contact with anything which is really originary, opposes it and searches in all directions for alibis in order to justify his aversion and discredit racism.

This point must be made most emphatically, almost as a premise to any particular racist exposition. Fascism calls out today to all those in whom this feeling of race has not yet been entirely extinguished.

### Consequences of the Feeling of Race

Count de Gobineau who, from a certain point of view, can be considered as the father of modern racism, does not make a mystery out of the inner origin of his doctrine; what made him write his famous *Essay on the inequality of human races* in 1853 was a deep reaction against the 'democratic and egalitarian marsh' into which the European nations were and are sinking deeper and deeper.

Exactly this *pathos* must always accompany the development of any coherent racist attitude and must produce definite effects when the time comes to deduce from it political and social consequences. Such deductions, moreover, must dovetail perfectly with the cornerstones of fascist ideology, which turn out to be developed and, so to speak, energised by them.

To be racist, in fact, means to align ourselves against the democratic-Masonic myth, according to which the supreme value is 'humanity' in the singular, and within which all beings must become essentially equal and fraternal with one another. In reality, *this mythic 'humanity' assumed by the gospel of the 'immortal principles' either does not exist at all, or it is of less than no significance to us, representing, not a plus, but a minus.*

In order to clarify the racist standpoint, we would say that we certainly do not think of questioning the existence of common aspects in the vast majority of human beings: however, the aspects in which difference is obvious and unquestionable are equally real. We must take

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a stand when we decide the relative importance of the former and the latter, and here, once again, we have a test of our inner vocations.

Racism, we can say with certainty, aligns itself with the *classical spirit*. What was peculiar to the classical spirit was the exaltation of everything which has form, face, and individuation, as opposed to what is formless, vague, and undifferentiated. The classical, and, let us add, 'Aryan' ideal is that of the *cosmos*, that is to say, that of an ensemble of well individuated natures and substances, organically and hierarchically connected in a whole: it is not the more or less romantic or pantheistic ideal of *chaos* as the principle which, in its undifferentiation, dominates everything which has form.

Pursuing this idea further, on our own plane, we may say that the ideal 'humanity' of the demo-Masonic myth appears to us only as common denominator or as a vague substratum, whereas what interests us is only the living, concrete, well defined forms in which it articulates itself. These forms are precisely the races, to be understood as unities either of language, of instinct, or of spirit. The racist, therefore, acknowledges difference and wants difference. To be different, to be oneself, is not an evil, but a good.

When does the famous 'humanity' really exist? When, from a well-articulated world, we go back to a chaotic, collectivist, promiscuous, world, thinkable only as the final and dreadful station of a process of disintegration and of social and spiritual levelling.

It is only then, that, if there is still any difference in the bodies, this difference can be considered as accidental, unessential, insignificant, negligible. Here is what is hidden behind the egalitarian myth and the democratic-Masonic ideology.

In the racist vision of life, on the contrary, any difference – even corporeal – is *symbolic*: the inside manifests itself in the outside, what is external is symbol, sign and symptom of something internal. Such are the fundamental principles of a complete racism.

And, from our Roman and Fascist point of view, it is very important to insist on the aforementioned *classical* tendency of racism: will to form, aversion for the promiscuous; reassumption of the principles of our ancient wisdom, that is: *know yourself and be yourself*. Fidelity to one's

own nature, that is to say, to one's own blood and one's own race. Here is the inner, ethical and spiritual counterpart to the elements which genetics, the science of heredity, and biology give us towards the formulation of a scientific racism. Here are precise instructions for racial education.

### Racial Heredity and Tradition

More specifically still, what is the inner, experiential meaning of the racial law of *heredity*?

This meaning is twofold. First of all, it means the overcoming of the liberalistic, individualistic and rationalist conception of the self. To the racist consciousness, the individual is not a sort of atom, an entity by itself, which lives and has its worth in itself. Racism conceives of the individual in relation to a given community both in space, as race of the living individuals, and in time, as unity of a stock, of a tradition, of a blood. There is in the first aspect a further convergence of racism with the totalitarian-corporatist conception of Fascism, that is, the value of the individual as organic function of a whole in space. As for the second aspect – unity in time – racist consciousness gives a livelier, more energetic, deeper meaning to what ordinary usage refers to as 'tradition'. As a matter of fact, to this word is too often attributed a meaning which is only 'historicist', cultural and 'humanistic', if it does not dissolve into mere rhetoric: tradition as heritage of the creations, acquisitions and beliefs of our predecessors. Well, in all this, the essential, the deeper substratum of any tradition worthy of the name, is not brought out, that is to say, the blood, the living race, the sense of connection not so much with the works of our ancestors as with the very forces from which such works derived in them – forces which continue in our blood, in the most mysterious and sacred strata of our being. *This is how racism revivifies and makes concrete the concept of tradition*: it will accustom the individual to see in the ancestors not the series of the more or less famous 'dead', but rather the expression of something which still lives in us and with which we are still internally connected. We are the bearers of a

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heritage of life which was transmitted to us and is to be transmitted again – in this consciousness, there is something which goes beyond time, something which enables us to begin to discern what we have called elsewhere the ‘eternal race’.

Let us get to the second meaning of the racist idea of heredity, that which allows us to understand racism as an explicit refutation of the Lamarckian and, in part, Marxist theory of the influence of the environment.

Environment, whether natural, historical, social or cultural, can only influence the ‘phenotype’, that is to say, the outer and contingent manner of manifestation, in the individual or in a given group, of certain hereditary and racial tendencies, which are always the primary, original, essential, uncontrollable element. To be racist therefore means to be explicitly aware and to know concretely that it is forces rooted inside of us, and not the mechanical and impersonal influences of the environment, that are really determining for our life, our character, and our vocations. This is a point of view which, among other things, also leads to new historical perspectives: as a matter of fact, it opposes the theory of environment in the form which considers that the great civilisations of the past were determined by their location, by their climatic or, in the narrow sense, historical conditions, their economy, and so on. On the contrary, man is the decisive force who, often in an environment which is hostile to him, has shaped various civilisations – and, once again, not man in the abstract, but man as representative of a race, whether corporeal or spiritual. This outer and inner race is not only the reason why, in some given people taken as a whole, a given vocation is peculiar to given groups of individuals, but it is also the reason why, in a given environment and in a given epoch, a civilisation of warriors rather than of tradesmen, or of ascetics rather than of humanists, arose. In each case, the irresistible, or, more accurately, the fate-laden forces which exist within us and give shape to our nature and are connected with the mystery of our origins, are decisive.

What is the link between the individual and the meaning of human personality and such forces in general? One might imagine that, by way of racism, we fall into a form, albeit interiorised, of determinism: race



would be all, personality as such nothing. That is why a suspicion of collectivism, of return to the spirit of the clan, of the savage promiscuous communities, may even arise. Nevertheless, this may be viewed differently. It can be said with good reason – apart from specifically metaphysical problems – that, *if the individual does not exist outside race, race, in its turn, in a certain sense, does not exist outside the individual, or, better, the personality.*

In order to clarify this formulation, the ‘aristocratic’ aspect already underlined in the expression ‘to be thoroughbred’ or ‘to have race’ must be recalled. To express ourselves paradoxically, it could be said that race really exists only in those of its representatives who are ‘thoroughbred’. Race, in other words, is a vague heritage and sub-stratum; although it tends to find expression in all and it does find expression in all one way or another, it is only in a few that it fully and perfectly fulfils itself – and it is here that the action and the meaning of the individual, of personality, manifests itself. In the really superior men, race is fulfilled, is actualised at its highest point, which is simultaneously the peak of the values of the true personality. Racial heredity can be compared to a heritage gathered from the ancestors and transmitted to the descendants. There is no determinism, since the freedom of use of such heritage is granted to the descendants: it can be assumed in order to be preserved, to be developed, and to really bear fruit, just as it can be squandered and destroyed. From what an individual has been provided with by a specific heredity, whether spiritual or biological, the individual can therefore, in fidelity to his race, draw the forces needed to reach a personal perfection and amount to a perfect incarnation of the ideal of a whole stock; or he can contaminate this heritage, squander it, and put it at the mercy of determinisms asserting themselves by means of mixings and hybridisations, as a result of which he will be sooner or later overwhelmed by either paralysing or dissolving influences.

The racist consciousness, while acknowledging the meaning and the function of personality in race, means to awaken a precise sense of responsibility in the individual for the use of his liberty with regard to the racial heritage, both biological and spiritual, which has been transmitted to him throughout a chain of generations.

## Race and Nation

There is no racist, not even the most extreme, who does not recognise that expressions such as 'Italian race', 'German race', 'Anglo-Saxon race' and even 'Hebraic race' are scientifically incorrect, since in this connection one must speak of *peoples* or of *nations*, and there is currently no people or nation to which a sole pure and homogenous race corresponds.

This will be clarified later, when we will indicate that, today, when speaking of race, we no longer use the generic categories of the ancient anthropology, which limited itself to speaking of white, black, red, yellow races, and so on, but instead refer to more individuated and more original ethnic units, which, in a way, could be compared to the simple bodies or elements which in chemistry are used as a base to study composites. Current nations and peoples would thus be various compositions of such elements, more or less stable or homogeneous. So, for instance, for Deniker, the word 'race' refers to a collection of characteristics which could originally be found in a collection of individuals, which today are scattered, according to varying percentages, in various ethnic groups, which are precisely the nations and the peoples, groups which are distinguished from each other essentially by language, way of life, customs, and so on.

*What relations exist then between the national idea and the racial idea?*

Where does the most important element lie, in the nation or the race? However thorny it is, this problem must be tackled, since, without a clear point of view on this subject, we cannot arrive at the fundamental meaning and justification of all the practical and activist aspects of racism and above all of selective racism. Both peoples and nations are syntheses. It can be granted that the elements which appear in such a synthesis are not only racial, if race is conceived of as a purely ethnic and anthropological-biological entity. But this is not our conception of race. Race is for our racism an entity which appears both in the body and in the spirit. The various cultural, artistic, religious, ethical forms and so forth are manifestations of the race of the soul and of the spirit. So the non-

ethnic and non-anthropological elements which define a nation can also be the object of racist research.

At this point, something must be said about the power of crosses. We have noticed up till now that, when heterogeneous races cross, the result is not only, or not always only, the distortion in the descendants of the characteristic traits of the related pure types.

In addition, a more serious hybridism can occur, that is to say that there may appear descendants in whom the race of the body of a given type no longer corresponds to the race of the soul and of the spirit which should normally be correlative to them and with which they were originally connected. Hence a disharmony and often an inner fragmentation comes about.

Further, we must explain the general nature of two concepts within the Mendelian theory of the heredity of crossbreeds, namely the '*dominant*' and '*recessive*'.

In a cross, it may happen that, in the descendants, for one or more generations, only the characteristics of one of the two types which were crossed prevail, so as to create the illusion that no mix, no bastardisation or 'hybridism', has occurred. This is a mere appearance. The 'genes', that is to say the hereditary potentialities, of the other type also are transmitted and active in the descendants, but in a latent form, lying in ambush so to speak, since, for a certain period of time, the force of the 'genes' of the first type prevails. But, at a certain moment, these others will reappear on the surface, assert themselves visible and bring about a form corresponding to their own nature. These latent characteristics constitute the 'recessive' traits, the others constituting on the contrary the 'dominant' ones.

While, in the strictly biological field and in the world of the natural species – plants and animals – the recessive function and the dominant one, in their alternations, are governed by objective and impersonal laws, once again a spiritual factor comes into play in the context of the human races. A quality remains 'dominant' in crosses kept in certain limits, as long as there is a certain tension, a certain self-presence, so to speak, of race. When this creative tension is relaxed, the 'dominant' quality ceases to be such and extraneous forces which had been compelled by it to

remain 'recessive', that is to say only latent, assert themselves in their turn.

