



The new radical right as a challenge to governance and the quality of democracy

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Abstract. The advancement and electoral consolidation of the new radical right political groups in the last decades pose a challenge to the quality of western democracy. This phenomenon has spread across much of Europe, undermining the advances made towards the construction of multi-cultural and cosmopolitan societies, endangering their social diversity in this way. This theoretical article aims to conceptualize these groups, distinguishing between far-right and the new radical right through a comparative analysis of both factions. In this manner, and following said methodology, this paper will analyze the two ideological principles of these parties that endanger a truly democratic governance: the defense of the ethnic nation and the ultranationalist palingenesis.

Keywords: radical right; new radical right; governance; democracy; far-right.

Summary. 1. Introduction. 2. Conceptualization and classification: 2.1 Differentiation between fascist parties and the new far-right, 2.1.1 Fascist parties or far-right parties, 2.1.2 New radical right parties or populist radical right parties; 2.2 Far-right and new radical right classification criteria. 3. The ethnic nation according to the new radical right and far-right. 4. Ultranationalist palingenesis according to the new radical right and far-right. 5. Challenges to governance and the quality of democracy

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, the study of the new radical right is of great interest to political science due to the growth and solidification in the last decades of a large number of groups with this ideology. In most European countries (France, Italy, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, or Norway), there can be found new radical right parties that have emerged with significant strength. Their study is of great relevance since their maxims and ideological values pose a clear challenge to the governance and quality of democracy. After the end of World War II and the long “journey through the desert” (Rodríguez Jiménez, 2006), starting from the last days of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s, a “silent counter-revolution” (Ignazi, 1992) will develop, but it is now when the real “populist wave” (Taguieff, 2007) will begin, or, to be more precise, a radical right-wing populist wave. To understand the political importance of this phenomenon, it is enough to look at the electoral results of these parties in the last years. The most representative case is that of the Front National (the French National Front)¹, whose current leader is Marine Le Pen, and which achieved an electoral percentage of 21.3% and 7,679,493 votes in the first round of the

¹ In 2018, it changed its name to National Rally (in French, Rassemblement National, RN); nevertheless, we will continue to use National Front until the new terminology gets properly established.

presidential elections of 2017. It even exceeded this level in the second round, when it achieved the support of 33.90% of the electorate and 10,644,118 votes.

However, this process is not an isolated case, other electoral results of Western European² parties with this name can also be mentioned: Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ, The Freedom Party of Austria) achieved the 26% of the electorate in the legislative elections of 2017; Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest) managed an electoral percentage of 24.2% in the municipal elections of 2004; Lega Nord (Italian Northern League) reached the 17.37% of votes in the general elections of 2018; Union Démocratique du Centre (Switzerland's Democratic Union of the Centre) achieved the 29.4% of votes in the legislative elections of 2015; and finally the Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV, Party for Freedom) received 13.1% of the votes in the 2017 elections of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands (Table 1).

Table 1: Classification of far-right parties and new radical right parties in Europe,

Countries	Party	Acronym	Lubbers Scale ³	Year of the election	% of votes	Type of Elections
Germany	National Democratic Party of Germany	NPD	9.6 ⁴	2014	1.00%	EUROPEAN
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria	FPÖ		2017	26.00%	PARLIAMENTARY
Belgium	Flemish Interest	VB		2014	3.67%	PARLIAMENTARY
Belarus	Liberal-Democratic Party of Belarus*	LDPB	9.6	2016	4.24%	PARLIAMENTARY
Denmark	Popular Danish Party*	DF	9.2	2015	21.10%	PARLIAMENTARY
Spain	Falange*	FE	9.6	2016	0.00%	PARLIAMENTARY
Finland	True Finns	VF	9.1 ⁵	2015	17.65%	PARLIAMENTARY
France	National Front	FN	9.6	2017	33.90%	PRESIDENTIAL
Greece	Golden Dawn	AFI	9.7 ⁶	2014	9.40%	EUROPEAN
Hungary	Movement for a Better Hungary	JB	-	2018	19.54%	PARLIAMENTARY
Italy	Casa Pound	CPI	9.4 ⁷	2018	1.00%	PARLIAMENTARY
Italy	Northern League	LN	8.3	2018	17.37%	PARLIAMENTARY
Norway	Progress Party	FrP	8.7 ⁸	2017	15.20%	PARLIAMENTARY
Netherlands	Freedom Party	PVV	-	2017	13.1%	PARLIAMENTARY
Russia	Liberal-Democratic Party*	LDPR	9.1	2016	13.14%	PARLIAMENTARY
Sweden	Sweden Democrats	SD	8.7	2015	12.90%	PARLIAMENTARY

² The results of the radical right in Northern Europe, namely the Nordic Region, are also highly significant: the Danish People's Party got the 21.1% in Denmark's general elections of 2015; the Swiss Democrats reached the 12.9% of votes in the Swiss Parliament in 2014; the True Finns achieved a 17.65% of votes in the National Parliament in 2015; the Norway Progress Party received 15.20% in the general elections of 2017. Radical and far-right parties in Eastern Europe are also relevant; for example, the Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary acquired 19.54% of electoral support in the Hungarian National Assembly of 2018. Greece is also interesting, as a far-right party with a nationalist ideology, Golden Dawn, obtained 9.4% of votes in the 2014 European Parliament elections.

³ The combined scale of opinions from Lubbers experts, where 0 is the most left-wing position and 10 the most right-wing. On this scale, the far-right-wing or radical populist parties need to score an 8 or more to be considered as such.

⁴ Fact related to the Deutsche Volksunion (DVU, German People's Union), a party dissolved after joining the NPD, of equivalent ideology.

⁵ Lubbers Scale of Sammaallien (National Patriotic Alliance) of similar ideology to Perussuomalaiset.

⁶ This scale alludes to Eliniko Metopon (Greek Front), which shares identical political origins with Golden Dawn.

⁷ This data refers to the neofascist movement Fiamma Tricolor (Tricolor Flame), which is an ideological twin of Casa Pound, although it has since separated from the latter.

⁸ The Lubbers experts' scale mentions the Norwegian Patriotic Party, dissolved in 2008, and which had an analogous political discourse to that of the Progress Party, because it was founded by Harald Trefard, the ex-leader of this latter formation, and a lot of his political ideas went into it.

