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# From New Order to the Millennium of White Power: Norwegian Fascism Between Party Politics and Lone-Actor Terrorism

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## ABSTRACT

By analysing the conception of history expressed in different textual material, this article traces the evolution of post-war fascist ideology in Norway. By focusing on the first real attempts at establishing fascist parties in Norway after World War II, *Norsk Front* (1975–1980) and *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* (1980–1991), and the later attempts in the 1990s by the first leader of both parties, Erik Blücher, to re-calibrate fascism outside of party politics, it argues that the present case study can be used to advance the understanding of fascism both specifically and generically. Specifically, because it traces the evolution of Norwegian fascism all the way up the present terrorist turn of right-wing extremism. Generically, because the case study both shows how a distinct fascist conception of historicity survived, yet mutated, after World War II, and how two related narrative structures or tropes have shaped the ideologies of the extreme-right, both past and present: the rebirth myth and the trope of a coming apocalypse.

## KEYWORDS

Norwegian fascism;  
leaderless resistance;  
fascism; the extreme right;  
neo-Nazism

## Introduction

By analysing the conception of history expressed in different textual material such as articles,<sup>1</sup> essays, manifestos, party programmes and editorials, this article tries to advance the understanding of post-war fascism both generically and specifically. It focuses on the first real attempts at establishing fascist parties in Norway after World War II, *Norsk Front* [Norwegian Front] (1975–1980) and *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* [National People's Party] (1980–1991), and the later attempts in the 1990s by the first leader of both parties, Erik Blücher (b. 1953), to reformulate a tactics of 'leaderless resistance' outside of party politics. It sets out to show that the case of *Norsk Front*, *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* and Blücher can be used to highlight two main trends in the evolution of post-World War II fascism: First, the persistence of what I—with reference to François Hartog—call the fascist 'regime of historicity'<sup>2</sup> (i.e. the way fascist movements linked together the three

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<sup>1</sup>All translations from Norwegian is done by the author of this article.

<sup>2</sup>François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time*, transl. Saskia Brown (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2016).

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categories of lived, phenomenological time: past, present, and future) and the tropes and narratives that characterize it. Secondly, its mutation in response to the hostile environment facing revolutionary nationalism in the post-fascist age, mirroring transnational tendencies on the extreme right towards groupuscularization and internationalization, as well as the influence exerted by the evolution of ‘Universal Nazism’, the spread of White Power music, and the emergence of ‘leaderless resistance’ and terrorism as a revolutionary strategy.<sup>3</sup>

The article shows how Blücher originally tried—in the beginning with the support of former members of the interwar fascist party, *Nasjonal Samling* [NS; National Unity] (1933–1945)—to develop *Norsk Front* as a mass party, modelled after British *National Front*, and bent on forcing structural change on society on par with the attempts of the interwar fascist parties.<sup>4</sup> However, he eventually changed his tactics away from building a political party, leaving Norway and continuing his activism within the international Blood & Honour network. Hence, in the 1990s and early 2000s, Blücher’s rhetoric had changed towards arguing that ‘illegal direct action’ was the only possible path that would lead to the racist and historical goals of fascist movements. As such, despite important differences in terms of symbology, networks and images of the enemies, *Norsk Front* and Blücher can be used to highlight some key traits in the ideological evolution of the extreme right from interwar fascism and to the contemporary strategies of ‘leaderless resistance’ as a way of ‘accelerating’ the motors of history towards what the extreme right see as an inevitable ‘race war’.

In order to show how *Norsk Front* and Blücher can highlight both the continuity and discontinuity of fascist ideology, this article compares the conceptions of history communicated by the former with the ones expressed by both NS, different international neo-Nazi currents, as well as Anders Behring Breivik. The premise of this article is that all of these ideologies have been tethered to a structurally similar ‘philosophy of history’: a view of history in which modernity is seen as alienation and estrangement from a glorious past, a decline or ‘fall’ into what is perceived as either a Judaized or Islamized world ruled, according to the Manichean conspiracy theory applied, by either a Judeo-Bolshevik-plutocratic plot (*Nasjonal Samling* and Nazi-oriented interwar fascism), a Zionist one emanating from ‘ZOG’, (Blücher), or ‘Eurabia’ (Breivik).

Using a methodological combination of discourse and narrative analysis on textual material, the key questions investigated in the article are: What ‘regime of history’ can we infer from this material? Or, phrased differently: How did *Norsk Front*, *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* and Blücher articulate and link together the three dimensions of lived, phenomenological time: the past, the present, and the future? And is there—despite changing historical *circumstances*—a common regime of historicity, or any common narratives and plots, that organized the way *Norsk Front/Nasjonalt Folkeparti*/Blücher and, respectively, NS and Anders Behring Breivik, placed *themselves* within the course of history, and hence contribute to the perpetuation of interwar fascism in Norway?

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<sup>3</sup>See: Roger Griffin, ‘Net Gains and GUD Reactions: Patterns of Prejudice in a Neo-fascist Groupuscule’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 33 (1999), p. 2, 31–50. doi: 10.1080/003132299128810542; Roger Griffin, ‘Interregnum or Endgame? Radical Right Thought in the ‘Post-fascist’ Era’, *The Journal of Political Ideologies*, 5:2 (July 2000), pp. 163–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713682938>; Roger Griffin, *Fascism* (New York: Tibidabo, 2020) chapter four.

<sup>4</sup>Tore Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge: Utviklingstrekk, konspirasjonsteorier, forebyggingsstrategier* (Oslo: Politihøgskolen, 2018), p. 38.

First, the main sections focus on *Norsk Front*'s and *Nasjonalt Folkeparti*'s ideology at the height of their activity and as it was expressed in their publication *Nasjonalisten* in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This means that it treats the ideology of the party both under Blücher's leadership and after he resigned in 1981. Secondly, it analyses the pamphlets *The Way Forward* and *Blood & Honour Field Manual*, penned in the 1990s and early 2000s by 'Max Hammer', an alias believed to belong to Blücher,<sup>5</sup> as well as content on the web pages of the most active branches of the international Blood & Honour network: the ones in Scandinavia and England.<sup>6</sup>

In order to trace an ideological line between interwar fascism and contemporary right-wing extremism, the article will also chronologically situate the discussion of *Norsk Front*, *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* and the Blood & Honour network in between a short outline of NS' conception of history, and the narratives permeating contemporary right-wing extremism, in particular the ones found in the compendium of the Norwegian terrorist and mass murderer, Breivik. The argument is *not* that there is a *direct influence* or any gradual and logical development between interwar fascism and contemporary lone-actor terrorism. Yet, by analysing them in a larger context, there is still possible to identify certain trends and dynamics that may give a better understanding of how the different expressions of right-wing extremist ideology still try to breathe life into a similar fascist vision of history.

### Fascism as palingenetic ultranationalism

One of the theoretical starting points of this present study, is Roger Griffin's claim fascist ideology revolves around a myth of national rebirth.<sup>7</sup> It is particularly valuable to test Griffin's ideal type model of generic fascism in relation to the research questions of this article, since his theory inherently suggests a temporal dimension of fascist ideologies. For instance, Griffin claims that three components constitute a 'fascist minimum': populist ultranationalism, the myth of decadence, and the rebirth myth. The two latter ones implicitly refer to specific ways of experiencing the flow of history. First of all, the myth of decadence assumes that the national/racial/cultural community has experienced a dreadful decline from a better, more harmonious past. The rebirth myth, on the other hand, is a future-oriented cultural archetype that refers to a sense of facing a historical turning point where something 'lost' will be regenerated (cf. the renaissance as a rebirth of classical antiquity).<sup>8</sup>

But does this offer a valuable framework in order to make sense of the extreme right in general, and of how they have experienced the flow of time in particular? On one side, Griffin's ideal type has received criticism for being too 'idealist'. Michael Mann has for instance claimed that it lacks 'any sense of *power*',<sup>9</sup> while Robert Paxton has claimed

<sup>5</sup>Daniel Koehler, *Right-Wing Terrorism in the 21st Century: The 'National Socialist Underground' and the History of Terror from the Far-Right in Germany* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 117, 145; Jacob Aasland Ravndal, 'Right-Wing Terrorism and Militancy in the Nordic Countries: A Comparative Case Study', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 30:7, 772–792, doi: 10.1080/09546553-2018.1445888; 'Ledet av Blücher', *VG*, 29. January 2001: <https://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/i/RxxAdd/ledet-av-blucher>

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 142. The articles written by 'Max Hammer' that were available online were direct reproductions from the printed *Blood & Honour Magazine*.

<sup>7</sup>Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>8</sup>Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, p. 33.

<sup>9</sup>Michael Mann, *Fascists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 12.

that its focus on ideas and myths misses ‘the most important register’ of fascism: the ‘subterranean passions and emotions’<sup>10</sup> underpinning it. Others again—such as Kevin Passmore—has questioned the value of developing a theory of fascism altogether, arguing that ideal type models tend to iron out the actual diversity of the movements and regimes that they claim to explain.<sup>11</sup>

All of these criticisms points towards aspects important when one tries to understand extreme right movements. When we not only suggest that Italian Fascism, German Nazism, and Norwegian *Nasjonal Samling* belonged to the same category, but also imply—as I do in the following—that it is meaningful to add post-war groupuscules and lone-actor terrorists to the list, we do risk glossing over major differences. However, if the focus is more specifically on fascist *narratives*, *tropes* and *ideas*, as in this current article, the theory of generic fascism provides valuable tools. One of the defining features of the Griffinite approach, is that it tries to understand fascism by delving into the visions and ultimate goals of the movements themselves. Most of us would agree that the ultimate aim of socialist movements is to establish an egalitarian or classless society, while feminist movements work towards equality of sexes. But what about fascist ideologies? By combining Weberian idealizing abstraction with looking closely at the worldviews, narratives and value-systems of fascists, the theory of palingnetic ultranationalism may come closer to providing an answer to this question.

