



*Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right*

# **NEOFASCISM IN EUROPE (1945–1989)**

**A LONG CULTURAL JOURNEY**

Matteo Albanese

**ROUTLEDGE**



# Neofascism in Europe (1945–1989)

The text represents a long journey in the debate that characterized the multifaceted political phenomenon of neofascism. From the end of the Second World War until the fall of the communist regimes, groups, parties and individuals have given life to a network of action and thought that has developed, above all, around three major themes that have characterized the thought of historical fascism and that we can find at different latitudes during the course of the long period of time under consideration. Racism, contempt for equality and democracy and an issue linked to the state as an element of modernity, these are the three levels of analysis around which the neofascist movement regroups, debates and acts. The meticulous reconstruction of that debate at a transnational level is the result of a long archival work with unpublished and illuminating papers on the issue of continuity between political cultures. The text can be easily read by students of Humanities and Social Sciences courses but it is also pleasant for fans of the subject.

**Matteo Albanese** is Professor of History of political parties and movements at the University of Padua. He is a researcher at the Institute of Social Sciences in Lisbon, after defending his doctoral thesis at the European University Institute. He has been a visiting scholar at Sciences-po, Paris and at the New School for Social Research in New York. He is the author of essays on political violence and extremism in Italy and abroad.

Among his publications we mention: *Tondini di ferro e bossoli di piombo; una storia sociale delle brigate rosse* (Iron rods and lead cases, a social history of the red brigades) (Pacini 2020) and *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century: Spain, Italy, and the Global Neo-Fascist Network* (Bloomsbury, 2016). He won the ERICS prize from Portuguese academy for this book. Most recently he also published: *The Italian fascist community in Argentina. 1946–1978*, *European History Quarterly*, Sage, Newbury Park, California, n 2/2020

Recently he was the author of a small volume on the death of Aldo Moro at the hands of the Brs published by *Corriere della Sera*.

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# **Neofascism in Europe (1945–1989)**

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**Matteo Albanese**

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# Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vi
<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>1 The idea of Europe and the birth of neofascism</b>	8
<i>A brand-new traditionalism</i>	16
<b>2 Racism between blood and culture</b>	26
<i>Ethnic social policies</i>	28
<i>The anthropological communism of black people</i>	32
<i>Anti-Zionism or anti-Semitism</i>	38
<b>3 Equality, citizenship, and democracy</b>	46
<i>Anti-democratic actors in a democratic environment</i>	51
<i>Anti-capitalism transnationals plot</i>	54
<b>4 Violent landscapes across Atlantic Ocean</b>	63
<i>Neofascism, violence, and terrorism</i>	63
<i>The Iberic liaison and the 1974 change of strategy</i>	69
<i>Culture of violence or shortcut towards the siege of power?</i>	73
<b>5 The 1980s from depression to institutionalization</b>	82
<b>Conclusion</b>	96
<i>Index</i>	108

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# Introduction

If Nazism and fascism were defeated in the spring of 1945, why are we still dealing with them and their legacies?<sup>1</sup> Why these two political categories, together with neofascism, ultra-nationalism, racism, and many other categories which belonged to that specific political field are still so used within the public debate? We may say together with Roberts,<sup>2</sup> Griffin,<sup>3</sup> and many others that political cultures don't really die and even when it happens, they leave a scar in collective consciousness, they mark almost permanently the way we frame reality. This phenomenon is particularly evident and prominent under two circumstances: the political experience was extremely strong and the social system we live in didn't suffer a real revolution that made old scheme of interpretation obsolete. Fascism in this respect is a political fact which belong to modernity and, despite all the attempts to label our times as something different, we are still struggling with the big issue of modernity as such: the participation and inclusion in the political life of masses. Which kind of organization provides freedom and rights without running the risk of falling into chaos? Should it be based on individuals, classes, or nations? Which lines of social, cultural, material, and even spiritual development should we seek for? The idea that the job could define the social position and the political weight within a certain society dated back to the French Revolution, and it went along during the 18th century with the need of destroying the old regime, based on cosmopolitan aristocracies, in the name of the will of the people and their belonging to a certain culture. Soil, blood, and tradition were the holy Triade of the liberal revolutions. The rise of a new subject, the working class, pose the issue I am convinced we are still debating; millions of poor persons climbing the stage of political participation, claiming rights and sometimes openly contesting the economic status quo. This rise in its making posed a crucial challenge to the liberal ideas of *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité*: how to enlarge the political field, how to include this wide mass of people within the democratic space. In his Americanism and Fordism, Antonio Gramsci suggested that the real challenge was exactly this: which political way societies should have chosen between Communism, Fascism, and what he called Americanism to name the liberal capitalistic form. After the end of the Second World War, one of these ways seemed to be almost closed, Fascism, with its ideal of a strong nationalistic idea and its violent and aggressive way to enforce rules within and outside nation-state borders.



## 2 Introduction

Looking carefully into this, we may say that while fascism represented just a political shape and it wasn't bringing with it any economic or social revolution along, as it was for the other two ones, it was doomed to fail. Even if it might seem strange to say Fascism was a weak thought. Yet fascism as ideology, the idea that masses should be brutally ruled, and their spaces of freedom closely guarded in order to prevent any social disruption didn't die together with Hitler or Mussolini. Fascism was defeated, its leader dead or brought to face justice, but fascist ideology was still alive and so were few militants who decided not to give up on their faith. Already during the last months of the war, different plans were put together to save money, and to organize escape routes for whomever wanted to. Especially the ones who were involved in the most despicable crimes needed to avoid a sure sentence to death or to life imprisonment. Key figures of German, Italian, Croatian, and other regimes as Otto Skorzeny, Valerio Borghese, Ante Pavelic, and many others, approximately around 50,000 persons started to secretly plot with allies' information services in order to save their lives and to grant for themselves, their families, and their closest ones, a safe route to countries where they may start a fresh new life. Madrid, Lisbon, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Damascus, and later on Cairo<sup>4</sup> and other countries were more than happy to accept former war criminals that may be useful in the task of the modernization of their own country and because they were ruled by regimes ideologically close to Nazi-Fascism.<sup>5</sup> What is important to underline, and I shall do it again in the subsequent pages, is that these former Nazi militants didn't simply escape to hide under false identity, but they engaged in politics, spread their culture, and propose their own version of the history of the war.

Neofascism was nothing else than this: a strategic project for political hegemony built during a 50-year long debate on three main axes: racism, despise for democracy, and the need of a transnational- and global-level analysis and action. As I shall show in the next pages, from the UK to Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and Argentina dozens of militants, groups, parties developed a tight network of men and ideas which need to be studied and understood. In its own making, this network embraced not only different countries but different interpretations of the historical and political context trying to achieve tactical goals for the neofascist movement as such. Fear of communism was, as a matter of fact, the fuel that made their engines to run especially during the first period, 1946–1974, and the strategy that the neofascist transnational movement pursued was to be seen as a safe bastion against communism. The fight against the red danger could have led, according not only to neofascist groups analysis, few western countries, Italy in the first place due to the strength of its Communist party, to abandon democratic values to embrace a conservative revolution through a coup d'état led by the army and the radical right-wing forces. This kind of outgoing was, by the way, not completely discarded by Washington which looked with an increasing preoccupation to the European situation. The Cold War is, as a matter of fact, the contest that shaped the first part of this long story of extremism; we must say that anti-Communism remained as a powerful tool of propaganda way beyond the moment of maximum tension between the two superpowers and it was used until the end of the Soviet

regimes and sometimes even after that. Yet the reason is both political and cultural; as we were saying political cultures are a weird kind of creatures able to survive their natural dead, to feed of new fears and to expand the borders of their insightful meaning, to stretch their semantic adoption in order to appear necessary and to survive. In this sense, it is quite interesting to look at the way in which a singular character as Berlusconi could use anti-Communism in his propaganda to address every enemy he faced. When a category became so popular to address the enemy is quite easy to, use it also in different contests and communism fits perfectly this requirement. The other point is related with a political opportunism which is not something new when we encounter fascism; anti-communism was, again, a widespread feeling across classes and generations, and exploiting this fear gave to neofascist message the possibility to be heard way beyond their political space. Whether the western countries' secret services were keen to protect former criminals in order to use them against the new enemy it meant for neofascist militants not just a way to save their life but a way to rebuild a political credibility. We are criminals but the red ones are way worse than us. Especially in countries as Italy and France, there wasn't simply the fear of a Soviet invasion but the consciousness of a strong inner enemy. The spectre of a civil war was a powerful tool to push people and organizations which belonged to a wide area of conservatism to welcome neofascist as a necessary evil. Another crucial passport of decency came, then, from the Catholic Church which offered safe way out from Europe to well-known criminals and condemned communism any given Sunday from altars all around the globe. To be fair is important to remind the thousands of catholic who fought in the Resistance movements across Europe and the many movements which tried to merge Catholicism with advanced social claims of the lower classes both in Europe and in every corner of the world; nevertheless, we shouldn't forget that Catholicism and its organizations are again a complex galaxy where stand side by side ultra-leftist militants and pro-Nazi groups such as *Alleanza Cattolica Tradizionalista* in Italy or *Guerrilleros de Christo Rey* in Spain just to mention two of them.<sup>6</sup> The involvement of bishops and cardinals in the plan to made Nazi escape safely from Europe remains a very controversial part of this story. The escape routes which allowed thousands of Nazi criminals to fly in South America, in Spain, Portugal, and the Middle East was established during the last months of the war and remained active for at least fifteen years after its end. Supported by literature and primary source, we may nowadays overlap these escape routes and the safe heavens built by this network with the activities of neofascism. The old survivors decided not simply to join western structures of counter guerrilla and intelligence but to use this opportunity to create and consolidate a political cultural, and operative organizations. Within this galaxy of individuals, groups, and parties, a new generation who didn't fight during the war started to imagine a political space where neofascism could grow.<sup>7</sup> In the following pages, I shall show how intense and articulated the debate within this galaxy was and how neofascism could be seen as a hegemonic transnational project. Following the development of the rich discussion on different primary sources collected in many different countries is my intention to look at neofascism from both sides: a political culture

#### 4 *Introduction*

with its resilience and a political network of activism able to adjust its message and its theoretical elaboration to the new scenario that Cold War and globalization brought along. Neofascism has been, and may be still is, a living creature a political predator who try to exploit any open space in front of it. In this way, it hasn't been so different from historical fascism which combined anti-modernism and a formidable application of technologies when it comes to propaganda. From this contradiction for its being a double-head sort of mythological character fascism was hard to define. Yet we are still struggling, as scholars, between the Sternhell<sup>8</sup> and Payne<sup>9</sup> interpretation, between modernity and anti-modernity of the Nazi-fascist phenomena. I am not fully backing the Sorelian roots of fascism, but I am more and more convinced that fascism had something to do with modernity in many of its political and cultural implications. The idea of an intimate connection between soil and blood, from where we may descend the ideas of nationalism and races, it is something deeply rooted in the European culture of the XIX century. At the same time while many of the Payne arguments on fascism, and especially on Nazism, were largely accepted the point on anti-traditionalism is something I couldn't find in neofascism. Yet the complicated entanglement between modern and anti-modern aspects of this composite and contradictory political culture is something we still have to reflect on.

This book does not aim to solve this issue but shows the resilience of fascist political culture through the decades. At the same time while I say that this permanency is something, I encountered in the neofascist debate the question on the very nature of fascism rise almost on its own: is it possible for an anti-modern culture to resist the ruins of the Second World War and to survive within the fast cycle of economic, social, and political changes we labelled as globalization? At the same time, how can we say that neofascism was a political shape of modernity when it clearly claims for a closed ethnic-based and even chaste organized society?

These and many other questions are still open in historiographical debate; this book tries to face a single aspect of these bigger issues; dividing strategy from tactic, I think that the strategic thinking of neofascism is completely within the Sternhell view of anti-modernism. As a matter of fact, historians, as Roger Griffin and Mosse,<sup>10</sup> analysed fascism from a very similar perspective and even De Felice was, somehow, agree with Sternhell on this point. At the same time, the way I communicate an ideology does affect it, and the usage of modern media, the enthusiasm for modernity, and the idea of science exploitation to increase the power of Totalitarian State were not simple tools, but they were a part of that culture. In this respect, neofascism was no different from its predecessor. Another crucial point this work wants to address is the transnational dimension of neofascism; as we said fascism was transnational as well, as Marco Cuzzi, Andrea Mammone, Federico Finchelstein, and many others already proved but neofascism had to face the brutal acceleration of globalization processes. Looking at these transformations, we should take into account not just the mere economic sphere but to reflect on the deep changes that occurred and that are still happening to the link between nation and state. For almost a century, if we take the

temporal division suggested by Arno Mayer of modernity, we spoke about nation-state almost as something fully entangled into one another; after the long ride of nationalistic ideology and revolutions during the whole XIX century, we got used to think these two categories almost as one. The modern state could have risen only after defeating the transnational empires to give birth to the dream of nations: the union among people, soil, and traditions. The dream of Leviathan was coming true and single states were emerging together with a new ruling class who demand political power and participation in the name of revolutionary nationalistic ideas. The scenario after the end of the Second World War was rapidly changing. As Harold James brilliantly pointed out in his works, the run for the internationalization of capitals started back stronger than ever immediately after the moment of totalitarianism at least in the western countries. The Bretton Woods agreements were abandoned exactly when the impulse of reconstruction was fading away at the beginning of the 1970s; it adjusted for three decades some distortion which could have led to other financial and economic tension which may indirectly fuel the nationalistic ideology that was considered partially guilty of the development of fascism and Nazism. Despite these corrections, the integrations of markets, both of goods and men, became faster and faster during the second half of the XX century. This integration left a smaller space to the states to regulate these movements and claim for the birth of supranational agents such as the European Union. Free market was thought as the very base of a harmonic development without the risks of a fully unrulèd challenge among states. Western countries led by the political, military, and economical domination of the USA started a process of integration that had a natural side effect, that is, the loss of power of the single nations. How neofascism did face this crucial change? On one side, as I shall show in the next pages, they embraced the idea of a European Union because they saw in this a way out from the US hegemony; it has to be remembered again that former fascists looked at the old allies as a bastion against communism but at the same time as the old enemy who defeated the old fascist regimes. Gentile rightly underline how fascism was a state religion and the very nature of totalitarianism lay in the absolute power given to the state strictly under the control of the party; neofascism in this respect had to face a completely different context where they were somehow trapped between an ultra-nationalistic heritage, the loss of power of the state towards supranational actors which they back up for pure anti-US feelings, and a growing pressure from the ruling classes they wanted to hegemonize who asked for less and less control on their business. These are the main reasons why neofascism was different to historical fascism due to the global scenario they were living in; of course, the small detail of the historical defeat of Nazi and fascist regimes played a crucial role, but I think it is nothing but wrong to label neofascism as a pure merging of veterans desperately attached to the good old days. First of all, I am saying this because I am convinced that if neofascism would have been a simple issue of veteranism, it could have already gone in dust after the death of the ones who actually fought the war and had a living memory of the past regimes;<sup>11</sup> as we can say, on the contrary, we still have to face growing in numbers neofascist actors in our societies. Second, but not less important, it

## 6 Introduction

would have meant to deny the importance of a solid presence through the decades of a galaxy of political actors that had a vivid and vibrant transnational debate and repertoire of action. Neofascism was a long run project thought and shaped by a wide galaxy of actors to replace the old fascism which fell dramatically and in order to face the new challenges of globalization. Neofascism reacted to the process of disentanglement of the state from the nation claiming the primacy of the nation and its values over the regulatory role of the state. Neofascism is, in this sense, a primal force, destructive and bearer of a Behemothian soul; the constant search for chaos is not only a romantic breath of hymns to violence and war but a tactical step necessary to overcome the bourgeois form of domination of modernity. It is therefore no coincidence that among the many aspects of fascist ideology, the neofascist culture decides to carry on above all three that are well situated within a reasoning that thinks of a fight against communism only as an opportunity to build a transnational network, of communities of ‘believers and fighters’ who, ultimately, will have to overthrow bourgeois modernity. These three elements as already mentioned are transnational communitarianism, racism, and the end of democracy based on equality. All these elements question the complexity of liberal democracy and its complex relationship between political power and instances from below; the idea of a nationalism without a state capable of being self-sufficient but which needs transnational elements, such as the European community, may make the return to small homogeneous communities seem a simple solution to the distortions of the capitalist economy. It goes without saying that within these small homogeneous communities, culturally and racially, there will be no need for representation and that within the assembly mechanism of direct democracy, the strongest will tend to emerge ‘naturally’. Seen from this perspective, representative democracy loses its bases and recourse to parties, literally tools that divide society and the living body of the nation, are of no use. The leader will appear from the magma of direct democracy, the one who alone is able to intercept, feel, and interpret the most hidden needs of the people.

A transnational community with a specific objective, ideological, cultural, and propagandistic tools, refined during the 1930s and 1940s that could rely, at least until the second half of the 1970s, on authoritarian regimes scattered throughout Europe and the world and with whom he had political, economic, and cultural relations: this is the plural, collective but not unitary subject that this work deals with. A community that also debates bitterly, that is divided, that risks implosion several times but that always finds strategic unity around the 3 points I have outlined. However, we must not think of these points as totems around which to sacrifice politics. Politics is continuous adjustment, analysis, and often compromise. Neofascism is not pure testimony, but construction of cultural hegemony on the wider field of international anti-communism.

## Notes

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- 2 D. Roberts, *Fascist Interactions. Proposals for a New Approach to Fascism and Its Era, 1919–1945*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016.
- 3 Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.
- 4 Matteo Albanese and Pablo Del Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- 5 Giuseppe Parlato, *Fascisti Senza Mussolini: Le Origini del Neofascismo in Italia, 1943–1948*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006; Matteo Sanfilippo, *Gli italiani in Brasile*, Viterbo: Editore Sette Città, 2010; Andrea Mammone, Emmanuel Godin and Brian Jenkins (Eds.), *Mapping the Extreme Right in Contemporary Europe: From Local to Transnational*, Oxford: Routledge, 2012; Andrea Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015; Fededrico Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism. Ideology, Violence and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919–1945*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
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- 7 L. Weinberg, "Italian Neo-Fascist Terrorism: A Comparative Perspective in Terror Form Extreme Right", in T. Bjórgo (Ed.), *Terror from the Extreme Right*, London: Routledge, 2013.
- 8 Zeev Sternhell, *Les Anti-Lumières: du XVIIIe siècle à la guerre froide*, Paris: Fayard, 2006; nuova ed. ampliata, Paris: Gallimard, 2010.
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# 1 The idea of Europe and the birth of neofascism

At the beginning of 1946, Europe was a pile of rubble. The reconstruction after the end of the biggest human conflict ever was started, but the road to provide shelter to who's lost it, to help with medical care and food millions of former soldiers walking back from sidereal distances, was still very long. The moral insecurity and the general feeling about an uncertain future accompanied the material misery. The role of the political parties, in charge or not, was hard to handle and it had as main goal the ideological construction of Europe. Within the first stirrings of the Cold War, European parties had to find a way to ensure peace and prosperity to their citizens. Two big narrations, two main ideologies, remained victorious on the battlefield: communism with its promise of a perfect world on earth where thanks to the seize of the means of production, misery, and exploitation would have been banned, and liberal democracy with its faith in free individuals who merge to build up a leisured society based on wealth that comes from hard work and open democracy. The third option, fascism, was defeated for good. Fascism with its emphasis on nationalism, violence, and a sort of cult for the leader was buried under the pile of rubble. Was it so? Was really fascism defeated? In his *Prisons Notebooks*, Antonio Gramsci described fascism as one of the possible ways for the masses to enter modernity;<sup>1</sup> that path was accompanied by a terrible war and for this reason was abandoned. But what about modernity? Was it over? Of course not. Apparently, the course of history decided that fascism was not a good way to solve the issue of the masses participation in politics that by the way remain one of the crucial issues of our time. In a way, history dealt with fascism but not with fascist. Because even after the defeat, there were few millions of fascists around Europe. All over the continent fascist parties were born. And even after the end of the war, two European countries, Spain and Portugal, were ruled by authoritarian regimes close to fascism. One of the aftermaths of the end of the war was the end of fascism; nobody could even claim himself as fascist in the great majority of Europe. Thousands of people tried to escape from communism in the countries where the Red Army arrived, from the Nuremberg trials in Germany and Austria. In Italy, the situation was a bit more complex. After more than 20 years of regime, counting in them also the Salò period, purging the nation from fascism and from fascist seemed to be an extremely difficult operation.<sup>2</sup> This book is not dealing with the Italian transition to democracy, but it is important to say at

least three things about it in order to understand why the first neofascist party was born in Italy in 1946. First of all, the Italian liberation process engaged Allies and partisans in a 20-month fight. During these months, as in the North, partisan's groups were fighting against the Social Republic of Salò (the Nazi puppet State, officially ruled by Mussolini freed from the prison by the Schutzstaffel (SS) special assault groups led by Otto Skorzeny) in the South, with the fast victory of the Allies forces, many former fascists organized an underground resistance against the King who betrayed the Duce and, of course, against the Allies and the Committee for the National Liberation. Chief of this organization, created by Carlo Scorza, was the Prince Valerio Pignatelli and his wife, Princess Pignatelli,<sup>3</sup> who served as agent. In those days, June 1944, after the liberation of Rome, Scorza, Pignatelli, and Junio Valerio Borghese, the chief of the assault groups of the RSI-XMAS, decided to start with the help of the German a secret operation of infiltration of fascist behind the enemy lines.<sup>4</sup> The *Cypresse* organization, this was the name of the group, had as one of the main goals to gathered intelligence from fascist elements in the South who pretending to be loyal to the King, were wearing a double hat. In the North of Italy on the other hand, the liberation war was cruel and bloody and constellated by episodes of genocides towards the Italian Jew minority and massacres committed both by the Nazi and by Italian fascist not only against partisan troops but quite often spreading fears with terrorist attacks against armless civilians. Within this context, immediately after the end of the war, Palmiro Togliatti, political secretary of the Italian Communist Party and at that time Ministry of Justice, decided to sign a general amnesty. In front of a very difficult decision, the Italian provisional government decided not to go through a long political and criminal mass process of the fascist regime and his members but to persecute only the few fascists who committed cruel crimes as the ones against humanity and in few cases war crimes. It is important to remind that quite no German officers were persecuted and condemned in Italy for the atrocity they order and committed during the war. This was the context that witness the birth of Italian Social Movement (MSI) on 26 December 1946. In the same country, where fascism was born, a neofascist party was legally accepted. From that moment, many fascist movements around Europe started to look at MSI as an essential actor of neofascism at transnational level.<sup>5</sup> The second issue about Italy was the strength of the communist party. The cultural and political hegemony of the communist party on the resistance movement has been well documented over the years; it is also important to underline that also the Italian Socialist party was strong and rooted in Italy. In this respect, it is quite obvious to think about the Cold War dynamics that started according to some historians even before the end of the Second World War with the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan. From that moment on the policy of containment of communism brought alongside with it the dark shadow of another doctrine: the rolling back.<sup>6</sup> Communism slowly became an evil ideology with a precise scheme to spread all over the globe. In many countries, communist parties were blossoming and Italy was put under the microscope. A country that belonged to the western block, 180 miles away from Hungary and with a shared border with Yugoslavia, could not have the biggest



communist party in the continent. In this respect, we should look at the OSS documents that talk about the way Borghese approached them already in the end of 1944. Borghese was brought from Milan to Rome and interrogated during the last days of May 1945;<sup>7</sup> according to sources, his name was evaluated for Stay Behind organization, but he didn't pass the test. We will see how that test didn't prevent the US intelligence agency to cooperate with him lately. What is important here is to show how some important pieces of the complicated and articulated puzzle of the Cold War were already on the move. The third issue has to do with the transnational level of fascism and neofascism. The transnational dimension of fascism and neofascism is a field of study that has become richer over the past decade; many historians dealt with the contacts, formal and informal, between regimes, movements,<sup>8</sup> but also as Andrews reminded in his last work, among single individuals who shared ideology, practices, and experiences. This cultural and political circulation started already in the late 1920s by a Mussolini initiative to increase as soon as the Nazism reached the power in Germany. This feature of fascist ideology took even more on importance while the war was finishing and, of course, afterwards. Italy was the first country with a recognized neofascist political party, the same country where fascism was born, where the strongest communist party was present and a place where the Cold War started even before the end of the Second World War. A country of passage, for thousands of former Nazi and fascist from all over Europe. A country from where the neofascist rise could start, a country from where starting, within a transnational perspective, to think about Europe. Europe was a frontier, a secured border between two worlds, two mentalities, cultures, and eventually two mortal enemies. The atomic deterrence would have turned the confrontation between the two super-powers an ideological, cultural, psychological one, especially within Europe. This does not mean that in Europe, massacre or homicide didn't happen but, except for the Berlin situation, the tension between the two major actors were somehow ruled by an unwritten code. Among these fading codes and rules neofascism was born, supported in some moments as a perfect anti-communist force, and tolerated as a minor problem. Within this space, Europe, fascist started to re-think their ideology and to adapt it to the new global environment. Within this new scenario, fascism became, slowly, neofascism and the idea of a unitarian idea of Europe the one of a place where a third way, between capitalism and communism, could develop and may win. Europe didn't represent the Hitlerian dream of the fortress with the stone walls to defend it; Europe became suddenly an occasion for neofascism to rethink their all strategy; Europe could be turned into an incubator for a new political model based on an old fashion design.<sup>9</sup>

In a way, fascism was transnational from the very beginning and it developed an idea of Europe as a fortress from which the fascist revolution would have won the whole planet. This passage is crucial: fascism was a revolutionary totalitarian ideology.<sup>10</sup> Despite its nationalism the idea of ruling the entire world was always present.<sup>11</sup> Fascism was a religion, Emilio Gentile said, and as every other religion did have an eschatological mission, fascists wanted to save the humankind establishing a new order.<sup>12</sup> This is one of the key features around which we may find

a sort of continuity between fascism and neofascism. Fascism has been a thick political and ideological galaxy that crossed decades, countries, times of relative peace, and devastating conflicts to a global scale; it is quite impossible to reach a consolidate definition. I shall not even try to step into this enormous debate; I think, it is important to remind that almost every scholar who tried to define fascism had to choose between a long list of features or to a reductive key aspect. Some authors focused on its complicated relationship with Marxism, looking at fascism as an illegitimate child of revolutionary syndicalism, some others looked at its nationalism and its violent attitude. Marxist theorists saw in fascism the ultimate sin of capitalism and its last resource in time of mass mobilization. Some others decided that fascism wasn't even a real ideology; in this respect, I think that Sternhell answer to this point is the most appropriate.<sup>13</sup> For someone, fascism was a revolutionary fact, as for others, it was the sign of a reactionary tendency of society. As I said, I am not entering this issue, but just for the sake of clearness, I would like to say that fascism and neofascism are going to be treated in this book as historical facts and from a very strict perspective. The context in which fascism was born is very different from the Cold War scenario and fascist militants did know that. They adjusted their vision, ideology, and repertoire of action accordingly. This wasn't even a peculiarity of neofascism. If we look at the position of Mussolini or Hitler on religion and especially on Catholicism, we may easily see how the doctrine and ideology was bending to serve the *realpolitik* more than once. In this respect, it is quite obvious that in its change from fascism to neofascism, from regime back to movement, we may say, it changed. I am not saying that there was no continuity on the contrary, I am deeply convinced that some important features of the fascist thought of its mentality passed from one generation to the next, what I am saying is that fascism (and neofascism) is what it does as Angelo Tasca already wrote in 1950. Rather than following a strict ideological perspective, I would suggest that there are at least three main features that many of the neofascist movements shared along their long story with other organizations which were not strictly fascist or neofascist but suffered the hegemony of the neofascist groups thought or simply could find common ground with them. That's why I decided to use the category of mentality instead of ideology; the capability of the neofascist groups to create a common sense around some features of their view of life, values, and identity in a brand-new world is my main interest here. In this sense, the idea of Europe is crucial and looks on how the neofascist galaxy unroll this idea using mythology, propaganda, and rituals in order to make their idea popular and common-sensed is particularly important.

The reflection about Europe started almost immediately; it is an article within Mosley's<sup>14</sup> bulletin of January–February 1947 one of the most interesting case. The open article, signed by Mosley himself, was titled: 'The Extension of Patriotism: Union of Europe and the Idea of Kinship'. We were divided, and we were conquered, says Mosley in the first lines of his long article, and Europe must return to be a space of tradition, a living battlefield against the Soviet Union and the USA. He goes reminding his readers that socialism put on the top who was supposed to remain at the bottom (of the social pyramid) and that the right men of

Europe should replace it (socialism) with universalism.<sup>15</sup> Also, in Germany where Nazi parties were forbidden by the law, former regime's members decided to act in order to defend the motherland from the communist. According to the documents of the British Foreign Office, Werner Naumann, who had been the secretary of the Chancellery of Goebbels to the Ministry of Nazi Propaganda, had tried to infiltrate the conservative parties of West Germany and was, for this reason, arrested by the British services who had discovered the plot. Together with Naumann, the organization of the plot included, among others, Hans Ulrich Remer, a German air ace who allegedly destroyed about 500 Russian planes during the war. His fame was so solid that he convinced the British themselves in 1945 to call him with them as a consultant to the RAF. Both Naumann and Remer had in mind the infiltration of German conservative parties with the aim of regaining Germany a role in European politics that would follow the old Hitlerian ideas of fortress Europe. The propaganda carried out by their party, Deutsche Reichspartei, founded in 1950 at the national level but present in Lower Saxony since 1946, was based, among other things, on the leading role of a strong and independent Germany within a finally unified and third Europe force between the USA and the USSR. After the English intelligence services discovered their plan, Remer flew to Argentina where he worked for the military regime of Peron until 1953.<sup>16</sup> The debate started immediately as very fast was the tempt to give to the European forces of the neofascist fields a place of international coordination. The first tempt of building this coordination dated 1950 when Per Enghdal, a Swedish fascist who was extremely active in the Scandinavian scene with his publications, organized at his own place, in Malmo, the first meeting of the European Social Movement (MSE).<sup>17</sup> Even if the first meeting took place in 1950, and the organization was organized in 1951, it goes alone that the contact that Enghdal had to develop dated before those years. The Swedish fascist did have a considerable number of contacts and one of the most important one, also from a political and ideological point of view, it was with Maurice Bardèche. Bardèche was already recognized within the political field of fascism and neofascism not only for being a good writer who described, from the Francoist point of view, the Spanish Civil war but also for his relationship with Robert Brasillach, possibly the most important intellectual of the fascist scene in France. Brasillach wasn't simply a collaborator and an anti-Semite who wrote pages and pages of propaganda on the newspaper *Je suis partout*, but also one of the first intellectuals in France who started to preach the need for the fascist movement to become a real transnational reality. Brasillach was one of the first right-wing intellectuals to break the nationalist taboo in France and because of that, he also had a long and strong quarrel against Maurice Maurras. Maurras himself will become a strong partisan of the transnational fascism after the end of the War. Bardèche who got married with Brasillach sister was himself a fervent fascist and he wrote in 1947 a book titled *Nuremberg ou la terre promise* which was one of the first samples of historical negationism. In 1952, Bardèche started the publication of *Défense de l'Occident*.<sup>18</sup> We will deal with this publication, that lasted until 1982, later. For now, it is important to define who the funders of the MSE were. Together with Enghdal, who had contacts also

with the Princess Pignatelli and her organization, in Malmo, we can find Bardèche, Professor Massa and according to Graham Macklin, Augusto De Marsanich at that time general secretary of MSI<sup>19</sup> and Karl-Heinz Priester at that time influential member of the National Democratic Party of Germany.<sup>20</sup> MSE experiment was far from being a success; many differences were present among the participants. Nationalism was still a strong feeling few years after the war; nevertheless, powerful forces were on the move and the neofascists didn't live in a closed box. They knew that a more integrated organization was necessary at least to reinforce an anti-communist block. In a letter that Alain Geoffrey D'Escos, a French spy for Nazi during the war and a collaborator of Italian Army Intelligence (SIFAR) after the war, sent to Princess Pignatelli, he explained the idea of involving the Parti Républicain de la Liberté and Mutter in person within MSE gave us an idea of the way in which neofascism tried from the very beginning to create the wide mentality I am describing. André Mutter was not a fascist; he fought against Nazism, he participated actively in the French Resistance Movement. but at the same time, after the war, he represented one of the streams of the right-wing French politics before Poujadism. Yet as it happened in Italy, in Germany, also in French, the strategy of the former fascist was to widen their discourse towards parties as PRL, which was the fourth French political party until 1951 when it merged with the National Centre for the Independent and Peasants. The core of PRL party was the alliance between working classes and entrepreneurs in order to avoid the excess of socialism; they agreed on the state intervention in economy, and they were against nationalizations. They were strongly rooted among peasants and small landowners, and they had a similar rhetoric of the Italian *Uomo Qualunque* (Everyman). The call for the defence of the peasants against the evil multinational, that eventually became one of the main features of Poujadism, was already present in these movements immediately after the war. On this ground, neofascists enrolled their strategy of closeness to other non-fascist groups trying to exercise their political and ideological hegemony. It is not a case if one of the future leaders of the French neofascism, Jean Marie Le Pen, started his political career being elected with the Poujad party in 1956.<sup>21</sup> The idea of building a political representation for the middleclass threatened by internationalization process was one of the cores of the neofascist groups as at the same time, they developed their own vision of Europe. Yet Bradeche on his revue started in 1953 writing down an important article where he said clearly that the Europe community, they have in mind was not a simple NATO tool, they want a Europe which should have been able of erasing any form of communism and crypto communism but also based on production and against financial speculation.<sup>22</sup> They wanted to fight back the Strasbourg bureaucratic system that was serving the great financial powers that stand against workers. Bradeche was pretty clear in his vision, and in the vision that the journal was promoting, saying that Europe should become a clear political project against communism but also against liberalism. Europe is not the place for merchants and parasites, Europe is the place where workers and patrons go along in the name of the common wellbeing. Europe should become a continent that look at Africa in the name of the common interests; Europe should not deny its colonial past but

work together to guide the newborn African states. In this respect, it is extremely interesting to look at a French document speaking about the rise of a *Defense de L'Occident* group in Alger in 1956. At this point, it sounds also extremely interesting to underline how in 1957 some members of these groups in Alegria participated in a MSE reunion in Germany. In the middle of the Algerian war, some French fascist decided to engage into this organization that will include shortly after *Organisation de l'Armée Secrete* (OAS) members.<sup>23</sup> The process of European Union construction together with the decolonization wars was the new reality with the neofascist movements had to cope. The idea of a united Europe as third force between the USA and the SSR a place where class struggle and liberalism were overthrown in the name of the holy national interests was the answer of neofascism to the new scenario. It is not difficult to find in these political statements a line of continuity with the old fascist way but things on the ground were way more complicated. Yet when I suggest looking at neofascism as a culture and a mentality, I had in mind exactly this process of hegemony building on a cultural base and the capability of these forces to adapt their vision to the new situation. When I refer to culture and to galaxy, I want to stress the large amount of small local groups that acted, wrote, and were present in any way across Europe. Just to run small samples: according to Italian police in September 1960 in Como, there was a meeting of former fighters from Italy, Austrian, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and Swiss militants. Among them were former army high officers, fascists, and Nazi sympathizers who were trying to help the ones still in prison for crimes committed during the Second World War.<sup>24</sup> Between the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, at least until 1962, we may find many pages within the French police files that speak about the support and the engagement of simple citizens with OAS local organizations. A pharmacist in the north of the country plotted with few friends to put a bomb on a railway to claim Algeria as a part of France.<sup>25</sup> Professors of high school, merchants, clerks, it is a long list of common citizen, probably already sympathizers for the right-wing, who decided to mobilize on that topic. It is extremely interesting the rhetoric used by the OAS and by the groups close to it to describe Algeria, and Africa in general, as a part of Europe.<sup>26</sup> Algeria was the land from where the real French patriots started to free the country from the Nazi invasion; now neofascists were using nationalist and republican words in order to justify the belonging of Algeria to France. This is one of the many contradictions neofascist fell in; but they are as well a symptom of the capability of adaptation of neofascism to new scenarios. Algeria became at the same time the symbol of a victory during the Second World War and the neofascist; even if some of them were proudly and openly sided with the enemy, they were using this to describe how weak the democratic institutions which were giving up to Algeria were. This line of reasoning was not only French, as this cultural offensive was not confined within any national border, but a shared political position taken by many different neofascist force in Europe. To better understand, we can easily look at another group – *Jeune Europe* (JE) – fully integrated within the galaxy we are describing since the second half of the 1960s. The organization was settled by Jean Thiriart who was during the Second World War period a militant

of *Amis du Grand Reich allemande*.<sup>27</sup> Because of that, he was persecuted as a collaborationist after the war. Thiriart can be considered an exponent of the national Bolshevism, a current which tried to merge together some aspects of the Nazi thought and the Leninist one. JE due to its opposition to the *European abandon process of Africa* was founded during the fight to free Congo from the Belgian presence. As it happened in France with another political movements called Occident which was in favour of the OAS and its terrorist actions in Algeria in order not to free that country. It is not a case if the founder of Occident, founded in 1964, was Pierre Sidos the former president of another group named Jeune Nation.<sup>28</sup> Sidos was also the president of JE in France. This overlapping was a very common situation in the extreme right-wing political field. Due to the small numbers of militants, some of them used to have double or even triple militancy in different even if contiguous groups.<sup>29</sup> Thiriart shifted from being against the decolonization of Congo to support any single battle in Africa in the name of anti-communism and on the concept that nationalism was a necessary step for African nations before becoming part of a Euro-Asiatic-African block against communism and liberalism. JE made also an attempt to sign a pact with the OAS but due to the strong nationalism of the French, JE was not able to convince them to join the organization as such. At the same time, Thiriart was extremely active and present on the European level; we can find him in Italy, in Venice to be precise, in 1962 where together with Mosley and Strasser the National Party of Europe was founded.<sup>30</sup> Italy at that time was one of the main knots of the web I am describing; the presence of MSI and a high number of organizations in neofascism political area together with a certain benevolent attitude of the Italian State apparatuses helped the neofascist groups to find easy to organize international meetings and rallies. Yet as we were saying about the presence of OAS as a national fact also the presence of groups like Ordine Nuovo (new Order) was a national fact as its international engagement. In March 1964, a meeting between Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese neofascist belonging to different organizations, Ordine Nuovo Jovem Europa (Portuguese branch of JE) and the Doctrinal Centre Luis Antonio (Spanish Falangist group), took place in Sicily.<sup>31</sup> Yet the main discourse in this and in many other meetings was about the construction of Europe and the relationships with the Mediterranean countries. During this specific Italian meeting, the birth of a new journal was discussed and according to the report of the Italian police, this endeavour should have started thanks to French money. There are three crucial points I would like to stress before going forward. First of all, all these militants who used to give real life to all these organizations were both present within the international level and on the local scale. A document of the Italian police reminds us how Bruschi, one of the pillars of the Italian neofascist Europeanism, was present in Milan to a local reunion that had the goal to unify different groups.<sup>32</sup> These militants, all around Europe, were incredibly active; that kind of engagement should not be underestimated. When we speak about neofascist militants, we describe real believers as in ON statute, they were part of an organization of fighters and believers. Second, we always take into account the international context: Cold War fear for the communist to win was vivid in their everyday action and it

shaped the debate. The role of the USA as bulwark against communism was at the core of almost any discussion about Europe and the role of neofascism as a revolutionary force. The third point has to do with this belief in a revolutionary way to overthrow the democratic system. As I said neofascism was a galaxy of groups and ideologies; within this galaxy, we may find not simply nuances and small differences on some positions but sometimes even opposite views in some issues. At the same time, the common mentality, deployed especially on the three points I am analysing in this work, made possible for these movements to work together. Positions and ideas may easily change in respect to the political situation. Just as a sample in respect to NATO and anti-communist feelings, certainly shared by everyone, if we look at Germany, we may find Gottlob Berger. He was a former SS; since 1936, he spent years in jail after the end of the war and I have no doubt Berger used to embrace any single passage of the Nazi doctrine including the fortress Europe. As a consequence of this, he never stopped to consider the USA as an enemy even when writing articles on how NATO should have utilized former Waffen-SS as a valuable resource, and he joined *Nation Europa* in 1965. Yet Hans Ulrich Rudel, former Luftwaffe ace, who went to Argentina after the war and helped Peron in shaping his air-force, was active in Mosley organization 'Friends of Europe'. In 1960, he wanted to attend an international rally in London, but the Foreign Office denied him the permission to enter the UK.<sup>33</sup> Europe was at the core of the neofascist ideology and mentality the defence of European values, such as Christianity, led these groups to act as an incredible counter force to communism. Within the context of the Cold War, one of the issues was if these forces could have been domesticated and used against the enemy. The 1960s was in any case a turning point in the history of the XX century and the history of neofascism is not different. A new generation was coming on the stage, new cultures were rising, and a new global mentality was growing not only among left-wing young people but also within the neofascist galaxy. The eruption of 1968 was just the most visible sign of a long process of changes.