Switzerland	Democratic Union of the Centre	UDC	9.3 ⁹	2015	29.40%	PARLIAMENTARY
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Source: own elaboration with official data from the last elections up to the publication date of September 1st, 2018, mainly Parliamentary (where there is less political bias). The Lubbers Experts Scale was obtained by Pippa Norris (2009:73-77)

All this data shows a clear advancement or electoral consolidation of the political formations belonging to the populist radical right that have spread across practically every Western European Parliament, with some exceptions such as Portugal or Ireland. Besides, there are other countries like the United Kingdom or Germany where political science is not unanimous in their attempts to place the existing populist parties in the same group as those in the rest of Europe (Decker, 2016; Norris, 2009; Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012)¹⁰

One of the reasons for the success of these parties, as we will analyze further in our research, is the actualization of their political discourse, which differs from the far-right since the latter remains anchored to fascism and shows little to no ideological renovation. Every populist far-right movement, despite their heterogeneity, will share similar ideological elements. As we will see, these parties defend theoretical postulates based on ethnonationalism (rejecting immigration, especially when it is illegal and refuses assimilation) and on the recovery of pre-modern ultranationalist myths that threaten the balance of the current democratic values that the principal European countries uphold.

As the French political scientist Pascal Perrineau maintains, this phenomenon is linked to a “‘Le Pen-ization’ of the spirits”, this is, a process of constant change in the perceptions, ideas, sentiments, and consciences of the individuals who slowly begin to assimilate the criticism against multicultural societies.

For this reason, the main objective of this theoretical article is to dive deep into the conceptualization and classification of the new radical right, distinguishing it from the far-right through a comparative analysis of both ideologies. In this way, we intend to demonstrate that the concept of new radical right is different from the concept of far-right. To do this, and following the aforementioned methodology, differential elements between both ideologies will be analyzed, and we will delve into two basic ideological maxims of these groups that pose a risk to democratic governance: the ethnic nation and the palingenetic ultranationalism. We intend to show the peculiarities of both ideologies surrounding these relevant topics. Furthermore, with this analysis and after analyzing some previous research, we want to provide a necessary clarification in hopes that it will assist in the resolution of this “nominative debate” (López Ortega, 2017:37) or this “terminology war” (De Lange & Mudde, 2005) that exists around this topic.

2. Conceptualization and classification

A diverse terminology has been used to refer to the same phenomenon, which is the focus of this research. This requires us to analyze the most appropriate terminology for our investigation. The political parties of the new radical right use a diffuse, ambiguous, neutral, or else very ample nomenclature to refer to themselves, eliminating any terminology that could be understood as “extremist”¹¹ and generally avoiding any term that could reference or be linked to fascism. On the other hand, far-right groups are not as ambiguous in their language or in their ideological position, showing a clear link to classical fascism.

⁹ The Lubbers scale of Démocrates Suisses (DS, Swiss Democrats) demonstrates ideological maxims similar to those of the Union Démocratique du Centre.

¹⁰ Indeed, in these countries, populist political formations create a divide within political science. Many political scientists indicate that these parties should be placed between the new radical right and the classic conservative right. For example, the professor Rodríguez-Aguilera del Prat (2012, p. 76) places the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) as belonging to the “radical right” but admits that “it doesn’t have neofascist precedents nor does it defend an ethnicist program” when this last element is a focal point in the new radical right ideology. Likewise, Pippa Norris (2009, p. 294) explains that UKIP “lacks an openly racist content”. A similar phenomenon is that of Alternative for Germany (AfD, Alternative für Deutschland) which belongs to the same group as UKIP in the European Parliament (Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy*). For this reason, it would be more convenient to place both of them in the populist right, as Frank Decker defines the AfD (Decker, 2016), but it would be problematic to apply the term “radical” in this conceptualization, especially because nowadays it lacks a marked ethnicist speech, at least pragmatically speaking.

¹¹ Clear examples of this can be seen in the following nomenclatures: “Freedom”: Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) or in the Freedom Party of the Netherlands (PVV); Swedish Democrats (S.D); “Progress”: Progress Party of Norway (Prf); “Popular”: Danish Popular Party (DF); “Center”: Democratic Union of the Centre (UDC).

For this reason, the problem with the definition that concerns us is less relevant to the (old) far-right than to the new radical right parties, which is the reason why we will focus on clarifying the terminology to be used for these last ones.

Diverse expressions have been used to speak of them, but some of these terms are not useful to holistically understand all these parties and would only serve to define a small part of them. For this reason, we must reject any reductionist terminology of the phenomenon we study. To compress its conceptualization to an ideological component is not a convenient way to define them if the goal is to be precise and objective. We cannot characterize the entirety of the new radical right based on one of their features, even if it is very relevant to their political theory. Therefore, reductionistic nomenclatures such as “ultra-reactionaries”, “ethnics”, “anti-immigration”, “ultra-conservatives”, “nationalists”, “authoritarians”, “anti-government”, or “antisystem” must be discarded. The concept of “neo-liberal” is also inadequate if it is being used to refer to new radical right parties, since a great deal of them advocate postulates related to economic protectionism, and the vast majority defend the “national preference” or an increase in “public aids to nationals”.

In the same vein, it is also inadvisable to categorize these parties as “new right” or “neoconservatives”, since these terms refer to an ideology associated with the defense of privatization, free market, tax cuts, exterior interventionism, the Bush administration, and important “neocons” figures such as Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld or James Woolsey.

These parties also deny any proximity or relation to historical fascism, as seen in the French National Front, in the Freedom Party of Austria, in Switzerland’s Democratic Union of the Centre, etc. On the other hand, the far-right does show connections to classical fascism, as seen in parties like Golden Dawn or the Italian Casa Pound. For this reason, we must also rule out terms like “fascists”, “nazis”, “filo fascist”, “neofascists”, “neo-Nazis” or “crypto-fascists” to refer to new radical right parties.

For all these reasons, we will settle for the terms “new radical right or populist radical right” to label this section of political parties, based on Cas Mudde’s work (2007). Other authors in political science use similar concepts as well: Daniel Bell (1963) publishes *The Radical Right* in 1963 using this term to identify these formations, in the same way as Pippa Norris (2009) and Roger Griffin (2000)¹²; Miguel Ángel Simón (2007) describes this ideology as “contemporary radical right”; Hans-Georg Betz (2004) defines this phenomenon as “radical right populism”. We will delve deeper into Cas Mudde’s conceptualization (2007), one of the greatest researchers and referents in this area of social science. The Dutch professor explains that it is necessary to use the term “new radical right or populist radical right” to conceptually differentiate this phenomenon from the fascism that these formations reject.

Because of this and as has been explained, these groups should be distinguished from those belonging to the far-right that do keep their ties to historical fascism. Moreover, the new radical right has its own elements that fascism did not have, such as the vindication of the idea of “Europe”¹³, the anti-establishment populism or the substitution of racist terms for the new one of “racial differentiation”. It is true that the expression “far-right” has also been used by some social researchers to analyze the current populist radical right groups, but most political scientists do not use this term to define these new parties. On the other hand, Piero Ignazi (2003) uses the term “the old far-right” connected to fascism, and “the new far-right” which is not linked to classical fascism. This will be further analyzed later.

To complete our analysis, we will mention the work of Backes and Jesse (1984), which emphasizes the difference between radicalism and extremism. Extremism opposes liberal democracy, is anti-constitutional, anti-pluralist and anti-parliamentary. Radicalism represents a form of action that may or may not be anti-democratic.