In order to—more specifically—analyse the temporal dimension of the far-right ideologies in question, I draw on in particular two sources for methodological inspiration. One is the form of ‘structural hermeneutics’ developed by the so-called ‘strong program’ of cultural sociology:<sup>12</sup> In opposition to forms of discourse analysis that inspired by Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu tend to explain the significance of a discourse with reference to social structure, Jeffrey C. Alexander and Philip Smith has developed a form of discourse analysis that aims at identifying how meaning is produced by *the inner structure* of a particular discourse.<sup>13</sup> The aim of such an analysis is to enable causal explanations, by identifying how discourses, cultural codes, tropes and narratives both frame experience and guide behaviour.

The other methodological tool utilized, is François Hartog’s notion of ‘regimes of historicity’.<sup>14</sup> Like Griffin’s ideal type, a ‘regime of historicity’ is an analytical device whose value lies in the fact that it allows us to analyse how the relations between the *past*, the *present*, and the *future* are articulated.<sup>15</sup> In this context, the term ‘historicity’ refers to ‘how individuals or groups situate themselves and develop in time’,<sup>16</sup> to how ‘the categories of past, present, and future give order and meaning’ in a specific context, enabling

<sup>10</sup>It should be added that Paxton here only speaks of interwar fascism..See Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2004), p. 40.

<sup>11</sup>Kevin Passmore, *Fascism: A Very Short Introduction*, second edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 18; Kevin Passmore, ‘Fascism as Social Movement in a Transnational Context’ in Stefan Berger and Holger Nehring (eds) *The History of Social Movements in Global Context: A Survey* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 579–618.

<sup>12</sup>Jeffrey C. Alexander and Philip Smith, ‘The Strong Program in Cultural Sociology: Elements of a Structural Hermeneutics’ in Jeffrey C. Alexander (ed) *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 11–26.

<sup>13</sup>Trygve B. Broch, ‘Kultursosiologiske studier av kjønn’ in Håkon Larsen (ed.) *Kultursosiologisk forskning* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2015), pp. 131–142.

<sup>14</sup>Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. xv.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

a particular temporality ‘to be grasped and expressed.’<sup>17</sup> Before looking closer at which order of time that has informed different extreme right currents in Norway, I will first present the reader with a potted historical background.

### **From *Nasjonal Samling* to post-War fascism**

Towards the end of the 1970s, *Norsk Front*, under the leadership of Erik Blücher, emerged as the first post-war extreme right organization of notice in Norway.<sup>18</sup> Officially the party distanced itself from the labels such as fascism and Nazism, yet the terms they instead deployed to describe their ideology—‘social nationalism’, ‘radical nationalism’, and ‘revolutionary nationalism’—could hardly fool anyone.

Why they felt the need to distance themselves from interwar fascism and the disasters it created should need little explanation. There had been several parties that held fascist or fascist-like views in Norway in the 1920s and 1930s,<sup>19</sup> but *Nasjonal Samling* [NS] eventually emerged as the most important one. This was not due to mass-support, however, as revolutionary right-wing politics never managed to catch fire in Norway.<sup>20</sup> However, during the occupation, NS was named the only legal party, and collaborated with the occupational forces, with members of the party forming a collaborationist, puppet-government, the Quisling-regime, from 1942 to 1945, as well as representing the majority of Reichskommissar Josef Terboven’s provisional councillors of state between 1940 and 1942. As such, not only fascism, but membership in NS was associated with treason in the post-war era, making it perceived as a contradiction to claim to be a patriot wanting to serve the interests of the nation, *and* a national socialist at the same time.<sup>21</sup>

In their short, yet dramatic lifetime, NS, on one hand, tried to distance themselves from Italian Fascism and German Nazism, continually stressing that they represented an independent Norwegian movement, an independent national ideology, not merely a copy of continental models. On the other hand, however, they still recognized their ideological kinship with the Italian and German fascists, imagining that they all represented a ‘third way’ that would overturn liberalism and communism.<sup>22</sup>

Both claims were, somewhat, true enough. On one hand, NS’ ideology expressed the kind of longings for a post-democratic national rebirth that Griffin has defined as the ideological core of fascism.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the ideology of NS followed the same temporal pattern as other fascist movements, where history was seen as an estrangement from a glorious past, to a disintegrating present, coupled with a promise of a New Order, a new national rebirth that would reverse the period of decay, and resurrect supposedly slumbering national and racial virility in a new era.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. xvi.

<sup>18</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 38.

<sup>19</sup>This is for instance treated in: Øystein Sørensen and Nik. Brandal, *Det norske demokratiet og det fiender: 1918-2018* (Oslo: Dreyer forlag, 2018) and Terje Emberland, *Da fascismen kom til Norge: Den nasjonale legions vekst og fall, 1927-1928* (Oslo: Dreyer forlag, 2015).

<sup>20</sup>In their first parliamentary election in 1933, NS only managed to get 2.2% of the total votes, while, in comparison, their antagonists in the Labour Party won 40% of the electorate. Three years later, their support dwindled even deeper, managing to only get 1.8% of the total votes. See: Martin Kristoffer Hamre, ‘Norwegian Fascism in a Transnational Perspective: The Influence of German National Socialism and Italian Fascism on the *Nasjonal Samling*, 1933-1933’, *Fascism: Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies*, 8:1 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1163/22116257-00801003>

<sup>21</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 37.

<sup>22</sup>Hamre, ‘Norwegian Fascism in Transnational Perspective’, p. 49.

<sup>23</sup>See: Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*.

On the other hand, however, NS still tailored this regime of historicity, this way of linking together the three dimensions of phenomenological time, in accordance to specific *Norwegian* national myths. NS did not build its narratives of a Golden Age, followed by decline, from scratch, but relied on tropes that were worked out far and wide by Norwegian historians, poets, artists and politicians in the 19th century. These were built around the myth of the Realm of Norway, i.e. that the Norse period and the High Middle Ages represented the Golden Age in Norwegian history, whereas the 400 years of union with Denmark was as a period of decline and decay.<sup>24</sup> The ideologues of NS recoded these national-romantic narratives, and integrated them into their own apocalyptic, palingenetic and—after 1935—anti-Semitic grand narratives of a coming post-democratic ‘new ordering’ of Norwegian society.

Plotting themselves into history as facing a rupture in the flow of historical time, NS suggested draconian measures in order to build a bridge between this mythic Golden Age of Norwegian history, and a new, highly modern, era, that still embraced technological, scientific and social advances, but reconnected them with a heroic, mythical past. This metaphysical view of history was draped in a spiritual, idealist rhetoric, that urged for the overturning of what was portrayed as hegemonic, materialist and dividing features of modernity: Judaism, liberalism and parliamentarism, Marxism and class conflict.<sup>25</sup> They reduced the established political opposition between the left and the right to an expression of two varieties of the same materialist ideology, and evoked an image of being in a historical transitional-period, where an era marked by *materialism* would be replaced by a new spiritual and *idealist* era, headed by NS itself.<sup>26</sup>

### Fascism outside its epoch: the ideology of NF

Facing a hostile political environment, where involvement with fascism was seen as treason, most of the attempts at far-right reorganizing after World War II were covert and cautious. One was the establishment of *Forbundet for sosial oppreising* [The Association for Social Rehabilitation] in 1949, which consisted of former members of NS, who fought for their own rehabilitation and published the newspaper *Folk og Land* [People and Country]. Another attempt aimed more at organizing at a pan-European level through involvement in the European Social Movement (ESB). Inspired by ESB and the Italian Social Movement, there was also several attempts at establishing a new political party. Yet all of these attempts failed, and nothing really lasting materialized from it.<sup>27</sup>

In this context, *Norsk Front's* predecessor, *Nasjonal Ungdomsfylking* [NUF; The National Youth Wing] (1968–1975) represented the most important line connecting the former members of NS to a new generation of revolutionary ultranationalists that emerged in the 1970s, and continued their political activism throughout the 1980s and 1990s in organizations such as *Norsk Front* and *Nasjonalt Folkeparti*.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup>Øystein Sørensen, *Hitler eller Quisling: Ideologiske brytninger i Nasjonal Samling 1940–1945* (Oslo: Cappelen, 1989), p. 44.

<sup>25</sup>See for instance: Nasjonal Samling, *Program for NS* (Oslo: Thuleselskapet 1940), p. 3.

<sup>26</sup>Hans Olaf Brevig and Ivo de Figueiredo, *Den norske fascismen: Nasjonal Samling, 1933–1940* (Oslo: Pax forlag, 2002), p. 130. See also: Nasjonal Samling, *Program for NS*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup>Per Bangsund, *Arvtakerne: Nazisme i Norge etter krigen* (Oslo: Pax forlag, 1984), p. 63, 82, 101.

<sup>28</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 38.

