

# White? Southern European white? Mixed?: The struggles upon race and ethnicity within the Portuguese non-partisan far-right\*

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The aim of this article is to contribute to the debate on race and ethnicity amidst Far-right internet organizations by using Portugal as a case study. The main issue is to analyze how the Far-right in Portugal, despite its small number of groupings, encompasses a huge overarching field of world-frames. There are, basically, two main ideological axes highly opposed to each other. One axis states that Portugal belongs to a white ethn European universe. It aims at a Portugal amalgamated to a European continent in which whites should be an undeniable majority, if not all its population. Its followers are influenced by schools of thought from Europe and the USA. The other axis states that the Portuguese people are especially prone to miscegenation with non-white Europeans. It aims at a Portugal amalgamated with its former Empire in the tropics and bases its ideal on thoughts emerged in Brazil. I conclude that both ideological lines cleave the Portuguese groupuscular right and give a very particular tone to Metapolitics.

**Keywords:** Metapolitics, far-right, groupuscularity, portugalidade [portugality], identitarianism, white identity politics

## **Branços? Brancos sul europeus? Miscigenados?: As disputas sobre raça e etnicidade na direita não partidária portuguesa**

O objetivo deste artigo é contribuir para o debate sobre raça e etnia em meio às organizações de extrema-direita na internet, usando Portugal como estudo de caso. A questão principal é analisar como a extrema-direita em Portugal, apesar de seu pequeno número de grupos, abrange um enorme campo de estruturas mundiais. Existem, basicamente, dois eixos ideológicos principais altamente opostos entre si. Um eixo afirma que Portugal pertence a um universo etno-europeu branco que visa um Portugal amalgamado a um continente europeu no qual os brancos deveriam ser a maioria incontestável, se não toda a população. Seus seguidores são influenciados por escolas de pensamento da Europa e dos Estados Unidos. O outro eixo afirma que o povo português é especialmente propenso à miscigenação com europeus não brancos. Este eixo visa um Portugal amalgamado com seu antigo império nos trópicos e baseia seu ideal em pensamentos surgidos no Brasil. Concluo que ambas as linhas ideológicas dividem a direita groupuscular portuguesa e dão um tom muito particular à metapolítica.

**Palavras-chave:** Metapolitics, extrema-direita, direita radical, grupuscularidade, portugalidade, identitarianismo, políticas de identidade branca

## Introduction

The aim of this article is to contribute to the debate on Metapolitics and the groupuscular right in the European and Lusophone spaces with Portugal as a case study. I begin from the hypothesis that the Portuguese groupuscular right hardly constitutes a common metapolitical and ideological space. This is the case because of the existence of a right-wing model focused on Europe in ethnic terms and another focused on old imperial multiracial nationalism within the

same galaxy of organizations considered extreme-right-wing. Portugal is an extremely interesting case because it encompasses—within the field that could be described as the Far-right—ideologies that regard Portugal as part of a pristine white European race and ideologies that see the Portuguese as the people most prone to race mixing in Europe. The latter is supported by school thoughts coming from the global south, namely Brazil. That feature makes the groupuscular Far-right in Portugal a very particular case worthy of analysis.

My starting point is the observation that Portugal is a case in which the groupuscular Far-right and Metapolitics develop in a highly particular way if compared to other countries in Europe. I think that even the concepts of extreme-right radical right and the overarching Far-right deserves special attention in the Portuguese case. Naturally, every country or region has its particularism. However, the Portuguese particularism presents some tones that puts it outside of the typical European extreme-right: Indeed, organizations exist that recover Imperial and even old Salazarist extreme-right mottos such as ‘From Minho to Timor’ (for more explanations, see later in this text), without falling in plain concept of extreme-right as defined by the state of art. On the other hand, there are organizations that try to break with imperial traditions and, at the same time, defend the most radical forms of white only nation-states. While all that conceptualizations could be considered extreme-right in the Portuguese national context, they include astonishingly different worldframes and projects of society.

All the information and data utilized here are part of a research made from 2019 to 2022.<sup>1</sup> The main corpus of information was taken from the Facebook pages of the groupuscules, as well as their websites, Telegram, and YouTube. By observing the posts and analysing their content, it was possible to identify the main axis of their worldframe. Information taken from interviews with groupuscular members was also utilized. However, due to the ‘introverted’ nature of the organizations, interviews were utilized in a limited manner. It is worth pointing out that some of these groupuscules are so evasive that their members do not even display themselves in any public space at all. Thus, the main method used was observation by the social web, with a special emphasis on Facebook. The methodology was exclusively qualitative in scope.

First, I will make an analysis of the concept of Metapolitics, Far-right and groupuscular Right and then, I will recapitulate the origins of the two found ideological models that pervade them. I then analyse five groupuscules considered most important regarding their theoretical production, dissemination of ideas and number of subscribers to their online sites, that is, *Portugueses Primeiro* (Portuguese First), *Escudo Identitário* (Identitarian Shield), *O Bom Europeu* (The Good European), *Nova Ordem Social* (New Social Order), and *Nova Portugalidade* (New Portugality).

Next, I will analyse two groupuscules focused on the dissemination of news related to the themes of the five mentioned organizations, namely *Invictus Portucale* (Latin for Undefeated Portugal) and *Notícias Viriato* (Viriato News). Finally, I conclude that Portugal is a case of great particularity since its small marginal groups of the extreme-right do not manage to create an ideological proposal common to the whole spectrum. Rather, it can be said that there are two groupuscular right-wings in Portugal, which act both by the dissemination of ideas and theoretical proposals and by the dissemination of news of more immediate impact.

### **Metapolitics and the groupuscular right**

To begin, Metapolitics can be defined as the effort undertaken in civil society regarding beliefs, attitudes and worldviews that are dominant and can also influence how the universe of politics is perceived (BAR-ON, 2021). In short, Metapolitics is the space of struggle for the conquest and modification of ‘hearts and minds’, the reconfiguration of a collective mental landscape so that only in another moment will there be conditions to form more solid social bases for an action with eminently political ends. In this way, despite not being completely aligned with conventional representative politics or even with the classical unconventional politics of social movements, Metapolitics is a complement to these, contributing to the debate of what can be considered the most fundamental questions of politics far beyond from how the state should be managed (BAR-ON, 2021).

Metapolitics goes hand in hand with the extreme-right. By extreme-right, we refer to Cas Mudde’s (2019) definition in the way he differentiates it from the radical right. The former represented by groups that operate outside the parliamentary and electoral universe and the latter being the most right-wing representation within formal representative structures. For Mudde, both form the broader phenomenon of the Far-right. In the discussion proposed by Piero Ignazi (1995), the Far-right is composed of what he calls the old extreme-right and the new extreme-right. The former is characterized by its position as a direct heir to the authoritarian (or even totalitarian) right-wing regimes of the inter-war period, Nazism, Fascism, Francoism and Salazarism. It uses their symbols, tries to copy their organizational models, mottos and their repertoire of actions, as well as showcase representative institutions in an extremely aggressive way. The second, the new extreme-right, is the right that has emerged from parties since the 1980s in Europe. Ideologically, it defends the right to exist in ethnocultural terms for Europeans. Such a right, once aimed at peoples colonized by Europeans, is now aimed at them—something introduced by Alain de Benoist’s *Nouvelle Droite*. It manifests itself by networks of political movements and so-called populist

right-wing parties. It criticizes the representative party system but does not directly confront it nor does it necessarily aim to overthrow it.

The Portuguese right-wing movements of today, at first sight, fall into what could be called new extreme-right. I demonstrate, however, in this article, that once in virtual spaces, the divisions between the new and old extreme-rights and between radical and extreme-rights, are often quite tenuous, although they should not be disregarded. Moreover, it is worth to remember that, according to Mudde (2000), the extreme-right is necessarily one that goes completely head-to-head against immigration. It is incisively ethnonationalist as well. Authors such as Kauffman (2018), Kaufmann and Harris (2014), and Eatwell and Goodwin (2019) see ethnic and racial issues even in the populist right wing parties' performance. In their case, these issues manifest in tune with sudden ethnodemographic change in cities and neighbourhoods. However, these parties are not overtly ethnocentric as are metapolitical organizations. Also, their electorate acts more because of striking sudden changes rather than due to reflective and conscious racism. Open defence of the white race and theorization about its alleged inherited advantages comes from metapolitical organizations beyond populist parties (ZÚQUETE, 2020). In Portugal, curiously, there are groupuscules that recover elements from the interwar right-wing but do not position themselves against non-European immigration and also do not confront representative institutions. Importantly, despite distancing themselves from political parties, they are not closed to dialogue with the vast majority of them.