In a similar manner, Pippa Norris (2009: 65) describes the far-right as “groups that are beyond the legal boundaries of democratic politics and who would not hesitate to use violent direct action or even terrorism”. On the other hand, according to Roger Griffin (2000), new radical right parties accept the liberal system but demand the expulsion, marginalization and segregation of any person who does not belong to the autochthonous ethnic group, meaning that they defend an “ethnocratic liberalism”.

¹² The Professor specializing in Eastern Europe, Sabrina Ramet (2010), will also use the term ‘radical right’ to group together all parties of this ideology. According to the political scientist of Washington University, these groups ‘share organized intolerance’.

¹³ We obviously mean the “Europe of the regions” or the “European empire” (Benoist) and not the current Europe, which they hold a clear euroscepticism or europhobia for, to a different extent depending on the country and political party.

2.1. Difference between fascist parties and the new radical right

For these reasons, we should make a conceptual difference between the “new radical right” or “populist radical right” and the fascist groups or “far-right” (Mudde, 2007). This categorization has been accepted by most of the political scientists who study this phenomenon (Antón Mellón, et.al. 2011; Hernández-Carr, 2011), analogous to the differentiation shown by Piero Ignazi (2003) or José Luis Rodríguez (2006), which is between the “old far-right” and the “new far-right”. Let us focus on stating the specific characteristics of fascist parties (or old far-right) and those of the new radical right groups.

2.1.1 Fascist, or far-right, parties

Fascist movements emerge from the economic and sociopolitical crises that started after the First World War in interwar Europe and after the downfall of the classic liberal State. To face these crises, different ways out emerge, most notably the communist and fascist parties.

The latter will have a social base of the bourgeoisie and middle-class but will be supported by the upper classes as a response to the upsurge of socialist and communist parties, which are mainly supported by the working classes. They intend to end parliamentary democracy, suppress political plurality and create an authoritarian or totalitarian State headed by a charismatic and undisputed leader with a nationalistic and militaristic ideology (Raschke, 1983). They defend a racial¹⁴ view of the nation and a paligenetic ultranationalism with the mission to bring about the rebirth of a mythical past time of the nation, usually based on imperialistic references. They give great importance to the signification of the political party, establishing one-party dictatorships once they take power. In the way they are organized, these groups are a copy of the socialist mass parties, achieving in most cases a great mobilization, they also emphasize the control of their militance and its militarization.

Historically, as is well known, these parties will acquire great relevance and power in different countries between 1919 and 1949, especially in Italy and Germany. In a strict sense, the word fascism can be applied only when speaking of the Italian party which, in its origin, adopted this term, but it has ended up being applied to any comparable political ideology. Historical liberal democracies, like France (French People Party) or England (Fascist British Union), had important fascist groups during the decades of 1920 and 1930, and similarly there were other fascist movements, like the Belgian Rexism¹⁵, the Spanish Jonsism and Falangism¹⁶, the Socialist National Movement of the Netherlands, the Romanian Iron Guard, the Hungarian Arrow Cross, the Norwegian National Union, the Swedish National Socialist party, or the National Socialist Workers' Party of Denmark.

After the Second World War, the parties that supported fascism disappeared or became politically irrelevant, basically nonexistent to the parliamentary life of all European countries. The neo-fascists or “far-right wing” (Mudde, 2007) feel nostalgic for the interwar period and exhibit historical revisionism, opposing the European Union but supporting the racial idea of Europe (“white Europe”), and want to expel every immigrant (whether legal or illegal) and reject minorities such as homosexuals and Roma people (Olascoaga, 2018). Therefore, they maintain a racial conception of the nation. These parties can be cited as examples: Golden Dawn in Greece (the most relevant party of this category now), the Social Italian Movement (MSI), Casa Pound, or the National Democratic German Party (NPD). In Spain, we can mention very minoritarian groups that have an ideology close to Italian fascism, to German national socialism, Falangism and Rexism: Hogar Social, Acción Nacional Revolucionaria, Falange Española¹⁷, Movimiento Social Republicano, Estado Nacional Europeo, Alianza Nacional...

2.1.2. New radical right, or populist radical right, parties

New radical right parties are organized political groups that, while rejecting historical fascism, advocate for nationalism based on ethnicity and authoritarian, populist and nativist ideologies.

¹⁴ Even though “race” will always be present in any fascist speech since its origins, it reached its maximum expression with the rise to power of the National Socialist German party and the implementation of Mussolini's racial laws in 1938 in the Italian state and later in the Republic of Saló (Italian Social Republic).

¹⁵ The Rexist Party (Christus Rex) was a catholic, nationalist and conservative Belgian movement led by Leon Degrelle, which progressively got closer to fascism, much like Spanish falangism did as well.

¹⁶ In Spain, fascism originated in the Juntas de Ofensiva Nacional Sindicalista (JONS) ('Councils of National-Syndicalist Offensive') of Ramiro Ledesma and Onésimo Redondo, which merged with the Spanish Falange of José Antonio Primo de Rivera, a group clearly imbued with European fascism.

¹⁷ The party known as Spanish Falange (FE) represents the most fascist view of falangism that exists today. Other parties of this same ideology, like Authentic Falange, clearly break ties with these principles.

Unlike fascist or neofascist parties (often categorized as far-right), which maintain a racial theory of the nation, the new radical right emphasizes cultural differentiation rooted in ethnic principles. These parties, also exhibit a strong anti-establishment stance, often characterized as 'populist radical right'. This term, coined by sociology professor Jens Rydgren (2005), encapsulates their blend of ethno-nationalism and anti-establishment populist rhetoric.

This also means that they are nativists, that is, they draw a distinction between the population that is "original" and the one that is "foreign" to the nation and, therefore, reject any immigration that is ethnically impossible to assimilate, especially if it is Islamic. As will be analyzed later on, they dogmatically defend the ethnic concept of nation, which is not racial as it was with fascism, but flatly rejects the civic nation. Therefore, belonging to a nation is not free or voluntary, but it is marked by a shared inheritance and common cultural aspects.

In the same vein, they criticize the decaying and corrupt state of the nation today, which has been provoked by globalization, multiculturalism, traditional parties, the establishment, and the political elites. In opposition to this, they defend the rebirth of its mythical and glorious past (palingenetic ultranationalism) which has also been cited as belonging to fascism and which will be further developed later.

It is also important to comment on the fact that their electoral support is inter-classist and focuses on the most vulnerable parts of the national population, even sectors that have traditionally supported socialist or communist parties, attempting in this way to gain the electoral support of the "losers" of globalization and European integration (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012). In the same vein, they will find supporters within sectors of the middle class afraid to lose their "status quo", usually ex-voters of conservative parties whose votes will shift due to the phenomena of emigration, insecurity and national identity (Ignazi, 2003).