### **A brand-new traditionalism**

As I was saying, few lines above neofascism was made of a large number of parties, groups, movements, and sometimes a single individual. Every actor of this galaxy brought to the transnational level, experiences, ideas, practices, and reflections. It is not difficult then to imagine how fragmented the scene was. The main line of division the issue that divided neofascist actors in two main 'families' was the Cold War. Especially after 1962 and the defeat of the OAS in Algeria, the decolonization process opened the field to the debate on which kind of position should have been taken in relation with the USA. Was the USA still an enemy or the last hope for millions of people not to surrender to communism? Former French army, Portuguese regime that was a member of NATO, the Italian ON, and others decided to engage themselves in this mortal battle against communism worldwide. Others as Mosley himself and his group, National Avant-Garde (AN) an Italian group, JE and its transnational branches, and others decided to maintain

their distance both from the USA and the SSR. Now even if this division was real and sometimes it explodes in streets fights among different groups, we also should take into account that the neofascist galaxy did not involve millions of people. They were short in numbers, and they knew it; their distance was a mere theoretical matter, and they also knew that. The debate was important and somehow even fertile but one of the great capabilities of the galaxy was to be able to merge together whenever it was necessary. As a sample, it is interesting to see that while Pino Rauti, leader of ON in Italy, flew to Lisbon to create a political connection with Salazarist regime and its former OAS members who decided to find shelter in Portugal,<sup>34</sup> AN thanks to Junio Valerio Borghese started to weave links with Otto Skorzeny in Madrid and with some pieces of the Francoist regime. Well, it was not unusual that these two directions co-operate together and gave support to one another. When the Portuguese regime collapsed in 1974, it was an ON member who decided to stay in Madrid to build the radio used by the Portuguese neofascist to broadcast messages in their own fatherland to rise against the revolutionary government. For this operation, Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese fascists worked together no matter what their position about NATO or the US government was. Yet another sample is to see how Alain De Benoist, one of the leaders of the anti-Americanism within the European neofascist galaxy, used to write on journals that formally belonged to the other side as it was written in French but printed and published in Lisbon. The world was changing in front of them, and it was doing it fast. The French army was defeated twice in South Asia and in Africa; the loss of Algeria was a national trauma as we said. Many former colonies went to France some of them for the very first time in their life. Few weeks ago, speaking with a dear French friend whose parents were born and raised in Algeria, I was told that his grandmother used to call Alger *chez nous* (our place) until her last day on the heart. She arrived in Paris when she was a middle-age French Jew born in Africa with all that it mattered in cultural terms. OAS soldiers even after the general amnesty signed by De Gaulle didn't really feel welcomed and few of them decided not to come back. They felt betrayed and strongly believed that Algeria, their former place, the shore from where the free French men sailed to free France from the Nazi, had been left to the communists. In this respect is not even correct to say that all the former OAS militants were fascists; few of them were ultra-catholic, extremely nationalist but call all of them fascist would be a mistake. This is the strength of neofascism: in the name of anti-communism and claiming for an idealistic Europe devoted to traditional values, neofascism was able to attract many people outside its inner circle. As we were saying, some of them embraced the global fight against communism on the base of a new doctrine: the revolutionary warfare. On this point, a small explanation is needed. The revolutionary warfare was a doctrine developed by Coronel Lachero, a French army officer who served in Indochina and in Algeria. This doctrine is quite important not just because was one of the first warfare doctrines that reflected on the moral and psychological effects of ideologies on the troops and on the war itself but also because it suddenly became a NATO official doctrine to implement the fight against communism. Looking closely at the French defeat in



Indochina, and afterwards in Algeria, Coronel Lacheroy started to think that the amount of ammo, the technological status of the equipment, and other aspects didn't play a key role during the wars that the French army fought in those places. The enemy did have a solid ideological background, the civilians were on their sides, and they had a considerable advantage not simply by the guerrilla warfare tactics but by the penetration of their ideology within the non-fighting population. Reading Mao Zedong, Coronel Lacheroy started to write his thesis on the parallel hierarchies. The enemy swam as a fish in the water because the social, cultural, and ideological structure built by the communist party allowed it to control the country. How can we defeat the Vietminh? In a sentence, how we fight back against the communist revolution that were taking place all over the world? According to Lacheroy by using terrorist strategies. I shall not enter the long debate on the doctrine, but the idea was to build a counterinsurgency force trained in all the psychological aspects of the revolutionary war.<sup>35</sup> Among these methods, the idea of terrorist attacks was extremely popular. Setting up an attack against innocent citizen and blaming your enemy for that is something quite easy, especially if you are in power and you can influence the media, and effective. Yet as we were saying above even if this doctrine became a NATO option, neofascist groups, all the groups even the ones which didn't fully embrace the enthusiasm towards the USA, were keen to listen to this miraculous cure against communism. In 1965, in Rome, took place an important event which is emblematic to understand the link between radical neofascism and Sate apparatuses: the meeting organized by Military Institute Pollio at Hotel Parco dei Principi.<sup>36</sup> The meeting was organized by Enrico De Boccard and Gianfranco Finaldi, both journalist and neofascist elements, together with Edgardo Beltrametti who was a collaborator to the Chief Army's cabinet. The list of participants to the meeting is quite long and we are not going to reproduce it here but it's important to underline some names in order to understand which kind of meeting it was. Pino Rauti, Guido Giannettini, already met as a member of another group called *Traditional Catholic Alliance*, Stefano Delle Chiaie and Mario Merlino were part of this meeting which means three of the most prominent elements of Italian neofascism; all of them were persecuted for massacres multiple homicides tempt to republic and other things; among the participants, we found Generals as Alceste Nulli Augusti, General of parachutist, Osvaldo Roncolini, and the colonel of artillery Adriano Magi Braschi. There were university professors as Pio Filippini Ronconi who was born in Madrid and fought during the Second World War as Waffen-SS officer among the Italian division. Diplomats, journalists, and different politicians were present all linked somehow to the intelligence services or belonged to neofascist or even Nazi organization. Just for the record apparently, the meeting was financed by Italian Carabinieri. The tryst was organized with the main purpose of presenting the theory of the revolutionary war to the public. The revolutionary war was the way in which, according to participants, Italian Communist Party was going to turn the country into a Soviet puppet; the revolutionary war was also the way to fight the communists back, using the weapons of psychological warfare, infiltration, disinformation, and terrorism. At the same meeting, we can find Rauti with

his Portuguese connections and Delle Chiaie more linked to the Francoist regime in Spain. Pio Filippani Ronconi, former Italian SS worked until the half of the 1970s for the Italian secret services.<sup>37</sup> Among a long list of speeches, it is important here to remember the title of the one gave by Gino Ragno, young militants of ON: Young Europeans patriots. The idea of Europe was present in any debate even when the main topic was the fight against communism the neofascist agenda remained focus on how to offer an alternative between communism and liberalism. Analysing the texts produced by this area, we can easily find a list of features that they shared in the whole continent. Europe as a single political entity was one of them. According to neofascist Europe, an Empire of 400 million men as the title of Thiriart book should go from the Atlantic Ocean to Moscow. How a gigantic political creature could be governed? Always according to neofascists Europe should have been built on people, recognizing the national differences in cultural terms, a kind of Europe of nations within a strong cultural and spiritual association. Recalling in a way the theories of Rousseau, they think about small communities able, thanks to their small dimension, to self-regulate themselves with a direct democracy, merged together by the strength of the common cultural and spiritual heritage.<sup>38</sup> This heritage was extremely connected with Christianity. Religion, faith, and values were a common ground for every European. Yet we are here facing another of the discrepancy of the neofascist thought: some militants and some groups claimed to be pagan they refer to symbols and myths coming from different traditions of the pre-Christian era, but at the same time, they openly said that Christianity was one of the cultural bases of their belief. Europe must be a Christian space. Yet they were extremely closed to many Arab regimes, as Nasser ones, in the name of their eternal war against Jews. Neofascism is full of this kind of contradictions, but if we look closely to their ideology, somehow, in the middle of an ideological confusion, we may find a path. Being Christian, or at least comply to Christian values, was crucial for the people not for the leaders. The leaders as Nietzsche taught could be above the moral and ethical rules in order to guide the people. The 'golden souls' may embrace a different and somehow higher form of spirituality because they could fully understand the real meaning of the natural religion that shaped the cosmic laws. Even when neofascism appears to be an intricate tangle of ideas and beliefs the irrational base come up and, in some way, solves the situation. Moreover, Christianity was also the base to justify the international nationalism: we all are nationalist but united within the common cultural heritage of being Soldiers of Christ. This is what Jean Ploncard D'Assac explained on *Le Découverte*, a neofascist journal printed in Lisbon, in February 1965.<sup>39</sup> This journal was an ultra-reactionary pamphlet printed in Lisbon with the clear intention of chanting Salazar and his regime that by the way used to finance this cultural venture. *Le Découverte* was a magazine printed in Portugal and written in French; among its correspondent, we may find militants coming from different countries; this particular aspect enforces the idea we are trying to debate of a transnational neofascist debate. Ploncard D'Assac was a former French fascist who escaped to Portugal in 1944 and lived in the Portuguese capital until the democratization of that country in 1974. He worked as a consultant to the

Portuguese dictator Salazar, to whom he dedicated a biography. He was openly anti-Semitic and one of the finest thinkers in the neofascist area, writing several articles and books about tradition as the only way to escape the bolshevization of the world. Ploncard d'Assac once returned to France worked for *Present*, one of the newspapers which gave support to Front National.<sup>40</sup> There is a line, a cultural heritage that survived decades that passed from one generation to the next one; of course, it is not a straight line, we are describing here what I called a mentality exactly because it is the outgoing of a long process of reflections, adaptations, and changes. This all process was made with the intent of conquering hegemony within the political field of the right-wing. As we were saying during the 1968 movement, there was a vivid debate on the left as on the right, especially young people started to act accordingly sometimes more as a unified generation than as militants of different political parties. Year 1968 was the birth of the youth as a sociological category. The generation born during or immediately after the Second World War shared many aspects of a popular culture that was becoming more and more homogeneous. Same books, movies, and music were enjoyed at different latitudes; the idea of freedom of conquering a space that the middle-class routine seemed to deny was a common feature of these young people both communist, very often in a Maoist or Trotskyist declination, or neofascist who refused the bourgeois ideal of life and authority. Most of them dreaming craving for the revolution; no matter which one but a violent, vital rupture with the past and, especially, with the future that their parents, both biological and political ones, arranged for them. On the left-wing, we may easily describe those years as the first mass problematization and critique towards the SSR model. On the neofascist side anti-communism was not enough but it represents, also for the ones who embraced it, a first step towards the dissolution of the bourgeois state. In this respect, it is interesting to see how Thiriart did meet the secretary of the Chinese communist party Zhou Enlai in Romania<sup>41</sup> after the refusal of OAS former members to become military instructors for JE. The rupture between JE and OAS took place exactly on the Cold War issue. As for the former army guys, the USA were the last bastion to protect and to help against communism; JE didn't mind looking for 'impure' alliances just to fight capitalism. On the one hand, we do have groups that were getting closer to NATO apparatuses while on the other, there were groups which refused these compromises in the name of ideological pureness. Were they so different? Of course, not. It was a tactical difference, fertile of many disagreements, and some real tragedy since few of the groups directly involved in the anti-communist strategy were involved in massacres and tempt of coups. Their idea remained anyway the same regarding European issues; Europe should have become a third force distinguished both from the USA and the SSR. How to achieve this goal was the real matter; I am not saying it wasn't a big issue, but I simply would like to emphasize that the final goal to achieve was absolutely the same. As I already explained, these differences didn't stop different groups with different strategies from co-operating. In this sense, the late 1960s and the first half of the 1970s were years of violence, tensions, and attacks, all of them justified

by the idea of Europe. In order to preserve the order and to have the chance of building a new one, communism should be defeated. Nevertheless, the bourgeois domination should suffer the same fate as well. Yet if we look at French, German, Italian, and UK journals and bulletins, we can see how during those years, the debate was intense and somehow sophisticated. As I already said, I decided to disentangle the three main arguments that the neofascist galaxy developed during the years we are focusing on, but it has to be reminded that this operation has been made only to make the analytical level easier to understand. Most of the time, the three themes were interconnected within the neofascist discourse. It was common to find a strong critique towards the economic model that European technocrats had in mind connected with the racial aspect of the Jew presence within the finance and bank sector. In this chapter, we are discussing the idea of Europe that neofascist had and it is interesting to notice that from 1968 to the end of the 1970s when the process of European integration speeded the numbers of articles on this issue follow the lead. We can say how on almost any number of the different publications we are considering we may easily find at least one article on the European issue. In France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Belgium, the UK, and Portugal, we may find flyers, articles, and actions to promote the idea of Europe as a strong independent continent, against communism of course but also against capitalism. The idea that people should decide and not the parties or the transnational institutions was presented as the only way to build a proper democracy – a system based on tradition, faith, and hard work.<sup>42</sup> The Europe of producers, against speculators, Europe of people against transnational elites with no traditions, Europe of Christian values against immigration. Does it sound familiar? Of course, it does and the reason is simple: neofascist organizations developed these discourses for five decades without changing them that much. As we said, we may find divergences, differences but the core was always the same. The only way to fight a European democratic integration they had to promote their own idea of a fascist universalism. Fascism as many scholars underlined was always a universalistic ideology. Neofascism even if it was not an ideology maintained the core idea that Europe was the natural space of the development of anti-democratic, racist ideas. Building a society that finally could erase equality was the goal, Europe was the battlefield.

## Notes

- 1 James Martin, *Gramsci's Political Analysis. A Critical Introduction*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998.
- 2 Michele Battini, *Peccati di memoria: La mancata Norimberga italiana*, Roma: Laterza editore, 2003.
- 3 Matteo Albanese, *Maria Pignatelli, una dirigente fascista*, Bologna: Officine della Storia, giugno, 2020; Federica Bertagna, "Un'organizzazione neofascista nell'Italia postbellica: il Movimento italiano femminile «Fede e famiglia» di Maria Pignatelli di Cerchiara", *Rivista Calabrese di Storia del '900-1* (2013), pp. 5–32.
- 4 Giuseppe Parlato, *Fascisti Senza Mussolini: Le Origini del Neofascismo in Italia, 1943–1948*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006.

## 22 *Idea of Europe and birth of neofascism*

- 5 Antonio Costa Pinto and Luciano Morlino (Eds.), *Dealing with the Legacy of Authoritarianism: The "Politics of the Past" in Southern European Democracies*, London: Routledge, 2013.
- 6 Fededrico Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism. Ideology, Violence and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919–1945*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2010; Matteo Sanfilippo, *Gli italiani in Brasile*, Viterbo: Editore Sette Città, 2010.
- 7 NARA (National Archives and Records Administration), Nazi War Crimes files, MEMO JZX-5403–6 novembre 1945.
- 8 Andrea Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015; Matteo Albanese and Pablo Del Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- 9 Roger Griffin, "Interregnum or Endgame? The Radical Right in the 'Post-fascist' Era", *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 5/2 (2000), pp. 163–178.
- 10 Aristotele Kallis, "'Fascism', 'Para-Fascism' and 'Fascistization': On the Similarities of Three Conceptual Categories", *European History Quarterly*, 33/2 (2003), pp. 219–249; A. Bauerkämper, "Transnational Fascism: Cross-Border Relations between Regimes and Movements in Europe, 1922–1939", *East Central Europe*, 37/2–3 (2010), pp. 214–246.
- 11 Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence*. Volume two of a Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- 12 Emilio Gentile, "New Idols: Catholicism in the Face of Fascist Totalitarianism", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 11/2 (2006).
- 13 Zeev Sternhell, *Les Anti-Lumières: du XVIIIe siècle à la guerre froide*, Paris: Fayard, 2006.
- 14 Stephen Dorril, *Blackshirt. Sir Oswald Mosley and British Fascism*, London: Viking, 2007; P.J. Davies and P. Jackson, *The Far Right in Europe. An Encyclopedia*, Oxford: Greenwood, 2008; Graham Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black. Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism after 1945*, London: Bloomsbury, 2007.
- 15 Wiener Library, Oswald Mosley Union of Europe – extension of patriotism – idea of kingship, Shelf reference: 252/O602 folder PO2758.

*The first stage was, therefore, to divide the world into large, self-contained blocks on this realistic basis of natural division. A superstructure of universal friendship and understanding between nations could later have been erected on the solid foundation of these natural and practical areas. In my writing and speeches long before the war. I thus opposed the concept of Universalism 'to that of "Internationalism"'. It is a practical sense which says let us begin by cleaning up our own corner when the loom is in a muss: afterwards, we can discuss the future of the room as a whole. That attitude was, Anyhow, a very natural reaction from the fantastic performances of the Babel Boys, who confronted chaos with the confused jabber of a multitude of conflicting tongues and diverse instincts within the old "Internationalism", which began as a woolly ideal and ended as a squalid racket.*

*But the revulsion from current errors led most protagonists of the new European creed back into what should have been regarded as the obsolete paths of ultranationalism. On practical grounds, it became all too dear that a grotesque medley of skins and cultures could never get anywhere to the realism to the new men reacted too far to the other extreme of a nationalism which, in modern conditions, is unnaturally narrow.*
- 16 Foreign Office Archive, FO 1006/683. According to the Nazi-War criminals record at NARA, Remer was in Egypt in 1953, apparently with a VISA for passage but in reality to work for Nasser Army as instructor.
- 17 Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS) Minister of Interior (M.I.) DCP (General direction of Public Safety), Category G, 1944–1985, folder 59.

- 18 It is quite interesting to note as the number 4 of April 1953 we find articles of Filippo Anfuso and Per Enghdal and most of the articles refer to the European situation and how to build a traditionalist Europe. BDIC: Droite et extrême droite. Tracts and pièces diverses, arch. 0032.
- 19 Graham Macklin, *Very Deeply Dyed in Black. Sir Oswald Mosley and the Resurrection of British Fascism after 1945*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 107.
- 20 X. Casals Meseguer, *Ultrapatriotas: extrema derecha y nacionalismo de la guerra fría a la era de la globalización*, Barcelona: Crítica, 2003.
- 21 Andrea Mammone, "The Eternal Return? Faux Populism and Contemporarization of Neo-Fascism across Britain, France and Italy", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 17/2 (2009), pp. 171–192.
- 22 Maurice Bradeche, *Defense de l'Occident*, numéro 3, 1953, BDIC. BDIC: Droite et extrême droite. Tracts and pièces diverses, arch. 0032, Le premier acte de Défense de l'Occident a été de publier un Manifeste qu'on peut trouver dans notre numéro un. Ce Manifeste rédigé en commun contient les propositions que je résume succinctement ici:

- *les unités nationales ne sont plus en mesure de faire face aux tâches économiques et militaire du monde moderne. La communauté européenne est une nécessité;*
- *la communauté européenne doit respecter autant que possible les structures nationales. Elle doit se réaliser par une coalition des différentes forces nationales qui prendra progressivement la forme d'une Confédération, puis d'un Etat fédéral. L'Armée européenne, par exemple, doit être une coalition des armées nationales sous un commandement européen.*
- *La communauté européenne doit être indépendante. Elle doit décider seule de son organisation militaire et de Sa position diplomatique.*
- *La production doit être la base de l'économie européenne autonome qui sera soustraite par-là aux manipulations monétaires imposées par le mouvement des prix et des capitaux à l'étranger. La planification de l'économie européenne et la fixation d'objectifs échelonnés doivent permettre d'intéresser tous les travailleurs à la réalisation d'une production massive des biens de consommation qui conditionne l'augmentation du pouvoir d'achat.*
- *Tous les travailleurs doivent être associés à la production européenne, d'une part, comme réalisateurs et bénéficiaires des objectifs à atteindre en un temps donné, d'autre part par une participation effective directe dans leur entreprise aux plus-values résultant d'une meilleure organisation ou d'un accroissement de la production. Les éléments parasites de l'économie doivent disparaître.*
- *Pour que la communauté européenne devienne une force politiquement saine, les éléments communistes ou crypto-com-munistes doivent être éliminés de la politique européenne, ainsi que tous les agents d'infiltration d'intérêts politiques ou stratégiques non-européens. L'Europe ne doit pas appartenir à un camp idéologique, mais elle doit constituer une troisième force politique et militaire au service de la paix.*
- *Les traités et pactes actuels qui lient individuellement les différents pays européens devront être remplacés par des traités signés par l'Europe en tant que Confédération avec d'autres Etats ou Confédérations pour garantir son territoire contre le danger d'agression. La Communauté européenne doit s'interdire dans ces traités de participer à aucune agression contre un Etat non-européen.*
- *La loyauté totale et la complète égalité de droit et de situation entre la France et l'Allemagne sont des conditions indispensables de cette communauté européenne. Nous devons travailler les uns et les autres à oublier les mauvais souvenirs de la guerre. Nous ne devons maintenir aucune discrimination ou méfiance Soit à l'égard d'un peuple, soit à l'égard d'une partie de ce peuple. L'institution d'une*

24 *Idea of Europe and birth of neofascism*

*communauté européenne doit commencer par une amnistie totale et véritable dans tout l'Europe. Je ne crois pas avoir résumé ici trop arbitrairement le Manifeste élaboré en commun (1). Je n'y ajouterai que quelques commentaires qui feront comprendre notre position dans les questions européennes qu'on débat actuellement.*

- 23 Archive National de France, Préfecture d'Oran, L'inspecteur Général de l'Administration en mission extraordinaire, 11, mars 1957, Folder: F/7/15182.
- 24 ACS, M.I. DCCP, category, Groups and Parties, 1948–1989 Folder 29.
- 25 Organisation de l'Armée Secrète. O. Dard, *Voyage au cœur de l'O.A.S.*, Paris, Perrin éditeur, 2005.
- 26 Archive National de France, Direction de Renseignement General, folder, F/7/15216.
- 27 For a short biography of Thiriart one of the few references is: Y. Sauveur, *Jean Thiriart et le national-communautarisme européen*, Paris: IEP, 1978.
- 28 Frédéric Charprier, *Génération Occident: de l'extrême droite à la droite*, Paris: éd. du Seuil, 2005.
- 29 Piero Ignazi, *L'estrema destra in Europa*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994.
- 30 ACS, M.I. DCCP, cat. G 1944–1985, folder 59.
- 31 ACS, M.I. DCCP, Affari riservati, folder 260.
- 32 ACS, M.I., DCPS, Parties, 1967, folder 64.
- 33 Foreign Office Archive, FO 371/169152. The enter to the UK was forbidden not only to him but to a large number of former Nazi. Their activities were extremely well described in a 12 pages long dossier.
- 34 In the national archive of Torre do Tombo, a document can be found that tells us about this trip and about the will of Rauti to meet Salazar. The aim of the meeting was to explain to the Portuguese dictator the plan to establish in Italy a group that would have had as its main goal a fight against the communist propaganda about Portugal and its regime. Archivio National de Torre do Tombo, AOS/CO/NE-30A, February 1964. What is crucial in this document is the fact that Rauti wanted to meet Salazar to ask him for a permission of ON to create a friendship association between Italy and Portugal. It is impossible to find proof that the meeting in the end took place. What we know, from another document found in Italian archives is that during a demonstration, in November 1964, ON used flyers produced in Portugal and mailed to Italy. The flyers were distributed by a group called Associazione Italo-Iberica (Italian-Iberian Association). This group, as Rauti wrote in the letter to Salazar, was a ghost organization underneath which militants of ON organized their activities. The group was present not only in Rome but, as has been confirmed, there was also a Venetian branch led by, among others, Carlo Maria Maggi. Maggi was later persecuted for the massacre of Piazza Fontana. The reconstruction of the activities of Maggi and the others components of the group are available in the trial against them that took place in Milan, registration number 3192171-A-G.I.
- 35 Charles Lacheroy, *De Saint-Cyr à l'action psychologique. Mémoires d'un siècle*, Lavauzelle: Panazol edition, 2003.
- 36 ACS, M.I. (Minister of Interior), Gabinetto (Cabinet), 1967–1970, Folder 31.
- 37 The meeting acts were printed by an Italian publishing house and are still available: AA.VV., *La guerra rivoluzionaria*, Rome: Editore Volpe, 1965. In this meeting, we could also see the Italian police report: M.I. Divisione Affari Riservati (Minister of Interior, Bureau for the secret issues), 1963–65, folder 42.
- 38 As Alain De Benoist wrote in 1970, looking back at the same rhetoric developed by JE and other groups: *Nous ne tenons pas à ce qu'il devienne le second souffle du mercantilisme, redoutable arbitre de trusts et d'intérêts particuliers. Nous désirons au contraire associer la mystique européenne, à la représentation réelle du droit sacré à l'enracinement. Quand nous parlons d'Europe, ce n'est pas une accumulation de chiffres et de schémas sans vie qui apparaît à nos yeux; nous ne sommes pas des technocrates. Pour nous l'Europe, c'est d'abord la défense d'une civilisation et la*

*sauvegarde des Patries charnelles qui l'ont édifiée. . . . En premier lieu, il faut admettre que ni le pouvoir, ni la disposition des biens et des richesses ne doivent être l'apanage de l'une d'elles. Les méfaits du libéralisme économique ont déterminé au siècle dernier la réaction marxiste qui n'a rien résolu). Aujourd'hui, la technocratie capitaliste et le marxisme ont ceci en commun qu'ils considèrent l'homme comme une machine dont on doit! obtenir un rendement maximum.*

Wiener Library, Jeune Europe, shelf reference, P02565, JEU.

- 39 Wiener Library, La Découverte, February 1965, shelf reference: P00021; P38: Pourquoi? C'est très simple: parce que la «vraie frontière s'étendait «jusqu'à la rencontre de la barbarie» avait cédé devant l'égalitarisme démocratique formel.

Il était courant, dans les milieux progressistes chrétiens, d'entendre rappeler, à contre-sens, l'apostrophe de Saint Paul: «Il n'y a plus ni Juive ni Grec, ni Barbare, ni Scythe . . . tous sont un».

Si l'on prend soin de lire Saint Paul jusqu'au bout, on s'aperçoit qu'il dit « . . . tous sont un en Jésus-Christ».

C'est-à-dire quand ils sont unis dans l'Eglise, ils deviennent un, pas avant et pas autre chose qu'un dans la finalité propre de l'Eglise qui est le salut éternel.

C'est en ce sens que la Civilisation chrétienne est porteuse d'une certaine unité. C'est en ce sens que la Colonisation des Navigateurs portugais rendait possible une plus grande unité du monde en faisant des Chrétientés.

En reniant ces principes, le colonialisme mercantile du XIXème siècle s'est privé de bases morales, de justification et n'a rien trouvé à opposer aux revendications d'autonomie des indigènes.

- 40 Frédéric Charpier, *Les plasteurs: Une histoire secrète de l'extrême droite violente*, Paris: La découverte, 2018.

- 41 Francis Balace and others, *De l'avant à l'après-guerre: l'extrême droite en Belgique francophone*, Bruxelles: De Boeck université, 1994. Look also at: Matteo Albanese, "Il Neofascismo coem categoria analitica", *Ricerche Storiche*, No. 2 (May–August 2018).

- 42 As we can find within La Nation Européenne, the JE review: *Les partisans de l'Europe supra-nationale: Bruxelles et ses technocrates, descendants en ligne directe des Schumanniens. Ils ont de puissantes ramifications non seulement dans les partis politiques de l'Europe des Six, mais aussi de l'ancienne zone de Libre Echange, d'où leur souci de faire entrer l'Angleterre dans le Marché Commun. Ils recrutent leurs membres généralement dans les partis ou les clubs socialistes, résultant de la deuxième Internationale (c'est-à-dire résolument acquise à la démocratie bourgeoise: Mollet, Wilson . . . , etc) OU chez certains démocrates chrétiens (CDU allemand, et ex-MRP français). La vérité quant à ceux-ci est visible du premier coup d'oeil: c'est le CLAN YANKEE. Dévoués corps et âmes à leurs maîtres américains, ce sont d'aussi redoutables traîtres à leur patrie européenne, que peuvent l'être les robots de la place Kossuth. Ils sont sans doute plus dangereux, car leurs attaches ne sont pas officialisées de la même manière, mais tiennent beaucoup plus d'une forme de monstrueuse loge économique-maçonnique . . . Si nous regardons une carte actuelle de l'Europe (une carte vieille de cinquante ans ne nous renseignerait pas mieux), on a une bien mauvaise idée des Peuples qui composent ce continent, de leurs diverses confluences, de leurs osmose ou de leur intégrité.*

*Les Etats historiques sont, pour la plupart, complètement artificiels. Non seulement, ils ne sont conformes, dans la majorité des cas à aucune réalité biologique, mais même pas à des exigences géographiques. Ils résultent de traités de paix multiples, où des êtres avides ont mille fois redécoupé la carte de notre continent autour d'un tapis vert.*



## 2 Racism between blood and culture

In the history of fascism, neofascism and broadly speaking of the extreme right-wing groups, racism has always been one of the most sensitive spots. During the interviews, I ran over the past ten years with neofascist activists, the question on racism have always been one of the most delicate. Why so? Why political activists who openly claim themselves as fascists or even Nazi did have issues in telling they are racist? Because the mark of Shoah is incredibly powerful. The infamous extermination of six million European Jews has been and still is the elephant in the room. To this issue, there are two different answers that don't exclude each other and create an intricate maps of reasoning, justification, and explanation. In few words, the great majority of the sources I am going to present in the next pages could describe a neofascism which refused both the 'official story' on the Shoah<sup>1</sup> and the biological racism, while Jews are still pictured as the master of the global finance.<sup>2</sup> Another line of reasoning is related to the allegedly will of the neofascist movement of fighting against colonialism and imperialism which is supposedly the real cause of the mass immigration process and always addressed as one of the biggest problems of western societies.<sup>3</sup> This second position, mostly developed after the 1968 turn, not only rented the idea of people self-determination from Leninism but used the concept of community in order to describe not just a specific people who shared traditions, blood, and soil, but this concept brings with it a strong political connotation: a member of my community could easily live at the other side of the globe, but since we shared common political and even ethical values, we are comrade. It goes alone that this assumption heavily questions the idea of the state as we got to know it since the Westphalia treaty. This new nationalism without state is a concept I shall develop throughout the book, and it will almost entirely occupy the last chapter, but the reader should keep it in mind in order to understand how the three lines of reasoning I am proposing are nothing but immobile and outside the flow of history. The relationship with history is a very crucial point when it comes to study neofascism; as a matter of fact, these groups claim very often their will to rebuild a golden age society lost in the ancient times while they pictured, as a sample, eternal communities shaped by values that never changes. Yet values change in time and also neofascist groups and movements adjusted their political strategy and vision to these changes. When it comes to talk about racism, we should not forget this aspect; the history of racism and

xenophobia is as long as the one of human societies. Barbarian was the one who didn't belong to the city who comes from outside the walls. The idea of building a homogeneous community has always been present and the stranger was always looked at as a possible threat. In modern time, the idea of a uniformed society was the way that was found in order to solve the religious conflicts in Europe during the XXVII century. *Cuius regio, eius religio* was a formula that allowed the creation of political spaces, not yet states, that could work on the base of a cultural similarity among the people who lived together. It also has to be considered that since the Medieval times, a group that didn't want to abandon their morals and pointed out as internal enemies: the Jews. Yet while the long march of the Nation-State was about to start an internal enemy was already recognized; those who didn't want to be integrated and decided to keep their own culture. This is not a work on anti-Semitism, but it should be clear that, as stressed by many scholars, the construction of an internal enemy lied on a very solid cultural base for fascist and neofascist groups; the presence of anti-Semitism was embodied in many ways within western societies culture way before the birth of Fascism. As we are going to see neofascism, in its ideological effort, lived of both these tendencies: biological and cultural racism. At least until the first half of the 1970s, we may easily find groups that claim black people are inferior on a biological base and other groups claiming the superiority of white or western culture. All these aspects need to be analysed in order to solve the tangle of ideas, awesomeness, and mythologies that characterized the neofascist thought on this issue. In approaching racism as an ideology, Mosse's works have to be our reference together with Arendt even if we should pay attention to the interpretation given by Eco of Gramsci's works. Eco wrote that the link between popular culture and racist ideas was extremely stronger than we believe; Gramsci himself in his attacks against Nietzsche tried to point out how the idea of superhuman was advertised and spread more by novels and feuilletonism than by a deep knowledge of the German philosopher. This aspect of the popular culture of racism is crucial to understand that neofascism did have an ideology when it comes to talk about fascism but at the same time neofascism could be seen, in its constant work of adaptation to the context, as a *mentalité* in the way in which Roger Chartier described it. In this respect, it would be no surprise to discover that we may find neofascist groups that tried to avoid anti-Semitism and others that still nowadays develop it in a very 'classical' way. Yet racism was addressed as a biological issue and as a cultural one very often in a not very clear way; it is quite impossible to disentangle the different approaches within the many groups that are part of the extreme right political field. Yet there is a racist ideology, which is not a peculiar feature of fascism, there was a fascist ideology and racism was a pillar of that and a *mentalité* on racism that mix together old school visions, some aspects of popular culture clique and any sort of myth and an intense activity of historical revisionism which is the neofascist way of thinking and acting racism. For this reason, to look at neofascist racism discourse as a *mentalité*, that changed during the arc of time I am considering, I am going to look not simply into their political activity and publications but also at their cultural production where possible.

