

III

The Totalitarian Ideology

*THE NATURE OF TOTAL IDEOLOGY:
ITS SYMBOLS AND MYTHS*

It has of late become fashionable to proclaim the "end of ideologies" and to engage in speculation about the consequences. (189) At times, wishful thinking is involved, but a marked sophistication concerning ideological positions and tenets has undoubtedly occurred in this century. The critique of conventional ideologies by the revolutionary movements has given rise to general assessments, such as Karl Mannheim's well-known *Ideology and Utopia*. In this overrated work he goes so far as to describe ideologies as "utterances" that "structurally resemble lies." (227a) The increasing sophistication, however, has by no means ended the function and role of ideology in contemporary society. Quite the contrary. The process of "ideologizing" the ideas prevalent in various polities is still going forward at a rapid pace, as traditional and conventional notions are transformed into action programs of particular movements, groups, and parties. (240c)

A special case of the argument that ideologies have lost their significance is the contention that ideology is not a significant feature of a totalitarian regime, but merely a weapon of the rulers. Even if that were true, ideology would be important, and in any case there cannot be any doubt that ideology is a weapon not only in the hands of totalitarian rulers, but of power seekers and power wielders everywhere. Nor is ideology any the less serviceable for this purpose, if it is passionately, fanatically believed to be true. There are in any event clear indications that the ideology shapes the behavior of the totalitarian leaders as well as of the mass following. Djilas is quite right when he says that ideological unity is the

mainstay of the Communist Party, which makes obligatory for its members "an identical concept of the world and of the development of society." (74b) A purely manipulative attitude on the part of the leaders would not work.

This conclusion forces itself upon the observer not only in regard to such major policies as the collectivization of agriculture in the Soviet Union, Communist China, and the satellites, but also in many minor policies. The discussions during recent party congresses as well as the Soviet conflicts with China, Albania, and Yugoslavia become hard to understand if ideology is discarded. The same holds true for the Fascist regimes, notably Hitler's. His "final solution" of the Jewish problem by mass extermination was clearly ideological in motivation. We need not depend upon public declarations in this respect. His comments to confidants are quite convincing evidence (150), and we have further signs that this motivation continued powerful to the end. On February 14, 1945, he said to Bormann: "I ought to have had twenty years for leading the new elite to maturity, an elite of young men who would have been bathed in the philosophy of national socialism from infancy." (153a) The world-revolutionary posture of totalitarian movements is unthinkable without the ideological thrust from which they spring.

Marx and Engels described the whole range of ideas as "superstructure." Religion, law, and other systems of ideas were seen by them as nothing but camouflage, surrounding the bare and brute facts of economic controls, the "control of the means of production." They served as weapons in the class struggle, by which the ruling class buttressed its position of power. Thus Marx and Engels wrote: "The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class" (231), and later Marx again: "every historical period has laws of its own . . . as soon as society has outlived a given period of development, and is passing over from one given stage to another, it begins to be subject to other laws." (230) Clearly, according to them, the prevailing ideology of any particular epoch was both the outward rationalization of that epoch's economic organization and the tool used by the dominant class to stop history from continuing on its inevitable path. For, as Marx and Engels saw it, history was a perpetual progress through time, propelled irresistibly by the class struggle, though at varying rates of advance. The struggle pro-

duced the historical momentum and established the economically dominant classes in a position of power and then toppled them from it. "All history is the history of class struggles," the *Communist Manifesto* declares. Throughout this unfolding pattern of dialectical change, combining revolution and evolution, ideology served both to mask and then to unmask "objective reality."

Though we can readily see that this communist approach to history and the ideas at work in it was the product of a specific historical period, Marx and his followers believed its unique quality to be that it was more than an ideology. To them, this approach embodied the science of history and as such constituted an unprecedented insight into the true course of development. It provided those who fully grasped it with a key for understanding not only the past and the present, but also the future. And because its view of the future was said to be scientifically accurate, and because it asserted that the future would be better than the present, it readily became a compelling call to action. The future, thus clearly perceived and rightly valued, must be hastened; its advent must be assisted with all available means. Dialectical materialism (or *Diamat*, in Soviet parlance) offers, according to the communists, not only an infallible perception of the meaning of the interrelationship of social forces, but also a clear guide to the character of inevitable social change. It combines moral indignation against the Today with a fiercely fanatic conviction that the Tomorrow, which is bound to come, will be a higher, indeed a near perfect, state of society. (277)

Marx and Engels, by making ideas depend upon the economic system, raised the issue of what has come to be known as the "sociology of knowledge"—or the study of the social conditioning that causes and thereby explains the rise and growth of ideas, of notions regarding values, of scientific discoveries, and of practical programs of social reform. By claiming that all such knowledge is essentially superstructure, of which the substructure is the system of economic controls, the Marxist makes knowledge a dependent variable that changes with the economic system. This is a sweeping sociological generalization, and it was natural that scholars, and not only they, should question it and ask in turn: how true is this proposition? To what extent is the economic system primary, the first cause of all other changes in the intellectual field? Indeed, the

obvious query suggested itself: is this true of the Marxist system itself?

We are not now going into this vast problem of intellectual creativity and its relation to environmental conditioning, but we wish to make quite clear at the outset that these issues are involved in the problem of ideology and its role in the totalitarian dictatorships of our time. The Soviet dictatorship, more particularly, rests upon this belief in the instrumental nature of ideas and ideology. Far from reducing the role of ideology, this conviction has led to its explicit cultivation and to the large-scale indoctrination of the masses. An intense concern with ideological conformity is the paradoxical consequence of the doctrine that ideas are nothing but weapons.

But before we further elaborate a typology of totalitarian ideology, it is necessary to determine what is to be understood by it. The problem of totalitarian ideology must be seen as a special case of the role of ideology in the political community. Ideology is often too broadly taken simply as a set of ideas prevalent in a community. (273a) Or it is too narrowly seen as a political "myth." (195a) Ideologies usually contain myths, but that is not all. Before this element is explored, one question needs an answer: what is an ideology? Ideologies are essentially action-related "systems" of ideas. They typically contain a program and a strategy for its realization, its operational code. (201a) Their essential purpose is to unite (integrate) organizations that are built around them. (110d)

An ideology is, therefore, a set of *literate ideas*—a reasonably coherent body of ideas concerning practical means of how to change and reform a society, based upon a more or less elaborate criticism of what is wrong with the existing or antecedent society. Where such reformist ideologies become potent, an ideology may also be developed to defend a society; such defensive ideologies contain a correspondingly elaborate criticism of the reformist or revolutionary ideologies. Finally, a totalitarian ideology would be one that is concerned with total destruction and total reconstruction, involving typically an ideological acceptance of violence as the only practicable means for such total destruction. It might accordingly be defined as "a reasonably coherent body of ideas concerning practical means of how totally to change and reconstruct a society by force, or violence, based upon an all-inclu-

sive or total criticism of what is wrong with the existing or antecedent society."* This total change and reconstruction in its very nature constitutes a "utopia," and hence totalitarian ideologies are typically utopian in nature. (110e) Totalitarian ideologies, in this perspective, are a radical form of a development which, although there are precedents, is typically modern; they must not be confused with traditional notions, beliefs, and customs prevalent in more mature societies.

A significant aspect of such ideologies is their symbolism, invented for the purpose of effectively competing with the symbols of the rival ideologies. The donkey and the elephant, the red and the green flag, and the like illustrate this. In the case of totalitarian ideologies, their symbols are typically invented to undermine the symbolism of the political order to be overthrown. (110f) Hammer and sickle, swastika and fasces, are the familiar symbols of the totalitarian movements. They are well known to many who have no clear conception of the movements for which they stand. Each of these symbols embodies an element of its ideology that has central importance, and its importance to the totalitarian order deserves consideration. The symbol gives concrete form and focus to an abstraction, while the abstraction serves to illumine for the faithful the "meaning" of the symbol. (110e) The hammer and sickle stand rationally enough for the workers and peasants who together constitute the new society that the USSR aims at. The swastika and fasces (the bundle of sticks that the Roman lictor or police officer used to carry) symbolize the ancient tribal world to which Nazism and Fascism wished to be linked, the barbaric heathens in the woods of pre-Christian Northern Europe and the Romans of early times. While the swastika is a ritual symbol of uncertain origin, quite common in primitive societies, the fasces are an image of the harsh discipline of sober and archaic Rome, which presumably provided the basis for the city's eventual greatness. It is probably not an accident that the symbol of the Soviet Union and its satellites is

* Brzezinski has recently restated his position with particular reference to "revolutionary" ideologies as follows: "Modern revolutionary ideology is essentially an action program derived from certain doctrinal assumptions about the nature of reality and expressed through certain stated, not overly complex, assertions about the inadequacy of the past or present state of societal affairs. These assertions include an explicit guide to action outlining methods for changing the situation, with some general, idealized notions about the eventual state of affairs." (38a; also 39)

a constructed symbol, invented by the leaders of the movement and pointing to the future, while the Fascist and Nazi symbols are ancient and inherited forms relating the movement to a mythical past.

