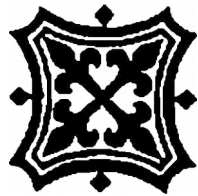


JULIUS EVOLA

# ORIENTATIONS



## P R E F A C E



Originally published in 1950, *Orientalism* is a hidden gem among Julius Evola's impressive body of work. *Orientalism* provides a lucid and concise introduction to Evola's thought, presenting a framework for the European right-wing to approach the post-war modern world. Evola calls for the creation of a New Man, who will hold himself steady among the ruins of our unmoored civilizations, as they lurch violently towards ever-increasing strife and chaos. He warns against the various trappings of modernity—materialism, bourgeois decadence, contingent economic trivialities, and so on—advising men to embrace the spiritual, heroic, and aristocratic values of the world of Tradition. Evola states that men must lead by example, rise above, and form a new elite, filling the void created by the age of decline and forces of modernity.

*Orientalism* is essential reading for all right-wing youth. Other important works by Evola include *Revolt Against The Modern World* (1934), in which he delineates the concepts of Modernity and Tradition, and *Men Among The Ruins* (1953), which builds upon the framework laid out in *Orientalism*.

## I



There is no point in indulging in wishful thinking with the illusions of any kind of optimism: today we find ourselves at the end of a cycle. Already for centuries, at first insensibly, then with the momentum of a landslide, multiple processes have destroyed every normal and legitimate human order in the West and falsified every higher conception of living, acting, knowing, and fighting. And the momentum of this fall, its velocity, its giddiness, has been called 'progress'. And we have raised hymns to 'progress' and deluded ourselves that this civilisation — a civilisation of matter and machines — was civilisation par excellence, the one for which the entire history of the world was preordained: until the final consequences of this entire process has been such as to cause some people at least to wake up.

It is well known where and under what symbols the forces for a possible resistance tried to organise. On one side, a nation that, since it had been unified, had known nothing but the mediocre climate of liberalism, democracy, and a constitutional monarchy, dared to assume the symbol of Rome as the basis for a new political conception and a new ideal of virility and dignity. Analogous forces awoke in the nation that in the Middle Ages had made the Roman symbol of imperium its own in order to reaffirm the principle of authority and the primacy of those values that are rooted in the blood, race, and the deepest powers of a stock. And while in other European nations, groups were already orienting themselves in the same direction, a third force in Asia joined the ranks, the nation of the samurai, in which the adoption of the outer forms of modern civilisation had not prejudiced its fidelity to a warrior tradition

centred upon the symbol of the solar empire of divine right.

No one claims that there was a very clear discrimination between the essential and the accessory in these currents, that in them the idea was confronted by people of high quality who understood it, or that various influences arising from the very forces that had to be combatted had been overcome. The process of ideological purification would have taken place at a later time, once some immediate and unavoidable political problems had been resolved. But even so it was clear that a marshalling of forces was taking shape, representing an open challenge to 'modern' civilisation: both to those democracies that are the heirs of the French Revolution, and to the other one, which represents the extreme limit of the degradation of Western man: the collectivistic civilisation of the Fourth Estate, the Communist civilisation of the faceless massman. Rhythms accelerated, and tensions increased until the opposing forces met in armed combat. What prevailed was the massive power of a coalition that did not draw back from the most hybridised of agreements and the most hypocritical ideological mobilisation in order to crush the world that was raising itself and intended to affirm its right. Whether or not our men were equal to the task, whether errors were committed in matters of timing, preparation, or the assessment of risks, let us leave that aside, because it does not prejudice the internal significance of the struggle that was fought. Equally, it does not interest us that today history is taking its revenge on the victors; that the democratic powers, after allying themselves with the forces of red subversion to conduct the war all the way to the senseless extremism of unconditional surrender and total destruction, today see their allies of yesterday turn on them as a danger much more frightening than the one they wanted to exorcise.

The only thing that counts is this: today we find ourselves in the midst of a world in ruins.

The problem to pose is, do men on their feet still exist in the midst of these ruins? And what must they do, what can they still do?

## II



Such a problem, in truth, goes far beyond yesterday's coalitions, because it is clear that both victors and defeated now find themselves on the same level, and the only result of the Second World War has been to reduce Europe to the object of extra-European powers and interests. We have to recognise that the devastation we have around us is primarily of a moral character. We are in a climate of general moral amnesia and of profound disorientation, despite all the accepted ways of speaking in common use in a society of consumers and democracy: the surrender of character and every true dignity, an ideological wasting away, the supremacy of the lowest interests, and living day by day, in general characterise post-war man. Recognising this means also recognising that the first problem, the foundation of every other one, is of an internal character: getting up on your feet, standing up inside, giving oneself a form, and creating in oneself an order and uprightness. People who delude themselves today about the possibility of a purely political struggle and about the power of one or another formula or system, who do not possess a new human quality as a precise opposing vision, have learned none of the lessons of the recent past. Here is a principle that ought to be absolutely clear today more than ever: if a state were to possess a political or social system that, in theory, would count as the most perfect one, but the human substance of which it is comprised were tainted, well then, that state would sooner or later descend to the level of the lowest societies, while a people, a race capable of