As a brief historical recapitulation, in the 50s several small-bourgeois anti-tax parties emerge: L'Uomo Qualunque (Any Man) and Poujadism¹⁸. Later in 1973, the Danish Progress Party emerges with these same characteristics. In the late 80s early 90s, they achieve an electoral upsurge, the "quiet counter-revolution" (Ignazi, 1992), for diverse reasons: neo-conservatism, new polarization, and the crisis of traditional politics, of the system of conventional parties and of the political system as a whole. To this one must add the economic crisis and especially the immigration crisis, which contributed greatly to its electoral success.

McCarthyism should also be mentioned as a precedent of the new radical right, studying a classic book on political science: *The New American Right* by Daniel Bell. McCarthyism, as we know, begun in the 50s, and, while it lasted, the Republican senator Joseph McCarthy developed a series of persecutions, denouncements, irregular investigations, accusations with no legal substrate, and blacklists against any person suspected of being a communist or participating in "anti-American activities". Daniel Bell (1955) manifests that, even though there are common elements, McCarthyism and radical right are not identical. Radical right is a movement that fears not just communism, but also modernity. This criticism against modernity is in fact a basic indoctrination element of fascism (far-right) and a great part of the new radical right.

Similarly, it is important to point out the political phenomenon of the Italian Leagues: the Lombard League (Lega Lombarda), Venetian League (Liga Véneta), Northern Piemonte League (Lega Nord Piemonte) that are combined into the Northern League (Lega Nord). They belong to a movement that originated in the 80s, which originally manifested an independentist ideal for the North of Italy (Pedania), but which got modified later for federalist ideas. Ideologically they are incredibly populist and try to emphasize territorial, national and anti-immigration elements (Biorcio, 1992:11).

In the last decades, the new radical right has been consolidating itself and advancing electorally in the great majority of European countries as has been exemplified in the introduction, favored by the phenomenon of emigration, Islamic terrorism, the economic crisis and the increase of euroscepticism. Their ideological values have changed and, especially in the last years, they have articulated a more coherent ideology than the one that existed after the end of World War II, defending the identity and European nationalism of Christian roots, and leaving behind the classical idea of nation-state.

Despite their differences, the majority of these parties have in common an ethnic and palingenetic ultra-nationalism (as will be further developed in later sections), an anti-establishment speech that

¹⁸ To analyze French Poujadism it is necessary to be acquainted with Stanley Hoffman's work "Le mouvement Poujade". This movement, enjoying significant support from the petite bourgeois (merchants, artisans, farmers, butchers, and librarians), defends French identity, nationalism and the French colonial cause in Algeria. Furthermore, it exalts moralism, appeals to the middle classes, and manifests a clear rejection of taxes, immigration, European integration, bourgeoisie, large surfaces, intellectualism and "parisism" (Hoffman and others, 1962). Jean-Marie Le Pen, founder of the French National Front, was a Poujadist deputy in 1957.

opposes political elites, the defense of national sovereignty, economical protectionism (“national preference”), severe rejection of illegal immigration, Euroscepticism or Europhobia against the European Union, moral conservatism, traditionalism, nativism, and the defense of the idea of a primordial nation.

The following are clear examples of these parties in Europe: Freedom Party of Austria, Flemish Interest, Lega Nord, the Swiss Democratic Union of the Centre, the Netherlands Party for Freedom, True Finnish, French National Front... In Spain, nowadays we find formations such as Spain2000 (López Ortega, 2016), Platform Per Catalunya (Casals, 2009). It is also important to cite the party lead by Santiago Abascal, Vox, of recent emergence and that is today still under study and analysis.

2.2. Classificatory elements of the far and new radical right

One of the main ways in which to classify these political formations has been developed by the Italian political scientist Piero Ignazi (Ignazi 1992: 3-24), following three criteria:

- a. Spatial criterium (the positioning within the left-right continuum). Ignazi indicates that these parties must be placed in the right end of the scale. Nevertheless, it can be observed that few of these parties position themselves on the far-right end of this continuum; most of them prefer to position themselves as a third way or middle ground between left and right (an objective that fascism also attempted)¹⁹. For this reason, in order to classify these parties, it is very useful to use the combined scale of the opinions of Lubbers experts, with 0 being the position that is further to the left and 10 being that to the right. In this scale, far-right parties and new radical right parties are those that achieve a score equal or higher than 8,0 points (see Table 1).
- b. The ideological criterium (references to classical fascism). According to Ignazi, parties must have ties to classical fascism in order to meet this criterium. In the European context, the formations belonging to the “new far-right” do not reclaim historical fascism, either as a strategy or out of true conviction (such as Austria’s Freedom party, Vox in Spain, the National Front in France, or the Freedom Party of the Netherlands). On the other hand, parties belonging to the “old far-right” (neo-Nazis or neofascists) show a clear nostalgia for the mythical and ideological maxims of fascism, as seen with Golden Dawn in Greece, Casa Pound in Italy, or the German National Democratic Party (NPD). In Spain, the uprising of the 18th of July is defended by the far-right vinctulated to falangism and/or “franquismo”. Furthermore, there is a significant number of minoritarian groups, such as National Alliance or Hogar Social who clearly identify with historical fascism.
- c. Systemic-behavioral criterium (attitude towards the political system as a whole). According to Ignazi, these parties must manifest antisystem postulates in order to fulfill this criterium. In fact, these are “anti” parties, and therefore tend to have a negative discourse, such as anti-pluralism or anti-parliamentarism in the case of the “old far-right” and anti-establishment or anti-elites in the case of the “new far-right” (new radical right).

Following the terminology of the Italian academic, a party can be called far-right-wing when it fits the first and the third criteria at least, that is, if it is “anti-system”, defining this concept as a party or group that shows an opposition to the political system itself, according to Giovanni Satori (1976). Depending on its positioning on the second criterium, the Italian professor will draw a difference between “traditional far-right or old far-right”, directly associated with fascism, and “post-Industrial far-right” or “new far-right”, which rejects historical fascism (Ignazi, 2003).

This division is similar to the one by Mudde that we explained earlier, between “far-right” and “new radical right or populist radical right”. Nevertheless, following the Mudde’s classification, we can give nuance to the third criterium, distinguishing it in both ideologies, since the populist radical right is “(nominally) democratic, even though it opposes some of the fundamental values of every liberal democracy, while the far-right is at its core anti-democratic, since it opposes the fundamental principle of the sovereignty of the people” (Mudde, 2007:31).

Similarly, Rodríguez Jiménez describes this separation between these two ideologies or political families in this way:

¹⁹ For instance, in Spain, Vox defines itself as a “patriotic movement”, and colloquially as the “unashamed right” or the “not-cowardly right”; other parties such as España2000 defend a “third positioning”, meaning they do not identify with either left or right. There are some groups that, even though they do not describe themselves as “transformative left”, are nevertheless capable of using revolutionary language to some extent or claiming the social justice component as their ideological axis, Falange Auténtica and the national-Bolshevik Republican Social Movement are proof of this (this latter party has already been dissolved).