**Ethnic social policies**

One of the main issues that Europe had to face in the aftermath of the Second World War was the structural lack of houses. With many big cities lying in ruins, the process of reconstruction took almost a decade, in some areas, in order to be over; on the one hand, some governments decided to rebuild the productive structures and facilities first as in other part of the continent the moving away of the rubbles was not exactly an easy task. Just to run a sample in Milan a new hill was created by the rubbles and wreckages caused by the Allies bombing on the city. In this respect, the propaganda of neofascist groups, based on the never developed social plans of the fascist regimes, could start to claim the need not just for big investment but also that houses should have been given to white people first. They actually used national belonging in quite a twisted way as Mosley in 1955 when he wrote on his newspaper that Crossman was about to gift millions of pounds in order to build thousands of new houses for just arrived immigrant instead to dedicate his efforts to the Britons families who were experiencing a dramatic lack of houses and force to live in slums. In Mosley's rhetoric, it is way too easy to see the seat of racism; exploiting a real need British neofascist target an ancient enemy, the stranger.<sup>4</sup> Any house given to an immigrant is stolen to a British family, this was one of their slogans. The government, Mosley said, cannot build so many houses and the assignment criterion should have been, according to Mosley, the colour of the skin. Not even the citizenship because, and this was a problem for French neofascist too, many 'coloured immigrants'<sup>5</sup> as they addressed them were British citizen thanks to the colonial past of Great Britain. Yet citizenship was not enough, being part of the political community didn't count that much for the neofascist forces. The social leverage was used not only in the UK and not only during the years immediate after the end of the Second World War; in France, in 1970, *Ordre Nouveau* wrote that wild immigration could not be tolerated anymore, that Paris was becoming an African city, and that the neo-Nazi group blamed the left-wing unions for this situation. According to their view, the leftist organizations were no longer defending French workers' rights. Social rights became something ethnically designated, two centuries of citizenship, since the French Revolution was contested by neofascist forces in the name of blood. Manuel Castel in one of his books showed how citizenship, through all the XIX century, was linked to ownership. In his becoming the ruling class, bourgeois attacked the birth right of aristocracy and based their political and social claim on wealth. During the XX century working class, thanks to the welfare state had access to life-long job contracts which in a way mimic ownership, property. Gramsci defined this process as Americanism and spoke about it as one of the ways of access to modernity; with modernity, both Gramsci and Castel meant the entry of working-class people in the political arena. Yet citizenship in a way means equality and racism is a doctrine of inequality, as all fascism and neofascism. In this respect, the idea that social rights which were linked to citizenship should be granted only to white men was a way not simply to affirm racism but also to stress inequality as a core of their ideology; if for the argumentation, we

speak about mentalité, racism remained a solid ideological ground on which neo-fascist groups built their fortune. Yet the problem of social injustice was pointed out as if the cause was the presence of not-white people in their national communities. The lack of houses, the lack of jobs, the attack on our values were classical samples of spreading a mentality while the discourse on races itself pop up in some article and in some flyers, but it was the ideological level underneath. On a more superficial level, on the everyday discourse, we may easily find German neo-Nazi complaining on the Turks issue or French groups campaigning for the rights of Africans to go back to their countries. Covered by this justification, a form of biological racism stands within neofascist ideology and it developed as a mentalité in discourses and practices. As we can find within another important publication as it was *L'Europe Réelle* (Real Europe) a Belgian publication written in French and with different editorial boards in many countries as Switzerland, Italy, France, and Canada; in its number of June 1964, we may find a French translation of a Mosley position on racism where the chief of UK neofascism claimed that the only way to manage racism was to adopt an ethnic division of labour as South Africa did.<sup>6</sup> In the same number, always translating a Mosley's piece on Action, they described the Asian immigration to the UK as a clever manoeuvre of capitalism in order to force different races to mix with each other. Immigrants steal jobs and acceding to the same rights of any other with citizen, they make the country poorer. Yet this was the mentalité, the easy idea based on a very simplistic way of reading social Darwinism: a poor person will be always ready to accept worse conditions of work or lower salary in order to survive. In doing that, he makes not only the working class weaker but the whole society weaker. The neofascist groups across Europe moved a social critique towards the capitalistic system, but again in doing this, they very often blame the Jew for being at the edge of the financial world pyramid. Yet the creation of enemies was complete: if you couldn't find a decent job is because there are too many immigrants who are at the full disposal of an inhuman capitalistic model run by Jews!<sup>7</sup> I know this may sound as a scene of an unforgettable movie, *The Blues Brothers*, and the speech of the Illinois' Nazi chief when he said: the Jews is using the black as muscle against the white people, but in reading many neofascist publication, the discourses were not so much more sophisticated. This is the strength of mentalité the capability to communicate through a very easy and somehow popular concept that contains underneath liars of ideology. Neofascist political culture in its being consistent on some crucial points was able to articulate them within a large varieties of discourses. Yet if the immigrants come in Europe jeopardizing our economies and our lifestyle, the easiest solution is to keep them, or to send them back, in their own countries. African countries are poor because of the exploitation of the western ones and, at the same time, because the end of colonialism that didn't unroll after five centuries all its civilizing potential. This kind of discourse grounded particularly after the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s when the decolonization movement became stronger. How to react to this tendency was one of the main issues for the extreme right-wing galaxy during those decades; if, on one hand, the neofascist groups were keen to recognize a certain superiority

to the white people and they always pictured colonialism as a civilizing mission, on the other, they were quite aware of the inevitability of that process. On the top of that, we should remark that nationalism was a very strong feature of every single anti-colonial movement and neofascists could not be blind in front of such a claim. The debate within the galaxy I am describing was rich and complex. Just as a sample, it is useful to remember the debate between OAS and JE exactly on this point. As an example, former OAS members were not Nazis and the category of fascism does not fit some of them who fought during the Second World War. They were more a group of ultra-nationalist and fervent Catholics who had lost their fatherland and were looking for a cause to become devoted to; they found that cause in the transnational holy war against communism.<sup>8</sup>

In Italy, ON started to have relationships not only with AN and other fascist groups but also with actors such as *Alleanza Cattolica Tradizionalista* (Traditionalist Catholic Alliance) an ultra-Catholic organization<sup>9</sup> close to Archbishop Siri who denied the legitimacy of the Pope John XXIII election. Siri and his group contested the new deal opened by the new Pope. This new policy that seemed to be more caring towards the poor sounded, to the more conservative streams of the Church, like a dangerous approach to socialist ideas.

The Cold War also reached the Vatican and there were different streams within the Catholic Church; there have always been a multitude of voices and positions towards fascism since the very beginning and as we have already underlined in the previous chapters the network we are describing could have been built as a result of the help offered by some branches of the Catholic Church.<sup>10</sup>

On this ground, neofascism and traditionalism found common goals and similar tactics; socialism was winning wars around the globe not only in the name of self-determination but also, more frighteningly, in the name of ideology. The conservative and reactionary organizations found a strong ally in young neofascist militants. Jean Thiriart joined a first national-Bolshevism group during the 1930s and he entered into an association called *Amis du Grand Reich allemand* (friends of German-wide Reich) during the war. This group, organized by former communist elements who suffered from Hitler's national socialism, was the first real political experience of the young Jean and these times strongly shaped his political thinking. Jean Thiriart was, indeed, a theorist of national-Bolshevism and he believed in a pan-European nationalism. After the war, he spent three years in jail for collaborating with the enemy. He did not play a role in any political activity until 1960 when he found an association that fought against the decolonization process which was taking place all over the world, including the Congo, a former Belgian colony. He argued that the loss of colonies for the European countries was the proof of the double imperialism put in place by the two superpowers. According to his texts, Europeans were abandoning Africans to the US-SSR's clutches instead of keeping to its *natural* mission of helping the development of the continent.<sup>11</sup> The alliance with OAS members was, starting with this point of view, quite obvious.<sup>12</sup> But exactly in 1962 the Belgian leader understood that the battlefield was global and that the traditionalist forces could not even compete outside that scenario; he became more and more convinced of the need of a

European organization which should have fought alongside the nationalist decolonization movements. On this exact point the collaboration, dreamed by Thiriart who desired to have within his organization a group of army experts, failed. While OAS was openly racist and supporting the idea that Algeria was France territory and that Algerian could not even survive without the crucial help of France, JE started to develop the discourse, which eventually became hegemonic within the extreme right-wing galaxy, that pictured the western countries intervention in Africa, as in the other old colonial territories, as capitalistic imperialism to which traditionalist should oppose to. The idea of JE, and of many other groups, was that in the name of nationalism, former colonies should regain independence and that traditionalist forces should even help them in doing that, first of all to defeat communist tendencies inside the liberation movements, second to oppose US expansionism and third because they were looking to the not-aligned experiment as a possible way to rebuild a nationalistic form of socialism that they did not despise. Were they racist? Of course, they were but at the same time, they put in front of their racist idea the geopolitical and global issue as the challenge of the XX century.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, it is easy to enrol the JE magazine pages to find out that the Europe they proposed was an ethnical one, a continent that should support Africa just to keep African people in their own continent where they belong. The concept of community that will be developed by De Benoist was yet to come but as any other idea, it lays on solid bases; communities existed also for other groups as JE and they were ethnically pure or in the name of a never-ending present with no concept of historical processes or it was rooted in a confused golden age. Communities were about to become a kind of magic word that was able to sum up all the good features of racism: a community is pure because it insists on the same territory since the dawn of time and since the dawn of tie, it established rules and traditions to which every member is devoted to. If the community are frozen in space and in time, stuck into a loop of repetitive actions with no need for any changes, it goes alone that they are ethnically pure; if everyone is satisfied with its own status, no one is going to emigrate. Yet the discourses about a golden age when these conditions were all together presents changed from one group to another also because of the narrative space that exists between ideology and mentalité. In this sense, it is not difficult to find for the Italian a direct reference to the Roman Empire, and, of course, to historical fascism as the only temptation to restore those times, as for a Spanish group, the reference could have been the time of Charles the Fifth and for a French one, Napoleon the first or even Charles the Great, and so on. Yet it was not a neofascist practice claiming for the golden ages or the good old times when things were simpler and better, when an honest man could find a job and having a happy life no matter which social condition he had; many different groups that we cannot label as neofascist did have the same kind of discourse as Poujadism in France or Uomo Qualunque (Common man movement) in Italy. Yet the neofascist groups managed to be part of this discourse, it is important to remember that Le Pen was elected for the first time within the Poujad party, and to bring their ideology in it, to exploit the vacuum of ideas that these movements used to have to fill them with their points and to use them in

order to bring these points within a common sense. The discourse on unemployment, an issue that hit all western societies in the aftermath of the Second World War, became step by step the problem of migrants who stole our jobs; the lack of houses and other form of social protections became suddenly the issue of black people who want to profit of 'our' security paid by 'our' taxes. Yet as we are seeing the social discourse around racism didn't end during the 1960s or the 1970s even when western economies were flourishing. It goes alone that alongside this discourse, other ones were taking place; neofascist galaxy was not composed by men and women made completely blind by their own ideology. They were intellectuals who made an everyday effort in order to read the world they lived in. For this reason, after the end of the 1950s, when European social conditions started to improve, their racist discourse became more and more focused on two other points: communism and Europe as the space for western values. It is quite interesting to look closely at these two issues without forgetting that it is a simple schematization that I use to help the reader when in reality, these three discourses were often present at the same time even if, according to the political and social condition of a specific time, neofascist were keen to adjust their political tactics and discourses.

### **The anthropological communism of black people**

The times I am considering in this work were of Cold War;<sup>14</sup> there are many different definitions of Cold War, some authors underlined the cultural aspect of this confrontation as others point their fingers on the military aspects or again on the economic one. All of them agreed on a specific point it was fought globally; it is quite impossible to find a single corner of the globe that was not somehow touched by the complex dynamics of the Cold War. Being the biggest political fact of that period, it was crucial, of course, even for and within the neofascist galaxy I am describing. How Cold War dynamics, sometimes contradictory ones, did affect the reasoning on racism? In which way a political culture that supposedly fund geopolitics as science, or at least they strongly believed so, was affected by the Cold War in its discourses on races? Last, how these groups articulated a general political position facing the SSR, the biggest enemy of all times, on the one side and the USA on the other? The SSR as we know was seen as the Evil, the last stage of the un-natural turn started with the French revolution but the USA was also labelled as foe; the USA with its enormous army, technologically advanced, industrial and political power was by all means the superpower that decides the end of Fascism and Nazism but also represented and pictured as the empire of money, individualism the safe holy land for thousands of Jews who decided to manoeuvre the leverages of capitalism from there while they enforced the myth of the USA as a second Zion, the city on the hill from where they would have ruled the world. What is crucial now to remember again is that I am describing a galaxy, a network with weak links. I am not describing an organization with its own political agenda on a transnational level that lasted for 50 years. To each and any of these questions, we may easily find different and sometimes controversial answers not only because of

the large arch of time I am taking into consideration but exactly because of the weakness of this bonds. I am describing a trend a general position how it comes out from the enormous number of primary sources I collected and analysed. Sometimes within the same country, there were two different neofascist groups with different political position on a single issue I am raising here, sometimes these positions changed with time and context. I will provide all the necessary specification of these changes and also, I will try to explain under which circumstances they occurred, but at the same time, the very focus of this entire work is more to look at the way in which different groups found a common ground on specific important issues rather than pointing the finger on the differences that for sure were present. I would like to underline that even within the effort to popularize their position to make them become common sense in the mentalité project they pursued, I am describing groups with a strong ideological inclination that used to operate in a very ideological times as the Cold War one was. Just to run a very quick sample, the position of two Italians groups, Ordine Nuovo and Avanguardia Nazionale, towards the USA and their military presence around the world were extremely different with Pino Rauti, chief of Ordine Nuovo, who described the US marines in Vietnam as ancient centurion fighting in a holy war of all times against communism<sup>15</sup> as Avanguardia Nazionale maintained a sceptical position towards US ventures looking to the USA always as an enemy, may be a secondary one but still an enemy. At the same time, they were young neofascist militants at the beginning of a new decade which was, talking about the 1960s, almost a new era. New waves of music, fashion, way of living.<sup>16</sup> It would be a nonsense to picture that generation as completely closed within their ideology as if ideologies are not alive and as an alive creature, they aren't able of changes. In 1963, Iraq and Syria witnessed the coup of Ba'ath parties, and France that has lost its last colonies sentenced to death six members of OAS for attempting to President De Gaulle's life; the Pope John XXIII wrote his last encyclical, Martin Luther King leads the movement for the abolition of segregation and the President of US J.F. Kennedy was shot to death in Dallas. In the meantime, the first LP, *Please Please Me* of the Beatles marked a profound change in youth culture. When we think about neofascist groups and culture, we should consider the specific context in which certain ideas, debate, and even contradictions were born. Let's take, as a sample, the colonial issue due to the closeness with the specific topic of this chapter, racism: we may easily find a different position within the debate on decolonization process. As OAS members and the thinkers closer to Portuguese regime were extremely strict in their defence of European rights of maintaining colonies, not only for anti-communist reasons but as a right, JE and other groups were looking at the Ba'ath experiment as a form of nationalistic socialism they didn't dislike. Yet the first European guy to die in a war action in peace time was exactly a JE member who decided to go to fight alongside with the Palestinian resistance movement in 1968 against Zionism. Of course, for the French militant in exile in Portugal, the ones who received money to publish in Lisbon *Decouverte*, the defence of colonialism was quite inevitable.<sup>17</sup> Yet also groups that engaged themselves on a long and sometimes excruciating discussion on this topic, which



involved the role of the US as anti-communist strongest rampart, as ON in Italy, Portuguese and Spanish regimes remained in some ways a point of reference. Especially because on the Catholic front, something was happening; John XXIII ideas were perceived by the extreme right-wing of traditionalist Catholicism as subversives and too close to socialism. Few militants of ON claimed themselves pagan or neo-pagan and, in any case, distant from the Church but traditional values were something to commend and to respect because they give a hierarchical order to societies. In this respect, Portugal and Spain were there, standing against socialism and capitalism, fighting against modernity in the name of traditional values and those values should be defended. On the other hand, we have to keep in mind the effort that parts of these regimes made to help neofascist movements across the globe. As we have seen in the first chapter, there was a European discourse, but Europe was imagined as white, Catholic, and pure. In this respect, the attack of ON militants against a cinema in Rome that in 1963 was broadcasting a movie where a white woman and a black man fell for each other is a perfect sample.<sup>18</sup> Just to add a small detail that anyway tells us a lot the flyers that Ordine Nuovo militants distributed during their action were printed in Lisbon and shipped in Italy. I always wonder why they acted like this, but I have to admit I don't have a clear answer; may be they just want to show to other groups that they had goon leader, Pino Rauti, flew to Lisbon in the same year in order to make contacts not only with Portuguese extremist but also with Yves Guerin Serac a former French OAS member who became, among other things, the instructor of the Green Shirts, the paramilitary neofascist groups close to the regime. What is crucial here is to see how different groups with a different position on racism could work together. When I said neofascism is a transnational hegemonic project, I intend exactly this the capability of different groups to adapt to the situation. Serac was the leader of Aginter Press, a sort of catalyst for different experiences of European neofascism; he trained European young guys who went to fight in Africa in support to the Portuguese troops, in the name of white supremacy and the European natural right to subdue other peoples while Portuguese army, as a high-ranked Navy officer told me during an interview few years ago, was buying weapons from Czechoslovakia. Yet in the same year, some elements of JE in Italy tried to create a link with a group close to Maoism in the name of anti-capitalism and a common revolt against the middle classes: according to the police of Savona on 6 April 1963, a meeting of the Italian branch of JE took place in Albenga. The organizer of this meeting was the young Curcio Renato (leader of the Red Brigades from 1970 to 1986).<sup>19</sup> Identified in the document as a student of the high school Ferrarini even if at that time Renato Curcio was already 22 years old and in Trento and, more important, a member of a Maoist group directed by Peruzzi Walter. Actually, Renato Curcio spent a considerable part of his youth in Albenga and he attended that school. The document talks about a small meeting, around 15 persons came to listen to a not better identified Bruschi from Milan. This Bruschi might be identified as a militant of JE who decided in 1970, after the solving of JE Italian branch, to join the PCd'IM-L (Italian Communist Party Marxist-Leninist).<sup>20</sup> At the same time, militants of AN, always in Italy but in Rome this time, were putting

up fake Maoist posters in order to create the impression of a mounting protest among young people against Italian Communist Party Great disorder under the Heavens and the situation is excellent! Yet I ran these samples to show how extreme right-wing groups were capable of adapting to a different situation but keeping the strategic vision of their policy firm. In this respect when different political groups stand with different positions on race, discriminations, and anti-Semitism, we have to remember this attitude to adapt and to change without denying the very core of their ideology; actually, this ability to change position will be the key to popularizing their positions in that mentality that meets and directs common sense. Just to run an easy sample while JE already during the first half of the 1960s developed a political discourse on the right of self-determination of people and in support of the anti-colonial fights, *l'Europe Réelle* published an article, already in 1967, on the Protocols of the wise men of Zion.<sup>21</sup> These two positions may seem completely different from each other but at the very end as the official organ of Order Nouveau, *L'Europe Réelle*, justified its racism on a biological base, Juene Europe developed a more sophisticated discourse. The African people have all the rights to free themselves from the tyranny of old patrons, European militants should look after this process in order to prevent these new countries to fall under the domination of the USA or even worse of communist. This is more or less the same discourse made by Mosley about Commonwealth policy. According to English neofascist, as a matter of fact, black British population should have sent back to their countries, as if wearing the UK citizenship was not enough to live on the Island, but the UK should have kept a very strict control on the Commonwealth countries to avoid that they could become communists.<sup>22</sup> In this sense, it is not surprising that also the Portuguese regime used the same discourse to justify the Angolan war. Even in a country as Italy, stripped of its colonies after the end of the Second World War, neofascist groups stressed this aspect as if it was an anthropological attitude of the black people: they are keen to communism and this tendency must be guided by the wiser European men. This kind of 'natural' vision is something that characterized the whole political philosophy of neofascism, and it was present in the historical fascism as well, and it will come back in the next chapter, but it is important to underline this feature also now. According to neofascism, there is a natural law which rules above all of us; this law provides that the stronger should command over the weaker not only in the name of his strength but for the very sake of the weaker too. As it happens in wild nature, there must be a certain balance of forces within society mitigated only by the good heart of the ruling class which is ready to help the weak ones due to its own good will of guiding the mass of the poor ones in accepting their condition. It occurred to me of interviewing few years ago one of the leaders of the Spanish neofascist movement: Alberto Torresano. Torresano, who was at that time almost 90 years old, has a quite peculiar biography which deserves to be looked at with attention to better understand some of his assumptions. Alberto Torresano left Madrid in 1954 after a comrade of him was killed by the police during a demonstration: Torresano was part of the youth Falangist movement and they were protesting against the will of Spain to join NATO when they had a clash with a

monarchist group. Spanish police shot in the direction of the youth Falangist and one of them was killed; to Torresano that episode was the proof that the Spanish regime was no longer a revolutionary one, a neofascist one but simply a bourgeois clan interested in managing some power. He was a quite fluent German-speaking person, so he flew to Berlin when he eventually won a position as a teacher at the University: Spanish language and culture. After a while he met a French girl and decided to move to Paris. He was a young researcher when May 1968 found him on the roof of the faculty of Law at Sorbonne leading his neofascist comrade inside those weeks. The participation of young neofascist militants in the 1968 movement was not a French peculiarity, in Italy during the first confrontation between students and police, the militants of *Avanguardia Nazionale* were leading the very first line of clashes against policemen. The ideological anti-bourgeois charge present in that movement was attractive for far left militants, but it sounded quite familiar for neofascist vanguards and activists who were engaged in the strong critique towards their own parties judged too opportunist and institutionalized. My interview with Alberto Torresano was crucial because I had the rare opportunity to talk with an intellectual, still active at that time, of the national-revolutionary area who due to his past as a professor was very clear in exposing some quite complicated point of neofascist visions and reflections. On this specific point of racism and natural law, he told me something which became suddenly one of the most interesting and important aspects of my research.

Your (you the democratic and socialist) fixation with equality comes from the French revolution as if there was nothing before it and nothing is supposed to rise after; you invented a pervert system of value putting upside down centuries of tradition as if they had no value at all. The French revolution with its idea of equality simply dismissed a crucial truth: men are quite different from one another; the cultural invention of equality destroyed the natural Law and lead our societies to decadence.

When we face the issues related to neofascism, I am convinced we always have to keep in mind this naturalness of inequality this negative anthropology that is a key feature of neofascist thought; it goes along that if men are different from one another, stronger and weaker, the first bound to their natural role of leaders and the others doomed to obey, the 'races' should conform to the same law. This is what I meant in the title of this paragraph speaking of anthropological communism of non-white people. It is not that surprising at this point realize how racism was still present in every single group of the neofascist galaxy even if with some differences. Some groups as a matter of fact embraced a spiritual vision of racism that brought them to overthrow some aspects of biological racism. To be fair, we should say that already Evola used to talk about a spiritual racism claiming the simple biological racism as an old idea with no stickiness to reality. According to the Italian philosopher and, in a way, father of Italian neofascism, men can be divided into three categories based on their soul. The soul is something given to you at your birth and it is not something inherited. Men could be born

with a golden soul and this soul will, or should this point be not completely clear in Evola, guide him or her towards a pattern of pure thought and philosophy the golden soul will turn this person into the perfect wise ruler; some others were born with a silver soul and they were going to become soldiers and heroes; the great majority of men though were born with a lead soul and their fate was to be workers. I have serious doubts about the possibility that young neofascist militants were passionate in reading Evola but the popularization of this concept is still present in the political discourse of many groups around Europe. This idea is not only the base for the refusal of democracy, as we will see in the next chapter, but it is also crucial to understand neofascist racism; as I said while some groups were stuck into an old school and biological vision of races, the majority slowly shifted towards the Evola's kind of ideas. Evola's circulation during the 1960s, as we can see in French and Belgian journals where Pino Rauti used to write articles on this topic, represents another important moment for the neofascist propaganda and theoretical articulation. While the world was facing the decolonization process, neofascism could present itself as a force close to the people claims of freedom and at the same time justify their racism with the idea of elitism, we support the golden souls and the warrior wherever they rise and fight, with a strong scent of anticommunism. This debate was present in Italy with ON as in the UK with Mosley, in Sweden, France, Belgium, Portugal, and many other countries: neofascism claimed black people deserved rights, sometimes even freedom, but under the strong guidance of Europe, of their European older brothers is an expression we find many times, in order to prevent Africans from falling under the cruel domination of communism. We are not racists, we support black elites, but we must help them in their pattern to freedom otherwise they are going to be enchanted by communists with their false promises. This kind of approach was, of course, full of contradictions and due to these flaws, we may find an Italian militant who went to fight in Angola against Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola and a Belgian one killed by the Israeli army in 1968 while he was fighting with Palestinian resistance. While it is true that anti-Semitism was embedded in fascism and neofascism DNA and a certain sympathy for the Palestinian was present since the Second World War and the birth of the Handschar SS division, the perception of communism as global threat and the subsequent judgment on the USA and decolonization process was a crucial issue for the neofascist galaxy. Just as sample while Spanish Falangist remained always anti-USA, the Italian ON decided not without internal clashes to support the US intervention in the Vietnamese war. Yet these issues were present both for ideological reasons and for a quite complicated context; it has to be said that a new military doctrine was becoming more and more popular since the end of the Indochinese war when France army was defeated by insurgents not so well equipped or trained. In the same jungles where the USA soldiers were going to be slaughtered, French ones suffered the same destiny from the same enemy years before. Among these French officers, there was a Coronel, Charles Lacheroy who did study the support that the Indochinese army received from the civilian population; according to Lacheroy, the main reason why French were so bitterly defeated was due to this support from

the population which put the French army in a condition of desperate inferiority. Lacheroy, apart from his formation as French officer that includes the study of Napoleonic campaign with a particular attention to the Spanish one during which Napoleon should face guerrilla issues, red Mao Zedong, Trotsky, and other communist theorists. He was in this respect extremely well-prepared on how to face and to use guerrilla warfare. During the 1950s, he gave several conferences on the theory of the revolutionary war, as he decided to call his way of facing communism, to any level of the French army. According to his theory, propaganda (and sometimes even terrorism) were the weapons that have to be used in order to conquer the heart and the soul of the civil population and fear should be spread among innocent civilian in order to blame communist as the guilty ones. Looking closely to this doctrine, the strategy of tension experienced especially by Italy during the 1960s and the 1970s appears clearer. It may be useful to remind that Lacheroy joined the OAS venture after the Algerian issues in 1960 and he flew to Madrid passing through Genova and he was helped by some Italian officers. Lacheroy's doctrine arrived to Italy in 1965 thanks to a meeting at the Hotel Parco dei Principi in Rome where neofascist, extreme right-wing groups, army officers, journalists, and few academics were participating in a meeting titled: the revolutionary war.<sup>23</sup> Theme of the evening, was: are we already fighting the Third World War? At this rhetorical question, the answer was: of course, we are and we are not ready. Communism is winning everywhere, and we must do something, whatever it takes. In this sense when we met an article wrote by Rauti on ON, and again ON was distributed also in France and in some small UK circles, where the US marines were pictured as new Centurions deployed to defend western civilization, we may recall the principles of that doctrine and the absolute belief, shared among not simply neofascist militants, that communism was about to win globally. In this respect, some position about racism were strictly connected with the idea that colonialism had been a normal process of domination of the stronger on the weaker, and sometimes made for the very sake of the weaker himself, but many times, the Cold War scenario brought some groups to made a choice between the two enemies: we protect our weaker poorer brothers from communism, also because they are quite stupid, is an anthropological data, and they are completely armless against communism. Yet this ferocious anticommunism was one of the points on which neofascism could build the political hegemony of some of their ideological assumptions; the process of popularization of some neofascist ideas was inoculated within the larger extreme right-wing scene thanks to the common anticommunism and support to the USA. One of the poisonous gifts that neofascism brought within the larger area of extreme right-wing was anti-Semitism with all the plot theories underneath it.

### **Anti-Zionism or anti-Semitism**

Dealing with anti-Semitism is not an easy task; it is a very old ideology and the literature on this issue is quite impossible to manage even for specialists. This work is not designed and thought for fully debate anti-Semitism, but it goes alone

that it is not possible to face neofascism without mentioning the darkest side of that moon the never-ending infamy: anti-Semitism and Holocaust. Since the works of Mosse to the last books of Brustein<sup>24</sup> or the one of Taguieff,<sup>25</sup> many scholars tried to find an ultimate reason, or even better a different number of reasons, to explain not simply the presence but the persistence of anti-Semitism. Starting from the Catholic roots of our societies to positivistic theories on races, the effort of all these scholars is not summing up here. What is crucial for this work is to better understand which kind of discourse was developed by neofascist organizations after 1945. Before starting to analyse the political discourse of neofascist groups on this specific issue, at least two elements of context are needed: first of all, the Holocaust images, the Nuremberg trials and the Eichmann affaire were quite sensitive issues and the new media such as television covered this news. The planned extermination of six million European Jews were something knew; secondly, the policies to eradicate fascist ideology and fascist former militants from crucial positions were quite different from one another. In Germany, few Nazi criminals were sentenced to death but already in 1953, only 17% of the German population valued the de-nazification process as something useful. In Austria, the excuse of the Nazi invasion, as if the Anschluss wasn't voted by a large majority of the population, no process of de-nazification was even started. In Italy, a new neofascist party, MSI, was funded in 1946 and in large numbers, Italian war criminals escaped the justice until the general amnesty of 1946 that left most of them, including judges, chief of the police, and many other crucial figures, in charge. In France, the situation was not so different and apart from Petain, Darlan, and Laval most of the Vichy collaborationists were left free. In the UK, the situation was even more complicated since a small part of the English aristocracy did sympathize for the Nazi regime and looked with a certain favour at the possibility of a separate peace between the UK and Nazi Germany. Mosley was actually incarcerated in 1940 and his party claimed illegal but immediately after the end of the war, he could start again with his propaganda. Spain and Portugal were still authoritarian regimes, and the Cold War was about to start. Every time we speak about the way in which we failed to eradicate fascism from Europe we should remind these small aspects linked to the international situation and the new clash with the SSR and how strongly rooted this ideology was in many societies. In this respect, when we analyse the anti-Semite argumentations developed by the neofascist groups, we should take in mind these two aspects: first of all the closeness to the war period and, due to that, a certain restrain in openly assuming the inferiority of the Jew people on a biological way, there were samples of this approach but really limited and almost all of them in France, and the presence within the first wave of neofascism of key figures who fought the war who joined Nazi and fascist parties since the 1930s. As we see for the idea of Europe in the first chapter, deeply rooted in the fortress Europe of Hitlerian memory, the old generation was well aware of the changes occurred with the end of the war and they also tried to adapt their discourses to the new world power balance but, as we will see some of the old stereotype stood and, somehow, still stand nowadays. As a matter of fact, if we can read an article, fund in France among the documents

collected produced by French groups proving again this transnational connection among neofascist groups, written by Mosley in 1949 that denounce the alliance between Jew and the Labour Party in order to destroy the UK society just to enforce an old pattern on Jews equal Bolshevism. How can we describe as communist the UK Labour Party of the 1940s is another issue but still according to Mosley, the plot was serious and real: Jews are not English people, they are foreigners and they work for the foreign enemy, namely the SSR. This is one of the classical contradictions of fascist ideology that I tried to underline since the beginning of this work: Jews were at the same time agents of communism and part of the plutocratic global scheme. So, as Mosley wrote that Jews were part of the communist plan to conquer the world the narrative about the Jewish control over the global finance never vanished. Especially in France, in journals like *Defence de l'Occident*, we may find few articles dedicated to this topic. What is important to underline here is how together with the classic anti-Semitism discourses, a new kind of plot theory took place. Just to be clear the plot theories were quite spread already during the 1930s and as Mosse stressed in his books the cultural construction of the Jew as a key figure in every possible threat to the motherland started since the pamphlet in the German popular culture since the end of the XIX century. What's new in the neofascist propaganda tough? Not that much. This is probably one of the elements of continuity between historical fascism and neofascism; Jews were and remained the absolute enemy. As I said, we find less references to a direct biological explanation, even if groups as *Fédération d'action nationale et européenne* (FANE) printed and distributed anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi flyers until 1980, but all the other ingredients of the recipe were there. Jews were in control of banks and finance, and it is quite interesting to see that in the number of June 1967 together with a long article on a so-called Jew International, we may find a long article dedicated to the Bilderberg group. Yet the anti-finance crusade of neofascist groups met anti-Semitism; not in an open way, in this specific article, but reporting the names of few participants, all Jews. It is crucial to observe how these meetings were described by neofascist journals and magazines; reading this description, we can find that the articles' authors stressed two features: the secrecy of the meetings (they were quite reserved but not secret, otherwise neofascist groups wouldn't have known about it) and the global level of the debate. Why are they meeting in the dark? Do they have something to hide, were the answers, and what else if not a global scheme to dominate the world they were putting in place? Due to their financial power, these super-capitalist could easily create a world lobby which manoeuvres national-level politicians in order to achieve a precise agenda. What is important to stress is that neofascist were not crazy and they were not suffering any mental disease: they strongly believe that, in a way, communism and capitalism were two sides of the same medal, they didn't see any structural problem in describing the Jews as communist or as chiefs of a global financial plot. Jews were represented as the enemy, in every possible way; they could have been pictured as communist at the service of the SSR or as greedy bankers ready to starve entire population in order to satisfy their bestial appetites but, in both cases, they had a plan to conquer the world. This kind of

explanation of the Jewish plot was no different from many others we can find during the 1930s and as I said anti-Semitism remains one of the key features and a strong legacy that historical fascism left to the future generations. As I said since line one of this work neofascism evolved and adapted to the context and starting from the end of the 1940s, there was another crucial actor on the stage that must be taken into account: Israel. I mentioned the death in 1968 of Roger Coudroy, a Belgian engineer who joined the armed formation of Al-Fatah in its fight against Israeli army. Yet for neofascist militants' Palestinian resistance movement became quite easily a myth;<sup>26</sup> people fighting for what they claim as their own nation against the Jewish state; the elements for Palestinian to become an example for western young people recognizing themselves as nationalist revolutionary was way too easy. We should add that a certain number of former Nazi officers already flew to the Middle East countries in order to escape their responsibilities: we may find, as a matter of fact, Alois Brunner who was Adolf Eichmann's assistant working for the Syrian government or Johan Von Leers who worked in the propaganda ministry and was the author of many important anti-Semitic publications. Von Leers flew to Cairo in 1950 and was welcomed to the airport by Amin al-Husseini and worked in the anti-Jew propaganda unit of Egyptian government. He eventually converted to Islam under the name of Omar Amin.<sup>27</sup> Yet according to a Belgian source, also Leon Degrelle was in Egypt during the uprising for the nationalization of Suez dam in 1956 as part of a transnational organization of former Nazis ruled by Degrelle and Skorzeny among others, called 'the spider'. In this sense, the links between Nazi, neofascist, and Arab regimes were old, and the war times left some legacies that should still be fully explored. In neofascism, rhetoric then anti-Semitism was many times hidden and disguised as anti-Zionism. This was, and still is, a technique to popularize their racist message as it was the one about the dependence of the African countries from Europe; as Africans were anthropologically stupid who needed wise European in order not to become all communists, Jews were naturally evil and their state could simply reflect their wickedness and malice. It was, according to neofascist vision, a natural inclination of these people; within the logic of a racial fight, every race had specific features given by Nature or by God. This idea of a natural law, untouched by historical processes, is one of the key features of neofascist thinking and one of the pillars on which they built their philosophy and their ideology. This kind of immutable and eternal law, natural or divine, became the cornerstone of the willing to go back to a golden age when this law, and all its implications, was respected and glorified. This golden age of traditionalist communitarianism was eventually broken by the idea of equality brought by the French Revolution. Yet there was, according to neofascism and more in general to extreme right-wing groups, a direct connection between the French Revolution, the representative democratic system, and the Soviet one. As I said, they looked at the ideal of equality the real issue; the rock on which has been built a twisted society that had abandoned any ethics and moral values. How these ideas were developed and debated during the years we are considering in these pages is going to be the core issue of the next chapter.



**Notes**

- 1 Yet in December 1967 on the Monthly revue L'Europe Réelle, we can find articles about the Protocols of the Elders of Zions. Wiener Library, shelf reference Eur, P02328: *Monopoles. Dépendance des fortunes goym des monopoles. £ aristocratie dépourvue de ses terres. Endettement des biens fonciers. Commerce, Industrie, Spéculation. Luxe. Hausse de la main- d'œuvre et des articles de première nécessité. Anarchie, alcoolisme. Le sens, secret de la propagande des théories économiques. Nous commencerons bientôt à organiser de vastes monopoles, réservoirs d'immenses richesses dont les plus grandes fortunes goym dépendront à tel point qu'elles y seront absorbées en même temps que le crédit des gouvernements le lendemain du jour de catastrophe politique.*
- 2 As we can read in Mosley newsletter, January 1950 Wiener Library shelf reference: 252/O602 folder PO2758: *Jews still represents the sneaky enemy able to present itself in many ways, especially pretending themselves to be communists just to conquer the world (!).*  
*Practically all Jews today arc' Communists, though they may call themselves 'Labour' because it is easier to get into Parliament that way. (For instance, at the last Whitsun Conference of the 'British' Labour Party no fewer than six of the twelve speakers on foreign policy were Jews and they all took a line identical with Communism). Now the sole interest of the Jews is MONEY. Why are they not, therefore, in the traditional Party of money and big business – the Conservative Party? The answer is simple. Communism proposes to nationalise everything, including the land. When everything is nationalised, all the profits and wealth go to the 'State' – which will be a handful of Jews! Theoretically, of course, the Jews should pass on the profits and wealth to the workers, but will they?! Or will they keep it for themselves? They are not likely to take this wealth in the form of actual money, but in the form of goods and services (food, yachts, servants, houses, cars, petrol, holidays, chauffeurs, etc., etc., all out of the national revenue, as in Russia). Similarly, when everything is nationalised, the whole of the British People will be working for the 'State', i.e., for a handful of Jews. The boss of the British people, far from being the working class, will be the Jews! By nationalising the land, the 'State', i.e., the Jews, will get all the produce of the farms (turkeys, eggs, milk, butter, – cheese, etc.) for themselves.*
- 3 Wiener Library, *ibidem*. In 1960, Oswald Mosley proposed from the pages of the Nation Europe used to write: *YOU can only solve the small within die context of the great. Some weak heads may have thought that my appearance at a press conference with a Nigerian on one side of me and an Indian on the other was just a stunt, it was nothing of the sort. It was not a trivial reply in kind to the foolish measure of the Government on the subject of race relations. It was a long-considered part of a great policy which we have developed for years. If we had not long ago conceived and advocated great measures for introducing some order and sanity to the present dangerous chaos in the world, we could not logically and honestly appear wide members of other races to suggest together a solution of immediate and pressing problems in the streets of Buyui. Let us first consider what was proposed at this press conference in relation to the policy on which I fought the North Kensington election in 1959. Then we will regard it in the context of our whole European and world policy. I announced at the press conference exactly the same policy of returning all post-war immigrants to their homelands with fares paid and described again the constructive measures by which they could return to good jobs and produce sugar, bauxite, etc., in conditions which would benefit both them and us.*
- 4 Wiener Library, fund Oswald Mosley, *ibidem*, the title of the long article was quite self-explicative: GIFTS HOMES FOR BRITONS-NOT FREE FOR BRITAIN'S ENEMIES.