Due to the size, structure and type of activism of the surveyed organizations, the discussion will be brought around the concept of the groupuscular far right (GRIFFIN, 2003) or the online far-right community (MADISSON; VENTSEL, 2016). The groupuscule is defined by a decentralized group with few members and a weakly established leadership that is generally focused on Metapolitics and has a palingenetic<sup>2</sup> revolutionary ideal and the aim to overcome what they see as the decay of the prevailing liberal order (GRIFFIN, 2003). It is an organizing style that can develop in a relatively easy way and is found in many countries, such as Russia (ZUEV, 2010), Estonia (MADISSON; VENTSEL, 2016), Canada (BURSTOW, 2003) and Germany (SOMMER, 2003). Its physical expression is generally a website, although it can also be a magazine or a meeting place (GRIFFIN, 2003).

If several groupuscules establish a network in which their members can easily relate to each other and fluidly switch from one to the other; thus, the extreme rhizomatic right is formed (GRIFFIN, 2003). By slime mould rhizome, Griffin refers to a life form that was for a long time considered a fungus, later being removed from this classification. Slime is a type of living being, when prokaryotic cells come together to form a creature in which the whole is more important than

the parts, even though these parts would still be alive if separated. The rhizomatic right composed of the groupuscules would be a political expression with these characteristics. Each organization (or groupuscule) plays the role of a cell (or node) that has total independence from the other groupuscules but forms with them a sort of whole articulated by a more or less common world framework. Here I take David Snow's concept of framework to describe the ideologies of the Portuguese groupuscular right (SNOW et al., 1986). In a system such as this, the whole is more important than the parts but if it breaks down, the parts are able to remain alive and active. When the whole is consolidated, Griffin gives it the name of rhizome, inspired by the concept of the same name by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (GRIFFIN, 2003). In this ensemble, the circulation between members and sympathizers is quite easy and fluid and in the case of online activity, sympathizers sometimes act almost as proto-members since they can participate in online discussions and bring their own questions related to the most relevant themes.

The groupuscule is characterized by being highly decentralized and flexible in its ability to manoeuvre and survive in extra-institutional politics, not having very strong or consolidated leaderships. According to Roger Griffin (2003), the groupuscule was the survival strategy of fascist-inspired forces in a post-1945 world totally dominated by the liberal viewpoint. Having very little space in the party, representative, and electoral arenas, these groups had to adopt strategies that guaranteed their survival and, at the same time, the ability to disseminate ideas to a broad public far beyond their own networks.

With the advent of the internet, especially with web 2.0 technology, the virtual sphere galvanized the groupuscules' ability to survive and disseminate ideas (WINTER, 2019), constituting an opportunity, especially for the European and North American extreme-right (CAIANI; PARENTI, 2016). The internet created the spaces for the articulation of virtual communities and, with web 2.0, their reach became much greater than that of the first virtual platforms created by the far right in the 1990s (WINTER, 2019). The first group to create such a type of platform was Stormfront by former Ku Klux Klan member, Don Black, in the US (WINTER, 2019). From the virtual platform model of bulletin board—online newspaper—proposing the motto White Pride World Wide, and with the publication of the writings of iconic figures of the racial extreme-right, such as William Luther Pierce and David Duke, Stormfront became a parameter for the extreme-right that was beginning to venture into the virtual universe (WINTER, 2019).

The preponderance of written material and physical meetings among Far-right groups of the 1970s and 1980s presents a turn towards virtual space as done by Stormfront. It is important to remember the fact that groups are not movements per se but organizations that serve as

models of action, the *Aktionsmodell* (SIMPSON, 2016) for networks that eventually become movements. This *Aktionsmodell* is intrinsically linked to extreme-right organizations in internet spaces. YouTube, for example, has become a kind of alternative television, something between TV and its conventional channels and virtual social media: a platform intended for all kinds of information, but centred on videos (RAUCHFLEISCH; KAISER, 2020).

With the internet, far-right activists were able to remain even less vulnerable in the face of the actions of the state and rival groups of the radical left (CAIANI; KROLL, 2015). The sphere of outreach and dissemination of their ideas became much larger (FROIO; GHANESH, 2017), and it was easier for members to circulate among several different like-minded organizations. The internet was extremely important for the consolidation of the groupuscular right as a specific expression of the right as it allowed it to become transnationalized (CAIANI; KROLL, 2015; SIMPSON, 2016) and to administer a nationalist discourse that is practically excluded from conventional communication channels, that is, biological racial nationalism (CAIANI; KROLL, 2015) and ethnonationalism grounded in the ideas of the *Nouvelle Droite* (SIMPSON, 2016). In other words, the internationalization of the extreme right, already present in part in its theoretical and ideological component (BAR-ON, 2011), is facilitated by virtual social media.

However, national specificity is an important feature in the analysis of right-wing organizations (CAIANI, 2017) as it provides them with their own face that other countries do not have. In the Portuguese case, different right-wing types focused on extra-conventional politics that brings with them the mark of a multiracial overseas Portugal, but also aim at a 'European Portugal in a European Europe'. Portugal is quite illustrative in the sense that there are groups that easily conform to ideas coming from other European countries and the US, but with the presence of other organizations that would be seen as very divergent from the Euro-American right-wing universe. These organizations esteem and value imperial nationalism, praising multiracial and transcontinental civilization, miscegenation, and the supposed ease of the Portuguese to mix with non-European peoples. Since the immigration issue is the major common theme of European right-wing movements (FROIO; GHANESH, 2019; HUTTER, 2014; MUDDE, 2000; SIMPSON, 2016; ZÚQUETE 2018), a right-wing scenario with groups aiming at a multiracial civilization attracts attention.

The analysis of this scenario will be based on two main axes: one is the verification of the theoretical-ideological scope of the groupuscules, that is, the extent to which these movements work with international influences from the North American and European extreme-right or with the imperial, lusotropicalist tradition of the Portuguese far right. The main question is to what extent the Portuguese groupuscular right migrated from imperial nationalism with Luso-tropicalist

traits to a nationalism focused on the defence of congruence between state, territory, and ethnicity. In this case, European ethnicities, or even the so-called Caucasian white race, would be the core of such ethnicity. In this sense, I also take into account the Identitarian and Alt-Right ideology, the Identitarian constituting the ethnopluralist worldview inherited largely from the Nouvelle Droite and from GRECE (Groupe de Recherche sur la Civilisation Européenne), founded by Alain de Benoist, in 1969. It advocates ethnopluralism, which it identifies as the right of European peoples to exist on similar terms to the peoples once targeted by colonization processes (BAR-ON, 2011; ZÚQUETE, 2018). The Identity Movement, which emerged in 2002 in France under the name *Bloc Identitaire*, can be seen as the main organization that explicitly carries forward the ideology of the Nouvelle Droite.

The Alt-right, in turn, would be a reinterpretation of the Nouvelle Droite in more explicitly biological and racial terms (BAR-ON, 2021). It materialized itself in a set of organizations coming, above all, from the USA, which bring to the fore the bioracialist worldview (MUDDE, 2019), generally more present in the Anglo-Saxon universe. Despite the centrality given to the natural sciences by the Alt-Right, it is not outside the network of identitarians, which also flirts with biological elements, even though they give tremendous weight to culture when it comes to visualizing European identities (ZÚQUETE, 2018). By advocating the existence of indigenous Europeans, it proposes a white racial solidarity—White nationalism—that goes beyond the European continent formed of diverse white ethno-states.

For the Alt-Right, to be European is necessarily to be white before anything else. Centred in the US, with Richard Spencer as its main spokesperson and Jared Taylor as its main intellectual mentor, its major goal is to create homogeneously white Caucasian regional, national and transnational spaces—White homelands—on both sides of the Atlantic (BAR-ON, 2021). One could say that the Identitarian Ideology and the Alt-Right are gradations within the same axis, the former having a theoretical basis that gives equal weight to bioracialism and culture and the latter tending more towards racialism, even though cultural elements are not one hundred percent absent. Alain de Benoist himself, before his turn to a more culturalist ethnopluralism, participated in debate groups focused on physical anthropology and racialism (FRANÇOIS, 2011). The fact that Richard Spencer identified himself as identitarian (BAR-ON, 2021) demonstrates the proximity of the two ideological models. Both would also come from the same core of thought—Nouvelle Droite above all—but also from the ideas of Interwar intellectuals such as Ernst Jünger, Carl Schmitt, and Martin Heidegger and traditionalists such as Julius Evola (BAR-ON, 2021).

The second axis will be the analysis of the repertoire of actions of these groups. The investigation of this facet of group Metapolitics is important regarding the use of the internet and social media. These discussion spaces are central to all analysed groups, being the principal means of diffusion of their worldview, as well as of proposals for theoretical discussion outside of what could be seen as the mainstream academic and scientific universe. In this sense, one can say that this groupuscular right is quite interspersed with Metapolitics.

