
Abstract:
The title of this paper is “Alain de Benoist: Neo-fascism with a human face?”. This title is purposefully provocative because it is my claim that the leader and “transnational messenger” of the French nouvelle droite (ND – New Right) seeks to create a neo-fascism that is suitable for anti-fascist and anti-imperialist times. That is, in contrast to neo-fascist political parties and extra-parliamentary violence, de Benoist and the ND chose the third path towards neo-fascism, which I call cultural or intellectual neo-fascism. I begin by explaining the meaning of the title of this paper. I then trace de Benoist’s intellectual evolution and impact since the 1960s. Using various definitions of fascism, I underscore why de Benoist is a neo-fascist. I conclude by exploring why it is difficult to fight a metapolitical movement such as the ND.

Key words: Alain de Benoist; nouvelle droite; neo-fascism; fascist revisionism; reactionary movements.

Introduction
Where Have All The Fascists Gone?,¹ argues that post-war neo-fascists had three options after the defeat of Fascism and Nazism in 1945: 1) neo-fascist political parties; 2) extra-parliamentary terrorism; and 3) cultural or intellectual neo-fascism. While extra-parliamentary terrorism became discredited after the war due to the experiences of the Nazi brownshirts and Fascist blackshirts and sectors of the French revolutionary right had a disdain for political parties, the French nouvelle droite (ND – New Right) led by Alain de Benoist chose the strategy of cultural neo-fascism. Yet, the ND would eventually influence the discourse changes (e.g., the “right to cultural difference”, or cultural ethnopluralism)² and policies (e.g., on immigration, multiculturalism, regionalism, or support for direct

² On the ND’s cultural ethnopluralism, see Martin Lee, The Beast Reawakens (Toronto: Little, Brown, 1997). Also, Guiberneau notes that the term ethnopluralism “has been coined by the new right to advocate respect for cultural and ethnic differences while maintaining that the best strategy to protect them is to avoid their mixing with each other.” See Montserrat Guiberneau, The Identity of Nations (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2007), p. 156.
democracy) of extreme right-wing and neo-fascist political parties such as the French Front National, as well as the Italian Lega Nord (Northern League) and Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI – Italian Social Movement) and its successor Alleanza Nazionale (National Alliance – AN). Mammone argues that this metapolitical or cultural approach, which in effect seeks to win hearts and minds and influence political parties of all ideological stripes, helped the revolutionary right to leave the “ideological ghetto it has inhabited since 1945”; promoted a regeneration of postwar neo-fascism; influenced the discourses and policies of part of the mainstream; and impacted the entire revolutionary right after World War Two.

The title of this paper is “Alain de Benoist: Neo-fascism with a human face?”. This title is purposefully provocative because it is my claim that the leader and “transnational messenger” of the ND seeks to create a neo-fascism that is suitable for anti-fascist and anti-imperialist times. That is, in contrast to neo-fascist political parties and extra-parliamentary violence, de Benoist and the ND chose the third path towards neo-fascism, which I called cultural or intellectual neo-fascism. I begin by explaining the meaning of the title of this paper. I then trace de Benoist’s intellectual evolution and impact since the 1960s. Using various definitions of fascism, I underscore why de Benoist is a neo-fascist. I conclude by exploring why it is difficult to fight a metapolitical movement such as the ND.

Why should we care about the ND? Lindholm and Zúquete point out that right-wing, left-wing, and “no-wing” anti-globalization movements around the world all seek to defend their distinctive identities against the weight of modernity’s homogenizing processes. Although they come from different political camps, these movements nonetheless share many key characteristics, goals, and attitudes, including a common tendency toward charismatic leadership, good versus evil worldviews, the quest for authentic identity, concern with ritual, and demands for total commitment. One such movement included by the authors as a “liberation movement” is the French ND, a position I challenge in this paper.

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6 The notion of “anti-imperialist epoch” is borrowed from Zbigniew Brzezinski, Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower (New York: Basic Books, 2007).

Gill argues that both force and consensus engendered by intellectuals such as de Benoist help constitute or challenge the global, neo-liberal capitalist order. For Gill, the contemporary hegemonic international order is challenged by “counter-hegemonic forces” associated with “rival groupings of states, some that seek regional autonomy from neoliberalism under state-driven, left-wing models based on social needs” (e.g., former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez’s regional plans for Latin America or the China-based Shanghai Cooperation Organization), as well as “progressive forces” (e.g., the World Social Forum, Occupy Wall Street, or the Indignados) and “reactionary forces” (e.g., the ND, extreme right-wing and neo-fascist political parties, or radical Islamist movements). Both “progressive forces” and “reactionary forces” struggle to overturn the existing capitalist order, but they imagine worlds with very differing political mythologies and institutions.

Thus, the future of Europe is up for grabs and what intellectuals such as de Benoist utter or write is part of the power struggle of the 21st century. It is important to remember that de Benoist pioneered a “right-wing Gramscianism,” which seeks to win the hearts and minds of Europeans, the mass media, government officials, and political parties of all ideological stripes. While his heyday was in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the full weight of his ideas are being felt today in the growing skepticism towards mainstream parties and elites; a more right-wing political climate; and increasing attacks on the EU, multiculturalism, open immigration, immigrants, and civic (as opposed to ethnic) variants of nationalism. Ethnic nationalism stresses the predominance of tribal solidarity, an emotional and mystical connection to an idealized past, and national development. In contrast, civic nationalism focuses on liberal universalism, rationality, individual rights and self-transcendence, and a community of numerous sovereign states living in harmony. This type of nationalism is, in theory, more cosmopolitan and colourless than ethnic nationalism and based on shared republican values.

De Benoist historically supported ethnic nationalism, but now calls for a pan-European empire of the regions, which promotes a homogeneous conception of politics and privileges “native” Europeans above non-Europeans. In short, de Benoist argues that

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Europe must strive to overcome its “existential uncertainty” based on both “strategic” and “identity” considerations in order to mould a “Europe for Europeans” in all its manifestations. For de Benoist and the ND, a “Europe for Europeans” connotes the following:

1. A Europe that is united and sovereign politically and militarily and does not obey the dictates of any external power(s);
2. A Europe that is united to fight the perceived decadence of liberal universalism and capitalism;
3. A Europe that has a “long memory” for the hierarchical, pagan, Indo-European past as opposed to the “imposition” of “foreign,” egalitarian influences such as the Judaeo-Christian tradition and its secular derivatives liberalism and socialism (under the influence of French historian Georges Dumézil, de Benoist pointed to his preference for the “tripartite ideology of the Indo-Europeans” in which the first function corresponds to political, juridical, and religious sovereignty; the second to the warrior function; and the third to the economic function. Liberal societies inverted the organic, hierarchical order of the past by privileging the order Dumézil considered the most basic, namely, the economic function and thus denigrating the military and political functions);
4. A Europe that rejects official multiculturalism and immigration, while seeking to create hundreds of homogeneous ethnic communities privileging ‘natives’ above ‘non-Europeans’ in citizenship, jobs, and government services;
5. A Europe no longer wedded to the “divisiveness” of the right–left division (conceptual tool one), but instead a Europe united by its civilizational challenge to advance the interests of “Europeans first”;
6. A united Europe in the foreign policy domain that is able to overcome its current cultural fatigue and ‘decadence’, as well as create heroic rebels (elites), which will recreate a Europe that is true to its peoples and its roots as one of the great geopolitical players of history; and
7. A Europe that is united yet rejects the liberal, capitalist, and technocratic model of the EU as it is currently constituted. In short, Europe’s “natural vocation” must be the creation of an “original culture and civilization” that challenges Anglo-American

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mercantilism; a Europe that plays an “independent” geopolitical role on the continent in a “multipolar world”; and a Europe at the forefront of “regulating globalization”.

Moreover, against the civic nationalist posture, de Benoist seeks to create homogeneous regions cleansed of immigrants in which “original” and “titular” groups would receive special privileges in citizenship, welfare benefits, or government jobs. The FN has called this position préférence nationale (national preference). This position was first promoted in 1985 as an antidote to unfettered immigration and is attributed to Jean-Yves Le Gallou, a former FN politician and founding member of ND think-tank GRECE. It amounts to creating what scholars call ethnocracies, in which certain ethnic groups are able to exert political, legal, economic, and cultural dominance over their respective societies. For Yiftachel, an ethnocracy is a political regime that facilitates expansion and control by a dominant ethnicity. It is neither democratic nor authoritarian, with rights and capabilities depending primarily on ethnic origin.

The uses of “Fascism with a human face”

The term “Fascism with a human face” is not new. In 1982, the American cultural critic Susan Sontag told a pro-Solidarity (Poland) audience that people like herself on the left have often told lies about Communism because they supported it, but that it was time to see Communism as a type of Fascism:

Communism is Fascism—successful Fascism, if you will. What we have called Fascism is, rather, the form of tyranny that can be overthrown—that has, largely, failed. I repeat: not only is Fascism (and overt military rule) the probable destiny of all Communist societies—especially when their populations are moved to revolt—but Communism is in itself a variant, the most successful variant, of Fascism. ‘Fascism with a human face.’

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Sontag was booed by her audience in New York. While I disagree with Sontag’s characterization of Communism as a variant of Fascism because it is a distinctive political ideology, I admire her courage. Moreover, one major scholar of Fascism, A.J. Gregor, has since supported Sontag’s claim that Communist regimes were Fascist.17 Moreover, Sontag is obviously playing on the phrase “Socialism with a human face.” The phrase was a part of a political programme announced by Alexander Dubček of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in April 1968. “Socialism with a human face” was a reaction to the worldwide May 1968 events, but also a criticism of dogmatic Soviet Communism associated with the lack of political debate and the extreme violence of the gulags. The aim of “Socialism with a human face” was to engender moderate democratization and political liberalization, but still allow the Communist Party to maintain de facto power. The Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 20-21, 1968 ended the hopes of “Socialism with a human face” and demonstrated the sheer brutality of the Soviet Union. 500,000 Warsaw Pact troops violated Czechoslovakia’s sovereignty, over 100 Czechoslovaks were killed, and another 500 were injured. The 1968 Brezhnev Doctrine disingenuously maintained that the protection of worldwide socialism was more important than the defense of Czechoslovakia’s sovereignty.

There are no tanks to stop de Benoist’s “Fascism with a human face.” He could operate freely through the dissemination of his works. He helped inspire other intellectuals through the ND, especially in Western Europe and later in Central and Eastern Europe and Russia. Interestingly, de Benoist’s ND project began in 1968, the year of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia and the massive student and worker protests in France in May 1968. De Benoist and the ND were influenced by both events, insisting that a revolution is possible in advanced industrialized societies without using violence.18 If we want to better understand de Benoist’s “neo-fascism with a human face,” we must see through what Feldman and Jackson see as the “double-talk” of the far right and its disdain for liberal democracy since 1945. Feldman and Jackson argue that the far right includes de Benoist’s ND and it attempts at “repackaging” contemporary ultra-nationalism in order to make it more

18 See the collection of essays by ND intellectuals entitled le Mai 68 de la nouvelle droite (Paris: Le Labyrinthe, 1998); Alain de Benoist, Mémoire vive: entretiens avec François Bousquet, pp. 101; 272.
palatable to mainstream European and American audiences. I now turn to de Benoist, his role in promoting the ND project, and his unusual intellectual evolution.

**Alain de Benoist and the expansion of the ND project**

Alain de Benoist was born near Tours, France in 1943. He is an intellectual, philosopher, and political commentator who was the most visible face of the French ND at its height of mass media attention in the 1970s. He is the editor of three ND journals founded in three different decades: *Nouvelle École* (1969), *Éléments* (1973), and *Krisis* (1988). Moreover, de Benoist was the director of several publishing collections, including *Éditions Copernic* (1977-81), *Éditions de Labyrinthe* (since 1982), *Éditions Pardès* (1989-1993), and *L’Âge d’Homme* (since 2003).

De Benoist’s principal writings have been translated into many European languages. In this century, de Benoist published a work on Carl Schmitt and just war theory in Italian as *Terrorismo e "guerre giuste" Sull'attualità di Carl Schmitt* (Guida, Napoli 2007). A controversial book accused of right-wing revisionism by leftist critics, *Comunismo y nazismo 25 reflexiones sobre el totalitarismo en el siglo XX* (1917-1989) (*Communism and Nazism*), was published in Spanish in 2005 (Ediciones Áltera, Barcelona) and in the same year in Croatian as *Komunizam i nacizam 25 ogleda o totalitarizmu u XX stoljeću* (Zlatko Hasanbegovic, Zagreb). *Jézus és testvérei Gondolatok a vallásról és a hitról* (*Jung Authentica, Budapest*) appeared in Hungarian in 2005. *Manifesto per una rinascita europea* (Nuove idee, Roma), or *Manifesto for a European Renaissance*, appeared in Italian in 2005. *On Being A Pagan* appeared in English in 2005 (Ultra, Atlanta). A critique of liberal capitalist globalization, *Kritik der Menschenrechte. Warum Universalismus und Globalisierung die Freiheit bedrohen* (Junge Freiheit, Berlin), appeared in German in 2004. De Benoist’s most famous work *Vu de droite* published its newest edition in 2002, sold more than 25,000 copies worldwide, and was translated into Italian, Portuguese, German, and Romanian. De Benoist’s Web site provides translations of his works in a whopping 25 European languages. There are also Web sites for GRECE and *Éléments*, as well as an Internet presence for numerous ND journals from *Junge Freiheit* in Germany to *Diorama*

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21 For the full list of translations see Alain de Benoist’s Web site, *Les Amis d’Alain de Benoist*, Retrieved from alaindebenoist.com.
letterario in Italy. An ND variant of Wikipedia, Metapedia, was created by ND supporters to disseminate ND ideas worldwide. It is extremely hostile to liberals and leftists.