“We must start from the premise that far-right parties and ultra-nationalist parties, which currently hold significant positions in the media do not advocate for the suppression of institutions and democratic freedoms. This was one of the main demands of old extremism and fascism, which advocated for sacrificing individual rights to the sake of collectivity, the Nation, the people or the race. Secondly, let's point out that the new far-right tends to make the connection to the fascist and Nazi legacy.” (Rodríguez Jiménez, 2006: 94)²⁰

Another interesting classification that we can focus on is the one by Sabrina Ramet (Ramet, 2010: 24) which divides these formations into five big ideological groups: ultranationalist, fascist and crypto-fascist, clerical, ultraconservative, and radical-populist. Even though her analysis only covers countries in the center and East of Europe, it is important to take it into account. Rodríguez Aguilera's classification is also very revealing of the degree of euroscepticism of these political parties: 1) Negative Euroskeptics and Europhobes (or anti-European Union): they show global criticism both to the communitarian project and to the concrete politics (all far-right parties and a large number of the new radical right find themselves in this position, like the French National Front, the Dutch Freedom Party, and the Northern League); 2) Euro-critical: they agree with the communitarian principle but criticize the current policies of the Union (few new radical right parties fit within this section, which is closer to radical left formations such as Syriza or the Portuguese Bloco Esquerda); 3) Resigned or Euro-pragmatic: they reject the project of the European Union itself but support the established communitarian policies necessary to achieve cohesion funds, vital for the economic development of their countries (conservative, agricultural, and populist radical right parties of Central and Eastern Europe such as the Greater Romania Party). For reasons more ideological and strategic, we include the Freedom Party of Austria in this group as well (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012: 55-56 and 169-170).

Therefore, we can highlight the differences between the new radical right parties: many of them call for leaving the European Union, often demanding a referendum on their countries' membership in this organization, as in the case of the National Front; others are opposed to surrendering more sovereignty but are in favor of staying, (such as the Freedom Party of Austria or Vox); and others support integration but only as a temporary and instrumental measure, or show ambiguity towards the topic, as seen with the Northern League. However, sometimes the distinction between these options becomes blurred and, on many occasions, these parties' positions may change in certain cases, as observed with the Swedish Democrats²¹, making it difficult to differentiate between them.

Consequently, not every member of the new radical right holds the same Euroskeptic opinion, but, despite certain divergencies, the entirety of the new radical right does show homogeneity regarding certain European matters: the defense of the European Christian roots against the “Islamization of the continent”, criticism against the creation of a federal European superstate, opposition to Turkish membership, and condemnation of treaties for greater political integration like the one in Lisbon, the defense of the primacy of the national sovereignty over the Union, and support for the closure of European borders against illegal immigration.

3. Ethnic nation according to the new radical right and far-right

The conceptualization of a nation from the perspective of the far-right and new radical right is crucial to our research, since it presents an antagonistic vision of multicultural societies and therefore questions a basic pillar of modern democratic societies.

Following Michael Keating's classification (1996) we can differentiate between “ethnic nation” and “civic nation”, a distinction very similar distinction to that made by Andrés de Blas Guerrero (1994) between “cultural nation” and “political nation”; Hans Kohn's (1944) division between “oriental nation” (based on the German romanticism *ius sanguinis*) and “occidental nation” (based on the Enlightenment); or in the contrast Alain Renault (1991) finds between “organicist nation” and “voluntarist nation”. The primary difference is the following: in the ethnic nation “belonging to the national community depends on attributable criteria” (Keating, 1996:14) therefore, belonging to the nation is non-eligible and involuntary. You belong to the nation if you meet certain cultural conditions specific to the territory.

²⁰ In this way, the classification made by Rodríguez Jiménez (2006: 91) about the extremist and radical movements of the right before the Second World War is also of great interest. In it we find two big groups: fascism and far-right, where the latter one is divided in three big families of political parties: traditionalists, authoritarian right, and radical right.

²¹ In 2018, Swedish Democrats (DS) went from supporting its country's emancipation from the European Union to merely asking for a reform. Until that year it supported a “swexit”, in imitation of the British “Brexit”, and wanted to hold a referendum in Sweden about the “corrupt” EU.

On the other hand, the civic nation “has its origins in the individual acquiescence (...) Anyone can come to be a part of the nation regardless of their birth or ethnic origins”, therefore, individuals voluntarily and freely into the collective, and “there are no myths about a common ascendance” (Keating, 1996:16). In the 19th century, during the rise of nationalism and romanticism, it was common to describe an ethnic condition by misguidedly identifying it with the term of “race”. Fascism will emphasize clearly and consciously a racial nationalism, especially in the case of German national socialism and later on in the Italian Social Republic, the Republic of Salò.

For the far-right and current formations of that ideological line (neo-fascists or neo-Nazis), the racial component of the ethnic nation is still persists., Therefore, they link the three elements: nation, ethnicity, and race.

This becomes apparent, for example, in speeches by Golden Dawn, Casa Pound, or the German National Democrat Party. In Spain, the National Socialist party National Alliance is one of the most significant organized groups (albeit very minoritarian) that espouses racist doctrines without ambiguity. Apart, from that, groups like Falange Española, Hogar Social, the Cultural Association of Friends of León Degrelle, or the now dissolved Social Republican Movement²² manifest important racial elements in their political discourse. In this defense of a racial vision of the nation, we could also cite other small far-right, fascist or marginal socialist parties, cyber-fascist groups and street movements such as “skinheads’ white power” (Hammer Skin), usually linked to intimidation and violence.

Nevertheless, the new radical right has abandoned the use of the term “race”, defending instead the ethnic nation and, in consequence, pleading the necessity of an “ethnic differentiation”.

For this reason, the new radical right political parties defend an ethnic nationalism where belonging to a nation is not voluntary, meaning a person belongs to a nation if they meet certain ethnic conditions, certain cultural aspects inherent to that nation: language, religion, history, customs, gastronomy, commemorations, festivities, art, clothing... And to these elements, one must evidently add a genetic component relative to a common ancestry. In this way, only people with these ethnic conditions belong to the nation, and consequently, the new radical right will reject any national construction based on the principles of the multicultural civic nation, accepting only the legal immigration of assimilable minorities able to meet these ethnic constraints.