However, some of the groupings act more exclusively on the internet than others. Some use street demonstrations in their repertoires of action, which brings them closer, to some extent, to social movements of a non-groupuscular nature. There are also experiences in which the groupuscles convert themselves into a more institutionalized think tank, coming closer than others to the academic world. Finally, there are those that get closer, at least during street demonstrations, to political parties competing for parliamentary representation. Many of these differences occur in line with the ideological style, which is very varied even within the groupuscularity, at least in the Portuguese case. The ideological line there runs from the defence of Portugal as part of an ethno-European White homeland along the lines of the Alt-right to the search for the rearticulation of the political-territorial space of the former multi-racial Portuguese Overseas Empire. I do not mean that this multi-racial doctrine is not highly conservative only because it aims for a territory extended throughout the world of the tropics. The principal point here is that the political and social project it defends are extremely different from the ethnonationalist ones. In this way, the study of the ideological component together with the repertoire of actions is of great importance for the understanding of the particularities of the groupuscular right in Portugal.

### **The introduction of identitarian ideology in Portugal and its imperial nationalist rival**

During the *Estado Novo* (1926-1974; a far-right regime led by António Oliveira Salazar and Marcello Caetano), ideas originating from *Nouvelle Droite* were already circulating in some organizations, such as *Jovem Europa* by Roberto de Moraes, the first to translate Ernst Jünger into Portuguese. Similarly, such ideas were also found in the newspapers *Futuro Presente*, *Movimento Jovem Portugal*, and *Cooperativa Livreira Cidadela* (MARCHI, 2016) but never gained any autonomy in the face of imperial nationalism in any organization (MARCHI, 2019). These small organizations positioned themselves more to the right than toward Salazar's regime itself. Their worldframe was a mix of imperial longings and a literature that defended exclusive European political spaces. The skinhead movements of the 1990s, in turn, rejected imperial nationalism in

search of an exclusively ethnoracial-based nationalism. They relied on a practical, unreflective rationality with very little theoretical basis. This practice was basically attacking and fighting African immigrants.

Regarding the introduction of new theoretical bases to the nationalist scene, the episodes that deserve more emphasis are the formation of identitarian organizations in Portugal at the turn of the New Century. In October 2001, the 1st Portuguese Nationalist Congress was held in Lisbon, with the title *Os nacionalistas portugueses no presente e no futuro* (Portuguese nationalists in the present and in the future), which brought together, in a hotel in the capital, individuals from various tendencies of Portuguese nationalism: orthodox Salazarists, monarchists, Catholic-Integralists, fascist intellectuals of the 50/60s, national-revolutionaries of the 70s and the younger militants of neo-Nazi tendencies of the 80s/90s (MARCHI, 2016).

Among the various speeches, that by Miguel Ângelo Jardim (official speaker) stands out (MARCHI, 2016). In his presentation, entitled 'The nationalism of the 21st century: directions and solutions', Jardim attempts to apply Guillaume Faye's ideas<sup>3</sup> to the Portuguese context, defining the Nouvelle Droite author as prophetic (MARCHI, 2016). Jardim points to two central problems faced by European nations, Portugal included: One is the migration of non-Europeans endowed with an aggressive and militant Islam and the second is the clashes between ethnic and allegedly neo-tribal groups in major European metropolises, a scenario in which ethnocultural identity would be the last stronghold of the Portuguese (MARCHI, 2016). Facing these challenges, one should abandon the Eurafrikan imperial myth so common in classical Portuguese nationalism. Faye's proposal of an *Ethnoeuropa* from 'Brest to Vladivostok' would be extended to 'Lisbon to Vladivostok'. That is, Portugal is suggested to be the westernmost tip of a geopolitical bloc that includes Russia, excludes Turkey and treats the US and Islam as enemies. This 'Nation-Europe' would supposedly have a relationship of mutual respect with sub-Saharan Africa in political and economic terms, but without any project of geopolitical integration. However, this intervention of Jardim receives harsh criticism from the well-known intellectual Antonio José de Brito, who advocates the possibility of incorporating individuals of any strain into the foundations of nationality. According to his view, those are courage, devotion to the political community, loyalty, a sense of duty, honour, and dignity (MARCHI, 2016). For Brito, there is more value in the Black soldiers who fought for the Portuguese Empire than in the whites who abandoned it, as well as in the Arabs who fought for the French Empire in Algeria than the Nazi fighters who defamed Germany. In this way, he defends the 'Universal Empire of Order, Authority and Hierarchy' against what he calls false idols, worshipped both in the rectangle<sup>4</sup> and in a fantasy Europe (MARCHI, 2016).

The tension between the ethno-European line and the National-Imperial line continues at the following event of the Portuguese Nationalist Congress in November 2003, around a new presentation by Miguel Jardim, entitled *O Nacionalismo e as Etnias* (Nationalism and Ethnicities). In counterpoint, the leader of the Oliveira Salazar Study Center, Dr. Luiz Silveira, expresses Africanist theses in his paper *Portugal europeu ou atlântico?* (European or Atlantic Portugal?). There is a clear fracture point between the two lines, especially when Rui Pereira, a radical militant of the 1990s generation, stands against Silveira, accusing imperial nationalism of being outdated in relation to the need for the ethnic defence of Europe against supposedly alien elements (MARCHI, 2016). This tension highlights the dissatisfaction of the new generation of militants in the face of imperial nationalism and brings this generation closer to the identitarian nationalism coming from France.

The group *Causa Identitária* (Identitarian Cause) was founded in 2005 by João Martins as a product of this ideological divide. The idea arose in João Martins' house, together with Rui Pereira, a militant colleague from the days of *Movimento Ação Nacional* (MAN; National Action Movement),<sup>5</sup> and, at the time, a member of the Political Commission of the *Partido Nacional Renovador* (PNR; National Renewal Party), today *Ergue-te* (Arise). At its foundation, the founders of the *Associação Causa Identitária* (Identitarian Cause Association) announced it as an alternative to the system, to 'politically correct totalitarianism', be it 'Marxist or multicultural on the left side' or 'ultraliberal on the right side'. This alternative aims to overcome what its founders see as the ideologies of the last two centuries, desiring, for Portugal and Europe, an 'ecological and social society rooted in its history, but technologically evolved'; in short, the Archeofuturism of Guillaume Faye (MARCHI, 2016).

*Causa Identitária* takes part in several events organized by the PNR, such as in Porto, in the colloquium *Portugal in the 21st Century: The National Response*, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2005. Also, on June 18, 2005, the group participated with its own banner in the largest gathering held by the radical right since the 1970s, the demonstration *Against the rise of crime*, organized by the PNR and the National Front. The latter is a nationalist platform that emerged from the internet network of the National Forum and that was controlled by the skinhead movement (MARCHI, 2016). On September 17, 2005, *Causa Identitária* officially participates in the demonstration organized by the PNR against the so-called gay lobby in defence of the traditional family. Starting in July, it publishes *Voz Dissidente* (Dissident Voice), the official bulletin of the organization that will come out with certain regularity at least until 2009. The first page of volume No. 1 was dedicated to the nationality law that the government aimed to modify in a sense of strengthening the *Ius Solis* principle of citizenship to the detriment of *Ius*

*Sanguinis* (MARCHI, 2016). However, difficulties in creating a militancy capable of acting regularly caused *Causa Identitária* to disperse as an organization.

### **The continuity of the far-right Portuguese debate**

The ideas pervading *Causa Identitária* and its close rivals did not disappear from the Portuguese metapolitical scene, though. New groups resumed their theoretical and ideological proposals using the internet as their space of action, although not exclusively. To this new network, the Alt-right worldview is added, with its almost exclusively biogenetic and bioevolutionary framing, conferring a novelty in the Portuguese nationalist scenario. However, an organization that resumes the classic Portuguese nationalism divergent from identitarianism and the Alt-Right also emerged, *Nova Portugalidade* (New Portugality), having particular weight within the groupuscular right in Portugal. The Portuguese groupuscular identity galaxy is, therefore, led by the organizations *Portugueses Primeiro* (Portuguese First), or simply Portuguesees 1, *Escudo Identitário* (Identitarian Shield), and *O Bom Europeu* (The Good European).

With João Martins (from the extinct *Causa Identitária*) as one of its main leaders, *Associação Cívica Portugueses Primeiro* (Civic Association Portuguese First) was created on September 20, 2015, at the time of the refugee crisis, when many refugees/immigrants came from the Middle East. At that moment, the Portuguese government was considering to open the borders of Portugal, according to Nelson Dias da Silva, former spokesperson of the movement and now member of the *Chega* party. The demonstration against the arrival of refugees—*Take care of ours first*—with about 150 people in front of the Assembly of the Republic, was the meeting point that gave birth to the embryo of *Portugueses 1*. This association has a Facebook page with about 5458 followers and a page for young people, *Jovem Portugueses Primeiro* (Young Portuguese First), with about 1600 followers. At least until the street demonstrations conducted in 2018 and 2019, the group appeared to have some contact with the National Renewal Party (PNR, now *Ergue-te*), although it maintained its independence from that party, not being its movement arm. It is an organization that counts on leaderships coming from *Ergue-te*, as well as groups of autonomous nationalists. It is worth noting that its former president, Rui Amiguiño, was in the PNR until 2013. *Portugueses 1* is, in this way, a platform of nationalists from various backgrounds, focusing on the issue of refugees and migration flows.

