

At the Roots of the New Right-Wing Extremism in Portugal: The National Action Movement (1985-1991)

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ABSTRACT *Since the mid-1980s, the Portuguese Radical Right has deeply changed its political beliefs. The traditional radical right that emerged from the authoritarian regime and was characterised by the ‘multiracial and pluri-continental imperial myth’ has been replaced by a new radical right showing an ethno-nationalist political identity. This change was played, for the first time, by the Movimento de Acção Nacional [MAN, National Action Movement]: a radical group founded in 1985. MAN introduced the political speech and militancy typical of the more extreme European groupuscular rights in Portugal, fusing both the ultra-nationalism of the old radical right and the neo-Nazi racism of the skinhead subculture. The attention given to MAN’s growing activism by Portuguese media and judicial authorities made it the most important radical right movement in contemporary Portugal after the transition to democracy.*

Introduction

Academic studies on the radical right of fascist or Nazi inspiration, which was active in the second half of the twentieth century, focussed on the analysis of political parties, encouraged by the defeated factions of 1945 and their heirs.¹ This preference for the party model and its electoral action led to the marginalisation of fringe political and social players, perceived to be of little interest within national political systems. This had a real negative impact on the actual historical and political dimension of the radical right in the post-war period, as at the time this segment was represented particularly by the so-called ‘groupuscular right’ and disseminated through multiple variants both in Western Europe and the United States, and, after the fall of communism, in Eastern Europe.²

According to Roger Griffin who, in 1999, was the first to draw attention to the importance of this phenomenon,³ the groupuscularisation of the radical right is no symptom of failure of post-war fascism, rather a mutation of fascism itself,

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¹Roger Griffin, “From Slime Mould to Rhizome: an Introduction to the Groupuscular Right,” *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37/1 (2003), p.7.

²Jeffrey M. Bale, “National Revolutionary Groupuscules and the Resurgence of Left-wing Fascism: the Case of France’s Nouvelle Résistance,” *Patterns of Prejudice*, 36/3 (2002), p.25.

³Bonnie Burstow, “Surviving and Thriving by Becoming More ‘Groupuscular’: the Case of the Heritage Front,” *Patterns of Prejudice*, 37/4 (2003), p.415.

dictated by the need to adjust to historical circumstances.⁴ This is one of the two strategic alternatives undertaken by the heirs of fascism following military defeat: on the one hand, their option to adopt a party format with the objective of organising the nostalgic and seducing, again, the masses who had supported the national revolutions of the 1920s and the 1930s;⁵ on the other hand, to form small elite and militant groups distant from the mass-based party stand and destined to carry out ideological and subversive actions. Thus, the groupuscular system became the most diffuse form of European neo-fascism (and not just that) in the second post-war period⁶.

Griffin proposed the *rhizome* type model of the radical right to describe the groupuscular dimension. This is a reticular structure formed by autonomous cells not organised according to internal and external stiff hierarchies and devoid of a single leader or a defined centre, rather polycentric and fluid at the extreme ends and constantly changing. These characteristics set it well apart from any classic political party format and bring it closer to counterculture movements.⁷

These are, therefore, grouplets, with a limited number of militants and an insignificant number of followers, incapable of exercising maximum influence through some type of relationship with the main political players,⁸ or through any form of involvement in mainstream political culture, in some cases remaining almost invisible as members of the civil society.⁹

These features allowed the multiple grouplets to maintain strong internal solidarity, create an efficient network of contacts, prepare and disseminate ideological propaganda swiftly and execute protest actions. On ideological grounds, the groupuscular radical right merely concentrated on keeping unaltered the nucleus of fascist identity, abandoning unnecessary, even counter-producing appendages in the post-war political and cultural milieu, such as the cult of leader or imperialist expansionism.¹⁰

In terms of political action, this meant playing down the electoral tool and denoted a marked preference for non-party instruments, such as publishers, radical movements (sometimes internal trends within larger parties), international relations networks with counterpart groups and underground radical counterculture transmission channels, which were more appropriate to introduce non-conventional ideas in the receptive surrounding scene.¹¹

This 'receptive milieu' has been identified in the 'uncivil society', and can be found in those segments of the civil society that are particularly sensitive to the appeals of extra-parliamentary protest, anti-liberal ideologies and anti-system policies;¹² this is a segment made up of persons who stand across the middle class

⁴Griffin (note 1), p.49.

⁵In Portugal and Spain, the heirs of the defeated fascist movements did not attempt to regain the support of the masses that were orphaned of national revolutions. Instead, they focused on guaranteeing a space within their corresponding authoritarian regimes to mark their revolutionary whims with regard other political families standing in the shadow of Salazar and Franco.

⁶Griffin (note 1), pp.38 and 41.

⁷Ibid., pp.30–4.

⁸Ibid. p.45.

⁹Roger Griffin, "Guest Editor's Introduction: the Incredible Shrinking ism: the Survival of Fascism in the Post-fascist Era," *Patterns of Prejudice*, 36/3 (2002), p.4.

¹⁰Ibid. p.7.

¹¹Bale (note 2), p.46.

¹²Griffin (note 1), p.33.

stripped of its social status, and the fringes of the new poor. These people's only form of income is provided by the welfare state (pensioners, long-term unemployed, the disabled). They often have a low educational level and live in the run-down outskirts of large cities or in declining areas.¹³

This social milieu is more receptive to propaganda made both by parties and social movements of the radical right and of the grouplets that form it. Regarding the latter, their network and autonomous cell structure, which are ideologically syncretic, eclectic and flexible from an organisational perspective, allowed the dissemination of the radical message mostly amongst younger members, and enabled them to remain invulnerable to the regime's repression.¹⁴ Thanks to its autonomy and absence of stiff hierarchies, the dismantling or self-dissolution of each cell does not cause a domino effect and does not lead to the collapse of the entire network.¹⁵

Chronologically speaking, these radical right movements assured their presence throughout the second post-war period and reached their mobilisation peak at the end of the 1980s, with varying degrees of success. This depended on the existence, within the same political context, of a stronger or weaker moderate right with greater or smaller ability to legitimise the radicals and able, to a larger or lesser extent, to keep traditional fractures active or ride the new differences, seizing them from the radicals.¹⁶

The same double strategy adopted by the national radical right can be found in the young Portuguese democracy, as it remained active through the political parties or radical small groups after the fall of the authoritarian regime in 25 April 1974.

Regarding attempts to organise political parties, the few studies on the Portuguese radical right in the democratic period focused their attention on two specific historical periods: the transition years, with some references made to the 1980s,¹⁷ and from the turn of the millennium until the present.¹⁸

In contrast, the present article focuses on the most important Portuguese political player that was active in the groupuscular arena: the Movimento de Acção Nacional [MAN, National Action Movement]. By resorting to archival sources never used before, this paper analyses MAN's historical path, its territorial establishment and the characteristics of its followers and leaders, paying particular attention to the political and ideological identity of the movement. The objective is

¹³Hanspeter Kriesi, "Movements of the Left, Movements of the Right: Putting the Mobilization of Two New Types of Social Movements into Political Context," in Herbert Kitschelt, Peter Lange, Gary Marks and John D. Stephens (eds), *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp.398–423.

¹⁴Griffin (note 1), p.46.