Now that these basic notions of the doctrine of race have been explained, we can tackle the problem of the relations between race and nation, or race and 'people'. We have said that from a rigorous point of view current nations and peoples are mixed ethnic entities, which have arrived through historical vicissitudes at their present form. They are points of interference, not only of various races of the body, but also of various races of the spirit, which form the deepest substratum of elements of different civilisations and cultural influences. The predominant point of view on the nation during the democratic epoch was 'historicist' and agnostic: the problem of the genesis and composition of a given community was avoided, each nation was accepted as a 'fait accompli', and its concern was to maintain in a certain equilibrium the various forces which were acting in it, often in antithetical ways.

With racism and therefore with the new racist concept of state and nation, a different point of view is reached. The problem of national origins can no longer be avoided when it is acknowledged that the political model should not be a system of 'balance', but one of the resolute leadership of the state and the nation by an elite, a core representing the most valid and worthiest element compared to all other elements present alongside it, and that it is desirable that this element gives its imprint to the whole. Here, then, it becomes necessary to frame the problem of the formation of the nations in a different way, which is no longer 'historicist'. We see at the origin of any true national tradition a relatively pure and homogeneous race, at least as the ruling race compared to other, subject races; we recognise that in the course of centuries each such original race has experienced dramatic, sometimes even tragic, vicissitudes; epochs and civilisations become apparent to us in which it weakened, alien influences became part of the political-social units created by it, the natural laws of the race were betrayed, a hybridism occurred in the field of cultural and spiritual productions, because elements of other races were received, which saw to it that what held a 'dominant' character towards them before persisted only in a stifled,

‘recessive’ form. The sporadic resurrections of the original race and the original tradition, its impulses to maintain itself in spite of all, to free itself or to assert itself again, to give rise again to forms and creations faithful to its own nature, become equally apparent.

*A whole new ‘national history’ must be written and taught* in accordance with this new outlook, not with the purpose of an abstract knowledge or of vain recriminations, but rather to promote inner decisions and a precise formation of will. We must therefore arrive at this conclusion: that in each composite ‘nation’ there has been and there remains a superior race. Everything that, coming from the outside, from different race sources, adds to the national tradition produced by each such race, has had and will have a constructive value, in principle, only when the race source from which it proceeds is similar to that of the main core, and thus conditions through which this main core can maintain, especially in the spiritual field, the ‘dominant’ quality are in force. Otherwise, anything added will be either useless or paralysing, or even dissolving. As for the future, if we must naturally tend to maintain the synthesis corresponding to each given ‘people’ united and intact, we also need to realise the danger of allowing the mere play of history to have its way with this synthesis. We need on the contrary to act in order that the most racially valid part included in each nation maintains itself or better still develops in future generations and that the less valid or simply secondary components do not grow in strength ultimately to prevail.

In the various vicissitudes and periods of the ‘histories of the nations’ the trained eye will have to get accustomed to discerning the racial behind-the-scenes activity, to seeing in it the alternation of influences of components which, recessive, become dominant and vice-versa, giving rise to periods and cycles which are by no means stages in a homogeneous and continuous process, but symptoms and manifestations of one or the other of the components which were combined in each nation through cross-breeding.

From this point of view, ‘race’, in the sense of ‘superior race’, certainly comes to mean something more than ‘nation’; it is the leading and formative element of nation and of its predominant civilization. And this is perfectly consonant with the Fascist idea. Fascism, diverging in this

respect from National Socialism and surpassing it, refuses in fact to conceive of 'nation' outside the state. For Fascism, it is the state which gives shape and consciousness to the nation. However, the state, in its turn, is not an abstract and impersonal entity; in the Fascist idea, the state is the instrument of a political elite, of the best part of the 'nation'. With racism, a step forward is even made: *this elite is meant to reassume the heritage of the higher race and tradition existing in the national composite*. When Mussolini, in 1923, said: 'Rome is always, will always be, tomorrow and for millennia, the powerful heart of our race; it is the everlasting symbol of our vitality', he explained unambiguously the direction of an inescapable decision: *the suprace of the Italian nation is the race of Rome, it is that which we would call properly the 'Aryo-Roman' race*.

We must also recall these words, likewise said in 1923 by Mussolini to the Fascist elite: 'You really represent the wonder of this old and wonderful race, which experienced painful hours, but never experienced the darkness of decline. If it sometimes appeared obscured, it always suddenly reappeared in greater light'. We have, here, the exact correspondence to what we have just expounded in a racist terminology when speaking of the hereditary persistence of the primordial race and of the vicissitudes linked to the play of the 'dominant' and 'recessive' forms in the development of the 'histories of the nations'.

## Meaning of Racial Prophylaxis

In Germany, as is well known, measures to prevent the transmission of hereditary degeneracy were adopted some time ago, on the basis of the results of the theory of heredity as applied to race, racial hygiene, and demography. There is no need to examine and discuss such measures in more depth here. Let us just point out that, although the limit of validity of the laws of heredity in many cases, according to us, cannot be absolutely fixed, the idea of simple probability should suffice to impose on any man provided with an ethical consciousness a very precise line of action and a brake on what can be dictated by blind instinct or by mere

feeling. Even in such cases, an innate feeling of responsibility and nobility imposes itself upon the impulses of natural life, manifests itself and makes itself felt in anyone who possesses real breeding.

The same thing can naturally be said regarding cross-breeding with lower, non-European, races, and it is well known that one of the circumstances which favoured the racist position in Italy was the necessity to avert cross-breeding in our new colonial empire. But, here again, what should be decisive in any case in which anyone, because of the arbitrariness of his individual will and his passivity toward the impulses and feelings of his body, favours a contamination of race, is an inner motion combined with a clear consciousness of his utter treachery towards his own blood and his ancestors and his crime in regard to his descendants. Here, naturally, we do not presuppose racial purity in an absolute sense: on the contrary, if the general type is already a mixed one, its defence against cross-breeding and any similar contaminating mix is all the more necessary, because a mixed type needs to be protected even carefully, not having 'dominant' characteristics to the same extent as a pure type, which, in special circumstances of which we shall speak below, can sometimes overwhelm and organise under its own dominance, without suffering any alteration, relatively heterogeneous racial elements introduced into the stock through cross-breeding.

Defence against cross-breeding and the isolation of elements in which race is already affected are therefore the main aspects of prophylactic racism and are the object of the measures of what is called 'racial hygiene', which has obvious and close relations with general demography. Our racism, however, goes beyond this, and proposes to promote an action which is not only negative, or defensive, but also positive, that is to say, an action of strengthening and inner selection. In this context, of course, we cannot think, as in the previous one, of literal legislation: the fundamental task is on the contrary the formation of an instinct, the honing of a sensitivity. Here arises the delicate question of conjugal choice even among persons belonging to one and the same people. As far as selection is concerned, *this is the only area in which we can move from theory to practice* and act positively, so that the race of the future generations of our nation, and therefore the nation as such,

gradually cleanses itself, rises, comes nearer and nearer to the type of the superior core, or 'super-race', present in a people.

## The Danger of Counter-Selection

To proceed in this direction, we need not only a general racist consciousness, but also a very precise racial ideal: not merely a theoretical one, but rather an object of experienced and sincere aspiration, which should spread through the greater proportion of all the components of a people. To reach that stage, methodical, patient educative work, which, naturally, must be applied to the young first and foremost, and must use any means able to lead to the goal, is necessary. We must examine models of the past and cultivate a special literature. We are aware of the suggestive power which, for instance, a certain type of American cinema has exerted on the masses by imparting the character of popular international 'idols' to some types of actors and actresses, who, however, are not always in order from a racial point of view. In similar way, we should endeavour to bring to life within the people a certain human ideal corresponding to that of the higher race which is found in it. And if, on top of the exerted suggestion by this type, there can be a racial consciousness and that feeling of inner dignity and responsibility of which we have repeatedly spoken, the essential premises for the inner selection and the strengthening of the race of the nation will be present.

As regards conjugal choices, that of the woman by the man is naturally essential, not only because, in practice, the initiative of the choice is taken mainly by the man, but also from the point of view of precise racial laws. According to the ancient Aryan teachings about race, in a cross-breeding, the masculine heredity would basically have the 'dominant' character, the feminine one, on the contrary, the 'recessive' one. Two important laws come from this:

1. in the products of cross-breeding of a man of inferior race with a woman of superior race, the superior race of the woman is stifled or contaminated;



2. in the products of cross-breeding of a man of superior race with a woman of inferior race, the inferior race of the woman can on the contrary be rectified and practically neutralised.

As far as the problem we are interested in here is concerned, we are considering only relative superiority and inferiority – basically, we are dealing with races which are not really heterogeneous but are co-present in a single, unitary, European people. Both laws have the inner, spiritual, aspects of which we spoke in our other books on race: from their general statement, we can see, therefore, the importance which they have in the problems of conjugal choice and racial selection. A new sensitivity, a new instinct, the suggestion of a well determined racial picture should thus gradually ‘organise’ the unions, not in the sense of ‘rationalising’ them as in a zootechnical state establishment, but in the sense that they would be more and more conscious that what determines them is no longer only a blind fact of feeling or of desire or a given economic, utilitarian, or conformist circumstance, but that inclinations and interests peculiar to the man who, in a higher sense, is ‘well-bred’ and ‘has breeding’, have at least as much importance.

Thus, racism must clarify and explain the true meaning of demography and, in particular, that of the so-called ‘demographic campaign’, while recalling, on the basis of the laws of heredity, the possibility of ‘counter-selection’ or ‘mis-selection’. What we mean is that, in demography, we cannot limit ourselves to the purely quantitative criterion of giving birth to as many children as possible, but we must also consider *quality*, that is, we must ask *what sort* of children this prolific nation will have. The mere simple and indiscriminate multiplication of the number without any knowledge of the state of the racial whole of a nation can favour an invasion of the elements ill-terminated by the inferior race, if, through various circumstances they are more prolific. This is precisely the phenomenon of ‘mis-selection’, acutely studied by Vacher de Lapouge; the result is a fall of the racial level of the nation. Such a peril, which, in a whole series of civilisations, has appeared and proved fatal for the political organisms cultivated by various units of the ruling Aryan race, can be averted if we dedicate ourselves to this racial education of the sensitivity and inclinations of which we have just spoken, to the point

where our efforts come to exert a precise and positive action on the conjugal choices and, in general, on the human unions within a given nation.

### Spirit and Race

We have said that, in the total conception of fascist racism, race is not limited to the mere biological entity. The human being is not only 'body', but also *soul* and *spirit*. However, scientific anthropology until I now has either been based on a materialist conception of the human being or, even though it has acknowledged the reality of immaterial principles and forces in man, it has posed the racial problem only within the framework of the body.

As regards the relations between race, body and spirit, clear ideas are not always found in many forms of contemporary racism, either, and dangerous deviations can sometimes even be noticed, from which, naturally, our adversaries hasten to derive the greatest benefit. For us, therefore, *it is advisable to come down strongly against this racism which considers any spiritual faculty and any human value to be a mere effect of race biologically understood*, thus producing a mortifying deduction of what is superior from what is inferior, more or less in the same spirit as Darwinism and Jewish psychoanalysis. But, at the same time, we must take a stand against those who take advantage of the point of view of a racism which is limited to anthropological, genetic and biological problems, in order to maintain that race certainly exists, but that it has nothing to do with the typically spiritual and cultural problems, values and activities of man.

Our point of view will go beyond both positions if we claim *that race exists both in the body and in the spirit*. Race is a profound force which manifests itself both within the corporeal frame (race of the body) and within the animic-spiritual frame (inner race, race of the spirit). There is racial purity in a full sense when these two manifestations correspond, that is to say when the race of the body is consonant with the race of the

spirit or inner race, so that the former can be used by the latter as the most adequate organ of expression.

