

Fascism - The Tensile Permanence

By Sam Vaknin

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Nazism - and, by extension, fascism (though the two are by no means identical) - amounted to permanent revolutionary civil wars. Fascist movements were founded, inter alia, on negations and on the militarization of politics. Their raison d'etre and vigor were derived from their rabid opposition to liberalism, communism, conservatism, rationalism, and individualism and from exclusionary racism. It was a symbiotic relationship - self-definition and continued survival by opposition.

Yet, all fascist movements suffered from fatal - though largely preconcerted - ideological tensions. In their drive to become broad, pluralistic, churches (a hallmark of totalitarian movements) - these secular religions often offered contradictory doctrinal fare.

I. Renewal vs. Destruction

The first axis of tension was between renewal and destruction. Fascist parties invariably presented themselves as concerned with the pursuit and realization of a utopian program based on the emergence of a "new man" (in Germany it was a mutation of Nietzsche's Superman). "New", "young", "vital", and "ideal" were pivotal keywords. Destruction was both inevitable (i.e., the removal of the old and corrupt) and desirable (i.e., cathartic, purifying, unifying, and ennobling).

Yet fascism was also nihilistic. It was bipolar: either utopia or death. Hitler instructed Speer to demolish Germany when his dream of a thousand-years Reich crumbled. This mental splitting mechanism (all bad or all good, black or white) is typical of all utopian movements. Similarly, Stalin (not a fascist) embarked on orgies of death and devastation every time he faced an obstacle.

This ever-present tension between construction, renewal, vitalism, and the adoration of nature - and destruction, annihilation, murder, and chaos - was detrimental to the longevity and cohesion of fascist fronts.

II. Individualism vs. Collectivism

A second, more all-pervasive, tension was between self-assertion and what Griffin and Payne call "self transcendence". Fascism was a cult of the Promethean will, of the super-man, above morality, and the shackles of the pernicious materialism, egalitarianism, and rationalism. It was demanded of the New Man to be willful, assertive,

determined, self-motivating, a law unto himself. The New Man, in other words, was supposed to be contemptuously a-social (though not anti-social).

But here, precisely, arose the contradiction. It was society which demanded from the New Man certain traits and the selfless fulfillment of certain obligations and observance of certain duties. The New Man was supposed to transcend egotism and sacrifice himself for the greater, collective, good. In Germany, it was Hitler who embodied this intolerable inconsistency. On the one hand, he was considered to be the reification of the will of the nation and its destiny. On the other hand, he was described as self-denying, self-less, inhumanly altruistic, and a temporal saint martyred on the altar of the German nation.

This doctrinal tension manifested itself also in the economic ideology of fascist movements.

Fascism was often corporatist or syndicalist (and always collectivist). At times, it sounded suspiciously like Leninism-Stalinism. Payne has this to say:

"What fascist movements had in common was the aim of a new functional relationship for the functional and economic systems, eliminating the autonomy (or, in some proposals, the existence) of large-scale capitalism and modern industry, altering the nature of social status, and creating a new communal or reciprocal productive relationship through new priorities, ideals, and extensive governmental control and regulation. The goal of accelerated economic modernization was often espoused ..."

(Stanley G. Payne - A History of Fascism 1914-1945 - University of Wisconsin Press, 1995 - p. 10)

Still, private property was carefully preserved and property rights meticulously enforced. Ownership of assets was considered to be a mode of individualistic expression (and, thus, "self-assertion") not to be tampered with.

This second type of tension transformed many of the fascist organizations into chaotic, mismanaged, corrupt, and a-moral groups, lacking in direction and in self-discipline. They swung ferociously between the pole of malignant individualism and that of lethal collectivism.

III. Utopianism vs. Struggle

Fascism was constantly in the making, eternally half-baked, subject to violent permutations, mutations, and transformations. Fascist movements were "processual" and, thus, in permanent revolution (rather, since fascism was based on the negation of other social forces, in permanent civil war). It was a utopian movement in search of a utopia. Many of the elements of a utopia were there - but hopelessly mangled and mingled and without any coherent blueprint.

In the absence of a rational vision and an orderly plan of action - fascist movements resorted to irrationality, the supernatural, the magical, and to their brand of a secular religion. They emphasized the way -rather than the destination, the struggle - rather

than the attainment, the battle - rather than the victory, the effort - rather than the outcome, or, in short - the Promethean and the Thanatean rather than the Vestal, the kitschy rather than the truly aesthetic.

IV. Organic vs. Decadent

Fascism emphasized rigid social structures - supposedly the ineluctable reflections of biological strictures. As opposed to politics and culture - where fascism was revolutionary and utopian - socially, fascism was reactionary, regressive, and defensive. It was pro-family. One's obligations, functions, and rights were the results of one's "place in society". But fascism was also male chauvinistic, adolescent, latently homosexual ("the cult of virility", the worship of the military), somewhat pornographic (the adoration of the naked body, of "nature", and of the young), and misogynistic. In its horror of its own repressed androgynous "perversions" (i.e., the very decadence it claimed to be eradicating), it employed numerous defense mechanisms (e.g., reaction formation and projective identification). It was gender dysphoric and personality disordered.