An inclination to identify the living person of the dictator with the symbolism of the regime became very marked in the USSR toward the end of Stalin's life. His seventieth birthday, for instance, became the signal for a veritable orgy of celebrations, gifts, panegyrics, and declarations of faith. This symbolism proved a considerable embarrassment for his successors after they had decided to attack him. But the difficulties did not prove unsurmountable. Khrushchev decided to fall back upon the prestige of Lenin and to re-emphasize the role of Lenin (whether he did so instinctively or deliberately is not important). Such glorification of a dead man leaves the Soviet leadership ample room for defining what Leninism is; at the same time, a living leader can constantly define his own premises and policies, which may differ considerably from those of his immediate predecessor. In that sense, the Soviet collective leadership strengthens its own broad appeal while not limiting its manipulative capacity in policy formulation. Thus Lenin could much more effectively serve as an effective symbol than Stalin could.

An additional important symbol for all the totalitarian regimes is negative: the stereotyped image of the enemy. For the Nazis it was the fat rich Jew or the Jewish Bolshevik; for the Fascists it was at first the radical agitator, later the corrupt and weak, degenerate bourgeois; for the Soviets, it is the war-mongering, atom-bomb-wielding American Wallstreeter; for the Chinese Communists, it is the Yankee imperialist and the Western colonial exploiters. In these negative symbols, the ideological basis of all such symbolism is even more evident. It is also found to some extent in the competitive politics of constitutional regimes. (224)

As it is with symbols, so it is with myth. The rise and development of reformist ideologies is a feature of the democratic age, associated with the development of parties. Parties of reform fashion ideologies that they propose to put into practice after their assumption of power. In this process, adaptations take place and some of the more utopian aspects of the ideology are eliminated as a concession to reality. (8a) Totalitarian parties are an extreme

instance of this general trend. By their elimination of all rivals, they monopolize the field and convert their group ideology into a governmental one. But the process of adaptation to "reality" still takes place, even though a persistent effort is made to maintain the myth that the ideology is intact and that concessions are temporary. It is at this point that ideologies are to some extent transformed into myths. A myth is typically a tale concerned with past events, giving them a specific meaning and significance for the present and thereby reinforcing the authority of those who are wielding power in a particular community. (110f) They may carry a lesson, explicit or implied, for the future course of events. Such myths may be invented or they may "just grow," but they play a vital role in totalitarian dictatorships. Though myths are certainly found not only in totalitarian dictatorships, (4) the question arises as to whether totalitarian myths have a special quality. This is indeed the case: they are pseudo-scientific. The communist myth rests upon the notion that its view of history is beyond criticism, while the Nazi myth claims biological superiority for a particular race.

Naturally, considerable difficulties arise when such notions are confronted with reality. This process has been ridiculed by George Orwell in *1984*, where a Ministry of Truth is staffed with officials who are always at work shaping and reshaping the record of the past to bring it into consonance with the particular situation and the exigencies in which the dictatorship finds itself. There has been enough of this actually happening to make the caricature significant. When, after Stalin's death, it became important to highlight certain new men, pictures appeared associating them closely with the deceased. In fact, some of these were forgeries manufactured for the purpose of establishing a firm link between the new rulers and the old. Stalin himself, at an earlier date, had engaged in similar tricks to establish the myth of Lenin's appreciation for him. (49a; 391) But such frauds should not blind us to the important and very real place that the myth has in totalitarian as in all political societies. It is the result of a spontaneous response of men who possess power and seek authority and who wish others subject to that power to accept it as legitimate.

The myths that have played an important role in the dictatorships are numerous. For the Soviets they are in part at least embedded in Marxist writings. As tales, myths tell stories about the

past or the future. Dialectical materialism provides the key myth of the communists. In the laborious words of Stalin, "if the passing of slow quantitative changes into rapid and abrupt qualitative changes is a law of development, then it is clear that revolutions made by the oppressed classes are quite a natural and inevitable phenomenon. Hence the transition from capitalism to socialism and the liberation of the working class from the yoke of capitalism cannot be effected by slow changes but only by a qualitative change of the capitalist system, by a revolution." (337c) That all past history is a history of class warfare is part of this general myth of the communist world; that Lenin detested Trotsky and was anxious to rid the movement of his counterrevolutionary plots is a specific myth; both are related to the past; they are historical myths. That there will eventually be established an anarchic paradise of freely cooperating individuals is a similar general myth referring to the future; another, but more specific, futuristic myth is that the Soviet Union will liberate peoples falling under its sway, that it will abolish class distinctions, and so forth.

In the case of the Nazis, the role of myth was specifically proclaimed as basic to the movement and the regime. Harking back to certain notions popular since the days of the Romantics, Alfred Rosenberg expounded in his often mentioned but seldom read *The Myth of the Twentieth Century* (298; 266a) a rather confused racial doctrine. To this myth is related the other that the Germans as a nation of culture stand guard against the Slavic barbarians who, for some unexplained reason, are denied the status of a race with a historic function. The abysmal hatred of all things Slavic, which was also such a strong impulse of the Austrian Hitler, produced in the Baltic German Rosenberg an attitude that made him mystify the mythos. Although Hitler himself admitted that he had never read this book (150b), "the German mission" was rooted in this same race myth. His wordy generalities about India, Persia, and the rest of the Nordics and Aryans, in the manner of Stewart Houston Chamberlain, culminate in the proposition that honor and spiritual freedom are the metaphysical ideas which are shaping the Germanic myth.

In Italian Fascism we find a similar conscious stress on myth. One early interpreter went so far as to misunderstand this to the extent of writing that "fascism represents a religious revival." Hav-

ing a pragmatic view of religion, this writer immediately added, however, that he did not mean that fascism had developed a new theology, but only "that it has given to thousands of Italian youths an ideal for which they are ready to sacrifice all." (318) If this were a valid criterion for determining whether or not a movement were a religious one, it would only be consistent to conclude that all totalitarian movements are religious movements, for they certainly make their youthful members ready to sacrifice all. In point of fact, it is crucial to distinguish clearly between religion and a political myth. Later (Chapter 23) we shall deal with religion and the churches, but the political myth of fascism is the idea of "the grandeur that was Rome," sometimes seen as a synthesis of the Roman empire at its glory, reinforced by the Roman Catholic Church as its spiritual guardian, but more typically divorced from the latter. The love all Italians feel so passionately for their country was projected in terms of conquest and imperial violence, which were sanctified by the memories of a historical past. History itself was, as in the case of the Germans, "spiritually conceived," that is, similarly distorted and seen as revolving around Italy: the Latin nation par excellence, the center of all civilization, the "light of the world."

That Mussolini's stress on the creative force of the myth goes back to the inspiration he derived from Georges Sorel and Vilfredo Pareto is apparent in all his utterances. Sorel, in his *Reflexions sur la violence* (334; 83), had argued that the general strike is or should be "the myth in which socialism is wholly comprised." He had defined such a myth as "a body of images capable of evoking instinctively all the sentiments which correspond to the different manifestations of the war undertaken by Socialism against modern society." Heroes and martyrs are woven into the general myth to give concreteness and consequent appeal to the masses.

This viewpoint had been put into the broader perspective of a general view of society by Pareto (270), who stressed "nonlogical conduct" as characteristic of such political, and other social, life and assigned to myths, of which he examined many historical variants, an essential role in organized mass activity. Although practical applications were rather far removed from Pareto's scientific interests, he was obviously implying that a man who wants to build a political movement would do well to create myths calculated to

satisfy the human craving for transrational beliefs in terms of which man's emotions can be organized for action.

The role of the myth in totalitarian ideological patterns, intimately intertwined as it is with symbolization of persons and ideas, serves to show that an ideology can be more or less "rational" in its elaboration. The Soviet ideology, based as it is upon the allegedly scientific findings of Marx and Engels, as elaborated by Lenin and others, appears to be more rational than that of either Fascist Italy or Hitler Germany. In the latter instances, the ideology was distinctly "personal." It rested, in the case of Mussolini, upon his journalistic writings and more especially his article on fascism in the *Encyclopedia Italiana* (1932) (268a); in the case of Hitler, it is expounded in *Mein Kampf* (148), written in 1923-24 during his sojourn in jail and maintained ever after as the gospel of National Socialism. An analysis in terms of antecedent intellectual influences and the like would incline one to differentiate further and call Mussolini's creed more rational than Hitler's. (266b) The degree of "rationality" here involved is that of a rationality of means rather than of ends. For the values in all three ideologies are of a transrational sort. This may not make much difference to the skeptic who considers all value judgments beyond rational discourse, but in any case there are differences of degree, and it is certainly permissible to assert that the value judgments at the base of Thomism, Confucianism, and modern constitutionalism are more rational than those of the totalitarian creeds, even if they are not wholly rational.