producing real men, men of just feeling and secure instinct, would reach a high level of civilisation and would stay on its feet before the most calamitous tests even if its political system were faulty and imperfect. We should therefore take a firm stand against that false ‘political realism’ that thinks only in terms of programmes, partisan political issues, and social and economic recipes. All this belongs to the contingent, not the essential. The measure of what can still be saved rather depends on the existence, or absence, of men who stand before us not to recite talking points, but to be models: not yielding to the demagogy or materialism of the masses, but to revive different forms of sensibilities and interests. Beginning with what can still survive among the ruins, and slowly to construct a new man to be animated by means of a determined spirit and an adequate vision of life, and fortified by means of an iron adherence to given principles — this is the real problem.

### III



As spirit there exists something that can serve as an outline for the forces of resistance and revival: it is the legionary spirit. It is the attitude of one who knows how to choose the hardest life, to fight even when he knows that the battle is substantially lost, and to confirm the words of the ancient saga: ‘Loyalty is stronger than fire.’ Through him the traditional idea is affirmed. It is the sense of honour and shame — not half-hearted measures drawn from half-hearted morals — that creates a substantial difference, an existential difference between beings, almost as though between one race and another race.

On the other hand, there is the realisation that belongs to those in whom what was an end

now appears as only a means. They recognise the illusory character of manifold myths, while leaving intact what they know how to follow for themselves, on the frontiers between life and death, beyond the world of the contingent.

These forms of spirit can be the foundation of a new unity. What is essential is to seize them, apply them, and extend them from wartime to peacetime, especially this peace that is only a moment of respite and a poorly controlled disorder — until distinctions and a new grouping are established. This has to happen in rather more essential terms than what might be called a ‘party’, which can only be a contingent instrument in view of given political struggles; in terms more essential even than a simple ‘movement’, if by ‘movement’ we understand only a phenomenon of masses and aggregation, a quantitative phenomenon more than a qualitative one, based more on emotional factors than on severe, clear adherence to an idea. What we are hoping for, rather, is a silent revolution, proceeding in the depths, in which the premises are created, first internally and in individuals, of that Order that will later have to affirm itself externally as well, supplanting suddenly, at the right moment, the forms and forces of a world of subversion. The ‘style’ that has to achieve prominence is that of one who holds his positions out of loyalty to himself and to an idea, in an intense absorption, in a rejection of every compromise, in a total commitment that must manifest itself not only in the political struggle, but also in every expression of existence: factories, laboratories, universities, the streets, and the very personal life of the affections. We need to reach the point where the type of which we speak, which must be the cellular substance of our group, is completely recognisable, unmistakable, and differentiated. Then we can say, ‘He is one who acts like a man of the movement.’

This was the commitment of the forces that dreamed of a new order for Europe, but

which was often frustrated and misled in realising it by manifold factors. Today that commitment must be taken up again. And today, the conditions are basically better, because the situation has become clearer. We only need to look around, from the public squares all the way to Parliament, to see that our vocations are being tested, and that we have clearly in front of us the measure of what we should not be. Before a world of mush, whose principles are, 'You have no choice', or else, 'We'll have time for morals after we take care of our stomach and our skin.' (I mean 'skin' in the sense of Curzio Malaparte's novel, *The Skin* !) There is also, 'These are not times in which we can permit ourselves the luxury of having character.' Or last and not least, 'I have a family.' When we hear these slogans, we know how to give a clear and firm response: 'As for us, we cannot act in any other way. This is our life, this is our essence.' Whatever positive achievements are accomplished today or tomorrow, it will not be by means of the skills of agitators and political operatives, but by the natural prestige and recognition of men both of yesterday and, even more, of the new generation, who are capable of so much and thus vouch for their idea.

#### IV



Therefore there is a new substance that must make its way in a slow advance beyond the boxes, columns, and social positions of the past. We need to have a new figure before our eyes to measure our own force and our own vocation. It is important, or rather basic, to recognise that this figure has nothing to do with classes as economic categories and with the antagonisms related to them. This figure can present itself in the garb of rich as well as poor, of worker as well as aristocrat, of

businessman as well as explorer, technician, theologian, farmer, and even a politician in the strict sense. But this new substance will know an internal differentiation, which will be complete when, again, there will be no doubts about the vocations and functions to follow and command; when a reprimed symbol of unshaken authority will reign at the centre of new hierarchical structures.