- 5 BDIC, 4P/7505, Ordre Nouveau, 1973: *ILS SONT AUJOURD'HUI QUATRE MILLIONS, dont plus d'un mille de Nord-Africains et près de 400.000 Noirs. COMBIEN SERONT- DEMAIN?*  
*Paris est devenu la plus grande ville africaine d'Europe. La France va-t'en devenir un immense bidonville? Des populations souvent peu assimilât se multiplient et se répandent sans contrôle dans notre pays, et de plus; plus tombent sous la coupe des agitateurs gauchistes. ACTUELLEMENT, UN ENFANT SUR TROIS EN FRANCE NAIT PARENTS IMMIGRES!*
- 6 Wiener Library, Mosley fund, shelf reference: 252/O602 folder PO2758.  
 This article, which originally appeared on NORTHERN WORLD. Volume I., Vo. 5. in which it originally appeared. "The situation to which it refers continues to assume an even more pressing significance  
*as we move into a confused and uncertain future. FEW would cruise to see the identity of their own peoples lost in a confused, cosmopolitan society," Apartheid in South Africa is a positive step towards the preservation of distinct cultures, without implying, as so many wrongly suppose, any ascendancy by one people over the other. Its ultimate aim is self-government, independence and freedom for both European and African, both in their own distinct lands. Yet this policy is being obstructed by the uninformed on the one hand, who misunderstand its ultimate aims, and the industrialists on the other, who wish to keep their supply of cheap African labour, and consequently oppose Government attempts to give the African his own land and to make him economically independent and free from foreign industrial exploitation.*
- 7 Europe Réelle, Monthly revue. Wiener Library, shelf reference Eur, P02328  
*En 1965, l'Europe occidentale est sous la botte économique judéo-yankee et, celle de l'Est subit l'esclavage total des marxistes moscovites. . . . « Nous sommes pour l'Europe car nous croyons qu'Io Franco pout \*\*intégrer a l'Europe, SANS RIEN RENONCER a ce qui fut les gloires de ton passe et de ce qui fait son patrimoine moral et spirituel.*
- 8 Olivier Dard, *Voyage au coeur de l'OAS*, Paris: Perrin, 2005.
- 9 The collaboration between neofascism and ultra-Catholicism was established on the basis of the common refusal of the idea of modernity. They claimed a common faith in Tradition and on this basis the figure of Codreanu became an important reference for the neo-fascist groups such as ON. Among others: Giuseppe Scaliati, *In difesa della tradizione. Alleanza tra tradizionalisti e neofascisti*, Rome: Prospettiva editrice, 2007.
- 10 Jean-Yves Camus, "The European Extreme Right and Religious Extremism", *Středoevropské politické studie*, 4 (2017), pp. 263–279.
- 11 Many documents are available in Italian archives describing the ideology of this group: ACS, M.I. Cabinet (Gabinetto), 1967–70, folder 268.
- 12 In this specific case, Spanish archives provided us with lots of information on the link between OAS members and JE Militants who had several meetings in that country: AGA, section culture, folder 42/8938.
- 13 BDIC, Politique Intérieur, Extrême Droite. F Delta, 1257. Jeune Europe, Février 1969  
*L'Europe française de Napoléon, l'Europe germanique d'Hitler, sont les meilleurs témoignages que l'on puisse fournir.*  
*Or souhaiter que ces états com-prennent la nécessité d'association qui existe entre eux, et veulent tous devenir membres d'une réelle confédération européenne, voilà un vœu pieux. Cependant, dans le domaine historique, les vœux pieux n'ont jamais servis qu'à orner les musées, ou plutôt l'esprit des intellectuels, ce qui est encore pire.*  
*Il faut donc démanteler les états actuels. Non pas parce que c'est une chose qui nous fait plaisir, ma is simplement par souci de rendre aux peuples leurs dimensions propres. Cette thèse ne peut s'appuyer que sur l'Ethnisme, d'ou l'idée d'une responsabilité des ethnies. Il faut aussi savoir que ('existence des peuples ethniquement intègres*

- n'est pas un fait réel a tra- vers toute l'Europe, mais seulement dans certaines régions de celle-ci. Nous distinguons plusieurs types d'Etats historiques existant actuellement.*
- 14 M. Leffler and O.A. Westad (Eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- 15 Matteo Albanese, "Il Neofascismo coem categoria analitica", *Ricerche Storiche*, No. 2 (May–August 2018).
- 16 Marco Tarchi, *La rivoluzione impossibile. Dai campi hobbit alla nuova destra*, Florence: Vallecchi, 2010. Anne-Marie Duranton-Crabol, "La 'Nouvelle droite' entre printemps et automne, 1968–1986", *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, No. 17 (January–March 1988), pp. 39–49.
- 17 In an article titled 'The Plot Against Portugal', published by La Decouvertes in February 1965 and conserved at Wiener Library, we may read: Ainsi, a la tete du «Fund for the Republic\*, nous avons Mr. Arthur Goldberg, ex-secrétaire au Travail du Gouvernement Kennedy; juif et marxiste repenté (il se declare aujourd'hui modestamente «socialiste»). Voici quelques détails sur la vie de ce magnanime bienfaiteur de Mr. Mond- lane: Juge au Supreme Tribunal des Etats-Unis; appartient au Conseil de Direction de l'Anti-Defamation League de la B'nai Brith (Ordre maçonnique international compose exclusivement de juifs); membre actif de la National Religion and Labour Fondation, dénoncée par le Comité du Congrès pour l'Investigation sur les Activités Anti-américaines comme l'«une des organisations communistes les plus pernicieuses qui aient été établies dans ce pays\*»; conseiller général de la grande centrale ouvrière américaine AFL-CIO, présidée par Irving Brown, dont les activités auprès des mouvements africains de «libération» sont bien connues; en 1960, appartenait au Carnegie Endowment for international Peace, jadis préside par Alger Iss, secrétaire général de l'ONU, juge plus tard comme espion au service de l'Union Soviétique . . .
- Arthur Goldberg fait également partie de la direction du «Congres pour l'égalité raciale» (C. O. R. E.), organisation raciste negre, dirigée par l'agitateur James Farmer, et qui a ete a l'origine des sanglants tumultes de Harlem, au mois de juillet dernier. Au C. O. R. E. appartient également Jess Grey, principal instigateur de ces tumultes et dénonce publiquement comme un « agitateur dangereux » par un de ses frères de race, le Rev. Eugene Houston, de l'Eglise Presbytérienne Noire.
- Nous savons que la Fondation Ford a concède em 1962, par l'intermdiaire du « fonds» de Goldberg, une subvention de 900 000 dollars au Council on Foreign Relations, connu par les nationalistes américains comme le Gouvernement invisible des Etats-Unis, et dont dépend, entre autres, le fameux American Committee on Africa.
- 18 ACS, M.I., DGPS, 1956–1964, political groups, folder 56.
- 19 ACS, M.I. DGPS, Political Parties, folder 90.
- 20 For a brief biography of Renato Curcio see among others: Mario Scialoja, *A viso Aperto*, Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1993.
- 21 Wiener Library, number 2, 1967: *Plan mondial de GRAND CHATIMENT domination juive :Les "PROTOCOLS des Sages de Sion. . . détruire l'industrie des goym nous développerons parmi eux grave on rirait pour aider l'œuvre de la spéculation, un luxe effréné dont Mais il est une hypothèse que la radi (sic) nous leur avons déjà donné le goût. cole, maçonnique et anticléricale. . . Elevons les gages mais n'en laissons pas le bénéfice aux évidemment pas travailleurs en élevant simultanément le prix des objets de Notre pays quartier-général de l'O.T. première nécessité, sous prétexte de décadence de l'agriculture A.N.) a été et reste le théâtre de beau- et de l'élevage. Nous saperons aussi artificiellement et pro- coup trop d'impostures, d'iniquités criant fondements les sources de la production en enseignant aux vengeances au Ciel. Et cette série noi ouvriers l'anarchie et l'usage de l'alcool, tandis qu'en même re> de catastrophes cincompréhensibles pour un populo abruti de struggle for des temps nous prendrons des mesures pour expulser du sol tous life, de biere forte, de télévision, de les goym intelligents. football et de vie moderne ne serait- Afin que les goym ne se rendent pas*

compte de la situa- elle, quelquefois, un chapelet d'avertis. tion réelle avant qu'il n'en soit temps, nous la masquerons par segments venant d'en-haut et annonçai- un prétendu désir de venir en aide aux classes laborieuses teur de cette JUSTICE IMMANNENTE . . . de maintenir les grands principes économiques; une propaactes nous suivent en laquelle, en dépit

grande active de ces principes se développe actuellement par de tout, nous avons la faiblesse de croire et c'espérer?

la dissémination de nos théories économiques. De ces buts nous nous insinuerons dans les pourparlers et les négociations, armés de notre astuce, nous emploierons le langage dit officiel et nous nous élèverons contre toute tentative d'injustice pour paraltre honnêtes et raisonnables, de cette façon les goym et leurs gouvernements à qui nous avons appris à ne regarder que la surface de ce que nous leur montrons, nous considérerons comme les bienfaiteurs et les Sauveurs de l'humanité.

Nous devons être à même de détruire toute opposition en faisant déclarer par ses voisins la guerre au pays qui ose! se dresser contre nous. Si cependant ses voisins à leur tour! s'allient contre nous, nous devons répondre par une guerre universelle.

Le succès en politique dépend principalement du secret des entreprises. Il doit y avoir contradiction entre les paroles et les actes des diplomates.

Nous devons pousser les gouvernements des goym à agir conformément à notre plan largement conçu et qui approche maintenant de sa réalisation triomphale, en donnant l'impression que ces gouvernements cèdent à l'opinion publique, loquèle en réalité est organisée en secret par nous mêmes à l'aide de ce grand pouvoir » qui s'appelle la presse. Les journaux d'ailleurs, à quelques exceptions insignifiantes près, sont déjà entièrement entre nos mains.

- 22 As Oswald Mosley wrote in his newsletter, available at the Mosley paper at Wiener Library: *THE grotesque charade of the utterly divided Commonwealth conference might have served a useful turn in convincing the British people that it was time to wake up and find an alternative. The cause of Europe, the British Dominions and white Africa might have been well served if the whole performance had been played on the stage of this bitter comedy. But in the wings a more serious and sinister action was occurring under more realistic direction. It is immaterial or not some of the Commonwealth countries are subject to communist control. It certain that they are consciously or unconsciously under communist influence in sufficient degree to play the communist game. This organization is well on the way to becoming the commie commonwealth. The Conservative leadership has done more than "preside over liquidation of Empire"*.
- 23 Marie-Catherine et Paul Villatoux, "Aux origines de la « guerre révolutionnaire »: le colonel Lacheroy parle", *Revue historique des armées*, 268 (2012), pp. 45–53.
- 24 William I. Brustein, *Roots of Hate: Anti-Semitism in Europe before the Holocaust*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- 25 Pierre-André Taguieff, *The Force of Prejudice. On Racism and Its Doubles*, Chicago: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- 26 Edited by: Claudio Mutti and Andrea Strummiello, Roger Coudroy, *Ho vissuto la resistenza palestinese. Un militante nazionalrivoluzionario con i Fedayin (I Have Lived the Resistance. A National-revolutionary Militant alongsides Fedayin)*, Roma: edizione Passaggio al Bosco, 2017.
- 27 NARA, Nazi war Criminal records: folder 080,230/86/23/05.

### **3 Equality, citizenship, and democracy**

Parliamentary democracy is a blasphemy against any Natural and God's law.<sup>1</sup> These are the words that I collected in a series of interviews with militants of the neofascist area around Europe during the past seven years of work.<sup>2</sup> People are not equal by Nature, and the responsibility of democracies to disrupt this very simple assumption is enormous. In Nature, we can find the strong and the weak, the good and the bad, the wise and the fool; trying to break, culturally or legally, this simple truth has driven western societies into the nightmare of decadence. As for the other ideological pillars, I am analysing also in this case, we should remember that this work embraces a long-time range, since the end of the war to the 1980s, and during these years, many conditions changed considerably. Neofascist movements and groups considered it and adapt themselves and their messages. In this respect, something could have been particularly stressed in a precise moment as some other issue could have been almost ignored for a while but, and this is quite important, never dismissed. The reason why I choose these three elements is exactly because I am convinced, they are the best examples of a certain level of continuity within neofascism, as it developed throughout 50 years at European level, and in a way, it reminds me some of the peculiarity of some extremist groups of the present political scene. This continuity, this permanency, and resilience of some aspects of neofascism are not a thoughtful judgment given by political actors; we won't find any debate on which elements of the fascist culture should have been kept alive for the future generations. Each one of them was simply perceived and almost felt as so important by the community of the neofascist galaxy that they simply could not abandon them. The distaste of neofascism, and in this respect of the historical fascism as well, towards democracy was so deeply rooted that it could not be eradicated. In this chapter, we analyse the political discourse, as in the other two ones, of neofascist galaxy on this issue and we try to trace back the ideological roots of this aversion.

There are at least three points I have to underline before starting with the analysis of this chapter issues and these points deal, as many times in this work, with the contradictions that neofascism brings alongside with itself: first of all, neofascism is the 'democratic' version of fascism; apart from Portugal and Spain, and since 1968 to 1974 in Greece (even if Greece is not a case study I am dealing with in here), the whole galaxy of neofascist groups used to live within democratic

societies. Yet these societies were so democratic that apart from the reconstitution of the Nazi party in Germany forbidden by law, a law that neo-Nazi were able to escape from many times, the very existence of neofascist parties was allowed. In France, the UK, Italy, Belgium, and possibly throughout the whole Europe, neofascist and very often openly neo-Nazi groups were legal. In many countries, neofascist movements were even represented by parties which elected deputies; in Italy and France, MSI and Front National participated in the government of small and medium cities and their exponents were fully integrated within state's apparatuses. As I already said apart for the German campaign of de-Nazification, with very poor results, in many other countries, neofascists were not put aside nor on the institutional or administrative level. In this respect, neofascism is the form of fascism under democracy and I would say in many cases within democracy, fully integrated in the democratic system. A system they didn't recognize and that they want, as the communists, to abolish.

A second layer of complexity is given by the fact that democracy is not just an ideal, but a complex system based on the division of power and individual freedoms. Neofascism was a communitarian ideology, where community was very often to overlap with nation and nationality, with a very narrow space for individuals and therefore for free market economy.<sup>3</sup> But as we know quite well fascist regimes not even when they were in power, or where they still were as Spain or Portugal, threatened capitalism in a revolutionary way despite some socialists' statements and neofascism was no different; nevertheless, fascism and neofascism were quite keen to grant enormous power to big enterprises but also to try to centralize economy and to direct it. In exchange for the end of class struggle and unionism issues, fascism demanded a certain degree of integration between economic system and political regimes. Social peace was maintained with extreme violent method, of course, but this kind of violence seemed not to disturb the free market system that much at least until the beginning of the Second World War. At this point, being neofascism a 'democratic' expression of fascism, the groups I am describing in this work stressed, sometimes to a paroxysmal level, their anti-capitalistic streams and ideology but they always accept funds and support given them by big enterprises. As I said, anticommunism was always an important feature but in their anti-democratic crusade anti-capitalism was as strong as in certain moments.<sup>4</sup>

The third level of analysis dealt again with the Gramscian explanation of Fascism in his Americanism and Fordism: if modernity has as a meaning, among others, the participations of masses to political life must be regulated in some ways. Communism proposed a collective, forced collective, way, to economic and political engagement while Americanism, the political shape of the political bourgeois' domination under Fordism as a prevalent way of production, put individuals at the core of the project, Fascism opposes to both of them in the name of a nationalistic vision capable of overthrow the classes struggles with a fixed social roles structure. The very core of the fascist and neofascist discourse, and as a matter of fact of this entire work, is exactly this one: which kind of way to face modernity neofascism had in mind? Participation of masses to political

process implies the possibilities of declining a new meaning of citizenship. For almost two centuries, since the French Revolution until the end of the First World War that according to Arno Mayer signed the very end of the *ancient regime*, citizenship went along with property and census. The entry into the political arena of millions of dispossessed posed the problem of the creation of a citizenship without possession; how could we imagine a different kind of citizenship and which limitation, if any, should have been put to this fundamental right now that suddenly became a universal one? Was it enough to simply enlarge the number of persons who could eventually vote? Should we go towards a socialist state which provides to every single need for everybody within a planned economy? To this question, Fascism answered with the militarization of societies and with the idea that modernity itself should have been reframed on the light of pre-modern values such as traditional classes roles. Fixed and immutable these roles should be respected for the very sake of something considered as holy: nation. Nation itself though was changing and the indissoluble couple between the state and the nation was starting to fade. A supranational nationalism based on ideology was born, based on the Nazi and Fascist dream of dominating whole Europe, while a sort of ethnic citizenship was thought in order to answer to the issue of participation.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, as communism was, of course the enemy, also liberal democracy seemed a tool to create society based on pair opportunities and singular freedoms which didn't respect the sense of belonging to a community to which every single member has to be ready to sacrifice for.

Just to sum up: neofascism lived within and somehow integrated within democratic institutions which are heavily disputed in the name of a revolutionary ideology that could overthrow both Marxism and liberalism in the name of pure communities made not by equals but divided into fixed roles that everyone may accept for the sake of the supreme good of the nation. In this respect, the debate on democracy should be addressed from two different perspectives which as always did have a quite powerful level of ideological connotation and the popularization process of this ideology. Yet we are witnessing the same process of shift from ideology to mentality that I am describing from the very first line of this work. Neofascism was an ideological fact within an era of strong ideological confrontation;<sup>6</sup> at the same time, this confrontation, even when reached peaks of violence which made many to fear for the stability of democratic institutions in different countries, was played within the democratic arena. We may say that from the beginning of the 1960s and at least until the mid-1970s, the neofascist galaxy reflected on the possibility of a military coup as a way to overthrow democracies in the western countries: at the same time, they learned from the doctrine of revolutionary war the need for a wide popular support. In this sense, they have hardly worked on a process of popularization of their ideology into a mentality. This shift was a complicated construction of meanings and key words that could easily target a large public; this strategy was implemented to create a hegemonic cultural path to win the heart and the soul of people. We will face, in another chapter, the issue of violence and the idea that only through violence a real leader could emerge, we will see how the 'golden soul' shows itself during actions, and why

neofascist groups were quite keen to mass bombing and other terrorist actions also due to their disregard for the people they claimed to represent. Yet with this kind of attitude, this idea that in the name of a superior interest, national interest, or racial interest, everyone was expendable is another small piece of complex mosaic which had as solid base the refusal of equality. Men are not equal to one another, and lead soul ones are, for sure, more expendable, even if, at the same time, the warriors should follow a path of virtue and seeking for death in the clash and not to hope for a peaceful departure in their own bed. It is not a surprise then that Maurice Bradeche in April 1953 wrote a long article where he said that democracy was simply a falsification process of the people will; democracy is a system created and supported by parties and elite in order to sacrifice the country its freedom and independence to a small circle of private interests. The press, radio, and television were the tools used to forge fake news which pushed entire populations to believe in this big lie; according to Bradeche also, the communist party was involved in this evil scheme: guilt of abandoning the working class, the communist party was actively working to its own economic interest. This treason of communists who worked together with the big capitalists is one of the reasons why the French working class should look at them as the only force capable of representing the national interests which correspond to the working-class ones.<sup>7</sup> This was not only a French problem but European, the whole continent was under a foreign domination: communist in the East and USA on the West. The communist domination was a real tragedy of course but for Bradeche, US presence in Europe was a form of imperialism against which few men driven by a steal will should fight and thanks to their faith in truth they could prevail. With the heroic narration of a minority fighting for true values and ready to sacrifice everything to the cause, it has always been the constant tune of neofascist propaganda. The attempt to represent the lower classes on an ethnic basis, comparing European (white) workers with migrants, is a declination of the struggle between nations that is part of that historical process that sees neofascism as a nodal point between historical fascism and today's ultra-nationalism. The communist parties present in western Europe, in short, were not simply the fifth column of Soviet power but intimately traitors to the interests of the nation's workers. They represented both the internal and external enemy at the same time.

This propaganda included from the very beginning a deep revision of historical events as the Second World War that was ended just seven years before. It may appear a little bit strange that neofascist forces put in place such a strong revisionist propaganda few years after the war when whomever was present could easily told them down. The point about propaganda though is exactly this one: repeating obsessively something even against any evidence and building up false or twisted proofs to your own vision of reality. In this respect is quite famous, among extreme right-wing activists, the version of Leon Degrelle of what happened on the East front. According to the Belgian Rexist, at the time officer of the Waffen-SS, every single European country should build a monument to the SS who heroically fought on the East front preventing Stalin to reach Paris!<sup>8</sup> This is one of the first and most advertised fake news on which the neofascist movements



tried to conquer a large part of an anti-communist middle-class to their views: Hitler might have made some mistakes but at least he fought against the SSR until the very end while western democracies sat on the shoulder of the Russian bear without knowing how to control it and eventually defeat it. Yet after the end of the war, the real enemy was another one, communism indeed, and these divisions between left- and right-wings made no sense any longer. We are all Italians, British, French, and we should be all united, without distinctions, against the common enemy in the name of fatherland. I am neither right nor left-wing side was one of the ways neofascist tried to hide themselves under in the aftermath of the war; I am just a decent citizen who simply wants to live in calm small life protected from the abuses of corrupted politicians who act arbitrarily upon our heads. As already underlined for neofascism, as well as for historical fascism, the division into classes of society represented the rupture of a mystical unity; that sacred body of the nation that was to be kept united in the name of nationalism. It was not, therefore, a simple propaganda operation that aimed at deconstructing concepts such as those of right and left. From this point of view, it was again the concept of equality, central to the Kantian reflection, that was targeted; only by recognizing citizens as equals is it possible to think of representative democracy.<sup>9</sup> Without this basic concept, which neofascism has always strongly denied, the division into parties becomes a manoeuvre of the 'strong powers', of the financial elites, against the people.<sup>10</sup>

This line is translated from Italian movement *Uomo Qualunque*<sup>11</sup> (Common Man) and we may find the same argumentations within the Poujade movement.<sup>12</sup> Yet we find the popularization of the neofascist discourse within other extremist formations; this is exactly what I mean when I speak about how an ideology becomes mentality and this discourse on ineffectiveness of democracy and parties is vital within the critique that neofascism brought to democracy.

This chapter will be divided into two major sections that will deal with two key aspects of neofascist critique towards western societies: first of all, we will see which kind of discourse neofascism developed on democracy as political and social systems. In this sense, it would have been pointless to divide the critique towards democracy from the proposal they brought; as a matter of fact, and this is part of the popularization process of their ideology, very often neofascist groups and parties claimed themselves as the only democratic agents against a corrupted system.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, it is going to be extremely useful and interesting to look at the idea neofascist had on equality and its link with a natural law which should rule above us all in the name of a sane and virtuous development of human societies. In this respect, a bit of attention will be devoted to their argumentation on parties and party system not only, and it would be enough, for the way in which this discourse anticipates the nowadays debate on party system but also because, again, within this approach, it emerges quite clearly the idea that people are the mystical body of nation and break it is a kind of sacrilege acting. As last point, not for importance, I want to look at the way in which neofascism framed a new kind of contraposition between the decent people and the politicians who belongs to an international elite which conspired against the nation. These two elements,

an international elite and a plot subculture, are, again, particularly interesting to understand the process that brought part of neofascist ideology within the general common sense. The neofascist movement in its effort to connect with working-class in order to gain this social sector from communists suggested different plot theories and spread what we call nowadays fake news, constantly. I already ran the sample of the mystifications about the Second World War and it is the case to add the support they gave to homeopathy and the doubts risen in an article on the damages that tobacco<sup>14</sup> was supposed to give. Yet embrace the idea that quit smoking was a suggestion of the elite who didn't want to fight air pollution and was forcing 'good common people' to stop smoking.

### **Anti-democratic actors in a democratic environment**

As I said, the great majority of neofascist western actors used to live in democratic countries; that's one of the reasons why I labelled neofascism as a 'democratic fascism' which sounds an oxymoron but as a matter of fact, there were two countries in Europe, Spain and Portugal, which lived under an authoritarian dictatorship until the half or even the end of the 1970s. As many scholars pointed out, European neofascist actors were interconnected<sup>15</sup> and it goes alone that certain part of these authoritarian states' apparatuses tried to help their comrades around the world: tried and many times succeeded. I already mentioned the case of Yves Guerin Serac but the relationships between Salazarism,<sup>16</sup> Francoism and neofascist groups in different countries didn't stop to the former OAS militants. We may easily find ON Italian activists in Spain, helped by Falange, which used to be a part of the state as a Ministry until the very end of the regime, or by organizations as *Guerilleros de Cristo Rey* (Warriors of King Christ) or *Fuerza Nueva* (New Force).<sup>17</sup> We mentioned many times 'La Découverte' a French spoken magazine printed in Lisbon as a sample of the help given by Portuguese regime to the galaxy of neofascists groups. I am not saying that without these two regimes, we wouldn't encounter the transnational level of debate and organizations we are describing but having a safe port where to escape or part of a state apparatus helping them was, as a matter of fact, quite important for the neofascist movements. These regimes, and more precisely parts of the state apparatuses strongly ideologized, provided shelters, documents,<sup>18</sup> and money for neofascist militants, and as for the case of some OAS militants also for a larger political area which was not fully labelled as neofascist, in return for their skills and abilities.<sup>19</sup> The first goal, as it appears in a letter written by Yves Guerin-Serac while he was living in Lisbon directing a Press agency called *Aginter press*, was to help national-revolutionary movements in their fights against the so-called, by neofascists, democracies. This letter wrote in 1969, found within the Portuguese documentation of the political secret police (PIDE), was addressed to other militants around Europe and aimed to collect help for the Greek coronel regimes which was under attack of the western countries' public opinion.<sup>20</sup> Before the Greek crisis in 1969, the criticism of neofascist movements towards representative democracy were quite settled: in Italy, neofascist groups and also the MSI developed an anti-democratic discourse

since the beginning of the 1950s and the same happened in France and the UK. Few years before, Mosley wrote a very enlightening article on his newsletter,<sup>21</sup> Mosley used to write several pages of articles as a proof that left-wing activists know how to bore people to death, where he underlined as the democratic system is the way to put the lower on top. The vote itself is a fraud, according to Mosley, because it doesn't represent the real will of the people. Bradeche in 1953 on *La Découverte* said that people are submerged by a nonstop false and fake information which reduced when it doesn't completely disrupt, the possibility for the common people to create a free and independent idea. One of the pillars of democracy, free speech and right to information, was heavily under the attack of neofascist organizations just because in many countries, they didn't allow them to access mass media that easily. Why so? Were the UK, France, Italy, and other countries authoritarian ones? Not at all but just because the memories on the atrocity weren't faded away not so many were keen to listen to neofascist or neo-Nazi discourses. Right-wing extremist groups created around this attitude a plot theory which explained to themselves and their supporter that democracy is not real, democracy is just the dictatorship of the majority that excluded any critical voices. Communists, liberals, and Catholics are all part of a massive plot to prevent them to loudly speak their reasons. They are the only out of the system, with no connections with the financial power that is sat behind the scenes pulling the strings of the democratic parties. This is what we can easily read in French magazines, as *L'Europe Réelle* in 1967.<sup>22</sup> This is another feature that unites the different neofascist formations across Europe: they all blame democracy for its fundamental equalitarianism, but they complain with the democratic institution for not being democratic enough. As we can read in an article written by a quite famous French journalist and essayist, namely Pierre Fontaine, in January 1954, the transnational interdependence of economies tied together by market rules and dominated by few multinational companies, was one of the main reasons why state sovereignty was at stake. The discourse was quite clear: the democratic system in the western world was not so democratic driven by a foreign superpower, the USA, and ruled, ultimately, by enterprises which put their interests ahead to the people's ones. According to the neofascist line of reasoning these two elements, internal and external, limited western states and confined them within a paradigm of obedience towards these actors alone. The whole political scenario was guided by money and Cold War issues. Yet these issues were present and real: as many authors wrote Europe suffered a different kind of US intervention due to the needs of Cold War; as the soviet presence was not simply a foreign concern due to the growth of communist parties in Italy and in France, the debate on the inner enemy, especially in these two countries, was quite strong. As we have seen already neofascism is the 'democratic' form that fascism took while within a democratic environment and with no hopes of taking over soon. In this respect, neofascist forces adjusted themselves to the new reality and played the card of the true democrats within the realm of unsovereign forces which had the goal of dispossessing the people, the very mystical body of the nation, of their souls. As we can find in a long article in the number of September 1965 of *Ordine Nuovo*, a great nation is

not simply made by the will of men who merely compose it but from the Spirit incarnate within traditions and values. These values speak of honour and blood of courage and hard work to stand against enemies. Yet the only way to build a real democracy is to forget the mythology of particularism and individualism and to fully embrace the destiny of our people and to reject false ideologies that profess class struggles in the name of the greatness of the Nation. In order these values to be respected the political form advertised by many neofascist groups, ON but also JE and others across Europe were the so-called popular-democracy. What was exactly this new democratic way to exercise people power? Even if it is not easy to reach a conclusion here; due to the multiple definitions of this peculiar form of governing, there are many features that are common and shared not only among different groups but in different periods of history. Since the first kind of discourse started, like many other times, by Mosley in the early 1950s to the idea of Front National in the late 1970s, we may find three aspects that remained crucial. First of all, we can easily find in many flyers and political statements on the useless of the electoral process which is a way to trick people making them believe that the person elected, eventually, is the most suitable one for the office when, according to neofascist, is very often appointed by parties. So, no election and yes to co-optation; a list of citizens with their abilities will be studied and only the best profiles will be finally appointed to a specific office. It remains unclear who is going to evaluate the profiles but, again, I suppose that a committee made out of the Golden Soul ones might be in charge of this delicate issue and process. Second, and perfectly consistent with the first point, if no elections are needed, also parties are useless. As we said, the idea of dividing the people into different groups was perceived by neofascist groups as a heresy an act of pure evil against something sacred. The people belong to one community, and one alone, and there are no reasons for divisions while the whole nation works together for the sake of the nation itself.

If no elections and parties are needed what was exactly this popular democracy that neofascist advertised which such passion? We luckily could find a sample in different articles, flyers, and political documents of the different organizations we are looking at in this study. As a sample Thiriart in one of his essays said that a unified Europe would have born only on the base of communities able to self-governing themselves. This idea of the small self-governing unities, coming from a Jacobin tradition, was quite trans-ideological as we can find extreme left-wing groups with a very similar discourse based on the Leninist concept of the self-determination right of every single people. Neofascist actors embraced this discourse not simply as a tactical position, which allowed them to be present within certain political communities as the Catalans or Basques as Bretons and many others until nowadays, but also because it fits perfectly with their main idea of the abolition of parties. Small communities are more manageable in terms of direct democracy as a way to express popular will. Yet according to the sources I am referring to, popular democracy should work as a mix of small communities' direct democracy and co-optation. The crucial point is to avoid any form of representation based on the party system. This is again an attack on the enlightenment

cultural and philosophical heritage; as Immanuel Kant said, in order to have a fair competition between ideas these ideas should be represented by men who recognize each other as equals. Anytime we find a reference to the party system we should keep in mind this line of reasoning that neofascism put in place since the end of the 1940s. As I said in different parts of this work, this was the ideological level of the debate that I am tracing down not just as academic research but also because it is crucial when we try to analyse the popularization of the neofascist discourse within the larger audience of the extreme right-wing and ultra-conservative actors. In this respect, it's not a surprise to discover that neofascist propaganda focused on how corrupted and ineffective, structurally corrupted I would say, the party system was. A simulacrum of democracy that stood in front of good people eyes in order to distract them from the truth: there was no democracy, and western countries were ruled by a small group of capitalists, most of them Jews of course, who took care of their own economic interest and nothing else. This system was doomed to fail and to precipitate the country and the whole world into chaos; a chaos that would have helped communists to seize power. Communists were ready having their fifth columns already organized within western societies to take advantage from all the possible distortions of this decadent political system based on false values that due to this ultimate sin could not lead elsewhere if not to the victory of bolshevism. These fifth column to which neofascists refer to were communist parties and Trade Unions. As for the fight against the party system, communist parties shared the fate of the other ones and their presence was only the proof of how democracy with its egalitarian twisted ideas allowed socialism and communism to develop. As JE wrote in a very long document<sup>23</sup> dated 1963, Popular democracy, the only real way to give power to the people, was based on a system in which Trade Unions were forbidden as part of the party system that was disrupting western countries' civilization. This aspect is crucial in order to better frame neofascism as an enemy of democracy: democracy is not indeed a system characterized by the free speech and vote but also, and mostly I would add, by a large number of actors which actively participate in political and social life. Free participation was exactly one of the historical enemies of neofascism. This is one of the reasons why they see communism as the worse possible scenario, but they were not that fond of democratic system either. As I said, democracy and equality was the real issue according to neofascist movements and free market-based economies promoting individualism were the other side of the moon of Marxist materialism.

### **Anti-capitalism transnationals plot**

Even if I already mentioned this point, the anti-democratic thought was entangled not only to the criticism moved towards socialism but to capitalism as well. It is quite common to find among the sources I collected through all the years, a profound concern towards capitalism as destructor of communities.<sup>24</sup> Capitalism view and philosophy with its major focus on individuals and their freedom, political and economic, was the oldest enemy – the real beast to defeat in order to

establish societies based on the Natural Law abovementioned. It comes quite easy to understand why a communitarian and nationalist theory may encounter several difficulties in matching with liberalism; individuals searching for their own material satisfaction are not exactly the base of a communitarian or nationalistic regime. In this respect, the fight against democracy as political system went along with a severe criticism towards the free market and economic egoism. It is not surprising then if we may find in an article published in *La Defense de l'Occidente* in 1964 a long description of the way in which the big capital (in the sense of an organized companion of transnational big capitalists) plotted to flood European countries with immigrants.<sup>25</sup> According to the scenario described in the article, poor immigrants were keen to work for lower wages and in doing so, they helped big capital to gain more money. On the top of that, the secret plot also aimed to mix races among them apparently was considered a crime in itself. The neofascist magazines and journals put a crucial issue on the table speaking about the dumping on poverty that big enterprises were committing not only by exploiting immigrant works but also by starting to deploy their factories in poorer countries where they could find lower wages policies and many other legal advantages for their enterprises. As we can see already during the first half of the 1960s, right-wing galaxy started to reflect about globalization process, exactly as extreme leftist groups, and to search for a nationalistic way out from this process that according to them posed a severe threat to the integrity of the state both economically and culturally.

Yet again the problem lay in the democratic and parliamentary system which structurally is not able to resist the power of big capital; in the number of January of *La Decouverte*, we may find a long article on how weak this institution, parliament, is. Deputies are not skilled or prepared for their duties they simply can't stand the power of capitalism and they sell themselves and the whole nation to the best offer. The danger represented by democracies, easily corruptible for their own very being was clear; what we should look at with a certain degree of scientific interest is the concept of big capital. As I said already, neither neofascist and even less extreme right-wing groups have ever been revolutionary ones, despite the way they wanted to be perceived and the self-portrait they used to offer to the general public, most of the time they received money from middle and even upper-class persons scared by communism and generally speaking from small- to medium-size enterprises. What this rhetoric against big capital was about, then? As we can read in *La Defence de L'Occidente* in 1956, financial capitalism was one of the main enemies to defeat; the defence of producers against banks and capitalist system was a must for the extreme right-wing in general for neofascists. The entrepreneurs who risked his own money in a capitalistic venture standing together with his workers is to commend while the big bankers who didn't create any tangible value are enemies. We may hear an ancient sound here; this kind of ideas smell of golden age during which loaning money in order to make more money was not simply considered unfair but almost blaspheme. Money must be earned working hard and producing something or providing a service; every finance speculation was part of a transnational or even global plot

to weak the nation. At the top of this plot, we may find, once again, Jews. Finance is transnational and doesn't answer to any law but the profit while according to neofascism only hard work may lead to success and richness. Yet this richness is part of National wealth and not simply a selfish accomplishment of a single person; richness is valuable for everyone even if it declares social status. Speculation is not a matter of hard work but of some clever manoeuvres that may even lead to richness but without ethics and no add-value to the nation or the community. Yet it is not difficult to find within this way of thinking a certain parallelism with Poujadism and its defence of small shopkeepers who were fighting against multinational enterprises of large retails. This kind of movements, as I already underlined, took gradually many voters and militants from right-wing extremism to embrace neofascist positions. The strong criticism against modern society the way of production and a certain fascination towards ancient ways of producing and living were one of the points that Poujadism or Uomo Qualunque (Common Man Movement) in Italy shared with neofascism. Yet we witness a glorification of the past, the chant of a Golden age where everyone used to live in harmony completely happy and satisfied of its own social role. As I said in the first chapter, this kind of ideas were pushed and advertised from the very beginning of neofascism history until the 1980s and beyond. Reading an article written by Mosley in 1947, we may find an analysis that sounds more or less like this: capitalism is a fraud and together with democracy will be one of the factors that will determine the communist's victory in the world. Only a 'third way' a corporative one might save western civilizations. It is not a surprise then if Mosley again dared to forecast the end of capitalism and the ruin of civilization in 1964. According to his vision, western capitalism with the injection of liquidity operated by the US central bank was driving the entire system to a fatal failure. In such a case, only the will of brave men could have saved the incoming crisis. Capitalism based on individual greed could not function said Pino Rauti during a conference in Rome in 1968.<sup>26</sup> It is remarkable that at this conference, Spanish and Portuguese militants were attending from the Centre Study on Organic Economy. Organic is used in this case as a way to extend ecology to the human relations; according to neofascist organizations, organic economy was the one which took into account not simply the material aspects of economy but spiritual and immaterial needs of human beings. Is it possible to land money and earn a profit from this activity? It is, but, according to La Decouverte, in an article published at the beginning of the 1970s, the state must overlook this kind of venture because not completely ethical. On the other hand, the French spoken journal published in Lisbon, as I already mentioned, already put under its spotlight the 'weird Bilderberg Group' in 1967. It is not a case if the author mentioned various times that this secret group was already controlling the USA because due to the capitalist nature of that state, it was easy for bankers and elite to achieve the control of the state. A state without a soul ready to be bought and sold to the best offer. And in this materialism, democracy becomes more and more close to Marxism and here a gigantic plot theory becomes real; within the pages of different journals until the beginning of the 1980s, Marxism and Liberal individualism were about to lead European

civilization to the end. Through ethnical substitution or globalization process, the culture of Europeans is going to be destroyed and a new melange without history and traditions is going to rise. Neofascism was the way to defeat the bitter future that the two superpowers were preparing for humanity. This idea of an encirclement of Europe, by the USA and the SSR, was indeed a debate in a long interview with Otto Skorzeny in December 1969<sup>27</sup> where the former chief of the SS special branch remembered to the audience that a war in Europe could have erupted every minute. Europe and western countries should react and unify under the ideology of a strong pan European nationalism which refused both individualism and collectivism. Skorzeny was of course in favour to a stricter link with the USA, and by the way used to be paid by US intelligence among others, but he made clear that the alliance with the USA, despite he claimed himself to have a strong liberal spirit (!), was a tactic in order to defeat communism but without any doubts, USA should have bond to European culture and traditions. Especially to the end of the 1970s, the links with the US with suprematism became stronger; in this respect, the idea of a cultural superiority of Europe was not stressed too much in order not to hurt the new allies. As I already mention, neofascism was an adaptive creature and even of the criticism towards democracy and liberalism remained a key feature of its ideology the collaboration with US state apparatuses in the fight against communism was considered as a priority issue; for this reason, we may encounter here another contradiction that we may explain only reflecting again on strategy and tactics. The fight against communism was a strategic target and one of the ways to enlarge the political field for neofascists groups. Democracy and liberalism were still considered a major problem; but facing the growth of communism in many different countries around the world, the neofascist groups were more than keen in helping former enemies. To this reasoning, we may add that many former Nazi and fascist criminals were saved from a bitter destiny exactly by OSS in the late 1940s and in the early 1950s.