The revolutionary aspect of this point of view must be remarked upon at once. The assertion that *a race of the soul and of the spirit exist* contradicts the egalitarian and universalistic myth of both the cultural and the moral planes, overturns the rationalist conception which asserts the 'neutrality' of values, and, in short, affirms the principle and the value of difference on the spiritual as on the material plane. A whole new methodology ensues. First of all, in front of a given philosophy, we wonder whether it is 'true' or 'wrong'; of a morality, we ask for a clarification of notion of 'good' and 'evil'. Well, from the point of view of the racist mentality, all this is overcome; it is not faced with the problem of truth and good, but with the question of whether a given conception can be true and a given norm can be valid and 'good' *for a given race*. The same thing could be said of juridical forms, of aesthetic criteria, and even of ideas of the knowledge of nature. A 'truth', a value, or a criterion, which can be valid and salutary for a given race may not be so for another race, and if adopted by it may lead it to denaturing and distortion. These are the revolutionary consequences, in the order of culture, art, thought and sociology, which derive from the theory of the races of soul and spirit, beyond those of the body – that is to say, to use the terminology adopted by us in the other works, of the racism of the second and third degree beyond that of the first degree.

We must however explain both the limits of validity of the point of view we have just expressed, and the distinction between the race of the soul and the race of the spirit. The race of the soul determines character, sensitivity, natural inclination, 'style' in action and reaction, and attitudes towards one's own experiences. We are therefore in the domain of psychology and typology: the science of types develops here into typological racism or racist typology, a discipline which Clauss has called *psychoanthropology*. From this point of view, the definition of race is, as we have said elsewhere, 'a human group defined not by the possession of such and such psychic and corporeal characteristics, but by the style which manifests itself through them'. We can see from this the difference between purely psychological considerations and racist ones. Psychology

defines and studies some gifts and some human faculties in the abstract. Some racists have sought to attribute these gifts and faculties to the various races in one way or another. However, 'racism of the second degree' or, if you prefer, psychoanthropology, proceeds differently. It holds that all the gifts are found in the various races, albeit to varying degrees, but that in each of these races they assume a different signification and 'functionality'. So it will not state, for example, that a certain race has as its characteristic heroism and that another has on the contrary a mercantile spirit. There are in *any* race men with heroic or mercantile dispositions. But given that these dispositions are present in him, the man of a given race will manifest them in accordance with this race, who in exercising these activities or these gifts, will follow a different 'style'. There are thus various ways, conditioned by inner race, to be heroes, researchers, merchants, ascetics, and so on. The feeling of honour, as manifested, for example, in the Nordic man, is not the same as that which manifests itself in a man of 'Western' or Levantine race. The same could be said of 'loyalty', and so on.

All this has been said, then, in order to explain the meaning of the concept of 'race of the soul'. The concept of 'race of the spirit' distinguishes itself from this because it no longer concerns the types of reaction of man towards the experience of the environment and the contents of his normal day-to-day experience, but rather his varying attitude towards the spiritual, supra-human and divine world, as expressed in the form of speculative systems, myths and symbols, and in the diversity of religious experience itself. Here, again, there are 'invariants' or, if you prefer, common denominators, similarities of inspiration and attitude, which refer us to an inner differentiating cause, which is precisely the 'race of the spirit'.

It is appropriate, however, to point out an obvious limitation to the racist criterion regarding the dependence of values upon the differences of race. This dependence is most real and decisive, even in the domain of spiritual manifestations, in the creations peculiar to a 'humanist' type of civilisation, that is to say, a civilisation in which man has precluded the possibility of an actual contact with the transcendent world and has lost any genuine understanding of the knowledge relative to that world, which

is peculiar to any tradition really worthy of the name. By contrast, in a really traditional civilisation, the effect of 'races of the spirit' does not go beyond a certain point, in that it does not concern the content but only the varying form of expression taken by experiences or knowledge which are identical and objective in their essence, because they refer in fact to a suprahuman order, in one people or another in one cycle of civilisation or another.

### Importance of the Theory of the Inner Races

The global doctrine of race explains the relations between race and spirit on the basis of these principles. *The outer is the function of the inner, the physical form is the instrument, expression and symbol of a psychic form.* The aforementioned conception of the type which is really of pure race derives from this doctrine: it is the type which is 'made in one piece', it is the harmonious, coherent, unified type. It is the one in which supreme spiritual aspirations of a given kind do not find any obstacle or contradiction in the qualities of character and in the 'style' of the soul of a given race, while the soul of this race, in its turn, is in a body really able to express it and make it aware.

Such a 'pure' type, naturally, cannot be found in any quantity in currently existing peoples, which, as stated, correspond essentially to ethnic compounds. In fact, it would not be found in any quantity even in a stock which had remained quite isolated from heterogeneous influences, because it corresponds to a limiting concept, that is to say, a culmination and a perfect resolution of race in a general sense – and it is precisely at this limit that we have stated that the supreme values of personality identify themselves with those of race.

This is why, in this respect, racist research cannot be quantitative; it must go beyond the numerically predominant common outer elements, and it must *search out* the data representing a given race capable of being considered as the most complete example and the purest representative of the given type, so as to allow us to grasp and

understand what finds expression in it and what animates it, that is, its inner race too, and, therefore, to have the sense of the original unity in which the various elements of a race come together. Once we have this sense, we can also get our bearings as regards the less pure types of the same race, that is of those in which the correspondence between the various outer and inner elements is not equally complete and perfect; in which, so to speak, there is a *distortion* of the 'style' of this race. It is thus a matter of qualitative study, of research based on an outer look but proceeding via an intuitive and introspective faculty. Naturally, *physiognomy*, the science of physiognomy, plays a large part in it: it is a commonplace to say that 'the face expresses the soul' – but also the body in general, the form of the skull, the proportion of the limbs, and so on, have an eloquent language for anyone who understands it. Hence a new, precise meaning of craniology, skeletology and similar apparently insensitively scientific disciplines.

Racism thus favours a new sense of the body and of the physical form in general of the human being. It is not a matter of indifference that a body has this shape rather than that one: it is not a fortuitous thing and without consequences. Anyone who has the sense of the type, in which all the elements of the human body are really unified, has also the sense of the tragic and obscure cases in which such a unity has disappeared. A soul which experiences the world as something before which it takes a stand actively, which regards the world as an object of attack and conquest, should have a face which reflects by determined and daring features this inner experience, a slim, tall, nervous straight body – an Aryan or Nordic-Aryan body. We should contrast the case in which this soul has as its expressive instruments a full and podgy face, a thickest and slow body, and in short a physical race which normally seems made to express an interiority of a very different type. Surely, inner race will do, so to speak, violence to this heterogeneous body, will give to the features another meaning; in spite of all, it will find a way to express itself. But, to use an image from Claudius himself, it will be as if a score written for the violin was played by an ocarina.

In racial education, the fact that, in this respect too, racism is animated by a *classic spirit* and adopts a classic human ideal will have to

be highlighted. Racism seeks an exact correspondence between the contained and the container, between interiority and exteriority. *It wants men made in one piece, unified and coherent forces.* It detests and opposes any promiscuity, any lacerating dualism, and, consequently, also this romantic ideology which revels in a tragic interpretation of spirituality and supposes that it is only through eternal opposition, suffering, continuous ardent desire and confused struggle, that we get nearer to the supreme values. The true superiority of Aryan races is *Olympian*: it manifests itself in the calm domination of the spirit over the soul and the body, which appear to it as adequate instruments of expression, in order to reflect its race in their style and their laws.

The theory of inner race is important because it brings the most pernicious aspect of cross-breeding and hybridism to light: they lead to an inner laceration and contradiction, to a rupture of the inner unity of a human being of a given race. They make it possible for souls of one race to find themselves in bodies of another race, with the result of an alteration of both elements. They create truly 'mixed-up persons', in the strongest sense, until, the inner force exhausting itself in conflicts and frictions of all sorts, whatever had still remained 'dominant' to some extent finally loses its dominance altogether and the inner race vanishes, to be replaced by an amorphous, limp substance borne by bodies in which those racial characteristics which may still subsist are now nothing but echoes, forms emptied of their profound significance. This, as we have mentioned, is the stage when internationalist and cosmopolitan myths and the ideology of the fundamental spiritual equality of the human species begin to become truths...

It is in the opposite direction, contrary to this, that we must move. The starting point is an inner examination, meant to discover the fundamental element in us, the 'own nature' or spiritual race, in accordance with which we must essentially act and to which, at any cost, we must remain faithful. After this, we must seek to give to our being as much coherence and unity as possible or, at least, to act so that more favourable conditions may be found by our descendants on the basis of what has already been attained: because the plastic, formative influence exerted upon the somatic and biologic plane by an idea, when this idea

has some relation to the inner primordial racial element, is a positive reality, confirmed by very precise examples, whether historical and collective or individual.

The consequences of the science of inner race in terms of political culture are also clearly apparent. Let us quote Clauss: 'To the extent that it is given to a scientific knowledge to exert an influence on history, the task which, in this respect, psychoanthropology must carry out is the following one: it must identify these frontiers that no people, no racial and cultural community, can itself cross, or allow to be crossed by others, without running the risk of destroying itself. *The research of the frontiers of the soul is thus, today, an historical task*'. We must commit ourselves to the task of applying to the nation as a whole the criteria of coherence and unity, of correspondence between outer and inner elements, which we have already discussed in reference to the individual. To explain this has been the central motive of our considerations of the relation between race and nation.

It is thus in the nature of a complete doctrine of race to go beyond the dangers of relativism and narrow particularism, to which theories of this sort, if assumed in a unilateral and extremist manner, can give rise. We must acknowledge especially the need to define and defend some inner frontiers, as regards culture and the 'race of the soul', corresponding to an intermediary domain between corporeality and pure spirituality, because the 'closing' which ensues from it is, in a Goethian sense, that of a 'creative limit', rather than that of a paralysing one; a limit which does not bar the way upwards, but rather that towards the bottom, towards a racial and, basically, subpersonal promiscuity, facilitating any and every process of inner denaturing, disintegration and laceration.

## The Face of the Various Races

One of the characteristics of the modern racism, as we have repeatedly pointed out, is research into the ethnic primary cores. Early anthropology was limited to the brief classification comprising the well-known races: white, black, yellow, Malay, red, and so on, which everyone remembers



from school. Modern racism, however, has taken the analysis and classification far further, especially as far as the race in which we are interested, that is to say, the white one, is concerned. Current research into the races of the body distinguishes therefore, in what was generally described as the white or Caucasian race, a series of races in a more specialised sense, races each of which have their own face and their own constancy, and to which the laws of heredity and of cross-breeding can be applied.

For this classification, we will refer the reader to our book called 'Il Mito del Sangue', limiting ourselves, here, to recalling schematically the main points. Within white humanity, six main races must be distinguished.

First, there are the *Nordic race* and the *Western one*, which is also called 'Mediterranean' by some authors; doliocephaly prevails in both, the blond type in the former, the brown type in the latter; however, they have the same proportion of limbs; on average, the types of the latter have a smaller stature and something more refined and less sharp in their features.

There, there is the *Phalian race*, called by Günther the 'blond heavy race', which has similarly many features in common with the Nordic type, while being, however, more massive, well built, often thickest, in general of taller stature, with a certain slowness in the physical and intellectual movements, rather withdrawn, sometimes even brachycephalic, with particular gifts for a pertinacity often degenerating into obstinacy.

The *Dinaric race* follows, in which elements of the Nordic race and the Western one seem to have coalesced with an element which also appears in non-European races such as the Armenoid or Levantine one: this latter element appears, at any rate, in the physical features (nose, lips, and so on), without, however, having any apparent spiritual repercussions: the Dinaric man is active, has warlike gifts of an order and style similar to those of the Nordic man and yet of lesser concentration and of greater lightness (greater love for colour, disposition to cheerfulness, and so on).