¹⁵Griffin (note 9), p.5.

¹⁶Kriesi (note 13), pp.414–9.

¹⁷António Costa Pinto, "The Radical Right in Contemporary Portugal", in Luciano Cheles, Ronnie Ferguson and Michalina Vaughan (eds), *The Far Right in Western and Eastern Europe* (London: Longman, 1995), pp.109–28; António Costa Pinto, "Dealing with the Legacy of Authoritarianism: Political Purgés and Radical Right Movements in Portugal's Transition to Democracy 1974–1980s," in Stain Larsen (ed.), *Modern Europe after Fascism 1943–1980* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), pp.1679–1718; António Costa Pinto, "O legado do autoritarismo e a transição portuguesa para a democracia, 1974–2004," in Manuel Loff, Maria da Conceição Meireles Pereira (eds), *Portugal: 30 anos de democracia, 1974–2004* (Porto: Editora da Universidade do Porto, 2006), pp.37–70; Tom Gallagher, "Portugal: the Marginalization of the Extreme Right," in Paul Hainsworth (ed.), *The Extreme Right in Europe and USA* (London: Pinter, 1992), pp.222–45.

¹⁸José Pedro Zúquete, "Portugal: a New Look at the Extreme Right," *Representation*, 43/3 (2007), pp.179–98.

to present a player which, thanks to doctrinal innovation and the new fissures it provoked, represented, in our view, the turning point in the dynamics of Portuguese radical right movements and the basis for a new nationalist radicalism in Portugal. With the groupuscular model of part of the new extreme ring-wing as background,¹⁹ the evaluation of MAN enables us to test, to some extent, the validity of the model regarding right-wing extremism in Portugal.

The Radical Right in Portuguese Democracy: An Historical Excursus

Throughout Portugal's democratic transition until the beginning of the 1980s, Portuguese radical right movements, coming from the former Salazar regime, denoted a manifest incapacity to lay down the foundations of a consistent project granting them a political space in the young Portuguese democracy. The more solid attempts, such as those carried out by the Partido do Progresso/Movimento Federalista Português [Progress Party/Portuguese Federalist Movement] and by the Movimento de Acção Portuguesa [Movement for Portuguese Action] were brushed away in just a few months by the clashes between military and civilian factions just after 25 April 1974.

The clandestine experiments carried out between 1975 and 1976 by organisations such as the Movimento Democrático de Libertação de Portugal [Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Portugal] and Exército de Libertação de Portugal [Liberation Army of Portugal] proved equally unfeasible. Faced with the lack of consistency of the project and of the organisation, part of its top leaders (who came from the university student elites of the 1960s and 1970s) decided to join the centre-right parties: Partido Popular Democrático [PPD, Democratic Popular Party] and Centro Democrático Social [CDS, Social Democratic Party], actively contributing to the success of the anti-socialist coalition Aliança Democrática [Democratic Alliance]. The other group opted for cultural warfare in 1980 and founded the publication *Futuro Presente*, committed to ideological reviewing,²⁰ and introducing in Portugal both 'right-wing Gramscism' of the French Nouvelle Droite (Alain de Benoist) and, since 1982–83, the realism of the new Anglo-Saxon Right (Thatcher and Reagan).

Only a small fringe of orthodox salazarism insisted on conquering a new autonomous electoral space, Partido da Democracia Cristã [PDC, Christian Democratic Party] and Movimento Independente para a Reconstrução Nacional [MIRN, Independent Movement for National Reconstruction], collapsing permanently at the legislative elections of October 1980 with the electoral defeat (0.4%) of the coalition Direita Unida [United Right].

Accordingly, the return of radical militants from clandestinity, the end of the decolonisation process and the inability to ride the wave of Portuguese returning from the colonies marked 'the end of an epoch in the political culture of the Portuguese radical right',²¹ and its definitive marginalisation and survival in irrelevant grouplets who denoted scarce innovative capacity in strategic and ideological terms.

¹⁹Roger Griffin, "Fascism's new faces (and new facelessness) in the 'post-fascist' epoch," in Roger Griffin, Werner Loh, Andreas Umland (eds), *Fascism Past and Present, West and East – An International Debate on Concepts and Cases in the Comparative Study of the Extreme Right* (Stuttgart: Verlag, 2006), pp.29–67.

²⁰Pinto (note 17, 1995), p.183.

²¹Pinto (note 17, 2006), p.58.

The drainage of the radical wing throughout the 1980s provoked a political and cultural fracture at the level of political parties, later mended by the creation, in 2000, of Partido Nacional Renovador [PNR, Renovation National Party]. In effect, the PNR presented some new features regarding the traditional extreme right and was, comparatively, an interesting political player within the emerging new post-industrial extreme right.²²

The chronological scattering in the analysis of the Portuguese radical right accounts for the gap, in Portugal, between two distinct types of extreme right. This makes the characterisation of the evolution of this political family uncertain.

The resolution of this fracture rests in the troubles of the Portuguese Radical Right of the mid 1980s and, particularly, in the emergence of MAN within the fragmented and feeble hub of radical nationalism. In this period, due to the absence of a strong party of reference, a new generation of militants appeared in Portugal, who shared a radical subculture that was distant from the traditional ideological vectors of Portuguese ultra-nationalism, and whose new political language brought the topic 'extreme right' to the top of the agenda of both the media and the judicial power. MAN's experience lies in the fact that it gave a new push to ultra-nationalist militancy and also in that it brought the radical and differential discourse of the most extreme European-American right-wing movements to the political culture of Portuguese radicalism. This discourse, rewritten and modernised at the turn of the millennium, was at the basis of the creation of PNR, after causing not only a generational fracture, but a mostly doctrinal break regarding the multi-racial vocabulary of the historical Portuguese radical nationalism, still associated with the myth of empire.

The Political Development of MAN

In 1985, a group of youths from Amadora, a housing development on the outskirts of Lisbon, founded a nationalist cultural association. This group was led by José Luís Paulo Henriques, who had been associated with nationalism since the beginning of the decade and was a leading member of the Juventude Centrista [Centrist Youth] in Amadora.²³ However, his dissatisfaction with the moderation of the CDS, his admiration for the values promoted by the previous regime and his ultra-nationalist tendencies led him to leave the party and, in January 1984, launch the radical magazine *Vanguarda Nacional* [National Vanguard], whose first issue clearly showed the group's interest in the most extreme right-wing groups on the international scene. *Vanguarda Nacional* represented the first step on a path that was to lead this small group to formally establish itself as the Associação Cultural Acção Nacional [National Action Cultural Association] on 25 June 1985, an organisation whose stated aims were to 'defend and promote national, cultural, ethical, ethnic and spiritual values', and which was to serve as the more political formal structure of MAN.²⁴

MAN's political development can be separated into three distinct phases. During its first three years, from 1985 to 1987, it limited itself to isolated public activities that included handing out leaflets and putting up posters in and around Amadora. In January 1986 the group published its first official newspaper, *Acção*

²²Zúquete (note 18), p.180.

²³The youth wing of the party *Centro Democrático Social*.

²⁴Tribunal Constitucional, "Acórdão n.º 17/94 de 18/01/94," *Polis* 2 (1995), pp.103–49.