To sum up, we could quote a long article written in February 1969 in *la Nation Européenne* where the author underlined how a communitarian Europe should be built on small territorial identities which were able to self-manage themselves without electing anyone but simply choosing the best ones among the community.<sup>28</sup> They imagined small and closed communities ethnically homogenous on traditional identitarian features based on a quite peculiar idea of history. Refusing free market, at least in theory, they tried to promote a coming back to a sort of ruralism and federalism. Small administrative unites federate in a bigger Europe that refuses liberalism and communism to embrace a sort of ethical economy based on fixed social positions. What is extremely interesting to notice is how these proposals remained simply in paper; where they had the chance of ruling even for long periods as in Spain or even in Portugal, big enterprises were present and powerful and the Franco's reforms of the end of the 1950s opened to financial capitalism and tourism represent one of the turning point of the Spanish present time and the beginning of the end for the regime. As Salazar was busy in fighting, a never-ending war to keep Angola and Mozambique as Portuguese colonies against every advice the Portuguese economy sank into a state of backwardness which affected



Portugal for many years. In this respect, apart from the Verona's manifesto not even the RSI was keen to realize all the social statements they wrote. Neofascism was struggling against communism from a neo-communitarian perspective that brought along the strong criticism against democracy. The equalitarianism was the ultimate sin that should be defeated sooner or later; communism was nothing, but the bitter fruit grown on the tree of the French Revolution. Until the end of the 1980s, the goal was to keep as many people as possible away from the fruit, but the final goal was to cut the tree.

## Notes

- 1 BDIC, 8 op. 4744, La Défense de l'Occident, Avril 1953: Pervers et nuisible sous toutes ses formes, le libéralisme est l'ennemi le plus dangereux du Nationalisme. Son aspect économique, en particulier, ne saurait être réduit à la défense ni à l'illustration de la liberté d'entreprendre: là, comme ailleurs, le libéralisme camoufle, sous une façade idéologique, des réalités peu avouables. . . . Les dirigeants politiques de la Nation, en régime libéral, sont issus de l'élection. Mais, plus généralement, tous les hauts postes, toutes les responsabilités dirigeantes de la société actuelle sont désignés selon des critères fantaisistes et inadaptés.

Désignation des gouvernants par une opinion publique mal informée et inorganique, nomination des hauts fonctionnaires par des politiciens incompetents, tout cela aboutit à un gouvernement de fait que Maurras nommait les "Quatre états confédérés de la république et qu'il convient de nommer aujourd'hui le Régimo: gouvernement par une enste politicienne très lucide quant aux moyens propres à perpétuer son pouvoir, au détriment de la France

Le régime électif aboutit à cette démocratie que Céline définissait: 'le Gouvernement du Peuple, pour le Peuple, par la vinasse'. . . . A nous, puisque nous sommes des révolutionnaires politiques, de nous pénétrer de ce principe aristocratique de la Nature qui est la clef de voûte de l'ordre des choses. C'est seulement lorsque l'idée de sélection présidera dans l'ensemble du courant nationaliste qu'elle pourra triompher dans l'Etat.

- 2 Especially Alberto Torresano but also Claudio Mutti, and many others confirm me this very crucial point.
- 3 E. Cassina Wolff, "The Meaning and Role of the Concepts of Democracy and Corporatism in Italian Neo-fascist Ideology (1945–1953)", *Modern Italy*, 16/3 (2011), pp. 295–313.
- 4 Andrea Mammone, Emmanuel Godin and Brian Jenkins (Eds.), *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism in Europe (Extremism and Democracy)*, London: Routledge, 2012.
- 5 It is extremely interesting to look at the federal dimension they stressed in order to claim an ethnic homogeneity and to criticize the surging European institution. Yet within the number 1 of February 1969 of *La Nation Européenne* conserved at BDIC 4P, 7505, we may read:

*L'Europe française de Napoléon, l'Europe germanique d'Hitler, sont les meilleurs témoignages que l'on puisse fournir.*

*Or souhaiter que ces états comprennent la nécessité d'association qui existe entre eux, et veulent tous devenir membres d'une réelle confédération européenne, voilà un vau pieux.*

*Cependant, dans le domaine historique, les vœux pieux n'ont jamais servi qu'à orner les musées, Ou plutôt l'esprit des intellectuels, ce qui est encore pire.*

*Il faut donc démanteler les états actuels. Non pas parce que c'est une chose qui nous fait plaisir, mais simplement par souci de rendre aux peuples leurs dimensions propres. Cette thèse ne peut s'appuyer que sur l'Ethnisme, d'où l'idée d'une*

responsabilité des ethnies. Il faut aussi savoir que l'existence des peuples ethniquement intègres n'est pas un fait réel à travers toute l'Europe, mais seulement dans certaines régions de celle-ci. Nous distinguons plusieurs types d'Etats historiques existant actuellement. Et en faisant cette distinction, nous commettons certes nombre d'erreurs, d'omissions volontaires dans le simple souci de rendre clairs nos propos.

– les états comprenant deux ou plusieurs communautés distinctes ou inassimilables: Belgique:

Wallons

Flamands Yougoslavie

Serbes

Croates et autres minorités Tchécoslovaquie

Slovaques

Tchèques – les états comprenant certaines parties d'une minorité ethnique: Basques d'Espagne;

– les états comprenant à la fois des minorités inassimilables, mais aussi des régions assimilables à la nationalité, et souffrant simplement d'un manque d'autonomie: la France. Nous nous étendons sur cet exemple, non par esprit de cocarde, mais par goût pratique. Notre pays a une existence historique réelle, mais n'a pas légitimité (sic)

Un ethnisme raisonné permet la construction d'une Europe où chaque peuple représente une entité et la notion nationaliste reprend sa vocation réelle dont le Jacobinisme l'avait détourné (la Nation était alors déterminée par la volonté démocratique de vivre ensemble). Ces simples termes nous indiquent combien cette notion était arbitraire et sujette à caution. Les Etats résultant de confluences diverses subsisteront (Hongrie). Dans le cas où ils recouvreront une superficie suffisamment grande (France, Allemagne), ils seront à régions autonomes. Toutes ces conceptions ne peuvent avoir d'application que dans le cadre européen. Dans la construction de l'Europe, l'ethnisme constitue une ligne de direction, mais le séparatisme à but antieuropéen, demeure une absurdité qu'il faut combattre. L'ETHNISME NE DOIT PAS ETRE LE RETOUR AUX LUTTES TRIBALES.

L'existence d'une Europe aux « cent drapeaux » ou plutôt aux! « cent états » nécessite un pouvoir central. Ce pouvoir ne peut être que fort, car à chaque échelon de la hiérarchie pyramidale, il existe! un renforcement, une structuration des cellules essentielles de la Société: la hiérarchie sociale, tant dans ses fondements que dans ses réalisations, sera traitée plus en détail dans le cadre du Socialisme.

6 J.L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

7 BDIC, 8P4744, La Défense de l'Occident, April 1953:

*Le second facteur est le flottement actuel de la clientèle communiste. Un grand nombre de communistes restent attachés au parti parce qu'il n'y a pas autre chose. Mais un certain nombre d'entre eux commencent à percevoir que le Parti communiste sacrifie les intérêts de la classe ouvrière aux intérêts de la politique soviétique. Il y a place en ce moment pour un parti des travailleurs qui se donnerait sincèrement pour objet la défense des intérêts des travailleurs contre des partis qui se sont tous faits complices de l'exploitation capitaliste et qui acceptent et préparent une guerre qu'ils jugent inévitable.*

8 Leon Degrelle, *The Eastern Front: Memoirs of a Waffen SS Volunteer, 1941–1945*, Fountain Valley, CA: Institute for Historical Review, first translation in English, 1985; Francis Balace, *De l'avant à l'après-guerre, l'extrême droite en Belgique francophone*, Leuven: De Boeck Supérieur, 1994.

60 *Equality, citizenship, and democracy*

- 9 F. Neumann, *Behemoth struttura e pratica del nazionalsocialismo*, Milan: Mondadori, 2007.
- 10 We may find an interesting article in this respect in JE, February 1969, BDIC, 4P 7505: *L'Europe des Six et ses apôtres: Schumann et les technocrates de la Démocratie chrétienne qui sont d'ailleurs partagés en deux groupes. D'une part, les technocrates capitalistes, fort semblables à leurs frères marxistes. Il s'agit de régler les affaires du monde en fonction de la rentabilité économique elle-même, dictée par des lois pseudo-scientifiques. Leur conception uniformisatrice de la Société ne laisse aucun doute: « Grattez le vernis, aucune moelle européenne ne subsiste . . . »*
- 11 P. Corduwener, "Challenging Parties and Anti-Fascism in the Name of Democracy: The Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque and its Impact on Italy's Republic", *Contemporary European History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 26/1 (2016).
- 12 BDIC, 8P 4744, within the number 30, February 1956 of *La Defense de l'Occident* we may find a long dossier on Poujade and his movement.

*La 7 janvier 19, dans une déclaration à la presse, Poujade affirmait: Nous allons faire voir au pays ce que doivent être les véritables représentants du peuple. . . . Ce n'est pas faire de la poll bique, c'est faire du civisme. Nos depuis ont pour instruction de ne rien faire qui ne sont conforme a la ligne de Mouvement. Ce n'est pas de la dictature, est a construire, la vraie démocratie.*
- 13 Andrea Mammone, "The Eternal Return? Faux Populism and Contemporarization of Neo-Fascism across Britain, France and Italy", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 17/2 (2009), pp. 171–192.
- 14 Wiener Library, London, Mosley fund, shelf reference 252/O602 folder PO2758.
- 15 A. Bauerkämper, "Transnational Fascism: Cross-Border Relations between Regimes and Movements in Europe, 1922–1939", *East Central Europe*, 37/2–3 (2010), pp. 214–246; A. Costa Pinto and Aristotle Kallis (Eds.), *Rethinking Fascism and Dictatorship in Europe*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014; M. Cuzzi, *L'internazionale delle camicie nere: i CAUR, Comitati d'azione per l'universalita di Roma, 1933–1939*, Milan: Mursia, 2005; Fededrico Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism. Ideology, Violence and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919–1945*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2010; Andrea Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- 16 *Ibidem*; in the same long dossier we may read an interesting analysis made by the neo-fascist group that published the magazine where they say that Poujadisme was close to Salazarism: *sentation économique ait pour base l'organisation professionnelle, que l'élu découle directement de des professions » (M. Rohart, Fraternité 7–55). Le principe des Etats Généraux met en tendance qu'on pourrait appeler corporative motion de 1955: « suppression du Conseil Eco se transformerait en seconde Assemblée charge problèmes économiques, et notamment du contrôle des dépenses ». La démocratie suggérée par led poujadistes serait libérale en politique et corn matière économique. S'il fallait absolument che références étrangères au Poujadisme, c'est sans côté de Salazar qu'il faudrait regarder.*
- 17 G. Cabrejas de las Heras, "La matanza de Atocha y la Semana Negra de la transición española", in M. Bueno Lluich, J. Hinojosa and C. García García (Eds.), *Historia del PCE*, vol. 2, Oviedo: Fundación de Investigaciones Marxistas, 2007, pp. 399–412.
- 18 On the first number of 'The Truth', an ultra-Catholic and neofascist review, we may read: *A truly democratic government, not one merely calling itself a democracy, which ascertains and speedily executes the general will, with action rather than talk, under the principle of personal responsibility and unity of our people.* Published in June 1955 it is conserved at Wiener library, London, shelf reference Eur, P02328.
- 19 J. Cubero Sanchez, *Montejurra 76 en el contexto de los años de plomo*, Madrid: Ediciones Arcos, 2010.
- 20 Archivo National de Torre do Tombo, AOS/CO/NE-30A, February 1964.

- 21 Wiener Library, London, Mosley fund, shelf reference 252/O602 folder PO2758  
*We still live in an economic crisis which threatens the life of Britain. Our people feel the growing pressure of ever-increasing restriction and suffering. . . . The reason for this failure was suggested before the debate in the White Paper, which was the subject of discussion, in the following words: "Indeed, the task of directing by democratic methods an economic system as large and complex as ours is far beyond the power of any Governmental machine." The governing words of this illuminating phrase are, of course, "by democratic methods." The same point was underlined after the Debate in a leading article in the Economist, which stated: "The Government was almost openly faced with the dilemma of going forward until the planning is no longer democratic or going back until some of their followers say it is no longer planning." In other words, the ablest minds of the present system at last admit the obvious fact that any kind of "planning" is impossible under that system.*
- 22 Wiener Library, London, L'Europe Réelle, shelf reference Eur, P02328, December 1967: *les moyens d'information > Aux mains du Régime ou de certains intérêts ». Tels sont les gens entre les mains desquels on met un bulletin de vote. Si on admet que dans toute société l'élite est minoritaire, on doit alors reconnaître que cette façon de choisir une politique est contraire à la raison, qu'elle nivelle par le bas les capacités de l'ensemble de la Nation . . . Mais soyons assez conciliants pour supposer ce principe juste en théorie. Comment s'empêcher de remarquer que dans la pratique il est absolument inapplicable, et qu'en réalité la Démocratie n'est qu'un masque pour une Dictature qui n'ose dire son nom. . . . Et, les partis riches ayant tout le pouvoir financier de faire campagne tapageuse les affiches de la Majorité étaient scandaleuses par leur luxe, leur taille, leur nombre.*
- 23 BDIC, 4P7505, Jeune Europe, June 1963.  
*L'autorité n'est pas le despotisme d'un homme ou d'une camarilla soucieux de maintenir leurs privilèges par des lois d'exception. L'autorité n'est pas fondée par l'élection mais par la sélection, le mérite, la compétence, la volonté, la clairvoyance et la responsabilité qui en sont les critères.*  
*L'autorité doit être rigoureusement hiérarchisée. Pour nous socialistes-européens, l'élite nouvelle doit redonner à notre continent la volonté de lutte indispensable à la vie, car une communauté humaine qui refuserait de combattre serait rapidement éliminée par d'autres plus vigoureuses. Les adversaires de notre civilisation en sont parfaitement conscients. C'est pourquoi nous devons lutter. . . . Non seulement nous n'excluons pas la violence révolutionnaire pour mener à terme la mission de notre génération, mais nous sommes décidés à l'utiliser au mieux . . . Nous sommes des partisans de l'ordre. L'ordre est un fait naturel, qui correspond à l'ordonnance des espèces et de la vie; plus les choses sont achevées, plus elles sont ordonnées, plus elles sont évoluées. Mais de même qu'il est des contestations qui mènent au chaos et d'autres qui rétablissent l'équilibre, l'ordre ce n'est pas n'importe quel ordre, ni l'ordre à tout prix, et en tout cas pas l'ordre conservateur du parti de la crainte. Notre contestation entend rétablir l'équilibre, l'ordre naturel, face à une société décadente. Pour construire le monde nouveau auquel nous aspirons, nous sommes décidés à nous servir de la contestation comme d'une arme et seulement comme d'une arme. La contestation est une étape, un premier pas vers la révolution.*
- 24 Wiener Library, London, The National European, July 1964, article signed by Oswald Mosley.  
*Money is getting tighter; import restrictions are growing, the Kennedy Round for tariff reductions has run bang into a clash between America and the Common Market, the INO conference at Geneva is a growing disappointment to those backward lands that believed more aid from the West was to be had for the asking. So ends the post-war dream that slumps and unemployment had been waved aside for all time by the dollar magic wand.*

*Where do we go from there?* The *ECONOMIST*, voice of orthodoxy, comes up with an answer straight away. What is needed is the “overt transfer of power from national central banks to international institutions”. It takes the American President and Treasury to task for their lack of true international vision, arising from their innate sense of American interests first. British politicians – particularly the Chancellor – must get busy in showing American leaders how to be model world citizens. As it happens Mr Maudling put up a plan some time ago giving power to the International Monetary Fund to ‘voluntarily create’ a new type of international credit; it fell on deaf American ears. This plan says the *ECONOMIST* must be pushed forward again. Both Maudling and the *ECONOMIST* are out to make the bankers of the I.M.F. into world dictators – and here they are quickly joined by Mr Harold Wilson who last May lectured the American Chamber of Commerce in London on the need to leave behind ‘the age of Charles II’ and ‘give full central banking powers to a reformed I.M.F.’

This is the new orthodoxy – the financial experts of the two main parties in full agreement on making finance the overt government of the world. Tory Chancellor and Labour would-be Premier agree it should have the same vast power over countries which present national bankers have over the individual.

- 25 La Defense de l’Occident, Wiener library, London, PO, 2250, DEC.
- 26 Central Archive of State, Italy, DPPS, Political Parties, 1967–70, folder 57.
- 27 Wiener Library, London, shelf reference, DEC PO 2250, La Découverte, December 1968. During an interview with Otto Skorzeny (who claim to be a liberal person!) we may read: *A ce propos, permettez-moi de vous faire remarquer que le général De Gaulle, depuis longtemps, déclare que tous les Français sont «des veaux» ()*  
 – *Chacun son opinion (vous savez que je suis d’esprit fort libéral). Je connais beaucoup de Français qui ne sont pas des veaux. Je déplore cependant que la France ne fasse plus partie de l’O.T.A.N.; bien que cette organisation ne soit pas parfaite, elle a le grand mérite d’exister.* About the same topic we may look at: G. Parlato, “La cultura internazionale della destra tra isolamento e atlantismo (1946–1954)”, in G. Petracchi (Ed.), *Uomini e nazioni. Cultura e politica estera nell’Italia del Novecento*, Udine: Gaspari, 2005, pp. 134–154.
- 28 It is an interesting point already visible in other sources shared. It is crucial to understand how neofascism was able to connect with local political movements that in a future became quite important as the case of North League in Italy that started as a movement claiming independence for the northern Italian region and ended up as one of the most important actors of the new right-wing radicalism. BDIC, 4P, 7505.

## 4 Violent landscapes across Atlantic Ocean

### Neofascism, violence, and terrorism

In the previous chapters of this work, I chose to focus more on the ideological level, and I may have sacrificed a crucial aspect for historians: the context. I have to say that the amount of material I dealt with it was quite wide and some choices sometimes have to be made. I must admit that reading and studying these documents the similarities I have found despite the passing years convinced me to prefer to look at this aspect and I am still convinced that a certain degree of continuity between historical fascism and neofascism and within the galaxy of neofascist movements across Europe and during different decades, it has been somehow proved. The last point I would like to address in this book is related to violence, not just violence as a political tool but as a political goal. Violence was in historical fascism one of the pillars of its ideology and it represented the combination between theory and practice; the physical annihilation of enemies was not just a tool to seize power, but it was the way in which the movement shape<sup>1</sup> itself and a kind of mass ritual<sup>2</sup> through which the best ones were selected. Following the already quoted ‘natural law’, fascist used to practice violence to determine the hierarchy among the party and in society. Violence and war were embedded in fascism since the beginning of its political birth. Fascism seize the power relatively soon in Italy and Germany and Portugal, while in Spain, the fascist dictatorship needed to go through a terrible civil war that fascist forces wouldn’t had won without Nazi and fascist helps; in this respect, the phase of fascism as movement, invented by Renzo De Felice,<sup>3</sup> it is a quite interesting theoretical tool, but we may use it for what it is: a tool to better understand a specific and quite brief moment of historical fascism; we have to underline how this phase was and still is quite emphasised by the neofascist groups around the world.<sup>4</sup> For some reasons, it sounds easier to claim that a part of fascist past more than the regimes with their charges of crimes. As if the violence wasn’t present during that phase many neofascist groups openly claim to look at the first moments of fascism and Nazism to rebuild a fascist ideology after the end of the Second World War.<sup>5</sup> As it has already been said, neofascism is the shape that fascism took in times of democracy; while in Europe, Spain and Portugal remained two authoritarian countries, even if with substantial differences after the end of the war, the other

European countries dealt with the construction, in case of Italy, or with the consolidation of democratic models. Fascist militants, those who didn't want to retire from public life, had to decide whether there was space enough for their ideology and organizations. Yet Italy was a kind of very interesting case study, while in Germany, Nazi parties and organizations were banned from the political life in December 1946, the Italian MSI, neofascist party, was funded and not put out of law. In the same way while the German government decided to start a de-Nazification process of its society in Italy a first amnesty was put in place. I am not assuming German de-Nazification plan freed the whole country by Nazi ideology or militants, but it remains a fact that a public procedure was taken against the ones who were strongly committed with the previous regime while in Italy, as Focardi and Klinkhammer proved, the great majority of high ranked bureaucrats, including army officers, judges, and so on, remained in place without a single allegation.<sup>6</sup> We should take this in mind every time we face the big issue of the public use of history and the reasons why the construction of a shared memory of the past is still so difficult in Italy. At the same time, both in France and in the UK, fascist groups were back to the light immediately after the end of the war; as in France, the legacies with Vichy regime are still a very sensitive topic as the book of Buton<sup>7</sup> showed, in the UK, Oswald Mosley was released from prison and he started back to organize his neofascist movement.<sup>8</sup> Immediately after the war, we might have seen dozens of groups being created and many of them didn't survive; the real issues of these groups were mainly two: how to create a stable organization that could guarantee a certain stability and how to picture these groups as a vital subject outside of the sphere of remembrance. The Italian MSI, in this respect, was a very important sample: a party born in the country where fascism was created that gathered a large majority of former fascist militants. The debate within the party was severe at the very beginning with some streams that wanted to forbid to enter the party to anyone of those who didn't fight alongside the Nazi during the last months of the war. In this case, a lot of fascist militants who used to live in the south of the country would have been cut out from the party. This stream lost the battle, and the party became an incredible reservoir of votes and militancy for everyone who felt the new-born Republic as an enemy. The second issue was easily solved presenting the new parties and groups as a bastion against communism. We told in the book of the different positions that neofascism articulated and developed during the years and it is quite important to remind that, as a sample, the neofascist anti-communism didn't lay on the USA; from many years, and somehow it is still very true especially after the end of the soviet regimes, neofascist didn't go along with democracy and especially they were not very fond of the US system of values. At the same time, communism was seen as the beast to put down at any cost the last and more dangerous degeneration of that equalitarian thought that fascist always despised. Full funded and strong organizations and a solid ideological justification were needed in order to revitalize fascist parties around Europe; and these were the two main goal of the transnational network of militants that was put in place formally during the 1950s with the Malmoe and Rome meetings and prepared by continuous relations among former officers such

as Otto Skorzeny and Junio Valerio Borghese. These two famous former officers played a crucial role during the first decade after the end of the war to build and consolidate a network of groups that could keep the flame of Nazism alive. They flew, separately, to Argentina to seek for money from Peron and they started, especially Skorzeny, their skills to the former enemies: the USA government. At the same time they helped the neofascist organizations in grabbing some money here and there and they established a strong connections with the security services of the West which was about to start its global war against communism. This book is not related with the history of Stay Behind but the existence of such an organization could explain some passages we may go through in this chapter. As it has been mentioned in the first lines, violence was one of the pillars of fascism, not a tool but an unavoidable part of its ideology; at the same time, we underlined many times how neofascism was the declination of fascism in democratic times. The Cold War was, somehow, an answer to the question: how to put together a violent ideology, and its practices, within peaceful times and even democratic countries. Stay Behind was an underground organization created by the US intelligence service, OSS, at the sunset of the war. Once they captured Reinhard Gehlen, US forces immediately understand which utility the former chief of German secret services on the Eastern front may have. During the war, Gehlen collected all the possible tactical information on the Red Army, copied everything on microfilm and buried all his material on Austrian Alps. From this position of strength, he manage to bargain with OSS; he passed not just all his material but he offered to manage the network of spies he infiltrated during the war among the Red Army and, according to him but this passage is not proven, among high ranked member of the Soviet Communist Party. To those spies was ordered to 'stay behind' the enemy lines and to keep working for their General. Eventually Gehlen became the chief of western Germany secret services, BND (Bundesnachrichtendienst) in 1956, but his past was exposed in 1968 by a soviet agent infiltrated within BND and he had to resign. This was the shape that Stay Behind took in the Eastern bloc countries', but the plan was more elaborated and complex. While the SSR was the first and more impellent concern also among the western ones there were issues, especially in Italy, with the emerging of its strong communist party, Italy represented an unstable country through all the time of Cold War and plans to fight back a possible victory of communism were a part of the treaty that Italy signed to join NATO. Just to be clear some of those contingency plans pursued the precise goal of establishing an authoritarian state instead of a democratic republic and to deport communist and socialist activist on some special prisons on islands. The idea of a possible violent regime change wasn't just the sick nightmare of some neofascist group. In this specific context, violence was an option a very present one. When in 1950s the war of Korea started, and France had to face its first decolonization process in Vietnam, some of the plans were adjusted and from every corner, you may have ear of war to communism and even of atomic solutions. It was during the French-Vietnamese war that a young officer, coronel Larechoy, started an important reflection on the means of this new war he witnessed in Vietnam, and he came up, in 1954, with a new warfare doctrine: the revolutionary war.



According to the manuals he wrote and that later on were adopted as textbooks in many armies academy in Europe and in the USA, the greatest problem of conducting a war against populations who refused to be under the control of colonial powers, it was represented not by the guerrilla itself but by the support that civilian used to grant to these irregular fighters. Consequently, the main argument that Larechoy debated in his manuals was how to force the civilian population to abandon freedom fighters, he defined them terrorists, to dry the water where the fishes swim. No popular support meant for the guerrilla groups no place to hide, no help with logistic matters and so on. Acting in this way defeating guerrillas should have been relatively easy for a well-trained army. So how to do this? The plan was quite simple, actually; it was enough to spread fear through terrorist attacks which target civilians and blame your enemy for those crimes. A large aspect of this plan was devoted to the psychological war, a wide kind of 'weapons' have to be used in order to create the right climate; newspapers, opinion makers, media at any level, and cover operation put in place by secret services to infiltrate the groups all these measures have to be taken and to be exploited with care and consciousness to achieve the goal. As a matter of fact, the telling about the attack is more important than the attack itself in this strategy; once the attack has been done, in order the plot to succeed, you need a well-made construction of the story to convince as many people as possible who is the criminal.

No theory is good enough until you don't try it. The revolutionary war theory made no difference and it needed to test. Few years later the defeat they suffer in Vietnam, French officers had to face another complicated situation: Algeria. Yet another people refused to remain within the glorious French empire and started to seek for gaining its own independence. First of all, let me underline an important fact: the loss of Indochina was felt by the large part of French society as a sign of times and didn't create a very large debate if we compare it with the mass panic provoked by the independence of Algeria. Algeria, as the grandmother of a good friend used to say, is *chez nous* (our home!). From Algerian's shores, general Charles de Gaulle sailed to rescue the motherland violated by the Nazi; in Algeria used to live more than one million French, counting the second and third generations of who were born there. We may add to this French society developed a certain acquaintance with war. From 1946 to 1962, France experienced a long time of war in its colonies, in Indochina before and in Algeria afterwards. It is the case to remember an obvious fact: the Second World War ended in 1945 and this mean that France lived a non-stop war period that lasted 25 years with small breaks in between. Exactly in order to face this difficult moment of French political history, De Gaulle was called back in charge. France decided to adopt a new constitution which gave to the President more powers and the fifth Republic was launched in 1958. But the expectations of the most radical and conservative stream of the French right-wing were soon disenchanted. De Gaulle had no intention in engaging a long and expensive colonial war; on the other way, he immediately started to bargain with the FLN (Front de Libération Nationale) in order not to waste too much money. For the French right-wing elements within the army this choice was an unacceptable betrayal and some of them created OAS (Organisation de

l'Armée Secrète) in Madrid in 1961. They were guided by Pierre Lagailarde, former parachutist officer, and Jean Jacques Susini who was involved in barricades weeks which took place in January 1960 when some French settlers started a street protest against the negotiations between Paris and FLN.

Why such an organization which killed more than 2000 persons in a single year was settled in Madrid? Is it possible that Francoist regime didn't know that some high officers who belonged to a foreign army were present on its soil in order to create a terrorist organization? After the army push of April 1961, the organization was ruled by General Raoul Salan who was commander in chief of the French army in Indochina.

OAS tempted to kill President De Gaulle twice, in Point sur la Seine (September 1961) and one year later in Petit Clamart (August 1962). Today also thanks to Portuguese documents we know that Francos' regime knew exactly what was going on with the OAS. According to PIDE documentation, OAS was planning to hit the president plane using three strikers who would have taken off from a line in the north of Spain. It looks clear that any regime, and in particular an authoritarian one with a strict control of its army, would have been aware of such a plan. Among these men who fought for Algeria remained French, who followed the doctrine of the revolutionary warfare, we may find Yves Guerin-Serac, alias Yves Guillou; former captain of the 11th parachutist brigade, member of the OAS, after the defeat of this organization flew to Portugal where he embraced the cause of the Portuguese dictator Salazar. He fast became the instructor of the 'green shirts' the Salazar para-military movement and was also the chief of Aginter Press a fake press agency that was in real a political and military organization financed and supported also by Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The goal of this group was to recruit person and to infiltrate them within leftist group in order to push those group towards more radical acts. Another related activity of Aginter Press was to commit terrorist attacks under the name of communist groups; Yves Guerin Serac was a master of what has been called as non-conventional war, a specialist in psychological warfare and under-covered missions. Aginter Press was based in Lisbon but its agents were active worldwide, Serac was indeed extremely clever not only in training militants but also in having a political influence on them. For the Portuguese government, he also recruited mercenary to send in Angola to fight back communist guerrillas.<sup>9</sup> According to his memories, one of them was Pierluigi Concutelli, an Italian fascist who was condemned for the murder of the judge Vittorio Occorsio who, in 1973, put ON outlaw.<sup>10</sup> Portuguese government didn't welcome Guerin Serac just to find militants who could join their cause. Crossing different documents found in Portugal and in Italy, another agent of the Portuguese intelligence service was Giano Accame. Son of a Navy admiral and with a German mother, daughter of a German Navy admiral, he joined the Salò's troupes on 25 April 1945 when he was only 17 years old. He did it, as he said in his memories, to claim his political belonging as a heroic act.

He was a journalist and an intellectual. He was travelling in Angola when he was kept in arrest by Portuguese police; during his interrogation, he manifested

his political affiliation and Portuguese intelligence services started to use him in order to trace political opponents who refugee abroad.

In his personal archive based at Fondazione Ugo Spirito in Rome, we found many files regarding African intellectuals and politicians who fought against the Portuguese domination in Angola and in other countries.<sup>11</sup> Thanks to his status Accame could easily approached those elements and told back to Portuguese secret services their intentions. It is important to remind that even if Giano Accame remained within MSI he was extremely close to Rauti both personally and politically.

We then do have the leader of ON that between 1963 and 1964 travelled around Spain and Portugal in order to gain political visibility and sustain for his group. Rauti didn't ask simply for money, he wanted to go back in Italy able to say that Franco and Salazar were helping him that the last two authoritarian regimes recognized ON as a political partner. In the same year in Venice, Oswald Mosley participated in a very important meeting with a large number of neofascist organizations both Italians and from other European countries. This first meeting was needed to prepare one of the few global meetings that took place in 1965 in Hamburg where also US and Latin American groups were represented.<sup>12</sup>

When in their publications neofascist groups spoke of a different idea of Europe – a nationalist Europe – they were not just writing. Yet they showed the same attitude towards violence which is the focus of this chapter. As we know Italy was particularly hit by neofascist violence during the 1970s, the first terrorist attack that caused several casualties took place in 1969, but as I am trying to show from the very first line of this work that these attacks lay on a solid and shared ideological base. It would be quite easy just to refer to historical fascism to label neofascist attacks and create a sort of direct line from the 1920s to nowadays crossing one century: yet history is made of context and the context of those years was signed by the Cold War. In the previous chapters, it has been shown how much the relations with the USA were nothing but complicated for the neofascist galaxy and how much influence the anti-democratic and anti-bourgeoise though did matter for these actors; at the same time, we must take into account that communism remained for a great majority of neofascist groups the main enemy and to a transnational level, it seemed to have good chance of succeeding. In this respect, the organization of the Piazza Fontana massacre in December 1969 is a perfect sample; after have organized the infiltration of neofascist militants in anarchist groups, namely Mario Merlino, the commando of Ordine Nuovo was trained in Greece by French officers as Serac and others. At that time, as a matter of fact, the transmission of knowledge should happen in person, and this is the reasons why we may encounter in the polices and secret services documents many notes on camps organized by neofascist organizations. Most of the times, these camps were organized in forests away from people in places where a training that may involve the use of guns could have been possible. Before the event itself, all the pawns had been placed on the board; former neofascist elements infiltrated in anarchist groups, the theoretical level was given by the revolutionary warfare developed by French and NATO officers and the skills to build a bomb was developed thanks to a former French and

OAS militants, in Greece. At that point, it had to happen in a way. On 12 December 1969, at 4.37 p.m., a bomb exploded within the Agricultural Bank of Milan, a building situated in the very crowded centre of the city at Piazza Fontana. From that moment onwards, this event has been referred to as the Piazza Fontana massacre. The bomb caused 17 deaths and another 88 people were wounded.

Across Italy, three bombs further exploded on the same day in Rome. Another bomb was found in Milan before it had detonated. The bombs in Rome injured 18 people in total; 14 were injured in an explosion in the underground corridor of a bank in Rome, and 4 more were hit by a bomb that exploded in the Altar of the Motherland (Altare della Patria)

Italy was experiencing an articulated attack from a group with a very high level of organization and this aspect was clear from the very beginning. We also must remember that some of the people who came from institutional roles and embraced a terrorist strategy claimed their actions to be perfectly legal within a Cold War framework; it is true that according to some NATO documents, extreme actions against communism were justified and encouraged.<sup>13</sup>

The history of the bombings and all the attempts made to keep Italian and more in general European citizens away from the truth is in many ways the story of this book. This is the story of a terrorist network and in my opinion, it is not possible to fully understand the meaning of these attacks from outside the network. Neofascism had an international ideology and was internationally organized. On a global level, these links are still visible today and are clearer thanks to this approach which without denying national specificities acknowledges not only the links but the fact that these links are real.<sup>14</sup>

Neofascist attacks happened in Germany, during the 1980 edition of the Oktoberfest, in France against a Mosque in Paris and dozens of smaller episodes occurred through all the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. Especially after 1974 with the collapse of Portuguese and Greek regimes and with Francoism about to fall the violent and terrorist activities grew up in numbers. Like if with the favourable regimes, the neofascist groups decided to radicalize their strategy.

### **The Iberic liaison and the 1974 change of strategy**

Year 1974 was crucial for the history of neofascist organizations across Europe and beyond. In a few months' time, two regimes, namely Portuguese and Greek one, collapsed, while Italian groups, already hit by severe judiciary measures, started a new campaign of terror in the country with two major attacks and several small ones. Yet during that year, Junio Valerio Borghese died in Spain where he fled after the condemn, he received in Italy for the attempt coup I already mentioned. Otto Skorzeny who was the godfather of European neofascism fell seriously ill due to a brain cancer that drove him to death in 1975. Especially the end of Salazarism with the escape of Marcelo Caetano, who had taken the place of Salazar after his accident in 1968 after which the old dictator was no longer able to remain in charge, was a very hard strike for the neofascist network. As we already recall, few former OAS members found a safe new home in Lisbon and started

the Aginter Press political venture. The victory of the carnation revolution, led by young army officers, was unexpected and brought a certain unease in the circles of neofascism on a global level; among the ones who were worrying the most, we can find the Spanish neofascist. In this respect, it's extremely evocative an interview I collected few years ago with an old militant of this area and that I have already reported in my previous book: according to Alberto Torresano, militant of the national-revolutionary Spanish area, he was in Paris in April 1974 when the Salazar regime collapse. He received a phone call in the middle of the night from his comrades who asked him to immediately go back to Madrid because the fear of an incoming revolution was becoming more and more cogent in Spain too. I had left Spain in 1955, he told me, because according to me, the Francoist regime was betraying the values of fascism. I was right, he went on, because in the blink of an eye, the opening towards Monarchy and market economy became blatant. I have been travelling and working since then, in Germany, at the very beginning of my academic career, Torresano was lecturer of Spanish language and culture in different European universities, and later in Paris. I have been a militant of the neofascist areas always and wherever I was, I spent most of my life playing politics around Europe, and I never thought about coming back to Spain. I had a wife and kids in Paris and my ideas on the Spanish regime didn't change during a night-time. Nevertheless, the 26th of April 1974 facing the possibility of a communist coup I found myself packing part of my belongings and I desperately drove to Madrid without turning my back. I felt as if I was summoned by a superior force who obliged me to go and to stand to defend that regime I didn't even like; but my deep-rooted aversion to communism was stronger. Yet a militant as Torresano who never felt a particular attachment to the regime ran back to Madrid when a possible path of democratization was about to start; neofascism enemy, as we already said, is democracy even more than communism.

During those troubled weeks between the end of April and the beginning of May 1974, thousands of persons were on the move: young leftist militants who tried to reach Lisbon from every corner of Europe quarrelling with the Spanish police to cross the country;<sup>15</sup> at the same time, thousands of young neofascist militants were heading to Madrid to support the last European regime, scared by the falling of the Portugal into a socialist revolution. In the same days, neofascist were running away from Lisbon to the safe harbour of Spain after having cleaned all the proofs that may connect their activities with massacres in Europe and Africa. Among them, especially, the Aginter Press men. From Rua das Praças 13, the place where the secret meetings were hold to Albufereta, in the south of Spain near Alicante where Otto Skorzeny put the headquarter of the twin organization, Paladin.<sup>16</sup> According to a CIA document:

In the late sixties . . . it is estimated that about 60 per cent of Aginter personnel were recruited from the ranks of the OAS, while the remainder were recruited from neo-Nazi organisations in Western Europe such as the Frankfurt based Kampfbund Deutscher Soldaten run by another ex-Goebbels man and partner of 'von Schubert' in Paladin.