Then, there is the *Alpine* race or, according to another nomenclature, the *Eastern (Ostisch)*, with a more markedly individual face of its own:

rather rounded and fleshy, essentially brachycephalic, brown-haired, with small and slightly inclined or round eyes, of small stature, with a skin which often borders on the yellowish.

The last race to be considered is the *Baltic-Eastern* one, which abounds in the populations close to Russia, possessing a flat face, blondish hair, grey eyes, cheekbones and eye shape reminiscent of the mongoloid type, flat nose, and low forehead. Once again, in this race, it seems that the elements of the common Nordic-Western stock have absorbed elements of a non-European race, corresponding to that of the first Slavic-Asiatic populations.

These are the main races of the body which are found in the European peoples to varying degrees and in various combinations, as constituent or essential races of these peoples, within which, however, there are infiltrations of alien races: *Levantine race*, *desert race*, *Mongoloid race*, *Negroid* and *Mediterranean-African race*; and, in addition to them, there is, finally, the Jewish *element*, which, however, despite the persistence of the main types which correspond to it, is not considered as a genuine race, but rather as a determinate ethnic mix to be defined essentially on the basis of a common 'race of the soul'.

We come now to the 'racism of second degree', which is specifically a matter of seeing which contents, which souls or races of the soul find in the physical forms and the inclinations of each of these races of the body the most closely related expressive instruments. The one who has gone the furthest into the research is again Clauss, whom we have already quoted. Regarding Clauss' theories, we once more refer the reader to our 'Mito del Sangue' and here limit ourselves to hints.

The soul or style of soul most consonant with the Nordic physical type is that of the 'race of the active man', of the man who feels that the world is presented to him as material for possession and attack. What is peculiar to the 'Western' type, on the contrary, is, in principle, the style of a rather exteriorly oriented soul, prone to game, gesture and exhibition, of a soul which feels in the world a bit like an actor who must play his role in front of a gallery. The Alpine race, different again, lends itself to the expression of an intimate soul which likes seclusion in a small-scale environment and which seeks escape from the vast and problematic

world through group feeling and through activity aimed at achieving a quiet and refreshing well-being. The Phalian race lends itself to the expression of the style of a soul which 'grasps and resists', sometimes to the point of irrationality, persistent and tenacious in its goals, but with heaviness, without light or inner freedom. Clauss speaks after this of two other races of the soul, which to him would correspond respectively to the Orientaloid or Desert race of the body and to the Levantine one: the former is the race of the 'man of revelation', meant to experience the world as a continuous miracle or as a continuous manifestation of chance, a lover of the unexpected and of the changing, as the nomad is; the latter is the race of the 'man of redemption', characterised by a special and insurmountable dualism between carnality and spirituality or sacredness.

Therefore the connections established by Clauss between the race of the body and the race of the soul in the two last cases must be considered as very approximate, because the inner dispositions themselves can also characterise other racial elements: the race of the 'man of revelation', according to various observations of Clauss, is found in the Baltic-Eastern race of the body, whereas that of the 'man of redemption' essentially reflects some typical aspects of the 'style' of the Jewish compound. Clauss has not carried his study of the inner race to the remaining race of the body, the Dinaric one: and yet we can sense as appropriate a style which is made up of elements of the active soul mixed with something of the Western-Mediterranean element (love for certain 'theatre', for action, but less exteriorly oriented) but also influenced by the instability of the 'man of revelation'.

Unfortunately, here the reader is in front of a series of denominations which do not say a lot unless we move to practical ground, that is, unless we come to *feel* their content by examining the features of various types peculiar to both races and by seeking thus to 'spectroscopise' the physiognomies, in order to grasp, in the types which are 'purest' in the totalising sense already mentioned, the inner element, the race of the soul. We will thus have to refer above all to the photographic material which can easily be found in the main racist books – let us mention, besides the iconographic essays contained in our two works, 'Il Mito del

Sangue' and 'Sintesi di Dottrina della Razza', the works of Günther, Eickstedt, Fischer, and of Clauss himself. Secondly, *we must move from books to reality, to life*, that is to say, we must get used to discovering the influences and interferences of this or that race in the particularly 'pronounced' physiognomies of living men with whom we have something to do, training not only the eye of the racial anthropologist, but also that of the racial psychologist who observes the agreement or disagreement of the inner element with the somatic and physiognomic one.

Our specific task then is to acquire a living sense of those racial interferences (of similar races) able to produce favourable results, through the examination and penetration not only of the physical 'line', but also of that of the 'acting', of the behaving, of the thinking of the various types. In general, it is agreed that the cross-breeding of the Nordic element with the Western, Phalian or Dinaric one is favourable, and, on the contrary, the mixing of the same element with the Alpine and Baltic-Eastern race is unfavourable, as are the mixing of the latter races with one another and with the Western one, while mixing between the Phalian-Mediterranean races and the Dinaric-Western one are not unfavourable.

To the purest and most valid element comprised in all these races through a remote unity of origins we can attribute the designation of 'Aryan race' or 'Nordico-Aryan race', whose meaning we intend to explain later on.

## The Problem of Spiritual Races

We have stated that race, besides manifesting itself on the planes of the body and of the soul, manifests itself also on that of the spirit. The search for the races of the spirit has a very special character and until now has remained embryonic. Apart from our own contribution not much has been done in this field yet, but nevertheless it is extremely important to the development of a comprehensive racial policy. In Germany, it is linked to the so-called *Kampf um die Weltanschauung* or 'struggle over world-view', that is, the struggle for a world view compatible with race.

Views of the modern world can actually be considered as expressions of the various races of the spirit. However, in this struggle, in Germany, mere words of the political order, and 'myths', which take the place of precise and scientific knowledge, play too large a part.

The science of the races of the spirit brings our attention back to the origins, and develops in parallel with a morphology of traditions, of symbols and primordial myths. Because of this, to limit our attention to the modern world and to try to find our orientation within it would be a hopeless endeavour: in the modern world, in modern culture, there are only distant reflections, uncertain survivals, and derivatives of the races of the spirit. As far as the race of the soul is concerned, it is still possible to appeal to a certain knowledge or direct experience: we just have to refer to a quality of character, of immediate inner reaction, of style of behaviour, to gifts which cannot be learnt or constructed but which are innate, and which therefore we either have or do not have, which are connected to the blood and, as we have said, even to something deeper than blood, so that they cannot be replaced by anything else when they are absent. The race of the soul is connected to the relation to life, and, therefore, where it exists, but does in normal circumstances, then under tests or in crises it can always be forced to reveal itself, and we can thus know, in everyone, its face and its force.

In the context of the races of the spirit, the task is much more difficult. What is generally considered today as spirit – or rather, what has been considered so for several centuries – has not, strictly speaking, much to do with what we mean here. Today we find ourselves, in reality, before a deeply standardised and weakened field of spiritual expression, in which it is very difficult to find again what might be described as instinct on a higher plane. As far as learning concerned, the whole of modern knowledge has a rationalistic-experimental base; deriving its form and its evidences from faculties which are more or less the same in all human beings, this kind of knowledge, according to the general opinion, is regarded as 'useful', 'positive' and 'scientific' only insofar as it can be acquired, recognised, accepted and applied by any man whatsoever, irrespective of his race or his vocation. In the realms of culture as well as those of art and thought, we find merely more or less subjectivist position,

‘creations’ that often have the character of fireworks; they are brilliant in their lyricism and their critical-dialectic ability, precisely insofar as they lack any deeper roots.

In a world and in a culture which, built on such a basis, has lost nearly every contact with real, transcendent reality, it would be therefore difficult to carry out any research intended to characterise the ‘style’ of the experience of the transcendent and the form of the possible attitudes of man in front of it: which is exactly equivalent to the search for the ‘race of the spirit’.

We must therefore return our attention to that world in which true spirituality and metaphysical reality were truly the central formative forces of civilisation, in all its aspects, from the mythological-religious to the legal-social plane: the world of the pre-modern and ‘traditional’ civilisations. Once we have acquired by this means some points of reference, we can turn to the current world in order to discover the various influences that, almost as echoes, come from one or the other race of the spirit even to this worn out state and this essentially ‘humanistic’ culture, essentially determined only by the human element.

Here we shall offer some very brief hints towards a typology of the races of the spirit: the reader who seeks further elements useful for the formation of a racial consciousness must refer to our two other works: ‘Sintesi di Dottrina della Razza’ and especially ‘Revolt against the Modern World’, besides the selection and the translation of the writings of Bachofen which we have published under the title of ‘The Solar Race – Studies on the Secret History of the Ancient Mediterranean World’.

An ancient Greek writer said: ‘There exist races which are placed between divinity and humanity and which oscillate between them’. Some such races have finally placed their centre in the first element and the others in the second, that is, in humanity.

The first case defines the ‘solar race’ of the spirit, also called ‘the Olympian race’. The more than human element appears to them as natural as the human one does to the others. Therefore, in their relationships with the metaphysical world, they lack the feeling of extraneity and transcendence: rather, the human element appears to them to be the stranger and the more distant. Hence, they show a feeling

of 'centrality', which justifies the expression 'solar race', and a style of calm, power, sovereignty, of indomitability and intangibility, to which the other designation alludes: 'Olympian race'.

Contrasting with the 'solar race' of the spirit there is the 'telluric' or 'chthonic' one. Here man draws his sense of himself from a dark, wild relationship with the forces of the earth and of life in their 'inferior' aspect, lacking light: hence a dark connection to the soil, via the ancient cult of the 'demons' of vegetation and elementary forces; hence a fatalistic sentiment, especially regarding death, and a sense of the ephemeral character of the individual which dissolves again in the collective substance of the biological substratum and in the Becoming of life.

There follows the 'lunar' or 'Demetrian' race: just as the moon is an extinguished sun, so a feeling of spiritual centrality no longer corresponds to the lunar race as it does to the 'Olympian' one, because it experiences spirituality passively, as reflected illumination, without any 'style' of affirmation and of calm virility – this is the basis for 'contemplative' experience of an essentially pantheistic type. The term 'Demetrian' derives from the fact that the ancient cults of the Great Mothers of nature reflected in a characteristic manner this race, this spirituality, which is under the 'feminine' sign, in the form, so to say, of a calm light or a diffuse feeling of an eternal order which is spiritual and natural at the same time, in which any anguish of Becoming and of the isolate individual is cancelled out. Socially, it is often from the lunar race that the peoples organised according to the matriarchal system proceeded, while father-right, or patriarchy, was always a form peculiar to the solar race and to those peoples which derived from it.

Next comes the 'Titanic Race': it has the same connection with the elementary forces, and with the deep, intensive, irrational elements of life as the 'telluric' race, but not according to its style of promiscuity or passive identification; rather, according to a style of affirmation, will, and virility: and yet, still, without light, or inner liberation. Only the hero, Heracles, frees the titan, Prometheus – we shall see that what that means.

By the curious designation of 'Amazonian race', we mean the style of an experience which in its essence is 'lunar' (and, in an analogical sense,

feminine), but which assumes affirmative, virile, forms of expression, just as the Amazon assumes the way of being of the warrior.

In talking of the 'Aphrodisian race' of the spirit, we do not refer solely to the erotic-sexual field, but rather to an 'Epicurean' style of experience, in the broadest sense. The refinement of the forms of material life, culture in an aesthetic sense, in short a spirituality which oscillates between love for beauty and form and the enjoyment of the senses, can also be found in it.

The style of an experience in which exaltation of the impulses and an intense way of living based upon sensation, which has only confused ecstatic resolutions which are therefore lunar in their passivity and formlessness, so that no true inner liberation can proceed there from, but only moments of escape – this style defines the 'Dionysian race'.