[Action]. However, it was during the period 1988–1990 that MAN came to the attention of the media and became the most famous radical-right wing movement of the 1980s. During these years, it experienced both an increase in membership and a progressive radicalisation of its political discourse. This was largely due to the decision of dozens of working and middle-class youths from the capital and from the Centre and North of the country, and of groups of skinheads, mainly from Lisbon's industrial belt, to join the movement.

Skinheads first appeared in Portugal at the beginning of the 1980s, and from 1985 began to spread through secondary schools on the outskirts of the country's larger towns and cities. One of the first and most enduring skinhead groups was established in Almada on the south bank of the River Tagus, opposite Lisbon. By 1986, many of this group's leaders had joined MAN. With so many skinheads joining the movement, MAN was encouraged to adopt an ethno-nationalist and racist identity. In fact, from the beginning MAN was a supporter of a critical ethno-nationalism with respect to the presence of African and Asian communities in Portuguese territory. However, its ethno-nationalism had always been subordinated to its critique of the democratic political classes, to left-wing terrorism (particularly that of the FP-25²⁵) and the supposed national disintegration of the post-25 April era.

The spread of skinhead fashion among Portuguese youth convinced MAN's leader of the convenience of accommodating these potential activists, and led him to create a structure capable of attracting them, politicising them and converting them into political activists. The convergence of ideas between the skinhead movement and MAN became explicit with the publication of the first issue of *Combate Branco* [White Combat] in July 1987 – a fanzine, whose 'principal goal' was 'the organization of a Portuguese skinhead movement'²⁶ – and with the publication in the same year of the neo-Nazi fanzine, *Vento do Norte* [North Wind], whose front page invited skinheads to daub slogans opposing democracy and immigration, the Celtic cross and the acronym 'MAN' on walls. MAN also opened *Acção's* pages to the skinhead subculture²⁷ by including two articles by Portuguese radical right veteran Rodrigo Emílio exalting the skinhead world.²⁸

The ever-increasing intensity of skinhead activism and its close collaboration with MAN piqued the interest of the Portuguese media, which presented an image of MAN as the central co-ordinating body of the neo-Nazi groups that spread throughout the country. However, the truth was that MAN never made any concerted effort to co-ordinate skinhead activity, nor did the skinheads seek to join the political movement *en masse*. As happens in all urban sub-cultures, skinheads almost immediately proved too diverse a group to be incorporated into any particular organised political structure. The first groups of Portuguese skinheads made no attempt to form an organisation, despite the appeals of *Combate Branco*, and remained in their isolated small groups of neighbourhood and school friends, without any party political goals other than those that related to a shared youth culture, taste in music and clothes, and slogans. However, there can be no doubt that the decision by some of the more influential figures of the Portuguese skinhead movement to join MAN resulted in the movement accentuating its

²⁵Forças Populares–25 de Abril [25 April Popular Forces].

²⁶"Editorial," *Combate Branco*, no. 1, July (1987), p.1

²⁷Carlos Lima, "A música nacionalista," *Acção* 4, June (1988), p.4.

²⁸Rodrigo Emílio, "Elogio da Raça," *Acção* 4, June (1988), p.3; Rodrigo Emílio, "Skinfellow(s)," *Acção* 5 (1989), p.2.

ethnic-nationalist and racist discourse, bringing it increasingly closer to foreign, especially Anglo-Saxon, groups of the extreme right. In fact, from its very beginning the Portuguese skinhead scene was influenced by the style and thematic of European groups connected with ultra-nationalist musical production, such as the French 'Batskin', 'Evil Skins', 'Legion 88' and the British 'Skrewdriver'. However, there were no actual contacts with the newly formed international skinhead networks, the British 'Blood & Honour' and the North American 'Hammerskin Nation', who only became known in Portugal in the 1990s.²⁹

On the other hand, the prominence given by the media to the political facets of the skinhead movement and of its militant capabilities (including violence), particularly in Lisbon and Oporto, led to a wave of emulation that in 1989 translated into increasing numbers of teenagers becoming skinheads and joining MAN.

MAN's leaders believed they could exploit both the media's attention and the growing skinhead phenomenon to the benefit of their movement. However, their attempt to spread the movement out from Lisbon and throughout the country immediately faced three great challenges. The first of these was Henrique's excessive centralism and inability to delegate. The lack of autonomy of the more active militants in the capital as well as of those responsible for provincial groups resulted in serious misunderstandings amongst the members seeking to take the movement's expansion forward. Secondly, MAN's commitment to skinhead militancy was instantly viewed by the neo-Nazis as an improper attempt to control their spontaneous radicalism and independence. This disagreement first emerged in the north at a dinner MAN organised with skinhead groups on 1 December 1989, which was intended as the first stage of collaboration but ended in riotous political disagreement and a street brawl. Thirdly, the increasingly violent nature of some skinhead groups, which the media regularly attributed to MAN's activities, served to discredit a movement that had no adequate response. The situation deteriorated following a scuffle between a group of skinheads and some left-wing youths in front of the offices of the Partido Socialista Revolucionário [PSR, Socialist Revolutionary Party] on 28 October 1989, which resulted in one of the PSR's leaders being stabbed to death. The seriousness of this event caused a reaction that extended beyond the press. The indignation felt by all Portuguese political parties, the calls for vigilance on the part of many civic associations and trade unions and, above all, the publication of reports by the PSR³⁰ denouncing the activity of the ultra-right, led the legal authorities to launch an investigation into MAN, a movement considered to be the legal face of the skinhead movement.

The media campaign demonising the extreme right for the increase in skinhead violence, and the realisation by MAN's leaders that it was impossible to control the ultras, led to distancing from the neo-Nazis. To this end, the publication of the newspaper *Ofensiva* [Offensive] in March 1990 as an independent initiative, although linked to MAN, was a desperate attempt to safeguard the movement's non-skinhead members. The editorial printed in the first edition of this publication stressed the obligation of all MAN's members to condemn all forms of

²⁹The Portuguese skinhead milieu only officially joined the international networks recently, with the Portuguese chapter of 'Hammerskin Nation' opening on 20 November 2001. The operation was led by the second and third generation of Portuguese skinheads, whose only connection with the history of the first skin wave was through his current leader Mário Machado.

³⁰This mobilisation against the extreme right led to the emergence of the organisation SOS-Racismo, also in Portugal, in 1990.

behaviour that may be prejudicial to the movement.³¹ However, this attempt at damage control was too little, too late, coming as it did only after a crisis within MAN had become inevitable. Many of MAN's non-skinhead followers began to leave the organisation, while others caused a schism at the end of 1990 that led to the formation of the ephemeral Frente de Defesa Nacional [FDN, National Defence Front], which was founded in protest at Henriques' centralism, immobilism and his decision to distance MAN from the skinheads.

Caught between defections, media attacks and legal investigations, Henriques had little alternative but to accept that his movement, which had been irredeemably compromised, was no longer viable, and decided to close it down in 1991. However, disbanding the movement did not prevent the Constitutional Court from pursuing MAN under the terms of the law banning fascist organisations.