*Portugueses 1* has not developed an organizational structure of national scope, limiting itself to the municipality of Lisbon, with a National Coordinating Board from which the activist groups, which do not exceed a few dozen, have little autonomy. Their activism is not constant,

and this organization has not had a significant moment in terms of consolidating this activism. Its members dedicate themselves more to other organizations and projects that they are part of, and former president Rui Amiguinho abandoned *Portugueses 1* to dedicate himself to the publishing house *Editora Contra Corrente* (Counter-Current Publishing House), of which he is the director. This shift made João Martins a leading figure in the organization. As the publishing house was founded by Amiguinho and Martins, one can say that the leadership of *Portugueses 1* alternates between the publishing house and the group, with the identitarian ideology as their common axis. In social media, *Portugueses 1* suggest a broad proposal of reading the books published by *Contra-Corrente*. It remains active on these networks, posting itself as one of the Portuguese ethno-nationalist strands, with a repertoire of actions basically focused on denouncing what they see as corruption of the Portuguese state agencies, especially its Foreigners and Borders Service (*Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras* [SEF]), and the alleged criminal practices conducted in the networks of Asian migrant stores.

The main goals of *Portugueses 1* are: to defend Portugal in ethnocultural terms, to promote a direct and referendum politics within the democratic system, as well as a united Europe that respects its diverse identities, and an economy at the service of what it interprets as community instead of what it calls the interests of a privileged few. Street demonstrations with astonishingly small number of activists were part of *Portugueses 1*'s repertoire of actions, following the pattern pointed out by Manuela Caiani (2017). That is, extreme-right-wing movements, most of the time when they turn to street politics, cannot gather as large numbers as left-wing movements. This pattern was noticeable at the *Portugueses 1* demonstration on June 18, 2018, which had a very low number of activists against the construction of a mosque, ethnic stores, and real estate speculation in the vicinity of the Martim Moniz<sup>6</sup> square in Lisbon. On the same day, together with some veterans of the Overseas War (African War), *Portugueses 1* activists poured pig's blood on local buildings and consumed pork nearby as a form of protest against what they saw as the Islamization of the locality. The demonstration was titled 'Lisbon, don't be French!'. The inspiration for the title comes from a song by Amália Rodrigues at a time—in the 1950s—in which Lisbon was very much absorbing French fashions. The number of *Portugueses 1* activists, however, was no more than 10. *Portugueses 1* also once posted on Facebook a photo of a banner at a pedestrian bridge in Lisbon with the writings 'White lives matter'.

Finally, I highlight the participation in the Nationality March in 2019, with members of the PNR and sympathizers with banners that read 'Portuguese first', 'Lisbon, don't be French', 'You are Portuguese, you are only for us', and 'No to the invasion of Europe' together with groups playing

traditional music on bagpipes. The flags seen among the demonstrators were those of the PNR, Portugal, *Portugueses 1* and that of *Genération Identité*, with the Greek Lambda symbol.

However, it can be noticed that *Portugueses 1* is an organization that has not managed to become a larger grouping. Its raids<sup>7</sup> on ethnic stores, which were filmed and presented on social media from 2018 to 2019, were conducted by few people and do not happen anymore. Perhaps because of their very low numerical impact, demonstrations have ceased to be in the repertoire of actions of the organization, and its last demonstration was at the aforementioned Nationality March in 2019. On its Facebook page, one of the most important posts regarding street manifestations dates back to 2017. It refers to the defence of the statue of Father António Vieira against attempted tagging made by the left-wing group *Descolonizando* (Decolonizing), inspired by the US Black Lives Matter,<sup>8</sup> along with another Portuguese extreme-right group, *Escudo Identitário*. Clearly, the page has received less attention recently and has become the side project of individuals already involved in other projects. I highlight the publishing house *Contra-Corrente*, whose books have been proposed by *Portugueses 1* in their posts lately. These books include those written by João Martins and Rui Amiguinho, among many other representatives of the identitarian ideology from Portugal and other white majority countries. These books are the centre of recommendation of readings of *Portugueses 1*. It would not be an exaggeration to affirm that *Portugueses 1* is currently almost the virtual dissemination branch of the publishing house.

The group *Escudo Identitário* was created at the time of the intervention made by *Associação Estudantil* (Student Association) against a lecture to be given by the well-known right-wing intellectual Jaime Nogueira Pinto at *Universidade Nova de Lisboa* (New University of Lisbon) in 2017. The lecture was cancelled, allegedly because of Jaime Nogueira Pinto's conservative views. According to a former leader of *Escudo Identitário*, Nuno Afonso, a group of about a few dozen young people gathered to deliver a letter of protest to the Association in defence of the lecture. After what Afonso described as a peaceful and civilized debate, some young people who were there to protest realized that it was possible to organize a group focused on youth activism along the lines of Metapolitics. *Escudo Identitário* describes this activism as a fight on the cultural level outside conventional politics whose starting point was the episode of the veto to the right of attending the presentation of a highly recognized intellectual such as Nogueira Pinto in an academic space for ideological reasons. With about 9,146 followers on its Facebook page, the group—which also only has a few dozen members—positions itself as a defender not only of Portuguese national identity but also of a broader ethnoeuropean identity, although directed more towards southern Europe.

Although Jaime Nogueira Pinto is an intellectual more often associated with Portuguese imperial nationalism, the episode surrounding the veto to his lecture was the gestation environment of a group that has broken, to a high degree, with this type of nationalism. According to *Escudo Identitário*, it was a mutiny of protest against the hegemony of the left in universities. The beginning of its activities laid in social media to later establish itself in the field of face-to-face relations. *Escudo Identitário* emerged as a youth group with the proposal to act in online social media and on the streets. It structured itself within an organizational model with regional nuclei endowed with certain autonomy, but always responding to a national directorate, which, in turn, is divided between Lisbon and Porto. Although it tries to create nuclei throughout the country (for example, in the southernmost Portuguese region Algarve), it has consolidated itself more in the central and northern regions on a Lisbon-Porto-Braga axis. Within the framework of the Portuguese groupuscular right, it is the only group with a permanent militancy, although its street demonstrations are also rare and with low numbers of participants. The organization has its own T-shirts and flags, showing signs of a certain uniformity among its members. Their symbol is the Iberian Lynx, which symbolizes the native Portuguese as a sociobiological species in extinction.

One can say that *Escudo Identitário* is the Portuguese correlate of Casa Pound Italia, a nationalist Italian organization close to an identitarian ideology and with some neofascist traits. At the time of its foundation, it had close contacts with Gianluca Iannone, then leader of Casa Pound. Iannone was present at the colloquium organized by *Escudo Identitário* in 2018, which was also attended by *Portugueses 1*. So, there is a proximity between the Portuguese and Italian groups. The Spanish organization *Hogar Social* is also on the radar of the *escudistas*, and there is advocacy for proximity between what are considered the three Euro-Mediterranean brother nations, Portugal, Spain, and Italy.

Following the repertoire of action of Casa Pound, *Escudo Identitário* promotes street demonstrations and activities aimed at helping the most impoverished sectors of what is seen as the native population. It also recommends sports activities, with an emphasis on martial arts. It is very active online, posting photos and videos of its activities and offering a variety of suggested readings. Authors such as Alain de Benoist, Guillaume Faye, Dominique Venner in the field of the French Nouvelle Droite, and authors of the French neo-pagan literature, such as Jean Mabire and Marc Augier deserve to be mentioned. In the national field, Jaime Nogueira Pinto, close to classical imperial nationalism, is recommended, besides Orlando Ribeiro, who described Portugal in 1945 as a convergence between the Greco-Roman and the Celtic world, a synthesis of parts of Northern

and Southern Europe. Additionally, a number of authors speaking of Portuguese history or praising Italian fascism, such as Homem Cristo Filho (1892-1928), are proposed.

*Escudo Identitário* defends a European Portugal in a European Europe and occasionally uses terms and concepts from the biological debates,<sup>9</sup> but focusing on a body of literature in which biology is not central. It is the Portuguese organization that is closest to the identitarians in the rest of Europe due to its theoretical-ideological scope, its repertoire of actions and the clear and central influence that the *Nouvelle Droite* has in its imaginary and worldview. This tiny group, similar to *Portugueses 1*, maintains the pattern of small numbers in street demonstrations, such as in the defence of the statue of Priest Antonio Vieira. Despite some defence of single elements of imperial Portuguese history, it aims for a white Portugal ethnically and socially connected with Europe. However, the wide breadth of the theoretical scope behind its ideology—using cultural elements and a biologist language—has caused some of its members to abandon it and help to form another organization, *O Bom Europeu*.

