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The “Empire of Morality”: The Iberian and Neo-Panhellenic Right-Wing Extremism

Fecha de recepción: 10 de enero de 2021

Fecha de aceptación: 12 de abril de 2021

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Resumen

La extrema derecha reaccionaria ibérica y neo-panhelénica comparte tres elementos. El primero, una mística nacionalista insertada en un discurso imperialista; en España se conoce como Hispanidad, en Portugal como Lusitanidade y, por último, en el mundo neo-panhelénico se vertebra en torno al eje Megali Idea/Enosis. En segundo lugar, la nostalgia por el pasado y, por último, su fracaso electoral. El artículo analizará tres fuerzas políticas que cumplieron con estos requisitos en las décadas de 1970 y 1980; en el Estado español, Fuerza Nueva, en el portugués, el Círculo de Estudos Sociais Vector y, en el caso neo-panhelénico, el Ethniki Politiki Enosis. Para ello, se hará una retrospectiva histórica comparativa que examine la génesis, la implementación y el fracaso de su ideología en el siglo XX.

Palabras clave: Extrema derecha, España, Portugal, Neo-Panhelenismo, Nacionalismo, Procesos Transicionales.

Abstract

Spanish, Portuguese and Neo-panhellenic right-wing extremism share three elements in common. First of all, a nationalist mystique fueled by an imperialist narrative. These were embodied by the Spanish concept of Hispanidad, the

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Portuguese Lusitanidade and, lastly, the Neo-panhellenic Megale Idea/Enosis. Secondly, nostalgia for previous ages and, finally, electoral failures after their respective dictatorships. This paper aims to analyze three political forces that met all these three key features across the 1970s and 1980s. In Spain, Fuerza Nueva (Spain), Circulo de Estudos Sociais Vector (Portugal) and Ethniki Politiki Enosis (Greece and Cyprus). In order to achieve this goal, this paper will dig into the background of each reactionary movement during the XXth century, their implementation and failure, in a comparative manner.

Keywords: Extreme right, Spain, Portugal, Neo-Panhellenism, Empire, Nationalism, Transitional Processes.

Introduction

During most of the XXth century, right-wing extremist movements oversaw the political life in Portugal, Spain and Greece (including Greek Cyprus). In order to achieve this goal, it will be carried out an historical retrospective aiming to understand its genesis in the first third of the XXth century, its implementation during the Salazarist, Francoist and Greek dictatorships and, lastly, its survival in the democratic framework. These ideological projects locate on a reactionary spectrum because, primarily, they advocated nostalgia for the past. Secondly, they articulated a discourse based on a Christian mystic: in Spain it was known as *Hispanidad*, in Portugal it referred to *Lusitanidade* and in Panhellenic world it was poured into the *ΜεγάληΙδέα²/Ένωσις³* axis. Eventually, it will be explained their electoral failure resulting from its ideological immobility. For this aim, it will be taken as a sample during the seventies and the eighties these organizations; Fuerza Nueva (FN) ⁴ led by the Spaniard Blas Piñar López, Círculo de Estudos Sociais Vector (CESV)⁵ promoted by the Portuguese António da Cruz Rodrigues and Εθνική Πολιτική Ένωσις (EPEN)⁶ chaired by former dictator Georgios Papadopoulos. All of which tried to integrate a European parliamentary front known as Eurodestra. We have chosen these movements, and not others, because

² *Megale Idea or Great Idea (Gran Idea).*

³ Read as Enosis, translate as Union (Unión).

⁴ New Force.

⁵ Circle of Social Studies Vector.

⁶ Ethniki Politiki Enosis or National Political Union (Unión Política Nacional).



they share anti-communist, anti-democratic, illiberal traits and even if there was a certain degree of harmony between these movements, the main factor that characterizes them is they felt heirs to the dictatorial legacy of their countries.

These alternatives failed, we believe, for two reasons. First, these countries had freed themselves from dictatorial regimes that had abused national symbols, so that, during their respective transitional processes, pro-democratic, pro-modernisation and pro-European discourses were reinforced. Moreover, the Iberian case shared similar sentiments of nationalism, Catholicism and authoritarianism for several decades. Thus, during the Transition to democracy, the national identity that had been enshrined during dictatorships was weakened, implying that progressive alternatives supported nationalist movements that had resurfaced during the 1970s.

Second, the Iberian and Neo-panhellenic right-wing extremism remained in a state of ideological parasitism, whereas in other territories, as a consequence of the Protests of 1968 and the processes of decolonization, it had adapted to its time, such as France with the Front national (FN) or Italy with the Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) where the far-right participated in the pluralist and competitive democratic system. This inability of reactionary forces to modernize their message meant that their outdated discourse failed to attract many voters. This precipitated the failure of the Eurodestra which dissolved due to a diversity of political discourses, disagreements between the leaders of its member groups and a modest electoral result.

Documents written by the leaders of each political organization, as well as some reports located in The Spanish National Archives, secondary sources of newspaper archives have served to illustrate this paper.

The Iberian right-wing extremism

Since the Iberian counterrevolutionary intellectuals exchanged articles in the fundamentalist magazine *Acción Española* (AE), the Iberian right-wing extremism blossomed in the 1930s and 1940s and was more powerful than later in the 1960s onwards. This doctrine remained homogeneous until the conclusion of the Second

Vatican Council. Thenceforth, the nationalist currents approaching the right-wing radicalized. In addition, in the late 1960s the Estado Novo in Portugal and General Franco's regime in Spain tackled their crippling economic problems from a liberal angle, which violated the early ideological tenets of both dictatorships. Thus, while Vector⁷ appealed for the *Lusitanidade*, Fuerza Nueva evoked the "glorious years" of the so-called Spanish Empire, giving primacy to the notion of *Hispanidad*⁸. This section eventually explores the progress of the right-wing extremism from first third of the XXth century to the 1980s in both countries.