The Story of a Political Process

Following the PSR militant's murder, in November 1989 the state prosecutor (PGR, Procurador Geral da República) instructed the Judicial Police (PJ, Polícia Judiciária) to investigate the world of the radical right with the intention of determining the size of the skinhead phenomenon in Portugal and to clarify its connections with MAN. Between December 1989 and April 1990, the PJ intercepted several telephone conversations between leading members of the radical right and informed the PGR of both the nature of the skinhead phenomenon in the country and of MAN's organisational structure. Based on its investigation into Henriques, which began in May 1990, the PJ concluded that between September and November 1990 MAN was going through a phase of membership growth, expansion and internationalisation. In fact, at the end of 1990 MAN was experiencing a profound crisis that was the result of a number of internal disagreements. When, in February 1991, the PJ was authorised by the Central Criminal Tribunal [TIC, Tribunal de Instrução Criminal] to proceed with searches of the homes of MAN's leaders, the movement was already on its knees. The police interrogations that followed the house searches only told the PJ that MAN had skinhead members; however, it was unable to establish any formal link between MAN and the skinhead movement, or that MAN had any plans to organise the Portuguese skinhead movement. Moreover, the events that took place at the dinner in Oporto in December 1989 seemed to show that MAN had no desire to be involved with the skinheads.

Despite the results of the police investigation, in July 1991 the PGR requested that MAN be closed down to the Constitutional Court. Its actions were justified, based on the following legal regulations:

- (a) Article 46, paragraph 4 of the Portuguese constitution: 'Organizations that espouse fascist ideologies [...] are not permitted.'
- (b) Law 64/78: 'Organizations that espouse fascist ideologies are prohibited.'
- (c) Article 10, Law of the Constitutional Court: 'The Constitutional Court is competent to declare [...] that an organization is espousing fascist ideologies and to decree that organization's abolition.'

The most serious of the PGR's accusation against MAN was that the latter sought to create a revolutionary movement that could overthrow the constitutional

³¹'Editorial,' *Ofensiva* 1 (1990), p.2.

political system with the aim of establishing a nationalist state in Portugal. This accusation was largely based on MAN's doctrinal statements, which could be discerned from the abundant material seized during the police searches of the homes of the movement's leaders.

During the final four months of 1991 the PGR and the Constitutional Court concentrated on identifying those legally responsible for MAN, who could then be tried in a court of law. Questioned by the PGR between January and March 1992, these leaders were finally instructed by the Constitutional Court to begin the formal process of closing the organisation down in June 1992. This process for the legal disbandment of MAN began in September 1993 and ended in January 1994 – four years after the investigations began, and three years after the movement had abolished itself.

The Constitutional Court's ruling stated that MAN was, in fact, a political organisation as defined by law, as it had a leadership structure that controlled a group of people and had a series of defined goals and a common objective. As for whether MAN promoted fascist ideals, the Constitutional Court noted that some of the movement's characteristics supported this accusation, with regards to its ultra-nationalism, its opposition to democracy, and its apologies for historical fascist personalities and regimes. Despite being unable to prove MAN had an *a priori* violent nature, the court argued that the existence of these characteristics, when taken together and individually, was sufficient to describe MAN as a fascist organisation. However, for legal and constitutional reasons, the court decided not to pass sentence on the movement, claiming that any justification for handing down an abolition order had been rendered moot given that the movement had already abolished itself. This deferral of the abolition order enabled the Constitutional Court to avoid the sensitive problem of setting a legal precedent concerning the legitimacy of fascist organisations within a democracy.

The Anatomy of MAN

The police search of the home of MAN's leader uncovered its files, which included detailed information on more than 200 members. Close analysis of this data ought to have provided the PGR with a more realistic assessment of the movement's capacity for subversion.³²

Structure of MAN's Organization

The first observation that can be made of MAN's membership base concerns its numerical consistency: if it is true that the movement experienced a rapid growth in membership from 1988 to 1990, then it is also true there were frequent defections which only undermined its stability and prevented the movement's membership from achieving maturity.³³ The rigid compartmentalisation of MAN

³²The data presented here is based on the analysis of 215 files in MAN's archives, which have been selected for the exhaustive nature of the information they contain. Neither this sample nor MAN's archives provide the exact number of the movement's sympathisers, a number that would include those who mixed with party members at school and in the neighbourhoods. However, without doubt the sample is representative of the movement's most radical supporters.

³³The PGR report speaks of the continual 'ebb and flow' of members (Constitutional Court process 364/91, point 194, folio 56).

discovered by the investigators existed only in the intentions of its leader, despite attempts at reorganisation during the 'two golden years' of 1988–1990.

From the beginning, MAN had two levels to its organisation: the leadership and the members. At the leadership level, the structure consisted of a president (a position that was occupied by Henriques for the movement's entire lifetime), a political commission and a secretariat. The political commission, which comprised the president and five others, was responsible for managing the movement, its policies and political direction, and for overseeing its territorial, administrative and financial organisation. The secretariat, in turn, was made up of the members of the political commission and seven other members who shared the movement's offices. The secretariat's main duties were to execute, administer and finance MAN's policies. The members of these three bodies, along with the movement's regional and local representatives, formed the national council, which was responsible for co-ordinating MAN's activities at the national level.

Only the president remained unchanged during the movement's lifetime. By contrast, the political commission was restructured at least three times – in 1985, 1988 and 1990. The secretariat does not seem to have been officially established, despite some of its members being identified. The national council, which according to the movement's rules was to convene four times each year, in fact only met three times in six years – March 1986, May 1989 and June 1990 – which indicates the movement's weakness at national level. Indeed the movement's organisation was far from complete at the regional level, with only the leaders of the most important local groups being identified, that is, those individuals who were in direct contact with the president, but who had no representation in the movement's ruling bodies.

The structure at membership level altered over the years. During the early years of the movement's existence (1985–1987), its members met in 'action groups' that were involved in basic promotional activities, such as putting up posters, distributing pamphlets and painting graffiti.³⁴ The movement sought to ensure the financial sustainability of its activities through the creation of the self-financed *grupo de apoio militante* [militant support group]; however, this group does not appear to have achieved any significant results. After 1988, the members' organisation was restructured on a four-level pyramid basis. The base of the pyramid consisted of the *amigos do movimento* [friends of the movement]. The next level up consisted of the *apoiantes do jornal* [supporters of the newspaper]. The top two levels comprised the *candidatos a quadro* [candidate members] and, finally, the *quadros políticos* [political members], which overlapped the leadership level structure. This organisation was similar to that used by Henriques' foreign comrades in their organisations.

At the international level, MAN remained in contact with three London-based organisations – the National Front, the British National Party, and the International Third Position – and received some financial support from the Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands [NPD, German National Democratic Party]. It also collaborated with Spain's Tercera Vía Solidarista [Solidarist Third Way] and Frente Sindicalista de Juventud [FSJ, Syndicalist Youth Front] as well as France's Troisième Voie [Third Way].³⁵

³⁴ *Acção 1* (1986), p.4.

³⁵ In September 1987, MAN, FSJ and *Troisième Voie* signed the *Manifesto to the European Nation*. Since 1988 Henriques had attempted to align himself with the European 'third position' groups, creating the *Grupo Terceira Via* [Third Way Group] to support MAN.