NUF was an unsuccessful and marginalized youth movement founded in 1968 with support from former members of NS. This connection was no recipe for success, so they tried to present themselves as independent of interwar fascism. Yet, in a bulletin sent out to people interested in reading more about the organization, they still openly declared their ideological kinship to ‘Falangism’, ‘the young national socialism and the young NS.’<sup>29</sup> Along with this message, NUF sent out a pamphlet written by the most influential ideologue of the organization, the history teacher Olav Hoaas.<sup>30</sup> This fact highlights that the topic of this current article—the regimes of historicity that organize fascist ideologies—does not represent an ideological side-track. Rather, it was central to their ideology, and was indeed considered to be so by the movements themselves. The pamphlet was entitled *The Past and the Future of the Germans: An Outline of a Conception of History* (1971), and here Hoaas set forth a reading of history that managed the dubious achievement of being perhaps *more* racist than the ones outlined by the NS. Through a pseudo-scientific, Darwinist lens, human history was reconstructed by Hoaas as a racial struggle for survival. In this existential battle, liberal values and socialist strivings towards equality were dismissed as evil forces of decadence in modernity. In line with what I—following Griffin—claim to be the classic fascist regime of historicity, Hoaas portrayed the present as being in a state of disintegration and decay, and a symptom of this decay, he found in the post-war spread of human rights. In order to resurrect past greatness, Germanic peoples had to be ‘freed’ from the ideals of equality, reason, and progress underpinning the principles of human rights, Hoaas argued:

The struggle to liberate the Germanic people from this poisoning [of human rights] must be directed against the dogmas of equality between the races, against the dogmas that a society is something that humans construct and create through reason, and one must seek to liberate oneself from the faith in progress as soon as possible. [...] That freedom is to be able to live in accordance with one’s own being, which lies in the instincts, feelings and will of the race and the people, that freedom can therefore only unfold in a society of like-minded people, that is, in a society of blood, that the most important task is to bring societies back to racial unity, that there is Germanic will to show solidarity with the blood brothers, and that the progress that can be achieved in social harmony will now be met by decline in the material field due to the overpopulation of the earth, and that Germanic solidarity must therefore be reflected in a thoughtful policy of preparedness and self-preservation.<sup>31</sup>

When *Norsk Front* picked up the baton from NUF in 1975, Hoaas and the new generation of ultranationalists, many of whom had been formerly active in the latter organization, brought this rhetoric with them. Racism had also been a cornerstone in NS’ ideology,<sup>32</sup> but contrary to popular belief, the chauvinist rhetoric of key figures in the party, such as Quisling himself, was more characterized by an idealist, spiritual, vitalist and metaphysical discourse, than the language of biological determinism and social-Darwinism.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Cited in Bangsund, *Arvtakerne*, p. 132. Emphasis in original.

<sup>30</sup>Bangsund, *Arvtakerne*, 132; Sørensen and Brandal, *Det norske demokratiet og dets fiender*, p. 220.

<sup>31</sup>Olav Hoaas, *Germanernes fortid og fremtid: Omriis av et historiesyn* (Leknes: 1971), pp. 41–42.

<sup>32</sup>Racism and anti-Semitism were not key parts of the ideology of NS from the outset but became more dominant after 1935. See: Dag O. Bruknaap, ‘Ideene splitter partiet: Rasespørsmålets betydning i NS’s utvikling’ in Stein Ugelvik Larsen and Rolf Danielsen (eds) *Fra idé til dom: Noen trekk fra utviklingen av Nasjonal samling* (Bergen: Universitetsforlaget, 1976), pp. 9–47.

<sup>33</sup>Cf. the section above on the idealist rhetoric of NS.



Couching instead their racism in a more social-Darwinist rhetoric, *Norsk Front* and *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* tried to portray themselves as the heroic saviours of the Norwegian people and the Nordic race. Yet, they lived a short, and politically unsuccessful life. First of all, *Norsk Front* never managed to even *register* as a legal party, failing to get the 3, 000 signatures at the time needed in order to establish a political party in Norway. After an activist from the party threw two bombs into the May Day rally in 1979, its core members dissolved the party, in order to avoid being associated with the terrorist attack. They went on to found, instead, the equally miniscule *Nasjonalt Folkeparti*, which was basically the same party, but now under a different heading.<sup>34</sup> In the following, therefore, the argument will be structured around ideological themes, rather than historical chronology, treating *Norsk Front* and *Nasjonal Folkeparti* at the height of their activism (late 1970s, early 1980s) as one entity (hereby referred to as NF), deciphering their ideology as it was expressed in their publication, *Nasjonalisten*.

Although the party distanced itself from the labels such as fascism and Nazism, the kinship with fascism in general and NS in particular was clear enough. The ideology of NF was, like NS before them, Manichaean, structured around binary codes—us and them, the pure and the polluted—and temporal narratives of palingenetic and apocalyptic kind. The simplistic contrasts between the healthy antagonists (the idealist and nationalist ‘patriots’) and the morally corrupt protagonists, relied on the same construction of the Others as NS had evoked: the three-headed materialist and internationalist monster, consisting of liberalism, Marxism and Judaism (yet carefully coded as an attack on ‘Zionism’ instead of Judaism as such<sup>35</sup>). Playing out a dramatic, heroic narrative, the first leader of NF, Blücher, for instance claimed that Norwegian people were locked in an apocalyptic battle with the enemies of the race and the nation: ‘Our country, our people and our race are under total attack from the cosmopolitan alliance of capitalism, communism and Zionism. It is no exaggeration to characterize it as a battle of life and death. Our civilization can still emerge victorious from this world settlement. But ultimately the responsibility falls on those of us who have realized the danger, who knows the enemy and know the remedy’.<sup>36</sup>

Despite distancing themselves from labels such as fascism and Nazism, their ‘remedy’ was still the old fascist vision of ultranationalist rebirth, evoking even the Nazi rhetoric of a coming New Order:

a total upheaval of society—the creation of a New Order on the ruins of the old and run-down social system. [...] Hence, it is not about a more or less narrow change in party politics; Our task is not to redecorate the run down facade of party politics, but to create a completely new social system that will permeate and characterize every member of the people and the nation’s future. NF is therefore not a party in the ordinary sense, but—despite its modest size—a national movement of the people (or at least the core of one) whose goal is not ordinary party politics, but a takeover of power that gives the Movement the opportunity for a total upheaval of the social system.<sup>37</sup>

The regime of historicity that organized this palingenetic and apocalyptic narrative, had the same structure as NS’ conception of history: *past greatness, decay in the present, and the future alternatives of either rebirth or annihilation*.

<sup>34</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, 39; Sørensen and Brandal, *Det norske demokratiet og dets fiender*, p. 230.

<sup>35</sup>Sørensen and Brandal, *Det norske demokratiet og dets fiender*, p. 227.

<sup>36</sup>Erik Blücher, ‘Kjære leser av ‘Nasjonalisten!’ *Nasjonalisten*, unnumbered (1984), p. 4.

<sup>37</sup>Erik Blücher, ‘Den nasjonale bevegelse: Mål og mening’, *Nasjonalisten*, 2:44 (1982), pp. 8–10.

In this scheme, the present was evoked as a contrast to an allegedly ‘pure’ and ‘heroic’ past. Following cultural anthropologist Mary Douglas, we may recognize how NF perceived matter to be ‘out of place’ in contemporary societies: Unlike in the past, modern Norway was perceived to be polluted, characterized by miscegenation, alienation, identity crisis, the spread of unhealthy values, and of moral and cultural decay.<sup>38</sup> Immigration, pornography, drugs, crime, unemployment, consumerism, feminism, homosexuality, alienating urban landscapes, even democracy and party politics—everything was seen as something that the polluting and impure materialist forces of Marxism, liberalism and Zionism had unleashed on the national community, designed, in NF’s paranoid perception, in order to ‘divide a people so that we have a society that gives free rein to destructive forces, and which robs our children of the opportunity to grow up in a harmonious community.’<sup>39</sup>

According to the propaganda of NF, they wanted to ‘resurrect’ a ‘Norwegian cultural life based on Nordic tradition and the Nordic character!’, and save the nation from the loss of national essence caused by immigration, miscegenation, and the spread of alien ideas.<sup>40</sup> This national heritage was sometimes evoked through pseudo-scientific references to biological ‘race’, other times through more metaphysical notions of common ‘blood’, and sometimes through more anthropological categories such as the traditions of culture, language and place.

The myth of the heroic Viking ancestry of Norwegians unavoidably played a key part in the symbolic universe of NF, and was repeatedly evoked in both texts and images. But what was it in this past that NF wanted to regenerate? What was it in this ‘heritage’ that they wanted to breathe life into? That was left nebulous. Yet despite the fact that their understanding of the past was thin, more mythical and archetypal than historical, it still served its ideological purposes in the political present. As Gabriella Elgenius and Jens Rydgren has pointed out, myths of national grandeur in the past is connected with the rhetoric of decay, as it helps nationalist movements to claim ‘authenticity along the lines of historical continuity and ethnic homogeneity in times of untoward change, crisis, decay and decline.’<sup>41</sup> Thus, the myths of golden ages provide the ultranationalists with ‘moral guidance in a decaying present’, and point towards a direction out of what is presented as ‘an otherwise doomed future.’<sup>42</sup> Elgenius’ and Rydgren’s argument obviously applies to the case of NF—to how the latter wanted to rekindle ‘Our Norse Viking heritage’ and to how they perceived ‘our highly civilized ancestors’ to represent ‘a source of spiritual and moral regeneration.’<sup>43</sup> NF’s idealization of Vikings was less about the past than about the present and the future: it supported their rhetoric of decadence and degeneration, as well as their mythic belief that if Norwegians was ‘reconnected’ with its organic roots, it could win back its true identity and renew itself.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, NF’s idealization of the past also supported their narrative that the corrosive Others

<sup>38</sup>Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London/New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>39</sup>Bitten Cathrine Lunde, ‘Nasjonalismen – kvinnens virkelige frigjører’, *Nasjonalisten*, unnumbered, 3.