It is quite important to remind that a key figure for the creation and development of Paladin was Eberhardt Taubert, known at that time as Dr Erwin Kohl; Taubert who served under the Third Reich as one of the closest associates of Goebbels was also the author of the screenplay for the anti-Semitic propaganda film *Der ewige Jude* (*The Eternal Jew* – a film about the problem of world Jewry) (Director: Fritz Hippler, 1940). This film was intended to foment hate against Jews in the population. In special screenings, the work was shown specifically to SS personnel, who were to be deployed in task forces or as guards in concentration camps. According to Milani, after the war, Taubert used to receive a 3000 US dollars salary from the German Christian Democratic Party, for providing incriminating material on German communists.<sup>17</sup> After 1957, Taubert worked in South America, Iran, Lebanon, Egypt, and South Africa, and from 1958 onwards, as advisor of then German Defence Minister Franz Josef Strauß and in 1958 Strauß recruited Tauber as a consultant for his newly established department ‘Psychological Warfare’.

In this sense, it is quite simple to understand how on an ideological and strategic base both former OAS and Paladin members could find a common ground. They always were part of the same neofascist network and they represented one of the most active knots of the network in term of political violence organization. We already mentioned the role of former OAS in the development of strategy of tension in Italy; at the same time, it’s crucial to remind that many Italian militants flew to Spain to find a safe haven, hosted by the Paladin network. The two structures were somehow interconnected even if they maintained their own operativity and ideological vision; this aspect was true, as we have seen, all along the network, a galaxy composed by dozens of groups around Europe and beyond. Many times, depending on the political context, we witness these organizations taking different positions regarding a specific issue or more in general; this attitude didn’t compromise the capability of the network to act almost as a single organization when needed. After the carnation revolution, the circumstances required a strong effort to support militants escaping from Lisbon and to stop left-wing forces to gain the momentum of that revolution to undermine Francoist regime.

It was the case, as a sample, of the radio station that was built in the southeast of Spain to broadcast messages within Portuguese territory in the weeks immediately after the Revolution. The neofascist network in that specific case put in place the skills of Italians, French, Spanish and, of course, Portuguese militants in order to achieve this result. As a matter of fact, for few months, this radio used to broadcast messages of resistance against communism and claiming back the return of Marcelo Caetano and the restoration of the regime.<sup>18</sup>

The end of Portuguese regime hit hardly the neofascist network, but it didn’t end it; as a matter of fact, the attacks became more and more violent, the strategy was to spread terror all over Europe. As we can see looking at the important documentation acquired by the Italian police during the investigation for the Fontana’s square massacre in 1975, four different Algerian embassies were hit by bombs, two of which blasted while other two failed to explode, and a new group, namely S.O.A. (Soldier of Algeria) claimed the attacks. Under the acronym S.O.A. we may easily find the former OAS members who once used to work

for the Portuguese regime and after 1974 moved their base to Madrid thanks to the help of part of the Spanish States apparatuses and to the transnational neofascist network.<sup>19</sup> After 1974, we witness a long series of attacks, in Italy, France, Germany and, of course, within Spain against the Francoism regime opposers; the bomb blasted in Brescia, that killed 8 people and injured 102 injured, was organized and carried out by Ordine Nuovo, and the attack against the Carlist group in Spain, who were openly against Francoism, on 9 May 1976 was conducted by Stefano Delle Chiaie together with members of Avanguardia Nazionale and supported by parts of the Spanish security apparatuses.<sup>20</sup> These two are just samples of the brutality engaged by the neofascist network after the collapse of the Portuguese regime, and soon after of the Greek military regime that collapsed in August 1974. While neofascist militants were busy in their plan of contrasting the advance of communism and to restore order, these were the reasons that according to their claiming move their actions, they also started to reflect on another plan: how to build stronger connections with Latin American regimes. In 1974, in fact, Otto Skorzeny and Junio Valerio Borghese passed, but they managed before their death to introduce the new generation of neofascist to two key figures of the Latin American regimes, namely Peron and Pinochet. Peron used to live in Madrid during his exile and it is not a case if on the plane that brought him back to Argentina in 1973, Licio Gelli, master of an anti-communist masonry lodge, was onboard. Licio Gelli, and his masonry lodge, was the point of contact between neofascism, secret services of different countries and a certain world of economic interest that directly financed anti-communist activities across the globe. It is also quite important to mention that Licio Gelli was in strict contact with an important UK association, namely the League of Saint George which beside being a neofascist organization played a similar role in the UK as the Gelli lodge. This is not a work on the masonry lodge called P2, but it's the case of giving some details just to contextualize better the presence of such an organization that was not simply in touch with the extreme right-wing groups we are dealing with but, under certain circumstances, acted as a centralized brain for the anti-communist movements around the world.

It is well-known the role of safe housing played by the League in 1980 after the terrorist attack in Bologna in favour of Italian terrorist who escape to London and managed to live there for several years.<sup>21</sup> Italian terrorists who lived in Madrid had the chance of meeting Peron several times and it is quite crucial to remind how in 1975 Delle Chiaie had the chance to meet the Chilean dictator, Pinochet, at the funerals of Franco. Few months later, Delle Chiaie who was present at the return of Peron in Buenos Aires and at least witnessed the massacre of the left-wing militants occurred on the motorway that led from the city centre to the international airport, flew to Santiago of Chile in order to work with *Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional* (Chilean secret service) (DINA) the Chilean political police responsible of the implementation of security policies in that country which included mass murderers, abductions, tortures, and the suppression of every single right in Chile. In Santiago, Delle Chiaie met with Michael Townley who was an US citizen who worked for the DINA and together they planned and carried

out the assassination in Madrid of Bernardo Leighton who was an opposer of Pinochet regime. The end of the 1970s was a troubled moment for the neofascist network that should decide whether follow the cultural turn of the new right born in France and trying to<sup>22</sup> conquer a cultural hegemony on a larger social block or migrate towards other countries, such as Latin American ones, where the classical strategy of military coup was still in place.

### **Culture of violence or shortcut towards the siege of power?**

As I write since the first lines of this work neofascist network was not a single organization; in different moments, under different circumstances, the several groups that made the network took different trajectories. The end of the 1970s and the early 1980s was one of these moments. As some groups decided to move away from Europe, considered doomed after the collapse of the authoritarian regimes in Portugal, Greece, and Spain, other organizations looked at the new cultural and political stream of neofascism that was born in France almost ten years before: the Nouvelle Droite. While violence reminds a constant practice for the neofascist movements and organizations, the idea that power could be seized trough a coup led by the army which eventually would have need of the neofascist political support was becoming more and more weak. At the beginning of 1975, two of the three authoritarian regimes present in Europe were collapsed and Spain was suffering a long but inexorable decline. Few militants decided to move to South America where joined guerrillas' groups formed by army officers driven more by their own greed rather than a pure ideological reasons; a perfect sample was the participation of Delle Chiaie who works for the DINA in Chile after the Pinochet coup and that eventually ended to back up Luiz Garcia Meza Tejada in 1980 Bolivia.<sup>23</sup> Delle Chiaie was introduced to the high sphere of Bolivian policy by Klaus Barbie the former Lyon butcher during the Nazi occupation of France. According to US documentation, Barbie was saved by the CIA and sent to the south American continent to work against communism.<sup>24</sup> During the decades, though Bolivia also became an important hub for the production and commercialization of cocaine; the criminal organizations were a solid ally of Barbie and his group for the fight against communism and the Tejada regime that lasted just for two years was involved in criminal activities related to the narcotraffic. The Pinochet regime as well was not exactly a fascist paradise; if the authoritarian and brutal measures against communists were of course welcomed by the neo-Nazi groups the idea of give the entire economy of the country to the Chicago school led many of them disappointed. Led by Friedmann, the Chicago group was a group of US economist who theorized the non-intervention of the state in economy; faithful to a strict liberalism, this group manage the economy of Chile for more than a decade and the outgoing of their policies is still debated. Pinochet regime was massively supported by the USA, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank with generous loans, the privatization process was driven to its maximum and this individual based ideology couldn't fit with the neofascist ideas. At the beginning of the 1980s, it was clear that the support



gave to the USA against communism was clearly necessary from a tactic point of view but strategically, it would have not led to the fascist revolution that these groups were dreaming of. A profound reflection started within the European side of the network on the way to achieve the goals they have been pursuing for the last 35 years; while the SSR was suffering a major crisis after the defeat in the Afghanistan war, and the western countries embraced neo-liberalism with Thatcher and Reagan victories in the UK and the USA, what was the space left for neofascism? During the 1970s as I already mentioned, the *Nouvelle Droite* became a more prominent stream within the neofascist galaxy; influenced by the reading of Antonio Gramsci, De Benoist and his group claim that neofascism should gain a sort of cultural hegemony to achieve their goals rather than repeating the old scheme of violence and blatant racism. They put in crisis the concept of nation itself and started to use the category of community, they embraced the inner message of Evola and Heidegger and started to criticize the industrialization process not only as the symbol of capital power but introducing ecologism within the neofascism galaxy. We don't have to picture this debate as if it produced a massive change overnight; at the very beginning, then, the group was quite short in numbers but what we should underline are two aspects: first of all, this debate reached every corner of the neofascist galaxy; all of a sudden in many different countries, new groups pop up talking about the same issue risen by the French intellectuals. Second the *Nouvelle Droite* didn't really say something completely new, but it shaped old pieces of ideology in a way that may fit with a world that was changing. Could we find direct claim to communities in the neofascist discourse or the issue of the Nature against the industrial development? Of course, we can, and we have shown it in the pages of this work, as it is present in others, but the *Nouvelle droite* systematized these discourses and gave them a new, fancier I would say, clothes. They stressed the revolutionary nature of neofascism presented themselves as the only rebels against the modern world which was falling apart; they started to improve the usage of certain 'categories' against their enemies; all of a sudden, they started to picture the communists as a crouch of capitalism, their anti-capitalism became anti-globalization discourse where migrations were not a normal event but an eradication of poor people from their roots and cultures. They foster a culture of suspicion against media, elite, and lobbies; they started to slightly insinuate the old fashion anti-Semitism within their discourses against capitalism; and they also called back an old slogan: left and right don't exist they represent a meta-political phenomenon. Metapolitics is the effort to deconstruct the prevailing ideological and cultural mindset, thereby preparing people for a total transformation. In terms of liberal democracy, the task of metapolitics is to weaken the culture, ideological rigor, and mindset that sustain the liberal democratic sociopolitical and economic order. For instance, it's the gradual growth of a cultural mindset against the foundations of democracy and capitalism, such as parliamentary democracy – political representation, checks and balances, pluralism; free markets – global trade, private ownership, economic freedom; and liberty – equality, justice, human rights, and individual freedom.

The Nouvelle Droite emerged as a counter-hegemonic project that aims to fight liberal politics and what it referred to as the hegemony of the USA. The Nouvelle Droite established an organization to pursue a cultural and ideological struggle against the dominance of liberal moral principles. This organization, the Research and Study Group for European Civilization (GRECE), has a metapolitical task of shattering the monopoly of the liberal democratic moral code in favour of European ultra-nationalism. GRECE thinkers such as Guillaume Faye explain metapolitics as the spreading of 'ideas and cultural values, seeking a complete political transformation in the long run'. According to Faye, 'metapolitics is the occupation of culture', unlike politics, which is 'the occupation of a territory'. Alain de Benoist, another one of GRECE's key thinkers, insists on the need for a metapolitical strategy to change the 'collective consciousness', which is rooted in liberal values. Nouvelle Droite also seeks to physically separate different ethno-cultures in the guise of preserving them, which is a deeply fascist idea wrapped up in the shallow disguise of cultural preservation. This is called ethnopluralism, or the segregation of different ethnicities into ethnically homogenized territories. As Tamir Bar-On states, ideas of de Benoist and the Nouvelle Droite are nothing more than 'neo-fascism with a human face'.

At the same time, we should remember that while soviet regimes were entering their final stage of crisis, this choice of Nouvelle Droite to underline the anti-capitalist and anti-modern aspect of neofascism was a winning idea; they seemed, and somehow they were, able to foresee a future where, with no left keen in defending the working-classes neofascism could revitalize the old fashion idea of fascism as creator of a fair society; the substitution of 'communities' to the idea of classes opened the way for mass campaign against migrants who were immediately pictured as the useful idiots manoeuvred by capitalist elites to lower inhabitants while destroying their culture and traditions. While this new wave of neofascism strategy was taking place, other groups who preach violence against the enemies were still present; this is a distinctive feature of neofascism I underlined since the first lines of this work; being a galaxy means also that different approaches were present at the same time. On 2 August 1980 when in Italy the Nouvelle Droite was already present, a new terrorist attack took place at Bologna Railway Station, provoking 85 deaths. Apart from having been the deadliest terrorist attack in Italian history, the Bologna's massacre has to be remembered for being the last attempt of the neofascist network to destabilize Italian democracy. It is important to recall that during 1980, FIAT was occupied by the workers and Enrico Berlinguer decided to stand near to them in front of the factory's gates. This was the last big strike in Italy and its negative outgoing is still used as a landmark to indicate the end of the era of collective movements; but the social movements were still in place and we may easily say today that their trajectory was aiming to the end but in those weeks, the occupation of the largest factory of the country the support given to this strike by the secretary of the biggest communist party of the western countries, made noise. During the decades, 1960s to 1980s, Italy suffered, as I have already mentioned, a long series of terrorist attacks, moments of institutional crisis when parts of state apparatuses deliberately plotted

against democratic asset and regarding to the attacks coming from the neofascist organizations we are still in most of the cases waiting for a full criminal judgment to come. Considering the involvement of Italian and foreign state apparatuses in these affairs, it is not so difficult to understand how after more than 40 years, the full truth about most of these attacks is yet to come; we have an historical truth though patiently reconstructed. This is not the place to debate the Bologna attack, but it is important to consider the last discoveries which came out few months ago during the last trial: according to the Italian judges and intelligence services, Italian group responsible of the attack may exploit the transnational network; according to the testimony of a Neo-Nazi British group repentant, in the beginning of June, he was commanded to find safe place for Italians comrades. This information gave to the Italian police by Raymond Hill who was a former Nazi militant close to the League of Saint George; the League was established officially in 1974 and it collected far right and ultraconservative members alongside with neo-Nazi young militants and former SS. Thank to Searchlight and the enormous work made by Gerry Gable we do know that some of the leader of this organization came from a former militancy in the Mosley's party and they had solid relationships with the political environment of the white suprematism in the USA, pro-Apartheid groups in South Africa, French neo-Nazi group such as FANE, and many others.<sup>25</sup> Yet following the documents of the trials, a quite complicated kind of source, we may find that the group that materially put the bomb, Armed Revolutionary Nuclei, was in touch with P2, a secret masonry lodge which was involved in many of the plots to undermine Italian democracy. P2 was a kind of second layer within the neofascist galaxy we are talking about, as if this hidden and secret organization, founded in South America with the support of the USA with anti-communist purposes, was entitled to finance and in that way to aim the neofascist groups towards the targets they believed as more sensitive. I don't want to say that neofascist groups were puppets whom strings were just pulled by someone else but a relationship between neofascism and the larger ultra-conservatism was real and effective. Does this ultra-conservative area get along with the strategic goals of neofascism? Of course, no. Did neofascism know that? Yes, for sure. The relationships between different actors were played on the bases of common goals as defeating communism but as any other political issue brought with it a certain degree of discrepancies and difficulties; as Mirko Dondi<sup>26</sup> showed in his remarkable study, the Italian ruling class was keen to support neofascism in order to undermine any possibilities of radical reformation that could come in place; anti-communism in this respect was widely used as an emergency break to stop any will of reformism. Neofascist on the other hand would like to push on the idea of a coup because they strongly believed that once the democratic experiment ended, they could have played an important role to reshape Italian society. In their plans, there were also some parts of the so-called social fascism which for sure couldn't find the support of the bourgeoisie. I called the neofascism a galaxy to make the reader aware of all the possible nuance present within that specific political area; at the same time, neofascism was a hegemonic project that want to establish a sort of cultural and where possible, an ideological supremacy

over a larger area that I have called the area of extreme conservatism. Yet if a strong debate was present among neofascist groups, we have to underline the difficulties that those groups encountered when they decided to meet middle and upper classes with ultraconservative views. Nonetheless, this match happened; Borghese met entrepreneurs from Genova, among whom it is crucial to remind Costa the shipowner, as Rauti collected money from Spain and Portugal and MSI directly from USA. Were they all terrorists? Of course not, there were thousands of young people who became militants of these groups and parties, and they might have even participated into some clash with leftist groups without being terrorist; on the other hand, parts of these groups decided to move a war against democracy, and they didn't spare Italy from a bloodbath. Rauti, Delle Chiaie, Borghese, Tedeschi, and Almirante<sup>27</sup> (together with many others) were part of this strategy; they were not simple militants but the bosses of the Italian knot of the neofascist web widespread around at least three continents. As we have said from the beginning of this work, neofascism was a transnational project which crossed borders and, in a way, to compressed within the two blocks scenario; this kind of political project which needs and wants to construct bridges to spread their view need a clearing house, a place where to be in touch with the area of ultra-conservatism they were carefully looking at. If the contact with state apparatuses was set up during the last months of the Second World War, the connections with other subjects should be strengthen using other 'tools'; one of these tools was the masonry lodge P2 which deserve a small deepening.

The masonry lodge denominated P2 was a secret lodge where public figures may meet and discuss about business and politics without being heard; the 'great master' of the lodge was Licio Gelli a former Nazi who changed side swiftly in 1944 gaining a patent of antifascist. After the end of the war, and more actively during the 1960s, the goal of the organization was not simply to reflect about the political situation of Italy which was considered the weakest spot of the West but to implement schemes to fight against the communist threat. The plan which it has been discovered in 1981 when the 'great master' was arrested had a very redundant name: plan for the national renaissance and basically had as its core the transformation of Italy into a presidential democracy to put judges under political control and, of course, to solve out all the leftist parties and organizations. When Gelli's daughter was arrested at the airport of Rome, a list of participants was found which most likely was not complete; among the 962 people on the list, there were the names of 119 senior officers (50 from the Army, 37 from the Guardia di Finanza, 32 from the Carabinieri), 22 police officers, 59 parliamentarians, a constitutional judge, 8 newspaper editors, 4 publishers, 22 journalists, 128 executives of public companies, diplomats, and entrepreneurs. In other words, this was clearing house the Italian ruling class built to elaborate plans that could block structural reforms they didn't like or to stem the Communist Party and the trade unions even if it meant undermining Italian democracy. What about the connections with neofascist then? First, it is useful to remind again that Gelli served during the War as inspector of the National Fascist Party, he was entrusted with the task of transporting the treasure of King Peter II of Yugoslavia to Italy,

requisitioned by the Military Information Service: in all, 60 tons of gold bars, 2 of ancient coins, 6 million dollars, 2 million pounds. In 1947, when the treasure was returned to Yugoslavia, 20 tons of ingots were missing: the hypothesis was made, always denied by Gelli, that he had transferred them to Argentina at the time. After 8 September 1943, he joined the Italian Social Republic and consequently became a liaison officer between the fascist government and the Third Reich. He eventually understood quite easily that Nazi and fascist were about to lose the war and as many other he became a double-crossed figure helping somehow partisan movements. The close ties with Peron did not end with the Madrid exile of the caudillo on the contrary; it will be Licio Gelli who will work for Peron's return to Argentina. In the Latin American country, Gelli enlisted important men of power in P2: such as José Lòpez Rega (the influential Minister of Social Welfare), Alberto Vignes (Foreign Minister), Admiral Eduardo Emilio Massera (Major Chief of the Navy), the Admiral Carlos Alberto Corti, and other military personnel. To the names already mentioned, we must add Cesar De la Vega, Grand Master of the Lodge of Buenos Aires from 1972 to 1975, and later ambassador to Denmark; Guglielmo De la Plaza, ambassador to Uruguay; the son-in-law of Lopez Rega, the president of the Senate Raul Alberto Lastiri, member of the P2 (file 0621). Another name of the very first rank in the Argentine military hierarchy was that of General Guillermo Suarez Mason, who died at the age of 81 on 21 June 2005. A supporter of the P2 Lodge and at the time commander of the army of the Buenos Aires district also remembered as one of the most ferocious repressors of young opponents of the dictatorship imposed by the military junta of the Massera-Videla duo. General Suarez was charged with hundreds of executions (which he himself admitted) and an unspecified number of missing persons, the 'desaparecidos'. Yet we may see how the neofascist network was flanked by the P2 transnational organization which worked as command centre for the strategy of tension in Italy as it did for the plan Condor in Latin America. It is now easier to understand how Delle Chiaie and other militants successfully joined the Chilean secret services and were able to play crucial political roles within the Latin American regimes.

Was neofascism the one preached by the Nouvelle Droite or the violent clandestine organization ready to help some of the most terrifying regimes of the XX century? It was, actually, both. Since the end of the Second World War, the whole academic world started to reflect on the nature of fascism. As Gentile said, fascism was a political religion that could not embrace all the rules of liberalism. Was it actually so? There is no doubt in ideological terms but at the same time, it is crucial to remember, as underlined by Bloch among others, that the ruling European middle classes stood for totalitarian fascist regimes at least until the beginning of the war. In Collotti's work, *Fascismi*, a point of reference for whomever, wants to address fascist phenomena, the use of the plural form is not just a grammar tool to describe the plurality of different national versions of fascism. By the use of the plural, the scholar decided to involve not only all the possible cultural nuances present in each and every experiment of a fascist regime but to underline the distance between the fascist ideology, that by the way lacks a specific doctrine,

and the political decisions taken by those regimes. Fascism – and in this respect neofascism even more – is a galaxy of ideas, suggestions, and practices with at the very bottom few crucial points highlighted, among others, by Sternhell and Payne as an anti-materialist and an anti-modern ideology. I cannot engage here with the huge debate on what fascism was, as a matter of fact, we may count dozens of different definitions and every one of them rather catches a peculiar aspect or ends in a long list of features sometimes in contradiction one with the other. As Paxton said, fascism cannot be defined solely by its ideology since it is a complex political phenomenon rather than a relatively coherent body of doctrines like communism or socialism. He focuses, instead, on the political context and functional development of fascism. Neofascism behaves in the same way. They have an ideological core on which they have built a strong identity, but they act within a precise political context. Looking at nationalism, for example, every single author defined historical fascism as an ultra-nationalist movement but at the same time, as Marco Cuzzi and other scholars have shown, the efforts to spread fascist ideology outside the national borders was present already in the 1920s. We may quote the fascist minimum of Griffin the long list of Umberto Eco and many other attempts to define fascism and we shall always find an objection, something that doesn't really fit into the definition we choose. Fascism and neofascism are complex and mutable creatures which adapt themselves to survive under different circumstances. The three element I have decided to take into account in this work don't work as a minimum definition, but they may represent three cardinal axes along which we may find a line of reasoning a shared culture that starting from the 1920s reaches nowadays. It is important to remind again this concept because the temptation of falling into a strict definition is quite comprehensible but very often distant from the truth; just to run a sample during the 1980s in France, we might have encountered the pick of the Nouvelle Droite production, Democracy, the problem of De Benoist came out in 1986, where ultra-nationalism was strongly criticized and at the same time neo-Nazi groups still active. We may extend this consideration to many countries like facing the same contradictions and issues: what to do with a long cultural tradition that beside a long story didn't seem to have a bright future ahead while the possibilities to establish a regime were losing stamina in Europe? Looking at the crisis of the SSR which was about to collapse, how to enforce a critique against liberalism which started to be perceived as the unique thought?

## Notes

- 1 L. Weinberg, "Italian Neo-fascist Terrorism: A Comparative Perspective in Terror Form Extreme Right", in T. Bjórge (Ed.), *Terror from the Extreme Right*, London: Routledge, 20.
- 2 E. Gentile, *Politics as Religion*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- 3 R. De Felice, *Intervista sul Fascismo*, Bari: Laterza, 1975.
- 4 Aristotle Kallis, "'Fascism', 'Para-Fascism' and 'Fascistization': On the Similarities of Three Conceptual Categories", *European History Quarterly*, 33/2 (2003), pp. 219–249.

- 5 C. Froio, P. Castelli, G. Bulli and M. Albanese, *CasaPound Italia: Contemporary Extreme-Right Politics*, London: Routledge, 2020.
- 6 F. Focardi and L. Klinkhammer, *Criminali di guerra in libertà. Un accordo segreto tra Italia e Germania federale, 1949–1955*, Roma: Carocci, 2008.
- 7 P. Buton, *La Joie Douloureuse. La Libération de la France*, Paris: Éditions Complexe, 2004.
- 8 Stephen Dorril, *Blackshirt: Sir Oswald Mosley and British Fascism*, London: Penguin, 2006.
- 9 It is a very difficult task to describe Guerin Serac life; he has been trained as a counter-spy specialist for years; professional trainer he worked for intelligence agencies and he used to define himself as an anti-communist crusader. All the information we have are taken from intelligence and police documents: Piazza Fontana trial, within the judgement number 9/92A, R.G.P.M. We could find different references to Guerin Serac as one of the most prominent figure of the terrorist attacks which took place in Europe during the 1970s. It is clear to the judges that this network was built also by his efforts throughout a decade of intense political engagement.
- 10 P. Concutelli and G. Ardica, *Io, l'uomo nero, una vita tra politica, violenza e galera*, Venice: editore Marsilio, 2003.
- 11 Ugo Spirito and Renzo De Felice Foundation archive, Giano Accame files. In these folders, we could find all the documentation PIDE gave to Accame as its agent; Accame's goal was to find and to approach elements of African resistance against Portuguese domination and to write reports back to PIDE.
- 12 AGA, (Central Archive of Administration, Spain) 42, 08916,4 Jovem Europa, 1963–69. According to Spanish intelligence service in this meeting were present more than 12 different groups and organisations came from Europe, US and Latin America.
- 13 Very interesting in this respect are the Gladio group documents; Gladio as a paramilitary organization could operate in different countries even outside the law; most of those documents were obtained by Italian judges during trials against neo-fascist groups: Piazza Fontana sentence, Court of Milan, registration number 3192171-A-G.I.
- 14 H.G. Haupt and J. Kocka, "Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems", in D. Cohen and Maura O'Connor (Eds.), *Comparison and History. Europe in Cross-national Perspective*, New York: Routledge, 2004.
- 15 J. Cervelló, *La revolución portuguesa y su influencia en la transición española (1961–1976)*, Donostia: Editorial Nerea, 1995.
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- 17 A. Milani, *The Shah*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- 18 R. Marchi, *Império Nação Revolução. As direitas radicais no fim do Estado Novo (1959–1974)*, Alfragide: Leya/Texto, 2016.
- 19 F. Laurent, *L'orchestre noir; Enquête sur les réseaux néo-fascistes*, Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2013.
- 20 J. Cubero Sanchez, *Montejurra 76 en el contexto de los años de plomo*, Madrid: Ediciones Arcos, 2010.
- 21 According to Italian judges, Licio Gelli helped the neofascist terrorists who deployed the attack at the Bologna Station in 1980. In July 2020, Italian Judges started a new investigation based on new evidence they collected. For a general look at the liaison between former masonry lodge P2 and the neofascist galaxy in Italy and in the UK, we may also look at the Parliamentary Commission led by Tina Anselmi available at the library of the Senate.
- 22 FOIA, State Department Archive, International terrorism, 20535, April 9, 1980: *On April 17, 1978, Michael Vernon Townley, self-admitted officer for the National Directorate of Intelligence (DINA), advised Special Agents (SAs) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) that during the late summer and early fall of 1975, he, his wife,*

*Mariana Calle/as Townley, and Virgilio Pablo Paz Romero, member of the anti-Castro Cuban exile terrorist organization, the Cuban Nationalist Movement (CRIM), travelled extensively throughout Europe. Townley advised that he, Paz, and his wife visited Rome, Italy, during the early fall of 1975 and were in contact with various members of an Italian fascist organization. Townley advised that members of this Italian fascist organization indicated that former Chilean Vice President Bernardo Leighton had been identified as a dangerous catalyst that would be the basis of the formation of a coalition between the Christian Democratic Party (PCD) and the Socialist Party (PS) in Italy during the forthcoming elections. Townley advised that members of the Italian fascist organization advised that Leighton was accepted as a prominent spokesman for the PCD in Italy, and that Leighton had excellent contacts among members of the PS in Italy. Townley identified one of the principal members of the Italian fascist organization as Alfredo Di Stefano (my add: Alfredo Di Stefano was one of the alias of Stefano Delle Chiaie), who was also known by the nickname Topogigio (The Doll).*

*Townley advised that after visiting Italy, he and his wife returned to Chile, while Paz returned to the United States in order to renew his activities with the CNM.*

- 23 Parliamentary Commission on massacres and terrorism: 22 July 1997. Library of the Italian Republic.
- 24 NARA, Nazi War Criminals, IPR, Personal names: AC848664WJ.
- 25 A long interview to Ray Hill, former NeoNazi militants to Searchlight and other clues point the judges in this direction. To look at Terza Posizione, we may see at: S. Bartolini, "Fascismo e neofascismo: I 'nipoti del Duce' tra eredità, novità, persistenze e sviluppi all'alba del nuovo secolo", *QF. Quaderni di Farestoria: Periodico dell'Istituto Storico Provinciale della Resistenza di Pistoia*, 10/2 (2008).
- 26 M. Dondi, *L'eco del boato. Storia della strategia della tensione 1965–1974*, Roma: Laterza, 2015.
- 27 Look at the Karl Hass interrogation that took place in July 1996 document of Italian Secret Services (SISMI) attached to the trial for the Brescia massacre, folder G-a/11 envelop 5.



## 5 The 1980s from depression to institutionalization

The 1980s was a decade of enormous changes for the western societies: from the crisis of 1973 ahead, a whole system started to collapse. A system of production, reproduction, and social cohesion was falling apart facing globalization processes. Thousands of factories closed, and many others moved their plants abroad in search of lower salaries and maximum gains. Millions of workers simply lost their jobs and, in some cases, fell into personal despair.<sup>1</sup> Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were the two heralds of the destruction of Fordist production in the favour of the financialization of the economy. Mass unemployment started to be a serious problem and the organizations of the working class seemed to be unprepared to face this epochal change. Socialists, communists' parties, and trade unions were fully aware already since the mid-1970s of the incoming revolution, but they failed to give convincing answers; with time, most of them simply follow the stream and ended up embracing the neoliberal view. It is not a case if even the largest Communist party in the western countries, the Italian one, agreed already in 1977 to the possibility for the bosses to fire workers due to the economic crisis. Until that moment, the holiness of long-life contract of employment was a kind of dogma.<sup>2</sup> Yet being aware doesn't necessarily mean they had a solution in mind; in the past four decades, we assist to a large debate among scholars on globalization and this is not the place where to list all the possible interpretation that are currently available. Robert Castel reminded us how citizenship is an ownership issue and how this property has been lost in recent years. The Fordist pact signed after the end of the Great War which provided for the vote for all citizens, males, was based, in fact, on an assumption: you will not have property, so you would be excluded from citizenship, but having a life salary, we can pretend that the two institutions, the property and the salary, correspond. Faced with the current crisis of primitive re-accumulation, the two institutes, which have never been the same, have begun to separate. The wedge that has opened that space is the precariousness of work. If the job you do is no longer for life, your rights will also be less certain, timed, or in any case conditioned by the circumstances of your solitary spendability on the labour markets.

Facing the new reality of mass migration of factories abroad and under the blackmail of mass layoffs, leftist organization simply bend the knee to the new wave of capitalism. It must be underlined how sceptical they were of a Soviet system that

was inexorably on the way to collapse after the defeat in Afghanistan. The triumph of neoliberalism was built on three main ideological and cultural pillars: first, the implementation of the idea according to which the market is really a self-regulatory actor and there is no need of state intervention in economy; more than that, any public aid should be banned from economy. After the final collapse of Soviet Union in 1989, even if these discourses started way before, the second pillar took form: paraphrasing a famous text, we may say there is no history after liberalism. Consequently, to this, the narration of living in the best of possible worlds gains positions even among intellectuals. Social Darwinism has been implemented within every corner of human life; this idea of a constant competition among people disrupted the social cohesion and especially working-class organization. The third pillar for the construction of neoliberalism triumph lies on individualism; if the market is self-regulatory and there is a strong competition among people, society is no longer so necessary, but we are all fighting for our own. The idea that meritocracy was the only way to measure everyone social status and that the social belonging doesn't matter was advertise in any possible way; any critical discourse on social and cultural capital silenced as a heritage from ancient past that no longer exists. In this scenario, where the hegemony of neo-liberal ideology was somehow embraced also by leftist parties and trade unions were labelled as conservative forces still entangled to old ideas that restrained the free development of market forces, neofascism started to refresh its 'socialist roots'. With no fear from East any more, neofascism could turn against its other enemy: democracy in its liberal form. Following the doctrine of the *Nouvelle Droite*, they started to claim to be the Defensor of the weaker ones, the looser of the globalization process.<sup>3</sup> An old discourse about the technological development emerged from the foggy ruins of the Nazi past and its proposition against modernity. Echoes of communitarianism that should have become the polar star of their political action neofascist groups regain positions spreading fear on immigration policies. The so-called cultural turn revealed all its heritage of biological racism in multiple occasions<sup>4</sup> but, more important, it slowly had become a common sense among the lower classes who turn their rage against immigrants.<sup>5</sup> One of the many results was that also conservative parties started to adopt the same language, vocabulary, and syntax when it comes to talk about globalization and immigration policies. At the same time, it is quite interesting to notice how during the 1980s, the electoral strategies were extremely similar, at least in Italy and France, with *Almirante* and *Le Pen* struggling to position their parties as nor right or left but beyond this ideological vision, as we have seen, this wasn't new as *Mosley* tried to claim the same already in the early 1950s. In the UK, the *National Front* ran a similar campaign embracing some of the *Nouvelle Droite* teaching; for example, they stop to define themselves as anti-Semite and they started to use the term 'anti-Zionist'. I am not implying there is no distance between the two positions, and we also should underline a certain degree of appreciation for the Israeli right-wing parties by few voices within the neofascist galaxy; their anti-semitism was embedded in that political culture. It is quite interesting to remind how in 2015 *CasaPound*, the Italian neofascist most prominent group, organized an international conference and *Hezbollah* was invited.<sup>6</sup>

They started to distance a bit from corporativism, as in other countries happened, it endorsed private enterprise but rejected laissez-faire capitalism, claiming that the latter places the interests of business above that of the nation. It promoted economic nationalism, calling for maximum national self-sufficiency and a rejection of international free trade. In this, it wanted to separate Britain from the international financial system, which it believed was controlled by the Jewish conspiracy. A certain form of protectionism was also common to the other neofascist parties around Europe. Also, the plot theories started to deal with the Jews conspiracy, as it has always been the case, but to look at the political parties as a unique elite anticipating in this, as in many other cases, one of the key features of the so-called populism. These three parties then had their peak in electoral results between the end of the 1970s and the mid-1980s with the French and the Italians which took the 6% of the ballots. In the UK, the National Front never reached this outgoing and remained always way under 2% on a national base. In France and Italy though both parties started a more radical process of institutionalization, to shift the focus from their being neofascist to the fault of the political system; they denounced corruption and malfunctions, embezzlement, and criminal behaviours. They made a considerable effort to be perceived as the party of the pure ones who never participated into the game of power, they spent the last 50 years without being involved in the government, and even if this was not true for Italy at the local level, they claimed they were the only trustful political party. Communism was about to fail, and the revelation of the new Soviet leader Gorbachev was revealing how difficult for the soviet citizens life was, the new course of liberalism was impoverishing the working class, cutting taxes on the rich in the name of a trickle-down economy that would never work but which, on the other hand, would increase inequality. The migration issue, especially in France, England, and Germany, was exploding with force and new regionalist and anti-state actors began to grow in some areas of Europe. In Italy, where migrations from across the border had not yet become a relevant issue, a renewed localist spirit was reborn in a form of racism against southern immigrants: for example, in 1984, the North League was born. The 1970s is still remembered as the time of collective actions, enormous mass movements, and social struggles; the 1980s is instead labelled as the time of the return to an individual dimension; many former militants who were active in the previous decade couldn't fit into this new reality where people were pushed to think about their own interest and to discard social issues. The local dimension was, in this respect, a perfect escape: if I can't deal with big issue anymore, even if the dream of changing the world was just a juvenile dream, I can commit myself to my local community and engage in battles to save the environment or to make the place where I live a better one according to my political visions. It is not a case if, in big numbers leftist person decided to participate and sometimes to start environmental association, right-wing and neofascist militants were attracted in the area of communitarianism and local racism. The 1980 decade was described by many scholars as a period of passivation and return to a political disengagement; this is not completely wrong but especially for the neofascist movements, those years

were the time of reflection about the strategy. The old neofascist way was about to end, anticommunism was no longer necessary, and the idea of a military coup was no longer in place. During the 1980s, some new formations entered the political arena such as the Skinhead movement, but they remained quite marginal and irrelevant. They were certainly extremely violent and grew up until the end of the 1990s also and above all thanks to the hooligan's phenomenon. The skinheads were the plastic representation of the violent anger of the urban underclass and of those who years later will be called the losers of globalization. They too have been a fully transnational phenomenon, but their political impact has never been remotely comparable with that of neofascist actors active in previous decades. Yet within this process of institutionalization, neofascism struggled between the tempt of discovering a new path for the radical right and remained attached to the old identity; for example, in 1979, MSI invested a lot of its political strength to give birth to Euro-Right a coalition of neofascist European forces which jointly ran for the 1979 European elections. The three parties were the Parti des forces Nouvelles a split between the National Front and the Spanish Fuerza Nueva. In its perennial struggle between acceptance of democratic rules and extremism, we must remember how Fuerza Nueva was accused in Spain of being a movement that supported terrorism. Just to be clear just two years before, some elements of FN was claimed responsible of the Atocha massacre in Madrid and, allegedly, Italian neofascists were also somehow involved. On 24 January 1977, a commando claimed itself to be a bunch of the triple A broke into rooms used by workers commissions. As we already remembered the workers commissions, strictly linked to the Spanish left, were still outlaw at that time even if they were growing in numbers and importance. The Atocha massacres has to be contextualised within the tragic moment Spain was going through and in particular the week which ended with this massacre is still called the tragic week for the numbers of attacks which took place almost simultaneously. Just the day before the attack, a demonstration in favour of amnesty took place in Madrid, a group a gunman belonging to the triple A stormed into the rally shooting. They shot Arturo Ruiz dead. A phone call to the newspaper *Diario* claimed the Triple A the responsibility for the attack. During the same week, then one of the most important categories of workers were striking: transporters. They had a very strong union and a worker commission ruled by Joaquin Navarro. The Atocha attack aimed him as primary target. When terrorist broke into workers unions offices and didn't find him they started an indiscriminate massacre. They shot first of all Ángel Rodríguez Leál; he was at a bar, he forgot some stuff within office, he was coming back to pick them up and he step into the terrorists. They killed him without a precise reason. After that, they started hunting furiously searching for whomever driven by a bloodthirsty madness; terrorists found eight lawyer in a nearby office, while they were working and they put all against a wall; they shot all of them killing four: Luis Javier Benavides, Enrique Valdevira Serafín Holgado, and Francisco Javier Sauquillo; The remaining four, Dolores González Ruíz (the wife of Sauquillo, who was pregnant at the time), Miguel Sarabia, Alejandro Ruíz Huertas, and Luis Ramos Pardo were gravely injured.