This formulation defines a direction that calls itself as much anti-bourgeois as antiproletarian, a direction completely liberated from democratic contaminations and 'social' whims, because it leads to a world that is clear, virile, articulated, and made of men and men's guides. It has contempt for the bourgeois myth of 'security', and the petty life that is standardised, conformist, domesticated, and 'moralised'. Contempt for the anodyne fetter that is part and parcel of every collectivist and mechanical system and all the ideologies that attribute to confused 'social' values the primacy over those heroic and spiritual values with which the true man, the absolute person, ought to be defined for us in every area. Something essential will have been achieved when we revive the love for a style of active impersonality, through which what counts is the work and not the individual. Through this, we become capable of not seeing ourselves as something important, since what is important is the function, the responsibility, the task accepted, and the end pursued. Where this spirit is achieved, many problems will be simplified, including problems of economic and social order, which would otherwise remain insoluble if confronted from outside, without the counterpart of a change of spiritual factors and without the elimination of ideological infections that from the beginning, already hinder every return to the normal; in fact, even the very perception of what normal means.

## V



It is important not only for doctrinal orientation, but also in regard to the world of action, that the men of the new group precisely recognise the chain of causes and effects and the essential continuity of the current that has given life to the various political forms that are jousting today in the chaos of the parties. Liberalism, then democracy, then socialism, then radicalism, and finally Communism and Bolshevism, only appeared historically as steps taken by the same evil, as stages in which each one prepares the next in the complex unity of a process of decline. The beginning of this process is the point at which Western man shattered the fetters of tradition, rejected every superior symbol of authority and sovereignty, claimed a vain and illusory liberty for himself as an individual, and became an atom instead of a conscious part in the organic and hierarchical unity of a whole. In the end, the atom was bound to find that the mass of the other atoms, the other individuals, had turned against him, and he was dragged into the plight of the kingdom of quantity, of pure number, of masses that are given over completely to materialism and who have no other god than the sovereign economy. In this process there is no stopping halfway down the road. Without the French Revolution and liberalism, there would not have been constitutionalism and democracy; without democracy there would not have been socialism and demagogic nationalism; without the preparation of socialism there would not have been radicalism and, finally, Communism. The fact that today we see these different forms frequently together or in opposition should not prevent an eye that sees clearly from recognising that they belong together. They are linked, they condition one another in turn, and they express only the different steps of the same current, the same

subversion of every normal and legitimate social ordering. The great illusion of our days is that democracy and liberalism are the antithesis of Communism and have the power to stem the tide of the forces of the low, what is called the ‘progressive’ movement in the jargon of the labour unions. This illusion is like saying that dusk is the antithesis of night, that an illness’s incipient stage is the antithesis of its acute and endemic stage, or that a diluted poison is the antithesis of the same poison in its pure and concentrated state. The men in the government of this ‘liberated’ Italy have learned nothing from the recent past, although its lessons are repeated everywhere monotonously. They continue their pitiful game with political conceptions that are out of date and empty in the parliamentary Mardi Gras, this danse macabre on a dormant volcano. What is in our possession is the courage of radicalism, the No spoken to political decadence in all its forms, both of the Left and of the supposed Right. And we must be especially aware of this: that there is no negotiating with subversion, and that concessions made today mean condemning ourselves to being completely overwhelmed tomorrow. We therefore insist on intransigence of the idea, and a readiness to advance with pure forces, when the right moment arrives.

Naturally this also implies ridding ourselves of ideological distortion, which unfortunately is widespread even in some of our young people. It is because of this that they concede some of the excuses for the destructions that have already taken place, deluding themselves with thinking that, after all, they were necessary and will serve the cause of ‘progress’: that we should be fighting for something ‘new’, awaiting us in a definite future, instead of for truths that we already possess. This is because, always and everywhere, although these truths appear in different forms, they have been the foundation for every correct type of social and political organisation. Young people need to reject these fads and whims. We should learn to

laugh at people who call us ‘on the wrong side of history’ and ‘reactionaries’. There is no such thing as History, this mysterious entity with a capital H. Men make and unmake history, provided they are really men. What is called the course of history is more or less the same thing as what is called ‘progressivism’ in Left-wing circles, and it aims at only one thing today: to foment passivity in the face of the current that is getting stronger and carries us continually lower. As to the charge of ‘reactionary’, ask them the following question: while you are acting, destroying, and profaning, do you then want us not to ‘react’, but to stand by passively watching, or maybe even shouting, ‘Good work, keep it up!’ We are not ‘reactionaries’ only because the word is not strong enough, and especially because we start from what is positive, and we represent what is positive — values that are real and original, and we do not need the light of any ‘sun of the future.’