<sup>40</sup>See Roger Griffin, *Fascism* (London: Polity Books, 2018), p. 130.

<sup>41</sup>Gabriella Elgenius and Jens Rydgren, ‘Frames of Nostalgia and Belonging: The Resurgence of Ethno-Nationalism in Sweden’, *European Societies*, 21:4, p. 590.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup>Tor Petter Hadland, ‘Leve nasjonalrevolusjonen!’, *Nasjonalisten*, 3 (1983), p. 6.

<sup>44</sup>For a thorough interpretation of how this longing to ‘recapture’ a lost heroic tradition informs fascism, see Roger Griffin, *A Fascist Century*, especially p. 167.

worked tirelessly in order to prevent the ‘true’ people from reattaching themselves to their racial instincts, their ‘true’ national ‘essence’: By relighting the supposedly dormant Viking instincts of Norwegians, NF believed that a nationalist movement could act as the revolutionary vanguard in the life-and-death battle with the ‘invading’ immigrants and the three-headed monster of liberalism, Marxism and Zionism.

NF’s first leader, Erik Blücher, continually stressed that ‘Norwegian nationalists must once and for all understand that the main threat against our freedom and integrity is and continues to be Zionism, the initiator of both capitalism and Marxism, and the enemy of the national strivings of the people.’<sup>45</sup> Yet, NF also evoked immigration as the biggest threat Norway was facing, contrasting the present to the interwar period:

When *Nasjonal Samling* came into being, it was internationalism under the sign of the hammer and the sickle that posed the great danger to our national identity. Today the situation is quite different. It is the pressure from the Third World—the immigration of people from there, a problem that was not even imaginable in the thirties—that now appears as the greatest danger. [...] However, they should remember that the very idea of the *Nasjonalist Folkeparti* is the same as that of the *Nasjonal Samling*—that is, protection of our Nordic uniqueness and close association with people from the same cultural circle. Politics is not static—it is dynamic and must constantly adapt to new conditions: the changed social structure and new constellations at home and abroad.<sup>46</sup>

The excerpt highlight something pointed out by historian Diethelm Prowe already in 1994: That one of the most obvious differences between interwar and post-war extreme right movements, is the fact that the latter is above all fuelled by demographic anxieties and cultural conflicts arising from multicultural societies, while interwar parties, like NS, was mainly fuelled by the fissures of class conflict and the fear of a communist revolution.<sup>47</sup>

Although NF continued to evoke the threat allegedly posed by a three-headed Marxist, liberalist and Judaist monster, there are *legion* examples of immigration communicated as the biggest threat facing the nation, as it supposedly alienated the people from both their past and the alleged purpose of their existence. For instance, the narrative of ‘the great replacement’—which has flourished in far-right virtual communities in the later years,<sup>48</sup> is a cornerstone in the Europe-wide Generation Identity,<sup>49</sup> and was used by fascist terrorist Brenton Tarrant to justify his attacks on two mosques in New Zealand in early 2019<sup>50</sup>—was already present in the ideology of NF in 1978: ‘Our contemporary governments are perusing policies aimed at replacing us—the indigenous and primordial Norwegian people—with alien peoples’, it was claimed in *Nasjonalisten*, arguing that a combination of liberal abortion policies and liberal drug policies, that drives the lives of young Norwegians in the gutter, as well as ‘planting a new, alien tribe in our

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<sup>45</sup>Erik Blücher, ‘Jødenes egen krystallnatt’, *Nasjonalisten*, 7:49 (juli 1982), p. 2. See also: instance: Erik Blücher, ‘Den nasjonale bevegelse: Mål og mening’, *Nasjonalisten*, 2:44 (February 1982), p. 10.

<sup>46</sup>Bastian Heide, Untitled article, *Nasjonalisten*, 3-4 (April 1982), p. 17.

<sup>47</sup>Prowe, ‘Classic Fascism and the New Radical Right in Western Europe,’ p. 312; Copsy, ‘The Radical Right and Fascism,’ p. 108.

<sup>48</sup>Especially, perhaps, after the publication of Renaud Camus’ *Le Grand Remplacement* (Chez l’auteur) in 2011.

<sup>49</sup>José Pedro Zúquete, *The Identitarians: The Movement Against Globalism and Islam in Europe* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2018).

<sup>50</sup>Brenton Tarrant, *The Great Replacement* (2019).

country instead—the foreign workers [...], with a higher birth-rate than Norwegians, the authorities tries to realize ‘the extinction of our own [...].’<sup>51</sup>

NF’s regime of historicity (glorious past; disintegration in the present; national/racial rebirth in a future New Order) evoked a sense of urgency. They pictured themselves as standing before a rupture in historical time, and the situation was in need of heroic intervention, since it was nothing less than the future destiny of the Nordic people which was at stake. Deploying a rhetoric similar to the one used by contemporary right-wing extremists, readers of *Nasjonalisten* was for instance presented with a narrative that immigration represented a ‘foreign attack’<sup>52</sup> on Western societies. In 1982 Blücher claimed that a ‘race war’ had already broken out in Sweden,<sup>53</sup> and the year after *Nasjonalisten* published an anonymous article entitled ‘Norway is at war’.<sup>54</sup> The article shows the persistence of a set of tropes and narratives on the extreme right, as it trotted out the now all-too familiar extremist themes of now-or-never—of immigration as invasion, the left-wing as traitors, and the need of heroic intervention:

Norway is now under INVASION by foreign peoples who want to take over our homes, jobs and our country! THE UNIFORMS OF THE OCCUPANTS are their skin colour. Their light weapons are the nice but thoughtless talk of ‘humanity’, ‘understanding’, ‘equality’, ‘brotherhood’, ‘charity’ and ‘international solidarity’—everything just propaganda for the enemy forces. Their TOXIC GAS are the drugs that breaks our youth. Their heavy ARSENAL is the mass media, both here at home and abroad, which daily propagandize for internationalism and contradiction. Their NEUCLEAR WEAPONS are the monopoly capital that requires our borders to be opened to all kinds of goods and investments. As a result, our own business community is run by the multinational companies owned by the international banking leaders and Zionists. [...]. To prevent us from reclaiming what is our, the foreigners wants to destroy the Norwegian people! The Occupants are assisted by THE TRAITORS of the people who works towards letting in more drug-killing foreign ‘workers’, ‘refugees’ [...] and the adoption of coloured youth from Asia, Africa and Latin America’s slums.<sup>55</sup>

Despite this war-like rhetoric, Blücher and the party aimed at being a kind of Norwegian version of John Tyndall’s National Front, trying to achieve influence by winning votes in elections.<sup>56</sup> (However, they were not democrats, but referred to democracy as a ‘sick and dying delusion’<sup>57</sup> that could be exploited.) However, NF consisted of two wings: Whereas Blücher belonged to a more ‘moderate’ wing, another fraction emphasized direct and violent actions, and tried to recruit young activist which wasn’t necessarily interested in achieving political ends, but were willing to participate in plots against communists and immigrants.<sup>58</sup> Yet, according to Tore Bjørgo, the fact that Blücher was more moderate than others didn’t necessarily mean that he was in principle against the use of violence. Rather, he stressed that violence and direct action had little effect if it was isolated from political actions.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>51</sup>Einar Giæver, ‘Til vår ungdom’, *Nasjonalisten: Organ for Norsk Front*, 1 (1978), p. 3.

<sup>52</sup>Erik Blücher, ‘Sverige rystes av rasekrig’, *Nasjonalisten*, 8–9 (1982), pp. 6–7.

<sup>53</sup>Blücher, ‘Sverige rystes av rasekrig’, pp. 6–7.

<sup>54</sup>‘Norge er i krig’, *Nasjonalisten* 1-2 (1983), p. 6.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup>Lars Preus, ‘Bakover mot det nye Norge: Ideologisk utvikling innen norsk nynazisme 1967-1985’, Master thesis, University of Oslo (2014), p. 36.

<sup>57</sup>Blücher, ‘Den nasjonale bevegelse: Mål og mening’, pp. 8–10.

<sup>58</sup>Sørensen and Brandal, *Det norske demokratiet og dets fiender*, p. 228.

<sup>59</sup>Bjørgo et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 38.

With time, however, NF's ambitions of gaining mass support through democratic channels petered out. Contrary to their vision of themselves as the heroic saviours of the people, both parties failed to even register as legal parties, and *Nasjonalt Folkeparti* was born out of the crisis following the fact that an activist from the violent fraction of *Norsk Front* threw two bombs into the May day rally in 1979. In response, the core members dissolved *Norsk Front*. Yet, its successor, the equally miniscule and failed *Nasjonalt Folkeparti*, was in reality the same party.<sup>60</sup>

Furthermore, in the following years, several violent groups surfaced around NF. The most serious incident happened within a group related to the party (*Norges Germaniske Armé* [The Germanic Army of Norway]) in 1981. Three members were convicted of executing two other members of the group. As non-Western immigrants became a more visible part of Norwegian society in the 1980s, even more people related to the party were convicted of criminal actions directed towards immigrants, such as the 1985 bombing of a mosque in Oslo.<sup>61</sup>

Blücher eventually resigned as leader for NF in 1981.<sup>62</sup> Despite continuing his ideological activity inside the party and in the columns of *Nasjonalisten*, he ultimately changed tactics away from building a political party bent on achieving parliamentary success, leaving Norway and continuing his activism from his exile in England and Sweden within the international Blood & Honour network, distributing White Noise music through the label Ragnarock Records and being linked to the violent Combat 18-movement.<sup>63</sup> In tandem with leaving Norway and fostering transnational networks of like-minded activists, his ideology became not only increasingly internationalized. In the 1990s and early 2000s, he even became a mouthpiece for a new strategy, arguing that “‘illegal’ direct action’ was the only possible path that could lead to the racist and historical goals of fascism: a ‘Millennium of White Power’.