These totalitarian ideologies can also be classified according to their ultimate values, and this is the more usual and conventional procedure. Apart from the obvious classification suggested by the terms "communist" and "fascist," the degree of universality is of prime significance here. The Soviet ideology is universal in its appeal — "Workers of the world, unite!" — whereas the fascist ideologies address themselves to a particular people in terms of their grandeur, power, and historical role.* In the Soviet ideology, the place of the national group is taken by the proletariat, which is invested with the historical role of liberating mankind from the shackles of industrial capitalism, but Marx and Engels make it very

* Even so sophisticated a writer as Ernst Forsthooff speaks repeatedly of the specific historical mission of the German people, e.g. on p. 17, where he mentions a "truly national constitution." (101a)

clear that this proletariat, by overthrowing the existing class structure, ultimately eliminates itself and ceases to exist as a proletariat. From this standpoint, in communism social justice appears to be the ultimate value, unless it be the classless society that is its essential condition; in fascism, the highest value is dominion, eventually world dominion, and the strong and pure nation-race is *its* essential condition, as seen by its ideology. Since there are many nations and races, there can theoretically be as many fascisms, and this has actually proven to be the case. Wherever fascism has raised its head, whether in Germany or Italy, in France, England, or the United States, the strength and the purification of the particular nation involved has been at the center of ideological attention. This aspect is an element of weakness in fascist ideologies, as contrasted with the communist ones. The latter have the advantage of an inherent universalism and the consequent ability to cope more readily with the extension of power to other nations. The Soviet Union more especially has benefited from this position in its dealings with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany, China in dealing with Korea, Indochina, and so forth (see Chapter 27).

It is precisely this doctrinal catholicism that makes communism an effective weapon of combat, not only between nations, but also, and generally unlike fascism, within nations. Fascism, when a spontaneous product of local agitation, by necessity tended to accentuate national distinctiveness and national sovereignty. It emphasized frequently the biological superiority of the given community. Fascism, when imposed on foreign nations, produced, as it did during World War II, vigorously hostile reactions. Universality based on a restricted nationalist appeal is a contradiction in terms. Even so, Italian Fascism had a good deal of appeal beyond Italy. Similar movements cropped up in Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Spain, France, and Great Britain, and one must not forget that Italian Fascism was, after all, the inspiration for many of Hitler's followers as well as for Hitler himself. Peron also followed the basic line of Italian Fascism. There is a very interesting item in the Italian Fascist catechism used in the youth organizations: "Question: Is Fascism exclusively an Italian phenomenon? Answer: Fascism, as far as its ideas, doctrines and realizations are concerned, is *universal*, because it is in the position of saying to all civilized people *the word of truth without which there cannot be lasting*

peace in the world; therefore it is the sustainer and creator of a new civilization." (120a) It should be noted, however, that this kind of "universalism," while it may be able to arouse imitators, will have the result that each fascist movement will itself seek world or regional dominion, and hence create obstacles to the extension of effective control by the "creator." Presumably, a fascist France or England would have been at least as vigorous a rival of Italian aspirations to dominion in the Mediterranean as the democratic regimes of these countries were.

Communism, on the other hand, has been markedly successful in operating on a national base for the sake of supranational goals. For communism, unlike fascism, works simultaneously on two levels: one is the universal, "orthodox," and philosophical plane, which until recently was the exclusive domain of the Soviet leadership; it has since been challenged not only by Tito but more significantly by Mao Tse-tung, who earlier had made some modest theoretical contributions. The basic issue now is the Chinese view of war as an essential element in world revolution. The other level is the practical, the tactical. On this level communism may vary, temporarily at least, from country to country. Thus the nature of the communist appeal is markedly dissimilar in, let us say, France and India. Similarly, even in the captive nations of Eastern Europe and in China, great stress was laid on the distinctive nature of their communist development. In Poland, for instance, in the immediate post-war years, the official party declarations stressed the fact that communism in Poland was to be implemented in "the Polish way." (432a) Indeed, it became the standard weapon of the parlor communist in Eastern Europe to emphasize the distinctive, allegedly more democratic, character of the development of a communist society in Eastern Europe as contrasted with past Soviet history. Nevertheless, significant local variations of a practical nature are to this day evident, such as in the treatment of the Catholic Church or the farmers in Poland, or in the redefinition of the concept of the elite in China. The crucial determinant of ideological loyalty is the ultimate implication of the local variation: if it serves to further the over-all goals of the universal ideology, without fragmenting the power bloc on which the ideology rests, the practical deviation is tolerated. If not, it is excised.

We conclude that ideology constitutes an operative force in totali-

tarian political orders, as it does in nontotalitarian ones, that its symbolism and its myths are among the significant elements of the contemporary political scene, and that there is every prospect that this situation will remain so. This does not mean, however, that the substantive content of ideology is not undergoing a continuing evolution, as do all institutions and processes in totalitarian regimes. Besides, there are types of totalitarian ideology to be distinguished which significantly affect the pattern and the operations. New types may emerge in the future. Now we can say that so far two primary typologies of totalitarian ideology have appeared, one distinguished by the degree of rationality, the other by the factor of universalism. No doubt other typologies could be elaborated. But what should be avoided is the adoption of typologies derived from the totalitarians' own ideological premises, such as calling one revolutionary, the other reactionary, or one progressive, the other conservative. For not only do such classifications have themselves a propagandistic effect, but they imply an acceptance of the directional premise of the particular ideology. Both of the types suggested here are explicitly related to the doctrinal aspect of these ideologies. It has been suggested that "deductions based on behavior," leading to an "operative social theory," should be included. But unless these deductions are themselves absorbed into the doctrinal context (see Chapter 9), they do not become ideological in a precise functional sense, such as the one here employed. To be sure, a view of ideology as *consisting* of the original texts, the scriptures, so to speak, would be too rigid and artificial. At the same time, reference to these basic texts constitutes a vital part of the controversies in this field, and the texts do therefore in some measure define the frame of reference.

In any case, there is to be observed a continuing evolution in ideology, as in other realms of totalitarian reality (260). Before we turn to an analysis of this evolution, however, the historical roots need more detailed exploration. For the adaptations of ideology to the exigencies of political life are undertaken in ideological terms inherited from the past. What are the roots of these ideological movements? And what is the importance of "ideas" as such in an ideology? Should certain groups or thinkers be "blamed" for the rise of totalitarian ideologies in the sense that, if they had not written, the ideologies could not have been fashioned?

8

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF TOTALITARIAN IDEOLOGY

In seeking to trace the roots of totalitarian ideology, every kind of link has been argued. (5; 180; 181; 126) Marx and Hegel, Nietzsche and Hobbes, Kant and Rousseau, Plato and Aristotle, Augustine, Luther, and Calvin — all have been charged with having forged the ideas that became weapons in the arsenal of the totalitarians. Since all these thinkers are in turn related to many other intellectual trends and views, it is not too much to suggest that the sum of all the arguments is plainly this: totalitarian ideology is rooted in the totality of Western thought, and more especially its political thought. To be sure, the key points of emphasis, such as equality, justice, freedom, are of so general a nature that they do not lend themselves to very precise analysis in this context. But even more specific points, like the stress on democracy or the state, are similarly elusive. This situation should not surprise anyone, for the programs of action the totalitarians proclaim are programs cast in terms of the antecedent states of European and American society (with interesting variations introduced in such cases as China), and they must therefore be related to the patterns of ideas associated with these antecedent states. Moreover, since ideology has an instrumental function, as we have seen, totalitarian leaders will fashion their ideological tools to fit the states of mind of the masses they are addressing. For example, the idea of progress, so peculiar a product of the Western mind, is embedded so deeply in totalitarian thought that such thought would collapse if this idea were eliminated.

It should be clear that this entire discussion of the roots of totalitarian ideology rests upon what answer is given to the question:

what is the role of ideas in history? Do ideas have demonstrable effects, or are they merely incidental to reality, like the froth on top of the waves of an agitated sea? Many of the writers who have placed major emphasis upon the ideological background of totalitarian movements have failed to realize the full implications of this view. For if ideas are assumed to have significant causal effects upon the course of events, a spiritualistic interpretation of history is apt to be implied. A stress upon religious ideas is most especially prone to carry this implication. The common argument that men act in accordance with the ideas in their minds does not settle the question of where such ideas come from. If some such notion as inspiration is introduced — Trotsky wrote that revolution is the mad inspiration of history — then one must ask: whose inspiration and by whom inspired? Some of the totalitarian ideologies are basically trite restatements of certain traditional ideas, arranged in an incoherent way that makes them highly exciting to weak minds. That was particularly true of National Socialism. By contrast, the Soviet ideology is based upon the rigorous, if erroneous and dated, historical and economic analysis of Karl Marx — which he would probably be the first to alter, if not to reject, in light of the reality, both economic and political, that has developed since his day.

The roots of not only so capacious a thinker as Marx but even of Mussolini and Hitler are as varied as the backgrounds of the people who expound them and who listen to them. One might illustrate this by the recurrent references in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* to the notion that the end of national glory justifies any means appropriate for its achievement. To call this "Machiavellism" means to attribute to it what was in Machiavelli, at least for his time, a novel and fairly sophisticated doctrine. In Hitler's treatment it becomes a crude and banal thought.*

In other words, any effort to relate totalitarian ideology more specifically to antecedent thought reveals that the antecedent thought is either distorted to fit the proposition or completely misrepresented. Thus Hegel is made an exponent of the doctrine that "might makes right," when as a matter of fact he explicitly and sharply rejected it. Or Hobbes is claimed to believe in the "state's

*These remarks do not mean that Machiavelli's notions should, in historicist fashion, be condoned. See Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli*, 1958, for an acute restatement of the moral objections; also 108a.

regulating everything," when it is quite evident to any careful but unprejudiced reader that Hobbes was inclined to restrict the sovereign to the police function, that is, to the function of maintaining peace in a given society. If one were to argue all the various statements that have been set forth in thus distorting the history of ideas to "explain" totalitarian ideology and practice, he could fill volumes. Such arguments may have a certain value in the market place, where the fighting about these ideas takes place; but on the whole, it is an arid enterprise, devoid of convincing results. It should be remembered that the history of ideas is a particularly difficult field of scholarship, fully measured by few. In any case, the problem of what an author actually said, and what he meant in the saying of it, calls for a never-ending search, and the more comprehensive the author, the more divergent the answers. Only when an author is an official source of ideology is such inquiry vital to the study of totalitarianism. Thus an understanding of the discussion of whether or not the activities of the Soviet Union fit the ideas that Marx and Engels expounded is a source of continuing controversy. This debate has now assumed explosive character in the dispute between the Soviet Union and Communist China.