In line with the notion of “neo-fascism with a human face,” it must be remembered that de Benoist had ultra-nationalist, pro-French Algeria tendencies in the 1960s. De Benoist supported French colonialism; praised the apartheid regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia; and applauded the “virtues” of the “white race.” In 1962, de Benoist was the editor of Cahiers universitaires, the journal published by the ultra-nationalist and pro-French Algeria Federation of National Students (FEN). He describes his time with FEN in romantic terms, stating that he enjoyed the movement’s “revolutionary style”; its “sacerdotal character” akin to revolutionaries such as Vladimir Lenin or Georges Sorel; and how he had been a supporter of the violent and ultra-nationalist Organization of the Secret Army (OAS).

De Benoist’s ND is a “cultural school of thought” (“Une école de pensée”), to use the words of Duranton-Crabol. The ND emerges out of the French revolutionary Right’s ill-fated attempt to maintain French Algeria and re-think and perpetuate the legacy of fascism. It was founded in France in 1968 by about 40 ultra-nationalists, including de Benoist. The ND’s major think-tank is GRECE - Groupement de recherche et d’études pour la civilisation européenne - Research and Study Group for European Civilization. As its French name connotes, GRECE has an affinity for the philosophy and politics of ancient Greece. It is obsessed with the search for Indo-European roots. In 1969, GRECE warned its members to avoid “outdated vocabulary,” a code-word for language linked to Fascism, Nazism, colonialism, anti-Semitism, or racism. In short, de Benoist and company followed the

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22 For GRECE’s site, including articles from Éléments, as well as Junge Freiheit and Diorama letterario, see the following Web sites: www.grecefr.net/accueil.php; www.jungefreiheit.de; www.diorama.it.
23 See “Alain de Benoist,” Metapedia, Retrieved from en.metapedia.org/wiki/Alain_de_Benoist.
24 See, for example, Metapedia, “Nouvelle Droite,” Retrieved from en.metapedia.org/wiki/Nouvelle_Droite.
25 See Alain de Benoist (Under the pseudonym Fabrice Laroche) and François d’Orcival, Le Courage est leur patrie (Paris: Saint-Just, 1965); Fabrice Laroche and Gilles Fournier, Vérité pour (Paris: Saint-Just, 1965); Fabrice Laroche and François d’Orcival, Rhodésie, pays des lions fidèles (Paris: Table Ronde, 1966). D’Orcival was a leader in neo-fascist organization Jeune Nation; a founding member and editor-in-chief of the Fédération des étudiants nationalistes (FEN) in 1960; and supporter of the Organisation de l’armée secrète (OAS), which led to his arrest in 1962. He also wrote for Défense de l’Occident and Europe Action, edited by Dominique Venner and Alain de Benoist. De Benoist also joined FEN. Saint-Just was founded by French neo-fascist and historian Dominique Venner, who committed suicide in 2013. Venner was a member of the OAS and influenced de Benoist’s turn towards the metapolitical and a European nationalism through his Pour une critique positive (Towards a positive critique) (1962), which is seen as a foundational text for a revived revolutionary right after the “defeat” (de-colonization) in Algeria and has been compared to Vladimir Lenin’s What is to be done? For this last point, see Pierre Milza, Fascismes français, passé et présent (Paris: Flammarion, 1988, p. 320). At the time of his death, Venner was the editor of La Nouvelle Revue d’Histoire, a bimonthly history magazine.
26 Alain de Benoist, Mémoire vive: entretiens avec François Bousquet, pp. 64-72.
28 See the May 1969 issue of de Benoist’s journal Éléments, p. 16.
lessons of French neo-fascist Maurice Bardèche (1907-1998), who sought to create a fascism “with another name, another face.” Or, a fascism that we will not recognize; a fascism without the single party, secret police, or even the presence of a Führer; a “Fascism with a human face.”

In 1977, de Benoist was awarded the prestigious Académie française prize for his book Vu de droite (Seen from the Right), a work that de-legitimizes all the major tenets of liberal democracy and provides a scathing attack of egalitarianism which is equated with totalitarianism. In the mid-1980s and 1990s, de Benoist supposedly veered “left” and his articles were published in Telos, a US critical theory journal with roots in the New Left (NL). The editor of Telos Paul Piccone essentially endorsed de Benoist when he stated the following: “The French New Right, if it is still possible to place them anywhere on the Right – have redefined themselves by incorporating 95% of standard New Left ideas, but on the whole, there is no longer anything that can be identified as ‘Right’.” Piccone saw the ND as a type of NL in disguise. He insisted that

the ND had swallowed whole most of the ideals of the American and French NL, such as rejection of the socialist and liberal ‘new class’, regionalism, direct democracy, and vehement anti-Americanism. He argued that de Benoist had nothing to do with fascism or the old right (a false claim given the ND’s indebtedness to the German Conservative Revolution thinkers who influenced Nazism), but was seeking to create a new political paradigm.

De Benoist also became a supporter of worldwide cultural ethnopluralism. He declared the defense of traditional and indigenous cultures against a homogenizing capitalism an “issue very close to my heart, because I am member of the Board of the Association for the Protection of the Threatened Indigenous Cultures and Peoples, founded in Italy by Alessandro Michelucci.” As a result of de Benoist’s intellectual migrations, the liberal-left

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29 Maurice Bardèche, Qu’est-ce que le fascisme? (Paris: Les Sept Couleurs), pp. 175-176.
32 Tamir Bar-On, Rethinking the French New Right: Alternatives to modernity, p. 28.
called him a fascist in disguise, while elements of the far Right called him a Communist.\textsuperscript{34} This was particularly the case in the ND’s mass media heyday in the “hot summer” of 1979 and \textit{in Le Monde} in 1993. Ignoring the criticisms, de Benoist and GRECE spread their ideas beyond France throughout Europe and beyond through a network of think-tanks and journals modeled on the French example.

