Stanley G. Payne

A History of Fascism, 1914–1945

The University of Wisconsin Press
This book is dedicated to
Juan J. Linz and George L. Mosse,
pathbreakers in fascist studies.
The doctrinaires who came to command the greatest cultural attention were the writers and thinkers of the nouvelle droite (new right) of the 1970s and 1980s. They were formed around a study center known as GRECE (Groupe de Recherche et d’Etudes pour une Civilisation Européenne, Group of Research and Studies for a European Civilization), and their leading figure, Alain de Benoist, won a prize from the Académie Française for a book of essays. Generally denounced, they nonetheless exerted a certain fascination within the French intelligentsia for their bold contradiction of contemporary norms.

The nouvelle droite is extremely elitist, hierarchical, and antigalitarian but rejects the mysticism and idealism of an Evola, affirming the importance of science in modern life and relying heavily on the new sociobiology. Unlike the classic right, the new right maintains a religious position that is exclusively pagan, opposing equally Marxism and “Judaic-Christianness.” It attempts to create a political and philosophical program on the basis of a certain kind of human anthropology, which gives it an intellectual and rigor normally lacking in vitalist neofascism.

The first popular antisysem movement of the right in postwar France was the group led by Pierre Poujade in the early 1950s. Poujade, however, was a right-wing populist who failed to develop a consistent political organization. More important in later years was Jean-Marie Le Pen, whose Front National became an electoral force in the 1980s. The Front National is a rightist-nationalist movement opposed to immigration, foreign minorities, crime, disorder, and modern egalitarianism, which is held to contradict the natural organic hierarchy of human life. Thus it stands for an organic and more hierarchical national community. In five different elections between 1984 and 1989 (two for the French parliament, two for the European parliament, and one for the presidency), candidates of the Front National won from 10 to 15 percent of the national vote, though its parliamentary representation has varied drastically, going down from thirty-two to one after the elections of 1987. In 1993 it gained 12.5 percent of the popular vote but no assembly seat.

Neofascism is of very scant importance in the smaller democracies of northern Europe. Proportionately the largest number of small right radical and neofascist groups appears to have been formed in Belgium (reflecting the Flemish-Walloon ethnic tension, at least to some extent). They have scored a few minor local electoral successes.

into any kind of more moderate mass political organization that could compete for votes.\textsuperscript{37} As hard as it may be for the left to accept the fact, neofascism is even weaker in the United States than in Western Europe.

Nor has Latin America—home to recurring cycles of authoritarianism, revolutionism, and terrorism—done much better in re-creating classic fascism. The new wave of rightist dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s excited considerable speculation among commentators about a new “Latin American fascism,” yet aside from Communist Cuba all these regimes were right-wing military systems without any elaborate ideology and without any mobilized political basis. Their economic and security policies were more sophisticated than those of traditional military regimes, yet they were much more adequately described by the new appellation of military “bureaucratic authoritarianism”\textsuperscript{38} than by “fascism.”\textsuperscript{39} A good many new fascist and right radical circles have been organized here in the past two generations, as in most other parts of the world, yet, as usual, their number has been inversely proportional to their significance. The only right radical movement to survive from the end of the fascist era through the subsequent period has been the right radical Falange Socialista Boliviana, a minor force in Bolivian affairs. Though the Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario did come to power by revolution in Bolivia in 1952, by that time it had lost most of its early fascist coloration and characteristics.

In developed countries outside Europe, the search for the equivalents of fascism has often turned toward Japan and South Africa. In chapter 10 we saw that interwar Japan failed to develop any direct political equivalent of European fascism; even though the semipluralist Japanese system of the 1930s did achieve a partial functional equivalent of it in practice. Since 1945 Japan has been largely demilitarized and has drastically realigned its priorities. The country nonetheless harbors many small fringe religious and political groups, including a few that are neo-fascist and many more that are right radical nationalist. By the mid-1980s at least fifty radical nationalist associations with some 120,000 members were identified.\textsuperscript{40} One of the most influential right radicals was the multimillionaire gambling czar Ryoichi Sasakawa, a major financier of Lyndon LaRouche's National Caucus of Labor Committees, which has placed a very few members in minor local offices. Yet the NCLC has only some, not most, of the characteristics of a fascist movement. See D. King, Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism (New York, 1989).

37. Conceivably the organization that has come the closest—and that’s not saying much—is Lyndon LaRouche’s National Caucus of Labor Committees, which has placed a very few members in minor local offices. Yet the NCLC has only some, not most, of the characteristics of a fascist movement. See D. King, Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism (New York, 1989).