There is no doubt that Marxism owes a great intellectual debt to the traditions, and particularly to the modes of thought, of the French Revolution. The intellectual climate of Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century was very much formed by the slogans but also by the philosophic content of that great enterprise. As a result, though surely not for the first time in the history of Europe, the intellectual, in his role of interpreter of the past and present, reached out to shape the realities of tomorrow. To acknowledge that Marxism is part of that stream is not, however, to establish a causal relationship, for to do so, as some have, is to engage in ex post facto attempts to interpret the ideas and even motivations of eighteenth-century thinkers in terms of categories imposed by nineteenth- and twentieth-century realities. Nonetheless, it can be shown that the Rousseauistic concept of total democracy can easily degenerate into total dictatorship when the "legislator" ceases to be a transient educator and becomes a permanent ruler acting in behalf of the people. Such concepts as "knowledge" are not far removed from such "consciousness" as that of a class, and both need to be instilled in those "who are born free and yet everywhere are in

chains." The emphasis on unity, unanimity, and ceaseless participation is suggestive—but no more than that—of the twentieth-century "passion for unanimity" characteristic of the totalitarian systems (see Chapter 13). And, what is more, it was the French Revolution which gave an outlet to the feeling of rationalistic revolutionaries that society must, and can be, remade in its totality to assure man the liberty that is inherently his. Indeed, a dialectical relationship to the religious zealots of the past suggests itself. Like Saint-Just in the French Revolution, such individuals become the self-appointed guardians of virtue and truth; genuine conflicts of opinion are excluded, and disagreement is condemned as absolutely wrong.

Similarly, the Marxist dialectic derived not only from Hegel, but from Babeuf and his primitive notions of class struggle. At the same time, Marxian doctrine divorced the utilitarian emphasis on self-interest from the individual, welded it to an economic class, and made it the focal point of the historical movement. Thus various antecedent notions, borrowed from different writers and movements, were fitted to the requirements of the industrial age and the peasant reaction to the machine. One need not linger, however, on the relationship of Marxism to preceding thought in the Western political heritage to prove how complex is the task of establishing meaningful intellectual causation. Within Marxism itself, which developed, as we shall see later, through schismatic clashes, there are continual disputes over whether a certain interpretation is an elaboration or a distortion. For instance, the formation of the new Communist regimes in Central Europe and Asia, bringing with it the problem of transition from a bourgeois or feudal society to a communist one, has perplexed Soviet ideologues in recent years. For various practical reasons, the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, mentioned only once by Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, though developed by Engels and made by Lenin into something of utmost importance, has become unsuitable for these regions. A new terminology and interpretation, evolving around the term "people's democracy," have been coined. The relationship between this view and Marx's own about the postrevolutionary situation is open to dispute.

Disappointed believers in some of the ideas contained in a particular ideology recurrently constitute very strong opponents of the

regime based upon such ideology. This is a phenomenon familiar from the history of religion. After all, the story of Christianity is to a considerable extent the story of successive disagreements over what Christ meant, and over the true import of his message. From these disagreements have resulted the successive dissents leading to new sects and churches. Considering the relatively short time that totalitarians have been actively at work, it is surprising how many divergent interpretations have already been expounded and made the basis of schismatic movements.*

And yet it is these schisms which provide a real clue to the meaning of the term we have been using — totalitarian ideology. The splits and disagreements on the basic tenets of Marxism, for instance, have served to accentuate the democratic and nondemocratic aspects of that theory. Through a process of political adaptation, differences in degree have become differences in kind, despite the original uniformity of view. Are not then social democracy and communism possibly the products of the same intellectual roots? Do they not claim ancestorship of a common family tree? Are not their basic assumptions to be found essentially in the same body of writings? Despite the necessarily affirmative answers, the distinction between the two schools of thought, when translated into actual practice, becomes fundamental and far-reaching — one is totalitarian, the other not.

The translation of an ideology into practice usually serves to reveal certain inadequacies inherent in human foresight. Attempts to picture the future and to prescribe the methods of achieving it clearly cannot conceive of all eventualities, of all possible situations, and communism is further handicapped by the general looseness of its philosophical structure. Consequently the schismatic movements that developed immediately as attempts were made to put Marxism into political practice were, apart from pure power factors, the inevitable product of such an attempted implementation. When theory is applied to a real-life situation, there are usually only two alternatives: one is to modify theory so as to make it more compatible with the prerequisites of practice, and the other is to attempt to force reality to fit the theory. The totalitarians, by their almost complete rejection of the status quo, are inclined to attempt to force

* A reading of such a classic account as Harnack's (133.1) constantly reminds one of present-day situations, when it discusses the doctrinal controversies, especially the great and intrinsically senseless debate over the various alleged heresies.

history to fit their conception of it.* And when such a conception involves a far-reaching idea of the desirable, that is, historically inevitable, scheme of social organization, the efforts to mold society to fit it, and the consequent measures to break down the resistance to it, call for such a massive deployment of organized force that the result is totalitarianism. At the present time, the conflict between the Soviet Union and Communist China is basically over such a deployment of force in the international arena, China taking the position that even the violence involved in nuclear war should be accepted in promoting the revolutionary aims of communism (see Chapter 26).

Not all the original supporters of such an ideology, however, are willing to go quite so far. This is particularly well demonstrated by the Marxist schism on the issue of evolution versus revolution. Marxism embodies both concepts, which are said to be historically inseparable. "Revolution is the midwife of every society," said Marx, but before the midwife sets to work, a lengthy evolutionary process precedes the climactic spasms of the revolution. The inner contradictions of capitalism have to ripen lest the revolution fail by coming too soon. And it is precisely on this time element that conflicting interpretations have clashed. What is the precise moment for revolutionary action?

The so-called Revisionists felt that precipitate revolutionary action would merely revive the blood flow in the corroded veins of capitalism and thus prolong its life. The key to success, according to Bernstein and the Social Democratic school, was the ability to wait, while exacting concessions through participation in the democratic process. Socialism would in time supplant the capitalist order, and the revolutionary stage would, in effect, become merely the technical act of taking over. Capitalism would die of old age, and so it need not be slaughtered. The revolutionary act would consist in burying it, not in killing it. (18; 169; 170; 190a) The Social Democrats have therefore been unwilling to engage in drastic measures to destroy the capitalist society. Their optimism in the certainty of their success has made them patient and willing to work within the framework of the constitutional order. Having accepted the perspec-

* The totalitarians are particularly vehement and violent in their criticism of "existing" (antecedent) societies. Their effort to change history does not, however, prevent them from making specific concessions in their ideology when such are necessitated by expediency. See Chapter 9.

tive of an inevitable historical victory, they are content with the thought that the status quo is not going to last.

The totalitarians, on the contrary, having announced that the status quo is doomed, proceed to prove the correctness of their analysis through measures to effect it. To them, willingness to wait is sheer treason. "Reformism . . . which in effect denies the Socialist revolution and tries to establish socialism peacefully . . . which preaches not the struggle of classes but their collaboration — this reformism is degenerating from day to day, and is losing all marks of socialism." (336) Lenin and the Bolsheviks, accordingly, emphasized that revolutionary action was the key to historical salvation, and that only direct measures aimed at overthrowing the capitalist order would produce its fall. "Great historical questions can be solved only by *violence*," exclaimed Lenin (205b), calling upon the revolutionaries to act as the gravediggers of history and to help place the remnants of capitalism in the dustbin of antiquity. For, unless a revolutionary party acting as the vanguard of the proletariat acts firmly, the working classes will develop a pacifist trade-union mentality and become the unwitting tools of capitalist measures of self-preservation.

In the Nazi movement, the socially more radical elements were strongly represented in the storm troopers, the brownshirts. These men, under the command of Captain Röhm, liked to suggest that all they needed to do was to turn their swastika armbands around to make them red. To be sure, all this argument remained on a very low level, as did the ideological discussion in the Hitler movement generally, but it nonetheless represented a characteristic ideological conflict pointing to the divergent strands in the official creed. There developed also a "leftist" deviation in Italian Fascism, headed by Giuseppe Bottai, Edmondo Rossoni, and Ugo Spirito. Giovanni Gentile was eventually prevailed upon to make common cause with this group, and his last work (118; 266) expounds the group's general theory. Two journals expressed these views in a veiled fashion, but it should be noted that these ideas had no support in the inner circles of the party.