### **Blood & honour and the Neo-Nazi discourse in the 1990s and early 2000s**

The vision of history underpinning this way of anticipating the future was laid bare in the short pamphlets *The Way Forward* and *Blood & Honour Field Manual*, written under Blücher's alias, 'Max Hammer', as well as in writings posted by the same pen name on the websites of Blood & Honour. According to political scientist Daniel Koehler, *The Way Forward* can be read as a 'strategic manual' that details 'the necessary elements of an underground struggle of the Extreme Right [...]',<sup>64</sup> and as a late 1990s adaption of the strategy of tension 'most notably employed by Italian right-wing terrorists in the early 1980s and a few German terrorists [...].'<sup>65</sup>

Explicitly, 'Max Hammer's' pamphlets engage in a discussion of the tactics of 'leaderless resistance' championed by American white nationalist Louis Beam, and deployed by extreme right terrorists such as Timothy McVeigh, David Copeland, Peter Mangs, Anders Behring Breivik and Brenton Tarrant, as well as the German terrorist cell

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 39; Sørensen and Brandal, *Det norske demokratiet og dets fiender*, p. 230.

<sup>61</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 40.

<sup>62</sup>*Nasjonalisten* 9-19 (1981), p. 2.

<sup>63</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 39.

<sup>64</sup>Koehler, *Right-Wing Terrorism in the 21st Century*.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

uncovered in 2011: *Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund*.<sup>66</sup> The tactics of leaderless resistance tries to outline both how violence can be used to increase tensions and create a ‘revolutionary situation’—and how to avoid being caught doing it. In an essay published in his own journal *The Seditonist* in 1992, Beam claimed that traditional hierarchical organizations of the far-right had become both ‘useless’ and ‘dangerous’, since they made what he called ‘resistance movements’ into an ‘easy prey for government infiltration, entrapment, and destruction of the personnel involved.’<sup>67</sup> Due to electronic surveillance, Beam saw the tactics of leaderless resistance as a ‘child of necessity’. The tactic could be played out by a lone-actor or a collective—the most important aspect was that individuals or groups were not dependent on central authority and command, but could act independently.<sup>68</sup>

The leaderless resistance strategy was later developed by other white supremacists in the 1990s, such as Tom Metzger and Alex Curtis. But it was also developed within the international right-wing extremist music network, Blood & Honour, established in the 1980s by the lead singer the neo-Nazi rock group Skrewdriver, Ian Stuart Donaldson. In this context, the writings of ‘Hammer’ was important. On the webpages of Blood & Honour Scandinavia he now argued along the same lines as Louis Beam, and emphasized that ‘the ways of the past’ no longer worked. Moreover, he questioned if it ever had, since Hitler was the only fascist who had managed to ‘come to power through democratic means’.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, the ‘National revolution’ could only become a reality through ‘Direct Action’ and ‘Leaderless Resistance’,<sup>70</sup> he argued.

These ideas were further developed in *The Way Forward* and *Blood & Honour Field Manual*. According to Daniel Koehler, this placed ‘Max Hammer’s’ pamphlets together with David Myatt’s *Practical Guide to The Strategy and Tactics of Revolution* as ‘the main strategic manuals’<sup>71</sup> of the European extreme right in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In the beginning of the 2000s, links to the Norwegian’s pamphlets was for instance highlighted on the front page of the web sites of the UK branch of Blood and Honour, together with *Mein Kampf*, William Pierce’s white supremacist novel *The Turner Diaries*, and the handbook of the violent wing of Blood & Honour, *The National Socialist Political Soldiers Handbook* by Combat 18.<sup>72</sup>

Both *The Way Forward* and *Blood & Honour Field Manual* express a belief that ‘direct action’ and ‘leaderless resistance’ tactics can ignite a world-historical ‘race war’ against ‘ZOG’, i.e. against the ‘Zionist Occupation Governments’ that secretly rule Western societies according to neo-Nazi conspiracy theories. Hence, the pamphlets—with its references to ‘ZOG’, ‘White Power’ and an impending ‘race war’—reflect how his ideology now had developed under the influence of American neo-Nazism and British skin-head culture. Not only was *The Way Forward* dedicated to the memory of Ian Stuart

<sup>66</sup>Paul Gill, *Lone-Actor Terrorists: A Behavioural Analysis* (London: Routledge, 2015), pp. 4–7.

<sup>67</sup>Louis Beam, ‘Leaderless Resistance’, *The Seditonist*, 12, 1992, quoted in Gill, *Lone-Actor Terrorists*, p. 4.

<sup>68</sup>Beam, ‘Leaderless Resistance’ quoted in Gill, *Lone-Actor Terrorists*, p. 4. See also: Helene Löw, *Nazismen i Sverige 2000–2014* (Stockholm: Ordfront, 2015), p. 114.

<sup>69</sup>Max Hammer, ‘The National Socialist Effect’, *Blood and Honour*, crawled June 5th, 2001, <https://web.archive.org/web/20010617140153/http://www.bloodandhonour.com/natsoceff.html>

<sup>70</sup>‘About B&H’, *Blood & Honor Scandinavia*, crawled June 5th, 2001, <https://web.archive.org/web/20010618010020/http://www.bloodandhonour.com/front/info.html>

<sup>71</sup>Koehler, *Right-Wing Terrorism in the 21st Century*.

<sup>72</sup>‘Combat 18 Blood And Honour’, *Blood & Honour UK*, crawled October 10, 2002, <https://web.archive.org/web/20021010195031/http://skrewdriver.net/index2.html>

Donaldson.<sup>73</sup> It also mirrored one of the most significant developments in post-war Nazism: the translation of the ideology from being ‘Nordic’, ‘Aryan’ or ‘German’ to a more ‘international’ ideology for the white race as such, what Roger Griffin calls ‘Universal Nazism’.<sup>74</sup> Much of the white supremacist ideology that permeates *The Way Forward* reflects this double influence from interwar Germany and post-war USA, where the narratives of Universal Nazism had been developed by people like George Lincoln Rockwell, Robert Jay Mathews, David Lane, and William Pierce. In *The Turner Diaries*—which inspired the Oklahoma bomber in 1995, Timothy McVeigh<sup>75</sup>—Pierce for instance described how a coming race war between whites and the ‘Zionist Occupation Governments’ would spread from the US to the entire world.<sup>76</sup> In the early 2000s, Blücher—now living in Sweden—could still write in nationalist terms about ‘the fight for a reborn Sweden’ and the need for ‘Swedish regeneration’.<sup>77</sup> Yet when he, in *The Way Forward*, wrote that he’d ‘rather scrap the whole idea of nationalism for the sake of White racialism’,<sup>78</sup> the influence from Universal Nazism was obvious.

The narratives of an impending ‘race war’ that permeated the ideology of the international Blood & Honour network—as well as the tactics of leaderless resistance that allegedly was going to ignite it by pushing societal tensions to the brink of explosion—was tethered to an implicit conception of history: As Hammer’s pamphlets indicates, the Blood & Honour network saw the present as a period of decadence and suppression, where white people was no longer allowed to live in accordance with their allegedly true essence. The historical culprits were not only immigration policies, but above all ‘Zionists’ and the materialist ‘twin-sister[s]’<sup>79</sup> capitalism and communism, that according to ‘Max Hammer’ had suppressed ‘the most basic nature of man and his society’<sup>80</sup> through ‘cosmopolitanism’.<sup>81</sup> Thus, modern societies was seen in accordance with classical Nazi narratives as a degeneration from a glorious past in primordial purity, to a polluted, Judaized world dominated by immigration and two varieties of materialism and internationalism: capitalism and Marxism. Yet, the vision of the past manifested itself more as a desire to extirpate the alleged adversaries of the white or Aryan race in order to ‘return’ to what was projected as its pure racial and national foundations. In regards to the future, ‘Hammer’ and the Blood & Honour network thought that a ‘revolutionary war’ was approaching, and that it would create a ‘cleansing explosion’—‘the fireworks of the Millennium’ that supposedly would lead to a ‘return of ancient Aryan justice’,<sup>82</sup> as well as a more racially pure and closely integrated community.

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<sup>73</sup>Hammer, *The Way Forward*, p. 1.

<sup>74</sup>Griffin, *Fascism*, pp. 42–43; Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, p. 165.

<sup>75</sup>Donald Holbrook, ‘Far Right and Islamist Extremist Discourses’ in Mary Taylor, PM Currie and Donald Holbrook (eds) *Extreme Right Wing Political Violence and Terrorism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 222.

<sup>76</sup>Andrew Macdonald (William Pierce), *The Turner Diaries* (National Vanguard Books, 1978).