In 1914, some Portuguese university students in Coimbra created an elitist cultural movement known as Integralismo Lusitano (IL), heavily influenced by the postulates of Action française (AF)⁹, the main French far-right think tank previous to the First World War. It was pioneered by Antonio Sardinha, a republican who later embraced royalist ideals, and by José Hipólito Raposo, a religious fundamentalist, both of whom came into contact with Ramiro de Maeztu, a Basque writer who directed *AE* and supported General Miguel Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, in the early 1920s. *AE* would eventually become the main printed influence on Spanish right-wing extremism during the first half of the XXth century.

The "integralistas" devised an anti-democratic plan that sought the restoration of medieval monarchy based on the idea of social corporatism, which would curb the development of the labor movement and administrative decentralization¹⁰. According to them, the Portuguese Homeland consolidated in the Mesolithic Period resulting from the very first human settlements in the region, thus justifying that localism was as an intrinsic characteristic of the Portuguese people¹¹. It also strengthened the idea of a decentralized state, administratively speaking, which relied on the three communal freedoms: hereditary Christian monarchy, local legislation known as 'fueros'¹² and the reinforcement of family,

⁷Marchi, Riccardo. *Imperio, Nação, Revolução: As direitas radicais portuguesas no fim do Estado Novo (1959-1974)*. Alfragide. Texto. 2009, pp.260-266.

⁸González Cuevas, Pedro Carlos. "Antonio Goicoechea: Político y doctrinario monárquico" in *Historia y Política*, N°6, (2001), pp.162-188.

⁹French Action (Acción Francesa). Marchi, Riccardo. *Imperio, Nação, Revolução: As direitas radicais portuguesas no fim do Estado Novo (1959-1974)*, Op., Cit., p. 43.

¹⁰Sardinha, António. *Processo dum rei*. Porto. Livraria Civilização. 1937, p.64.

¹¹Sardinha, António. *O valor da raça. Introdução a uma campanha nacional*. Lisboa. Alemida, Miranda & Sousa. 1915, p. 32.

¹²Rebelo, Jose Pequito. *Espanha e Portugal: unidade e dualidade peninsular*. Lisboa. 1939, p. 15.



municipality and guild though communal corporatism. Considering traditional monarchy as a cornerstone of said doctrine, Integralismo suggested that royal righteousness started to decline as soon as liberal influences besieged state institutions. It stated that the independence granted to South American countries had only led to a never-ending string of warlord's governments that encouraged bitter social unrest¹³. Finally, the king's figure it endorsed inequalities between members of the same national community. In result, social segregation distinguished two separate classes: the elite, who indoctrinated the population through the study of the Gospel, and the masses, who deemed the king as the great "scravo do poder" to prevent communism and liberalism from destroying the European Civilization¹⁴. This project included Brazil as part of a wider cultural brotherhood¹⁵.

In Spain the term *Hispanidad* was popularized by *AE* magazine under Fernando Gallego de Chaves Calleja's editing from 1931 to 1934 and by Maeztu from 1934 to 1939, both being linked to Italian fascism. Several Spanish-American columnists prone to religious anti-Semitism and political anti-communism also collaborated with this medium. Their articles featured the paternalistic notion that both Spain and Portugal had spread Western culture throughout Africa, America and Asia¹⁶. That legacy was transmitted through language, regardless of the lexical differences between the Portuguese and the Spanish, and Catholicism¹⁷.

The transcendence of the Hispanic and Western civilization was legitimized through a hereditary, traditional, corporate, decentralized monarchy in administrative terms and Christian¹⁸. The latter component wished to restore an arcane communitarian order that had been perverted by the Renaissance, the Lutheran Reformation and the French Revolution, which embodied "a three

¹³ Pimenta, Alfredo. *Política monarchica*. Lisboa. Empresa Lusitana Editora. 1917, p. 36.

¹⁴ "Slave of power". Raposo, José Hipólito. *Descobrendo Ilhías descobertas*. Lisboa. Edições Gama. 1941, p.173.

¹⁵ Raposo, José Hipólito. "Lusitanidade" in *Integralismo Lusitano - Estudos Portugueses*, Vol. II, Fasc. IV, (1933), pp. 218-228.

¹⁶ Maeztu, Ramiro de. *Defensa de la Hispanidad*. Madrid. Cultura española. 1941, p. 25.

¹⁷ El Marqués de Lozoya, "Balmes y los orígenes del separatismo catalán", *Acción Española*, N°48, 01 March 1934, p. 1206.

¹⁸ Maeztu, Ramiro de, "La nueva filosofía de la historia y el problema de la Hispanidad", *Acción Española*, N°58, 01 August 1931, pp. 362-368.

headed hydra" in Maeztu's works¹⁹. They also emphasized that the Spanish Homeland dated all the way back to the VIth century, when the Visigoth kings Hermenegildo and Recaredo embraced Christianity²⁰. This notion, heavily theocratic in its nature, took inspiration from a model of local administration that advocated municipality as an alternative to the Liberal State that, in the words of Raúl Morodo, alluded to a form of pre-corporate state²¹.

In these central years, both *Hispanidad* and *Lusitanidade* became synonymous and each project differed from the ethnic nationalism featured in National Socialism²². They both foresaw the creation of a 'European Romania' as an image of the Imperial Christian Rome resulting from the union of Portugal, Spain, Italy, France and Romania²³ would construct²⁴. The republics of Hispanic America would be integrated into such a commonwealth. Finally, the Philippines and even the Berber community would belong to that brotherhood²⁵. Sardinha pointed out that the Berber communities had a form of communal administration similar to the ruling the Iberian countries during the Early Modern Age. On the other hand, Hipólito Raposo stated that the *açoricidade*, *brasilidade* and *orientalidade* could coexist within this identity²⁶.