In the face of our radicalism, in particular, the antithesis between red ‘East’ and democratic ‘West’ appears irrelevant. An eventual armed conflict between these two blocs appears to us even more tragically irrelevant. If we look only at the immediate future, the choice of the lesser evil is certainly a reality because the military victory of the ‘East’ would imply the immediate physical destruction of the last representatives of the resistance. But from the point of view of the idea that inspires them, Russia and North America can be considered as two tongs of the same pincers that are tightening definitively around Europe. In them we see the same foreign and hostile force, acting in different but converging forms. The forms of standardisation, conformism, democratic levelling, frantic overproduction, the more or less arrogant and explicit cult of the expert (‘brain trust’), and the petty materialism of Americanism can only clear the road for the final phase, which is represented in the same direction by the Communist ideal of the mass man. The distinctive trait of Americanism is that the attack on quality and personality is not accomplished by means of

the brutal coercion of a Marxist dictatorship and the care of the state, but takes place almost spontaneously, by means of a civilisation that does not recognise ideals higher than wealth, consumption, profit, and unchecked economic growth — an exaggeration and *reductio ad absurdum* of what Europe herself has chosen. This is what the same motives have created there or are in the process of creating. On both sides we see the same primitivism, mechanical reductionism, and brutality. In a certain sense Americanism is for us more dangerous than Communism, because it is essentially a kind of Trojan horse. When the attack against those values of the European tradition which yet survive are found in the direct and naked form that belongs to the Bolshevik ideology and Stalinism, it still provokes some reactions and certain lines of resistance, even if weak ones, can be maintained. Things are different when the same evil acts in a subtler manner and the transformations take place insensibly on the level of custom and a general worldview, as is the case with Americanism. By thoughtlessly submitting to the influence of Americanism under the flag of democracy, Europe is already predisposed to the ultimate abdication, and this could come about without the need for a military catastrophe, but more or less the same point could be reached in a ‘progressive’ fashion after a final social crisis. Again, there is no stopping halfway down the slope. Americanism, willy-nilly, is working for its ostensible enemy: collectivism.

## VI



Our commitment to a radical reconstruction is directly relevant here because it insists there can be no dealings not only with every variety of Marxist and socialist ideology, but likewise with what in general can be called the

hallucination, or the demonic possession by the economy. We are dealing here with the idea that in both the individual and collective life, the economic factor is the important, real, and decisive one; that the concentration of every value and interest upon the field of economics and production is not the unprecedented aberration of modern Western man, but on the contrary something normal; not something that is, possibly, an ugly necessity, but rather something that should be desired and exalted. Both capitalism and Marxism are trapped in this closed and dark circle. We need to break this circle wide open. As long as we talk about nothing else but economic classes, work, wages, and production; and as long as we delude ourselves that real human progress and the genuine elevation of the individual is conditioned by a particular system of distribution of wealth and goods, and therefore has to do with poverty and ease, with the state of prosperity à la the United States or with that of utopian socialism, we yet remain on the same level as that which we need to combat. We need to assert the following: that everything that relates to economy and the view of economic interest as a mere satisfaction of physical needs has had, has now, and always will have a subordinate role in a normal humanity. Beyond this sphere we need to separate an order of superior values which are political, spiritual, and heroic; an order that — as we already said — does not recognise, or even admit, ‘proletarians’ or ‘capitalists’. It is only in terms of this order that it is proper to define the things for which it is worth living and dying, which establish a true hierarchy, which differentiate new ranks of dignity, and, at the top, place on the throne a superior function of command, an Imperium.

In light of this, we need to eradicate many weeds that have taken root here and there, sometimes even in our own field. What, after all, is this chatter regarding a ‘state of labour’, of ‘national socialism’, of the ‘humanism of work’, and similar expressions? What are

these more or less openly proclaimed appeals for an involution of politics into the economy, as if in a renewal of those problematic tendencies toward ‘integral corporatism’, that was basically headless, but which in Fascism fortunately found its way barred? Why do we see the slogan of ‘socialisation’ considered as a type of universal cure-all and the elevation of the ‘social idea’ to a symbol of a new civilisation that, who knows how, is supposed to be beyond ‘East’ and ‘West’?

These slogans — we need to acknowledge it — are the dark sides present in quite a few minds that admittedly are in other respects found on our side. With this way of talking they think that they are being faithful to a ‘revolutionary’ commitment, while they are only obeying suggestions stronger than they are. A degraded political environment is full of them. Among these suggestions, the ‘social question’ re-enters. When will they finally realise the truth? Marxism did not arise because of the existence of a real social question, but the social question arises — in countless cases — only because Marxism exists, in other words artificially, or in terms that are almost always unsolvable, because of agitators, who are notorious for ‘raising class consciousness’. Lenin expressed himself very clearly about them, when he refuted the spontaneous character of revolutionary proletarian movements.