The group *O Bom Europeu* is, to some extent, a surprising phenomenon in Portugal due to the huge influence of Anglo-Saxon racialism, being closer to the North American Alt-Right than to the identitarians of the rest of Europe, despite carrying a much more aggressive discourse than the Alt-right itself.<sup>10</sup> Alt-right authors such as Greg Johnson, Richard Spencer, and Jared Taylor, who are possibly its key theorists (BAR-ON, 2021), are mentioned in the podcast *Estrela Polar* (Polar Star),<sup>11</sup> focused on the theme of geopolitics as part of the ideological core of the organization. In that podcast, hosted by YouTube until mid-2020, members of *O Bom Europeu* put Guillaume Faye and Friedrich Nietzsche as their major philosophical inspiration, even though authors of Behaviour Sciences, Evolutionary and Genetic Anthropology, and Sociobiology represent their main theoretical axis. Names such as William Donald Hamilton, Charles Murray and Frank Salter,<sup>12</sup> among others, deserve to be highlighted in their reading suggestions made on Facebook and Telegram. Themes from craniology and physical and taxonomic anthropology are also not uncommon.

Initially composed in 2018 by a small group of a little more than a dozen people, *O Bom Europeu* is exclusively dedicated to Metapolitics on social media, with no form of activism outside the internet. In the online sphere, its members were very active on Facebook until it was banned from that platform in 2020—which reached over 9,000 subscribers—and are now on Telegram, with about 2,100 subscribers. On Telegram, the group shows an even more typically old extreme-right aspect, sometimes instigating physical violence against Blacks and making some anti-Semitic comments. The members of *O Bom Europeu* keep their identities anonymous and do not attend

conferences. Their discourse focuses almost entirely on the bioracial issue, presenting what could be a more reflexive, theoretical and intellectualized version of the skinhead ideology of the 1980s and 1990s.

Their cyberactivism basically consists in proposing readings, discussing it according to problems seen as structural but related to the conjuncture of the moment. Thereby, it often addresses the question of the demographic fall of what they frame as the white race. The dilution of the white race, especially within Europe, is the great topic of discussion in this groupuscule. The group tries to use natural sciences to corroborate ideas that sub-Saharan Africans are more prone to crime, have lower cognitive ability and are more impulsive and aggressive. Although they very negatively view any kind of non-European immigration, they have a particular distaste for the African and Brazilian communities in Portugal. Especially if they are Black or Mixed race in the case of Brazilians because of their extremely negative regard of sub-Saharan Africans.

For *O Bom Europeu*, the phenomenon of culture is only a subsequent manifestation of biological race, so that if race changes, culture changes. Thus, biological race matters more than culture and the nation-state. If the nation-state begins to become very ethn racially diverse, it is drastically changed as well. The behavioural pattern and cognitive capacity of peoples would already be in their genes, culture being only a secondary subsequent manifestation of this phenomenon, according to the groupuscule. The Portuguese people are, for *O Bom Europeu*, before anything else, part of a European Genetic Pool that stretches from the Iberian Peninsula to Russia. It proposes a European Union based on the idea of race that closes itself to the outside world and opposes liberalism and Marxism. Also, it advocates a type of socialism that, according to its podcasts, would be an extension of Prussian Socialism to the entire white race, and not only to Germanic peoples. At the same time, *O Bom Europeu* is the more explicitly anti-Christian amidst the Portuguese groupuscules, rejecting Christianity even from a cultural perspective, which is neither done by *Escudo Identitário* nor by *Portugueses 1*, as demonstrated in their defence of the statue of Father Antonio Vieira. Christianity is interpreted, under a great influence of Nietzsche, as the predecessor of Universalist liberalism and as the slave ethics that would allow Europeans to close their eyes to the ethnodemographic changes that supposedly cause their own end.

The end of the Overseas Empire is often celebrated as the end of a multiracial project and as an opportunity to create a new man in Portugal, turned towards Europe and not towards the tropical zones of its former Empire. The rejection of Christianity, even when it is presented in purely cultural rather than religious terms, as well as of the Overseas Empire, even as part of the historical memory of the Portuguese conquests, places *O Bom Europeu* as the group that

most radically breaks with Portuguese imperial nationalism. Even though *Escudo Identitário* and *Portugueses 1* also contain this element of thought, they do not break so radically with some symbols of Christianity and the Portuguese Empire. Rather, they explicitly praise some elements of the Portuguese Empire, whilst aiming at a new political unit, also only for Europeans. At the end of the day, *O Bom Europeu* is the cyber manifestation of René Binet's proposals back in the 1950s. Founder of the organization New European Order, in his *Theories du Racisme*, he stated that the term "Aryan" was obsolete and should be replaced by white Caucasian. Racism should be transformed into a political option just as socialism, liberalism, and conservatism were. He also stated that it was urgent to overpass what he called literary racism and give place to "true scientific racism". That is, to use what was most innovative in the biological sciences to support a white European world. According to Nicolas Lebourg (2020), Binet was the French father of white nationalism.

However, another organization focused on the theme of race, but anchored in it an imperial nationalist aesthetics that recovers an explicit imagery and discourse directly aimed at the old Nazi-fascist far right. It made itself noticed from 2014 to 2019. Created in 2014 by Mário Machado,<sup>13</sup> a notorious skinhead who had been part of the National Front,<sup>14</sup> and skinhead movements in Portugal, *Nova Ordem Social* (NOS) was suspended by its own leader in 2019. The dissolution took place shortly after a conference at a hotel in Lisbon with members of neo-Nazi organizations from various countries in Europe. Included was Francesca Rizzi, a member of the organization Italian National Socialist Party, involved with violence and dismantled by Operation Black Shadow in 2019, in Italy. Due to the fact that there was no one to inherit the leadership of NOS, Machado chose to disband the movement and focus on his YouTube channel, which currently has more than 12,900 subscribers. In some important respects, his ideas are not much different from the skinhead and neo-fascist movements that preceded him. NOS was founded in 2014, when Machado stepped away from the PNR/*Ergue-te* due to the fact that it allegedly began to seek a less radical positioning, moving away from the movements that penetrated the party. NOS was a small group, remaining on the fringes even of the Portuguese extreme-right, even though, in its street demonstrations,<sup>15</sup> it gathered a larger number of participants than those of *Escudo Identitário* and *Portugueses 1*. Its importance is more linked to the figure and activism of Mário Machado than to the actual impact of its set of actions. Machado's open and explicit esteem for Nazi-fascism causes some sectors of the Portuguese groupuscularity itself to avoid being associated with him. A good example is the greater proximity between *Escudo Identitário*<sup>16</sup> and *Portugueses 1*, groups that organize conferences together, and the distance that both maintained to NOS.

There is the use of biological metaphors in Machado's discourse, but without delving theoretically into analytical proposals of a biological order, something that *O Bom Europeu* does. NOS' use of biological metaphors without a more detailed biological discussion is also different from *Escudo Identitário's* style, which couples biological terms with cultural ones in a manner close to that of identitarianism and the Nouvelle Droite. The group had in its repertoire of actions street demonstrations, the organization of conferences with members of hyper-extremist movements from various European countries and online activities. The latter was more focused on its website-blog, in which, notes repudiating the mainstream media or publicizing NOS' demonstrations and activities, as well as Mário Machado's videos, were posted. The website-blog became central, especially after the group Facebook page was deleted, and after NOS was banned from that online social platform. Machado's speech is full of open praise for the Nazi and fascist regimes of yesteryear, often quoting lines and writings by members of the former German SS (*Schutzstaffel*). The symbols used, not infrequently, are the same as some seen on Nazi-Fascist style flags and clothing. The praise of violence, while not so openly advocated by Machado, was not absent in NOS' discursive repertoire and proposals for action. On the group's old website, baseball bats with its symbol engraved on them were for sale, next to the writing 'wolves don't wear collars'.

On his YouTube channel, Mário Machado proposes readings that combine imperial Portuguese nationalism with literature from the old extreme-right, especially Henry Ford's 'The International Jew' or the biography of Joseph Goebbels (deemed a genius by Machado), written by David Irving. The symbols of imperial nationalism are brought up in the sense of glorifying the achievements of the supposedly native Portuguese. The objective is to not resume the project of the Portuguese Empire, whose state would encompass masses of non-European peoples. In short, Machado and NOS are part of the racist right, with a worldview that is oriented to the neo-Nazi scene of the 1980s and 1990s.