The last race of the spirit is that of the 'heroes'. These are heroes, not in the common sense, but in that which derives from the teaching about the four 'ages' of the world expressed by Hesiod: a solar or Olympian nature, subsists in the hero, but in a latent state or, better, as a possibility only to be actualised through an active over-coming of himself. Some features of the titanic or Dionysian man can also figure, but according to a very different functionality.

These are, naturally, only passing comments. But anyone who studies a typology of this kind in sufficient depth to create a corresponding faculty of discernment will see history – the history of civilisations, as well as that of customs and religions – in a completely new light. What appeared previously to him as unitary will reveal itself according to its effective elements. He will recognise the continuity of deep veins through history, as common sources of groups of individual and collective manifestations in appearance distinct or scattered in time and in space. And also in the less insignificant forms of modern culture he will be able to orient himself and have the presentiment, here and there, of reappearances or adaptations of these original forms of the races of the spirit.

A further problem would be that of establishing the correspondence which, in principle, would have to exist between races of the spirit, of the soul and of the body. A few remarks: the solar race and the heroic race are



congenial to the style of the race of the 'active man' and of the physical race of dolicocephalic Western-Aryan and Nordic-Aryan man. The lunar race would find its best expression in the psychic and somatic characteristics of the Alpine race and in the residual traces of that extremely ancient Mediterranean race which can be generically designated as 'Pelasgian'. The Aphrodisian race and the Dionysian race – the latter most specifically in its desert and Baltic-Eastern type, the more dilacerated aspects of which are found mixed into the Levantine race – could be well harmonised with some branches of the Western race, especially its Celtic ones. A titanic element could very well be expressed in the soul and body of the man of the Phalian race. The telluric element, finally, would demand racial physical components derived from non-Aryan or pre-Aryan stocks, such as, for instance, those present in the African-Mediterranean type, in part in the Semitic (orientaloid) type, etc.

It is essential to arouse in the young generations the interest which this new and immense field of research deserves: then it will be possible to develop what has already been learned sufficiently for it to provide the basis for a complete and truly totalising racial consciousness.

## Races and Origins

The importance of the study of origins and therefore of the *science of prehistory* for our doctrine has already been made clear from our remarks on the field peculiar to racial research of the third degree. But it is necessary to introduce into these disciplines revolutionary criteria and remove definitely some prejudices of the scientist-positivist mentality which, favoured by an historical climate which is now outmoded, still persist in the most widespread forms of common teaching. Let us point out two of them.

The first is the *evolutionist prejudice*, closely related to the progressive-historicist one, according to which the world of origins and of prehistory is interpreted as an obscure and wild world of half bestial humanity which gradually, with difficulty, became 'civilised' and capable of culture. Racial science, on the contrary, *asserts that peoples of a high*

*spiritual level, but which subsequently lost their racial purity, existed already in prehistoric times.* These people, certainly, were not ‘civilised’ in the modern sense, linked to the development of experimental knowledge, technology, and juridico-positive organisation; but they had qualities of character and their own very precise spiritual vision of the world, proceeding from real contacts with forces of a super-human nature; a vision which was not ‘thought’, but experienced, made real in traditions, expressed and developed in symbols, rites and myths.

In relation to this, *even the limits of current research into prehistory have moved:* the most complete racial hypotheses with respect to the problem of origins lead us back to around ten thousand years before Jesus Christ, where previously it had seemed adventurous even to deal with civilisations dating back to 2000 or 3000 B.C. As for the general framing of the problem of the so-called ‘line of descent’, *it is necessary to stand firmly against Darwinism.* The stock of humanity to which ancient or contemporary superior races belong does not come from the ape or the ape-like man of the ice age – the Musterian man or the Neanderthal man or the man of Grimaldi – a fact which even the non-racial specialists acknowledge more and more today. The ape-like man corresponds only to a given human stem, which is extinct to a large extent and has been incorporated only in some of its elements within most distinct and superior human stocks, which appear, compared to it, to be more recent – so as to arouse the illusion that they ‘evolved’ from it – only because they appeared in the same lands more recently, having derived from places to a large extent destroyed or devastated by cataclysms and climatic mutations. The prehistoric races of the Cro-Magnon man and of the man of Aurignac belong to these superior stocks.

It is very important to grasp the living meaning of this change of perspective peculiar to the racial-scientific view: *the superior does not derive from the inferior.* In the mystery of our blood, in the most remote depths of our being, we bear, unerasable, the heredity of primordial times. However, this heredity is not one of brutality, of unleashed bestial and wild instincts, as Jewish psychoanalysis claims and as is unfortunately taught on the basis of ‘evolutionism’ and Darwinism: this heredity of the origins, this heritage which comes to us from mythic

distances is on the contrary a *heritage of light*. The force of atavisms, as a force of lower instincts, does not belong to this fundamental heredity: it is rather something which either is born and has strengthened through a process of degeneration, involution or decline, as recalled in varied mythic forms by the traditions of almost all peoples, or it is the effect of a contamination, a hybridism effected by alien incursion, by the residuals of the man of the ice age: it is the voice of another blood, of another race, of another nature, which only arbitrarily can be said to be human. In all the cases in which the truth of the saying of Paul is felt, 'two souls fight in me', it is necessary to derive from the views we have just mentioned the truly accurate interpretation. *Only the man in whom it is the other heredity* (the one introduced by a hybridism) *which speaks can feel the evolutionist and Darwinist myth to be true*, because this heredity has become strong enough to assert itself and to choke any sense of the presence of the truer one.

The other prejudice fought by racial science is that which is contained in the famous formula, *Ex Oriente Lux*. The idea still persists today in some people that the most ancient civilisations are those which originated in the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean or in Western Asia: it is from them, via the Jewish religion, that light would have come to the West, which, up to a rather later period, especially in the Nordic regions, would have remained rough and barbaric. With racial science there is, here also, a complete change of perspective. These Asian civilisations, to us, contain nothing original or pure. *The origin of the highest civilisation of the white race and, in general, of the Indo-European races is not Eastern, but Western, and Nordic-Western*. As we have said, in this respect, we go back to a prehistory which, until yesterday, would have appeared fabulous to us. With respect to the light of such Nordic-Western and Aryan, prehistory, the Asian-Eastern formations appear to us crepuscular and mixed, both spiritually and racially. What is really great and clear in them comes from the original civilising action of nuclei of the dominating Nordic-Western race, which went to these regions.

## Nordic-Western Migrations

'The light of the north', 'the hyperborean mystery', this is therefore a fundamental theme of our doctrine of race, a theme that will seem paradoxical to some, and to others suspect and humiliating with respect to our traditions, thought to be Mediterranean. That is why some clarification is necessary.

First of all, when speaking about North we must not be thought to mean the Germanic area. The primordial centre of the Aryan race must be recognised instead in an area corresponding to the *current Arctic*, in this extremely remote prehistory of which we have spoken. In a successive, but still prehistoric, period, the centre of irradiation seems to have moved to a Nordic-Atlantic centre. In our other works we have referred to the arguments which justify this thesis, and we have also related them to the memories and confirmatory traditional teachings of various civilisations. Also, from the positive, geophysical point of view, it is possible to admit that the Arctic area, or Hyperborea if one wants, has become the uninhabitable land of eternal glaciers only gradually, starting from a given age, while the subsequent *Nordic-Atlantic centre* seems to have disappeared following an oceanic cataclysm.

As for the alarm raised by the Nordic-Aryan thesis, it rests on a misunderstanding. Supporting this thesis does not mean in any way adhering to the Pan-Germanic myth, which, after having made of 'Nordic', Germanic, Aryan and German more or less synonyms, has come to hold that everything which is superior in the various civilisations and nations of our continent must be derived from Germanic elements, and that whatever cannot be derived from such elements must be purely and simply inferior and second-rate.

It is precisely in order to avoid such a misunderstanding that, with respect to the primordial Aryan race, we are accustomed to use the word Hyperborean, forged in Greece before anything was known of the Germans. In any case, we clearly say that Aryan, Nordic-Aryan, Nordic-Western, and so on, in a serious doctrine of race, do not in any way mean 'German' or 'Germanic': they designate a far broader reality. They refer to a stock of which the Germanic people of the period of the invasions are

only one of the many branches, since the major stocks which created civilisations in the East and in the West, in ancient India and in ancient Persia, and also in the first Hellenic culture and in Rome itself, would have had the right to refer their origins to the same stock. Between all these births there can exist a relationship of consanguinity, *but not of derivation in any way*. Of derivation we can only speak regarding that common 'Hyperborean' stock which we have mentioned, which, however, dates back to so remote a pre-history that it makes ridiculous any attempt to corner its exclusive descent, by any historical people, and even more by a modern one.

The current of the Nordic-Aryan peoples followed two fundamental directions, a *horizontal one* (from the West through the Mediterranean, the Baleares, Sardinia, Crete, Egypt), and a *diagonal one* (from North-West to South-East, from Ireland to India with centres in the Danube region and the Caucasus, which therefore was not, as was believed, the 'crib' of the white race, but a hearth of irradiations on the itinerary covered by one of the Nordic-Aryan currents). As far as the migration of the properly Germanic peoples is concerned, compared to the other two, it is incomparably more recent, by entire millennia. Now, along the horizontal direction and in part also by interferences of it with the diagonal direction in the Eurasian land-mass, the greater civilisations of the Mediterranean were born, both those which are known, and others, of which only the degenerate residues have reached us. Regarding such civilisations, on the basis of these new horizons of prehistory, what there is to see in the Nordic-Germanic peoples of the period of the invasions is only epigones, those who, in the common family, were the last to appear from the wings of history. Nor did they appear 'pure', from any point of view.

Certainly, not having behind them all the history of the other groups of the same family, they were not as exposed to the danger of hybridisations as the others: physically and biologically, they were therefore 'more in order'. Through life in regions where harsh climatic and environmental conditions had arisen and which they were the last to leave, a selective process grew stronger, gifts of character, ingenuity, and tenacity, were confirmed and strengthened, while their not having come

into contact with superficial and urbane forms of civilisation kept alive, in these Germanic peoples, virile relationships cemented by the warlike virtues and the feeling of fidelity and honour. However, this is not true of the specifically spiritual element in these epigones of the primordial Nordic-Aryan race. This element underwent a certain decline. In it, the traditions became confused in their primordial metaphysical and 'solar' content, became fragmentary, decayed into mere folklore, sagas, and popular superstitions. Moreover, in these traditions, rather than memories of their origins, the mythologised memories of the tragic vicissitudes endured by one of the centres of the Hyperborean civilisation, that of the Asen or divine heroes of 'Midgard', predominate: hence the famous topic of the 'ragna-rokk', a word grossly translated as 'the twilight of the gods'. Thus, to find one's bearings in such Nordic-Germanic traditions of the peoples of the period of the invasions, and to characterise the true meaning of the main symbols or memories which can be found in them, it is necessary to draw the points of reference from the study of more ancient Aryan traditions, where the same teachings have been maintained in a purer shape and a more complete form, traditions which are not Germanic, but are of the Aryan civilisations of ancient India and ancient Persia, of the first Hellenic culture and of Rome itself. And Germanic racial scientists, such as Günther, clearly acknowledge all this.

This presentation of the problem of the origins which has been set out here, must not therefore arouse in any way a feeling of inferiority or subordination from us, Italians, in relation to the more recent Germanic peoples. On the contrary, just as the best part of the Italian people, from the point of view of the race of the body, corresponds to a type to be considered as a variation of that of the Nordic race, the same elements of the 'race of the soul' (style of life, ethos, etc.) and of vision of the world shared by every great Aryan and Nordic-Aryan civilisation can be found in the patrimony of our highest traditions, which often date back to primordial times. *The Nordic-Aryan thesis of our racial science, therefore, rather denies to any current people the right to corner or monopolise the nobility of our common origin*, and to conclude that we, in that we are and want to be heirs of the ancient Aryan Romanity as well

as that of the subsequent Roman-Germanic civilisation, do not recognise ourselves as being in second place when it comes to Nordic-Aryan spirit, vocation and tradition.