In both the Fascist and the Nazi movements, actually, the physical presence of the men who formulated the programs prevented the emergence of major splits. The essential postulates of both movements — stressing the leadership principle, the traditional and

historical values of the people as contrasted with "bourgeois" degeneration, the *Etatismo* of Italy and the *Volk* veneration of Nazism, state corporatism but private ownership, the mystic quality of the soil, and last, but not least, the race principle — generally remained unchallenged during their relatively brief existences.

Both communism and fascism are characterized by their insistence on the revolutionary fulfillment of the "truths" of their doctrines, and it is this insistence that leads to the further conclusions on the necessity of a disciplined party — the elite of the proletariat of the nation. Its infallible leadership, through science or intuition, was to effect the conditions which, according to the ideology, are considered necessary for the achievement of its utopian apocalypse. It is precisely this attempt to impose on society a rationally, or rather pseudo-rationally, conceived pattern of distinctly novel forms of social organization that leads to totalitarian oppression. And since this oppression is justified in terms of the ideology, this ideology is totalitarian.

The fact that totalitarian ideology is rooted in the totality of Western ideas raises the question of its relation to democracy and Christianity. On the face of it, these two bodies of thought are the patent antitheses to fascist and communist ideology. The conflict with Christianity was highlighted in the Soviet Union by the Movement of the Godless; in Germany it led to protracted struggles to establish control over both Protestant and Catholic churches (see Chapter 23). With regard to democracy, the situation is somewhat more confused, since both communists and fascists like to consider themselves true democrats. Only if democracy is defined in constitutional terms, characterized by a genuine competition between two or more parties, a separation of governmental powers, and a judicially enforced protection of individual rights, is the conflict fairly obvious on both the ideological and the practical levels. Yet in spite of these sharp conflicts between totalitarian ideologies and the Christian and democratic heritage, it is only within the context of this heritage that the ideologies can be fully understood. Communism is not Christian, but it could not have taken root without the foundations laid by Christian belief in the brotherhood of man and social justice. Perhaps even more important than these substantive links are the habits of mind established by Christianity and the other religions with a formal theology, such as Buddhism and Mohammed-

danism, for they establish the cultural habit or trait of relating action programs and norms to elaborate rationalizations. These rationalizations are then elaborated into a theology that is in turn secularized and made the basis of rival ideologies. There is, to put it another way, a style of living involved that calls for transcendent explanations of what is right. When the theological explanations become untenable as a result of the decline of religious faith, these "secular religions" then fill the vacuum. (319; 5a; 110d) When seen in this perspective, it becomes evident why a totalitarian ideology has become potent even in China, which is not a Christian country. The argument is reinforced by the consideration that China inherited, but did not invent, the communist ideology. It seems more than doubtful that Chinese thought would have produced this kind of ideology, and all of Mao's presumed originality in interpreting the Marxist-Leninist heritage is little more than an attempt at applying it to specific Chinese conditions. (141; 320a) It may be well to add that communist ideology has, in a sense, a similar relation to Chinese traditional culture as Christian creeds have had: it is a missionary body of alien thought.

It must be pointed out finally that the relation of the totalitarian ideology to Christian and democratic ideology is a "dialectic" one — that is to say, the relation is antithetical. But just as antithesis in logic cannot be conceived except in juxtaposition to its thesis, so also in the movement of ideas the root is often the thesis of which the idea or ideology in hand is the antithesis. The importance of this kind of relationship lies not only in the consequent "consanguinity," enabling human beings to shift back and forth between these ideologies, but it also may provide a clue for the next step in the dialectic.

All in all, our discussion has indicated that the roots of the totalitarian ideologies, both communist and fascist, are actually intertwined with the entire intellectual heritage of Western man and that all specific links should be seen, not in terms of causation — of this or that thinker or group of thinkers being "responsible for" the totalitarian ideologies — but as strands of a complex and variegated tapestry. However, the specific totalitarian ingredient — the employment, even glorification, of violence for the realization of the goals that the ideology posits is largely absent from the thought of those whose ideas these ideologies have utilized and, in utilizing them, distorted.

9

THE CHANGE AND CORRUPTION OF IDEOLOGY

In the discussion of the role of ideology in totalitarian societies, some deny, as we noted, that ideology plays any significant part in the thinking of the leaders. Those who so argue usually dwell upon the changes in ideology that they feel are in fact corruptions, proving the insincerity of the leaders. The key leadership groups are said not to take the ideology seriously, but to manipulate it, to change it arbitrarily to suit their shifting policy lines. (5) But change need not be corruption; it can be genuine adaptation and meaningful alteration. It must, however, be admitted that in the case of Hitler a strong case can be made for such an interpretation, because of Hitler's own cynical statements about the matter. Certainly, several well-known passages in *Mein Kampf*, as well as remarks by Rauschning in *The Revolution of Nihilism* (289), lend color to the proposition that Hitler's attitude toward ideology was "manipulative." On the other hand, Hitler's secret talks (150a) give a different impression; in these monologues he clearly stays within the framework of his racist ideology.

Whatever may be the conclusions concerning Hitler's opinions, it appears quite clear that Soviet leadership, and Communist leadership generally, has continued to attach considerable importance to ideology. Indeed, it would be impossible to write a meaningful history of the USSR without giving sustained attention to ideological issues. But, of course, the ideology has undergone a steady evolution, as the leadership confronted novel situations and fashioned policy to cope with the issues as they arose. There is a constant interaction among the changing environment, the policy re-

sponses to it, and the ideological setting for these responses. This is not a mechanical determinism, but a live, organic process. "For if ideology," a thoughtful student of these matters recently wrote, "influences Soviet policy via the minds of the policy-makers, it also is demonstrably true that policy influences ideology, that official interpretations of Marxism-Leninism develop and change in response to policy needs, political interests, and changes in the policy mind." (360b) In short, ideology is decisively important, as was already pointed out in discussing the party, and hence the leaders are sincerely exercised over ideological issues. The recent Chinese-Russian clashes that have been mentioned several times reinforce this conclusion. All that the ingenuity of those opposed to this view has actually been able to prove is that there are important *changes* in the ideological pattern employed by the leaders.

Some of the key controversies in the earlier ideological clashes revolved around the questions of the spread of the revolution, the issue of democracy versus dictatorship, and the nature of the party's organization and operations. (66a; 190b) The first controversy, that of world revolution versus socialism in one country, was resolved for the Bolsheviks more by necessity than by doctrinal decision. Still, the issue gave rise to most vehement arguments and bitter disagreements.

Originally, most of the revolutionary leaders were hopeful that the revolution would spread from Russia to the West. Trotsky spoke glowingly of how "the working class of Russia, by leading in the political emancipation, will rise to a height unknown in history, gather into its hands colossal forces and means and become the initiator of the liquidation of capitalism on a global scale." (356; 71) The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, dictated by German bayonets, clearly implied, however, that the revolution was territorially limited to Russia proper. This gave rise to a serious intraparty crisis. Bukharin declared it to be a blow aimed at the international proletariat, which caused him and his supporters to "turn aside with contempt." Lenin's reply was characteristic: "Yes, we will see the international world revolution, but for the time being it is a very good fairy tale, a very beautiful fairy tale—I quite understand children liking beautiful fairy tales." (205c)

Nonetheless, Bolshevik hopes soared high for a brief period after the Armistice and the consequent collapse of Austro-Hungarian

and German imperial power. Central Europe became a political vacuum, torn by social and political strife. The situation seemed ready-made for communism. By January 1919, the commander of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky, was proclaiming: "It is no longer the spectre of communism that is haunting Europe . . . communism in flesh and blood is now stalking the continent." (359) He was echoed, albeit in a less ringing fashion, by Lenin, who observed hopefully that the "revolution has begun and is gaining strength in all countries." (203c)

Yet this was not to be. The revolution failed to spread, but still succeeded in Russia. Its failure as an international movement led to the birth of the theory of socialist victory in one country at a time. This view was at first propounded cautiously and halfheartedly, and Soviet leaders continued to emphasize that it was merely a transitional point in historical development. In one of his earlier statements Stalin expressed it as follows: "While it is true that the *final* victory of Socialism in the first country to emancipate itself is impossible without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several countries, it is equally true that the development of world revolution will be the more rapid and thorough, the more effective the assistance rendered by the first Socialist country to the workers and laboring masses of all other countries." (337b) The Soviet Union accordingly became the base of world communism. This issue was somewhat overstressed by the struggle between Trotsky and Stalin which, because it operated within an ideologically oriented setting, necessarily took the form of a theoretical clash. (312a)

Later on, the issue shifted to that of stages of development, Stalin claiming that there was one road, that of the USSR. At the Twenty-First Party Congress, Khrushchev gave the issue a new twist when he announced that the Soviet Union, having consummated the program that signaled the stage of "socialism," was then ready to enter the transition leading from socialism to communism. But there would not be "any particular moment" when socialism would end and communism begin. Oddly enough, he suggested that such familiar aspects of advanced capitalism as free lunches for schoolchildren, free nurseries, pensions, and scholarships at institutions of higher learning marked this transition. And he added that not luxuries, but "the healthy requirements of a culturally devel-

oped man" was meant when communism spoke of "satisfying the needs of the people." Such pragmatic goals seem far removed from the early ideological controversies. Yet they are involved, as the argument with the Chinese shows.