The far-right, as we have seen, further restricts the concept of nation even more and demands the eviction of every foreigner they accuse of “racial contamination”. This defense of the ethnic nation will be seen in all far-right parties: the Freedom Party of Austria, Flemish Interest, Northern League, Swiss Democratic Union of the Centre, Dutch Freedom Party, True Finns and the French National Front... In Spain, we find parties of this kind such as España2000 (López Ortega, 2016), Plataforma per Catalunya (Casals, 2009). It is also possible to cite the one led by Santiago Abascal, Vox party, a phenomenon that has recently emerged and is still subject of study and analysis today. Digging deeper into the concept, we can characterize this ethno-nationalism backed by the far-right and populist radical right as “primordialist”, that is, the nation is seen as something immutable in history that does not vary in essence or ideal (“essentialist or idealist nation”). Indeed, this nation is a persistent and recurrent phenomenon to all time periods, and is therefore “perennialist”, as said by Anthony Smith (Smith, 2001:60).

The Professor at the London School of Economics shows us the characteristics of this conception, differentiating it from a “modern” notion. The “perennialist nation” is an ethno-cultural, persistent and immemorial community, with temporal and spatial roots (historic homeland), organic, with no cracks or differences, unitarian, with a single will, and ancestral. In contrast, the “modern nation” contradicts the former, defining itself as a new, inconstant, mutable, created, spontaneous, divided in groups and of multiple wills (see Table 2).

Table 2. Differences between a perennialist ethnic nation and modern civic nation.

Ethnic perennialist nation	Modern civic nation
Cultural	Political
Persistent	Inconstant
Historical roots	Created
Organic	Spontaneous
Unitarian	Divided in groups
Single will	Multiple wills
Ancestral	New or mutable

Source: own elaboration based on Smith (Norris, 2009: 74-77).

²² Similarly, there have historically existed a high number of fascist or national-socialist movements in Spain: such as Círculo Español de Amigos de Europa (CEDADE), Bases Autónomas, Juventudes Nacional Revolucionarias, Joven Nación o Alianza por la Unidad Nacional.

Therefore, in order to promote this ethnic nation, the radical right and far-right seek unity and cultural homogeneity and reject any elements that could harm it, identifying immigration as “invasive capable of breaking the national identity and incapable of being assimilated, and obviously do not believe in multicultural integration. At any rate, at this point we also see differences between the far-right and the new radical right. The former rejects all migration, regardless of whether it is legal or irregular. “Neofascists fight to conserve this native community (...) through the expulsion of every foreigner (legal or illegal) and the systemic rejection of minorities such as homosexuals and Roma people” (Olascoaga, 2018: 8-9), whereas “the populist radical right pronounces itself against non-native elements, but focuses only on ending illegal immigration, leaving an open door for all foreigners and ethnic minorities who wish to be integrated within the recipient nation” (Olascoaga, 2018: 9).

Likewise, the new radical right places great emphasis on the rejection of the Muslim community. In fact, one of the differences between neofascist and new radical right parties would be that the former manifest clear antisemitism²³ while the populist radical right is unanimously Islamophobic. Here, there can be seen a difference between what is ethnic as defended by the new radical right and the racial ethnicity as defended by the far-right, although in certain groups the distance between the two can blur. The new radical right has known how to use phenomena such as the increase in Muslim immigration, the arrival of refugees, or Islamic terrorism to construct a set of Islamophobic arguments and find a certain support from sectors of the autochthonous population fearful of this phenomenon.

4. Ultranationalist palingenesis according to the new radical right and the far-right

The ethnic nation that we have just analyzed must be complemented with Roger Griffin's concept. The British political scientist first used the term “palingenesis” in 1991 to refer to a characteristic of nationalism belonging to fascism (and therefore to the far-right) and that we can extrapolate to the new radical right, saving some differences to be addressed.

The concept of “palingenetic ultranationalism” arises from the aspiration to the rebirth of a mythicized glorious past, meaning it aims to resurrect or recreate ideal or utopic historical landmarks. This national reincarnation is deemed necessary, according to fascism, to overcome the decline in which the nation has been submerged. Thus, fascism can be defined as “a political ideology whose mythic nucleus, among its different permutations, consists of being a palingenetic form of populist ultranationalism” (Griffin, 2010: 26)²⁴. For the British professor, the palingenetic myth criticizes modernity and represents a return to a Golden Age in the history of the country, aiming to achieve the nation's renaissance from the “decline”, “decay”, “collapse”, “obscurity”, “downfall”, “ruin”, “rupture”, “death”, “dusk” or “destruction” in which it is submerged.

All these terms are used by both fascism (far-right) as well as the new radical right to define the state of “decomposition” of the nation. Even though this concept can belong to any ideology²⁵, fascism and populist radical right, as we can see, are the only ones that focus heavily on the mythical precept. In this way, this ideology calls for a national reconstruction, for spiritual recovery that glorifies the past as a foundation of inspiration for the resurrection of the nation:

“Fascism is a far-right ideology that celebrates the nation or race as an organic community that transcends all other loyalties. It emphasizes the myth of national or racial renaissance after a period of decay or destruction. To this end, fascism calls to a spiritual revolution against the signs of the moral decay such as individualism and materialism and attempts to purge the strange forces and groups that threaten the organic community (...) fascism often idealizes the past as a source for inspiration for the national renaissance” (Griffin, 2012: 7).

The German national socialism envisioned the spiritual resurrection of the nation through the reimagination of another German Empire. The 3rd Reich intended to revive the 1st Reich, the Holy Roman Empire (800-1806) founded by Charlemagne (who in turn called himself the continuator of the Roman Empire) and the 2nd Reich (or German Empire) of Otto Von Bismarck, which lasted from 1871 to 1918. The mythological references of heroes, Nordic gods and legends are also very

²³ The populist radical right-wing populism not only abstains from expressing antisemitic views, but certain parties within this ideological spectrum actively support the State of Israel (such as Spain's Vox or Austria's Freedom Party).

²⁴ For a deeper exploration of historical fascism Mussolini's Italy and Hitler's Germany, see another relevant book by the same author (Griffin, 2010).

²⁵ This concept can indeed be applied to other ideologies with no ties to fascism or the new radical right, as is the case of Israel, which is a clear example of palingenetic ultranationalism (Lerin Ibarra, 2018)

significative. Through them, Nazism rejected modernity in all its manifestations, such as modern art defined as “degenerate”. In opposition to this “degenerate” art, national socialism praised the total work of art, following the Romantic view and Wagner’s principles against the “deplorable dissolution of Greek art”.

Consequently, legendary things are praised for “legends, regardless of time period and the nation they belong to, have the advantage of including exclusively what this time period and this nation have that is purely human and present it in a way that is very markedly original and therefore unintelligible at first glance” (Wagner, 1908)²⁶. We also find the mythification and glorification of war, strength, discipline, fight, the military, and, of course, violence in opposition to reason. The German national socialist leader described it this way: “day after day I could answer those who contradicted me (...) until at one point it was imperative to put into practice that resource that can certainly be enforced more easily than reason: violence” (Hitler, 1925). On its side, Italian fascism proposed the restoration of the idealized Roman Empire. This is clearly reflected in its symbology, iconography, and aesthetic, all modeled after this period²⁷. Likewise, Mussolini believed himself the heir of Garibaldi, leader of the Italian Unification of the 19th century, and was the creator of the “shirts movement” with his “red shirts” imitated by “il Duce” with his “black shirts” (Payne, 1982: 56).