V. Elitism vs. Populism

All fascist movements were founded on the equivalent of the Nazi Führerprinzip. The leader - infallible, indestructible, invincible, omnipotent, omniscient, sacrificial - was a creative genius who embodied as well as interpreted the nation's quiddity and fate. His privileged and unerring access to the soul of the fascist movement, to history's grand designs, and to the moral and aesthetic principles underlying it all - made him indispensable and worthy of blind and automatic obedience.

This strongly conflicted with the unmitigated, all-inclusive, all-pervasive, and missionary populism of fascism. Fascism was not egalitarian (see section above). It believed in a fuzzily role-based and class-based system. It was misogynistic, against the old, often against the "other" (ethnic or racial minorities). But, with these exceptions, it embraced one and all and was rather meritocratic. Admittedly, mobility within the fascist parties was either the result of actual achievements and merit or the outcome of nepotism and cronyism - still, fascism was far more egalitarian than most other political movements.

This populist strand did not sit well with the overweening existence of a Duce or a Führer. Tensions erupted now and then but, overall, the Führerprinzip held well.

Fascism's undoing cannot be attributed to either of these inherent contradictions, though they made it brittle and clunky. To understand the downfall of this meteoric latecomer - we must look elsewhere, to the 17th and 18th century.

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Titanium 101.... There is a difference

By Tom Erwin

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Titanium has taken the world of golf by storm. Manufacturers of some of the world's top golf clubheads have chosen to use titanium as their chief ingredient in assembling space age, state-of-the-art components. But why is this?

There are many materials as strong if not stronger than titanium. So why is titanium the material of choice? Titanium is not only one of the "hardest" metals known to man but unlike these other hard materials, titanium is extremely lightweight. Because of these weight characteristics, manufacturing advances have enabled clubhead designers to build drivers of ever increasing size while not being inhibited by added clubhead weight.

Three different types of titanium are used in the manufacturing of today's clubheads: 9-6AL-4V, 15-3-3-3 and SP700. There are 3 characteristics that are used to gauge the quality of each type of titanium. Tensile strength represents the material's resistance to breaking or cracking. The higher the value the more resistant the clubhead is to cracking. Elongation is the percentage each type of titanium will flex or spring upon impact. The higher the percentage, the more spring each metal will experience. HRC Hardness is fairly self-explanatory, exhibiting values that correspond to the metals hardness. The higher this figure, the less likely the metal will dent or become deformed upon use.

When evaluating the types of titanium and the figures used to do so, clearly noted is the separation between 9-6AL-4V and 15-3-3-3 / SP700. A golfer should avoid the purchase and use of 9-6AL-4V as the minimal cost savings (typically \$20 to \$40) do not warrant the inferior playing characteristics. As one can surmise, a clubhead made with 9-6AL-4V is much more likely to crack or dent through continued use. In addition, the elongation percentage is not nearly as high as the others mentioned therefore, a golfer would not experience the potential gains in distance/yardage that he/she would if using either of the other titanium's.

Titanium's 15-3-3-3 and SP700 offer tradeoffs when considering which may be better to seek when making your next purchase. 15-3-3-3 has the highest tensile strength of the 2 but a smaller elongation percentage. Meanwhile, SP700 still possesses considerable tensile strength but does add a few percentage points in the category of elongation. How does this translate? SP700, through its' higher elongation figure, can impart more spring upon impact and thus deliver more energy to the golf ball thereby increasing distance.

So what are the trade off's? Simply put—dollars for distance. Though this figure varies widely, the SP700 titanium is typically a bit more expensive than the 15-3-3-3, usually

on the order of \$20 - \$40. This amount is oftentimes minimized by using SP700 strictly in the face of the driver head. Also, the higher one's clubhead speed, the more realized benefit that could be realized from the increased spring effect of SP700. Golfers with a lower swing speed may not notice substantial yardage gains when comparing the two and therefore may not wish to pay this premium. Truly though, it is hard to go wrong with using either titanium as both offer such incredible playing characteristics, such vast improvements over stainless steel

Please feel free to visit TourPureGolf.com (<http://www.tourpuregolf.com>), where we'll be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding clubheads, titanium, golf technology etc. We have a wealth of knowledge obtained from over 20 years of experience in designing and building golf clubs. We specialize in only the best in tour quality golf clubs and equipment and using only the finest in materials. Inferior grades of titanium will never be tolerated with us.

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Tom Erwin is President and co-founder of TourPureGolf.com (<http://www.tourpuregolf.com>). An avid golfer and club-craftsman for 20+ years, he and the staff at [TourPureGolf.com](http://www.tourpuregolf.com) are strictly focused on improving the golf game of each customer through technology and the proper fit of each golf club.

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