To sum up, *Escudo Identitário* presents itself as the main heir of *Causa Identitária*, whereas *O Bom Europeu* can be seen as the representative of the Anglo-Saxon Alt-right in Portuguese lands. *Portugueses 1* places itself between the two. NOS and Mário Machado are the heirs of the National Front and the skinheads who competed with *Causa Identitária* in the early 2000s. The web of relationships between these groups forms the ethno-European extreme right, one part of which is more oriented towards the identitarianism of the Nouvelle Droite, another toward the Alt-right and another toward explicit Nazi-fascism or the old extreme right. *Escudo Identitário* and *O Bom Europeu* are the unfoldings of a generational renewal in the Portuguese nationalist scene,

for being groups of younger people, whereas *Portugueses 1* is a manifestation of figures from the previous nationalist scene, as shown by its connection with the former PNR party. This previous scene would constitute the periods up to *Causa Identitária*, as is the case of João Martins, an active figure in the Portuguese nationalist scene from the *Causa Identitária* period and currently active in *Portugueses 1*. A considerable part of the most prominent members of *Portugueses 1* are already older than those of the other two groupings, and this organization cannot be classified as a youth organization. Nevertheless, the three groupings can be framed as the greatest expression of rupture with Portuguese imperial nationalism, as well as, to a greater or lesser degree, as the heirs of the nationalist line that had in *Causa Identitária* its most significant expression.

### **The reformulation of lusotropicalism and imperial nationalism**

Meanwhile, the criticisms made by the old generation of nationalists against the identitarian ideology also did not cease to be renewed. Within the Portuguese groupuscular right, there are organizations that raise the flag of *Lusotropicalism*<sup>17</sup> and imperial nationalism. I seek to work on this issue, taking as a case example the organization *Nova Portugalidade*. It focuses on historical research and the planning of debates and conferences, with headquarters in Lisbon, Porto, Coimbra, and the Algarve—although more centred in Lisbon—and emerges as a point outside the curve in the field of Portuguese extreme-right networks.

It is a group that tries to activate Metapolitics with historical research, converting itself into something close to a think tank that recovers the *Lusotropicalista* doctrine, be it in its *estadonovista*<sup>18</sup> strand or in its softer post-April 25 version. It carries forward, to a great extent, the appraisal of the imperial past made by Jaime Nogueira Pinto and, among all the groups studied here, it is the most institutionalized of all and closer to intellectuals in the academic mainstream. It differs from the rest of the groupuscular right by its absolute rejection of ethnonationalism, even though it has been considered an extreme-right-wing organization by the media. It emerged as a form of protest against what they saw as the dominance of the left in the university world, becoming a research centre aimed at recovering the memory of Portuguese work overseas and the project of a Lusitanian Commonwealth, somehow in the lines of the British Commonwealth. Such a Commonwealth, as well as the proposal of *Lusíada* citizenship to the peoples touched by Portugal, were already a proposal of General António de Spínola<sup>19</sup> (POÇAS, 2022). In the case of *Nova Portugalidade*, this space encompasses Brazil, Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea-Bissau, and East Timor. Therefore, *Nova Portugalidade* recovers important traces

of the *Estado Novo*, especially from 1967 on, as we will see below. It counts with a few dozen members, remaining very much around the centre of Lisbon and its founders.

*Nova Portugalidade* started its activity in 2016, founded by Rafael Pinto Borges and Miguel Castelo Branco,<sup>20</sup> who can be considered its main ideologues. At the time, it was an entirely informal group with a very small number of collaborators, and its primary objective was the achievement of unity among the peoples of ‘Portugalidade’. Also, it focused on the cultural fight for the preservation of Portuguese History, in particular the one that connects to the peoples of Africa, America and Asia with which Portugal has ties. This space is called ‘Portugality’ by *Nova Portugalidade*, as it sees it as a space of common past and future, and proposes its organization into a geopolitical unit of armed power and mechanisms of integration and harmonization of decisions. The group focuses much of its activities on social media, in particular, on its Facebook page. The page, which gained thousands of followers— currently, it has more than 57,600—has since then served the function of attracting attention to Portugality regarding the alleged breadth, depth, and multiplicity of nuances of the common history of its peoples. The page is one of the most effective instruments at the service of the group.

Since then, *Nova Portugalidade* has continued to organize multiple events that aimed to make the public aware of the themes concerning *Portugality* in a personal and direct way. Its course, not exempt of some public controversies, gained more supporters and collaborators and allowed, at least, the introduction of the concept of ‘*Portugalidade*’ in the current vocabulary of the public. Indeed, since the appearance of the grouping, this term is proficiently read, heard, and discussed. Of the controversial events mentioned here, the conference given by Dom Duarte de Bragança at the Lisbon Law School in October 2016, certainly stands out; as well as the aforementioned event, scheduled for February 2017 at the New University of Lisbon, but cancelled in an ambient of media scandal, with Jaime Nogueira Pinto.

*Nova Portugalidade*, however, which is often framed as part of the new Portuguese extreme right, does not present an interpretative proposal of Portugueseness in ethnic terms, not pinning Portugal to a white Caucasian, European political bloc. It rather defends the retaking of a transoceanic Portuguese identity, which goes back to the time of the Portuguese Empire and its conquests overseas. But it does so by trying to search for something deeper, such as a transoceanic Portuguese social fabric that goes beyond language. Thus, it differentiates itself from Lusophony, which is centred on the linguistic theme. Lusophony was a term already used since 1950 (SOUSA, 2013), but it was replaced by *Portugalidade* still in the *estadonovista* period. For *Nova Portugalidade*, Portugal would be more focused on its access towards the Atlantic Ocean than to the European

continent, translating into a Confederation, the *Confederação Lusíada*, equivalent of the British Commonwealth. According to the group, these bids would not be made only by language but by an entire civilizational process with Portugal as its matrix.

What is defended is transcontinental patriotism, a main trait of the Portuguese Empire, in which the characteristics of the Portuguese described by Brazilian intellectual Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987) — *Lusotropicalismo* — are presented with great esteem. Plasticity, adaptability, easy interaction with other cultures and a greater propensity for miscegenation of a biological kind would supposedly be fundamental traits of a Portugal that underpins the foundations of Brazilian civilization. These traits are brought to the fore by *Nova Portugalidade*. The Freyrian elements of the civilizational character of the Portuguese are more relevant than Lusophony in its discourse because Portugal, seen in these terms, is considered more important than an identity restricted to the Portuguese language. That is, it is the resumption of a proposal of overseas patriotism not centred on language and ethnicity, but on a feature of the Portuguese that is supposedly unique among Europeans, that is, their greater predisposition to interaction of all kinds with other peoples, constituting an alternative—and conservative—form of globalization.

The idea of Portugal based on *Lusotropicalismo* gained greater contours in 1967, with Antonio Ferronha's *Ideário de Portugalidade: Consciência de Luso-tropicalidade* (Ideals of Portugal: conscience of Luso-tropicality). The whole work is oriented towards the overseas provinces, especially Angola, in which the author trained native Angolans within the theme of Portugal. Via Ferronha's writings, Portugal gained, within the *Estado Novo* doctrine, its Luso-tropicalist face, which means a single and indivisible Portugal covering territories far from the Iberian Peninsula and based on multiraciality (SOUSA, 2013). It does not mean that, in practice, *Lusotropicalismo* was a form of integration with that level of perfection. Much is debated whether it was a form of domination by keeping white Portuguese in the centre of social and political life. However, *Nova Portugalidade* recovers it in a way in which the Portuguese would necessarily have to live together with more and more non-European peoples. Its defence for 1,300 ex-fighters from Guinea-Bissau<sup>21</sup> having easier access to the Portuguese citizenship illustrates that quite well. Its proposal resonates as a particular sort of globalization, conducted by a historic memory centred in the Portuguese conquest of the world, a patriotism which brings back, to some extent, the very Portuguese Empire. Although much of its political position remains in the Far right—the very motto of the group is a copy from the *Estado Novo* motto—it breaks to a great extent with the idea of the extreme right as intrinsically ethnonationalist or even racial, white nationalist.

It can be said that *Nova Portugalidade* is the organization that most recovers Antônio Ferronha's ideal of Portugalidade, and subsequently, Freyrian lusotropicality. It intellectually develops the proposal to resume the Portuguese overseas experience by forming a political unit encompassing all peoples who had been touched by the Portuguese under a reformulated *estadonovist* motto, 'From Acre to Timor'.<sup>22</sup> That, added to the praise of Freyrian lusotropicality, places *Nova Portugalidade* as a significant exception within the Portuguese groupuscular right. Seen from the perspective of the other groups discussed in this article, it would be nothing more than multiculturalism conducted with a greater centrality of the Portuguese and with some conservative tint. This is because it defends the creation of a *Lusíada* passport with free circulation of all peoples which were once part of the Portuguese Empire and presents an ambiguous relationship with the right-wing populist political parties with anti-immigration proposals. *Nova Portugalidade* defends these parties—especially Pinto Borges<sup>23</sup> and Castelo Branco on their personal Facebook pages—only when they display a more civic nationalism in detriment of an ethnic one. However, when these parties show themselves by more ethnonationalist tints, *Nova Portugalidade* rejects them. Thus, *Nova Portugalidade* represents the return of an older Portuguese right against the new right wing that emerged at the time of the creation of *Causa Identitária* since it absolutely rejects the latter's ideological basis of European ethno-nationalism.