Age of Members at the Time They Joined MAN

Despite the 'ebb and flow' of members, it is a fact that between 1988 and 1990 MAN registered an increase in its membership, from a few dozen between 1986 and 1987,³⁶ to more than 140 members between 1988 and 1990, without counting those sympathisers who surrounded members at school and in the neighbourhoods. However, in 1985, at the time of the movement's foundation, MAN's operation was based on a small group of friends led by Paulo Henriques. The 1985 members' register shows that 29 people joined the movement on 25 June, giving it a membership of 44. In other words, at the moment of its foundation, MAN only managed to attract 15 new members: an average that was maintained over the following two years. This low number of new members was also registered in the last year of MAN's activities in 1991, when only three people joined the movement. Henriques' decision to halt the movement's activities to minimise its legal responsibilities was, without doubt, the main factor in the movement's decline. However, the abrupt disappearance of the movement in the face of rather minor legal proceedings was symptomatic of its weakness.

In addition to the organisational aspects, the background of the members and their leaders represents an interesting subject through which to assess the movement's subversive capacities. The age of members whose details were amongst the files seized by the police ranged from 15 to 65, although there were significant differences in the number of members in each age group; in fact, the overwhelming majority of militants (83 per cent) were aged between 15 and 25. Of these 177 members, 139 were aged between 15 and 20 (with a significant number aged 19). Only 24 of the movement's members (11 per cent of the total), were in the 25–35 age group, and only eight of them were over 30. In total, only 14 of the movement's members (six per cent) were older than 35. These older members did not represent a homogeneous group of more mature activists; rather, they were individuals who had more contact with the leader than they did with the movement, and who shared the organisation's doctrine without having any effective force as members.

This lack of any mature elite capable of guiding the movement is also found in the study of its leadership, the patterns of which faithfully reflect those found in the examination of the ordinary members.³⁷ Of the 25 identified leaders, 17 were aged between 16 and 21 (with eight of them aged 19) on the day they joined the movement. Five of the leaders were aged between 21 and 27, and only three were over 30 – and their organisational contribution was marginal. Henriques himself was 22 when he founded the movement and became its president, and 28 when he closed it down. Thus, in comparative terms, both the active leaders and members were generally aged 17–21, the number of active individuals in older age groups being significantly lower.

From a political point of view, the fact that MAN did not meet the political demands of an elite formed by veterans of the Portuguese Radical Right is important and contributed greatly towards determining the nature of the movement's ideological differences from traditional Lusitanian radical nationalism. In this respect, the most interesting figure connected to MAN, despite not being one of the movement's leaders, was Rodrigo Emílio Alarcão Ribeiro de Melo

³⁶The first issue of *Acção*, published in January–February 1986 announced MAN had 'five dozen members'.

³⁷The complete files of 25 militants with positions of responsibility within the organisation were selected for the analysis of MAN's leadership class.

(1944–2004), a prominent veteran and renowned intellectual of the Portuguese Neo-fascist wing. During the Salazar regime, Rodrigo Emílio was part of the extreme right-wing organisations which were relatively independent from the Estado Novo, such as Movimento Jovem Portugal (1961–1965) and Frente Nacional Revolucionária (1965–1956). Author of several poetry books, he wrote copiously for ultra-nationalist publications such as the weekly *Agora* (1961–1969) and *Política* (1969–1974). In the years of transition to democracy, he was involved in the foundation of the most radical extreme right-wing movements hostile to the 25 April 1974 revolution, like Movimento de Acção Portuguesa (MAP) and Exército de Libertação de Portugal (ELP). When he returned from clandestinity in Spain, he continued to intervene in the Portuguese extreme right milieu, supporting the doctrinal education of the younger radical generations and defending them intellectually in their short-lived activities. Rodrigo Emílio certainly maintained close links with MAN. However, it is not possible to talk of Rodrigo as being the brains behind a movement whose doctrine seems not to have been greatly influenced by his intellectual prestige. Rodrigo Emílio on several occasions demonstrated (particularly on the race question) that his ideology was moulded by his search for an understanding with his younger comrades.

Occupations of MAN'S Members

The young age of the majority of MAN's members is clearly reflected in their occupations. A total of 53 per cent of the sample that has been analysed were students and school pupils. This category merits closer attention. Of the total number of student members, only 14 per cent were at university, with the remaining 86 per cent being high school pupils. This represents a significant reversal of the historical trend within the Portuguese Radical Right. The ultra-nationalist organisations that were active during the 1960s and 1970s were made up largely of university students, enabling the younger members, aged 15–18, to have a cultural and ideological link with rather more mature political activists. Of the remaining members (48 per cent of the total), 12 per cent were workmen, nine per cent worked in shops or cafés, eight per cent were office juniors, seven per cent worked in the public sector, four per cent were liberal professionals (mainly working in information technology or as photographers or journalists), three per cent were retail workers, with the remaining one per cent being soldiers, unemployed or retired.

Focusing the study on the occupations of the movement's leaders, we see that, while students remain the largest single category, with 40 per cent of the total, they are no longer an absolute majority. Nevertheless, within this group the proportion of university students rises to 20 per cent. This 13 per cent difference in the proportion of students who were ordinary members and those who were leaders is shared between the workman category (16 per cent), public sector employees (12 per cent), and office workers (12 per cent).³⁸ Of the leaders, eight per cent were business people (a category that did not exist amongst the movement's base members), eight per cent were liberal professionals (twice the proportion found amongst the ordinary members) and four per cent were retail workers.

The profile of a typical member of the movement, therefore, is of someone with a low-average education, engaged in generally low qualified employment, with

³⁸As an office worker, the movement's president, Paulo Henriques, fell into this category.

the majority being employed by someone else and working in non-managerial positions.

The Geographical Distribution of MAN

As both the PGR and the Constitutional Court demonstrated, MAN was based in Amadora, a dormitory town on the northwestern outskirts of Lisbon where all of the movement's founding members lived. In 1986 the movement's newspaper announced the creation of groups in the city of Lisbon, Amadora, Oporto, Castelo Branco and Queijas.³⁹ The implantation of MAN at the district level was overwhelmingly concentrated in Lisbon and Oporto, where 46 and 32 per cent, respectively, of the members lived. Lagging behind were the districts of Braga (six per cent), Setúbal (five per cent), Aveiro and Castelo Branco (three per cent each), Faro and Viana do Castelo (two per cent each), Coimbra (one per cent) and Angra do Heroísmo, Évora, Santarém and Viseu, each with less than one per cent.

If, on the one hand, this distribution confirms the traditional concentration of Portuguese radical right-wing militancy in the country's two largest cities, on the other hand it also presents the peculiarity of Coimbra as being insignificant, when Coimbra has historically been fertile ground for militant radical nationalism. If we consider that in Coimbra ultra-nationalist militancy has always been led by the university elite, this then fits perfectly with the lack of university students within the movement's ranks.