We can also see the apology and glorification of the violence observed in national socialism. For example, the futurist artist and fascist ideologue Marinetti (2009) praises the “necessity and beauty of violence” supporting the “healing force of war” as a basic element of progress. In this way, he defends the futurist idea of “healthy violence” and justifies the destruction necessary to create a new world.

The palingenetic idea is linked to the concept of decay of the present moment from which we must emerge to rescue that “glorious past of the nation”. As professor Miguel Ángel Simón Gómez (2007) tells us, in this idea of decay and destruction, fascism, the present far-right, and in part the new radical right will intellectually draw intellectually from thinkers and authors like Carl Schmitt (2014), Ernst Von Salomon (1966), Oswald Spengler (1923) or Ernst Jünger (2005)... For these authors, the decay of the modern world is a natural factor, they do not see it as a catastrophe but as something necessary in order to achieve after it the reincarnation of the essence of the great nation. Furthermore, they will defend a return to spirituality and reject the enlightened idea of reason and criticize modernity. Except for the acceptance of technology (Marinetti, 2008), they will rebel against everything that constitutes the “modern world” and against one of its representatives: the city dweller: “a new nomad, a parasite, the inhabitant of a great city, a man purely preoccupied with facts, a man without tradition, that shows himself in shapeless and fluctuating masses (...) a great step towards the inorganic, towards the end” (Spengler, 1923: 66).

After the end of World War 2 and the defeat of fascism, the small far-right parties, practically irrelevant, kept calling for the renaissance of that mythologized glorious past heir to an “Imperial” period or for the resurrection of a “powerful nation”, and maintaining the demand for a historical fascism. On the other hand, European new radical right parties will modify certain ideological elements like the ones we have seen. Nevertheless, several of the palingenetic myths are maintained. Characters and historic occurrences (both historical and legendary) are exhibited such as Joan of Arc²⁸ or the “Lepanto Europe” against Islam. In Spain, it can be easily observed how Vox brings back historical characters or mythologized deeds such as the “Spanish Reconquista”, “Isabella the Catholic”, “the Cid”, “the conquest of America”, “Blas de Lezo” or “Don Pelayo”. In many cases there have been irredentist demands, from which we can cite the “Great Hungary”, “Great Romania” or the recuperation of Gibraltar in the case of Spain.

Nevertheless, in many European populist radical right formations, there are no references to concrete occurrences as there are in the far-right and Vox which, as we have seen, do show much more specific mythical claims. In general, the “corrupted glorious past”, “the destroyed golden age”, the “lost traditions” are criticized, or they otherwise appeal to a better past. The idea is simple, the essence of the nation is pure and it is now that it is “corrupted”, “humiliated” or “destroyed”. Therefore, the present is decaying, and the nation must return to the greatness of the past. The populist radical right does not show the mythologization of violence that we observe in fascism and that is maintained in the present far-right. There is a concept that the new far-right and new radical right parties currently share. The same idea of “Europe” and its ethnic and Christian roots are in

²⁶ For more information on the relationship between Wagner and national socialism, read Enric Riu’s article (Riu, 2013: 26).

²⁷ To cite some examples: imperial eagles, Roman salute, buildings, urban planning, and a great variety of architectural elements (like victory arches). Additionally, there is a strict artistic discipline that imitates Roman imperial styles.

²⁸ Joan of Arc is a iconic example. The French National Front organizes itself every 1st of May to celebrate the “mother of the French nation” and “fighter against the foreign invasion”. This image of the warrior against the foreign invader was claimed by the Vichy regime and reappropriated decades later by Jean-Marie le Pen.

themselves mythic references that attempt to recuperate and even demand the return to a “European Empire” (Benoist). The Political Sciences professor Joan Antón-Mellón (2004) speaks of “the unifying myth of the transnational Europe”, according to which “the old nationalism dissolves in a concept of racial and ethnocentric superiority of a more biological than cultural nature”. Delving deeper into this, it should be added that it supports a Europe with no racial heterogeneity in the case of the far-right, and an ethnically homogeneous one in the case of the populist radical right.

Nevertheless, neither the far-right nor most of the new radical right accept the idea of the current European Union that, according to them, leads to a federalist, centralist, hyper-regulatory, dangerous to the ethnic nation, and permissive of emigration European super-State. In contrast, they do support the idea of a “Europe of the nations” that is respectful of national sovereignty, an ethnic Europe with “Christian roots” that opposes multiculturalism (populist radical right) or a “white Europe” that is racially homogeneous (far-right).

For this reason, Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012: 72) reminds us that: “the radical right demands a certain differentiation of Europe in the world, hence its mythical references applied to this space as a community of ethnicities and as the homeland of civilized nations. There is, therefore, a certain myth of Europe within the contemporary radical right that has its roots in the classical fascisms that aspired to achieve a new order.” Therefore, the populist radical right supports the idea of a palingenetic mythical past inherited from fascism, and hence from the far-right, but this time of an ethnic nature linked to the idea of the recovery of a Western Christian civilization in opposition to others, especially the Islamic one (xenophobia and Islamophobia).

The ideology of the new radical right stems from the palingenetic ideas of the New Right of Charles Champetier and Alain de Benoist (GRECE). This school of thought defends the ethnocentric and differentiation theories, but still denies all ties to fascism (associated with the far-right), fostering even Antonio Gramsci’s concept of cultural hegemony. Nonetheless, Roger Griffin insists that “the New Right preserves a great amount of the mythical basis and the causal mythical approaches of fascism, despite the many alterations and structural redecorations performed in the visible ideological building.” (Griffin, 2000: 217). In fact, Joan Antón-Mellón (Antón-Mellón, 2011: 91) claims that the New Right is a more sophisticated manifestation of fascist ideas.

“Fascism became a cursed ideology, juridically criminalized except for very few minorities of believers or sympathizers— obviously, the opportunists disappeared. This situation of maximum distancing of power made the preservation of the force-ideas that homogenized the Radical Right in the first third of the 20th century gain a great relevance. This has been a complicated task in which the ND tried to reconvert said force-ideas, adapting them to a period of undisputed prevalence of democratic ideas and values. A necessarily sophisticated adjustment since for the survival of the strategic it was necessary to get rid of the tactical. A not-identical identity masquerading as a new paradigm beyond left and right.”

