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By Jesús Aller

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## Analysis of the rise of the far right in Italy



Sources: Rebellion

The journalist and writer Alba Sidera (Girona, 1979), based in Rome since 2007, has specialized in the study of European far-right movements and contemporary Italian politics, issues that are the subject of "Persistent Fascism" (Textos contextatarios, 2023).



Alba Sidera

Originally published in Catalan in 2020 and now updated in a translation by Paloma Farré, this book reveals the disturbing drift of the transalpine country in recent times, the result of a global process that continues to cast ominous shadows over many regions of Europe. As he points out in his foreword Miquel Ramos, since the appearance of the previous version of the book, The situation has only gotten worse, with Giorgia's accession Meloni to power and the right assuming the xenophobic postulates of the far right. It must also be said that the ideologues The reactionaries have learned a great deal, and they are now striving to appear so that the new fascism, without renouncing completely to the old man, tries to distance himself from him and conquer the masses with a friendly face.



The far right is already in power in several countries in Europe and in others it could do so shortly, so that that understanding the dynamics of the ongoing process is urgent extraordinary. This is what Alba Sidera is working on in this work.

### **A chronicle of the Resurrection of Fascism**

Mussolini ended his days shot and outraged, but Predappio, his hometown in the Emilia-Romagna, where his remains also rest, is today a active pilgrimage center for people from all over the world who They revere his memory. *Souvenir* shops display baseball bats decorated with white slogans *power*, busts of the Duce and the Führer and clothes with fascist symbols even give birth to babies. On the 28th October, anniversary of the March on Rome, the small city It becomes a hive of black shirts, coming from all over the world. Italy, parading arm in the air to the cemetery. Thirteen A few miles away is Villa Carpena, where the dictator lived with his family, mansion full of memories of his and a must for Nostalgic.

A century ago, when fascism burst onto the scene with its anti-democratic approaches and its violence, the advisability of imposing a cordon on it has already been discussed. sanitary. Journalist and socialist politician Giacomo Matteotti (1885-1924), assassinated by the "blackshirts", argued that "*fascism is not an opinion, is a crime,*" and that

consequently it should not be treated as just another ideology. He documented in a book published the year of his death the atrocities of the fascists, willing to maintain power through of fear. This, however, is little known today, and the the idea that the violence only began after the enactment of the Racial Laws of 1938 against the Jewish population. In any case, In the event of Mussolini's accession to power in 1922, the loss of freedoms came about progressively.

For current movements that are inspired by fascism or Nazism, the terms neo-fascist or neo-Nazi, overlapping with others as extreme right, for groups whose postulates go beyond the traditional right-wing conservatives, and far-right, for those who They resort to violence to achieve their goals. That being said, the A distinguishing feature of the entire extreme right of today is a xenophobia in which people don't usually talk about "races" as they used to of "incompatible cultures." In addition to this, The old anti-Semitism has generally been replaced by the Islamophobia. The "foreignization" of society is combated, and There is often a reluctance to openly attack democracy. because you don't give up on coming to power through it. Other Common phobias target feminism and LGBTI rights. With regard to the economy, they can be found from protectionist to interventionists, even ultra-liberals.

Silvio Berlusconi (1936-2023) It has an essential role to play in the whitewashing of fascism in the Italy. Media mogul threatened by multiple causes He devised a master plan to seize power and get rid of them, while presenting himself as nothing less than than as a champion of the fight against corruption. Here's how in In 1994 he won the elections and formed a government, relying on the neo-fascists of the Italian Social Movement and the populists of the Northern League, champions of xenophobia. In a country where the anti-fascism was considered a hallmark, this was a overturn. A few years later, Berlusconi had to watch as the Northern League, metamorphosed in the League, led by Matteo Salvini and taking advantage of the strategies of his good friend, Marine Le Pen and her Front National, he won over the electorate that had been so loyal to the *former Cavaliere*.

The "tefefascism" imposed on Italy in the Berlusconi era is here to stay, and not just in the Italy. The Lobotomized Masses in Entertainment Programs Oblivious to any analysis or debate about reality, they assimilate prefabricated opinions and predictably vote every four years. Sidera discusses the centre-left's contribution to this disaster with a review of Matteo Renzi's political biography. Losing In 2016, the referendum on constitutional reform that was demanded of him economic powers, he left the country ready for the coup

definitive. The absence of truthful opposition alternatives and and unawareness of the danger of democratic backsliding, They were decisive for the triumph of the extreme right.