### **Ethnonationalist and lusotropicalist news**

Along with these groupuscules, organizations have emerged that can also be considered part of the Portuguese groupuscular right, but with a different repertoire of actions. They focus only on the diffusion of news, following the media model. Thereby, they try to be a form of social communication that bypasses mainstream media and that is not controlled by what they generically call 'censorship'. In this prism, two groups stand out, by disseminating news with ethnoeuropean and imperial nationalism content. These two information channels are *Invictus Portucale* and *Notícias Viriato*, respectively.

*Invictus Portucale* was formed in 2019, currently active on Facebook, Twitter, Telegram and YouTube. On Facebook, the group was banned several times, managing, however, to re-establish the page, having, at least until this research was finished, five of them. The first has more than 41,000 subscribers; the second, 1,819; the third, 6,349; the fourth, 4,116; and the fifth, about 12,000. On the fifth page, their Telegram entry is presented to those who—to their interpretation—are fed up with the supposed censorship found on Facebook. On Telegram, there are about 8,140 subscribers, on Twitter, 4,870. Their YouTube channel has about 9,000 subscribers. The group's symbol is

the Maltese Cross with the acronym IP (*Invictus Portucale*) to its lower-right. Despite this symbol being related to traditional Portuguese imperial nationalism, *Invictus Portucale* stands as a frontal break with such form of nationalism. The Maltese Cross is resignified as a symbol of the Caucasian Portuguese and not as an element of integration of the peoples touched by Portuguese imperial and territorial expansion. Something already put in place by *Escudo Identitário, Portugueses 1*, and Mário Machado regarding the symbolic pantheon of Portuguese Imperial nationalism with lusotropicalist tints.

In general, *Invictus Portucale* is a group that focuses exclusively on the practice of denunciation, establishing a kind of alternative journalism. On its Facebook page, it describes itself as focusing on the topics of migration, demography, politics, corruption, and crime. There is no physical address or anything that signals a greater level of institutionalization. As with *O Bom Europeu*, *Invictus Portucale* does not feature any of its activists, which are all anonymous. However, two aspects mark its peculiar activism. The first is that it converges, by the practice of denunciation, the concerns of all the pan-European groups studied in this work. The second is that a significant part of its denunciations is made from the reinterpretation of news from the mainstream media. Something that *Portugueses 1* and *O Bom Europeu* also do, but *Invictus Portucale* focuses entirely on such practices of denunciation. It is neither a group focused on ideological doctrine nor on the dissemination of works and writings that represent a certain theoretical corpus. Its major axis of activity is around news. It posts news from Portuguese mainstream media channels such as CMTV, *Diário de Notícias*, SIC, TVI, and even channels from other countries. One example is the reproduction of a news article from the Brazilian newspaper *O Globo* from April 7, 2022, with the negatively emphasized information that Brazilian immigrants could unconditionally get special Portuguese visas. One remarkable practice from *Invictus Portucale* is the emphasis put on the race of criminals in the case of news related to crimes. They take news from mainstream media about violent crimes and when the accused of the crime is Black, they emphasize it in a way to corroborate the idea of high crime rates among people of African descent. They also do this kind of re-interpretation regarding crimes committed by members of gypsy communities.

*Notícias Viriato* is a channel closer to conventional communication vehicles, manifesting itself by a news site with various topics, such as Portugal, World, Health, Politics, Censorship, History, Opinion, and Interviews. Thus, it proposes a somewhat deeper level of theoretical and ideological argumentation than *Invictus Portucale*, although not as much as the other five groupings. In its editorial statute, it declares itself to be a free Independent Online Newspaper that opposes all kinds

of censorship, oppression, and tyranny. It is a media organ with a registered number at *Entidade Reguladora de Comunicação Social* (Regulation Entity of Social Communication [ERC]). It even has a *Número de Identificação Financeira* (Financial Identification Number [NIF]), and editorial headquarters. Its director and owner is António Abreu, its main leading figure, who describes himself on his Instagram account as a Christian and a patriot. Thus, it is much more institutionalized than *Invictus Portucale*. The most striking point of its status is that the channel assumes ‘clearly, without lukewarmness or equivocation, the references of its action and intervention models in the defence and clear promotion of genuinely Portuguese common, ancestral and contemporary cultural values that define us as an independent and sovereign People and Nation-State with a language, a History and a very rich, singular, and extraordinary heritage’. António Abreu declares that he is not connected to any kind of organization or association, such as movements, political parties, banks, or interest groups. Notably, the ancestry in the *lustropicalista* framework implies both the Portuguese and their racially mixed descendants around the tropics, and not only people of strictly European Portuguese heritage.

*Notícias Viriato* has a Facebook page created in 2019, with about 36,000 subscribers, and accounts on Twitter, Instagram and Telegram. On Telegram, it has about 2,081 subscribers; on Twitter, around 4,103 and on Instagram, around 7,530. Despite incisively standing against the so-called tyranny of political correctness, *Notícias Viriato* approaches a more mainstream right, focusing on all kinds of censorship, as well as on the issue of mandatory vaccination (in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic) and on the defence of the family as the last stronghold of resistance against tyranny. Not only does it shy away from the highly controversial themes of Identitarianism/Alt-right, but it postures against them, openly accusing right-wing populist parties of being racist, brutal, and irrational.

In the online newspaper, the articles published go hand-in-hand with the ideology of *Nova Portugalidade*, albeit with a Christian conservative touch not found in the latter. Something explicit in the presence of articles by Rafael Pinto Borges from *Nova Portugalidade*, such as the one entitled ‘The death of Populism’. In this text, Pinto Borges attacks what he considers both left-wing and right-wing populisms, represented by Donald Trump, Marine Le Pen,<sup>24</sup> Matteo Salvini and André Ventura. Characterizing them as empty, angry and opportunistic, he says they are not the answer to the challenges of a Europe shaken in many ways, with waves of migration arriving and continuing to arrive. He praises the more traditional right of Boris Johnson in the UK and Ron DeSantis in the US, seen as a thinking, “know-how” right. In this sense, *Notícias Viriato* comes very close to a more mainstream right, distancing itself to some extent from

the Far right. However, its praise of figures who fought for *Estado Novo* in the Colonial Wars, such as Marcelino da Mata,<sup>25</sup> as well as its praise of the Portuguese Empire and its worship of Portuguese identity in Lusotropicalist terms place it outside the mainstream as well. Besides, as does *Nova Portugalidade*, *Notícias Viriato* is incisively critical of the left, especially of the identitarian minority-oriented one. It states that this left is the other face of the ethnonationalist right, which tries to split peoples apart in race and ethnic bases. In sum, *Notícias Viriato* acts as a newspaper that vascularizes the world frame found in *Nova Portugalidade*, establishing itself as a *lusotropicalista*, imperial nationalist right-wing newspaper.

## Conclusions

What Roger Griffin called the slime mould rhizome has difficulties to find wider condensation in Portugal. This happens because the most relevant groupuscule<sup>26</sup> *Nova Portugalidade*, both in its institutionalization and in its number of followers in social media, has extremely disparate ideological bases from the Identitarian/Alt-right line. It could hardly be considered a part of the same political family, Metapolitics or rhizome to which belong the other groupuscules that form the Portuguese groupuscular right. *Nova Portugalidade* completely detaches itself from *Portugueses 1* and *Escudo Identitário* and may be considered the antithesis of *O Bom Europeu* and groups connected to Mário Machado. The freer and more fluid circulation of ideas and members, typical of the groupuscular right, does not occur between the *Nova Portugalidade* and the other three groups.<sup>27</sup> In fact, the ethnoeuropean and lusotropicalist groupuscules exchange insults towards each other. It is not uncommon for *O Bom Europeu* and *Invictus Portucale* to taunt *Nova Portugalidade* with news about violence committed by Black people in Portugal, ironically referring to them as the “darlings of the new Portugal”. Once they also called *Notícias Viriato* “Notícias Mulato” (Mulatto news), trying to attack the particular way with which *Notícias Viriato* deals with migrants from Portuguese ex-colonies, namely trying to incorporate and assimilate them.

In this way, it can be said that there is a groupuscular right in Portugal in which some groupuscules try to incorporate forms of action typical for social movements while mostly remaining in the online sphere. They definitively do not converge into a rhizome. It is more correct to say that there are two parallel rhizomes without a groupuscule that can be considered the nodal point of the Portuguese groupuscular right. The *Aktionsmodell* of the Portuguese groupuscular right, be it ethnoeuropean or imperial-nationalist inspired, comprises groups for theoretical discussion, proposes readings and sometimes street actions, as well as the formation of news outlets aimed at disseminating its theoretical basis in a faster and more direct manner. However, the existence

of such different types of Far-right lines while maintaining similar *Aktionsmodelle* constitutes a curious feature of Portuguese right-wing Metapolitics.