The ND reasoned that major changes in belief systems across nations would eventually result in revolutionary political change. And, for the ND, revolutionary political change needed revolutionary intellectuals on a mission to destroy liberalism. De Benoist cemented ties with revolutionary right-wing intellectuals throughout Europe in order to spread ND ideas beyond France. De Benoist has been able to single-handedly spread ND ideas throughout Europe, but also to the USA, the Americas in general, and Australia and New Zealand. Other key ND intellectuals include Guillaume Faye, Marco Tarchi, Aleksandr Dugin, Tomislav Sunic, and Troy Southgate. Most of them have roots in the revolutionary right-wing or neo-fascist milieux. Marco Tarchi is today a political science professor at the University of Florence, but was a youth leader with the Italian neo-fascist political party \textit{Movimento Sociale Italiano} (MSI – Italian Social Movement); Faye was a GRECE member and was considered the ND’s “intellectual motor” and second-in-command behind de Benoist.\textsuperscript{35} Sunic is a Croatian sympathetic to the ND and as late as 2003 spoke at the Sacramento chapter of the National Alliance, a white nationalist, anti-Semitic and white supremacist organization. Southgate is a former organizer for the ultra-nationalist British National Front; founded a chapter of the ND in London in 2005; and considers himself a “National-Anarchist.”\textsuperscript{36} In addition, \textit{TeKos} is a Belgian New Right publication, a Spanish \textit{Nueva Derecha} exists, and there are Romanian New Right thinkers. Alberto Buela is a pro-ND Argentinean thinker and a Ph.D. graduate from the Sorbonne. He published a pro-ND work in 1999.\textsuperscript{37} The intellectuals Paul Piccone (\textit{Telos}), Greg Johnson (\textit{Occidental Quarterly}), and Arthur Versluis (\textit{Journal for the Study of Radicalism}) promoted, or were sympathetic to ND ideas in the USA.

Dugin is a special case. Today he has the ear of Russian President Vladimir Putin and is Russia’s most important geopolitical thinker. Umland and Ingram point to his fascist tendencies due to his support for Russian ethnic rebirth, virulent anti-Semitism and ultra-

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\item[\textsuperscript{34}] Tamir Bar-On, \textit{Where Have All The Fascists Gone?}, pp. 40-56.
\item[\textsuperscript{37}] Alberto Buela, (ed.), \textit{Ensayos de Disenso (Sobre Metapolítica)} (Barcelona: Nueva República, 1999).
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nationalism, and embrace of Russian expansionism. Shekhovtsov has demonstrated how Dugin is a Russian variant of the ND, as well as the concrete exchanges in conferences, journal names (the Russian journal *Elementy* mimicked de Benoist’s *Éléments*), and themes between the ND and Dugin (e.g., the survival of ethnic groups, the dangers of immigration and multiculturalism, the notion of geopolitical greatness through a Russian-European alliance against the USA, liberalism and capitalism as decadent, etc.). Shekhovtsov is adamant that both de Benoist and Dugin embody an “alternative modernist” and fascist worldview, with Dugin more overtly fascist, militaristic, and ultra-nationalistic, including open praise for Russian expansionism in South Ossetia and Georgia, as well as Crimea (Ukraine) more recently. During his 2005 trip to Europe, Dugin met and interviewed ND thinkers Jean Parvulesco and de Benoist, “thus apparently overcoming the 12-year rupture between him and the latter.”

Moreover, Peunova points out how ND geopolitical ideas, interpreted by Aleksandr Dugin and political philosopher Aleksandr Panarin (1940-2003), have influenced the Russian New Right, and found the ear of key Russian political elites. In 2014, de Benoist praised Dugin’s neo-Eurasian perspective; multipolar vision for geopolitics; “fourth political theory”; and called Dugin “a man of impressive culture and especially a man of original personal thought.” He pointed to Dugin’s power as an éminence grise under the Putin regime: “At a time when Russia, under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, is regaining its traditional role of a great superpower, I think we should pay attention to the works of Aleksandr Dugin. His influence is already perceptible in some areas close to the Kremlin.”

As the ND was created in France, it was inevitable that it had an impact on the French political landscape. Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy openly questioned multiculturalism and another former President, Jacques Chirac, pandered to anti-immigrant sentiments. It became harder for political parties of any political stripe to defend open immigration. These were positions that would have pleased de Benoist and the ND. Tom

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44 Alain de Benoist in Arthur Versluis, “A Conversation with Alain de Benoist,” p. 85.
McCulloch points out that leading ND ideologues joined the FN in the 1980s, constituting a powerful party faction, which passed key ND concepts into FN ideology and policy. Bruno Mégret, Jean-Yves Le Gallou, Jean-Claude Bardet, Yvan Blot, and other members of the ND joined the FN. So much for de Benoist’s false claim that “the ND has always adopted a position of observer, never of actor.” As I wrote in a response to de Benoist in the Journal for the Study of Radicalism, “This claim is false because it is contradicted by the evidence and, as a student of the history of ideas, de Benoist should know that we are all political actors in the movement of historical change, whether in civil society, as intellectuals, or with respect to the interaction between the state and civil society.” Moreover, de Benoist’s Web site is full of commentary on the politics of the day from the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks to the European economic crisis and about why France should leave Afghanistan.

According to Minkenberg, the ND is intellectually close to the German Neue Rechte, the New Right in the United Kingdom, Nieuw Rechts in the Netherlands and Flanders (Belgium), Forza Nuova in Italy, Imperium Europa in Malta, and New Right forces in the USA connected to Paul Weyrich and the Free Congress Foundation. In Germany, Roger Woods points out that de Benoist has “insisted on the importance of cultural hegemony, and his work has been introduced to the German public by Armin Mohler.” Mohler wrote the introduction to de Benoist’s Kulturrevolution von rechts (Cultural Revolution from the Right) when it appeared in West Germany in 1985, while he mocked a German Right that was intellectually behind the times. The Thule Seminar was founded by Pierre Krebs in Kassel in 1980, created a journal called Elemente modeled on the French New Right, and in the late 1980s could boast of over 200 lectures in Germany and abroad.

Moreover, the German New Right could also influence mainstream German political parties and politicians. Contributors to Junge-Freiheit, a German New Right journal, include CDU Bundestag members and a former member of the EU Parliament, Rolf Berend.

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47 Alain de Benoist, “Alain de Benoist Answers Tamir Bar-On,” Journal for the Study of Radicalism, 8 (1) (Spring 2014), pp. 143-144.
48 Tamir Bar-On, “A Response to Alain de Benoist,” Journal for the Study of Radicalism, 8 (2) (Fall 2014), p. 130.
52 Roger Woods, Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics, p. 29.
53 Roger Woods, Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics, pp. 18-19.
The former Berlin senator Heinrich Lummer attended the meeting of extreme right-wing European leaders in 2002. Albrecht Jebens is sympathetic to the German New Right and a member for the Society of Free Journalism, an extreme right-wing cultural organization. The co-editor of the New Right journal *Criticón* is Wolfram Zabel, a member of the CDU. Armin Mohler was the adviser to Franz Schönhuber when he was leader of the *Republikaner*. Johanna Grund, a one-time *Republikaner* deputy, wrote in *Junge Freiheit* attacking the EU’s variant of democracy.