António Sardinha compiled the postulates of this "Empire of Morality" in his manuscript, *La Alianza Peninsular*, published in 1929. He supported the thesis that Spain and Portugal should maintain an autonomous government, but that they would cooperate in administrative, military, moral and cultural grounds. This confederation despised the project of an "Iberian Union"²⁷ because, especially to the Portuguese, a politically unified peninsula bore great resemblance to the kind

¹⁹"Three-Headed Monster". Piñar López, Blas. *Combate por España (I)*. Madrid. Fuerza Editorial, S.A. 1975, p. 56.

²⁰"Doctrina y acción", *Acción Española*, N°29,01 May 1933, p.455.

²¹Morodo, Raúl. *Los orígenes ideológicos del franquismo: Acción Española*. 2ªed., Madrid: Alianza Editorial.1985, p.15.

²²Rebelo, Jose Pequeto.*Espanha e Portugal: unidade e dualidade peninsular. Op.,Cit.*, p.11.

²³War. Piñar wrote about that multiple times and he was influenced by this group. Piñar, López, Blas, "Sangre Rumana en Majadahonda", *ABC*, 18 January 1958.

²⁴Pemartín, José, "Vida y cultura", *Acción Española*, N°47, 16 February 1934, p. 1139.

²⁵Sardinha, António. *La Alianza Peninsular*. Segovia. El Adelanto. 1940, p. 403.

²⁶Raposo, José Hipólito. *Descubriendo Ilhías descubiertas. Op.,Cit.*, p. 31.

²⁷ Prologue written by Marqués de Quintañar. Sardinha, António. *La Alianza Peninsular. Op.,Cit.*,p. XXIV.



of oppression that had been endorsed by the Spanish Crown during Philip II’s takeover of the country in 1580.

This ideal was to be embodied, albeit separately, across the early XXth century; in Portugal, between 1926 and 1974, with the implementation of a dictatorial regime known as Estado Novo in 1933 under Antònio de Oliveira Salazar’s autocratic rule. Almost simultaneously, this ideal was instituted in Spain between 1939 and 1975 during General Francisco Franco’s military dictatorship. Both regimes were fiercely anti-communist, antiliberal bulwarks, defenders of order, peace and Christian traditions. Nevertheless, between 1962 and 1965, during the Second Vatican Council, Catholic dogmas were renewed giving rise to new interpretations of the Scriptures²⁸, more open and modern in spirit. Coincidentally, during this period technocrats of both regimes pushed for a liberal economic agenda, which incited hatred amongst Spanish and Portuguese diehard reactionaries. This resentment would eventually turn them into scorn opponents of the regime.

In the Spanish framework, the stubborn Blas Piñar López²⁹ met in 1964 with a group of reactionaries in the Monastery of San Miguel de las Victorias³⁰. Two years later he founded the magazine *Fuerza Nueva* and subsequently created a homonymous political association. *Fuerza Nueva* emerged in Spain in 1966 as a reaction to these changes and reforms. Initially just a political association, later on became a political faction that praised José Antonio Primo de Rivera, the most prominent figure in Spanish Fascism, and Corneliu Zela Codreanu, the Romanian leader of the Iron Guard (who, according to Piñar, “had unified politics and religion”)³¹.

Fuerza Nueva received the approval of the Political Reform Act as early as 1976, the year that the Spanish transition to democracy took off. Until its disbandment in 1982, *Fuerza Nueva* deemed itself as a “religious and political

²⁸ Corrêa de Oliveira, Plinio. *Revolución y contra-revolución*. Lima. Erba Gráficos, S.A.C. 2005, p.148.

²⁹ *Fundación Nacional Francisco Franco (FNFF)*, Madrid. “Carta de Blas Piñar a Franco quejándose de las injurias de que es objeto en los diarios *ARRIBA* y *PUEBLO*”. 4521 (Rollo:60), pp. 1-9.

³⁰ Rodríguez Jiménez, José Luis. “Origen, desarrollo y disolución de *Fuerza Nueva*. Una aproximación al estudio de la extrema derecha española” in *Revista de Estudios Políticos*, N°73, (1991), pp. 261-286.

³¹ Piñar López, Blas. *Escrito para la Historia*. Madrid. *Fuerza Nueva* Editorial S.A. 2000, p. 426.

order of our time"³². In his speeches, Blas Piñar extolled the military to put an end to the democratic regime through violent insurrection and even stated that general Franco's legitimacy relied on his actions to prevent Marxism from expanding. Thus, Blas Piñar referred to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) as a "Preventive War"³³ and referred to that event as "Crusade", "Struggle"³⁴, alongside expressions such as "glorious blood poured into the Crusade"³⁵. These are common terms in the Francoist rhetoric, both during and after the regime's end and even to this day. He also argued that the best way to fence off from the Statute of Autonomy (which came to effect in 1978) and, henceforth, to stop Spain from breaking apart into "aberrant micro nationalisms" (meaning Catalan, Basque and Galician), was to enforce a Catholic, social and representative monarchy.³⁶

FN lunged for a Christian Europe³⁷ where right-wing extremists would gather regardless of their individual trends, just like its predecessors in *AE* and other European coreligionists had wished for before. In this regard, Leon Degrelle, a former Belgian Wallonian prominent Nazi collaborator³⁸, exerted an influence on the youth faction, *Fuerza Joven* (FJ)³⁹. At the same time, its magazine, paid attention to the *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI)⁴⁰, led by Giorgio Almirante. The MSI was founded in 1946 by followers of the former dictator Mussolini, but it sought to revise historical fascism whose strategy proved to be effective in the democratic sphere, and it was even stated that Democratic and Communist parties were conspiring against that alternative because "its presence constituted a relentless accusation of the current tendency towards corruption scandals, weakness for fear of subversion and compromises that favored the rising star of communism"⁴¹. The MSI supported the *Strategia della tensione*⁴² which referred to

³² Casals i Meseguer, Xavier. *¿Qué era?, ¿qué fue? El fascismo: Entre el legado de Franco y la modernidad de Le Pen (1975-1997)*. Barcelona. Destino.1996, p.40.