The two most important groups within the movement in the Lisbon district appeared in Amadora, which had a core of 50 members, and the city of Lisbon, with more than two dozen members – although there were also much smaller groups, with fewer than 10 members each, in Oeiras, Sintra, Loures, Cascais, and Odivelas. To those of the capital we must also add the important groups that existed in the towns on the south bank of the River Tagus – in the district of Setúbal, with particular concentration in Almada. The decision of several individuals from Almada to join the movement between 1986 and 1987, and the subsequent affiliation in 1988–1990 of a much larger group, is remarkable for two reasons: firstly, Almada, which is a traditionally communist sympathising town, proved to be a source of radical militancy at the end of the 1980s, just as it had been at the beginning of the 1960s when many of its young residents contributed considerably to the growth of that era's largest extreme right group, the Movimento Jovem Portugal [MJP, Young Portugal Movement]; secondly – also just as in the 1960s, when Almada's MJP militants altered the movement's social structure by increasing the number of working-class members within an essentially student group – at the end of the 1980s the Almada members were proletarian and sub-proletarian, and, more importantly, they supported the skinhead sub-culture (of which they represented Portugal's most famous group). That is to say, the affiliation of the south bank skinheads into MAN was the cause of the movement's approximation to the neo-Nazi subculture and was to be one of the PGR's most powerful accusations against it. In fact, the legal authorities claimed that the leader of the south bank skinheads had been a member of MAN since 1987 and that he was, in fact, one of the movement's leaders.

³⁹The movement's earliest recorded activity was the distribution of leaflets at Amadora train station on 22 November 1985, while its activities in Oporto, Castelo Branco and Queijas began in mid-January 1986. See *Acção* 2 (1986), p.4.

In the district of Oporto, the areas with most MAN members were the cities of Oporto, Matosinhos (with more than two dozen members) and Vila Nova de Gaia (with around a dozen members). There were also small groups, with fewer than six members each, in Santo Tirso, Gondomar and Lousada.

It is interesting to note that, in the Lisbon district, membership followed a regular growth pattern (the increase of 1988–1990 notwithstanding), while in the district of Oporto there was a peak in 1989 when the number of membership applications doubled. Almost half of this increase was centred on the Matosinhos group, which, like Almada, had one of the largest skinhead groups in the country. The importance of 1989 in the spread of the movement in the north of the country is also indicated by the dinner Henriques instructed the movement's northern leadership to organise in December 1989. The goal of this social event was to find points of convergence between MAN and the independent skinhead movement. The legal authorities believed that this dinner proved that MAN was responsible for the politicisation of the skinheads. However, the dinner was an absolute failure that only served to undermine the movement's spread into northern Portugal. Indeed, in 1990 there was a sharp decline in the number of membership applications from this region, at a time when Lisbon was receiving a slight increase in applications.

As for the remaining districts, it is possible to talk only of a group in Braga, in which about a dozen members were joined by some isolated individuals in Esposende, Guimarães, and Vila Verde. In the district of Faro, there were some members in Loulé, Albufeira, Portimão, and Vila Real de Santo António, while in the district of Aveiro there were groups in the city of the same name, Espinho and Castelo de Paiva. Castelo Branco, Fundão and Penamacor had groups, as did Viana do Castelo and Monção. Finally, there were groups in Coimbra, Angra do Heroísmo, Reguengos de Monsaraz (Évora), Rio Maior (Santarém) and Viseu.

In the smaller districts the small number of membership applications was concentrated in the period 1989–1990, at a time when MAN was already the subject of a national media campaign. This raises the prospect that the spread of the movement into the provinces had been facilitated more by the media attention than by any strategic plan developed by the movement's political leadership. Evidently, it was not a case of the movement's leaders demonstrating any lack of interest in increasing the movement's size; rather it was evidence of a total lack of ability on their part to pursue this, which, in itself, was caused by the paralysing centralism of MAN's leader.

Ideology

Ethno-nationalist and racist themes were a growing part of MAN's political discourse during its entire existence. In fact, the movement's first official documents, the 'MAN manifesto', which was published in March 1985, and the 24 'programmatic points', published in June that same year, made no explicit reference to either the phenomenon of immigration or to the racist identity struggle. These two documents still shared the cultural undertone typical of classical Portuguese nationalism. They outlined a programme that defined the 'people' as an organic community and the State as the politically organised nation; that stated universal order on the imperial scale is natural to the nation in which 'assimilation is not synonymous with degeneration' (MAN 'programmatic points', point 20); in which liberalism, capitalism, socialism and communism are instruments of a bourgeois domination that began with the revolution of 1789; where democracy is the destructive tyranny

of the political parties; where Soviet and American imperialism are the mortal enemy of Portugal, operating through African nationalism; and in which the 'new man', solidly implanted in tradition against modernity, is the only salvation.

Nevertheless, from the very beginning MAN's publications contained some signs of its future development. In the first edition of its official bulletin, the opening article addressed the matter of a 'spiritual race' that has to be preserved along with the state and the nation.⁴⁰ In the movement's membership application form, which was reproduced in the journal, several programmatic points of an ethno-nationalist nature were printed, including: 'Portugal for the Portuguese', 'halt immigration', 'begin repatriation', 'jobs for whites first' and 'end overseas aid'.⁴¹ In the following edition of *Acção*, the movement's final break from the tradition of Portuguese nationalism is clear. One of the articles published in it, "Imigração: o princípio do fim" (Immigration: the beginning of the end) was a war cry that called for the repatriation of all African and Asian immigrants as the only way to ensure 'the survival of the nation and of the culture and identity of our people: a white European people. This means keeping pure the Portuguese nation's biological body'.⁴² The article denounced the miscegenation caused by mass immigration as an ethnic and cultural deformation that will result in the disappearance of Portugal, since the mulatto inhabitants of the future can never be called Portuguese.

The evolution of MAN's racism was the result of the convergence of two factors: one sociological, the other political. Sociologically, Portugal during the 1980s was – for the first time – experiencing a rise in the size of its foreign resident population, which increased from 50 750 in 1980 to 107 767 a decade later.⁴³ This growth was taking place while the native population remained relatively unchanged at 10 million. While immigration into Portugal was actually amongst the lowest of any Western European state, its concentration in the greater Lisbon and Oporto areas was sufficient to secure an audience for the radical right's alarmist pronouncement, which was also assisted by the existing revanchism of some white Portuguese against the African nationalism that had been responsible for the downfall of the empire.

The political factor was mainly concerned with the absence of any representative of the traditional Portuguese Radical Right capable of containing and organising MAN's members and, particularly, its doctrine at the moment of its foundation. This absence meant that the movement's young members were politically unprepared for the socio-political changes that were taking place in the country, and susceptible to the easily absorbed political identities and ideological discourses of foreign radical right-wing organisations, whose activism was much more attractive than what traditional Portuguese radicalism could offer. As the material seized by the PJ clearly shows, MAN maintained links with similar groups throughout Europe, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world. The publications produced by these groups, and which were available in the Portuguese milieu, contained items on the themes of white pride and racial war.⁴⁴ It was in

⁴⁰"Lado a lado contra o inimigo comum," *Acção* 1 (1986), p.1.

⁴¹"Junto-te à nossa luta!," *Acção* 1 (1986), p.1.

⁴²"Imigração: o princípio do fim," *Acção* 2 (1986), p.1.

⁴³Serviços de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras, available at http://www.sef.pt/portal/v10/PT/asp/estatisticas/evolucao.aspx?id_linha=4255&menu_position=4140#0.