The German New Right could also take controversial and politically incorrect positions. Günter Maschke, a German New Right figure who has collaborated in projects with de Benoist, could eulogize Mussolini as a “politician-artist,” who emerges at times of crisis in order to provide people with necessary myths and “life-preserving illusions.”\textsuperscript{54} De Benoist praised Maschke in a piece on his Web site because of his analyses of Carl Schmitt and the need for a powerful Europe, which appeared in *Junge Freiheit*.\textsuperscript{55} The German New Right has also contributed to highlighting the so-called “internal decadence” of Germany as a result of capitalism, modernity, immigration, and multiculturalism, as well as more seriously “relativising National Socialism.”\textsuperscript{56} Some German New Right thinkers claimed that Germans were unaware of Hitler’s intentions; make Germans the real victims of the war; stress the heroism of its soldiers; argued that German crimes should be forgotten in the name of the present; and made a distinction between a healthy Conservative Revolution (an alternative Germany) and the perversions of Nazism.\textsuperscript{57} A leading German ND thinker Pierre Krebs praised reunification as a way to reassert the rebirth of “organic communities” and defeat Western and Eastern domination.\textsuperscript{58} New Right thinkers see Germany’s anti-fascism as a forms of sickness, suicide, and nihilism, which will lead to Germany’s destruction.\textsuperscript{59} Maschke lamented Germany’s lack of participation in the Gulf War and the denigration of pro-military and “normal” nationalist sentiments.\textsuperscript{60} Yet, in line with de Benoist’s turn to a “new European home,” a 1995 volume of a younger generation of German New Right thinkers questioned nationalism and older forms of political identity.\textsuperscript{61}

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\textsuperscript{54} Roger Woods, *Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics*, p. 70.
\textsuperscript{57} Roger Woods, *Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics*, pp. 72-85.
\textsuperscript{58} Roger Woods, *Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics*, p. 99.
\textsuperscript{59} Roger Woods, *Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics*, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{60} Roger Woods, *Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics*, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{61} Roger Woods, *Germany’s New Right as Culture and Politics*, pp. 103-104.
Recall that it is my contention that de Benoist embodies a “Fascism with a human face.” My various works aims is to demonstrate continuity and change between fascist ideology of the interwar years and novel forms of fascism suited for an antifascist age. Various historians of fascism such as Griffin, Mammone, and Copsey have demonstrated links between postwar European neofascists and the ND. For Griffin, the prefix “neo” meant “offering something new with respect to inter-war phenomena,” and he highlighted four neofascist subtypes: revolutionary nationalism, cryptofascism, Holocaust revisionism, and “conservative revolution” (e.g., the ND or European New Right). Mammone demonstrates how from 1968 to the end of the 1970s there were patterns of cross-fertilization and ideological transfer among neofascists. He also points to the transborder impact of the ND, its links with postwar neofascists such as Maurice Bardèche and Julius Evola, and “its attempt to update neo-fascist and racist ideals.” Copsey writes that neofascism, including the ND as one such permutation, “represents a continual evolution of fascism away from its dominant inter-war manifestations.” That is, neofascism “does not consist of consistent and unchanging features, but has its own history of development, and cannot be reduced to a static model.”

The Israeli historian Ze’ev Sternhell argues that fascism was created in France before World War One and it began as a cultural rebellion and was later transformed into a political movement. Fascism and the ND are both “atypical” schools of thought, in the words of de Benoist. Indeed, fascism was “atypical” because it united ultra-nationalism with Marxist revisionism. De Benoist’s “neither right, nor left” synthesis, or his regionalism (or a reformulated nationalism) combined with an anti-liberal, anti-capitalist orientation, eerily resembles the fascist synthesis highlighted by Sternhell. Two of the ND’s important

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66 Nigel Copsey, “Fascism ... but with an Open Mind,” p. 16.
67 Otto Ernst Schüddekopf, Fascism, 193, quoted in Copsey, “Fascism ... but with an Open Mind”, p. 16.
69 Alain de Benoist, “Alain de Benoist Answers Tamir Bar-On”, p. 145.
influences are the German Conservative Revolution and New Left, seemingly contradictory right-wing and left-wing ideologies.\textsuperscript{70}

In addition, fascism is simultaneously an ideology, a movement, a party, and regime in power.\textsuperscript{71} Furthermore, I point out that defining fascism is tricky because there is no universal consensus definition of what constitutes fascism.\textsuperscript{72} If we use Griffin’s definition of fascism as “a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism,”\textsuperscript{73} the ND is fascist with the caveat that the regions (a “Europe of a hundred flags”)\textsuperscript{74} are the new homogeneous nations.\textsuperscript{75}

Yet if we take Payne’s checklist definition consisting of fascist negations, ideology and goals, and style and organization, the ND meets some but not all of the prerequisites of fascism. Furthermore, using the insights of the historian Stanley Payne I highlight how the ND shares many of the preoccupations of fascists and revolutionary right-wing movements of the interwar years, including

1. Antiliberalism
2. Anticommunism
3. Anticonservatism
4. An attempt to create a new, modern, self-determined, and secular culture
5. A highly regulated, multiclass, and integrated national economic structure
6. An economic framework that uses the state to restrain capitalism, banks, and multinational corporations
7. A desire for nationalist (or regionalist) states
8. The goal of an empire
9. The desire for European grandeur in the geopolitical realm
10. A positive evaluation of authors that legitimize violence such as Carl Schmitt and Julius Evola
11. A stress on the emotional and mystical aspects of life, including traditions, Indo-European symbols, and primordial ties to the region, nation, or Europe


\textsuperscript{71} Tamir Bar-On, \textit{Where Have All The Fascists Gone?}, pp. 15-19.

\textsuperscript{72} See, for example, the wide variety of definitions of fascism provided by Anglo-American and German scholars (including Stanley Payne, Ernst Nolte, Andreas Umland, A. J. Gregor, Alexander de Grand, Roger Eatwell, myself, and others) responding to Roger Griffin’s claims of a “new consensus” in fascist studies in Roger Griffin, “Fascism’s New Faces (and New Facelessness) in the ‘Post-fascist’ Epoch, and Its Threats to Contemporary Democracy,” pp. 287-300.

\textsuperscript{73} Roger Griffin (ed.), \textit{Fascism} (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 4.