³³ Piñar López, Blas. *Hacia una III República?*. Madrid. Fuerza Nueva Editorial S.A. 1979, p. 55.

³⁴ "Don Blas Piñar presidió un acto de Afirmación Nacional en Santander", *Informaciones*, 12 May 1975.

³⁵ *Boletín Informativo de Fuerza Nueva*, Nº 12, 04 april 1981, p.26.

³⁶ Piñar López, Blas. *Hacia un Estado Nacional*. Madrid. Fuerza Nueva Editorial S.A. 1980, pp.5-10.

³⁷ Piñar López, Blas. *Filipinas: un país hispánico*. Madrid. Ediciones Cultura Hispánica. 1957, p.16.

³⁸ Casals i Meseguer, Xavier. *La tentación neofascista en España*. Barcelona. Plaza & Janés Editores, S.A. 1998, p. 77.

³⁹ Young Force.

⁴⁰ Italian Social Movement.

⁴¹ Gómez Tello, José Luis, *Fuerza Nueva*, Nº 335, 09 June 1973, p.1.

⁴² Strategy of tensión (Estrategia de tensión).



the subversive actions carried out by Italian neo-fascists to quell left-wing student and worker protests. Many Italian neo-fascists advised Spanish counter-revolutionary groups and one of them, Stefano Delle Chiaie, was in contact with violent youths from Fuerza Nueva.

These ideas also took grasp in Portugal. Ever since the drafting of Fuerza Nueva, encouraged patriots to join counterrevolutionary factions willing to overthrow Marcelo Caetano’s government. General António de Spínola, nicknamed the “Portuguese Kerenski”, was also accused of treason after deserting the Portuguese colony of Angola⁴³.

At the same time, the Portuguese *Círculo de Estudos Sociais Vector*, a religious cultural organization, appeared soon after *Fuerza Nueva* had in 1969. Guilherme Braga da Cruz, rector of Coimbra University, founded this group under António da Cruz Rodrigues’s advice, who would eventually collaborate with *Resistência* magazine⁴⁴. Unlike União Nacional (UN)⁴⁵, Vector never aimed to constitute a proper political party on its own, but shared some common influences thanks to French Catholic elements from Jean Ousset’s Office International des Œuvres de Formation Civique et d’Action Doctrinale selon le Droit Naturel et Chrétien (OI)⁴⁶ and the thesis of the Brazilian organization Sociedade Brasileira de Defesa da Tradição, Família e Propriedade (TFP) which exerted some influence on Braga da Cruz.

Vector supported a national state project based on the Social Doctrine of the Church, which relied on the patriarchal structure of the Catholic Church; while the Pope equates fatherhood, Virgin Mary is associated with motherhood⁴⁷. Vector looked forward to three educational practices in order to indoctrinate the faithful. Firstly, the “Acção capilar”, which instructed students in Christendom. Secondly, the “Célula”, which organized the "groups of friends" that met on a monthly basis.

⁴³ González Sáez, Juan Manuel. “Visiones de la transición portuguesa desde el búnker franquista: la revista Fuerza Nueva y la Revolución de los Claveles (1974)” in *Historia Actual Online*, N°32, (2013), pp.107-117.

⁴⁴ Marchi, Riccardo. *A direita nunca existiu: as direitas extraparlamentares na institucionalização da democracia portuguesa (1976-1980)*. Lisboa. Imprensa de Ciências Sociais. 2017, pp. 341- 344.

⁴⁵National Union (Unión Nacional).

⁴⁶ International Office for Works of Civic Formation and Doctrinal Action according to Natural and Christian Law (Obras de Educación Cívica y Acción Doctrinal según el Derecho Natural y Cristiano).

⁴⁷Richard, André. *Sinais para o nosso tempo: Fátima, Vaticano II*. Lisboa. Circulo de Estudos Sociais Vector. 1972, pp. 60-64.

Finally, the “Redes Orgânicas” that were structured around local, family and university grounds⁴⁸.

On the other hand, its main references, Jean Ousset, who belonged to an organization which became the spiritual guide to Latin American death squads⁴⁹, and Plínio Corrêa, who positioned himself in favor of the Brazilian military coup of 1964, wanted to establish an anti-communist, anti-democratic, elitist and anti-revolutionary state⁵⁰. Accordingly, Jorge Borges de Macedo, who collaborated with *Resistência*, stated that the Fatherland could not be subjected to democratic processes because “a Patria não se plebiscito: ou se defende ou se trai”⁵¹. In addition, records indicate that it deemed as necessary to distribute arms amongst the believers so that they could assist the regular army. Social order was to be preserved through a traditional Catholic and organic monarchy, which constituted the best alternative to any government in their eyes.

Vector did not resort to an aggressive rhetoric, nor did it incite hatred, but it encouraged “atenção” to all those sectors that made pejorative comments against Christians⁵². It came into contact with Fuerza Nueva when some of its members attended the XVIth Meeting of the Circle of Friends of the Catholic City held in Madrid in 1972. Vector also borrowed several tenants from previous right-wing groups, such as IL. Just like Fuerza Nueva, Vector subscribed a European model that borrowed several elements from IL by stating that “a presença portuguesa é europeia”⁵³. Being Portugal a European nation, it had established Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau as states in that same image. *Resistência* criticized those Portuguese nationals that had been unable to defend their empire, hence betraying their fatherland.

⁴⁸II Congresso de Leigos para a animação cristã. “Apresentação dos Nossos métodos do trabalho”. *Ephemera-Biblioteca e Arquivo de José Pacheco Pereira*, Lisboa.1970, p.5.

⁴⁹ Robin, Marie-Monique. *Escadrons de la mort, l'école française*. Paris. La Découverte.2004, p.161.