### **Other actors and scenarios in The Identity Comedy**

The Degradation of Politics In terminal capitalism it fosters the appearance of phenomena Bizarre. The 5-Star Movement, sponsored by the comedian billionaire Beppe Grillo, an enthusiastic admirer of Donald Trump, plays on a pretended ambiguity, which makes him proclaim himself "*neither fascist or anti-fascist*", But his obsession is with immigrants, so after winning the In the 2018 elections, he agreed to share power with Matteo Salvini, afflicted with the same phobia. With the new government, the aggressions xenophobic attitudes increased worryingly. Another original piece of the Italian neo-fascism is the CasaPound movement, squatters of extreme crusaders of European cultural identity and therefore enemies immigration juries.

In the Revival of Fascism In Italy, the long shadow of the "American friend" can also be seen. In 2017, when Steve Bannon, Donald Trump's adviser, left office at the White House, began orchestrating a campaign to promote far-right parties in Europe through *The Movement*, the organization he founded, considered a right-wing International populist. Initially, he bet heavily on Salvini in Italy, and when he fell out of favor because of his Russophile connections and his management of the pandemic, by Giorgia Meloni, the new winner of the 2022 elections.

The book also provides data alarming questions about how things are going in other European scenarios. Alternative for Germany tries to reconcile its hate speech refugees, Muslims and environmentalism, with a "Progressive" aesthetics and a friendly tone. They emphasize their character of popular movement, to differentiate themselves from the elites, and have succeeded in up to 27% representation in some regional parliaments. The Freedom Party Austria is not far behind, and with its xenophobic diatribes and exploiting the fear of the loss of European cultural identity, it is and the third political force in the country.

As far as France is concerned, small groups such as the Identity Generation gather weapons and prepare for the "race war," settling in the meantime with storming mosques and assaulting immigrants. They're kind of armed wing of the National Front, whose emergence and substratum Sidera analyzes this in detail. Alain de Benoist, Guillaume Faye and Jean-Claude Valle, among others, conceived of the 60's la *Nouvelle Droite*, a mix of Identity authoritarianism with left-wing values, such as solidarity and even anti-

capitalism. His insistence on necessity is remarkable. of an intellectual effort to conquer cultural hegemony, concept they take from Antonio Gramsci.

The difference is often underlined between Spain, where the dictator died in bed, and Italy, where He was hung upside down at a gas station, but the transition Spain, with its "tied and well tied", does not fail to have similarities with that of the transalpine country. The book reminds us of the impunity for fascist crimes in this country, with three amnesties in the country. 1946, 1953 and 1966, and a number of its authors the administration and army of the new state. Democracy Christian was the instrument, sponsored by the Catholic Church and the the U.S. government, to control the country and to it They affiliated many blackshirts. This match was the matrix of the current politics in Italy, from the centre to the neo-fascists.

### **Memory and Mobilization Against The Ghosts of an Uncertain Future**

The book concludes with two Relevant testimonials. The first is that of Umberto Eco, who in a conference in 1995 warned against the resurgence of fascism and He pointed out the key aspects to identify it: Cult of tradition and action, without renouncing violence, nationalism and xenophobia, Permanent denunciation of the danger of an external enemy and persecution of dissent. We are going to find these traits in spite of the unexpected clothes that the monster can wear.

The other testimony is that of Liliana Segre. This Jewish woman, born in 1930 and deported to Auschwitz in 1943, since 1990 he has given lectures throughout Italy and It embodies today the spirit of resistance against new forms of xenophobia. Their protests when Matteo Salvini raised the issue in 2018 Carry out a census of Gypsies in the country in order to expel as many as possible had enormous resonance and turned it into a target of the ultras, to the point of needing an escort.

In a 2019 survey, nearly the Half of Italians declared themselves in favour of the accession to power of the a strong man, who did not have to depend on parliaments or elections. It is a fact that fascism is reborn vigorously in fear Europeans to lose their way of life to those fleeing the ravages of capitalism in other regions. Alba Sidera shown in *Fascism persistent* details of what's happening in Italy, but we're all in the process of On the same ship and in other countries the scenario is not much different.

Under these conditions, the essential for the peoples of old Europe to resist the The siren songs of totalitarianisms that return can only be A Awareness of the state of the world and its causes. The veil woven from power, with its instruments of disinformation and ideological control, it must fall in order for us to see that the problems economic and

social problems that afflict us can only be solved by the through a deep and authentic democracy and a to confront the lethal economic system that governs the planet.

However, and to top it all off, clouding the panorama, most of the left that operates from Within the system, he has given up facing reality and is stubborn in an erratic discourse, scattered in trifles and mirages, incapable of to offer alternatives to disaster.

Author's blog: <http://www.jesusaller.com/>. In it you can download his latest collection of poems: *Los dead books*.

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