⁴⁴The bulletin *Vanguarda* (1984, no. 0, p. 11), produced by Paulo Henriques prior to the creation of MAN, affiliated to the campaign of solidarity for the American neo-Nazi multiple murderer, Frank Spisak.

these foreign movements that MAN found the political causes that traditional Portuguese radicalism was unable to provide, either because of the organisational agonies it was suffering or because of the persistence of a culture of universal nationalism that was opposed to racist formulations. The absence of this tradition within the Portuguese Radical Right can be seen in the banality of MAN's racist discourse, which incorporates a superficial adaptation of the immigration theme and which has no ethno-nationalist ideological subtext. Symptomatic of this is the fact that the most interesting article on identity published in *Ofensiva* appeared only in 1990, and was a translation of a radical right German 'differentialist' text that condemned the West's cultural imperialism and the policies of assimilation that destroyed African identities and which, consequently, supported the right of each people and of each culture – including white Europeans – to defend themselves from this cultural genocide.⁴⁵

Equally banal was the anti-Semite discourse which, in opposition to biological racism, had some tradition, albeit secondary and non-consensual, in the editorial output of the extreme right since the years of the authoritarian regime.⁴⁶ Indeed, the ultra-right magazines not directly connected with MAN, such as *Último Reduto* and *Jovem Revolução*⁴⁷ were the ones responsible for spreading Zionist conspiracy theories of world domination among the organisation's militants and for distributing revisionist materials produced abroad denying the Holocaust.

An attempt to heal the breach with the old extreme right in a way that would give MAN a more refined ideological profile was made by the radical right-wing intellectual Rodrigo Emílio. From the outset, Rodrigo collaborated with MAN's publications as a polemicist and contributed to the ideological development of some of the movement's members without becoming its mentor. His interventions on ethno-nationalist matters appear to have represented his personal attempt to draw the ideological legacy of the veterans of the Portuguese Radical Right to the attention of the young radicals of the 1980s. In an article published in *Acção* in 1988, Rodrigo Emílio explained how the projection of European Portugal in the tropics from an imperial perspective was the heart of the youth militancy of the 1960s generation, and was the cause to which it sacrificed all of its racial beliefs. However, the events following 25 April 1974 radically altered the cards that had been dealt: the fall of the empire rendered the struggle for integration and the myth of a multi-continental and multi-racial Portugal meaningless. The modern struggle was one of defending the race, its blood and its soil – the fundamental elements of the Portuguese temperament.⁴⁸ These themes are picked up again in an article in *Ofensiva*, which Henriques, fearful of legal reprisals, refused

⁴⁵Stephanie Schoeman, "Os verdadeiros racistas," *Ofensiva* 1 (1990), p.6.

⁴⁶Riccardo Marchi, *Folhas ultras* (Lisbon: ICS, 2009), pp.142–51.

⁴⁷*Último Reduto* and *Jovem Revolução* are just two of the most successful fanzines in a long series of short-lived small groups with national-socialist connections that sprouted in Portugal in the 1980s, such as *Mocidade Patriótica*, *Brigadas Portuguesas*, *Acção Nacional Revolucionária* or *Resistência Fascista*. The best organised was, without a doubt, *Ordem Nova* [New Order], an organisation founded in 1980 by two veterans, since the 1960s, of Portuguese neo-fascism, Zarco Moniz Ferreira and José Valle de Figueiredo. This organisation became clandestine in 1983 and ended shortly after in order to avoid judicial persecution. *Nova Monarquia* (1983–1991), with its ultra-nationalist monarchic roots, rather than neo-fascist or neo-Nazi ones, was more consistent, from a chronological view as well as in terms of militancy. However, none of this radical fringe of the 1980s would ever reach the notoriety and scale of MAN.

⁴⁸Rodrigo Emílio, "Elogio da raça," *Acção* 4 (1988), p.3.

to allow to be published. In this article, Rodrigo Emílio explained the substantial differences between the concept of race as held by the traditional Portuguese Radical Right and that supported by MAN and the skinhead movement. The former, he says, speaks of:

The Lusitanian race: a countenance of many faces, each with its own colour, but which all gaze in the same direction ... all communicating the same ideals that all have embraced – and which all do embrace: the lavish and prodigious framework of a common frontier.⁴⁹

The latter's view is like a 'contraction' of this grand concept of a 'Lusitanian race' that is an emulation of the geographical contraction of the Portuguese empire, which is now reduced to a merely European territory. This diminution, caused by the decolonisation demanded by the Carnation Revolution, legitimised the idea of 'black power' for Africa and also, thus, the principle of 'white power' for Europe, which became a perfectly legitimate struggle for the ethno-nationalist extreme right. Moreover, while the sovereignty of European Portugal in Africa was clearly justifiable as part of a civilising mission, the same cannot be said in relation to the African presence in Europe, since this does not represent a civilising mission, but rather the surrender of sovereignty to the 'Negro Marxists we left to prosper in the tropics'.⁵⁰

This explanation of the historical and ideological changes in the Portuguese Radical Right's racial beliefs from universal nationalism to ethno-nationalism never managed to create a stable bridge between the old and new extreme right, despite remaining latent within two generations of militants and their organisations. The majority of veterans remained contemptuous of MAN, an attitude that was clearly evident in the statement made by Nuno Rogeiro, who had been leader of the Movimento Nacionalista [MN, Nationalist Movement] during the 1970s, to a conservative right-wing newspaper:

Some fringe groups are emerging that confuse socially advanced, politically non-dogmatic and decidedly anti-racist revolutionary nationalism with the cretinism of the white supremacist views of Le Pen, Klan and others. Portuguese nationalists have to understand Portugal was created by overcoming the race barrier, and not by erecting an artificial one.⁵¹

In some cases, the radical youths came to consider the Portuguese imperial era as a parenthesis in history that was prejudicial to the Portuguese racial identity, openly accusing the traditional radical right:

In order to achieve their objectives, these old men are willing to promote so-called 'integration', a contemptible word that encompasses within it the destruction of a people. That is, this empire of Portuguese has only a name, as it is evident that mixing ten million white Portuguese with 19 million blacks will result in the assassination of the Lusitanian race. The Lusitanians of that future will be a caricature of their ancestors, the sad

⁴⁹Rodrigo Emílio, "Em defesa da mocidade nacionalista," Rodrigo Emílio's private archive.

⁵⁰Idem.

⁵¹Nuno Rogeiro, *O Diabo*, 6 December 1988.

product of anti-natural miscegenation. Those who will salute the national flag will be a hybrid sub-race of Negroes and mulattos who have lost forever their noble Lusitanian blood and culture. Nothing could suit international crypto-Judaism more than this destruction of the white race.⁵²

As we can see, these are two positions that are difficult to reconcile, despite the historical explanations for their respective formation that has produced a dichotomy which remains untreated in the development of the Portuguese Extreme Right.