⁵⁰ Zanutto, Gizele. *É un caos!!! A luta Anti-Agro Reformista de Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira*. (PhD). Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina. Centro de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas.Florianópolis. Programa de Pos-Graduação em História. 2003, p. 61.

⁵¹ “Patria is not a plebiscite: it either defends or betrays itself”. Macedo, Jorge Borges de. *As condições da esperança: resposta ao Inquérito sobre Portugal promovido pelo Círculo de Estudos Sociais VECTOR*. Lisboa. Resistência. 1978, p.6.

⁵² That is “Pay attention to”. Estatutos do Círculo de Estudos Sociais Vector (CESV). *Ephemera-Biblioteca e Arquivo de José Pacheco Pereira*, Lisboa. 02 July 1970, p.5.

⁵³“The Portuguese presence is European”. Macedo, Jorge Borges de. *As condições da esperança: resposta ao Inquérito sobre Portugal promovido pelo Círculo de Estudos Sociais VECTOR. Op., Cit.*, p.8.



The Neo-Panhellenic Right-Wing Extremism

The neo-panhellenism nationalism drew inspiration from some medieval elements, such as traditional monarchy, social inequality, communitarianism, social corporatism and a theocratic state endorsed by Christian faith. This political movement asserted the reunification of all Greeks, both inside and outside the borders of Greece; Macedonia to the North, Sicily to the West, the Black Sea to the East and Cyprus to the South⁵⁴. It also aimed to include Greek communities that had settled in other countries, such as those in the United States of America.

Despite their similarities, this movement differed from its Iberian counterparts. Most notably, two separate notions divided its rank and file. On the one hand, the *Megali Idea*, which would conform the core ideal during Ioannis Metaxás’s dictatorship in the 1930s and, later on, during the Colonels’ Junta dictatorship from 1967 to 1974. On the other, the *Enosis*, a concept introduced by Greek Cypriots. While the Great Idea featured an anti-communist undertone as its main trait, the Union, given the disagreements of the leaders, split into two alternative subgroups⁵⁵: the pragmatic one, led by Archbishop Makarios III, and the reactionary one, organized by Colonel Georgios Grivas, an anti-communist hardliner who had joined an organization known as ‘X’ in his youth⁵⁶.

Once Greece had broken free from the Ottoman rule in the XIXth century, religious and social elites endorsed the Megali Idea through anti-communist organizations. One of those, known as ζωή⁵⁷, prevented communist influence in the country by publishing material that promoted family values, presented an exploitative narrative about the Byzantine Empire and, also, exalted traditional Greek cultural values⁵⁸. However, these contacts resulted in failure after Venizelos

⁵⁴Mirbagheri, Farid. *Historical dictionary of Cyprus*. Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press. 2010, p. 110.

⁵⁵This classification was made *motu proprio*.

⁵⁶Anagnostopoulou, Sia. “Makarios II, 1950-77: Creating the Ethnarchic State” in *The Archbishops of Cyprus in the Modern Age: The Changing Role of the Archbishop-Ethnarch, their Identities and Politics (Cyprus Historical and Contemporary Studies)*. Coord. Andrekos Varnava; Michalis N. Michael. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013, pp.243.

⁵⁷Zoí or life (Vida).

⁵⁸Makrides, Vasilios N. “Orthodoxy in the Service of Anticommunist. The religious organization Zoë during the Greek Civil War” in *Greek Civil War: Essays on a Conflict of Exceptionalism and Silences* Coords. Philip Carabott; Thanasis D. Sfikas. Aldershot; Burlington, VT. Ashgate. 2004 pp. 159-170.

stirred republican sentiments amongst army cadre⁵⁹. Nonetheless, the Great Idea ended up finding advocates in anti-communist right-wing extremists.

Those sectors coalesced around Metaxás and soon gained King Constantine I's sympathy⁶⁰ after successfully articulating an anti-democratic discourse as a reaction to the extension of universal suffrage⁶¹. Supported by the military, Metaxás formed an autocracy that Jon V.Kofas deemed as quasi-fascist⁶². His ruling over the country, mostly known as the 4th of August regime (the date on which his dictatorship was established), relied on a xenophobic, cultural supremacist, anti-communist, anti-liberal and anti-democratic set of ideas that preached about Turkish barbarism. In addition, he abolished the courts and banned political parties other than his own one. He also aimed to establish a proto-corporate organic status across family, faith, education and the state. Finally, he created secret police force reminiscent to the National Socialist *Geheime Staatspolizei* or Gestapo⁶³. Still, Metaxás's regime bore more resemblance to Salazar's Estado Novo than to Hitler's national-socialism. Lacking an adequate support base and, in spite of British military assistance, the dictatorship perished in 1941 under German and Italian assault, shortly after Metaxás's death.

Decades of political and social turmoil followed this event. The memory of the Second World War and the subsequent civil conflict significantly influenced the average Greek citizen's notion of politics. In result, although a political situation that mirrored liberal democracy was established, left-wing sectors and communists were ostracized. The Ένωσις Κέντρου⁶⁴ (EK) prevailed as the predominant political entity during those years, bringing together royalists as well as right-wing extremist militants⁶⁵. Extremist sectors that related most to Metaxás seceded from the party. The king, Constantine II, kept being sympathetic towards them. In 1966 President Yorgos Papandréu, aware of the possibility of a coup

⁵⁹Muirhead, R.E, "Enosis", *The spectator*, 24 October 1954, p.363.

⁶⁰*Ibidem*, p.167.

⁶¹Papacosma, S.Victor. "The military in Greek politics: A Historical survey" in *Greece in transition: essays in the history of modern Greece, 1821-1974* Coord. John T. A. Koumoulides; Domna N Dontas. London: Zeno. 1977, pp. 173-189.

⁶²Kofas, Jon V. *Authoritarianism in Greece: the Metaxas regime*. Boulder, Colo.: East European Monographs 1983, p.59.

⁶³ Secret Police. Lee, Stephen J. *The European dictatorships 1918-1945*. London: Methuen. 1987, p.55.