It is starting with this premise that we should act, above all, in the direction of ideological deproletarianisation, by disinfecting those parts of the people which are still healthy of the socialist virus. Only then can one or another reform be studied and implemented without danger, according to true justice.

Thus, as a particular case, we can examine in what spirit the corporative idea can again be one of the foundations of reconstruction. I mean corporatism not so much as the state’s general system of composition, an almost bureaucratic system that maintains the deleterious idea of classes arrayed against one



another, but rather as the demand that we must reconstruct within each business that unity and solidarity of differentiated forces which have been prejudiced and shattered, on the one hand, by capitalist prevarication (which has been followed by the parasitic type of the speculator and finance capitalist), and by Marxist agitation on the other. We must bring business into the form of an almost military unity, in which the spirit of responsibility, energy, and competence of the man who directs it will bring about the solidarity and loyalty of the working forces associated around him in a common enterprise. The only true task is, therefore, the organic reconstruction of business. To do this there is no need for slogans intended to be fawned upon or for low propagandistic and electoral ends, which represent the spirit of sedition of the lowest strata of the masses, a spirit which is disguised as 'social justice'. In general, we should restore the style of active impersonality, dignity, and solidarity in producing a style that belonged to the ancient corporations of artisans and professionals. We need to outlaw the trade union movement with its 'struggle' and its acts of real blackmail, of which we meet too many examples today. But, let us say again, we need to reach this point by starting from the inside. The important point is that against every form of resentment and social antagonism everyone should recognise and love his own station, one that fits his own nature, also recognising in this way the limits within which he can develop his own possibilities and achieve his own perfection, because an artisan that acquits himself perfectly in his function is without doubt superior to a king that rejects and does not live up to his dignity.

In particular, we can allow a system of technical competences and corporative representations to replace the partisan parliamentary system, but we should keep in mind that the technical hierarchies, on the whole, can signify only a step in the integral hierarchy. They concern the order of means, to be subordinated to the order of ends, to which

alone corresponds the really political and spiritual part of the state. Speaking instead of a 'state of labour' or of production is the same as making a whole of the part, as clinging to what amounts to a human organism reduced to its merely physical and vital functions. Our standard can be neither such an obtuse and dark thing nor the 'social' idea. The true antithesis in front of 'East' as well as 'West' is not the 'social ideal'. It is instead the integral hierarchical idea. Confronted with that, no uncertainty is acceptable.

## VII



If the ideal of a virile and organic political unity was already an essential part of the world that was overwhelmed — and through it in Italy the Roman symbol was also recalled — we should also recognise the cases in which such a demand took the wrong path and was nearly aborted in the mistaken direction of 'totalitarianism'. This, again, is a point that must be seen clearly, so that the two sides are precisely distinguished and, also, so that we do not furnish arms to those who want to confuse matters for reasons we have seen. Hierarchy is not hierarchism. (The latter is an evil that unfortunately tries to spring up in a minor key every once in a while.) The organic conception has nothing to do with a state-worshipping sclerosis and a levelling centralisation. As for individuals, both individualism and collectivism are really overcome only when men stand in front of men, in the natural diversity of their being and their dignity. And as for the unity that ought to, in general, impede every form of dissociation and absolutising of the particular, the unity must be essentially spiritual and of a central orienting influence; an impulse that, depending on the realms, assumes very differentiated forms of expression. This is the

true essence of the ‘organic’ conception, which is opposed to rigid and extrinsic relations appropriate to ‘totalitarianism’. In this framework the demand for the dignity and liberty of the human person, which liberalism knows how to conceive only in terms that are individualistic, egalitarian, and privatised, can be realised integrally. It is in this spirit that the structures of a new political and social order must be studied, in solid and clear articulations.

But these kinds of structures need a centre, a highest point of reference. A new symbol of sovereignty and authority is necessary. The commitment, in this regard, must be precise. Ideological tergiversations cannot be permitted. It is important to say clearly that we are dealing here only secondarily with the so-called institutional problem. We are dealing especially with what is necessary for a specific climate, for the fluency that ought to animate every relationship of loyalty, dedication, service, and action with no thought of individual glory, so that we have really overcome the grey, mechanical, and devious aspect of the present political and social world. Given the situation today it will end in an impasse, since at the top it is not capable of any kind of asceticism of the pure idea. The clear perception of the right direction is compromised for many, either by some unfortunate antecedents of our national traditions or, and even more so, by the tragic accidents of yesterday. We can also recognise the inconclusiveness of the monarchical solution, since we can see those people who today only know how to defend the remnant of an idea, a symbol that has been gutted and castrated, like the constitutional parliamentary monarchy. But in an equally decisive fashion we ought to proclaim the incompatibility of our idea with the republican idea. To be anti-democratic, on one hand, and to defend the republican idea ‘ferociously’ (this is unfortunately the terminology of some representatives of a false intransigence) on the other, is an absurdity that is almost palpable. By republic we mean