Conclusion

The centrality of the 1980s as a changing time in the European Extreme Right, characterised by the emergence of a new kind of radical movements,⁵³ found some parallel in Portugal. Whereas it is true that during that decade no parties that may be placed in the dichotomy advanced by Ignazi between the old and the new extreme right appeared, nevertheless, it was over the last 20 years of the past century that profound changes in the Portuguese radical nationalism occurred. Thus, MAN accounts for the fracture whose historical parable establishes a 'before' and an 'afterwards'. In fact, through MAN, a new type of political militant arises, whose adhesion to the extreme right is caused by the social-economic and social-political changes in contemporary Portugal. In this sense, the Portuguese movement was hybrid: at national level it represented a novelty compared with the Portuguese traditional Radical Right. Conversely, in terms of international comparison, it cannot be included in the category of the new extreme right movements and is chronologically out of step because it perpetuated a neo-fascist identity typical of the old extreme right.⁵⁴

Within the category of the old European Extreme Right, MAN did not offer major innovation, from an organisational or doctrinal perspective. The movement did not even participate in the attempts for cultural renovation that some European groups pursued from 1970 onwards, adopting New Left topics, ranging from the Latin American third way to Russian national-bolshevism.⁵⁵ On the contrary, it became involved in the phenomenon, initiated in 1945, of Americanisation of some European Extreme Right, impermeable to the topics of white supremacy and racial struggle typical of North-American milieus.⁵⁶ Particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, these topics assumed a central role in the ideas of extremist grouplets, intertwining with youth urban subcultures like that of the Skinhead movement. The old chauvinist nationalism was thus superseded by a broader vision of belonging to the common white race, committed to a racial war against non-white races and international Zionism. This conspiracy theory

⁵²'Combate racial', manuscript document, TC 364/91, appendix 8, folio 210.

⁵³Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Party in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.2.

⁵⁴Piero Ignazi, "The Silent Counter-revolution. Hypotheses on the Emergence of Extreme Right-wing Parties in Europe," *European Journal of Political Research* 22/1-2 (1992).

⁵⁵Jeffrey M. Bale, "Fascism and Neo-fascism: Ideology and 'Groupuscularity'," in Roger Griffin, Werner Loh, Andreas Umland (eds), *Fascism Past and Present, West and East – an International Debate on Concepts and Cases in the Comparative Study of the Extreme Right* (Stuttgart: Verlag, 2006), p.82.

⁵⁶Jeffrey Kaplan and Leonard Weinberg, *The Emergence of a Euro-American Radical Right* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998), p.194.

translated into a political agenda of 'white resistance' that contrasted with low birth rates, abortion, immigration, mixed-blood marriages and positive discrimination policies for the minorities.⁵⁷ Additionally, it enhanced Christian identity and equally a few pagan roots of the West threatened by Islamism, in a religious revivalism that had played quite a secondary role in the discourse of the radical right in former decades.

All of these themes of a new groupuscular extreme right are found in the propaganda of MAN, alongside the classics of the old European Extreme Right: anti-egalitarianism, anti-pluralism, anti-parliamentarianism and a stance against the system.⁵⁸

The anti-capitalism and anti-liberal discourse of the movement, as well as the atonement of authoritarian regimes of fascist inspiration, made MAN definitively incompatible with the category represented by the new extreme right, which emerged in the transition from post-industrial economies with a neoliberal political agenda.⁵⁹ In this sense, MAN belonged to the small minority of movements with a 'volkisch socialism' identity, which privileged economic nationalism and the central role of the State, away from the successes of the post-industrial extreme right.⁶⁰ Despite this, MAN's radical opposition to immigration and assimilation policies constitutes something new in the slogans of the traditional Portuguese Radical Right, linked to the myth of the multi-racial and multi-continental empire.

The break with the classic radical right is not only ideological but also sociological. If the scarce territorial presence of MAN is a common feature of movements and parties of the classic extreme right (as well as of the party representing the Portuguese Extreme Right in the twenty-first century: PNR), the movement reveals, in contrast, a cultural paucity and a working class element in terms of followers in line with recent developments of right-wing extremism.⁶¹

The nuclei of the movement were fed mostly by medium-low class youth from the peripheries of cities, students or people from non-qualified professions, whereas militants from the traditional radical right came mostly from the medium-high bourgeoisie, drawn from university students, the liberal professions or the civil service.

If from an ideological viewpoint MAN reproduced the model of the groupuscular radical right, in structural terms it denoted both affinities and differences with Griffin's rhizome model. Indeed, MAN did not show willingness to contribute to the development of a rhizome-type structure, to which autonomous entities converge to form a flexible and agile network.⁶² Quite the opposite, its leader's obsession with hierarchy and centralisation of the group produced stiffness, immobility, fracturing conflicts and, mostly, vulnerability to the repression perpetrated by the regime. However, if we see MAN as an autonomous cell, we realise that, in fact, its self-dissolution did not have any consequence on the (more

⁵⁷Hans-Georg Betz, "The Growing Threat of the Radical Right," in Peter H. Merkl and Leonard Weinberg (eds), *Right-wing Extremism in the Twenty-first Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.82.

⁵⁸Ignazi (note 54), p.146.

⁵⁹Herbert Kitschelt, *The Radical Right in Western Europe*. (Michigan, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995), pp.2-3.

⁶⁰Betz (note 58), p.81.

⁶¹Ignazi (note 54), p.155.

⁶²Griffin (note 1).

or less formal) networks it was part of during its short existence, both at national and international levels. Thus, MAN is totally coherent with Griffin's model in its exogenous dimension, but diverges from it in key aspects of its endogenous dimension.

From a doctrinal viewpoint, MAN accommodated some of the Portuguese classic extreme right slogans: ultra-nationalism, anti-communism, disdain for the democratic system (identified as *particracy*), Euro-scepticism and the idea of crisis in the West. To this heritage, MAN added all the directives of the old European Extreme Right, which had never found a place in Portugal: marked ethnic-nationalism, the enhancement of racial and cultural homogeneity, the mysticism of the *blunt und boden*, social Darwinism in inter-racial relations, and the Law and Order proclamations.⁶³

Militants raised in the ranks of MAN and who remained active following the dissolution of the movement brought all these innovations with them, translating them, when of the founding of the Partido Nacional Renovador into a political language that was new in Portugal. Although MAN supplied PNR with quite a number of leaders, the party cannot be seen as a mere photocopy of MAN, in party form.⁶⁴ Its identity brings it closer to the parties Herbert Kistchelt calls 'welfare-chauvinist', due to its strong nationalism slant, cultural xenophobia, defence of the welfare-state and rejection of neo-liberal systems. Its political proposal no longer has the flavour of extremism devoid of any compromise with the fringes. Even when opposing immigration policies, PNR does not totally reject the assimilation hypotheses that characterise the more institutionalised parties of the European Extreme Right.⁶⁵ However, it concurrently keeps traces of the fascist subculture typical of MAN,⁶⁶ which weakens its image and political proposal among potential voters.⁶⁷

The set of differences and similarities with the Portuguese extreme right movements of the transition period and of the new millennium means the MAN can definitively be regarded as the bridge in the historical dynamics of radical nationalism in contemporary Portugal.

Notes on Contributor

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⁶³Pascal Perinneau, *Les croisés de la société fermée : l'Europe des extrêmes droites* (La Tour-d'Aigues: Éditions de l'Aube, 2001).

⁶⁴A few longstanding Salazar supporters from *Aliança Nacional* and militant of the national revolutionary wing of the 1960s and the 1970s and of the period of transition to democracy, whose political culture was slightly distinct from the one shared by MAN's activists, also contributed to the foundation of the PNR.

⁶⁵Betz (note 58), p.88.

⁶⁶Zúquete (note 18), p.187.

⁶⁷Roger Karapin, "Radical-Right and Neo-Fascist Political Parties in Western Europe," *Comparative Politics*, 30/2 (1998), pp.219 and 225.

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