⁶⁴ Enosis Kentrou or Centre Union Party (Unión de Centro).

⁶⁵ Stuart, James; Clogg, Richar. *Inside the colonels Greece*. London. Chatto and Windus.1972, p.136.



d'état supported by the monarchy, tried to dissuade the king but he was removed from office nonetheless. Thus, on April 21 1967, under the pretext of avoiding a new Communist-led civil war, a group of military officers led by Geórgios Papadóπουλος staged the coup. Nikos Kotardis and Nikos Vafeas have stated that the dictatorship of the Colonels borrowed much of its rhetoric from the 4th August Regime. In doing so, the regime segregated citizens into two categories: those in favor of the regime were labeled as εθνικό φρονες⁶⁶ and, in turn, those expressing their opposition as archetypically αντιεθνικά στοιχεία⁶⁷.

In his speeches Papadóπουλος referred to anarchism, communism and the mixture of both as the disarray resulting from the party system. Moreover, he used to remark that communism was incompatible with the Greek and with the Christian civilization due to its secular ideas. Due in part to the personality cult deeply rooted in the nature of the regime, in 1973 Colonel Dimitrios Ioannidis radicalized and staged a countercoup to oust Papadopoulos from the presidency. He allowed the U.S. government to establish two military bases in Greece during the Arab-Israeli war (1948), which made the opposition suspicious⁶⁸. In that year students at the Polytechnic University of Athens sparked a revolt in which they demanded the dissolution of the Military Junta and the approval of measures that would restore freedom of speech. In response to the uprising, the Military Junta sent armored units to quell the riots. In those days, the Junta had deployed the National Guard to carry out a coup in Cyprus to remove Makarios III⁶⁹, an adamant defender of the *Enosis*, from office. Nevertheless, the Turkish government sent troops to defend Turkish-Cypriot territories under the premise “we have suffered for 11 years: let them suffer now”⁷⁰. That setback brought a swift end to the

⁶⁶ *Ethniko frones* or national elements (Elementos nacionales).

⁶⁷ *Antiethnika stoicheia* or anti-national elements (Elementos anti-nacionales). Panayote, Elías Dimitras. “Greece: the virtual absence of an extreme right” in *the extreme right in Europe and the USA*. Coord. Paul Hainsworth. London: Pinter.1992, p. 250.

⁶⁸ Papadimitriou, Despina. “George Papadopoulos and the dictatorship of the colonels (1967-1974)” in *Balkan Strongmen: dictators and authoritarian rulers of South Eastern Europe* Coord. Bernd Jürgen Fischer. London: C. Hurst. 2007, p. 408.

⁶⁹ Makarios escaped from the island. “Cyprus: annual review for 1974”. *The National Archives* (TNA), Kew, Public Record Office (PRO). F.C.O. 160/168/26. 21 February 1975, p.1.

⁷⁰ “The Athens end of the Cyprus crisis of July 1974”. *The National Archives* (TNA), Kew, Public Record Office (PRO). FCO 160/168/9. 12 February 1975, p.2.

colonels' regime and led to the Democratic Transition known as the Μεταπολίτευση⁷¹, during which the colonels ended up to prison⁷².

Despite the political and socioeconomic transformations, former dictator Papadópoulos joined a right-wing extreme political group, Εθνική Πολιτική Ένωσις, which partook in the country's electoral framework of 1984. This party kept the same ideological line that the Military Junta had nurtured: anti-communism, metaxism, ultranationalism and militarism⁷³.

As far as the *Enosis* is concerned, the ecclesiastical hierarchy promoted a messianic idea. Archbishop Kyrillos II, between 1909-1916, was particularly important in this endeavor; he denounced British imperialists, who had ruled the island since the XIXth century, and argued that the Union was the only resource capable of wiping out social inequalities, ethnic confrontation and restoring the foundations of the Byzantine Empire⁷⁴. Although he was the first archbishop to legitimize violence as a direct method of gaining independence from the British government, it was not until the 1950s that the archbishop Makarios III approached Εθνική Οργάνωσις Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών (EOKA)⁷⁵, a terrorist, right-wing organization led by Georgios Grivas. Grivas kept a journal in which he stated that Makarios was aware of such activities and it seems that the archbishop was in correspondence with him by signing off as "Makariote"⁷⁶. This group, which operated between 1955 and 1959, attacked the Turkish-Cypriot population⁷⁷ as well as British and Greek-Cypriot citizens who remained neutral towards the British government. Makarios denounced the injustices of the British government

⁷¹ *Metapolítefsi* or Regime change (Transición). Harry J. Psomiades. "Greece: from the Colonels rule to democracy" in *From dictatorship to democracy. Coping with the legacies of Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism* Coord. John H. Herz. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press. 1982, p. 59.

⁷² "The Athens end of the Cyprus crisis of July 1974". *The National Archives* (TNA), *Op., Cit.*, p.1.

⁷³ "AROUND THE WORLD; Jailed Greek Dictator Sponsors Rightist Party", *Reuters*, 30 January 1984, p.5.

⁷⁴ Varnava, Andrekos; Pophaides, Irene. "Kyrillos II, 1909-16: The First Greek Nationalist and Enoist Archbishop-Ethnarch" in *The Archbishops of Cyprus in the Modern Age: The Changing Role of the Archbishop-Ethnarch, their Identities and Politics (Cyprus Historical and Contemporary Studies)*. Coord. Andrekos Varnava; Michalis N. Michael. Cambridge Scholars Publishing. 2013, pp. 148-176.

⁷⁵ Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston or National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (Organización Nacional de Combatientes Chipriotas).

⁷⁶ Grivas, Georgios. *The terrorism in Cyprus: the captured documents*. London. Her Majesty's Stationery Office. 1956, p.2.