modern republics. The ancient republics were aristocracies — as in Rome — or oligarchies, these latter often possessing the character of tyrannies. Modern republics belong essentially to the world that came into existence through Jacobinism and the anti-traditional and anti-hierarchical subversion of the nineteenth century. This kind of world, which is not ours, must be left behind. In terms of principle, a nation that is already monarchical and then becomes a republic can only be considered a ‘downgraded’ nation. In Italy we should not play a mistaken game in the name of loyalty to the Fascism of the Salò Republic, because if, for that reason, we feel we ought to follow the false road of republicanism, we would at the same time be disloyal to something larger and better, and throw overboard the central nucleus of the ideology of the Twenty Years of Fascism, which is its doctrine of the state, in the function of authority, power, imperium.

This doctrine alone must be maintained, without agreeing to descend to a lower level or play any group’s game. The concrete form of the symbol can for the present be left undecided. The essential task is to prepare in silence the suitable spiritual environment so that the symbol of a superior, untouchable authority may be felt and acquire its full significance once again, to which there cannot correspond the stature of any ‘president’ of a republic who can be voted out of office. Neither will the stature of a tribune or a people’s leader be equal to the task, being the holder of a simple, formless individual power that is deprived of every higher chrism and rests instead on the precarious prestige exercised by him over the irrational forces of the masses. It has been given the name ‘Bonapartism’ and its significance is correctly recognised not as the antithesis of demagogic and ‘popular’ democracy, but instead as its logical conclusion: one of the dark apparitions of Spengler’s ‘decline of the West’. This is a new touchstone for our side: a sensibility in respect to all this. Carlyle has already talked of the ‘Valet-World’, who has to be governed by the Sham-Hero, not a real Lord.

## VIII



We must clarify another point in an analogous order of ideas. We are talking about the position to take in response to nationalism and the general idea of fatherland. This discussion is all the more relevant, because today many, trying to salvage what can be saved, would like to take up a sentimental and, at the same time, naturalistic conception of the nation. This notion is foreign to the highest European political tradition and is difficult to reconcile with the idea of the state that we have already discussed. Even leaving to one side the fact that we see the idea of fatherland invoked by the most divergent parties, even by representatives of red subversion, this conception is already in fact not relevant to the times, because, on one hand, we are witnessing the creation of large, supranational blocs, while, on the other, the necessity of finding a European reference point is increasingly apparent, a unifying one beyond the inevitable particularism inherent in the naturalistic idea of the nation and still more of ‘nationalism’. Still, the question of principle is more essential. The political level per se is one of superior unities when compared to unities defined in naturalistic terms like those to which the general notions of nation, fatherland, and people correspond. On this superior level, what unites and what divides is the idea: an idea borne by a definite elite and tending to achieve concrete form in the state. For this Fascist doctrine — that in this aspect remained faithful to the best European political tradition — gave first place to idea and state as compared to nation and people, and understood that nation and people acquire a significance and a form, and participate in a higher grade of existence, only within the state. It is precisely in periods of crisis, like the present, that it is necessary to

hold firmly to this doctrine. Our true fatherland must be recognised in the idea. What counts is not coming from the same land or speaking the same language, but sharing the same idea. This is the foundation and the starting point. To the collectivistic unity of the nation — *des enfants de la patrie* — such as has increasingly dominated ever since the Jacobin revolution, we oppose something like an Order in every situation: men loyal to principles, witnesses of a higher authority and legitimacy that proceed precisely from the idea. As for practical goals, today we can hope to reach a new national solidarity, but to reach it we must not descend to compromises. The presupposition, without which every success would be illusory, is separating and forming a grouping defined by the idea — as political idea and vision of life. There is no other way, especially today. In the midst of ruins we must renew the process of originating; one that, in terms of elites and a symbol of sovereignty and authority, makes a people become one among the traditional great states, like forms rising out of the formless. Not understanding this realism of the idea means remaining on a level that is fundamentally sub-political, that of naturalism and sentimentalism, if not of downright chauvinistic rhetoric.

We must be especially attentive where there is a desire to use national traditions to support our idea, because a complete ‘national history’ of Masonic and anti-traditional inspiration exists that specialises in attributing the Italian national character to the most problematic aspects of our history, beginning with the revolt of the communes with the support of Guelphism. This historical vision emphasises a tendentious ‘Italian character’, in which we cannot and do not wish to recognise ourselves, and which we happily leave to those Italians who, with the ‘Liberation’ and the partisan movement, have celebrated a ‘second Risorgimento.’

Idea, order, elite, state, men of the Order —

we should maintain the battle lines in these terms, for as long as possible.