The situation is similar in the discussion over democracy versus dictatorship. It has repeatedly been charged that the Bolsheviks here again had abandoned true communism. In a sense, it was out of this conflict that the Bolshevik Party was conceived. It is not idle, however, to re-emphasize that Marxism is subject to varying interpretations, and the divergent lines developed by the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks offer a striking illustration. Lenin stressed that during the revolutionary period it is pointless to talk of democracy because "broad democracy in party organization amidst the gloom of autocracy . . . is nothing more than a useless and harmful toy." (203d) And once the revolution has been achieved, terror is needed to eliminate the remnants of the bourgeoisie. The dictatorship of the proletariat, therefore, will not tolerate any restrictions on its freedom of action against the fallen, but still not liquidated, foes. Lenin put this quite flatly: "Dictatorship is power based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws. The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is power won and maintained by the violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, power that is unrestricted by any laws." (205d)

The question of dictatorship is inherently related to the conflict over the nature of the party that was to lead the proletariat. The issue is again as old as the Bolshevik movement itself. The split between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks was precisely on this crucial issue, and some of the severest attacks ever launched by fellow Marxists against Lenin were uttered during the development of this schism. Trotsky's famous charge, often erroneously cited as aimed at Stalin, was to reverberate over and over again, whenever this question came to be discussed by Marxists: "Lenin's methods lead to this: the Party organization . . . at first substituted itself for the Party as a whole; then the Central Committee substituted itself for the organization; and finally a single 'dictator' substituted himself for the Central Committee." (358) But since all this vituperation failed to prove that Lenin's insistence on a disciplined, paramilitary party organization was un-Marxist, it is not surprising that in view of the political reality of tsarist Russia it was the

Leninist view that prevailed, and it was the Leninist party that seized power in 1917. Political events proved Lenin to be right, and among the first to acknowledge this was Trotsky himself.

If one considers this range of ideological conflict, one is struck by the fact that the issues are political rather than economic. This is at least in part because Marx and Engels were inclined to minimize the political problem that arises once the proletariat has "seized power" (see Chapter 7). The *Communist Manifesto* seems to envisage a purely cooperative living together, without any government. "The state withers away," Engels wrote, and he meant, of course, the disappearance of the bureaucracy. Marx and Engels concentrated their ideological effort on the criticism of the existing state of society — that is to say, on the second aspect of ideology defined here — and as proud students of economics they dealt in detail only with the analysis of economic reality, treating political problems incidentally. This is in a way curious, considering that the two men had been harshly critical of earlier socialists as "utopian" because they did not give due attention to political realities and, more especially, "the state." Likewise, Marx's controversies with the anarchists focused upon the latter's failure to appreciate the power of existing states and the effort required to overthrow them. (246) His latter-day followers have been much troubled by the anarchic implications. This doctrine of the withering away of the state is maintained to this day, in spite of the obviously different reality. Khrushchev offered a rationalization to the Twentieth Congress, when combatting the notion that the future communist society would be "a formless and unorganized, anarchistic mass of people," by stating that it would be "highly organized" and that "within it everybody will have to fulfill . . . his work function and his social duty."

One might further add that the gigantic task of industrialization which confronted the Soviet leaders in Russia called for state planning on a comprehensive scale, regardless of any doctrinal positions. The Marxist doctrine, economically speaking, is elaborate only in regard to "capitalism"; to say that Marxist dogma is "closed" or finished on the economic side is certainly incorrect. Such generalities as "to each according to his need, from each according to his ability" are general social slogans, not economic theory. (88a)

Generally speaking, the ideological changes in the Soviet Union need not be seen as corruptions of ideology, as they have been by

socialist and, more especially, Marxist opponents of the USSR. They may be interpreted as adaptations or modifications and thus may be seen as a sign of vitality, as suggested by cultural comparison in other spheres. Adaptability and flexibility are virtues, provided they do not lead to empty opportunism. There are a number of passages in Marx and Engels suggesting such adaptations. On such fundamental issues as equality, authority, nationality policy, or foreign relations, striking adaptations to the imperatives of political reality have been made. To take one further example only, the Soviet Union is today, as it has been said correctly, "a system of organized social inequality" despite its almost fanatic fulminations against capitalist inequality. (252a) This Soviet inequality involves not only a highly differentiated scale of rewards, which creates distinct classes of haves and have-nots, but, even more, distinct levels of opportunities for advancement on the social scale. (252b)

The problem of adapting the communist theory of equality to fit the Soviet reality could not, because of the importance of this doctrinal facet, have been evaded. But neither could this principle of equality be repudiated. The Soviet rationalization accordingly runs along the lines of the *Pravda* article on socialism and equality, which states in part: "The idea of equality is not an unshakeable eternal truth. It was born of certain definite social relationships. Its content changes with changes in the latter. The sense of the demand for equality lies only in the abolition of inequality. With the disappearance of inequality, the content of the demand for equality is lost." (441a) It is no accident that the concept of equality occupies no significant place in the constitution of the USSR, nor in the Rules of the Central Committee, as adopted in 1961. It is simply taken for granted that the elimination of class oppression and class struggle eliminates inequality. The countless manifestations of inequality in the USSR are accordingly, in the light of this Soviet analysis, not indications of inequality at all, but the necessary concomitants of a complex industrialized society.*

A steady elaboration of Marxist, or rather Soviet, doctrine occurred at the Twentieth, Twenty-First, and Twenty-Second Congresses. These changes illustrate the plasticity of Bolshevik

* It is of interest to note in this connection the considerably greater pay variation between officers and men in the Soviet army and comparable scales in the "capitalist" United States army.

ideology, a virtue which the Soviet leaders frequently comment upon. At the Twentieth Congress Khrushchev jettisoned the Leninist concept of the civil war as a *necessary* stage in any society's transition to socialism; he declared that the necessity for civil conflict depends upon how determined and strong the oppressing classes are. If these classes are weak and are faced by powerful, united labor masses, then "the winning of a stable parliamentary majority backed by a mass-revolutionary movement of the proletariat and of all the working people could create for the working class in a number of capitalist and former colonial countries the conditions needed to secure fundamental social changes." Since then, the Soviet regime has repeatedly reaffirmed similar views — and this especially in its conflict with the Chinese Communist leadership, which inclines toward the older notion that a violent revolutionary overthrow of the existing political order is necessary and inevitable.

Why do we not find any comparable pattern of ideological change in the fascist states? Apart from their shorter life spans, it might first of all be suggested that both Mussolini and Hitler were able to "interpret" their own thought. The situation resembles that of the Socialist International at the time when Marx and Engels were still alive and could be consulted. Certain alterations in their own views were nevertheless acknowledged by the fascist dictators. (266d) Changes could be claimed as a natural sequel to what the leader himself asserted had been his purpose and intention all the time. In fact, on certain subjects, sharp differences of opinion developed over ideological questions. Thus Mussolini's concordat with the Catholic Church was felt by a number of fascist subleaders to be a betrayal of fascist ideology; no less an ideologist than Gentile took this view. The varying attitudes adopted by Hitler toward the Protestant churches led, on the one hand, to sharp conflicts with Protestants, who had accepted his leadership on the strength of his alleged purpose of revitalizing the Christian religion, and, on the other, alienated some of his more decidedly pagan followers (see Chapter 23). We have already alluded to the potential conflict with brown-shirted "socialists," whose rebellious spirit was quelled in the blood purge of 1934. The difficulties in this sector of relations between "capital" and "labor" never ceased to plague the Nazis; a series of uneasy compromises were struck.

Even more perplexing is the anti-Semitic aspect of National So-

cialist ideology. It was, of course, central to Hitler's early ideological position, as developed in *Mein Kampf*. According to Hitler, it was his "studies" on the Jewish question that transformed him "from being a feeble world-citizen" into a "fanatical anti-Semite." (149a) To Hitler, anti-Semitism was inherently linked with anti-Communism, and he firmly believed that "if the Jew, with the help of his Marxist creed, conquers the nations of this world, his crown will be the funeral wreath of the human race, and the planet will drive through the ether . . . empty of mankind." (149b) Hitler himself has attributed his own conversion to certain Austrian leaders and acknowledged their inspiration—more especially the then mayor of Vienna, Dr. Lueger. While Hitler found ready responses to this anti-Semitism among the peasantry of Germany, it was a double-edged sword. At least one investigator (1) has offered striking evidence in support of the proposition that Hitler gained his adherents not because of, but in spite of, his anti-Semitism. Considering this fact, as well as the extent to which anti-Semitism proved a handicap in his foreign policy, it is striking with what radical determination Hitler pursued this "ideological" goal to the bitter end. The wholesale extermination of Jews during the war was, no doubt, in part motivated by Hitler's belief that the Jews were responsible for British and American opposition to him and his policies, and hence it was an act of revenge. However, the ideological aspect remained of central importance; in the secret talks recorded at the height of his power and triumph, he expounded it with fanatical zeal. (150a; 122a) It appears, in some ways, the inner rationale of his entire conduct.

