

THE FASCIST PERSUASION IN RADICAL POLITICS. By *A. James Gregor*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974. xiii, 472 pp. \$15.00.

The term "fascism" has been used as a political curse so indiscriminately that it has for some time been quite useless. If for some scholars it had specified meaning, interpretations differed substantially, and misconceptions abounded. We are very much in Professor Gregor's debt for several works in which he has discussed the nature and history of fascism responsibly. The book under review here will have a profound impact. Not that he says things nobody has said before; on the contrary, as he himself is at pains to point out, his thesis is a variation on the well-worn theory of totalitarianism, which lumped Hitlerism and Stalinism under one and the same category. But Gregor offers new elaborations, and he offers an interpretation with *great clarity and on the basis of careful, elaborate evidence and elucidation*.

His book begins with an exposition of orthodox Marxism, dwells on several important areas of inquiry Marx and Engels left unanswered, and then summarizes the attack on Marxism by Bernstein and the thorough transformation of Marxism by the Bolsheviks. He presents Leninism, quite plausibly, as an inversion of the ideas of Marx and Engels, made necessary by the lacunae in Marxism and by the special problems of underdeveloped nations. Throughout this treatment Gregor implies that the Bolsheviks might have made these necessary adjustments to reality more effectively had they known how to rid themselves of the outworn shell of Marxist ideas. In his opinion, another revolutionary Marxist, whose political and intellectual development ran analogously to that of Lenin, elaborated a far more adequate response to these problems because he was forthright enough to repudiate Marxism, without thereby becoming any less revolutionary. He is speaking about Mussolini, whose ideology he calls "paradigmatic fascism," indicating thereby that he considers Mussolini the most prescient theorist of twentieth-century politics.

Paradigmatic fascism, he argues, was by no means anti-intellectual or devoid of sociological or political content. Major theorists contributed to it, some of them imbued with lofty humanist values. Nor was it counterrevolutionary. What Gregor calls the fascist "persuasion" is a composite of avant-gardist style and revolutionary content, both of them essentially protests against capitalism, bourgeois rule, bourgeois culture, and imperialism. The political persuasion was more effective than Marxism in mobilizing broad masses, he claims, because it conceived politics as theater, knew about the force of myth, recognized the primacy of politics over economics, and appealed to the masses' innate nationalism or racism, authoritarianism, hero worship, and willingness to make sacrifices for a great cause—facts of life which Marx and Engels had shoved aside, and which were particularly salient in underdeveloped countries. Equally important, fascism understood the nonrevolutionary disposition of the proletariat.

Gregor stresses the origin of many fascist leaders from the ranks of revolutionary Marxism but also points out that the major sources of inspiration for the developers of Bolshevism were non-Marxist populists. Throughout he seeks to establish the basic affinity with paradigmatic fascism of such figures as Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Castro, Guevara, Nasser, Nkrumah, Perón, Marcuse, Abbie Hoffman, Marcuse Garvey, and Malcolm X. Whether Huey Long or Tito, to mention just two, have been omitted from his list by oversight or by design would be interesting to know.

Many readers will refuse to recognize these and many other political figures

Gregor names as belonging to the same category, whether or not it be labeled fascism. And indeed by glossing over rather lightly essential differences in aims, methods, social base, and political system (including foreign policies), Gregor strains his thesis, making his book an interesting tour de force. The same strain shows also in his treatment of Mussolini himself, where he stresses the periods before 1926 and after 1943, dismissing the years of Mussolini's accommodation with capitalism, private property, and the monarchy, as a tactic forced upon him by circumstances. An even more serious flaw may be Gregor's inability to fit the Third Reich into his scheme. For many scholars, National Socialism was the paradigm of fascism; for Gregor it was an aberration. Missing, too, from his account, are many movements usually described as of the "far right" in contemporary Western Europe and North America. At the same time, Gregor is careful to point out that he is writing specifically about ideologies, and not about political systems.

Still, this is a tour de force. Occasionally my eyebrows went up when I read a particularly bold statement. But Gregor, on the whole, presents an impressive amount of knowledge in highly provocative fashion. The book is an important contribution to our understanding of contemporary political ideologies and trends.

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L'ÉVOLUTION DU MARXISME SOVIÉTIQUE: THÉORIE ÉCONOMIQUE ET DROIT. By *Henri Chambre*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1974. 476 pp. Paper.

From the hand of a master who has access to all the relevant sources, this work asks what happened to economic and legal theory in the Soviet Union between the Twentieth and Twenty-fourth Congresses of the CPSU. In other words, what was the net effect of de-Stalinization in terms of economic and legal theory? Divided into two almost equal parts, the book offers the hurried reader the advantage of a short but precise introduction and accurate conclusion to each part—as well as a very informative, synthetic transition between the two.

In the section on economic theory (pp. 41–222), Professor Chambre limits himself to three problems: the "law of value," the "price of production," and profit. He finds that in the period under consideration the Soviets have had to extend the law of value beyond the limits formerly considered acceptable. They also moved to consider—in line with the third volume of *Capital*—the "price of production" as ultimately determining value. Profit—which had existed in the Soviet realm since the time of Lenin—is undergoing more critical analysis in terms of the real role it can play as indicator. Finally, the author points out that the Soviets have come around to more extensive use of mathematical modeling, with all the theoretical adjustments that this implies.

The section on theory of law (pp. 225–450) deals *in extenso* with the four areas of civil law, work law, law of marriage and family, and criminal law. The author finds that in all of these there has been evolution in the sense of "more rationality," including adjustments for changes in life-style. However, just as the results of the rediscovery of the "price of production" in the third volume of *Capital* were neutralized by the eternal dogmas previously derived from the first volume of *Capital* (the famous "iron laws"), so in the case of progressive adjustments of