But, naturally, this stand *commits* us and leads us from theoretical racial science to active and creative racial policy, that is, to that policy which is meant to make what, in the Italian general type, is most differentiated in itself, the physical and spiritual type of the higher race – present in the Italian people as much as in the German one but hindered, in both of them, by ethnic waste, by other racial elements, and by the effects of previous processes of biological and cultural degeneration – manifest itself and assert itself to a greater and greater extent and in a more and more precise form.

We can see from this the precise value which the racial framing of the problem of our origins has for the formation of the will and the consciousness of the new Italian. A ‘force of the idea’, a feeling of dignity and superiority, which does not mean pomposity and is not based on confused myths made for political use, but on precise traditional knowledge, really derives from this source.

### The Problem of ‘Latinity’

It could nevertheless be objected: all well and good, but what of *Latinity*? Are we not Mediterranean, and is not the nature of our people and the intonation of our civilisation universally acknowledged to be Latin? This Latin myth, if not in the form of the ‘Brotherhood of Latins’ and of the fundamental unity of spirit and of way of feeling of ‘Latin’ peoples (the very relative solidity of which has been shown by recent events), then at least in the sense of the ‘Latinity’ of our Italian civilisation, still keeps its force in many circles – above all, in those of the scholars and of pseudo-intellectuals – and it is not foreign either to some of the teachings which are still given in our schools. On the basis of this myth, the antithesis which, in spite of everything, exists between our people and other peoples, and the consequent impossibility of any understandings over

and above those dictated by common political interests, are constantly stressed and re-stressed.

However this argument expresses a major misunderstanding which derives from the uncritical repetition of standard phraseology and terminology, to which proper thought has not been given. What, in essence, do we mean by the word 'Latin'? To what domain are we referring when we use this term?

We have stressed, intentionally, that the circles to which the Latin myth is dear are mostly literary and pseudo-intellectual ones. In reality, the word 'Latin', and the concept of 'Latin civilisation', as commonly used, possess meaning only on the aesthetic, 'humanistic' and literary planes, in the world of the arts and of 'culture' in the most superficial sense of the word. 'Latinity', here, is considered to be more or less synonymous with 'Romanity': it refers to supposed elements that certain peoples, which were formerly within the orbit of the Roman empire, and thus adopted the tongue of Rome, the Latin tongue, preserved from the culturally formative action of ancient Rome.

When one examines this notion with more care, one rapidly realises that this 'Latinity', this reflection of the ancient Greco-Roman civilisation, is something superficial. We could almost say that it is a veneer, which endeavours fruitlessly to cover up either ethnic or spiritual differences which, as we have seen from history up to and including the present, are equally able to find expression in harsh antitheses. Unity, as we said, only exists in the worlds of literature and of the arts and, what is more, only in relation to a distinctly 'humanistic' interpretation of them: it thus refers only to a sphere for which ancient, heroic and Catonian Rome did not conceal its scorn. Unity exists also on the philological plane, but in a precarious manner, once the indisputable belonging of the Latin tongue to the general trunk of the Aryan and Indo-Germanic ones is admitted: beyond that, it is a fact that, in terms of vocabularies, articulation and syntax (declinations, etc.), the ancient Latin tongue is more similar to the modern Germanic tongues than it is to the modern Romanic tongues. So, to be accurate, the much vaunted 'Latinity' does not pertain to any of the really creative and original aspects of the peoples that supposedly hold it in common. It only pertains to a facade; not to the essential, but to the



secondary. Further: it is necessary to review from a racial point of view the meaning of this 'Greco-Roman' classical world, from which 'Latinity' is purportedly derived, and for which 'humanists' harbour an almost superstitious cult.

Here we cannot do justice to this problem either: we will only say that the myth of 'classicism' is very similar to that of 'Enlightenment', which wishes us to believe that it was only with the 'conquests' of the Renaissance and with the developments which led to Encyclopaedism and to the French Revolution that, after the 'darkness' of the medieval age, 'true' civilisation was brought to birth. This aestheticist and rationalist mentality appears also in the myth of 'classicism'. As a matter of fact, in the cases of both Rome and Greece, what is considered by most people to be 'classical' is actually a civilisation which, despite its apparent splendour, capable of seducing every 'Aphrodisian race', already appears to us in more than one respect to be in decline: it is the civilisation which arose when the cycle of the previous heroic, sacred, manly and properly Aryan civilisation, that of Roman originality and that of Hellenic originality respectively, was already in its downward arc.

Conversely, it is important to note that, when we refer to this world of the origins, created by 'solar' and 'heroic' races, the word 'Latin' takes on a very different meaning: specifically, a meaning which reverses the myth we mentioned at the beginning. We will only point out one of the results of the most recent studies into the races and traditions of pre-historic and pre-Roman Italy. The word 'Latin' originally designated peoples whose racial and spiritual relationship with the group of the Nordic-Aryan peoples is, for every competent person, incontrovertible. The Latins were a ramification, which had ventured as far as central Italy, of this race of peoples, practising the funerary rite of cremation, as opposed to those of the Osco-Sabelian civilisation, characterised by the funerary rite of burial, whose connection with pre-Aryan Mediterranean, or non-Aryan, Asian-Mediterranean, peoples is equally apparent. 'Latins' of this sort occupied parts of Italy long before the appearance of the Etruscans or the ancient Celts.

Among the most ancient traces left, almost as trails, by the stocks from which the Latins derived, there are recent discoveries in Val

Camonica. These traces have a significant correspondence with the prehistoric traces of the Aryan primordial races, both the Nordic- Atlantic ones (the Franco-Cantabrian civilisation of the Cro-Magnon men) and the Nordic-Scandinavian ones (the civilisation of Fossum). We have the same symbols of a 'solar' spirituality, the same style, the same scarcity of signs of a Demetrian-telluric religiousness, the latter of which are instead recurrent in the Mediterranean non-Aryan civilisation and in the civilisations of the Aryan decline (in Pelasgia and Crete, or – in Italy – Etrusca, Maiella, etc.).

New affinities can be found between the traces of Val Camonica and the *civilisation of the Dorians*: that is to say, of the peoples who came into Greece from the North and created Sparta, characterised by the cult of Apollo as solar Hyperborean god. In reality, according to Altheim and Trautmann, *the movement of the peoples from which the Latins were derived and whose final destination in Italy was to be Rome was similar to the Dorian migration, which, in Greece, gave birth to Sparta*: these – Rome and Sparta – are corresponding manifestations of races of the body and of the spirit, linked, in their turn, to specifically Nordic-Aryan ones.

When we speak of the first Romanity and of Sparta, clearly, we are in a world of forces without attenuation, of a rigid *ethos*, of a really manly and dominating capacity of the soul – a world which did not survive to any great extent in the subsequent so-called 'classical' civilisations from which 'Latinity' and the 'unity of the Latin family' are supposedly to be derived.

If we refer the word 'Latin', instead, to the origins, we see therefore an entire reversal of the 'Latin' thesis. The true original 'Latinity', which corresponds to what within the Roman grandeur was really Aryan, brings us back to forms of life and civilisations which do not oppose, but rather are similar to those that the Nordic-Germanic stocks were to manifest later, in the face of a decadent world which, no longer 'Latin', was now 'Romanic' and more or less Byzantinised. Indeed, beneath the exterior veneer, this alleged 'Latinity' included heterogeneous forces, capable of combining only as long as they did not address anything more serious than the 'worlds of literature and of the arts'.

## Race, Romanity and Italian History

We have already said that, in order to progress from racial theory to practice, one of the fundamental requirements is to recognise precisely the human ideal corresponding to the higher race among those which compose a given nation. Since all the peoples comprise by now racial mixtures, it is necessary to evaluate their various components: this is a process which must be both an inner, individual one, and a political, collective one. In this way, race appears to us essentially as an object of choice, of an election and of a decision.

What we have said already makes clear where, as far as we are concerned, the choice will fall. And we have also quoted the expressions of Mussolini, who has clearly indicated that the Roman element is the everlasting central core – the ‘heart’ – of the Italian stock. We can therefore say purely and simply that *Fascist Italianity identifies itself as Romanity*. We still have to go deeper into this formula in our pursuit of a precise racial consciousness.

Unfortunately, in our country, ‘Romanity’ is often a mere term of rhetoric, part of a stock phrase whose content is extremely indefinite. The proof of this is that, while this word recurs extremely frequently in our country today, no new and serious current of studies is to be noticed which could provide a living sense of what it is which is ‘Roman’, by going beyond the old archaeological, philological, and barrenly historicist exercises of the university specialists. Remarkably, it is not to Italians, but to foreigners, that we owe the most valuable contributions to the true and living study of genuine ‘Romanity’: to Bachofen (Swiss), to W. E. D. Sayers, to F. Altheim and

Günther (German), to Kerenyi (Hungarian), to Eitrem (Norwegian) and to Macchiario, who, while being an Italian citizen, is still not of Aryan origin.

Here we shall also point out that, with respect not only to Italian traditions, but also to Roman ones, it is necessary to choose. Romanity too shows a multiple face. There is a specifically Aryan Romanity, characterised by the symbols of the axe, the eagle, the wolf, and other symbols of a heritage which is, basically, Hyperborean; and there is a

composite Romanity, which shows the effects of the heterogeneous influences of Italic pre-Aryan strata and of degenerate Aryan civilisations. In racial education it is of capital importance to bring to light such divergences, which are manifested in the customs, cults, rituals, and institutions of ancient Rome, just as it is of the utmost importance to inculcate a sense of the struggle through which the Aryo-Roman element managed to predominate through certain phases of its cycle, freeing itself from alien influences (for instance, the Etruscan ones) or changing them according to its higher ideal of civilisation. Once again, there is here a secret history which, to a large extent, is still to be written – for hints, anyone interested in such matters can refer to our ‘Revolt Against the Modern World’, where there is some discussion of ‘Nordic Romanity’; to the work of Bachofen, ‘Die Sage von Tanaquil’; and to other authors cited in this present book.

In the imperial period, Aryan Romanity begins to falter: if, from the Asian provinces, elements of ancient solar spirituality came to it (i.e. Mithraism, the ‘divine’ conception of royalty, etc.), which revived it, ferments of ethnic and spiritual decomposition also came, which proved particularly deleterious given the ethical, demographic and racial decadence of the ancient Aryan-Roman stock. Especially for Fascist Italy, which must reconstruct its imperial mission, consideration from a racial point of view of the destiny of the ancient Roman empire, and that of the Imperial symbols of the Middle Ages, is particularly instructive.

A nucleus, whose virile and Aryan style and whose original exclusivism everyone knows, created the grandeur of Rome. It would have been logical that, as Rome gradually brought under its imperium and into its ‘space’ a more and more complex and varied group of peoples, a corresponding strengthening, a defence and an increase of the dominating Aryo-Roman nucleus, should have been provided for. Instead, just the opposite happened: the more the ancient Empire extended, the more the ‘race of Rome’ weakened, as it opened itself irresponsibly to every kind of influence of inferior stock and of alien: it raised to the dignity of Romans some of the most dubious ethnic elements, it absorbed cults and customs whose total contrast with the original Roman mentality was often astounding, as noted by Livy. In

addition to this, the Caesars often worked in such a way as to drive everyone away: instead of inclining themselves to the group of their best citizens, instead of surrounding themselves with the faithful exponents of ancient Romanity still able to hold on tight to their race and their ethics, they adopted the symbols of absolutism and believed in the magical power of their divinised function even as it became progressively more and more abstract, isolated, and devoid of roots. It is absurd to think that weakened as it was, the Empire could have continued for long to impose itself on the various peoples which, politically speaking, had been integrated into its orbit. The play of contingencies and the first serious attacks from the outside inevitably caused the collapse of this enormous organism, by then lacking a backbone.