It is possible, especially in the light of the catastrophic end of Hitler's enterprise, to argue that his failure to adapt his ideology to the realities of both German and international politics was a source of weakness, perhaps even the greatest source of weakness. Timely "corruption," such as was argued at times by Goering and others of his subleaders, might have saved him. (122b) He was not a complete purist; for he enunciated the curiously paradoxical doctrine that no one whom he proclaimed an Aryan could be a Jew. Several men of his immediate entourage were, according to the available evidence, non-Aryan in Hitler's sense of having some Jewish ancestry. This fact did not only provide the opponents of the regime with occasions for mockery; it also troubled the race purists. But

since the issue was not worked out ideologically, but put in terms of a fiat of the Führer's godlike will, the believers in the Third Reich could argue that such Aryan non-Aryans were purified by the "divine touch."

It might finally be suggested that a certain flexibility lends an appearance of infallibility: positions which are brought forward as developments of an underlying theme, no matter how illogical, can be made to reinforce this theme. As long as the ultimate goal remains pure, the adaptations appear to strengthen it.

Since both communism and fascism are "success philosophies," built upon the confident assumption that history is on their side, ideological factors are weapons in the struggle for men's minds. In the past, the role of ideology in strengthening the body politic had always been played by religion and tradition, and by the symbols and myths in which religion and tradition were embodied. In modern totalitarian societies, the leaders must carefully create and control the ideological weapons useful to their political existence; ideological adaptations and corruptions are ultimately tested by the role they play in the propaganda and education of totalitarian societies.

THE CONSTITUTION, THE LAW, AND JUSTICE

Every constitution contains strong ideological elements. Not only any bill of rights it may contain, but also the organizational fixation it undertakes, are ideologically oriented. This ideological element is sometimes a severe handicap to anyone who would seek to understand a system of government by means of reading its "constitution." (1041) It cannot therefore come as any great surprise to recognize this element in the constitutions of totalitarian dictatorships of the communist type. Characteristically, the Fascist and National Socialist regimes did not fashion a constitution, although Hitler allowed the Weimar constitution to remain "in force." He thereby expressed his contempt for a "system" that had proven a house of straw, once the strong winds of National Socialist ideology began blowing. (317) The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, undertook to fashion a fairly elaborate constitution, which bears the ideological stamp in its very opening: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants, the first article proclaims. It then proceeds to speak of its political foundation, the soviets or councils that sprang up "as a result of the overthrow of the power of landlords and capitalists and the conquest of the dictatorship of the proletariat." Landlords, capitalists, workers, peasants—the constitution conjures up their image as engaged in a vigorous class struggle.

Orthodox accepted scholarship in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in the Communist world projects this picture of the class warfare back upon the constitutions of the "capitalist" world. In a recent paper, a leading Soviet scholar, after reviewing a number of conven-

tional conceptions of the constitution from Jellinek to Greaves, commented: "Ignoring the political (class) essence of a constitution is an important demerit of the above-mentioned general definitions of constitutions." (210) He argued that a constitution expresses the will of the ruling class, as indeed it must according to Marx's view of law and the state. It would follow that in a mature communist order there would be no need for a constitution. Yet so far there has been a constitutional evolution not only within the Soviet Union (and a new constitution is presumably in the making), but also in other Communist states, notably Yugoslavia (which recently completed a new constitution). (448)

In the Russian constitution of 1918, the function of the constitution as an instrument of class warfare, and hence its ideological function, was even more forcefully put thus: "The basic task of the Constitution . . . is the establishment of the dictatorship of the city and village proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a powerful All-Russian state authority." The concept of the constitution implied in such a statement is not at all that of the Western tradition with its protection of the individual against the state and its division of power, but rather the opposite: no one has any rights and all power must be concentrated in the hands of the victorious proletariat, that is to say, its leaders. The new constitution of 1923, while seeming to establish representative government, by no means abandoned the ideology of class warfare, but rather institutionalized it. In retrospect, its democratic features may appear like mere "facade," (402a; 312) but the constitution actually epitomized the pretotalitarian phase of the Soviet Union's evolution, a phase when vigorous ideological debate was still carried on (88b) and before the totalitarian breakthrough occurred. This was genuine "revolutionary legality." By contrast, the constitution of 1936, promulgated at the height of the physical terror of the Great Purge, had a more clearly ideological function. When it was referred to in the Soviet Union as "that genuine charter of the rights of emancipated humanity," it was clearly seen in this light. Constitutional law, and with it all law, was made a key feature of the Soviet system, the crowning authority on Soviet law: "'Revolutionary legality' was redefined as the strict observance of those laws which the Revolution has established: from a symbol of flexibility the phrase was converted into a

symbol of stability." (19b; 374a) As such, it was by no means merely facade; it was the fixation of the ideological setting of Soviet totalitarianism.

In a way, this problem is related to a more general one in the theory of constitutionalism, which concerns what has been called the "living constitution." Ever since Howard Lee McBain published his well-known study in 1927 on the American constitution, seeking to identify its living corpus as contrasted with obsolete formulas, there has been discussion about it.* This is really a special case of the "living law" argument; for there has always been and always will be the problem of how much of the formal law, as set down in constitutions, statutes, and ordinances as well as in judicial decisions, is the operative law by which a legal community lives. (110e; 105c) The school of legal realists in the United States went to an extreme in the direction of arguing that only operative law is "real" (105d), but such a position creates great difficulties when it comes to interpreting radical changes in constitutional interpretation, such as have recently occurred in the United States. Such changes are usually put forward in terms of the existing constitution and must therefore be presumed to have been incorporated there as some kind of law, even though not operative. There is also the well-known range of "rights for which there is no remedy." Such rights presumably are law, even though not enforceable.

Autocratic legalism, however, must not be confused with the totalitarian distortion of the notion of law in what is spoken of as the "laws of movement." These are presumably "laws of nature" or "laws of history" (but history understood as a part of nature); they contain an existential, rather than a normative, judgment. The interrelation of existential and normative law has been a central problem in the long history of the natural law. (105) The totalitarian ideology tends to dissolve the normative in the existential realm and to consider all ordinary laws merely as expressions of laws of nature and history. "All history is the history of class struggles," for example, would be such a law in terms of which the positive legal order must be structured; it provides the standard by which to measure positive laws, to interpret and if necessary to alter and break them.

*Dolf Sternberger has used this notion in analyzing constitutional practice in the Federal Republic of Germany, apparently without knowing McBain's work — see his *Lebende Verfassung*, 1956.

All laws become fluid when they are treated merely as the emanation of such laws of movement, and their very multiplicity testifies to their normative weakness. (447a) Such fluidity makes them incapable of serving as standards of responsible conduct, since every violation can be argued away by the rulers as merely an adaptation to the higher laws of movement. A similar difficulty attached to the law of nature when it was intended to serve as a restraint upon absolute rulers, who in the past were allowed to contravene it whenever "reason of state" required it.

A comparable, though distinctive, complication is presented by the Chinese distortion of the traditional conception of *li* or *li-mao*, the rules of personal conduct evolved on the basis of Confucianism. The party leadership in Communist China has "endeavoured to re-structure the social obligations [arising from the Communist credo] by selectively pressing certain useful habits drawn from the *li-mao* pattern." (215j) The basic meaning of the *li* is thereby distorted.

Bearing in mind these general positions on constitutions and law, it seems only fair to interpret totalitarian and more especially Soviet constitution and law in this perspective. It then would appear that the Soviet Union, as well as Hitler Germany, Fascist Italy, and other totalitarian regimes, have maintained a legal system that is suitable for the nonpolitical reaches of interpersonal relations. But not only that. A very considerable range of highly political activities are subject to constitutional and other law, as long as the party or rather its leaders — the effective powerwielders — do not wish to interfere with it. In this respect, totalitarian dictatorship resembles many older autocracies. The great corpus of Roman law was developed after the disappearance of the Roman republic, under emperor-autocrats who became increasingly despotic as they claimed the "divine right" of an imperial prerogative: *quod placet principem, legis habet vigorem* (what pleases the prince, has the force of law). This central principle was resuscitated by the exponents of royal absolutism in sixteenth-century Europe and became the core of the Western doctrine of sovereignty. It did so at the very time that the legal systems of continental Europe were becoming ever more elaborately refined, culminating eventually in the great codifications. It should therefore not occasion any special surprise that the Soviet Union has promulgated codes of law in various

fields, and that there has been a considerable amount of regional diversification. Indeed, some Soviet jurists would make this diversification the mainstay of an argument in support of the reality of Soviet federalism. One might even argue that there is an inherent tendency of autocracy to proliferate legal norms, as long as the ultimate authority is retained by the autocratic ruler, the reason being that through law the authority (as contrasted with the power) of such a ruler is enhanced and his legitimacy buttressed. (110f) In both Italy and Germany, as well as in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and even Russia, a large body of law has remained in force because it is expressive of folkways and cultural traditions that the totalitarian leadership sees no reason to alter, because it does not affect the political goals of the regime. The presumed claim to total manipulation (*Erfassung*) of those subject to such a regime does not exclude the possibility of accepting a good deal of the law that exists. Specialists have argued with convincing evidence for a "specific Russian component of Soviet law." Though there are numerous other illustrations, the procuracy, criminal law, and the law of the peasant household provide excellent illustrations of the specific Russian component of Soviet law. (19c; 240e)