\textsuperscript{75} Roger Griffin, quoted in Bar-On, \textit{Where Have All The Fascists Gone?}, p. 15.
12. An organic view of society and extreme stress on the masculine principle.\textsuperscript{76}

Other scholars such as Taguieff have confirmed the ND’s cultural racism and de Benoist’s intellectual evolution from open racism to biological racism and later cultural racism.\textsuperscript{77} Guiberneau writes the following: “The Nouvelle Droite’s paradigm assumes that cultural difference involves separation, exclusion and what de Benoist refers to as the ‘right to difference’.”\textsuperscript{78} This means that all cultures must maintain their “purity”, be free of “alien influences”, and avoid “hybridization.” \textsuperscript{79} Banai explains the differences between the ND and Green conceptions of the “Europe of the regions”: The former “strongly object to internal diversity among individuals within political communities,” while the latter “emphasizes the internal diversity of tastes, cultures, lifestyles, etc. within the community.”\textsuperscript{80}

Still other scholars have gone further to insist that the ND and de Benoist are neo-fascist. So, for example, in a 2013 piece Beauzamy argues that the ND engages in what Stephen Reyna called “dazzling theory,” which is “formulated at a high level of abstraction” and incorporates “pompous formulations and a large variety of references, including to some extreme-left theory (‘rightist Gramscism’) to produce a racial argument dressed in a highly complex fashion—a ‘high culture’ version of fascist arguments.”\textsuperscript{81}

Or, Spektorowski correctly saw through the ND’s embrace of cultural ethnopluralism: “It sets a new basis for organic identification, deeper and more authentic than the nation-state, and is the most propitious framework for the raising of populist anti-liberal elites. It justifies segregation of foreigners, however, with clean hands, and sets the intellectual basis for a new European union, anti-liberal, and culturally homogeneous.”\textsuperscript{82} Spektorowski argues against the view that the ND is antiracist by suggesting that “the New Right and the Lega Nord are two different but complementary faces of the new sophisticated right-wing ethnoregionalist


\textsuperscript{78} Montserrat Guibernau, \textit{The Identity of Nations}, p. 156.

\textsuperscript{79} Montserrat Guiberneau, \textit{The Identity of Nations}, p. 156.

\textsuperscript{80} Ayelet Banai, “‘Europe of the Regions’ and the problem of boundaries in liberal democratic theory,” \textit{Journal of Political Ideologies} 17 (1) (2012), p. 54; p. 47.


ideology, the basis for a new discourse of exclusion.”  

Zaslove explains the ties between the ND and Lega Nord. Influenced by cultural notions of exclusion put forward in the 1960s and 1970s by de Benoist, the Lega Nord focused on cultural justifications of exclusion, “cleverly framing the immigration issue to avoid biological arguments.”

Other scholars have echoed Spektorowski and Zaslove. As Axtmann argued in relation to GRECE, the key ND think tank, “The flipside of [GRECE’s position] is the claim that ... differences have to be preserved at all cost: they must be cultivated, developed and defended against any attempt to abolish them. As a result, this particular version of the right to difference is organized around a ‘mixophobic’ core: it is ‘haunted’ by the threat of the destruction of identities through interbreeding—physical and cultural crossbreeding.”

Antón-Mellón also links the ND to fascism by analyzing their texts. Using Alain Bihr’s conceptual model of fascism, Mellón argues that both the ND and interwar fascists are united by a defense of ethnonationalist ideas, elevating the collective identity to the category of a fetish, the insistence on inequality as a fundamental ontological and axiological category, and the defense of a bellicose conception of life that glorifies combat as one of the fundamental elements of existence. He points to six ways in which there is continuity between interwar fascism and the ND: homogeneity at the core of their ideological and philosophical foundations; in terms of the movement of history, “the protagonists are ethnically homogeneous peoples”; society is viewed as “decadent” and in “crisis”; the attempt to transcend “party politics, social divisions and ideologies” in the name of new elites and the nation or Europe; the rejection of liberalism as a political philosophy; and an “organicist, metaphysical, transcendental and spiritualist” perspective that focuses more on political and cultural change compared to economic or social change.

Thus, while de Benoist and the ND deny that they are racist or fascist, numerous intellectuals differ with their claims. Let me provide you with a few samples of de Benoist’s anti-liberal, homogeneous, and neo-fascist conception of politics. De Benoist wrote the following in Telos in 1995:

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The proper functioning of both Greek and Icelandic democracy was the result of cultural cohesion and a clear sense of shared heritage. The closer the members of a community are to each other the more they are likely to hold common sentiments, values and ways of looking at the world, and it is easier for them to make collective decisions in regard to the common good without the help of mediators.88

Or, in the ND manifesto, “The French New Right for the Year 2000,” de Benoist and Champetier wrote: “By reason of its rapid growth and its massive proportions, immigration such as one sees today in Europe constitutes an undeniably negative phenomenon.”89 De Benoist and Champetier insinuate that native Europeans are the principal “victims” of immigration rather than immigrants themselves, but never asks immigrants for their perspectives:

Immigration is not desirable for the immigrants, who are forced to abandon their native country for another where they are received as backups for economic needs. Nor is immigration beneficial for the host population receiving the immigrants, who are confronted, against their will with sometimes brutal modifications in their human and urban environments.90

One writer has recently remarked in reference to de Benoist that “it seems clear from several of his works ... (such as his “Manifesto of the New Right,” “Immigration: Reserve Army of Capital?” and “What Is Racism?”) that Alain de Benoist does believe that maintaining the separateness [my emphasis] of the various cultural, ethnic, and racial groups is very important and he certainly does not accept the permanent resettlement of Europe by racially foreign immigrants (as O’Meara claims); rather, he believes taking a less radical procedure to solve the matter.”91

In addition, de Benoist (and his colleague Champetier) criticize the liberal and “abstract” notion of citizenship and defend citizenship based on ethnic origins:

As regards the immigrant populations which reside today in France, it would be illusory to expect their departure en masse. The Jacobin national state has always upheld a model of assimilation in which only the individual is absorbed into a

88 Alain de Benoist, “Democracy Revisited,” p. 75.
citizenship which is purely abstract. The state holds no interest in the collective identities nor in the cultural differences of these individuals. This model becomes less and less credible in view of the following factors: the sheer number of immigrants, the cultural differences which sometimes separate them from the populations receiving them, and especially the profound crises which affect all the channels of traditional integration (parties, unions, religions, schools, the army, etc.). The New Right believe that ethnocultural identity should no longer be relegated to the private domain, but should be acknowledged and recognized in the public sphere. The New Right proposes, then, a communitarian model which would spare individuals from being cut off from their cultural roots and which would permit them to keep alive the structures of their collective cultural lives. They should be able to observe necessary general and common laws without abandoning the culture which is their very own. This communitarian politic could, in the long run, lead to a dissociation of citizenship from nationality.92