## I X



Something must be said regarding the problem of culture. Not too much, however. In fact, we do not overvalue culture. What we call ‘worldview’ is not based on books. It is rather an internal form that can be clearer in a person without a particular culture than in an ‘intellectual’ or a writer. We should attribute to the evil consequences of a ‘free culture’ that is within everyone’s reach the fact that the individual is left open to influences of every sort, even when he is the sort of person who cannot be actively engaged with them or know how to discriminate and judge correctly.

This is not the right place to discuss this issue except to point out that, as things stand nowadays, there are specific currents against which today’s youth ought to defend itself internally. We have talked first of a style of uprightness and self-possession. This style implies a just knowledge, and young people in particular should recognise the poison which has been given to an entire generation by the concordant varieties of a distorted and false vision of life that has affected their inner forces. In one form or another, these poisons continue to act in culture, science, sociology, and literature, like so many hotbeds of infection that must be identified and attacked. Apart from historical materialism and economism, of which we have already spoken, among the most important of these are Darwinism, psychoanalysis, and existentialism.

Against Darwinism we must reclaim the fundamental dignity of the human person by recognising its true place, which is not that of

an individual, more or less evolved animal species among so many others, differentiated by ‘natural selection’ and always linked to bestial and primitivistic origins. Rather it is one which can be elevated virtually beyond the biological level. Even if there is less talk of Darwinism today, its substance remains. The biologistic Darwinian myth, in one variant or another, has the precise value of dogma, defended by the anathemas of ‘science’, in the materialism of both Marxist and American civilisation. Modern man has gotten used to this degraded conception, tranquilly recognising himself in it and finding it natural.

Against psychoanalysis we should oppose the ideal of an ego which does not abdicate, and which intends to remain conscious, autonomous, and sovereign in the face of the nocturnal and subterranean part of his soul and the demonic character of sexuality. This ego does not feel either ‘repressed’ or psychotically torn apart, but achieves an equilibrium of all his faculties ordered in accordance with a higher significance of living and acting. An obvious convergence can be noted: authority has been stripped from the conscious principle of the person and the subconscious, the irrational, the ‘collective unconscious’, and similar ideas from psychoanalysis and analogous schools have been given prominence in its place. In the individual, these correspond exactly to what in the modern social and historical world is represented by the crisis, the movement from below, subversion, the revolutionary substitution of the higher by the lower, and the contempt for every principle of authority present in the modern social and historical world. The same tendency is acting on two different levels and the two effects must end up becoming united in turn.

As for existentialism, even if we distinguish what is properly a philosophy — a confused philosophy — that up until yesterday remained relevant only to narrow circles of specialists, it is necessary to recognise in it the spiritual state of a crisis that has become

systematised and fawned upon, being the truth of a shattered and contradictory human type which experiences a liberty by which it does not feel elevated as anguished, tragic fate, and absurdity. Such people feel rather condemned without escape and responsibility to this end in the midst of a world stripped of value and meaning. All this, when the best of Nietzsche had already indicated a way to rediscover a sense of existence and to give oneself a law and a value untouchable even in the face of a radical nihilism, under the banner of a positive existentialism, according to his own expression: that of a 'noble nature.'

Such are the lines of overcoming, which should not be intellectualistic, but lived and realised in their direct significance for the inner life and its own conduct. Getting back on our feet is not possible as long as we remain in any way under the influence of similar forms of a false and twisted way of thinking. Only when you have freed yourself from dependence on drugs can you attain clarity, uprightness, and force.

## X



In the zone that stands between culture and custom it will be a good idea to explain the proper attitude more clearly. From Communism was launched the standing order of the anti-bourgeois attitude that has also been picked up by the field of culture in certain 'committed' intellectual environments. This is a point which we need to see very clearly. Just as bourgeois society is something intermediate, so there are two possible ways to overcome the bourgeoisie, to say No to the bourgeois type, bourgeois civilisation, and the bourgeois spirit and its values. One possibility corresponds to the direction that leads on to the lowest point of all this, towards a

collectivistic and materialised humanity with its 'realism' in the Marxist style: social and proletarian values against 'bourgeois and capitalist decadence'. The other possibility is the direction that combats the bourgeoisie in order to effectively raise oneself beyond it. The men of the new grouping will be, yes, anti-bourgeois, but by means of the aforementioned superior, heroic, and aristocratic conception of existence. They will be anti-bourgeois because they despise the easy life; anti-bourgeois because they will follow not those who promise material advantages, but those who demand all of themselves; anti-bourgeois, finally, because they are not preoccupied with security but love an essential union between life and risk, on all levels, making their own the inexorable character of the naked idea and the precise action. Yet another aspect by which the new man, the basic cell for the movement of reawakening, will be anti-bourgeois and will differentiate himself from the previous generation, is by his intolerance for every form of rhetoric and false idealism, for all those big words that are written with capital letters; for everything that is only gesture, phrase, effect, and scenery. The essential, on the other hand, is a new realism in measuring oneself exactly by the problems that will face us, and in acting so that what counts is not appearance, but being; not gossiping, but accomplishing, in a silent and exact manner, in harmony with related forces and adhering to the command that comes from above.