One of the weapons terrorists used was an Ingram M-10; the gun was never found, but according to the description of the survivors and bullet analysis, we are able to say that the hand-made machine gun which shot the great part of bullets was this particular one. Why is it so important? Because an Ingram sub-machine gun was the specific gun Eliodoro Pomar was creating in his laboratory hidden in a nun convent in the full centre of Madrid; the place where Pomar could easily work was found by Mariano Snachez Covisa; because that specific gun was approved by Otto Skorzeny, given and sold to Spanish special forces and Croatian Ustaše who lived in Spain; that gun was a kind of signature, produced in several copies, and was the main way of income for the Italian group, but it is nowadays also a symbol: it represents the network fingerprint. Carlos García Juliá, José Fernández Cerrá y Fernando, and Lerdo de Tejada (nephew of the personal secretary of far-right party Fuerza Nueva's leader Blas Piñar) were arrested almost immediately; they were still in Madrid may be trusting in police protection. Francisco Albadalejo Corredera who was at that time Madrid secretary of State Union (Sindicato Vertical) for transportation sector was arrested few days afterwards as the mastermind of the plan.<sup>7</sup> As we said, the network was connected at different levels with legal parties and organizations and with state apparatuses which fought against democratization process. Another prove of this connection was Lerdo de Tejada escape from Spain in 1979. While the process was still running, he managed to leave Spain to France and from there to Chile and Brazil. He was, as we just mentioned, the nephew of the secretary's party leader, Blas Piñar. As Cristina Almeyda, at that time one of the lawyers who defended the victims' relatives, asserted during a long interview, the whole trial was instructed just to condemn the material executors of the attack, without persecuting Blas Pinar and the political level.<sup>8</sup> As it happened in Italy, the political level was not really touched by trials and judgements; not to mention the state apparatuses. Years later in 1996, as reported by *El País*, an Italian judge raised the hypothesis that an Italian member of ON, Cicuttini, was in Atocha too in order to help the neofascist commando.

As we can say, European right was not far away from violence, according to the Spanish journalist, Mariano Sanchez Soler, in 1972 when Cicuttini escaped in Spain Giorgio Almirante gave him, during the period 1972–1973, about 34,600 US dollars.<sup>9</sup> It is also important to remind that Cicuttini started to live in an apartment together with Delle Chiaie and Carmassi; this apartment was given to Italian neofascist by Spanish militants as Alberto Royuela and Luis Antonio Garcia Rodrigues who said some years later to *La Stampa* that he was a Nazi and of course he did help Italian Nazi.<sup>10</sup>

While MSI was debating about culture, communitarianism, and how to build a political hegemony, it was still involved with terrorist groups; what it seems to be an anomaly is actually reflecting the double nature of neofascism, these contradictions were always present in neofascist history, they are embedded in that political ideology.<sup>11</sup> Yet the three pillars of continuity with fascism and on which neofascism was built since 1946 were still in place during the 1980s. For example, in a European meeting in 1988, Gianfranco Fini the future secretary of MSI at that time, claim for a unitarian European answer to the problem of the XXI century:

immigration. Adopting clear *Nouvelle Droite* categories, Fini used concept like, communities, ethnical, and cultural issues and also he stressed the need of a European plan for Africa. In his idea, we should help Africa to prevent immigration and not to bend to the unique liberal thought which it was destroying the identity of specific cultures. Yet we can see in this intervention, and in many others, made by Le Pen and other leaders the three pillars we are speaking about since the beginning of this work: the root of antidemocratic doctrine is, as a matter of fact, a powerful anti-egalitarian doctrine; if men are not equal among each other, it means that I can see the cultural differentiation as a way to reintroduce racist ideas in the debate. At the same time, the MSI and FN, but the same analysis, it is more than valid for the BNP,<sup>12</sup> developed their communitarian discourses allowed them to stress the responsibilities of the USA in their 'imperialist' efforts and in their idea of exporting the American way of life. Yet the anti-Americanism became suddenly with the SSR in deep crisis a cogent and very present issue on neofascist medias. The imaginary plan to help the African recover it was the prologue of the slogan 'help them at home' which it has been widely used by the nowadays extreme right-wing parties not only in Europe but also by Donald Trump referring to Mexico and Latin American immigrants.

As I was saying anti-democratic positions were developed more and more within the liberal frame of hypothetical meritocracy and cult of leaders; racism even if under the label of culturalism remained as a key feature of neofascism and a strong tendency to a transnational level of organization was vital while nation-state was losing its centrality. As this work has already shown, fascism and neofascism are totalitarian cultures and just for that, they must be universalistic even within the big changes that this political culture suffered during the 1980s, this being totalitarian and universalistic in its crucial ideological points stand.

Yet the 1980s was not just that; even if the three pillars that mark a certain kind of continuity within fascism and neofascist galaxy, it was a decade of deep change and reflections. Neofascism was a galaxy of subjects not always agree with each other and this kind of structure didn't change. Looking at the neofascist scene across Europe during the 1980s, we may actually find three major streams that are closely connected<sup>13</sup> with the three pillars debate we are developing in this work. First of all, it is quite interesting to see how the transnationalism and anti-global thought developed in the UK, where after the failing of the National Front, a new generation of militants were engaging in the reshaping of UK neofascism within the BNP, as in Italy, and France under the umbrella of culturalism. Starting from the old idea that every culture belongs to a specific place the anti-imperialist narration met the anti-American feeling always present among neofascists. The interest towards liberation movements, as it happened towards Palestinians and others, pushed neofascists groups to look carefully in the direction of religious integralism and its political implications; Muammar Qaddafi, the Muslim brotherhood, and other Islamic extremist organizations became suddenly interesting for European neofascism. This kind of orientation towards religions has always been present within the neofascist galaxy and also the interest towards radical Islam is not something new as I have already underlined are the strict contacts between

Nazi criminals on the run and Arab countries and the embracement of Islam by few of them. We must remember how this phenomenon of merging faith and neofascism was extremely present also among Christians of any kind and groups such as *Alleanza Cattolica Tradizionalista* or the *Guerilleros de Christo Rey* were present way before the 1980s and they were involved in the network we are describing.<sup>14</sup> The second stream we may encounter studying neofascism has something to do with nativism. I already tried to explain what culturalism was from where it started and in which way it was a way to re-propose a racial-type scheme trying to avoid the accusations of racism as such.<sup>15</sup> Nativism in this respect was an evolution of that thought in the sense that it attributed a meaning of ahistorical belonging not only to culture but directly to the place of birth and blood roots. Nativism, then, is the basis of what we could call a cultural by-product that has always been present in the culture of neofascism: conspiracy. According to the nativist scheme, in fact, there would be a pre-ordered plan by unspecified strong powers of racial and cultural homogenization of the people that would be implemented through a programmed ethnic substitution. From this point of view, therefore, nativism represents an evolution of the culturalism of the ND and aims not simply to defend the cultural specificities of a particular group but, again and openly, re-establishes a thread that indissolubly binds the soil. Again, in the 1980s, we find some of the characteristics of neofascism remodelled, adapted to the specific context. The third current of thought present in the 1980s and which has its roots in the previous period but with a certain level of sophistication is that linked to the criticism of the democratic system. We have seen how since the second half of the 1940s, the party system has been heavily criticized by neofascism. During the 1980s, this critique regained strength for at least two reasons. First of all, an attempt was made to underline how a fragmented system was not able to respond to the challenges of globalization and, secondly, some financial scandals that hit the governing parties began to be used as a sign of an anthropological weakness of the democratic system. On this specific point, the neofascist galaxy once again resorted to historical falsification to describe totalitarian systems as regimes exempt from corruption and bureaucratic distortions where the popular will mediated by the leader was fully respected.

These were the three main streams that were present in the debate of the major neofascist groups, but these streams didn't end the debate that was much wider, and it crossed particularly a crucial point of the fascist construction identity: the so-called fascist anti-capitalism. Before looking closely to this specific point, it is important to shed some light on the relationship between historical fascism and capitalism. As Adler recently wrote with respect to Italian fascism, there is no doubt that the large private enterprise was not only never threatened by the so-called fascist revolution but that the totalitarian and violent compression of the wage bill by the regime greatly helped the Italian industry. If we add to this the public commissions given to large companies and aid policies for large landowners, I would say that the link between capitalist bourgeoisies and fascisms, as Bloch has rightly indicated, can be thought of as a crucial junction for understanding the rise and consolidation of totalitarian regimes not only in Italy but also at

least in Europe of the 1920s and 1930s. It is not my intention to underestimate the complexity of the fascist phenomenon nor to think of a possible reading of the totalitarian phenomenon simply as a class-struggle issue; it is important, however, to underline the modality with which historical fascism first and then neofascism have created the narrative of a revolutionary and anti-capitalist totalitarianism and how this reading is fundamentally false from a historical point of view. Neofascism in this respect was no different; claiming of being anti-liberalism and even anti-capitalism and pro-socialism sometimes, the neofascist groups as we saw never step back from tacking money from the ruling classes and in a couple of cases from the SSR. Yet the second half of the 1980s put neofascists in front of a new challenge: with the slow dissolution of the soviet regimes, one of the enemies was disappearing; of course, nobody could have predicted the exact year until the fall 1989, but as I said, the debate was open: if on one side, bourgeoisie use to back neofascism, on the other, it is also true that the idea of an overthrow of liberal democracy was one of the features of neofascism. Within the area of neofascism and especially among parties with national seats in parliament, the idea of slowly accepting the free-market rules started to being discussed more and more open. As Albertini and Doucet pointed out, the neoliberal turn affects the Front National from the very beginning;<sup>16</sup> perhaps because of Le Pen's Poujadist past, the attempt to detach himself from the many former Nazis and collaborationists present in the organizations of the French right, the development of the economic program of the FN is entrusted to the young Gérard Longue who, immediately, directs the party towards a form of liberalism by abandoning the corporatism of previous years. From this point of view, the debate was, again, transnational; obviously there were differences and nuances between the French line, the closest to the liberal reading at least at the beginning, and the groups still linked to economic nationalism and openly anti-liberal.

The 1980s debate was, in this respect, vibrant and important but no different from the one I have discussed in the previous pages; we may say that neofascism was able to adapt to the context as any other political actor but again it remained firm on the pillars I described. Yet during this decade, we could easily find groups that were not interested in the institutionalization process began especially by the two bigger parties. There is, therefore, a general trend that crosses almost 50 years of the history of neofascism which is linked to the processes of institutionalization. After the defeat of the last authoritarian regimes in Europe, the parties of neofascist inspiration have tried to bring aspects of the neofascist culture that came from the groups into the democratic institutions. It can be said that they acted in some way as mediators between the most radical and violent extremism and the institutions. Obviously, this process was wider in those countries such as Italy and France where strong and representative far-right parties existed and continue to exist. However even, in reality such as the England or USA where the political culture and the electoral system has not favoured the development of far-right forces within the parliaments, the cultural battle of the neofascism has not been absent. The connections with this area as I have described them in this work, in fact, clearly reveal a common strategy, an interchange, and a constant



elaboration of that political area. Obviously, in the countries just mentioned, the most extreme areas have sometimes been recycled at the level of local organizations and have delegated to some individuals the attempt to 'enter' the institutions by exploiting the conservative parties in the UK and the Republican parties in the USA. This type of strategy eventually paid off even in England where Nick Griffin sought to broaden the BNP's electoral base by presenting a more moderate image, targeting concerns about rising immigration rates, and emphasizing localized community campaigns. What is important to remind is that during the 1980 while Roberto Fiore was refugee in the UK, he founded together with Griffin the Terza Posizione Internazionale (International Third Position). Similar parties and groups were also present in France, Belgium, and other countries; from the French nationalist party, founded and directed by former members of the Charlemagne Division, such as Pierre Bousquet, or to the Belgian New Forces Party which will join the Belgian National Front in 1991.<sup>17</sup> All these small groups, even with differences between them, maintained contacts and exchanges, had moments of common reflection. For example, one of the magazines of French extremism was titled *Pour Force Nouvelle*, like the Belgian neofascist youth organization, Italian, German, Belgian Dutch authors, and others wrote on the pages of *Initiative Nationale*. Alongside with this debate, we may trace back few other common grounds of intervention which reveal their patterns of actions; The proximity to the Palestinian cause and, in general, to the nationalist and socialist regimes of the Middle East, attention to social issues and related to unemployment and social exclusion of white citizens and criticism of the capitalist system. In the course of the 1980s, the crisis of the productive system began to create a new band of poor workers who would have swelled the ranks of the neofascist movements; as Kriesi and Rydgen<sup>18</sup> underlined in various publications, the transformation of the left/right dialectic into a clash between the people and the elite has its historical roots in those years. The victory of Thatcher over the miners and the dismantling of entire production chains had a dramatic impact on the political cultures of the workers. The failure of the transformation promised by communism, which would have crashed loudly in 1989, opened, in fact, the way for a more liberal politics on the part of the left parties that failed to stem the mounting methodological individualism that had grown since the 1950s in the folds of the US right. The idea that the state must be starved like a beast unfolded within the reforms first in the UK and then in the rest of the western world. The loss of identity, however, could not have remained a vacuum. As Evans had already shown in 1994,<sup>19</sup> the class during the 1980s was still one of the concepts most used by movements in Europe, but at the same time, it was Field<sup>20</sup> who investigated the patriotic revival on a mass level during the conflict for the Falklands. A working class, therefore, which does not completely lose its social dimension, however, detaches itself from the political one.

It is important to underline that this was not an English trend but of all western countries; it is certain that in the UK, this trend, both structural and cultural, first developed in the Anglo-Saxon world, but it is the studies of Nonna Mayer<sup>21</sup> that show us how France has experienced a very similar evolution. The rise during the

1980s, until the advent of Marine Le Pen, is driven by the same shift of meanings, from nationalism to nativism from biological racism to communitarianism, which had seen an important part of their philosophical treatment precisely in France, of the *Nouvelle Droite*. Then, the studies by Ignazi, Mammone, Chiarini, and others show us how during the 1980s, the MSI approached the *Nouvelle Droite*, how it changed its approach especially with respect to economic and international issues. A slow phenomenon of institutionalization affects the entire radical right, especially in the second half of the 1980s. As we have seen, this did not mean abandoning the three cornerstones of neofascist culture as we have analysed them in the course of this work, but it is inevitable to underline how the weakening of the communist regimes were an element that gave strength to those who wanted to transform the neofascist right into something different. The 1980s were, at the same time, a time of radicalization and institutionalization; radicalization of that piece anchored to a revolutionary neofascist ideology that did not foresee the abandonment of the violent path. A clear example of this modality lies not only in the dynamics of the Bologna massacre in the creation of Third Position and in its relations with Freemasonry; the elements linked to neofascism, in fact, tried to give life to their project far from Europe and especially had a certain practicability in Latin American dictatorships. This was the case of Stefano delle Chiaie who emigrated to Bolivia where Klaus Barbie was active who had fled to that country with the help of the CIA. It was in Bolivia that the leader of AN managed to form a new group 'the fiancés of death' which acted both as a paramilitary organization and as a political group. Delle Chiaie will remain active in South America until 1987, exploiting the network of former Nazis who had found refuge in that continent. Together with him, it is useful to remember the presence of Pierluigi Concutelli, material author of the murder of Judge Occorsio, who in 1973 he had outlawed ON, and that he had spent a few months in Angola fighting as a mercenary for Salazarist Portugal after being recruited by Aginter Press.

As we can see from these quick examples, the neofascism network was still active and at least until the end of the 1980s, it managed to move even on the 'national-revolutionary' terrain. At that point, we are faced with a minority of terrorism professionals who are unable to bring their militancy back into the terrain of the relationship with democratic rules. Was this, instead, the fate of the parties and of the majority of organizations in Europe? As Bar On and others have been able to underline, the organizations that are beginning a phase of institutionalization do not deny the foundations of neofascism and certainly not the three guidelines we have spoken about. Of course, the dictates of the *Nouvelle Droite* require radical changes: we move from street violence to an attempt at cultural hegemony, from beatings to the conquest of strategic positions in the world of information, academia, and local authorities. The rhetoric is always fierce and aimed at creating the enemy but, for example, biological racism disappears to make way for issues related to ethnic substitution and the destruction of European cultural identity. They try to win more votes to broaden their electoral and militant base, perhaps leaving some elitist attitudes to fall a little but democracy and above all parties remain in the crosshairs of a harsh criticism. In the meantime, a

new actor appeared on the European political scene, also with cultural ties to the neofascist right: local autonomism. Micro-nationalism has always been a trend of the European continent, but it should be emphasized how, over the years, neofascism has had a special focus on these political actors. During the 1970s, there was a closeness between micro-nationalist movements and the revolutionary left, but, in general terms, the discourse and narration on the homelands has always been a heritage of the far right which since the 1960s had developed a debate on the Europe of the peoples to be set against that of the cosmopolitan financial elites. This is a very important step that allows us to understand how the 1980 decade was a hinge and marked an epochal change in the culture of neofascism. We have already talked about the phenomenon of globalization in the economy, underlining how the concept of national capitalism had already gone into crisis at the end of the 1960s and how big capital had reacted to this trend of stagnation with the internationalization of production. This enormous process, of course, could not remain confined to the realm of the economy without an impact on politics: the 1980s saw an acceleration of the European integration process and a succession of weakening of national parliamentary structures in the favour of supranational institutions. This loss of centrality of the states gave new strength to a double debate that had never really subsided: that on 'small countries' and that on democracy and sovereignty. In a nutshell, the reaction of many citizens who saw themselves threatened by the physical distancing of the institutions and places of the decision was to relaunch ancient projects of micro-homelands. According to them, a small region could more easily reclaim its sovereignty which they felt had been taken away first by productive desertification and, later, by supranational projects that were seen as anti-democratic elements. The critique brought by neofascism to multinationals, cosmopolitanism, and party democracy have, therefore, the possibility of taking root within a political area that claims nationalism as a response to globalization; the community and ethnocentric office is combined with the narration of a state that has sold itself to the 'strong powers' of stateless capital. A cosmopolitan capitalism that does not need cultural roots and a state as a mere simulacrum of an increasingly less representative political power. The call to the soil, traditions, and self-government, therefore, are gaining ground. We are, however, talking about an encounter between political cultures of a process of hybridization. Within this process, for example, many actors of the neofascist galaxy present themselves as the only true democrats as the standard bearers of the people seeking revenge against the established power. Within this long political relationship, it will be the neofascists who dominate the organizations of European micro-nationalism, both those that have existed for some time and those born in the 1980s such as the Northern League in Italy; communitarianism declined according to ethnocentrism, contempt for parliamentary democracy, and a certain love for titanic, eschatological, and heroic narratives will converge in a new epic struggle against the 'globalist' elites. The slow process of detachment of the state from the nation would then have brought with it another by-product that should not be underestimated: adherence to a certain type of individualist and liberal culture in economics that was not part of the previous neofascist idea. In Europe,

nationalist groups aspired to the separation of their own cultural reality from that of another sovereign state which was portrayed as an invader whose occupation deprived citizens of their natural rights. The state was consequently seen as an imperialist actor who forced different national cultures to coexist against their will and only a secession would have sanctioned the return to natural borders; clearly even if nationalisms had been successful, they would have had to create a new state in their turn, but in recent decades on European soil only the former Yugoslavia has experienced a civil war that has led to the formation of ethnic states. However, a nationalist culture remained that painted first European and then national institutions as mere servants of big capitalism while reaffirming the inalienable rights of individuals and local communities, undermining the feeling of belonging to the state. In short, if the state is my enemy, why should I obey its laws? And above all, why should I pay taxes? Leaving aside a class interpretation of some independence systems such as the Lombard or Catalan one, the self-determination of resources was one of the great battles of the independence movements that fuelled real fiscal revolts. Clearly this type of idea did not fit perfectly with that of the strong state that has always been propagated by the far right and, above all, it paved the way for a certain degree of 'Americanization': I do not want to pay for a state that I consider an enemy, but I prefer to support, for example, a private welfare that I pay for myself and for my family. The far right and neofascist groups in many cases were part of movements that had this type of approach. Did they do it as a mere political tactic? In part, yes. It must also be said that with the weakening and the end of the communist regimes, even the neofascist galaxy was overwhelmed for a few years by a kind of Fukuyama syndrome: if history had really ended, perhaps, it could and should have been rethought capitalist economy as essential. The debate also on the right was extremely rich and the positions diverged greatly between the proponents of an abandonment of anti-capitalism and those who, on the other hand, decided to embrace liberal economic theories. Many of the intellectuals of the neofascist area, however, remained faithful to an idea of organic economy and knew, in that way, to be credible in the eyes of what many scholars have called the losers of globalization.

Here, however, we are talking about the hybridization of political cultures and a space of political opportunities that opened up in front of groups, and especially parties, which for decades had remained on the margins of political power. It should not, therefore, be too disconcerting that parties of the institutional far right have become liberal in economics while remaining faithful to the pillars of neofascist ideology. Also, with respect to this concept of continuity, it must be specified that not all parties or groups always behave in a coherent manner and not all have the same degree of adherence to these principles which should not be seen either as immutable and anti-historical or as divine laws to which we cannot derogate. Again there is a distance between the long-term historical analysis, such as the one proposed in this work, and the analytical one of a single actor, more typical of political science.

In short, the three pillars of the neofascist identity narrative remained unchanged even during the 1980s. We can say that the groups of the neofascist galaxy have

adapted to the processes of globalization, economic, and political, which, instead, have wiped out the communist regimes; the ability to interpret the separation between state and nation in a community and ethnocentric sense with the birth of new supranational institutions allowed neofascist groups during the 1980s to build a solid basis of credibility towards voters and possible new militants. Many of these groups presented themselves as the only bearers and advocates of citizens whose citizenship was stolen. To put it, again, with Castel, if citizenship based on wages was dismantled by the end of the Fordist system, an ancient right could once again be declined on the basis of blood and soil. Neofascism, then, wisely created a narrative that contrasted representative democracy with the ‘organic’ one and immediately acted out within small homogeneous communities; this aspect allowed him to reaffirm his extraneousness to the power elites that had ruled western countries up to that moment and with the terminal crisis of communism, they ‘sat on the side of the winner’. In short, it was the 1980s during which a sort of double action was consolidated that had always been carried out by parties such as the MSI in Italy: on the one hand, groups that claimed direct action but broke with the strategy of terrorism, at least in Europe, and on the other, a more reassuring presence on the part of institutional actors. The gradual abandonment of terrorist practices and the profuse commitment to the acquisition of cultural hegemony was undoubtedly favoured by the material and political conditions that we have discussed earlier but at the same time, the capacity of the neofascist galaxy to build a front should not be underestimated. The real strategic goal after the end of socialism is now to undermine and liquidate democracy as such.

## Notes

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- 8 I had the chance of interviewing Cristina Almeyda years ago together with Prof Del Hierro and some of the funding can also be found in: M. Albanese and P. Del Hierro, *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century: Spain, Italy, and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016.

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# Conclusion

What is modernity? It has to do with scientific, industrial, political, and cultural revolutions; in short, it is a historical process and as such, it is a multifaceted object. If we limit ourselves, as in these pages to political history, there is no doubt that the caesura of the XX century marked a new phase, that of the entry into the political arena of the masses. From transnational empires to the victory of the nation-state, from the personification of power in the body of the sovereign to the shift in that of the nation, in the people. The long epic that began with the English Revolution and continued for about two centuries found its apogee, to quote Mayer,<sup>1</sup> in the end of the Ancien Régimes only in 1918. Within a few years, it passed from the murders of rulers at the hands of anarchist groups, like Gaetano Bresci, or nationalists as it was for Princip, at the first bombings on cities.

However, as the great authors of the political tradition from Weber to Bodin wrote, power and government are not the same thing: How to regulate the new power of the masses? How to govern it? The vote and the suffrage, masculine and not immediately universal, was expanding with the growth of the demands that the new political and institutional institutions placed on its citizens: taxes and war. The war that became more and more total and all-encompassing as the democratic institution grew. At the same time, the development of capitalist forms of production relegated the spaces free from the productive and reproductive cycle of capital to almost zero; within these processes of industrialization and production, from military Keynesianism as Minsky<sup>2</sup> called it, the artifice of citizenship was developing as a political element that lost its link with property to stick, in a slightly artificial way, to wages as shown by Castel.

Again, it is Gramsci's work that suggests a sort of tripartite division within what has been, and probably remains, the knot of the government of the masses within the paradigm of modern participation; According to the Italian author, in fact, there are three ways in which the dilemma is articulated and, in some way, resolved: fascism, communism, and Americanism. In Americanism and Fordism, Gramsci suggests a sort of aporia between capitalist forms, Americanism and fascism, which can only be resolved outside the capitalist compatibilities and, consequently, in communism. And communism was the nodal point around which not only and not so much fascism as neofascism developed. When the Axis powers collapse, their chance to play a leading role vanishes under the weight of the rubble

of the Second World War and the horrors of the mass murder and crimes against humanity committed by those regimes; the only political space that remains to them, to those who remain fascists after fascism, is anti-communism. The alliance with the former enemies therefore became vital for the former fascists and immediately took shape as an element not only aimed at the personal survival of many exponents of the old regimes but as a starting point for the continuation of the fascist political project. This alliance between former enemies in the name of the opposition to communism, however, is not just a tactical space, a moment of intersection between liberals and conservatives with the old fascists but prefigures the necessary condition for the perpetuation of pieces of fascist ideology. This aspect is immediately clear if we look at the chronology not only of the organized escapes towards countries where compliant regimes existed, Spain, Portugal, Argentina and later Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, but at the birth of new political press groups and organizations that gathered the former Nazi-Fascists, giving them the opportunity to operate freely. The birth of the MSI in Italy in December 1946, the political and military roles covered by former SS officers in various countries of the world demonstrate beyond a reasonable doubt that there was no single case but that there was a political and field choice by western powers not to punish the great mass of war criminals but to take advantage of their knowledge to fight the Cold War. Whole pieces of important institutions, from the allied secret services to the Catholic Church, were engaged in this work of rescuing the Nazi-Fascists and with them of Nazi-Fascism as an ideology; However, it would not be correct to say that there was a 'central' organization that supervised and implemented a plan: there was not a single plan but a series of different realities tried to take advantage of the opportunities they could seize. Peron was certainly close to the fascist ideology but one of the reasons why he accepted the arrival of thousands of former Nazi-fascists in Argentina lay in the desire to transform his country into a local power; the same thing was true, a few years later, for the regimes of Arab nationalist socialism.

In the same way, one should not think of a unity between Nazi-fascist groups that were forming at the end of the 1940s. Since the first pages of this book, we have talked about how neofascism was, and perhaps still is, a galaxy of acronyms, parties, groups, and individuals, who share, despite a thousand differences, a transnational strategic project. The use of the word strategic is central in the discussion that, through the large amount of sources presented, I have tried to carry out in the previous pages to emphasize a cultural continuity and in the debate between the different souls of neofascism; at the same time, we must not think of this galaxy as an unhistorical entity unable to react and adapt to the different trends and countertendencies that were created in the folds of the contradictions of the Cold War.

If, therefore, we were to look for a definition of neofascism, we could say that it was, and probably still is, fascism in the time of globalization; he first interpreted the contradictions of the Cold War and then, after the fall of the Soviet regimes, embody a sort of neo-nationalism that opposed the transformation of state forms from national to transnational. This transnationality, among other



things, this attempt to build a 'revolutionary fascism' has always been one of the founding characteristics of that ideology and those regimes. A transnationality that, however, kept the idea and the dogma of the race firmly fixed, whether it be declined in biological, metaphysical, or cultural terms. If, in fact, the existence of the division into classes is denied, the incarnation of the 'politician' that Schmittian must develop the dichotomy friend/enemy in racial terms. Clearly, within the epic of globalization, the physical and biological element fades and the revival of the question changes. Not that forms of biologically understood racism were missing until the 1980s, and still are present, but this was accompanied by culturalist visions that spoke of forced displacements of people subjected to capital, forced to abandon their cultural heritage for come to hybridize the western one. Even in this case, however, one should not think that this mode of propaganda narration was alien to historical fascism and that it exclusively characterizes neofascism; just think of the violent and systematic spread of anti-Semitism and how dozens of myths pertaining to the national-popular cultures of each country have been made available to biological racism. The Jewish community as an internal enemy closely linked to Bolshevism and at the same time to big finance are not, in fact, inventions born after the end of the Second World War. Indeed, it could be said that many of the culturalist arguments promoted in particular by the French Nouvelle Droite have drawn heavily from that modality of construction of the internal enemy and have then applied them to gradually different cases. Hence, the problem of Jamaican culture as underlined by Mosley or, later, of religion as elements that should push the European peoples to think of ethnically and culturally homogeneous political communities. A homogeneity that, given the non-existence of the class conflict, would not foresee the breaking of the mystical body of the nation, the people, into parties. Here, then, is the last piece that engaged this brief discussion as an element that defines the link between historical fascism and neofascism: the aversion to the democratic form. There is, here, a clarification: it is not so much the search for a fixed and, for the most part, immutable order, an idea that has also fascinated some of the actors we have talked about for a long time, but that of the passivation of the masses in the sense in which Mosse spoke to us about their nationalization, the goal that neofascism sets itself. A sort of out-of-time stoicism that makes each and every one accepts the superiority of the rulers over the ruled, that does not question social mobility as much as the ability to think about other models of development. Neofascism, and fascism in a very similar way, does not clash with plebiscitarianism, on the contrary, it makes political and religious moments of acclamation of its leaders and of almost supernatural communion between the body of the nation and that of the rulers. The element that must be expelled is the political plurality on which equality is the inescapable foundation. Neofascism, everything, repudiates this basic principle of democratic thought as 'unnatural' and therefore calls for a system of co-opting the most 'deserving'. In this apparently contradictory position, it overcomes the methodological individualism that would derive from such an assumption through the concept of a culturally homogeneous community. In this sense, neofascism is at the same time illiberal because it rejects the aspects of free movement of capital,

goods, and above all the queen of goods, work but at the same time develops a system of thought within which the fight against inequality is not simply superfluous but intimately theoretically wrong. As a well-known exponent of contemporary neofascism told me during an interview: I help poor people because they are part of my community (excluding migrants, therefore, from its political and social horizon) but their poverty is the fault of individualism that it makes them aspire to social positions for which they are unsuitable. A society, in fact, divided into semi-closed castes and dominated by a sort of neo-Stoicism, a reference to oriental disciplines, of which fascism and historical Nazism have always been greedy, which eliminating capitalist greed would eliminate conflicts and pain. A society, therefore, without conflicts and within which social rights would be replaced by an undefined collective and national good that went very well with the wishes of the more conservative fringes of the European bourgeoisie. As Bloch said in his latest work, published posthumously, it was the European bourgeoisies who preferred Hitler to Stalin and this idea of a communist danger at the gates and the need for a resizing of the spaces for participation of the working masses in politics remained intact even after the end of the Soviet regimes. Neofascism was, therefore, a political project that aimed to extend its cultural hegemony far beyond the narrow limits of its own political space. In his search for 'living space', he found in some pieces of the reactionary right an audience attentive to his theories of him; much could be said, and I have partly tried to describe it, about this relationship which certainly affected the social and economic power relations not favourable to the actors of neofascism, and much still needs to be investigated that relationship between pieces of bourgeoisie which in their transnational yearning sponsored an equally global neofascism, including neofascists and pieces of apparatus of states that were still authoritarian or that had recently emerged from totalitarian regimes such as Germany and Italy. Little has been written about the sympathies of pieces of English aristocracy and neo-Nazi groups and research on the League of San Giorgio should undoubtedly be deepened. The enlargement of the political field was not a prerogative of neofascism alone, on the contrary; the electoral and political ascents of the fascist and Nazi regimes were characterized by the construction of a social bloc that supported those movements. The great difference between historical fascism and neofascism is, if anything, to be sought in the power relationship between fascisms and the reactionary right. While historical fascism becomes a totalitarian regime with great speed, neofascism will live all its historical parable as an element tolerated, supported, and even used by the reactionary right but without having any real possibility of becoming the driving force of a social bloc that would overthrow western democracies. Neofascism, at least in countries with a democratic regime, was an element of pressure on organizations of the historical left until the early 1990s. There were very few, even in the fragile Italian democracy that more than others suffered from neofascist terrorism, the real possibility that new authoritarian regimes would arise in Europe. This element inherent in the social and political power relations was not unknown to the neofascist galaxy, which, however, has for years cradled a political and ideological superiority by convincing itself that the reactionary right should sooner or

later seek the 'golden souls' of neofascism to find steadfast guidance that otherwise would have been lacking. Closed within their supposed almost anthropological superiority, many groups of the neofascist galaxy have been the violent 'muscle' of the counter-reformist projects of the reactionary right; the second 'phase' of this policy which provided for the coup in the name of anti-communism and, precisely subsequently, the seizure of power by the military and the big bourgeoisie with, at that point, the entry of the neofascists into the command rooms, did not never came true. Within the framework of the Cold War, it was sufficient in countries such as Italy and partly France to keep public opinion in constant fibrillation and alert to the communist danger without this necessarily turning into an undemocratic solution. The fear of communism was enough to fuel a vicious circle in which neofascism was allowed to survive but never became a real threat; the neofascists were, in short, useful to the system but not alternative to it. Many groups in the neofascist galaxy are aware of this situation, to say the least, but while some consider it an inevitable tactical step and are increasingly tied to both reactionary and western milieus environments, and others, not many, they begin to think of national-Bolshevism, of Third Position, that is, they take up one of the keys to reading 'revolutionary' fascism and try to make it a practice. Among the groups that will act according to this scheme there was certainly JE which has been mentioned several times in these pages. The group had its own relevance for at least three kinds of reasons that it is worth mentioning briefly: first of all, it was the first genuinely transnational neofascist group and grew to the point of having 13 sections in as many countries. Secondly, we must remember its pro-Arab orientation and in favour of national liberation struggles. The idea of training volunteers in Arab countries and the Mediterranean basin did not see the light, as well as that of an alliance with People's China sponsored by Romania, did not find a follow-up but this model of militant and internationalist voluntarism was well accompanied by the mythology of historical fascism, it interpreted the spirit of the Cold War and recalled that global partisan, that political warrior without borders, recalled by Schmitt. Thirdly and lastly, we must remember the enormous publicist and cultural production fielded by JE, whose magazine and whose campaign for the dissemination of its symbol, the Celtic cross, were true forerunners of the idea of cultural hegemony as an element cornerstone of the political struggle developed almost ten years later by De Benoist's *Nouvelle Droite*.

Mass culture, symbols, and communication will become from the mid-1980s a real battleground, the creation of a sense of belonging; as a JE militant, who was the first to deal with these aspects, said: when I travelled to Europe and saw a boy with a pin with a Celtic cross, I knew I was among 'mine'. To this was added, again between the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s, the phenomenon of identity rock. Born in Germany in the wake of the English Skinhead movements, initially left-wing and listening to Ska and Punk rock, identity music is a challenge to the axiom of rock music, rebellion as elements of the left. Even the song writing, especially in Italy, saw the birth of openly neofascist authors who expressed their ideology through songs. The ideology, it is clear, remained the same after all and was articulated around the three great guidelines that we have carried out in this

work: here, therefore, were born texts in which the veterans of Salò were glorified, the SS or openly put themselves in doubt the Holocaust of the Jewish people, it instilled racial hatred and against diversity. It was done, however, through new channels, media, and repertoires of action historically the prerogative of the left was made their own by neofascist groups. Across Europe, musical groups, shows and performances sprang up featuring content that belonged to the far right. Other elements, then, were dusted off from the wardrobe of memories and updated to the present time. This is the case with environmentalism. The Cold War has been called a balance of terror because of the immense nuclear arsenals of the two superpowers; this spectre of complete destruction was, of course, a not secondary part of the political debate to which was added the concern also for the civil uses of atomic energy that were accompanied by a new awareness of the damage that industrialization was causing to nature and to man.