De Benoist wants the revival of “hundreds of homogeneous ethnic communities.”93 He rails against immigration, fears cultural mixing, and calls for the “peaceful” return of immigrants and non-Europeans to their “home” countries for the supposed “mutual benefit” of Europeans and non-Europeans.94 In the 1970s, de Benoist was even more politically incorrect when he pioneered his “differentialist racism.” He stated the following: “We have the right to be for Black Power, but on the condition of simultaneously being in favor of White Power, Yellow Power and Red Power.”95 As late as 2012, de Benoist insisted that while pan-European unity is “an absolute necessity,” it must have as its base not liberal multiculturalism but rather “the peoples of Europe”—all born from the same “cultural and historical matrix.”96 De Benoist (and Champetier) view the liberal and universalist legacy of 1789 as “ethnocentric,” “neo-imperialist,” and “totalitarian”:

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96 Alain de Benoist, Mémoire vive, p. 47.
The West’s conversion to universalism has been the main cause of its subsequent attempts to convert the rest of the world: in the past, to its religion (the Crusades); yesterday, to its political principles (colonialism); and today, to its economic and social model (development) or its moral principles (human rights). Undertaken under the aegis of missionaries, armies and merchants, the Westernization of the planet has represented an imperialist movement fed by the desire to erase all otherness by imposing on the world a supposedly superior model invariably presented as “progress.” Homogenizing universalism is only the projection and the mask of an ethnocentrism extended over the whole planet.97

In 2014, De Benoist repeated his opposition to the liberal, universalist legacy and “the ideology of human rights”: “The ideology of human rights has now become a kind of new world civil religion, having primarily a legitimizing role in the global expansion of the market system.”98 It is not by accident that de Benoist sees the UN norm of Responsibility to Protect, or Western intervention in cases of genocides or crimes against humanity, as examples of Western neo-imperialism. Or, “as a weapon by stronger nations to bludgeon those weaker states which do not conform to the Western liberal-democratic form of rights, as we have recently seen in action in the former Yugoslavia, Iraq, and Libya.”99

De Benoist quotes, defends and legitimates many fascist or revolutionary right-wing authors. These include the following authors, which are still part of de Benoist’s contemporary worldview: Joseph De Maistre, Knut Hamsun, Ernst Jünger, Georges Valois, Carl Schmitt, Julius Evola, and Dominique Venner.100 In 2014, he continued to defend the pro-Nazi thinker Carl Schmitt with these verbal gymnastics: “I am the first to deplore the fact that Schmitt was a member of the Nazi party for three years (from 1933 to 1936, when he was excluded from all his official functions), the ideology of which he had never espoused (he even called for its ban in 1932!). The causes of this adherence are still being discussed.”101 In short, for de Benoist Schmitt was not really a Fascist. This was a tactic de Benoist used to defend Conservative Revolution authors such as Jünger, or outright racialist Fascists such as Evola. What de Benoist longed for, like these other intellectuals, was not anti-fascism, but a more elitist and aristocratic variant of fascism.

In addition, Tom McCulloch argues that despite the diversity of ND thinkers, the ND remains wedded to a metapolitical project based on the defense of collective identities (“any,” he states) and a rejection of egalitarianism. In 2002, de Benoist approvingly quoted Giuliano Ferrara in Il Foglio: “The rights of man are not universal if they include the right not to believe in the dogma of the universality of rights.” In a 2004 interview, de Benoist said that he rejected the “abstract,” individualist nature of the Rights of Man, which he viewed as an exception rather than rule in human societies.

Fighting neo-fascism for changing times

This paper sought to highlight the uses of “Fascism with a human face” and its connections to the notion of “socialism with a human face.” I focused on one conceptual tool to interpret the ND and its leader, namely, a “Fascism with a human face.” Others such as Bastow, Piccone, and Versluis challenge this claim. In his entry for “Alain de Benoist” in World Fascism: A Historical Encyclopedia, Bastow writes: “He has moved from fascism in more recent years.” In another book, I used three other conceptual tools to interpret the ND and its relationship to modernity, including the desire to supersede right and left, the quest for alternative modernities, and the aim of creating a re-sacralized and revolutionary society and state based on a secular “religion of politics”. In still another piece, I asked whether the ND led by de Benoist is “A New Right, Leftist Right, New Left, or Old Right in New Clothes?” I am inclined to view the ND as a combination of “A New Right” and “Old Right in New Clothes.”

Along with Marco Tarchi in Italy, de Benoist is the most “new right” of ND thinkers. Yet, other ND thinkers from Faye and Sunic to Krebs and Dugin are even more radical, ethnically determinist, and racialist than de Benoist. Krebs wrote the following in a clearly

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108 See, for example, Guillaume Faye, Le système à tuer les peuples (Paris: Copernic, 1981). Or, Faye’s The Colonization of Europe, which preached “total ethnic war” between “original” Europeans and Muslims and led to a fine for racial incitement by a European court. See the French original, La Colonisation de l'Europe: discours vrai sur l'immigration et l'Islam (Paris: L’Æncre, 2000). Pierre Krebs is part of the German branch of
racialist and determinist tone, while echoing de Benoist’s disdain for Christianity and propagan perspective:

Both White America and White Europe (the West?) are in mortal danger today. The matrix of the West, as Krebs argues, is no longer territorial or political. It lies in the White man’s experiment with Christianity, which began as merely an obscure Oriental cult — a cult which has absolutely nothing in common with the spiritual homeland of the White man: ancient Greece.109

De Benoist is keen to create the optics of a “new right” and thus distances himself from the populism and overt nationalism of the FN, or the overt racialism of Krebs. Tomislav Sunic has written a sympathetic portrayal of the ND as a fellow-traveler. De Benoist indirectly criticized Sunic in a 2009 interview in which he lamented that the title of Sunic’s 1990 book on the ND was “inappropriate” and hence gave away the ND project.110 The title is *The European New Right: Against Democracy and Equality*.111 In recent years, de Benoist continues to reject administrative equality,112 but supports direct rather than representative variants of democracy. Sunic troubled de Benoist because was not helping create an image of a “new right”. Also, Sunic has written these words, which echoed the blood and soil thesis of Hitler and Maurice Barrès: “Blood and soil will forever determine the life of nations.”113 Or, these politically incorrect lines:

Peoples are not the same; they never have been and never will be. Ethnic groups can be compared to the inmates of large American prisons, who usually begin to respect each other only when their turf is staked out and when their cells are separated by massive stone walls. Thrown into one cell they are likely to devour each other in a perpetual conflict over ‘territorial imperative.’114