⁷⁷ It is necessary to point out that there could be a Turkish Cypriot terrorist group. "EOKA plans and activities". *The National Archives* (TNA), Kew, Public Record Office (PRO). F.O. 371 117657. RG 1081/1007. 06 October 1955, p.3.



at the Bandung Conference in 1955 in these terms “I accuse the British Government that undermines and endangers the peace and security of the Eastern Mediterranean by its international machinations”⁷⁸.

EOKA's terrorist activities should not be ignored, nor can the response of the Governor of Cyprus, John Harding, who allowed members of the British army, aided by Turkish soldiers, to torture Greek Cypriot citizens sympathetic to their cause in secret locations. There were three kinds of institutions where citizens were tortured. Firstly, detention camps were located in Kokkina. Secondly, concentration camps were in the Omorfita's Local Police, in Kyrenia's Castle, in Platres and in Pyla. Thirdly, military camps were settled in Xeros Potamos, and finally, isolation centers were in Pafhos. Women were taken to the Central Prison⁷⁹ and Pyla⁸⁰. One victim, André Koronidis, testified that some months before he was arrested by force, he had received threats. He was tortured in Lefka and he denounced his torturers, Roby Linsee and Gerard O'Driscoll⁸¹. Other inmates revealed in the media that they were tortured by Turk, British, Greek and German officers⁸². Terrorist activity ended when the British government granted Independence to the island.

These events echoed in Athens and a pro-Enosis demonstration was organized in Metaxás Square⁸³. Beginning in 1961, Makarios III fragmented the enosists when he publicly declared that, in order to meet his goals, he would accept assistance from the Communists. Grivas rejected his stance and led the EOKA-B⁸⁴, a re-foundation of EOKA, presumably committed to using peaceful tactics, which was composed of EOKA members who disapproved of Makarios's "change to the left". After that, the archbishop survived several assassination attempts. Grivas joined the Greek military and declared himself an opponent of the Republic of Cyprus, the communists, the Turkish resistance and all of Makarios' allies. The British media

⁷⁸“Britain accused over Cyprus”, *The Times*, 06 May 1955, p.5.

⁷⁹Pissas, Michalakis Nichola. *The truth about concentration camp in Cyprus*. New York's Library Store pamphlets COLL. P 14170. 1957, pp. 1-3.

⁸⁰*Ibidem*, p. 17.

⁸¹“*Communiqué par l'Agence d'Athènes le 16 avril 1956. Un jeune Chypriote torture par deux officiers anglais*”, *The National Archives* (TNA), Kew, Public Record Office (PRO). FO 371 123398. RG 1081/1224. 04 June 1956, pp.1-2.

⁸²Pissas, Michalakis Nichola. *The truth about concentration camp in Cyprus. Op., Cit.*, p.38.

⁸³“Greeks meet Greeks: ENOSIS RIOTING”, *The Guardian*, 13 January 1961, p.1.

⁸⁴“Gen.Grivas linked with anti-Makarios ‘plots’”, *The Times*, 26 October 1971, p.8.

covered this ideological struggle and stated that, despite the fact that Grivas drew greater popular admiration, Makarios continued to enjoy the support of the Greek-Cypriot elite. At the same time, Grivas seized control of the National Guard, while the archbishop closed a deal with the government of Czechoslovakia to import weapons and institute a national militia⁸⁵. Under these circumstances, Makarios's death was reported in 1974 and Nikos Sampson, considered by many to be a puppet of the Greek Military Junta, succeeded him⁸⁶. Grivas died soon after, thus ruining any chance of the *Enosis* being carried out, an idea that would exist in the Greek Cypriot inhabitants' imaginary for years to come⁸⁷.

Electoral Failure

These entire groups maintained international links either through correspondence or press publications during the 1970s and the 1980s. All of them, with the exception of the Greek Cypriot one, focused on providing a parliamentary alternative equivalent of the Movimento Sociale Italiano notorious for being the first of its kind to be elected to parliament since the end of World War II in Italy and in Europe⁸⁸. Consequently, just like FN in 1976 or the EPEN after 1984, they shared the will of consolidating a feasible coup.

Unlike Vector, Antonio da Cruz Rodrigues considered the Portuguese party system to be alien to his political concerns, so he arranged that the Movimento Popular Português (MPP)⁸⁹ would convert to conventional politics, but after its debacle in the 1976 elections he disbanded the party⁹⁰. Still, even if these parties had little impact on their countries, a European coalition known as Eurodestra was created. It was comprised of Spanish representatives led by FN. Italian right-wing extremist representatives from the MSI and French extremists led by Jean Louis

⁸⁵Public Record Office (PRO). FCO 9/57. *Cyprus Political Affairs (Internal) CC1/3*. Common Wealth office to Nicosia. (MEWUN). 25 January 1967, p.2.

⁸⁶"Need for a miracle to end the confusion over Cyprus", *The Times*, 22 January 1975, p.12.

⁸⁷"Mr. Nicos Sampson is replaced.", *The Times*, 24 July 1974, p.1.

⁸⁸Rodríguez Jiménez, José Luis. *Reaccionarios y golpistas: la extrema derecha en España del tardofranquismo a la consolidación de la democracia (1967-1982)*. Madrid. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. 1994, pp. 248-250.

⁸⁹ Portuguese People's Movement (Movimiento Popular Portugués).

⁹⁰Marchi, Ricardo. "The Portuguese Radical Right in the Democratic Period". In Andrea Mammone, Emmanuel Godin, Brian Jenkins (eds.), *Mapping the Extreme Right in Contemporary Europe*. Londres e New York: Routledge. 2012, pp. 95-108.



Tixier-Vignancour, who at that time headed the Parti des Forces Nouvelles (PFN)⁹¹. This European group was originally going to involve some prominent Portuguese extremists, but da Cruz Rodrigues's group considered that it did not reflect Salazarist principles enough and, as a consequence, he decided to stay out of this initiative. Another alternative led by Kaúlza de Oliveira Arriaga, the former commander in chief of Portuguese forces in Mozambique, eventually decided not to take part after Piñar accused him of religious liberalization.