<sup>77</sup>Max Hammer, ‘Biggest NS Manifestation in Stockholm: More Than 1000 Nationalists March to Honour Fallen Comrade’, *Blood and Honour Scandinavia*, crawled 5th June, 2001, <https://web.archive.org/web/20010806040438/http://www.bloodandhonour.com/daniel1.htm>

<sup>78</sup>Hammer, *The Way Forward*, p. 5.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Max Hammer, ‘Bullets and Brawlers, Cops and Council, Blood & Honour: Battle Zone Klippan Rocks On!’, *Blood and Honor Scandinavia*, crawled June 5th, 2001, <https://web.archive.org/web/20010604035936/http://www.bloodandhonour.com/brawl.html>

Within the narratives of ‘race war’ and ‘ZOG’, which ‘Max Hammer’ now had made into his own, Jews were envisioned as conspiring against the white race, which they allegedly tried to make into a minority through immigration to Western countries by non-white people, and by manipulating mainstream media in order to stop an ‘awakening’ among whites.<sup>83</sup> Laying bare a conspiratorial and racist understanding of the current predicament of Western democracies, *The Way Forward* evoked a situation that left little room for other options than violent intervention in order to combat ‘ZOG’ and create a new world order. On one side, the pamphlet portrayed an age-old and all-mighty Jewish conspiracy, on the other, the author wrote off the people he styled himself as a saviour of as ‘zombies’:

We face a ruling clique of religious zealots and political mobsters who have thousands of years of practice in the dark art of schemes, plots and conspiracies against their own hosts. And when it comes to our own people, the majority of them are not only looked upon as cattle, cattle, but also behave like mind-dead creatures, lacking the most basic feelings of racial pride and solidarity, historical roots and cultural traditions. These zombies are either thrown into the capitalist rat-race where all rules of decency and honour are abandoned for the sake of the most extreme egoism, or they are high on Marxist ecstasy which has turned their inherited idealism into a pathetic blabbering in favour of the racial suicide through a multi-culti, multi-criminal, one-worldism. Comrades, don't waste time, energy or efforts on trying to ‘save’ or ‘convert’ these people.<sup>84</sup>

As this paragraph demonstrates, ‘Max Hammer’ had now left behind any ambition of ever mobilizing the masses through leading a ultranationalist party. Rather, he embraced the kind of visions spread by Louis Beam in *The Seditonist*. *The Way Forward* laid out a strategy that focused on a pan-European recruiting of violent revolutionaries, instead of trying to build a populist mass party. The pamphlet claimed that the current predicament of the West was shaped by a centuries-old conflict of two antagonists, Whites and Jews, and that the conflict was entering its last phase, the ‘racial war’ where existential choices had to be made, since it was ultimately a question of either ‘Victory or Death’, ‘Victory or Valhalla’.<sup>85</sup>

The regenerative narrative structure of fascist ideology seemingly takes a backseat in favour of a desire to just inflame tensions in neo-Nazi narratives like these. Even if it is less obvious, the regenerative underpinnings are still there, however, in form of a trope of a final apocalyptic showdown where the old world goes under in order to be reborn greater. In the apocalyptic narrative of *The Way Forward*, only violent intervention can foster revolutionary change. Thus, the pamphlet evokes the present not only as a period of decline, but also as a rupture in historical time, as a threshold between two different worlds. With the pairings ‘Victory or Death’ and ‘Victory or Valhalla’ the imminent future is for instance envisioned as one of either revitalization or annihilation, of either ‘the millennium of total White power’,<sup>86</sup> or nothing less than ZOG’s extinction of the white race: ‘[...] we simply cannot afford not to be victorious. The alternatives are at best extinction and at worst extermination. [...] The end is just that: the end of our White race and civilization as we know it.’<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Holbrook, ‘Far Right and Islamist Extremist Discourses’, p. 220.

<sup>84</sup>Hammer, *The Way Forward*, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup>Hammer, *The Way Forward*, p. 4.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 14.



Within the chimerical narrative of a coming race war, ‘Max Hammer’ suggested that both the Blood & Honour-network and the violent, neo-Nazi organization Combat 18 could play important roles: *The Way Forward* was meant to ‘mentally prepare the Movement for the next century—the Millennium of total White Power.’ Combat 18, on the other hand, was envisioned to play the role as the ‘armed wing’ of Blood & Honour in the coming race war.<sup>88</sup> ‘Hammer’ stressed that ‘It is vital that the Movement operates on an international scale’—most notably Europe-wide, but also ‘wherever White people dwell’—since the imagined ‘enemies work worldwide’.<sup>89</sup> Only ‘through international co-operation and understanding between White people, based on a common racial history and destiny’,<sup>90</sup> can a rebirth of the white race come about, *The Way Forward* prophesised. Connecting a prophecy of revolutionary violence and upheaval to a myth of an Aryan past, *Blood & Honour Field Manual* ended on the same note, claiming that

Aryan man will rise again and take back his rightful position on earth. Or he will die fighting for it. There is no middle ground. There is only the solemn call of our forefathers and the glorious vision of the future.<sup>91</sup>

### Change and continuity in post-War fascism

The development of Blücher’s ideology—from trying to build political parties to embracing the strategies of ‘leaderless resistance’—reflects more broader trends in the historical development of the extreme right, such as internationalization, the emergence of White Noise-music and skinhead culture, as well as the strategies of leaderless resistance, used by Combat 18, NSU, Tarrant, Breivik, and other right-wing extremist lone actors and terrorist networks.

As such, it can highlight both change *and* continuity in post-war fascism and right-wing extremism. On one hand, the fantasies of a coming ‘race war’ still rely on the old fascist mythic structure of past greatness in primordial purity, decay in the present, and new, resurrected greatness in the future. But whereas NF still clung to the fantasy of forcing structural change onto society, creating a post-democratic ‘New Order’ on par with the radical upheavals of interwar fascist movements, the narratives of ‘Max Hammer’ and Blood & Honour were similar to the ones informing terrorists and violent groups such as Tarrant, Breivik, Peter Mangs, David Copeland, and NSU: That ‘leaderless resistance’ is the only viable path to a post-democratic rebirth of a white, Western identity, and that although they are standing between two worlds, their terrorist actions will first derail society and have massive consequences when history in the future reaches a tipping point.

It also highlights the *groupuscularization* of the *extreme* right (in contrast to the radical right), i.e. the migration from party politics towards tiny grouplets. Yet, extreme right groupuscules should not be seen as failed parties, as they don’t necessarily aspire to achieve popular support, but has their own dynamic. In the 1990s and early 2000s,

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<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>91</sup>Max Hammer, *Blood and Honour Field Manual* (undated, probably from year 2000).

there were several neo-Nazi groupuscules in Norway and Scandinavia, consisting of a limited amount of people, each with their own home-made and amateurish magazine. The significance of these groupuscules was perhaps not to be found in their individual existence, however, but in how they collectively developed a shared subculture that nurtured the same hatred, myths and conspiracy theories.<sup>92</sup> The visions of history expressed in *The Way Forward* and *Blood & Honour Field Manual* was also shared by different Norwegian neo-Nazi groupuscules at the time, such as *Vigrid* and the skinhead organizations *Viking* and *Boot Boys*. These groups espoused a mythological identification with the Vikings and wanted to relight the allegedly dormant warrior instincts of Norwegians, in order to ‘defend’ and ‘save’ the country against the supposed loss of national and racial essence caused by immigration.<sup>93</sup> Out of the three, *Vigrid* was the more ideologically oriented, and was heavily influenced by both traditional anti-Semitism and Nazism—as well as Norse mythology and the *Turner Diaries*’ narratives of ‘ZOG’ and an impending ‘race war’.<sup>94</sup> *Boot Boys*, on the other hand, became infamous in 2001, when members from the organization murdered 15-year-old Benjamin Hermansen, motivated by racism. In their self-titled fanzine, *Boot Boys*—as well as in similar publications by the violent organization ‘Hvit Arisk Terror’ [White Aryan Terror]—signifiers such as ‘ZOG’, ‘White Power’ and ‘race war’ were dished out in between articles on white noise music and where to buy patches, bomber jackets and Doc Martens boots. The fanzine claimed that the skinhead culture was not about ‘violence, sex, and beer’, but represented a resistance against ‘immigration and suppression of OUR COUNTRY; OUR CULTURE AND OUR RIGHTS’ by what was claimed to be a hegemonic ‘anti-national Zionist tyranny that wants to enslave all races in a racial chaos and dictatorship of interest.’<sup>95</sup>

Moreover, the regime of historicity structuring Blücher’s pamphlets was also close to the one laid bare in one of the other key texts of the Blood & Honour network: Myatt’s *Practical Guide to The Strategy and Tactics of Revolution*. Like Blücher, Myatt’s text saw the present as an era of decadence and suppression, where the peoples of what he described as ‘our once Aryan nations’ was no longer allowed to live in accordance with their true ‘Aryan character’. The culprits were a paradoxical blend of ‘consumer capitalism’ and ‘crypto-Marxism’<sup>96</sup> that had ‘suppressed and outlawed’ the ‘culture and way of life’ of ‘Aryans’, and replaced it with a ‘multi-racial’ and ‘materialist’ society. Thus, in Western democracies, people were ‘brainwashed’ and ‘manipulated’ by ‘repressive’ and ‘tyrannical’ ‘Governments of Occupation’, Myatt claimed. This allegedly kept them ‘in ignorance of their Aryan culture, their Aryan identity, their Aryan duty, their Aryan Destiny.’<sup>97</sup>

Claiming, in a vain similar to ‘Max Hammer’, that ‘the very purpose of our individual lives is to aid, to assist, our folk, our race’<sup>98</sup> and that to do so is an ‘Aryan duty to our race’, to purge society of materialism and its ‘multi-racial’ ideology and peoples was

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<sup>92</sup>Roger Griffin, ‘Net Gains and GID Reactions’, pp. 31–50; Paul Jackson, ‘National Action and National Socialism for the 21 Century’, *Journal of Deradicalization*, 1/15 (2014), p. 101.