The same argument applies, of course, a fortiori to the Hitler regime. Great sections of German law remained, as a matter of fact, completely intact, having come down from the nineteenth century and indeed continued into the Federal Republic. This situation gave rise to the theory that there existed a "dual state" in Germany under Hitler (102d), the "legal state" and the "prerogative state." It is unfortunate that the important insight into the dualism of two conflicting orders was obscured by the term "state"; for a state is presumably all-encompassing so that only one state can exist in one territory. The state, therefore, was Hitler's, and what remained of the pre-existing legal order was not a state, but a complex of norms expressive of numerous aspects of human relations with which National Socialism was not or not yet concerned. There is every indication that, after a successful conclusion of the war and a further stabilization of the regime, various fields of law that had remained untouched until 1945 would have been subjected to radical alteration in light of the National Socialist ideology. But just as in the Soviet Union, those alterations would still have been "law" in the sense of being valid rules of conduct. As defined by the authorita-

tive Vyshinsky: "Law is a combination of rules of conduct which express the will of the ruling class and are established by legislative procedure, and also of customs and rules of community life sanctioned by state authority, whose application is secured by the compulsory force of the state for the purpose of protecting, strengthening and developing relations and procedures advantageous and convenient for the ruling class." (374b) It is evident that this definition is virtually identical with that given by such theorists as Hobbes, except for the introduction of the class concept. But if the meaning of that concept in Soviet reality is borne in mind, even that addition cannot be considered very much of a deviation. The will of the ruling class as represented by the rulers of the Soviet Union is in fact the will of those rulers: Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, and the party apparatus that they led.

The Fascists and National Socialists were more candid about this predominance, though from a Communist viewpoint they failed to face the class influence reflected in the dictator's legal will. The strongly ideological ingredient of totalitarian law is thereby made manifest. As a National Socialist jurist, confronted with the legal reality, put it: "Law is the formed plan of the *Führer*, and therefore expression of the folk order of life (*völkische Lebensordnung*). The formed plan of the *Führer* is the highest command of the law." (232) In such a statement, both the voluntaristic and the compulsive aspects of law are submerged in the inspirational representativeness of the *Führer's* intuition and plan. In place of the class as the determining factor, the folk or nation has become the reference point. As a result, the notion of law in the fascist mind is associated with such ideas as the *Volksgeist*, which had been developed by the Romantics and the historical school of jurisprudence. But the former conservative flavor of a doctrine, which tied legal development to and restricted it by the traditions and folkways of a particular people, has been turned into a revolutionary thrust by dint of the will of the dictatorial representative.

It is in keeping with this revolutionary thrust that totalitarian law greatly expands the area of penal and criminal law. This is accomplished both by the extension of such conceptions as treason and subversion and by the broad interpretation of the "national interest" and the "security of the state." With their help, many legal conceptions are perverted and at times turned into the opposite of

their original intent. (147) Matters that in constitutional systems are the subject of a suit between individuals become the concern of the state and are permeated by the ideological concerns of the regime. While the Germans and Italians had to abandon their former traditions of a legal order, the Soviet Union was greatly aided by the tsarist tradition, which was autocratic though not totalitarian.

One of the institutions of this ancient autocracy had been the office of the public prosecutor, or procurator. (19d) In the constitution of 1936, this official's functions are stated thus: "Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the laws by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them as well as by officials and citizens of the USSR generally, is vested in the Prosecutor General of the USSR"; he is "appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for a term of seven years" (articles 113-114). The prosecutor general himself appoints a host of lesser prosecutors throughout the Soviet Union; the system is completely centralized in his hands, since he also confirms the appointment of the local prosecutors, who have been proposed by his own subordinates. One leading scholar has summarized the varied functions as follows: the prosecutor sees to it that the vast administrative apparatus acts according to the law; he participates in local affairs. Whenever a prosecutor considers an act or proposal to be contrary to the constitution or the laws, he may "protest" to the next higher administrative organ; in the case of a ministry, this would be the Council of Ministers. He is supposed to supervise the operations of the security offices, the police, criminal investigations, and the corrective labor camps. Only the Council of Ministers as a body is beyond his control.

Besides these functions of an administrative kind (reminiscent of the French Conseil d'Etat under Napoleon), the prosecutor's office has comprehensive tasks in conjunction with the courts. It orders the arrest of those suspected and appoints the investigators of crimes who conduct pretrial examinations—a system generally found in Europe, but in constitutional regimes elaborately circumscribed by legal protections for the accused. It also prosecutes at criminal trials, supervises all civil proceedings, and may intervene in any civil suit. This is part of the extension of criminal law we pointed out above, although not formally recognized as such in the

Soviet Union. The prosecutor may request that any proceeding, civil or criminal, be reopened and tried again in a higher court. In short, the Chief Prosecutor's Office combines in one vast operation the functions of the American Attorney General's office, congressional and other legislative investigating committees, grand juries, and public prosecutors. We have in this office one of the most striking instances of the concentration of power, characteristic of autocratic regimes, as contrasted with its division under constitutionalism. The prosecutors in the Soviet Union are an adaptation of an institution of the old autocracy to the needs of the totalitarian order, with its vast administrative system.* It has been copied in the satellites, including the German Democratic Republic, where its operation has assimilated the National Socialist practices of people's courts and prosecutors, which in the minds of many Germans symbolize the end of the rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*). And yet, in a very real sense, the system of the procuracy represents the totalitarian method of securing some kind of legal order, under the sway of revolutionary legality. It may sound grotesque to claim that "the principal contribution of the Russian Revolution to the development of constitutional law is the adaptation of autocracy to twentieth century industrial society" (19e), but within the context of Soviet ideology it is a meaningful statement. A vast amount of law, including that of the constitution, is being maintained by this system. It stands behind this otherwise almost incredible statement by a leading Soviet jurist:

Great is the role of the Soviet Constitution in securing the rights of Soviet citizens. It secures the basic rights and duties of Soviet citizens, that is, such rights as enable them to take an active part in state activities, in exercising state power. To these rights and liberties the constitution refers the right of all people to have reached a certain age to elect and be elected to all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, the right to education, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly including the holding of mass meetings, street processions and demonstrations and other rights and liberties. (210)

Such a claim is not a bad joke, but is meant to possess real content. Whatever content it has is due to the prosecutor general's willing-

* Berman, ch. 16, has interpreted the Soviet system in this respect as a "parental" system which treats the litigant as a ward of society. It would be more in keeping with established usage to call such a system paternalistic.

ness to support a particular person or office in his legal claim to the right. It is true that "bills of rights, under such regimes as the popular democracies, become purely declaratory and unenforceable; they constitute essentially declarations of the principles and goals which the regime wishes the world at large to believe them to be dedicated to" (403b); but it is true only in the sense that a ward cannot seek the enforcement of his rights, though his warden can. The constitution *is* a weapon in the armory of the prosecutor general, when he wishes to protect a particular right or individual against the encroachments of a state or other office. It all is subject to the warden's typical concern: the welfare of the ward, as he sees it, or "the material conditions necessary for the realization of such rights." It is primarily a matter of protection against arbitrariness and prejudice. *Vis-à-vis* the state (and party) itself, the Soviet citizen does not and cannot have any rights. There can be no question that protection against administrative abuses is a legal protection of some sort. Its totalitarian limits were rather well stated by a satellite minister of justice: "The real task of those employed in the administration of justice is to be the realization of every word of party and government resolutions, but particularly the consolidation of the socialist legal structure and the modeling of our courts on the shining example of the courts of the Soviet Union." (450)

It is clear from the foregoing that the ultimate issue is an ideological one which turns upon the meaning of justice. What is to be understood by this basic value that has been central to the discussion of law and legal philosophy through the ages? (110g; 111) It is undeniable that the totalitarian autocracy, like monarchical absolutism in Europe, the Roman empire, and oriental despotism before it, operates in terms of its peculiar concept of justice. In this respect, these more permanent forms of autocracy contrast sharply with the tyranny of the Greek city-states, which Plato and Aristotle considered "devoid of justice" and hence the most unstable forms of government. If justice is considered in its political dimension, that is to say, in terms of the just political act, "An action may be said to be just, and hence likewise a rule, a judgment or a decision, when it involves a comparative evaluation of the persons affected by the action, and when that comparison accords with the values and beliefs of the political community." Justice, in brief, is the comparative evaluation of persons and acts according to the prevailing val-

ues and beliefs of a political community. Such comparisons are valid only if the facts upon which they are based are not untrue, if the relation between facts and values is not arbitrary, and if the norms derived from such comparisons do not ask the impossible. It is evident that justice thus understood has a distinct and meaningful application to the handling of a large number of human relations in these totalitarian orders. It is evident also that the growing consensus makes the enlargement of the area within which justice prevails quite feasible. But such a widening scope of justice does not by any means signify the end of autocracy. Consensus and justice have been characteristic of much autocracy in the past. A secret police may still be needed, because the rigid limitations upon public criticism of the official exercise of power oblige such a regime to search out potential enemies by other means. Yet no autocratic regime, even that of a tyrant, would endure long without providing a measure of believed-in justice. Modern totalitarianism has sought to facilitate its task by providing an ideological consensus that is manifested and symbolized in constitution and law, as it has been traditionally in the constitutional democracies of the West.