The disagreements between the two Iberian leaders were accentuated, since de Arriaga had always portrayed himself as a staunch defender of Catholicism. Even during his years as commander in chief, he was in favor of the use of violence against the Mozambicans and promoted regrouping policies in rural hamlets known as “aldeamentos” that acted as a bulwark against communist infiltration in the most conflictive areas⁹². This alternative failed due to Blas Piñar's ideological immobility and because the MSI adopted an authoritarian approach and dictated the guidelines for the entire parliamentary process. Moreover, the so-called Eurodestra did not meet Piñar's religious expectations and he soon ruled out this ideological line. In contrast, in Greece no right-wing party had emerged as an echo of the Μεταπολίτευση yet. As a result, Papadópoulos had not attempted to become part of the parliamentary spectrum until 1984 with the Group of the European Right⁹³. It should be noted that this new group was made up of the Front National (FN)⁹⁴ and MSI. That year the Group of the European Right achieved parliamentary representation, but in the following years it failed to secure any seats and EPEN did not adapt to the changes the Greek society was undergoing at the time. Between 1986 and 1993, Piñar promoted the Spanish National Front, influenced by Le Pen's party, which failed because, while the French party emerged as a strategy to respond to the problems of its time and its discourse was structured around the exaltation of national identity, the policies promoted by Piñar did not take into account the problems of the 1980s.

⁹¹ Party of New Forces (Partido de las Nuevas Fuerzas).

⁹² 5011. PAA. 940,1 (8), PT-ADN-SGDN-2REP-212-0728-006, *Arquivo da Defesa Nacional* (AND), Lisboa, 18 July 1973, pp. 1-3.

⁹³ Gallego Margalef, Ferrán. *Una patria imaginaria: la extrema derecha española (1973-2005)*. Madrid. Editorial síntesis. 2006, p.133.

⁹⁴ National Front (Frente Nacional).

Finally, the fact that just two out of the three political groups, the Greek and Portuguese, remained outside the parliamentary sphere is worth mentioning. Their Spanish counterpart obtained national representation with Blas Piñar's coalition of Unión Nacional (UN)⁹⁵ in 1979, despite having only one deputy.

Conclusion

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This paper suggests that right-wing extremism movements in southern European countries had remarkable similarities. First and foremost, a nationalist mystique rooted on messianic ideas; in the Spanish case, it was known as *Hispanidad*, whereas in the Portuguese case as *Lusitanidade*. In Greece it was referred to as the *Megali Idea* and in Cyprus, as far as Greek Cypriots are concerned, *Enosis*. Secondly, a ferocious rhetoric against communism, liberalism and democracy. And thirdly, traditionalist values reflective of the medieval era. All these similar sets of beliefs proved not to be compatible with the social and political rhythms of the 1970s and 1980s, for they lacked any room for programmatic renewability, and, eventually, their leaders persisted in collaborating with the military in an attempt to seize power again.

In that regard, *Acción Española* was probably the most influential, in that it was the only right-wing extremist organization that encouraged a successful military insurrection directly. Said insurrection, set in motion in 1936, sparked a nearly three-year civil war that resulted in a militaristic autocracy. All things considered, it is quite surprising that its successor, *Fuerza Nueva*, was also the only Southern European right-wing extremism party capable of gaining any kind of representation in any parliament after 1970, if only for a brief period of time. However, repeated attempts at military coups (more specifically on February 23 1981 and October 27 1982) may explain its electoral lackluster performance. Despite the fact that its involvement in the coup remains unclear, this coup attempt damaged the party's image.

Piñar showed little interest in reforming his ideological approach too, even as he promoted new partisan alternatives. He wished to emulate some of the

⁹⁵National Union.



ideological schemes that his French namesake had already put to test. Those schemes emphasized national identity by blaming immigrants for downgrading the national sovereignty of France. However, Piñar failed once again because he promoted the Spanish identity through an unappealing notion of nostalgia that highlighted the myth of a civilizing mission in America, Africa and Asia allegedly carried out by Catholics. Moreover, unlike Le Pen, Piñar excluded racism from his political agenda, antagonizing most right-wing extremism voters by doing so.

This track record might resonate with da Cruz Rodrigues, who created the Aliança Nacional (NA)⁹⁶ in the late 1980s, after the failure of MPP, and in 2005 the Partido Nacional Renovador (PNR)⁹⁷. In Portugal, it is worth pointing out that Aliança Democrática (AD)⁹⁸ was made up of independent candidates. In Spain, many of the FN voters were content with the postulates of Alianza Popular (AP)⁹⁹, led by Manuel Fraga Iribarne just as much as with the thesis of Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD)¹⁰⁰, led by Adolfo Suárez (who also held several positions in the government of Francoist Spain during its last stages). In Greece, nonetheless, the population soon gave in to the conservative policies that were introduced by Konstantinos Karamanlis, who created the political party Νέα Δημοκρατία (ND)¹⁰¹. The fact that democratic right-wing alternatives continued to gain social support constitutes another key factor as to why all of these right-wing extremism political parties failed. As conservative alternatives gained popularity, extremist measures became obsolete.

In conclusion, the right-wing extremists failed greatly during the last quarter of the XXth century by not giving up on old-fashioned ideologies, by exalting the dictatorial regimes that preceded them in the first place, and finally, by exorting the military to revolt in order to constitute an alternative to the democratic system. This would explain why other conservative options, which had succeeded in getting rid of the most outdated of tenets by focusing only on waging war on communism, defeated the extremists at the polls.

⁹⁶ National Alliance.

⁹⁷ National Renewal Party.

⁹⁸ Democratic Alliance.

⁹⁹ Popular Alliance.

¹⁰⁰ Union of Democratic Centre.

¹⁰¹ *Νέα Δημοκρατία* or New Democracy (Nueva Democracia).

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