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112 This was even the assessment of a sympathetic analyst of the ND, Paul Piccone in *Telos*, who argued that de Benoist’s failure to recognize administrative equality was the one impediment that kept him from being a new leftist. See Paul Piccone, “Confronting the French New Right: Old Prejudices or a New Political Paradigm?”
114 Tomislav Sunic, “A Global Village And The Rights Of The Peoples?”
A right-wing tide is sweeping Europe, both in the neo-liberal and cultural or racialist senses. How do we fight it? Scholars such as Mudde see the rising right-wing tide as a form of populism combined with nativism and authoritarianism, which challenges established parties and elites and is distinction from fascism. For Mudde, the literature on the extreme-right is alarmist and Europe is not repeating the crises of the 1920s and 1930s:

Many authors would focus almost exclusively on the historical background of the populist radical Right, in other words its connection to pre-war fascism and Nazism. The assumption was that the post-war populist radical Right had to be understood as the remnant of the past and not as a consequence of contemporary developments…In fact, they are best seen as a radicalization of mainstream values. Hence, the populist radical Right should be considered a pathological normalcy, not a normal pathology.

Others such as Umberto Eco would challenge Mudde. Eco points out that it would all be so easy if neo-fascists today said that they want to re-open the gas chambers. Except they do not. De Benoist claims that that he is anti-fascist, anti-racist, anti-totalitarian, and pro-multiculturalism. Yet, the ND’s elitist, hierarchical, pagan, and ethnically homogeneous worldview, valorization of a warrior ethic, and use of Conservative Revolution authors that legitimized Fascism and Nazism (Schmitt, Jünger, and Moeller van den Bruck) means that they have retained some of the Old Right and this has led to accusations of fascism. A leading historian of fascism, Roger Griffin, is convinced that the ND is fascist and alternative modernist. In a recent response to de Benoist, this author noted that the ND is neo-fascist and advances a reactionary political project in the Gramscian sense because it rejects administrative equality and seeks to “liberate” merely a part of humanity (“original Europeans”) rather than all of humanity. I also suggested that de Benoist is a neo-fascist

and this is not merely a polemical accusation, as de Benoist claims. It is based on the comments of neo-fascists such as Bardèche arguing that fascism will change; on the GRECE project of avoiding “outdated vocabulary”; on definitions of fascism proposed by Griffin, Sternhell, and Payne; on Feldman and Jackson’s notion of the “double-talk” of the revolutionary right (including the ND); and on Copsey’s insight that fascism “does not consist of consistent and unchanging features, but has its own history of development, and cannot be reduced to a static model.”

Despite the ND’s praise for the 1968ers and New Left, there is plenty that is “old” about the ND: its scathing critique of egalitarianism, rejection of the Rights of Man, and view that liberal and socialist models of history promote a false and abstract egalitarianism and universalism. The ND views immigration, cultural mixing, and multiculturalism through the lenses of homogeneity and exclusion. De Benoist quotes and even legitimizes many fascist or revolutionary right-wing authors, whether Joseph de Maistre, Ernst Jünger, or Georges Valois. De Benoist’s polemical tone and scathing response to this author is part of the “fascist style,” which consists in mocking and denigrating one’s opponents without directly confronting their arguments. The ND also cultivates ambiguity by synthesizing numerous worldviews from the left and right, conservative and revolutionary perspectives, and ideas based on myth and science. Woods also points out that part of the ND strategy consists in “cultivating vagueness” in order to promote a “devaluation of rational discussion.”

As this author suggested, “If de Benoist wants to forever leave the orbit of the revolutionary rightwing milieux, he would do well to stop defending Carl Schmitt or Julius Evola or legitimizing other figures in the fascist or revolutionary rightwing milieux on his website, including Dominique Venner, Charles Maurras, Henry de Montherlant, Ernst Jünger, or Knut Hamsun.” The leading French expert on the ND, Pierre-André Taguieff, made this point about de Benoist in 1994:

Let us not be so hasty or naïve. Benoist’s undeniable intellectual evolution, which part of GRECE followed, did not reflect or result in an unambiguous political evolution. His credibility will only be beyond reproach when he publishes an argumentative text

in which he both clearly breaks with the neo-nationalist or “revolutionary-conservative” milieu and clarifies the reasons for this break.122

It is 2015. We are still waiting for that text from de Benoist. As Spektorowski correctly notes, the ND “makes use of the intellectual contribution of old anti-liberal integralist sources at the fringes of fascism.”123 Fleischer views the ND as a variant of “multifascism,” which is based on the following tenets: rhetoric of anti-globalization, protection of identity and civilization, an anti-American and pro-Russian or Eurasianist geopolitical orientation, ethnopluralism, pagan or Orthodox in religious orientation, archaic in its mythology, and counter-intellectual (i.e., challenging the liberal-left intellectual elites).124 While the ND has attempted to stress the “direct democracy,” ecological, anti-capitalist, and “progressive” aspects of its manifesto “The French New Right for the Year 2000,” I am adamant that its positions are anti-progressive in contrast to the liberal-left. This is not to suggest that all leftists are progressives. Italian thinker Danilo Zolo agrees. He points out that while de Benoist’s imperial and pan-European, pro-regional federalist project attempts to reconcile the “one and the many” (i.e., organic unity, which respects its component parts), it is unlikely to be accepted by liberals or the left because it implies “an absolutist and anti-egalitarian conception of power.”125 Moreover, if this empire will be under the direction of one or two hegemonic states such as France and Germany, this would violate the egalitarianism between various European nations or regions.126 Finally, as the ND works from an illiberal position, Zolo argues that the imperial model contradicts protection of European citizens’ basic rights.127 Zolo’s criticisms of the ND highlights the chasm between liberal, left-wing, and neo-fascist models of Europe.

As the ND appears increasingly more leftist, anti-capitalist, and in favour of direct democracy (in order to attain culturally homogeneous societies), it is nonetheless not a “progressive” movement and fighting it is a challenge:

The ND’s ‘politically correct’ discourse, which is allegedly ‘anti-racist’, ‘anti-fascist’, ‘anti-nationalist’ (or pro-regionalist and pan-European) and ‘anti-antisemitic’, is coded to suit the changing times. For those concerned with fighting racism and antisemitism, it must be clear that open racists and fascists are becoming an extinct species. Furthermore, the tasks of fighting racism and a revived ‘metapolitical fascism’ have become complicated since the ND wages its ‘wars’ against liberalism, equality, representative democracy and multiculturalism not by using castor oil and fists, but by seeking to win the hearts and minds of the majority of Europeans and key state elites. Moreover, stigmatization of the Other may come in new forms, like the ND’s ‘multiculturalism of the right’, which paradoxically recognizes the right of others to be ‘different’ (for example, to wear Islamic veils), in order to exclude non-Europeans from the continent.128

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