Whoever knows how to react against the forces of the Left only in the name of idols, the lifestyle, and the mediocre, conformist morality of the bourgeois world, has already lost the battle beforehand. This is not the case for the man who stands on his feet, having already passed through the purifying fire of outer and inner destruction. Just as this man politically is not the instrument of a bourgeois pseudo-reaction, so, in general, he restores forces and ideals older than and superior to the bourgeois world and the economic era. With these forces and ideals he creates the

lines of defence and consolidates the positions from whence, at the right moment, the action of reconstruction will blaze forth.

In regard to this, we also intend to restore a commitment that was not achieved, because we know that there was an anti-bourgeois tendency during the Fascist period that wanted to express itself in a similar direction. Unfortunately, here too the human substance was not equal to the task, and it was possible to make rhetoric even from the steadfast rejection of rhetoric.

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Let us briefly consider a last point: relations with the dominant religion. For us, the secular state, in whatever form, belongs to the past. In particular, we oppose that travesty that has become known in certain circles as the 'ethical state', the product of a broken-winded, spurious, empty 'Idealist' philosophy that attached itself to Fascism, but by its nature was able to give equal support, by the simple device of a 'dialectical' game of dice, to Croce's anti-Fascism.

But if we oppose similar ideologies and the secular state, for us a clerical and clericalising state is equally unacceptable. A religious factor is necessary as a background for a truly heroic conception of life, such as must be essential for our group. It is necessary to feel the evidence in ourselves that beyond this earthly life there is a higher life, because only someone who feels this way possesses a force that cannot be broken or overwhelmed. Only this kind of person will be capable of an absolute leap. When this feeling is lacking, challenging death and placing no value on his own life is possible only in sporadic moments of exaltation and in an unleashing of

irrational forces; nor is there a discipline that can justify itself with a higher and autonomous significance in such an individual. But this spirituality, which ought to be alive among our people, does not need the obligatory dogmatic formulations of a given religious confession. The lifestyle that must be led is not that of Catholic moralism, which aims at little more than a domestication of the human animal based on virtue. Politically, this spirituality can only nourish diffidence before everything that is an integral part of the Christian conception, like humanitarianism, equality, the principle of love, and forgiveness, instead of honour and justice. Certainly, if Catholicism were capable of making a capacity for high asceticism its own, and precisely on that basis to make of the faith the soul of an armed bloc of forces, almost like a resumption of the spirit of the best aspects of the Middle Ages of the Crusades — almost a new order of Templars that will be compact and inexorable against the currents of chaos, surrender, subversion, and the practical materialism of the modern world — in a case like this, and even if at minimum it held firm to the positions of the Syllabus, we would choose it without hesitation. But as things stand — given, that is, the mediocre and essentially bourgeois and parochial level to which practically everything that is confessional religion has descended, and given its surrender to modernism and the growing opening of the post-conciliar Church of 'aggiornamento' to the Left — for our men the mere reference to spirit can suffice, precisely as evidence of a transcendent reality. We must invoke it to inoculate into our force another force, to feel in advance that our struggle is not only a political struggle, and to attract an invisible consecration upon a new world of men and leaders of men.

## CONCLUSION



These are a few essential guidelines for the battle we have to fight, directed especially to young people, so that they may grasp the torch and the commitment from those who have not fallen, learning from the errors of the past and knowing well how to distinguish and revise everything that was affected by and is still affected today by contingent situations. It is essential not to sink to the level of our adversaries, not to be reduced to manipulating simplistic slogans, and not to insist excessively on the past, which, even if worthy of being remembered, does not have the contemporary and impersonal value of the force-idea. It is likewise mandatory not to yield to suggestions of a false politicising realism, which is the weak point of every 'party'. And, yes, our forces must also act in the hand-to-hand political struggle in order to create room for us to manoeuvre in the present situation and to limit the assault, otherwise unopposed, of the forces of the Left. But beyond that it is important, indeed essential to form an elite that can define an idea with intellectual rigor and intellectual intransigence in rapt intensity. We must unite around this idea and affirm it, especially in the form of the new man, the man of the resistance, the man who stands upright among the ruins. If it is granted to go beyond this period of crisis and unsteady and illusory order, the future will look to this man alone. The destiny that the modern world has created for itself is now overwhelming it. Even if it is not fated to be contained, if we stand by these premises, our inner state will be maintained. Whatever happens, what can be done will be done, and we shall belong to that fatherland that no enemy will be able to occupy or destroy.