<sup>93</sup>Katrine Fangen, *En bok om nynazister* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2001), p. 160.

<sup>94</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 51 and 61.

<sup>95</sup>From: *Boot Boys*, 10 (October 1991), p. 12. Caps in original.

<sup>96</sup>David Myatt, *Practical Guide to The Strategy and Tactics of Revolution*, p. 7.

<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>98</sup>*Ibid.*

presented by Myatt as a prerequisite for ‘our very survival and for the future of our race’.<sup>99</sup> Like ‘Max Hammer’, Myatt believed in the conspiracy theory that mass media manipulation prevented the emergence of a real ‘desire in our people for radical change, for a new order.’<sup>100</sup> Through violence, however, Myatt believed it would be possible to create a new ‘Aryan homeland’ freed from the alleged erosion of tradition. This ‘Aryan homeland’ would ‘restore’ the ‘freedoms’ and ‘culture’ of ‘our Aryan way of life’,<sup>101</sup> thus reattaching present-day whites with their alleged heroic past.

More surprisingly than the overlapping narratives between Blücher and other neo-Nazi groupuscules and ideologues in the 1990s and early 2000s, is perhaps the structural similarities between the neo-Nazi desire to inflame tensions in order to ignite a ‘race war’ and the narratives exhibited by contemporary currents on the Islamophobic extreme right: Despite operating with other protagonist and antagonists, the narrative laid out in Anders Behring Breivik’s sprawling compendium, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence*, still followed the same temporal structure and tapped into the same pool of tropes (of decadence, apocalypse and rebirth) as *The Way Forward* and *Blood and Honour Field Manual*. In all these texts, Europe was portrayed as under ‘invasion’ and ‘colonization’ by non-Western immigrants. Prior to his twin terrorist attacks on 22 July 2011, similar ‘colonization’ narratives as the ones found in Breivik’s compendium had been disseminated in Norway by different far-right and anti-immigration organizations, such as FMI [The People’s Movement Against Immigration, est. 1987], SIAN [Stop the Islamization of Norway, est. 2000], and the Norwegian Defence League (est. 2010/2011). Yet, Breivik had been cautious not to engage in any extremist organizations prior to his terrorist attacks, in fear of police surveillance. Through terrorism and by copy-pasting narratives circulating online, he attempted to create a new foundational myth for the far-right, where the battle between Aryans/Whites and Jews were replaced by the battle between Islam and the West/Christianity. As such, it was not ‘ZOG’ who ruled the world, according to Breivik, but a secret conspiracy of cultural Marxists, multicultural elites and Muslims bent on turning Europe into ‘Eurabia’.<sup>102</sup> In line with this reasoning, Breivik didn’t evoke the dominant symbology of the extreme right, like runes, swastikas, sun crosses and Vikings. Rather, he used the symbology of Christianity in general and the crusaders in particular, claiming to be part of a reborn Knights Templar (which was only a figment of his own imagination), that would play the same role as Combat 18 would in ‘Max Hammer’s’ narrative: as a revolutionary cell that—through ‘leaderless resistance’—would derail society and turn the tide of history.

The symbology of the Knights Templars had already been embraced by the English Defence League, and although it is different from the classical Norse symbology of the Nordic extreme right, it still played a similar function in Breivik’s homemade symbolic universe:<sup>103</sup> Plotting the past, the present and the future into the matrix of Golden Age-decay-rebirth-or-annihilation, Breivik evoked a myth of a single European past, where a non-alienated ‘indigenous peoples of Europe’<sup>104</sup> were in contact with its true self, and were

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>102</sup>Anders Behring Breivik, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* (Oslo: 2011).

<sup>103</sup>See also: Daniel Wollenberg, ‘The New Knighthood: Terrorism and the Medieval’, *Postmedieval* 5 (2014), pp. 21–33 <https://doi.org/10.1057/pmed.2014.1>.

<sup>104</sup>Breivik, *2083*, p. 768.

*conscious* of the war they were fighting against Islam, something he for instance found ‘examples’ of in the battles of Vienna in 1683 and of Poitiers in 732. These battles were imagined to be part of a larger war that in Breivik’s paranoid mind had shaped Western history for 1, 400 years. It was now entering its full-scale apocalyptic ending, where he imagined that ‘Europe will burn once more, and rivers from the blood of patriots, tyrants and traitors will flow through the streets. However, a new European cultural renaissance will be born from the ashes. Islam and Marxism will not prevail.’<sup>105</sup>

## Concluding remarks

What the above discussions of different currents of the Norwegian extreme-right has shown, is not only the persistence of a distinctive regime of historicity, but also that in particular four, somewhat related tropes or myths have shaped—wittingly or unwittingly—the ideologies of the extreme right. All of these are *characteristic, but not exclusive* of fascism, since they serve as ingredients in different ideologies and religions (as well as in different conspiracy theories).

The first two are the myths of *decadence* and of a past *Golden Age*, where the latter provide the (ultra)nationalists with a direction out of the former, out of what is perceived as a decaying present and a gloomy looking future.<sup>106</sup> The third is the *rebirth myth*, a cultural archetype which in Griffin’s words refers ‘to the sense of a new start or of regeneration after a phase of crisis or decline which can be associated just as much with mystical (for example the Second Coming) as secular realities (for example the New Germany)’.<sup>107</sup> Hence, the rebirth myth is what cultural sociologist, Jeffrey C. Alexander, would call a ‘culture structure’.<sup>108</sup> We find its pattern, its binary opposition between ‘death’ and ‘rebirth’, in the historiographic model of Antiquity–Middle ages–Renaissance, and in the symbolism of baptism, communion and Easter celebrations—to name only a few.

The fourth trope or narrative form, *characteristic, but still not the exclusive* property of NS, Blücher’s pamphlets, or Breivik’s compendium, is related to the rebirth myth: the trope of *the coming apocalypse*. In contrast to the myths of rebirth and decadence, this trope is not part of Griffin’s fascist minimum. Before I round off, I therefore want to establish its centrality for the understanding of fascist and right-wing extremist ideology.

The trope of a coming apocalypse is present in fascist or extreme right ideologies not only in the sense that they are ‘dystopian’, that they believe in a coming civilizational collapse. It is also present in the sense that the ideologies revolve around the semiotic opposition between ‘death’ and ‘renewal’, and sees the downfall as a prerequisite for redemption (something which also shows the close relation between the rebirth myth and the myth of the coming apocalypse).<sup>109</sup> As shown in this article, we soon discover how the apocalyptic trope constantly recurs when we delve into the imaginary of the Norwegian extreme right, both past and present. First of all, the apocalyptic imaginary was not only present in *The Way Forward, Blood & Honour Field Manual* or in Breivik’s compendium. It is found in a variety of currents of post-war neo-Nazism, for instance in

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 1138.

<sup>106</sup>Elgenius and Rydgren, ‘Frames of Nostalgia and Belonging’, p. 590.

<sup>107</sup>Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, p. 33.

<sup>108</sup>Jeffrey C. Alexander, *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

<sup>109</sup>Rikke Louise Peters, ‘Redaktionelt’, *Slagmark* 53 (2008), p. 8.

the prevalence of the narrative of a coming ‘race war’, in the influence exerted by the *Turner Diaries*, and in the use the name ‘Vigrid’, which in Norse mythology refers to a field believed to host a decisive battle before the world is consumed by flames and reborn again in Ragnarok.<sup>110</sup>

Yet, the apocalyptic imaginary permeating far-right ideology dates back to the interwar period. Several scholars have pointed out the apocalyptic and millenarian underpinnings of fascism in general and German Nazism in particular.<sup>111</sup> Nazi visions of how the national community could reach redemption through apocalyptic cleansing in a final battle between Aryans and Jews also made their way into Norwegian fascism.<sup>112</sup> Illustrative of both this influence and of the longevity of the trope of apocalypse, is the fact that one of the key journals of interwar Nazism in Norway had taken its name from apocalyptic symbolism: *Ragnarok*. Between 1933 and 1945 the journal served as a forum for a neo-Pagan and pan-Germanic undercurrent in NS, who, in opposition to Quisling, saw the Germanic or Nordic race as the primary entity, not the Norwegian nation.<sup>113</sup> Yet, Quisling was eventually heavily influenced by German Nazism himself, and made use of the same apocalyptic imaginary as the German Nazis: In several speeches he made reference to a ‘battle that runs through the whole life of the world’ between ‘Aryans’ and ‘Jews’. Entwining the trope of the coming apocalypse with the trope of rebirth, he claimed that this ‘vision’ was ‘deeply rooted in the soul of the people,’ and that it was ‘based on the belief that the world, their own world, would perish in the battle against the evil, destructive forces of darkness, but that it only goes under to be reborn greater.’<sup>114</sup> In this process, the antagonisms in society were simplified and ‘in reality reduced to a duel between Judaism and the European principle’:

Out of the national decay and breakdown that the Jews brought upon our people, a national resurrection is emerging. A new Norway rises on the solid foundation of national socialism and the principles of the Nordic race [...]. Thus, in a strange way, realizing the living idea in the ancient Nordic myth of a battle that runs through the life of the world between Aryan and Jewish power would end in one last great battle, Ragnarok, the darkness of the Aryans, caused by the Aryans taking up the Jews in their midst and as such weakening their divine power. But the world of the Aryans only goes under to be reborn greater. In the decisive battle, the world-serpent and the war-wolf are killed. The old goes under, and a new world breaks forth, populated by a more vigorous and happier human race.<sup>115</sup>

Having already established how this narrative of an imminent apocalyptic battle lived on in different currents of neo-Nazism, I will lastly point towards two contemporary examples of how the trope shapes far-right ideologies in Norway.