In short, during the second half of the 1970s, groups and movements began to emerge that make environmentalism their main battle and if the majority of these are placed, in some way, on the left, we must not think that neofascism is not crossed. From this debate, indeed. Traditionalist thought, the Nazi-Fascist mysticism envisaged an anti-industrialist approach since the 1920s; the recovery of popular culture, as shown by Mosse, of the values of frugality and of a direct relationship with nature, in an almost pantheistic way, was an essential part of that mythology about the existence of the Aryan-Germanic race that had so much importance for the movement Nazi. One of the most important German philosophers of the XX century and himself close to the Nazi party, Heidegger, had basically written complex but important pages against technology and science that would have reduced the human being to lose his own profound essence to become a small cog in a world devoted to science and which would therefore have lost its spirit. Mussolini himself declared the *Arianità* of the Italians, Franco retrieved the concept of Hispanidad, and Salazar said that Portugal was the State of God and that Our Lady of Fatima would guide his steps. Between reactionary Catholicism, anti-bourgeois ultra-conservatism and hints of paganism, the fascist movements and regimes of Europe copiously used every element of popular culture and its variegated superstitions to create an anti-modern cultural hegemony. In this, therefore, Sternhell was right in declaring fascism as an ideology that opposed, and opposes, modernity, and Neumann in tracing a monstrosity in Nazi-fascism that threatened the social pact imagined by Hobbes. Yet, while Nazi Germany was one of the largest industrial powers on the planet of this harvest of symbols, mythologies, and cultures used artfully for propaganda, the intellectuals of fascist Italy glorified machines, speed, and an idea of progress. Almost science fiction. Again, the Nazi-Fascist ideology was winding in a vicious circle of aporias and contradictions and, probably, was anxiously trying to resolve that binomial between state and nation, between reason and faith. The idea of a nation-state has changed and within many different scenarios it has been recalled. For almost three centuries, from the end of the XVII century, when in the midst of the wars of religion in Europe, this concept becomes more and more familiar and used, until the fall of the communist regimes in 1989, we have used this concept as a synonym,

as an 'indissoluble unity' between two components that are different from each other but whose destinies, it was believed, were inextricable: the nation and the state. The first to use the metaphor of the relationship between Leviathan and Beemot to contextualize the tragedy of Nazism was, in fact, Franz Neumann who already in 1942 proposed this interpretation: Nazism as an explosion of the bestial aspects of western culture and the break with the intrinsic rational of pact processes. If today it is possible to trace a limit in Neumann's reading, which we remember was made hot and with the regimes still in power, and then blurred in his subsequent work, it is to see these two aspects of the democratic tradition as antithetical and self-excluding. The semantic and political distances summarized by that dash between state and nation, as if to build a bridge that can be crossed in both directions, can, under certain conditions, become barriers or, even worse, those bridges can collapse, and the distances become unbridgeable. Fascism like neofascism and the new right that worries so much today are phenomena that have to do with the relationship between democracy and modernity, which deeply question the founding values and the structures of political power that develop within the societies we call liberals. If state and nation detach if Leviathan flees national borders following the bourgeoisies that can live outside state control, Behemoth no longer has any counterbalance, no type of control and redefines not new terms of power but gives new form to those ancient. Concepts such as citizenship and belonging cease to be a reason for political inclusion but are used as other borders, once the physical ones have been skipped for the economy, within which to organize a hierarchy, including an ethnic one. From this point of view, perhaps, we can reformulate Neumann's thesis according to which Behemoth was a beast that was opposed to rationality and outside the progressive fate that history should have chased and see Behemoth as the solitary expression of the popular classes that are not able to keep up with Leviathan's slow agony. Left alone in a corner of history, the subordinates often look to nationalism and ethnocentrism as an answer, the only one left from the end of socialism, to face a loneliness in which they have been left by the bourgeoisies who no longer need to take care of them. I don't know if modernity, understood as the rise of technical domination over nature, has really killed God. Perhaps, our idea of soul and theology changed forever along the tracks that entered Auschwitz, perhaps, as we hit the lunar ground, we thought we no longer need explanations beyond ourselves. Nietzsche would have been proud of this superhomistic humanity which defied the stars, which split the atom and which, by dint of massacres, launched its cry of freedom towards its Creator. What certainly happened is that this superhuman challenge was launched by men, but to do so, they needed to replace the God of the people with the deities of Hobbes. We sat, once again, not so much on the strong shoulders of giants but on the idea of mythological creatures such as nation-states. The pursuit of destruction that went through the entire XX century, and which does not seem to have subsided in this first part of the century, was carried out by the states and, often, in the name of the nation. Even the atheist and materialist Stalinist Leninism baptized the Second World War the Great Patriotic War and the references to Mother Russia, and to the Orthodox faith, are famous to motivate that

huge tide of men to physically take sides against German bullets. The state, Leviathan, provided the rationality of the technique, a technique that elevated us astride the rockets like so many Dr. Strangelove, up to the stars while the nation, Behemoth, warmed hearts, and inflamed souls with words of earth and blood. The two monsters have always gone hand in hand, since the English Revolution, since the creation of belonging to a specific homeland; since before the birth of citizenship, which would have come in full form almost a century later with the French Revolution, the appeals to belonging became the engine of a desire to organize in a coherent manner. A cultural coherence first and then an ethnic one. Behemoth, culture, religion, language, and traditions, and on the other hand, the extremization of a positivist and scientific thought in the Leviathanic exaltation of the idea of race. A scientific idea that, if followed consistently, would bring happiness for everyone. Because if science tells us that everyone belongs to a different race, it seems normal that everyone must be, in order to proliferate, within their own biological enclosure. Biological racism is not born on the right at all but is, at least initially, a positivist extremization of a desire to control the rules of nature. After all, modernity is also this: a mythological place where suffering does not exist, a story of infinite progress within which every man will find his place and his happiness. Each era has, perhaps, experienced its own modernity, it is not our invention, in every age, the aspiration for a materially more comfortable future accompanied the narration of heavenly or earthly paradises. XX-century modernity gave us electric light to pierce the darkness, chemistry, that of phosphates (actually invented in the first half of the XIX century but which became popular a little later), to make arable land that was once unproductive and that of dynamite that opened the mountains or the mustard gas which, on the other hand, closed the bowels, the steam engine that unleashed speed and beauty and made the world smaller and smaller. Who built these wonders? Science, science resided in the universities of the state, in public laboratories, in the large factories of a national bourgeoisie which often had the state as its first client. A state that organizes and a nation that explains, a state that produces goods while the nation produces culture, meaning. A state and a nation, it should be stressed, that live within the realm of the bourgeoisie. The usage of social classes and the related categories has become a little bit too old to explain the complexity of the present time; despite this consideration, we lack a unitary theory that may help social sciences to cope with our present societies. The bourgeoisie that lived between the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century witnessed a series of important events: among all of them it is worth mentioning at least 3. First of all, it is useful to remember that, as Harold explained to us James, the levels of economic interdependence and the level of financialization reached by the economy between the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX century will only be reached in the second half of the 1960s. In short, globalization is not a new fact. Many of the dynamics that today are pointed out as structural elements of the crises of market economies and, sometimes in a somewhat deterministic way, of liberal democracies were also present in the 2000s and 2010s. This element must be kept in mind because when we talk about globalization, elites, and the relationship between

classes, understanding what they did, how they lived, and what expectations these social portions of our countries had, acquires a profound meaning. What countries would we have lived in? Under what political regime? First of all, it is important to remember that the most popular form of government at that time was the monarchical and in particular the imperial one. Transnational and vast empires within which different cultural identities coexisted, sometimes forcibly and with strong nationalist thrusts. This was true not only for the Ottoman Empire and for that of Austria-Hungary but also for the vast Tsarist empire and, if you think about it, even a very young republic like the USA saw the presence of different peoples within it. The system, therefore, was anchored to the idea of aristocratic legitimacy of birth; there had been corrective measures, obviously, the XIX century with its nationalist and anti-legitimist uprisings certainly hadn't passed in vain. Almost all regimes had an elected parliament. They were, therefore, imperial monarchies of constitutional types where still few, and on the basis of wealth and with the exclusion of women, could exercise the right to vote. A right to vote that, in our European democracies, becomes evanescent and fleeting, almost as precarious as work, a source of income that is disappearing, and the lives of two generations of young Europeans condemned to social and political inconsistency. How the neofascist extreme right of today reacts, interprets, and moves within this new paradigm is the question that shifts the initial direction of this work on continuities in the political culture of fascism and neofascism at the transnational level. In a framework within which it is currently complex to understand the direction in which states or transnational entities such as Europe are moving, one fact remains incontrovertible: there are, within the field of production models, two great irreconcilable guidelines; the transnational and financialized bourgeoisies that entrust the material and social reproduction of capital to capital-intensive instruments that require very little manpower and a still labour-intensive manufacturing model that no longer has the hegemonic force of the past and that compresses dramatically the wage bill. Labour-intensive jobs, however, are poor jobs that have been easily moved outside national borders in search of more advantageous wage conditions. At the same time, some companies, born multinationals, are now completely integrated into a global production cycle that has almost completely disconnected them from state borders. These two elements of the bourgeoisie faced the same challenge but had very different possibilities and reactions. Large companies, those that once expressed a culture and a ruling class, have abandoned state borders; Leviathan was no longer needed for them, he could die. Small entrepreneurs strangled by the lack of innovation capacity and by supranational rules that prevented them from asking for the devaluation of the currency to be competitive began to hate those rules and laws that, in their opinion, were weakening them. According to them, however, Leviathan had to die. In both cases, the national bourgeoisie decided that laws and regulations were superfluous: the first because thanks to legal dumping between the various countries, they enjoyed the fruits of endless speculation, the second because they were unable to enter financial reproduction of value and have seen themselves impoverished by the new global scenarios. Neither was more interested in establishing common rules, rules

that would hold societies together and integrate the masses into a political process. This, very briefly, happened to the bourgeoisie but what effect did it have on the lower classes? Robert Castel reminded us how citizenship is an ownership issue and how this property has been lost in recent years. The Fordist pact signed after the end of the Great War which provided for the vote for all citizens, males, was based, in fact, on an assumption: you will not have property, so you would be excluded from citizenship, but having a life salary, we can pretend that the two institutions, the property and the salary, correspond. Faced with the current crisis of primitive re-accumulation, the two institutes, which have never been the same, have begun to separate. The wedge that has opened that space is the precariousness of work. If the work you do is no longer for life, your rights will also be less certain, timed, or in any case conditioned by the circumstances of your solitary spendability on the labour markets. Today's crisis, moreover, lives around the dichotomy between stagflation and compression of the wage bill: I don't sell enough but those who work are too poor to buy. It is nothing new but within the compression of the wage bill, the pauperization of work and its disappearance as an element bearer of rights go hand in hand. If I don't receive a salary how can I claim those political rights that were centred not so much on my citizenship but on my being a salary? How to claim social rights that have always been a portion of the salary when the salary is not there? If I lose my rights as a citizen, what do I become? Mass? Yes, perhaps I become a mass, an indistinct heap of anger and resentment which, as a mass and not a class, is unable to express fully and alone. I need a means, a political mediation, possibly direct. The link between the loss of rights and citizenship and this new moment of emotional transport in which the strong man is clamouring from many sides, is all here. The end of a cycle, that of democratic modernity, and the slow start of a new phase. Usually, the grown-ups said, it is precisely in these moments that monsters are born. And nationalism, ethnocentrism if you prefer, is a monster of the real ones. When the bourgeoisies abdicate their toric role of ruling classes, the subordinate classes are left alone, abandoned at the mercy of an economic system that is going through a phase of decline that seems unstoppable; at the very least, I would add, it is difficult to combine the need to squeeze the wage bill with democracy. We are not, in fact, faced with cyclical phenomena but more and more the symptoms seem to indicate a chronic illness, if not terminal, of the combination, much more told than real, between the development of the free market and the prodigious progressive fate of democratic systems. Here in this decline of Americanism, after the death of communism, disturbing shadows of racism, violence, and anger appear that many are led to call fascism or neofascism. The League, I repeat, is not a fascist but interprets, as an anti-system party (after all it was born as such), the anxieties and despair of many. Its leader is able to convey a clear dichotomous message: there are enemies and enemies are not talked about, enemies are defeated, almost everything is allowed. Let me be clear, the League has no revolutionary programme, not even in its slogans, it is a party that represents a petty bourgeoisie angry at the tax burden whose dream is the house on the ring road and a series of objects that validate its social status. There is no strategic vision; there is no sovereign



ideology. The sovereigns are ultraliberals in economics, they love the flat tax because they have internalized an individualistic dream that has always been of American origin. The far right is a neoliberal and violent movement; it is a lump of economic selfishness and ethnocentric and communal nationalism.

I pay for myself, and I don't want to bestow favours on anyone because the state is a bureaucratic oppressor. On the contrary, the state is not interested in me and my problems and, consequently, I think of myself outside any logic, not only in solidarity but eminently social. If the state is not there, we are alone again, and we join together for personal preferences: tastes, inclinations, and suggestions. We leave the terrain of society and re-enter a state of tribal ferocity. Within this new scenario, nationalism or even regionalism are. I can hate the foreigner or my neighbour because I have lost equality between people, a real necessary condition for a democracy that recognizes adversaries but not enemies, I decide who is similar to me. The pact that I had signed with the state to which I had delegated the use of force, the only legitimate one, has failed. I claim my right to violence against anyone who does not meet my standards. Racial, ethical, economic purity, or sexual orientation: everything can be taken, from time to time, as a discriminating and discriminatory parameter. In this, he completely internalized the three ideological pillars that guided this work: racism, hatred of democratic institutions, and the ability to act and think transnationally. The far right plays on each of these tables, with the rosary, with the hatred poured out towards political opponents that it faces as enemies by feeding every single aspect of their physicality to its hungry voters. Salvini or Marie Le Pen is not the enemy to be defeated, even if we defeat him tomorrow someone else would take possession of that dynamic which is entirely internal to the end of Fordism and the disappearance of spaces for reformism. Power is distant, fluid, and elusive while politics needs a space, regulated or not, of conflict. The European left has pursued for at least 30 years a line and action without conflict and without possible alternatives. The conflict has been stigmatized as a monster to be expelled without understanding that it is an impregnable and invincible divinity; either it is controlled or it is addressed to more fervent faithful. Out of the class conflict anesthetized by decades of absence of prospects for change, the Beemotic conflict has found a host of fanatics of the national community and social selfishness. It may arouse a certain tenderness to note how the leaders of what was in the previous decades a mass party that knew how to carry out complex structural analyses, stammer before the repeated failures of their policies, betrayed by the polytheism of crazed markets; out of affection, however, remains the historical fact of a social bloc that is merging around violent slogans with the approval of a people who, in order to find revenge, have leaned on their backs to their fate as plebs. A mob to whom the extreme right allows to vent their instincts against the last as long as no one disturbs the operator. The 'sovereignists' and the new neofascists will not make any revolution, they have no totalitarian programme, they keep the plebs good while Europe fails its goal of integration and the dreams of a left without class and without conflict are extinguished in the polls and in the inability to restore boundaries to the enemy to be transformed into an adversary. This has been the long road of the democratic

left; along this path, it is useless to deny it, she got lost and found herself alone. The incontrovertible fact is that Leviathan as we knew it, with its scope of state borders and norms, is dying; if we don't hurry to create another, we should succumb to Beemot.

Finally, wanting to schematize, we could say that neofascism was, and remains, a transnational political operation that aimed at building a broad block of consensus in particular on the political area of extreme moderation. During the years of the Cold War, some areas of that galaxy suffered the coup and violent charm while with the innovations of the Nouvelle Droite cultural hegemony took over pure militantism. What remains interesting is the persistence of the ideological pillars on which neofascism has built militancy, including armed militancy, during the first half of its political history, from 1946 to 1980, to then devote itself to the construction of a broad cultural proposal that would shift the moderate right. These two operations have always been based, and still rest, on a transnational, totalitarian, and racist idea. These elements of the political culture of neofascism survive, develop, and inform the struggle of this area against liberal democracy considered unnatural and, ultimately, doomed to failure. The binomial state–nation, the central problem of modernity, still remains central in the reflection of the neofascist galaxy, and within this binomial, the aporia of the contradictions of fascist and neofascist thought plays out: anti-modernism and traditionalism for the management of the will of the peoples, mystical body of nations, and extreme elitism that goes well with forms of contemporary ultraliberalism in the management of the state machine.

## Notes

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- 2 H. Minsky, *Ending Poverty: Jobs, Not Welfare*, New York: Levy Economic Institute, 2013.

# Index

- Accame, Giano 67–68  
Afghanistan 74, 83  
Africa 13, 14–15, 17, 31, 34, 37, 41, 45n22, 70, 87  
Aginter Press 34, 67, 70, 91  
Albadalejo Corredera, Francisco 86  
Albertini, D. 89  
Al-Fatah 41  
Algeria 14, 16, 17–18, 38, 66–67, 71  
al-Husseini, Amin 41  
*Alleanza Cattolica Tradizionalista* 3, 50, 88  
Almeyda, Cristina 86  
Almirante, Giorgio 77, 83  
Altar of the Motherland (Altare della Patria) 69  
Americanism 1, 28, 47, 96, 105  
Americanism and Fordism (Gramsci) 1, 28, 47, 96  
*Amis du Grand Reich allemand* (friends of German-wide Reich) 30  
Ancien Régimes 96  
Angola 37, 57, 67–68, 91  
Anschluss 39  
anti-Americanism 5, 17, 37, 87  
anti-bourgeois 36, 68, 101  
anti-capitalism 34, 47, 54–58, 74, 88, 89, 93  
anti-colonial 30, 35  
anti-communism 2–3, 6, 13, 15–20, 30, 31, 37, 38, 47, 50, 57–58, 64–65, 69, 70–74, 76–77, 85, 97, 99–100  
anti-democratic 21, 47, 51–52, 54, 68, 87, 92  
anti-egalitarian 87  
anti-globalization 74  
anti-historical 93  
anti-imperialist 87  
anti-industrialist 101  
anti-legitimist 104  
anti-liberalism 89  
anti-materialist 79  
anti-modernism 4, 75, 79, 101, 107  
anti-Semitism 12, 20, 27, 35, 37, 38–41, 71, 74, 83, 98  
anti-state 84  
anti-traditionalism 4  
anti-Zionism 41, 83  
Arendt, Hannah 27  
Argentina 2, 12, 16, 65, 72, 78, 97  
Armed Revolutionary Nuclei 76  
Aryan-Germanic race 101  
Atocha massacre 85–86  
Austria 8, 39  
Avanguardia Nazionale 33, 36, 72  
Barbie, Klaus 73, 91  
Bardèche, Maurice 12–13  
Bar-On, Tamir 75, 91  
Beatles 33  
Behemoth 102, 107  
Belgian National Front 90  
Belgian New Forces Party 90  
Belgium 21, 37, 47, 90  
Beltrametti, Edgardo 18  
Benavides, Luis Javier 85  
Berger, Gottlob 16  
Berlinguer, Enrico 75  
Berlusconi, Silvio 3  
Bilderberg Group 40, 56  
black people 27, 29, 32, 34–37  
Bloch, Marc 78  
Bodin, Jean 96  
Bolivia 73, 91  
Bologna massacre 91  
Bologna Railway Station attack 75  
Borghese, Junio Valerio 2, 9, 10, 17, 65, 69, 72, 77

- Bornschier, S. 90  
 Bousquet, Pierre 90  
 Bradeche, Maurice 13, 23–24n22, 49, 52  
 Brassilach, Robert 12  
 Brazil 87  
 Bresci, Gaetano 96  
 Bretton Woods agreements 5  
 British National Party (BNP) 87, 90  
 Brunner, Alois 41  
 Brustein, William I. 39  
 Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND) 65
- Caetano, Marcelo 69, 71  
 Canada 29  
 capitalism 10, 11, 20, 21, 29, 32, 34, 40, 47, 54–58, 74, 82, 84, 88, 92, 93  
 Carmassi, Piero 86  
 CasaPound 83  
 Castel, Manuel 28  
 Castel, Robert 82, 94, 96, 105  
 Catholic Church 3, 30, 97  
 Catholicism 3, 11, 34, 39, 52, 101  
 Celtic cross 100  
 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) 67, 73, 91  
 Centre Study on Organic Economy 56  
 Charlemagne Division 90  
 Charles the Great 31  
 Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor and Archduke of Austria 31  
 Chartier, Roger 27  
 Chiarini, R. 91  
 Chile 72, 73, 87  
 Christianity 16, 19  
 Cicuttini, Carlo 86  
 citizenship 28, 35, 48, 50, 53, 58–59n5, 82, 93, 94, 96, 102, 103, 105  
 Codreanu, Corneliu Zelea 43n9  
 Cold War 2–3, 4, 8, 9–11, 15–16, 20, 30, 32–33, 38, 39, 52, 65, 68–69, 97, 100, 101, 107  
 Collotti, Enzo 78  
 communism 1, 2–3, 5, 6, 8–10, 12, 13, 15–20, 30, 32–38, 40, 41, 47–51, 52, 54, 55–58, 65, 67–69, 70, 75, 79, 82, 84, 90, 91, 93–94, 96, 99–100, 101, 105  
 communitarianism 6, 41, 83, 84, 86, 91, 92  
 Concutelli, Pierluigi 67, 91  
 Condor 78  
 Congo 15  
 containment 48, 59n7  
 Corti, Carlos Alberto 78  
 Coudroy, Roger 41  
 Crossman, Richard 28  
 Curcio, Renato 34  
 Cuzzi, Marco 4, 79  
 Cypresse organization 9  
 Czechoslovakia 34
- Darlan, François 39  
 De Benoist, Alain 17, 24–25n38, 31, 74, 75, 79, 100  
 De Boccard, Enrico 18  
 decolonization 14, 15, 16, 29, 30–31, 33, 37, 65  
 De Felice, Renzo 4, 63  
*Défense de l'Occident* (journal magazine) 12, 23–24n22, 40, 55, 58n1, 59n7, 60n12  
 de Gaulle, Charles 17, 66  
 Degrelle, Leon 41  
 De la Plaza, Guglielmo 78  
 De la Vega, Cesar 78  
 Delle Chiaie, Stefano 18, 19, 72, 73, 77, 78, 80–81–n22, 91  
 De Marsanich, Augusto 13  
 democracy 2, 6, 8, 19, 21, 37, 46–58, 60n18, 63, 64, 70, 74–77, 79, 83, 89, 91–92, 94, 99, 102, 105, 106, 107  
 de-Nazification 39, 47, 64  
*Der ewige Jude* [*The Eternal Jew*] (film) 71  
 D'Escos, Alain Geoffrey 13  
 de Tejada, Lerdo 86  
 Deutsche Reichspartei 12  
*Diario* (newspaper) 85  
 Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional [Chilean secret service] (DINA) 72, 73  
 Doctrinal Centre Luis Antonio (Spanish Falangist group) 15  
 Dondi, Mirko 76  
 Doucet, D. 89
- Eco, Umberto 27, 79  
 Egypt 71, 97  
 Eichmann, Adolf 39  
 Emilio Massera, Eduardo 78  
 Enghdal, Per 12  
 England 84, 89  
 English Revolution 96, 103  
 environmentalism 101  
 equality 6, 21, 28–29, 36, 41, 49–51, 54, 74, 98–99, 106  
 ethnic citizenship 48, 58–59n5  
 ethnic social policies 28–32  
 ethnocentrism 98, 102, 105–106

- Europe 13–14, 20–21, 25nn42, 30–32, 37, 39, 45n22, 57, 104
- European Social Movement (MSE) 12–13, 14
- Evans, G. 90
- Evola, Julius 36–37, 74
- Falangist movement 35–36, 37
- Falkland Islands 90
- fascism 1–6, 8–12, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 37, 39, 40, 41, 46–48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 63–65, 68, 70, 75, 76, 78–79, 86, 87, 88, 89, 96–102, 104, 105
- Fascismi 78
- Fédération d'action nationale et européenne (FANE) 40, 76
- Fernandez Cerrá y Fernando, José 86
- FIAT 75
- Field, G. 90
- Filippini Ronconi, Pio 18, 19
- Finaldi, Gianfranco 18
- Finkelstein, Federico 4
- Fini, Gianfranco 86–87
- Fiore, Robert 90
- Focardi, F. 64
- Fontaine, Pierre 52
- France 2, 12, 14–15, 21, 29, 37, 39–40, 47, 52, 64, 65–67, 69, 72, 73, 79, 84, 87, 89, 90–91
- Franco, Francisco 57, 67, 68, 72, 101
- Francoism 51, 69, 72
- Francoist regime 17, 19, 67, 70, 71
- Freemasonry 91
- French Resistance Movement 13
- French Revolution 28, 36, 41, 48
- Friedman, Milton 73
- 'Friends of Europe' (Mosley organization) 16
- Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) 66
- Front National 20, 47, 53, 89
- Fuerza Nueva (New Force) 51, 85–87
- Gable, Gerry 76
- García Juliá, Carlos 86
- García Meza Tejada, Luiz 73
- García Rodrigues, Luis Antonio 86
- Gehlen, Reinhard 65
- Gelli, Licio 72, 77–78, 80n21
- Gentile, Emilio 5, 10, 78
- German Christian Democratic Party 71
- Germany 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 21, 39, 47, 63–64, 65, 69, 70, 72, 84, 99, 100, 101
- Giannettini, Guido 18
- globalization 4, 6, 55, 57, 74, 82, 83, 85, 88, 92, 93, 94, 97, 98, 103
- Goldberg, Arthur 44n17
- González Ruíz, Maria Dolores 85
- Gorbachev, Michayl 84
- Gramsci, Antonio 1, 8, 27, 28, 47, 74, 96
- Greece 46, 51, 68–69, 72, 73
- Green Shirts 34
- Griffin, Nick 90
- Griffin, Roger 1, 4, 79
- Guérin-Sérac, Yves 34, 51, 67, 68, 80n9
- Guerrilleros de Christo Rey* 3, 51, 88
- Guillou, Yves 67
- Heidegger, Martin 74, 101
- Hezbollah 83
- Hill, Raymond 76, 81n25
- Hitler, Adolf 2, 11, 30, 99
- Hobbes, Thomas 101, 102
- Holocaust 39, 101
- Hungary 9
- identity music 100
- Ignazi, Piero 91
- inequality 28, 36, 84, 99
- Ingram M-10 86
- Initiative Nationale 90
- Internationalism 22n15
- International Monetary Fund 73
- Iran 71
- Iraq 33, 97
- Israel 41
- Israeli army 37, 41
- Israeli right-wing parties 83
- Italian Army Intelligence (SIFAR) 13
- Italian Carabinieri 18
- Italian Communist Party 9, 18, 34–35
- Italian Nazis 86
- Italian Social Movement (MSI) 9, 13, 15, 39, 47, 51, 64, 68, 77, 85–87, 91, 94, 97
- Italian Social Republic 78
- Italy 2, 3, 8–9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 21, 24n34, 29, 33–35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 47, 51–52, 56, 63–64, 65, 68–69, 71, 72, 75–77, 78, 80–81n22, 83, 84, 86, 87, 88, 89, 92, 94, 97, 99, 100, 101
- James, Harald 5
- Japan 9
- Je suis partout* (newspaper) 12
- Jeune Europe (JE) 14–15, 20, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 53, 54, 100

- Jews 19, 26, 27, 29, 32, 39–41, 42n2, 54, 56, 71, 84, 98, 101  
 John XXIII, Pope 30, 33, 34
- Kampfbund Deutscher Soldaten 70  
 Kant, Immanuel 54  
 Kennedy, J.F. 33  
 King, Martin Luther, Jr. 33  
 Klinkhammer, L. 64  
 Kohl, Erwin 71  
 Korea 65  
 Kriesi, H. 90
- Labour Party (UK) 40  
 Lacheroy, Charles 17–18, 37–38, 65–66  
*La Nation Européenne* (journal) 57  
 Lastiri, Raul Alberto 78  
 Laval, Pierre 39  
 League of Saint George 72, 76, 99  
 Lebanon 71  
 Le Découverte (journal/magazine) 19, 33, 51, 52, 55, 56  
 Leighton, Bernardo 73  
 Le Pen, Marie Jean 13, 31, 83, 87, 89, 106  
 Le Pen, Marine 91  
*L'Europe Réelle* [Real Europe] (Belgian publication) 29, 52  
 Leviathan 102–103, 104, 107  
 liberal individualism 56  
 liberalism 13, 15  
 liberation movements 31  
 Longue, Gérard 89  
 López Rega, José 78
- Macklin, Graham 13  
 Maggi, Carlo Maria 24  
 Magi Braschi, Adriano 18  
 Mammone, Andrea 4, 91  
 Maoism 34  
 Maoist groups 34  
 Mao Zedong 18, 38  
 Marxism 11, 48, 54, 56  
 Massa, Professor 13  
 Maurras, Maurice 12  
 Mayer, Arno 48, 96  
 Mayer, Nonna 90  
 mentalité 27, 29  
 Merlino, Mario 18, 68  
 Mexico 87  
 micro-nationalism 92  
 Middle East 3, 41, 90  
 Military Institute Pollio 18  
 military Keynesianism 96
- Minsky, H. 96  
 modernity 1, 4–6, 8, 28, 34, 43n9, 47–48, 83, 96, 101–103, 105, 107  
 Mosley, Oswald 11–12, 15, 16, 22n15, 28, 29, 35, 37, 39–40, 42n2, 42n3, 43n6, 45n22, 52, 53, 56, 61–62n24, 61n21, 64, 68, 76, 83, 98  
 Mosse, G.L. 4, 27, 39, 40, 101  
 Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola 37  
 Mozambique 57  
 Mussolini, Benito 2, 9, 10, 11, 101  
 Mutter, André 13
- Napoleon I, Emperor of the French 31  
 National Avant-Garde (AN) 16, 17, 30, 34, 91  
 national-Bolshevism 100  
 national-Bolshevism group 30  
 National Centre for the Independent and Peasants 13  
 National Democratic Party of Germany 13  
 National Fascist Party 77  
 National Front 83, 84, 85, 87  
 nationalism 4, 6, 8, 10–11, 15, 19, 22n15, 26, 30–31, 48, 50, 57, 79, 84, 89, 91–93, 102, 105–106  
 National Party of Europe 15  
 Nation Europa 16  
 nativism 88, 91  
 natural law 35, 36, 41, 50, 55, 63  
 Naumann, Werner 12  
 Navarro, Joaquin 85  
 Nazi criminals 3, 10, 39, 41, 88, 91  
 Nazi-fascist groups 97, 101  
 Nazi occupation 73  
 Nazi regime 5, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 26, 39, 48, 63–64, 66, 78, 83, 99, 101  
 Nazism 63, 65, 102  
 Nazi sympathizers 14  
 neofascism: development 2–4, 9–16, 97; ideology 2, 4–6, 19–21, 35, 97–100, 107; political discourse 46–58, 83, 85–94, 102, 104; racism 26–32, 37–41, 74; violence 63–79, 107  
 neoliberalism 74, 82, 83, 89, 106  
 neo-nationalism 97  
 neo-Nazi groups 28–29, 40, 47, 52, 57, 70, 73, 76, 79, 99  
 neo-Stoicism 99  
 Neumann, Franz 101, 102  
 Nietzsche, Friedrich 19, 27

- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) 16, 17–18, 20, 35, 65, 68, 69  
 Northern League 62n28, 84, 92  
 Nouvelle Droite 73, 74–75, 78, 79, 83, 87, 88, 91, 98, 100  
 Nulli Augusti, Alceste 18  
*Nuremberg ou la terre promise* (Bardèche) 12  
 Nuremberg trials 8, 39
- Occorsio, Vittorio 67, 91  
 Office of Strategic Services (OSS) 10, 57, 65  
 Oktoberfest 69  
 Ordine Nuovo Jovem Europa (Portuguese branch of JE) 15  
 Ordine Nuovo [New Order] (ON) 15, 16–17, 19, 24n34, 30, 33, 34, 37, 38, 43n9, 51, 52, 53, 67, 68, 86, 91  
 Ordre Nouveau 28  
 organic economy 56, 93  
 Organisation de l'Armée Secrete (OAS) 14–15, 16, 17, 20, 30, 31, 33, 34, 38, 66–67, 69–70, 71
- P2 72, 76, 77, 78, 80n21  
 paganism 101  
 Paladin 70–71  
 Palestinian resistance movement 33, 37, 90  
 pan-European nationalism 30, 57  
 Parti des forces Nouvelles 85  
 Parti Républicain de la Liberté (PRL) 13  
 Pavelic, Ante 2  
 Paxton, Robert 79  
 Payne, S.G. 4, 79  
 PCd'IM-L (Italian Communist Party Marxist-Leninist) 34  
 People's Republic of China 100  
 Peron, Juan 12, 65, 72, 78, 97  
 Peruzzi, Walter 34  
 Pétain, Philippe 39  
 Peter II, King of Yugoslavia 77  
 Piazza Fontana massacre 68, 69, 71  
 Pignatelli, Maria Victoria, Princess 9, 13  
 Pignatelli, Valerio, Prince 9  
 Piñar, Blas 86  
 Pinochet, Augusto 72, 73  
 Pinochet regime 73  
 plebiscitarianism 98  
 Ploncard D'Assac, Jean 19  
 plot theories 40–41  
 political secret police (PIDE) 51, 67  
 Pomar, Eliodoro 85
- Portugal 2, 3, 8, 17, 19–20, 21, 24n34, 33, 34, 37, 39, 46, 47, 51, 57–58, 63, 67, 68, 70, 71, 73, 77, 91, 97, 101  
 Poujade, Pierre 50, 60n12  
 Poujadism 13, 31, 56, 60n16, 89  
 Poujad party 13, 31  
 Pour Force Nouvelle 90  
*Present* (newspaper) 20  
 Priester, Karl-Heinz 13  
 Princip, Gavrilo 96  
*Prisons Notebooks* (Gramsci) 8  
 pro-Nazi groups 3  
 propaganda 2–3, 11, 12, 28, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 44, 49, 50, 54, 71, 98, 101  
 Protocols of the wise men of Zion 35, 42n1, 44–45n21
- Qaddafi, Muammar 87
- racism 1, 2, 6, 26–38, 74, 83–84, 87–88, 91, 98, 103, 105, 106  
 Ragno, Gino 19  
 Ramos Pardo, Luis 85  
 Rauti, Pino 17, 18–19, 24n34, 33, 34, 37, 38, 56, 68, 77  
 Reagan, Ronald 74, 82  
 Red Army 8, 65  
 Red Brigades 34  
 Remer, Hans Ulrich 12  
 Repubblica Sociale Italiana (RSI) 58  
 Research and Study Group for European Civilization (GRECE) 75  
 revolutionary warfare 16, 17–18, 38, 41, 47, 48, 65–67, 68  
 Roberts, D. I  
 Rodríguez Leál, Ángel 85  
 Roman Empire 31  
 Romania 20, 100  
 Roncolini, Osvaldo 18  
 Rousseau, Jean-Jacques 19  
 Royuela, Alberto 86  
 RSI-XMAS 9  
 Rudel, Hans Ulrich 16  
 Ruiz, Arturo 85  
 Ruíz Huertas, Alejandro 85  
 Rydgren, J. 90
- Salan, Raoul 67  
 Salazar, António de Oliveira 19–20, 24n34, 57, 67, 68, 69, 70, 101  
 Salazarism 60n16  
 Salvini, Matteo 106  
 Sánchez Covisa, Mariano 86

- Sánchez Soler, Mariano 86  
 Sarabia, Miguel 85  
 Sauquillo; Francisco Javier 85  
 Schmitt, Carl 100  
 Scorza, Carlo 9  
 Second World War 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 18,  
 20, 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, 47, 49, 51, 63, 66,  
 77, 78, 97, 98, 102  
 Shoah 26  
 Sicily 15  
 Siri, Giuseppe, Archbishop of Genoa 30  
 Skinhead movement 85, 100  
 Skorzeny, Otto 2, 9, 17, 41, 57, 62n27, 65,  
 69, 70, 72, 86  
 social Darwinism 29, 83  
 Soldier of Algeria (S.O.A.) 71–72  
 South Africa 29, 43n6, 71, 76  
 South America 3, 71, 73, 76, 91  
 South Asia 17  
 Soviet Union 11, 83  
 Spain 2, 3, 8, 19, 21, 34, 35–36, 39, 46, 47,  
 51, 57, 63, 67–73, 77, 85–86, 87, 97  
 Spanish Civil War 12  
 Stalin, Joseph 49, 99  
 Stay Behind 65  
 Sternhell, Zeev 4, 11, 79, 101  
 Strasser, Otto 15  
 Strauß, Franz Josef 71  
 Suárez Mason, Guillermo 78  
 suprematism 57, 76  
 Sweden 37  
 Switzerland 29  
 Syria 33, 97
- Taguieff, Pierre-André 39  
 Tasca, Angelo 11  
 Taubert, Eberhardt 71  
 Tedeschi, Mario 77  
 terrorism 9, 15, 18, 38, 49, 66–69, 71–72,  
 75–77, 80–81n22, 80n9, 85–86, 91, 94,  
 99, 101  
 Terza Posizione Internazionale  
 (International Third Position) 90  
 Thatcher, Margaret 74, 82  
 ‘The Extension of Patriotism’ (Mosley) 11  
 Third Position 91, 100  
 Third Reich 71, 78  
 Thiriart, Jean 14–15, 19, 20, 30
- Togliatti, Palmiro 9  
 Torresano, Alberto 35–36  
 Townley, Michael 72, 80–81-n22  
 Trade Unions 54  
*Traditional Catholic Alliance* 3,  
 18, 30  
 traditionalism 17, 30–31, 34, 41, 48, 57,  
 101, 107  
 transnationalism 2, 3–6, 9–10, 12, 16, 19,  
 21, 30, 32, 34, 40, 41, 51, 52, 54–58, 64,  
 68, 72, 76, 77, 78, 85, 87, 89, 96–100,  
 104, 106–107  
 Triple A 85  
 Trotsky, Leon 38  
 Trump, Donald 87
- ultra-Catholicism 30, 43n9  
 ultra-conservatism 76, 77, 101  
 ultra-nationalism 1, 22n15, 49, 75, 79  
 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
 (USSR), 12, 14, 20, 32–33, 39, 40, 65,  
 74, 79, 87, 89  
 United Kingdom (UK) 2, 21, 35, 47, 52,  
 64, 72, 84, 87, 90  
 United States of America (USA) 12, 14,  
 16, 18, 20, 32, 33, 35, 38, 56–57, 64, 65,  
 68, 73–74, 76, 77, 87, 89, 90, 104  
*Uomo Qualunque* (Everyman) 13, 31,  
 50, 56  
 Ustaše 86
- Valdevira Serafin Holgado, Enrique 85  
 Verona Manifesto 58  
 veteranism 5  
 Vichy regime 39, 64  
 Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy 9  
 Vietnam 33, 37, 65–66  
 Vignes, Alberto 78  
 violence 6, 8, 20, 47, 48–49, 63, 65, 68,  
 71, 73–78, 85–86, 91, 105, 106  
 Von Leers, Johan 41
- Weber, Max 96  
 World Bank 73
- Yugoslavia 9, 78
- Zhou Enlai 20