In the Middle Ages, as is well known, the Church tried hard to resuscitate the supranational symbol by combining with it the ideas of the new faith to produce a new imperial idea, that of the *Sacrum Imperium*. But the Italian people was, so to speak, foreign to the formation of this new symbol: they did not perceive at all the real task, which was to draw from the substance of our people a nucleus which was racially and spiritually worthy of that symbol. What prevailed instead was the Mediterranean, anarchistic, individualistic, particularistic component, the ferment of endless quarrels and antagonisms – not to speak of a strong fall in the general level of ethics. Hence the well-known words with which Barbarossa rightly laid into those who prided themselves on being ‘Roman’, if only in name. The consequence of this was that the medieval Imperial function, although it called itself Roman, was essentially seized by members of other peoples than ours: above all, of Germanic peoples, in which certain qualities of race had survived to a greater extent. Consequently, Italy, as such, had very little part in the building of the Imperial Roman-Germanic civilisation of the Middle Ages.

We have therefore two eloquent examples of the dangers to which every Imperial idea is exposed if no strong racial base corresponds to it. Also, in the choice of traditions which the Aryan racial consciousness demands for the consideration of subsequent Italian history, it is necessary to get accustomed to many revolutionary transformations of perspective. Thus, we will point out that, in spite of the suggestions of a

certain native history of Masonic inspiration, we must not in any way perceive the Italy of the Communes, in revolt against Imperial authority, as truly ours. For us the issue is not at all a 'fight against the alien', but rather a fight between the exponents of two opposite types of civilisation: and, on the side of the Emperor, for whom, and against the Communes, most Italian princes, such as the Savoy and the Monferrato, fought, there was the aristocratic-feudal civilisation, which still maintained to a large extent and in a remarkable manner the Aryan and Nordic-Aryan style of life. What is ours can therefore be said to be the Ghibelline and Dantesque Italy, not the Guelph and Communal one.

In the same way, although this may sound iconoclastic, we must not pride ourselves too much of the contribution given by Italy to the humanistic civilisation and, in general, to the so-called Renaissance. Despite the apparent splendour, this humanistic and 'Aphrodisian' civilisation of literature and arts represented a fall, and the breaking of the transmission of a much more serious and deeper tradition: apart from the individualistic quality which was to be reflected in the style of the Princes and in the endless disagreements between the Italian cities and between their *condottieri*, it is precisely in this civilisation that the germs were formed which were to develop into Enlightenment and similar phenomena of modern decadence. Additionally, the pretentious reassumption of 'Classical Antiquity' by Humanism is based on a major misunderstanding: only the superficial aspects of the ancient world were reassumed, not the more ancient, heroic, sacral, traditional, specifically Aryan ones.

Thus we arrive at a necessary revision of the 'Italian' values of the Renaissance and even of the 'Great War'. In fact, the part that the influences of Freemasonry, of Gallic Jacobinism, and, in general, of an ideology which, in its liberal and democratic form, is essentially anti-racial and anti-Aryan, played in the movements of the Risorgimento, despite the purity of intention of many patriots, is incontestable and, by now, well known. With respect to our intervention in 1915, the same thing must be said again: we did join the fray in pursuit of national claims, but essentially under the sign of the Democratic-Masonic ideology of the Allies, which was really intended to destroy states which still retained,

despite of the interferences of Judaising Capitalism and a certain *Kultur*, a hierarchical and aristocratic structure and the feeling of race and tradition. However, the intervention had also the effect, for us, of a heroic test, which reawakened those forces which then, by a true reversal, were to lead to Fascist and Roman Italy. These are only a few hints, to be developed adequately and extended, concerning the new approach to Italian history, which must determine more and more of our consciousness and of our Aryan racial policy.

### The Type of Our ‘Super-Race’

What, then, is the type of our ‘super-race’? Externally it is a tall type, with wide shoulders in men; well-proportioned limbs, slender, sinewy, dolicocephalic, with a long skull, even if, at times, less so than in the specifically Nordic type (let us recall the skull of Ceasar). It is mostly dark-haired; unlike the less pure Mediterranean-Italic types, the hair is not abundant, but at most wavy; lips, not fleshy; nor are the eye-brows thick. Thin and long nose, straight or slightly bent (the ‘aquiline’ race of Fischer). The jaw has a certain development but is less pronounced than in the Nordic type, and, with the prominence of the forehead and the nose, gives the impression of an active type, present to himself, prompt in attack. The eyes can be dark, blue, or grey. Where the look in the less noble Mediterranean-Italic types, is restless, veiled, or nostalgic, it has for us precise and firm movements: ‘to look straight in the face’, to look in front of oneself; a penetrating and firm look, not the oblique or malicious look of the Mediterraneans altered by Levantine elements. Gesticulation, which is supposed to be an Italian characteristic is foreign to it. It does have expressive, but not impulsive and uncoordinated, gestures – these are gestures which extend a conscious thought, rather than indicating the dominance of an uncontrolled instinctive drive. It has greater quickness of reactions than the Nordic type of the same stock, it has greater dynamism: a dynamism which, however, is always controlled, clear-headed, very different from effervescence or from gross exuberance.

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Racists will recall the main virtues of the ancient Roman type of the Nordic-Aryan race: bright audacity, a dominant attitude, concise and composed language, well meditated resoluteness, a bold sense of dominion. One spoke of a *virtus* which did not mean 'virtue' in a moralistic and reactionary sense, but brave virility and force; of *fortitudo* and *constantia*, that is, of the fortress of the mind; of sapientia, or wise reflection; of *humanitas*, and *disciplina*, which is the ideal of a firm formation of oneself which, also, comprises inner wealth; of *gravitas* or *dignitas*, dignity and inner calm which, in the aristocracy, developed into *solemnitas*, a moderate solemnity. Then, *fides*, fidelity, was an Aryan and specifically Roman virtue. Love for precise action without great gestures was Roman and Aryan, it was a realism, which, as has been rightly pointed out, did not at all mean materialism; it was the ideal of clarity, an ideal which, when weakened into rationalism, remained like an echo as part of the so-called 'Latin' mentality, in this respect, more faithful to the original essence than the romantic soul of some physically more Nordic men. *Pietas* and *religio* in the ancient Aryan-Roman man bore no resemblance to any subsequent forms of religiousness: it was a feeling of respect for the divine and, in general, suprasensible forces, which were felt to be an integral part of life both individual and collective. The Aryan-Roman type has always mistrusted any abandonment of the soul, any confused mysticism, nor did he know Semitic servility towards the Divinity. He felt that it was not as a broken man contaminated by the sense of sin and flesh that he could render a worthy cult to the Divinity, but as an erect and complete man, of calm and fierce mind, destined to know by Divine presentiment the directions in which his conscious and resolute action could be considered as continuation of the Divine will itself.

The ancient Aryan and Aryan-Roman man conceived of the world, and of society (*res publica*), as a *cosmos*, that is, as a whole of very distinct natures connected amongst themselves not by promiscuity but on the basis of a higher law. Hence also the ideal of hierarchy, in which the sense of personality and freedom is reconciled with that of a higher unity. Neither liberalism, therefore, nor 'socialism' or collectivism: to each his own, *suum cuique*. The woman, placed neither too low, as in some Asian



societies, nor too high, as in societies influenced by the lunar and Demetrian race; distance, however, towards woman, just as towards the preoccupation for sex, and resolute affirmation of the paternal right, of the authority of the virile leader of family or of a people. And a nearly 'feudal' sense of responsibility or fidelity of this leader for the state.

All these are elements of the Roman and Aryan-Roman style of the soul and of the spirit: gradually, we must come to see in them an organic correspondence to the physical form of the higher Aryan- Italian type which we have described, in order to incorporate them into the living ideal of our 'super-race'.

In order for this type to become more and more visible and real, a particular collective spiritual environment will be necessary. This does not contradict what has already been said against the power of the environment and in favour of heredity. Wherever the types are mixed and various racial components live and act in every man, the influence of environment can be important, not in the sense of introducing from the outside what is not present within, but in the sense of favouring the manifestation and the predominance of one of these components, rather than of others. Let us suppose a civilisation dominated by Judaising and anti-racist ideas: then, fatally, even in peoples where the percentage of Aryan and Nordic blood is strikingly high, apart from a few cases of awakening by reaction, what will come to the surface and will prevail is what in everyone and in general in this people corresponds to the anti-race and to the waste of an inferior and contaminated blood. Thus, when Aphrodisianism or Dionysianism or some other race of the spirit sets the tone of a civilisation, by means of the law that like evokes like there will be a corresponding re-emergence, the corresponding heredity will become 'dominant' and, conversely, the heredity of Aryan, i.e. solar or heroic, race though also present, will become 'recessive', or compressed.

By remaining clearly conscious of this, by creating an environment saturated with spiritual forces and heroic vocations, we shall produce the climate needed by the 'super-race' which is ours to reawaken, and we shall become truly decisive for the future of our a nation.

## Historical Place of Fascist Racism

To put in context definitively the views that we have just put forward, we have to say a few words on the *historical place of racism*.

The power of every truly creative and renewing idea depends more on the fact that it has appeared *at the right moment*, that it has come on top of a totality of confused historical requirements, organising them positively in a precise direction, than it does on mere contingent circumstances. It is essential therefore to have the sense of the historical 'place' of an idea, if it is to be able to manifest fully its efficiency.

Now, as to the 'historical place' of racism, it will necessary to recapitulate very briefly a general interpretation of history, based on the social quadripartition which was peculiar to every ancient civilization of the traditional type, from those, of Aryan stock, in the East, to the medieval Roman-Germanic one.

According to this quadripartition, the spiritual leaders are at the top of the hierarchy; the warlike aristocracy comes next, to which the bourgeoisie is subordinated, and, finally, there is the servile caste. It is above all Guénon who has expertly shown that the real meaning of so-called 'evolution' has been nothing other than that of a fall of the power and of the dominant type of the civilisation from each one to the next of these four levels or modes of being, by which the hierarchy we have just mentioned was defined. The epoch in which spiritual leaders, in one form or another, e.g. as sacred-kings, had the supreme authority, dates back almost to prehistoric times. The power then falls by a degree, and passes to warlike aristocracies: so we have the phase within the cycle of civilisations in which kings are, essentially, warlike leaders. This is what we had in Europe until recently, with the various traditional dynasties.

The liberal and democratic revolutions caused a new fall: the effective power passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie, into the various forms of plutocratic oligarchy, with the various Gold Barons, Coal Barons, Oil Barons, Steel Barons, et seq. finally, the socialist revolution and the communist movement seem to be the prelude of the last fall, because the dictatorship of the proletariat means the transfer of power to the modern equivalent of the last of the ancient Aryan castes, that of the *Shudra*, the

shapeless mass of the serfs, entirely dominated by materiality. In our various works we have developed similar views to those of Guénon.

Here, in our opinion, it must be noticed that the hierarchy which has been mentioned above was not created by contingent circumstances, but that it proceeded instead from precise reasons of 'analogical' order. It reflected the differentiation and the hierarchicalisation existing between the elements of a normal human organism, the state appearing, analogically, as a 'man on a large scale'. In this way, the spiritual leaders corresponded to the functions, in the human organism, of the spirit, the supernatural nucleus of the personality; the warlike aristocracy corresponded to the will; the bourgeoisie to the processes of organic economy; and the serfs, to all that in the human entity is determined by pure corporeality.