This feature relies on the fact that there is a type of ideology that combines certain imprints from the old extreme right, according to Mudde (2019). However, it does not carry on an ethnonationalist or white nationalist worldframe, a kind of ideology intrinsically connected to the extreme-right ideology (MUDDE, 2000, 2019). Moreover, Portuguese imperial nationalism relies on ideas coming from a Brazilian intellectual that praises racial miscegenation. Thus, although *Nova Portugalidade* is to some extent an heir of *Estado Novo* and praises an Empire that was headed by a European nation on non-European peoples, their ideal future society is not necessarily a white one. Whiteness is central only *in memoriam* to them. All the other groupuscules, however, despite the differences amidst them, are in one way or another white nationalists. They defend an all-white—or at least mostly white—social universe. They are more heirs to MAN than to *Estado Novo* itself and represent a cluster of small organizations that regard imperial lusotropicalism as just a kind of multiracial society, regardless of whether such a society will be ruled by a small white elite and middle class or not.

A very curious point is that, amidst the Portuguese Far-, or even extreme-, right, there are ideological lines in which Europe is not a so central issue. An interesting study made by Manuela Caiani and Manés Weisskircher (2022) displays six movements from left/liberal and Far-right leanings for whom Europe is central. The former, left/liberal wing aims for an anti-austerity European Union strengthened by Human Rights and cultural inclusion, which for them are in the core of European values (anti-nationalist Europeans). The latter Far-right wing aims for an ethnocultural Europe in which diversity relies on the different European peoples and nations, not on non-European immigrants (pro-European nativists). In the Portuguese case, we can see Far-right organizations in line with this latter wing, but also organizations in which Europe—whatever it may be—is not a central issue.

This absolute break-up between two so disparate ideological lines gives the tone to the particularities of the Portuguese extreme right. I do not mean that, in other European countries, groupuscules that aim at ancient non-European, former imperial spaces might not exist. But what is striking about the Portuguese case is the existence of a worldframe sustained by a theoretical line founded by a Brazilian intellectual that explicitly praises biological miscegenation. Along this line, we have the highly likelihood of a future non-majority white society inside a political line that, in the Portuguese context, can still be considered part of the Far right. Thus, the Portuguese case emphasizes that, within the Far right, especially within the non-partisan extreme-right, the defence of a white world assumes many faces. And sometimes its face does not show up in terms of a future

social project for an exclusively or mostly white society. Rather, in present and future societies, this white world shows up *in memoriam*, in some cultural and symbolic aspects, with whites being at the centre of the collective historical narratives, but not necessarily a numerical majority or a closed, pristine minority as in South Africa or former Rhodesia.<sup>28</sup> By ethno and white nationalists, such projects would be seen as a collective suicide.

We can say that, in Portugal, the groupuscular right is divided. *Nova Portugalidade* has much more followers on social media than other organizations. However, when we take the examples of alternative Far-right newspapers, ethnonationalist ones tend to have more followers, at least up to the moment the data for this study were collected. Thus, the Portuguese groupuscular right is divided between organizations that aim for a world beyond the Pyrenees Mountains and organizations that aim for a world beyond the Atlantic Ocean.

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note how fluid the groupuscular right is. Groupuscules surge and disappear more easily than parties. At the time this article was written, some Far-right channels may have been closed and others created. Thus, outside the time scope of the research, other groups can exist. In 2023, a new group took the stage on the social web: *Reconquista*, led by Afonso Gonçalves, an activist of ethnonationalist tint. Although with only 500 followers on Facebook, he has almost 9000 followers on X (former Twitter) and fewer on YouTube, in which he makes a series of journalistic videos denouncing immigration to Portugal, one of which is called *A Grande Invasão* (The Great Invasion). Generally, the videos from this series have between 10000 and 15000 views. One however, has more than 100000. On Telegram, Afonso Gonçalves has about 2200 followers.

<sup>2</sup> Palingenetic right is a concept from Roger Griffin which defines an idea of a new, pristine beginning based upon an also pristine past.

<sup>3</sup> Guillaume Faye could be considered one of the main names within the Nouvelle Droite, alongside Alain de Benoist. He also is responsible for a more racist biological turn within this ideological landscape.

<sup>4</sup> By "rectangle" it is meant Portugal because of its territorial rectangle-like form.

<sup>5</sup> MAN was basically a skinhead movement. It became notorious for being the first Portuguese group to explicitly defend a white-only Portugal and for introducing sociobiological theories in their bulletin *Ação* (Action). This introduction would not be accompanied by dense theoretical discussions, though. It lasted from 1985 to 1991.

<sup>6</sup> Martim Moniz is an area known for its inhabitants with a southern Asian heritage.

<sup>7</sup> These raids are not physically violent. Usually, they consisted of some form of denunciation about criminal networks operating in these stores. These stores always belonged to people from the Hindustani region.

<sup>8</sup> In a photograph posted on its Facebook page, *Portugueses 1* shows a banner with the writings 'White lives matter'. The banner that was placed on a pedestrian bridge in Lisbon, in August 2020. A fact that shows the emphasis given to race by *Portugueses 1*.

<sup>9</sup> As when they refer to non-European migrants as "allogene elements".

<sup>10</sup> If we consider, for example, the website *American Renaissance* as the main hub of the Alt-right.

<sup>11</sup> It is a podcast conducted by members of *O Bom Europeu*.

<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting that they combine well-known authors from the biological scientific mainstream such as William Donald Hamilton and Edward Osborne Wilson, and authors originated from other field studies which adopted a sociobiological theoretical basis, like political ethologist Frank Salter.

<sup>13</sup> Mario Machado served a sentence of almost 10 years in jail due to his involvement in several criminal activities. The most remarkable one was his involvement in the murder of a citizen from Cabo Verde in 1995, in Lisbon.

<sup>14</sup> National Front was a skinhead organization that competed with *Causa Identitária* for the leading role in non-partisan nationalism in Portugal.

<sup>15</sup> The only outstanding demonstration of NOS was to celebrate the 'Salazar Day', with about 40 demonstrators in 2019. The demonstration aimed to pay tribute to António de Oliveira Salazar, who led *Estado Novo* from 1926 to 1967. More recently, in February 2024, Mario Machado conducted a street manifestation with more than 100 people at Largo de Camões, Lisbon, against Islam and immigration to Portugal. Most of his supporters came from a Far-right soccer organized supporter group named *Claque 1143*. Curiously, this group is where Machado started his political activism.

<sup>16</sup> But there are also differences between the two groups. In music concerts organized by *Escudo Identitário*, it is possible to identify individuals coming from the skinhead scene.

<sup>17</sup> *Lusotropicalismo* is a sociological doctrine created by Brazilian intellectual Gilberto Freyre. It asserts that the Portuguese are the one and only European people that easily mix with non-European peoples.

<sup>18</sup> From 1967 onwards, *Lusotropicalismo* became the main ideology of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*. There is a heated debate in Portugal and Brazil about the possibilities of *Lusotropicalismo* being just an excuse for maintaining a racially hierarchical social structure.

<sup>19</sup> Antonio de Spínola was a General who governed the Guiné-Bissau province. His aims were to bring the imperial institutions closer to the peoples governed by the Empire. He defended the creation of a Portuguese Commonwealth with citizenship to all its inhabitants, which became known as *Spinolismo*.

<sup>20</sup> Castelo Branco had been already at the head of an organization from the 1980s called *Nova Monarquia* (New Monarchy), which advocated for a union between Portugal and Cabo Verde.

<sup>21</sup> These are Black people from Guiné-Bissau who fought for Portugal in the African wars for independence.

<sup>22</sup> The *Estado Novo* motto was "From Minho to Timor", Minho being the most Northern region of the Portuguese mainland and Timor the farthest country from Portugal that made part of the Portuguese Empire. In *Nova Portugalidade*, Minho is replaced by Acre, the most western Brazilian state.

<sup>23</sup> More recently, Rafael Pinto Borges helped to elaborate the programme of *Nova Direita* (New Right). It is a recently founded party that presents itself as right-wing and conservative and seems to be a right-wing alternative to *Chega*. *Nova Direita* is led by Ossanda Liber, a Black woman, and emphasises the theme of Lusophony. However, Pinto Borges distanced himself from the party soon after.

<sup>24</sup> Although, on his personal Facebook page, Pinto Borges posts praises of Marine Le Pen when she takes photos with Black inhabitants of the French overseas departments.

<sup>25</sup> Marcelino da Mata, originally from Guiné-Bissau, was the most condecorated military in the history of the Portuguese army. He fought for the Portuguese Empire against the independentist forces in Guiné and participated in more than 200 operations.

<sup>26</sup> In the news sphere, it could be said that *Invictus Portucale* is a little more relevant than *Notícias Viriato*.

<sup>27</sup> I say three considering that NOS does not exist anymore.

<sup>28</sup> It is noteworthy to remember that, despite all the defence of a *Lusíada* universe with permanent mixing, *Nova Portugalidade's* members are white. And the non-whites that are more attracted to them are, in general, from Portuguese Asia.

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