First of all, the narrative is found in the ideology of *the Nordic Resistance Movement*—a pan-Nordic, neo-Nazi movement with branches in Norway, Sweden, Finland and

<sup>110</sup>Bjørge et al., *Høyreekstremisme i Norge*, p. 61.

<sup>111</sup>See for instance: Norbert Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957); David Redles, *Hitler's Millennial Reich: Apocalyptic Belief and the Search for Salvation* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

<sup>112</sup>Jeffrey T. Zalar, ‘Review of Hitler's Millennial Reich: Apocalyptic Belief and the Search for Salvation’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 38:2 (2009), pp. 288–290.

<sup>113</sup>See: Terje Emberland, ‘Neither Hitler nor Quisling: The Ragnarok Circle and Oppositional National Socialism in Norway’, *Fascism*, 4 (2015), pp. 119–133.

<sup>114</sup>Vidkun Quisling, *For Norges frihet og selvstendighet: Artikler og taler 9. april 1940 – 23. juni 1941*, vol. 3 (Oslo: Gunnar Stenersens forlag, 1941), p. 75.

<sup>115</sup>Quisling, *For Norges frihet og selvstendighet*, 118.

Denmark. The roots of the Norwegian branch of the organization can be traced back to 2003, but it but it had little activity before it re-surfaced in 2011. The same year, in a discussion on the web page of the organization concerning why the movement does not tone down its ideological profile to make it more palatable to a broader public, an activist from the Swedish branch of the movement for instance argued that the coming ‘Ragnarok’ made it necessarily to take a ‘radical’ stance: ‘We live in what might come to be the last hour of our race,’ he argued, ‘and within not too long [...] we either come to experience total victory, or total downfall.’<sup>116</sup> Therefore the movement had to be radical; due to the coming race war, which ‘is going to be a “Ragnarok”’, The Nordic Resistance Movement needs people who are ‘ready to do what it takes’.<sup>117</sup>

Yet, as the example with Breivik has highlighted, the apocalyptic imaginary is also present in far-right movements that define themselves in opposition to the anti-Semitic ideology of neo-Nazism. For instance, the Norwegian counter-jihadist ideologist Fjordman, who Breivik saw as his main source of ideological inspiration, formulated an apocalyptic vision of a civilizational rebirth after a decisive battle between Muslims and Europeans. With reference to both Norse mythology and Judeo-Christian theology of history, Fjordman envisioned a ‘Ragnarök’ that would be followed by a new world that ‘will arise from its ashes’. If this apocalyptic event occurs, Fjordman imagined that ‘we can give our descendants a fresh start and lay the foundations for a new Renaissance, where European civilization can flourish once more.’<sup>118</sup> Although Muslims represent the enemy for Fjordman, his metaphor of a Ragnarok is reminiscent of Vidkun Quisling’s idea—outlined above—of how a ‘new world’ would emerge, ‘populated by a more vigorous and happier human race’ after ‘one last great battle, Ragnarok’<sup>119</sup> between Jews and Aryans.

The fact that culturally shared tropes—such as the myth of a past golden age, the rebirth myth, and the trope of a coming apocalypse—recurs in all of these different cases, can seem to corroborate a quite bold claim put forward by narrative theorists like Hayden White and Lois Presser, and cultural sociologists such as Jeffrey C. Alexander and Philip Smith: that narrative ‘frameworks’ give form to experience. Narrative frameworks are not restricted to production of fiction, they argue, but provide a repertoire of templates, tropes and stories that we draw on in order to make sense of history, the social world, and our place within it.<sup>120</sup> These tropes structure the fascist regimes of historicity: they provide a meaningful framework, where the precarious nature of social reality is alchemically transformed into a more or less coherent narrative.

Yet, when we compare the relationship between the regimes of historicity evoked and the tropes accompanying them historically, there seems to be a shift in emphasis: A

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<sup>116</sup>‘Radikalisme eller kompromiss?’ *Frihetskamp*, August 31, 2011: <https://www.frihetskamp.net/radikalisme-eller-kompromiss/>

<sup>117</sup>‘Radikalisme eller kompromiss?’

<sup>118</sup>Fjordman, ‘Preparing for Ragnarök’, *Gates of Vienna*, 2. Mai 2011. <http://gatesofvienna.blogspot.no/2011/05/preparing-for-ragnarok.html>

<sup>119</sup>Quisling, *For Norges frihet og selvstendighet*, 118.

<sup>120</sup>See: Lois Presser, ‘The Narratives of Offenders’, *Theoretical Criminology*, 13:2 (2009), p. 181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480609102878>; Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in 19th Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014); Lise Kjølrsrød, *Leisure as Source of Knowledge, Social Resilience and Public Commitment* (London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 11; James V. Wertsch, ‘Texts of Memory and Texts of History’, *L2 Journal*, 4 (1). <https://doi.org/10.5070/L24110007>; Philip Smith, *Why War? The Cultural Logic of Iraq, The Gulf War, and Suez* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005); Alexander, *The Meanings of Social Life*.

rearranging of the dominant tropes in these regimes—from *palingenesis*, towards *apocalypse*. While the trope of palingenesis was dominant in the regimes of historicity evoked by political parties such as NS and NF, the apocalyptic trope has grown to become the most dominant way of anticipating the future in recent decades. This re-arrangement of the tone of the extreme right can be interpreted in relation to changing historical and sociological circumstances. While an interwar fascist movement like NS, despite their own initial marginalization, worked in a context where fascists were in power in other countries—something which eventually, through the Nazi occupation of Norway, placed NS in power themselves—the overall context for the revolutionary right after 1945 has, of course, been quite different. Fascist yearnings to inaugurate a new historical era has been completely out of contact with reality after the total defeat of fascism in 1945. Thus, the terrorist turn of fascism—with its narratives of how acts of violence can ignite a revolutionary war, and thus change the course of history—can be read as a sign of the marginalization of the revolutionary right since 1945: While the trope of palingenesis relies on a populist base, the apocalyptic trope allows fascists to insist that dramatic change will come at some undisclosed point in the future—despite the fact that there is little that supports the militant belief that a ultranationalist revolution is on the horizon.<sup>121</sup>

As all of these examples highlight, the present case study can advance our understanding of fascism both generically and specifically: Specifically, because it traces the evolution of Norwegian fascism from the interwar period to the present terrorist turn of right-wing extremism. Generically, because the case study, first, shows how a distinct fascist regime of historicity survived, yet still developed, after World War II. Hence, the case study presented sheds light on both *change* and *continuity* between interwar fascism and the contemporary far-right. As such, the article contributes to the understanding of fascism in general, at the same time as it puts Norwegian fascism on the map of international scholarship on fascism, right-wing extremism, and terrorism.

When comparing fascism of the inter-war period to post-war right-wing extremist ideologies, there are, however, also some other critical differences involved, such as the transition from industrial to post-industrial societies, as well as increased globalization and the emergence of more diverse and multicultural societies. Whereas interwar fascism to a larger extent grew out of fear of class struggle, post-war fascism is mainly fuelled by demographic anxieties and cultural conflicts arising from multicultural societies.<sup>122</sup> A comprehensive understanding of different far-right ideologies should take the whole gamut of such historical and sociological circumstances into account. Nonetheless, a discursive and narrative approach, focused on the moment of political *articulation*,<sup>123</sup> can still deliver insights into commonalities and contrasts in the different contexts in terms of the discursive and narrative structure of the ideologies in question. Despite the important differences briefly outlined, research that map these differences, while simultaneously cut across them in order to identify the discursive and narrative

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<sup>121</sup>Jackson, 'Transnational neo-Nazism in the USA, United Kingdom and Australia', p. 19.

<sup>122</sup>Diethelm Prowe, 'Classical Fascism and the Radical Right in Western Europe: Comparison and Contrasts', *Contemporary European History*, 3:3 (1994), pp. 289–314; Nigel Copsey, 'The Radical Right and Fascism' in Jens Rydgren (ed) *The Oxford Handbook of the Radical Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 105–121.

<sup>123</sup>Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso Books, 1985).

commonalities and patterns at play, can still have great heuristic value—and help deliver insights into the discursive or linguistic ‘architecture’, into the webs of meaning permeating far-right movements across different contexts. The strength of such an approach, is that it can highlight how similar narratives and plots have provided ‘meaning and motivation’<sup>124</sup> and given shape to experience, despite changing historical circumstances. It can show how fascist movements, in different eras, have tapped into the same pool of templates, tropes and stories in order to make sense of their place within history. Without disregarding social and historical context, such an approach can identify the narratives fascists ‘lived by’,<sup>125</sup> and therefore, perhaps, come closer to some of the things that made them try to intervene and change the direction of the flow of time.

### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

### Notes on contributor

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<sup>124</sup>Alexander, *The Meanings of Social Life*.

<sup>125</sup>Sveinung Sandberg, ‘Are Self-Narratives Strategic or Determined, Unified or Fragmented? Reading Breivik’s Manifesto in Light of Narrative Criminology’, *Acta Sociologica*, 56:1 (2013), p. 73.