An important consequence flows from this analogy, if one considers that every human being has his own face, his own quality, his own personality, according to the two higher principles, that is, spirit and will. If he loses them, he fatally goes back to the undifferentiated, to the sub-personal. Now, the accuracy of the indicated analogy is confirmed by the fact that the historical ages determined by the advent to power of the two lowest castes show exactly the characters of the forces which, in the human entity, are in an analogical correspondence: at the point when power is no longer in the hands of spiritual leaders, and not even in those of a heroic elite, but is usurped by the Third Estate, by plutocratic oligarchies and, finally, by the world of the materialised masses, all tradition, all natural feeling of nationality, of blood, of race, of caste, disappear, and, therefore, everything to which the various human societies owed their qualitative difference, their personality, their varied dignity, decays. Instead, there appear cosmopolitanism, internationalism, collectivistic levelling, standardisation: all this, because of a logical necessity, under the sign of a mixing between rationalism and materialism. It is in this way that, in these crepuscular forms of civilisation, it is seriously thought that economics could determine the supreme historical law (Karl Marx); it is in this way that, instead of the 'outmoded' faiths, they created a superstitious religion of science and technology, and, in cahoots with the collectivistic myth, favoured the

advent of various forms of a mechanised, primitivist, soulless and obscurely irrational culture and civilisation.

This will suffice as a brief historical context in order to make possible the definitive expression, for the purpose of racial education, of the right of blood and race. Fascism, and other political movements of analogous inspiration, have asserted themselves as a revolt and a will to reconstruct, beyond the aforementioned twilight of the civilisation of the West. They therefore intend to highlight more and more the values and principles which refer to the two highest planes of the quadripartition. So, by a logical necessity, corresponding to the Fascist denial of internationalism and cosmopolitanism, what must reappear above all is ideas irreducible to all that is mechanical, deterministic, and soulless, whether as pure materialism or as economic or rationalistic myth: *and such values, at first, cannot but be those of blood, of race*: of human groups which are most differentiated by the deep forces of their origins, by effective and powerful forces, beyond all economic determinism, mass materialism, battered bourgeois culture, and individualistic disintegration. It is precisely from such forces that the qualities of 'race' proceed, which, as has been said, always imply something aristocratic, and, at the same time, something which transcends the narrow horizons of the individual: they are not constructed, they are irreplaceable and they are tied to a precise dignity and to a tradition.

This is enough to give a general idea of the 'historical place' of the doctrine of race and of the meaning which it has in Fascism. Implicitly, the result of all this is that *the direction along which the doctrine of race in our country must be subsequently developed is clarified*.

Where Fascism has declared itself to be against both the world of collectivised and mechanised masses, and 'Enlightenment' rationalism, against bourgeois civilisation in general and in particular against plutocracy, the forms corresponding to the two last stages of the European fall to the two lowest castes of the ancient Aryan hierarchy have been overcome in principle: that of the serfs and that of the bourgeois or 'merchants', *Shudra* and *Vaishya*, Fourth Estate and Third Estate. It is necessary to go beyond this, and to see to it that the values, the modes of being, and the modes of feeling, peculiar to the two higher

degrees to which the warlike aristocracy and the spiritual sovereignty formerly corresponded, are once again decisive in the new civilisation.

In accordance with this it is necessary to develop the Fascist doctrine of race in two further respects and to conceive it according to the complete sense which we have tried to intimate in the previous chapters. First of all, we must see to it that race, besides having a biological and anthropological meaning, assumes, more and more distinctly, also a *heroic* and *aristocratic* one. Community of blood or race will be the premise, the base. But, within such community, an adapted selective process will establish further differences, according to which something similar to a new aristocracy will be able to arise: a group which will show the 'pure race', the *true* race or race in the higher sense, not only in the body, but also in terms of the heroic soul, of a style of honour and loyalty.

So an immense and fecund field opens for various forms of synthesis between the principles of racism and the cornerstones of ethics and the 'Fascist Mystique', along with the possibility for us to remain faithful to our better traditions and to prevent the collectivising and socialising deviations which have sometimes occurred owing to hasty political use of racial policies in other countries. Racism of the second degree, the doctrine of the races of the soul, for its part, will continue to specify the main points of reference for determined, scientifically founded, action.

As far as the final constructive phase is concerned, with respect to the problem of the spiritual leaders, beyond all these forms per se, basically, the best points of reference can come precisely from the 'Aryan myth', if it is understood as it was originally. It is very sad that, in certain circles, 'Aryan' has come to mean merely 'anti-Semitic' and that, even in legislation, this term, 'Aryan', has only a negative meaning, because it indicates only what one must not be, 'Aryan' being those who do not have Jewish or coloured-race blood, without further conditions. Against this banalisation of the Aryan concept, it will always be necessary to react. The term 'Aryan', in its integrity, will instead have to mean once more, in the new generation and in its educators, a race of the spirit, specifically, of either 'solar' or 'heroic' type (this latter term being used in our own special sense). By proceeding along these lines Fascist racism will be able

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to liquidate definitively all the suspicious of 'materialism' or 'zoologism' which people have towards it; it will end up finding in the domain of a supra-mundane and supra-temporal truth, far from excluding this domain, its natural coronation, and realising, by means of a very precise tradition deeply rooted in our origins, the Fascist aspiration of giving to the Revolution a 'religious' meaning in addition to its other meanings, and the character of a renewal in the field of the supreme values themselves.

# The Hegemony of the White Races

by Julius Evola

The problem of the origins, the foundations and the future destiny of the global hegemony of the white race is, of course, among the most exciting issues of today. We have in our hands a newly published large volume by Wahrhold Drascher, who, thoroughly knowledgeable, comprehensively informed and with an acute historical sense, takes on precisely this subject (*Die Vorherrschaft der weissen Rasse*, Berlin, 1936). We shall provide an outline of his book, on account of the interest which, as we shall soon see, his views may have for Italian readers.

How was it possible for a group of peoples – bound to one another by only very relative ties – to subject the rest of the world to their will for centuries, involving the entire world in their own destiny? Many are tempted explain this unique event in world history in purely materialistic terms. Drascher, however, easily proves such explanations to be one-sided and inadequate. If it was only a matter of physical, military and technical superiority, it is, in fact, hardly conceivable how Cortez and Pizarro, along with only a handful of adventurers, succeeded in toppling gigantic empires, or how the English, with not even two hundred thousand men, have been able to keep no less than three hundred and fifty million Hindus at bay. Moreover, we must not confuse the latest phase of a dominion already organised on solid economic, administrative, military and, properly speaking, ‘colonial’ foundations, with the original forms of domination and conquest, conquests that were realised with no predetermined plan, and indeed even without any real economic intentions. The spirit of adventure, the love of risk and the unknown, the sheer pleasure of domination and predation, the desire for great distances were, more than any rational, mercantile, and utilitarian

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motive, at the origins of white expansion, and were inseparably bound to specific character traits: to a hard will, to coldness, to tenacity, to contempt for life and for death, to an unshakable feeling of superiority.

This is the first point: moral qualities, and not purely material elements. Regarding the feeling of white superiority, Drascher states that it was not based on guns and warships, or even on legal principles. Rather, it made use of all of those things with the naturalness of men willing to use whatever means necessary to achieve their goals. The true origins of this feeling of superiority are not rational, they are rooted in the very substance of the race, in the spirit of the blood. This is why even when the various peoples of the white race found themselves in the most bitter conflicts, nonetheless, in their behaviour, their way of being, of acting and of asserting themselves, they appeared to other peoples as a single family.

This, however, is not all. In addition to the material elements, in addition to the moral elements themselves, and perhaps more important than them, there is an element of the highest, almost of a metaphysical order, which Drascher calls the 'spirit of the oceanic age'. It is a kind of obscure will to the infinite and the unconditioned, which stands in the most intimate relationship to the conception of the world of humanism and the Renaissance, becoming more powerful and developed through the experience of the ocean and the new conquest of the seas, which was taking place at precisely that time. It was the 'oceanic spirit' that constituted the deepest spiritual core and the innermost impulse that uniquely animated and oriented the racial qualities of the white peoples, launching them on the path of the conquest of the world, principally through the previously unknown great ocean routes.

Drascher writes:

The sea, that vast surface, free and open in every direction, has no end at any point: beyond the horizon, which you thought you had reached, another opens itself, drawing you towards new distances, pushing you always beyond, towards infinity. Its element is mobile, restless. At no point does it invite you to linger, to dwell, always pushing you to continue towards a new goal. And when



you get there, it does not give you peace. Each wave is calling you, seems to urge you to forget and leave what you already know and not settle for what you already have, but to attempt and dare new things. The sea is, in the highest sense, the idea of limitlessness, which it embodies more than any other aspect of nature. It is serious, powerful, tragic, it is a hostile force that always wants to be tamed again, always ready to destroy you if you do not prove yourself to be stronger than it. And it is free, in the deepest sense of the word. On its shores, you can build cities and fortresses, but you cannot contain it and 'own it'. It 'belongs' essentially to he who navigates it, dominating it.

In these terms, the experience of the sea gives rise to the spirit of a new European epoch, to the driving force of a universal impulse, to the soul of a new epic and adventurous cycle. The ancient formula: *vivere non necesse navigare necesse est* [living is not necessary but navigation is], here takes on the fullness of its meaning. Navigation and conquest, derived from the original Mediterranean spirit, were gradually adopted by a series European peoples, from the Renaissance onward, as the watchword of world conquest and the consolidation of the hegemony of the white race.

But then, almost like the fatal cyclical process that every organism is subject to, the heroic tension and the original will to the infinite little by little went into dormancy. The epic phase of expansion was followed by the economic, mercantile phase. The first conquerors, surrounded by an almost mystical prestige, were replaced by highly organised companies trading in manufactured goods and specializing in the rational use of raw materials. Military power, especially naval power (as in the typical case of England), was more or less reduced to performing the function of the armed guard of economic hegemonism. The freedom on the seas ended up becoming synonymous with the freedom of British commerce. In addition, the white West itself began to formulate ideologies that were destined to turn back on it and seriously damage its prestige in the eyes

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of the coloured peoples, finally creating the conditions of a new spirit of independence and revolt among the latter.

This is not the place to delve into such considerations, which, moreover, Drascher himself discusses only incompletely. We will only mention, for example, that the egalitarian social principle has led to the absurdity of legal parity between white nations and mestizo nations or African savages; that a poorly understood and demagogic nationalism has become, in Asia, a dangerous source of insurrectionary ferment, while Bolshevik-Marxist propaganda calls for the revolt of colonised peoples against whites, claiming that the latter have the same role with regard to the former that capitalist exploiters and oppressors have with regard to the international proletariat. Here, however, it is more important to discuss consequences, recognizing that, in one way or another, the principle of European hegemony really is in danger today, and that the urgent problem of its restoration is not only material, but also, and above all, spiritual. There is very little point in resorting to external remedies. Only a return to origins, i.e., to the original attitude that brought whites to world domination – after the elimination of all the detritus of a soulless civilization devoid of ideals, a civilization that worships the idol of mere economy and is founded on the principle of levelling democracy – will allow us to maintain our supremacy. And that means reviving the oceanic symbol, reawakening the will to the infinite and limitless, fuelled – so to speak – by the ocean wind, the freedom of enormous distances. This spirit, however, must be mastered by firm discipline and translated into strength hardened like steel.

It is no accident that Italy, which only now is fully entering into a cycle of conquest and colonial empire-building, has also proved its capacity for such a spirit, while in other countries, those forces have for a long time and over the span of many generations been lying dormant, decimated or supplanted by other, lower forces. Thus, in this respect, too, Fascist Italy is now a symbol, and has defined the terms of a European alternative. Those nations that will be incapable of following her in accomplishing the miracle of a renewal and a revival in the sense just indicated, are destined to be swept away by the tide that is gradually swelling among the races they once dominated. Whatever the power of

those nations may still appear to be today, it is merely the legacy of a spirit that is now dead. Only the other nations, who will answer the call of fascist 'youthfulness' and bring back the deep forces of their race to new epic heights, and to a new spirituality permeated with the drive towards limitless, will be part of the new front called upon to defend and reaffirm Western world supremacy.