5. Challenges to governance and the quality of democracy

The current far-right or “old far-right” (Ignazi, 1992) plays a residual and irrelevant role in the European paradigm, with either nonexistent or scarce representation, except for Greece where we find a party, Chrysí Avgí, Golden Dawn, with the proper characteristics of the far-right and a relevant electoral percentage. This is evidenced by the 9.4% of votes obtained by the national-socialist party in the 2014 European Parliament elections or the 7% achieved in the Greek general elections of 2015. Said party is anti-pluralist, defends a racial idea of the nation²⁹, believes in fascist palingenetic myths, and has clear ideological links with Nazism, posing a total threat not only to governance but to the very democratic system. In the rest of Europe, we do not see parties of this ideology with any political relevance, so the risk they pose to governance and the quality of democracy is milder or even nonexistent.

The new radical right, on the other hand, as previously explained, has expanded across practically all of Europe, a fact that warrants careful analysis. Its defense of ethno-nationalism and palingenetic ultra-nationalism constitutes a criticism against modernity and multiculturalism, questioning the foundations of the current democratic system, or at least of the conception of modern civic democracy, which has social and political pluralism as one of its cornerstones. Although they are not anti-democratic in theory, unlike far-right parties, the populist radical right has a utilitarian view of democracy. As Political Sciences Professor Cesáreo Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat reminds us (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012: 65), radical right parties have “an instrumental/functional understanding of democracy”.

²⁹ One of the main principles of Golden Dawn’s ideology is the concept of race or “blood”, as the party itself calls it, glorifying a “Hellenic race” constrained by the “racial invasion of the foreigners”. Similarly, in their demonstrations, some of the slogans used are “Blood, Honor, Golden Dawn” or “Blood and Honor”, which are slogans used by Nazi Germany’s SS (Schutzstaffel).

The construction of political theories based on an ethnic understanding of the nation and on paligenetic myths constitutes an obvious breach of democratic pluralism. Both the far-right and the new radical right posit that each nation belongs to a specific ethnic group (and race in the case of the far-right) with a homogeneous culture, justifying the exclusive use of the territory by them and the expulsion or segregation of ethnic groups “foreign” to the native one. A basic principle of modern democracy is that it allows the majority to govern while maintaining the respect of the minorities/with the support of the minority, but the new radical right and the far-right question the cultural diversity of society and the fact that there are ethnic minorities in it, radically antagonizing any multicultural integration process. Their defense of sociocultural homogeneity attacks the very essence of a democracy based on the principles of a civic nation.

Even if they have not achieved the absolute majority in the elections, which would allow them to unfold their entire political agenda, the rise of the new radical right in Europe represents a danger and a threat to the governance and quality of democracy. The challenge, as we will see, poses two parts. On the one hand, other political formations, especially liberal-conservative or center-right parties, can copy or imitate a great part of their same discourse in an attempt to regain their lost electorate, especially with topics regarding migration. On the other hand, there is a risk that these parties, participating in coalition governments as is already the case in Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Austria, where they participate in coalition governments, will gain part of the political power which would enable them to implement their electoral program, implementing their harsh policies against immigration and refugees, and fomenting a clear euro-skepticism that in many countries is already becoming popular. This rise of euro-skepticism fomented by the new radical right is a observable phenomenon that shows us a distrust towards the European democratic governance: “the opposition to a further European integration expresses a rejection and/or doubts regarding the capacity of the EU to effectively guarantee material benefits, the visibility of a genuine European democratic governance, and the risks concerning national identity. In this sense, there is a fear for the future of the wellness state because of the loss of popular control and democratic quality” (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012: 40).

The far-right is intrinsically against the European Union, although it does recognize the importance of the unity of the European countries, united by racial links, promoting a “white Europe”, or at least a racially homogeneous one. However, as mentioned earlier, its lack of political relevance, except in the Hellenic case, makes it so that its postulates do not represent a risk or challenge to democracy.

At the same time, the populist nature of the new radical right is one of the elements that differentiate it from the far-right, which eludes this positioning or political strategy. Populism also reflects a critic of conventional politics and manifests self-evident facts that many citizens notice. The criticism towards the “political elites”, the “establishment” and the “traditional corrupt politics” made by these parties owes its existence to the real detachment of conventional political parties and their leaders to the demands of great part of the population.

This underscores the need “for democrats to react and demand a democracy of better quality and that the leaders of parties with a sincere democratic vocation get closer to the citizens” (Rodríguez Jiménez, 2006: 98). Likewise, there is a socioeconomic variable to this analysis. The new radical right parties, unlike far-right parties, have grown in the last decades making use of a complex context and socioeconomic circumstances in great sections of the population. The economic crisis, the labor reforms and the social cuts (especially in education and healthcare) have gravely harmed population sectors that fear their “status quo” is in danger. Manual workers and the middle-class “regard the changes with suspicion or fear, because they feel like their better or worse social position is vulnerable” (Rodríguez Jiménez, 2006: 97).

As a result of this deterioration in social wellbeing or fear of losing it, many of these social sectors now support these new radical right parties that blame ethnic minorities of “taking advantage of the Wellness State” and demand a “national preference” in social, economic and labor rights. In this way, this precariousness of the labor force and this deterioration of the socioeconomic level of great sectors of the population favors the rise of the radical right. Therefore, it corresponds to the “democrats” to revert the cuts in social and labor rights so that prosperity can reach the middle and popular classes and avoid the existence of conflicts for social services and public resources. In consequence, there must be an increment in social expenses, improve healthcare and education, make advances in the protection of workers, improve the social inclusion policies and, ultimately, perfect the wellness State for every citizen of the country.

6. Conclusions

In this paper we have delved deeply into the conceptualization of the new radical right, setting it apart from the far-right through a comparative analysis of both ideologies that studies their ideological components. Following this methodology, we have analyzed the theoretical principles of

these parties that pose a threat to democratic governance: the defense of the ethnic nation and the nationalist palingenesis.

After our analysis we can conclude that the far-right and the new radical right are different schools of thought. This can be appreciated in the following aspects.

The far-right defends the concept of the racial ethnic nation while the new radical right has an ethnic vision of the nation that lacks the racial component. They both share a rejection of the civic nation based on political will. Linked to this conception, the new radical right is against illegal immigration but accepts legal emigration as long as it shares the same ethnic principles as the natives, while the far-right rejects both legal and illegal immigration, demanding their expulsion in both cases.

On the other hand, the far-right has clear links or even supports fascism in its mythical and ideological precepts. Unlike them, the populist radical right rejects or at least does not actively show links to classic or historic fascism.

Likewise, the far-right defends a "white Europe", or one that is racially homogeneous, and the radical right supports a "Europe of the nations" that is ethnically homogeneous. Furthermore, the first one completely rejects the European union, while the radical right usually shows Eurosceptic attitudes but is occasionally more ambiguous, going as far as having (Euro-pragmatic or Euro-resigned) parties that support policies of European cohesion for the development of their countries (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012).

Similarly, far-right parties show references related to fascist or imperialistic palingenesis. New radical right parties, on the other hand, usually show an ultranationalist palingenesis that is less concrete and more generic, adapted to each country. Furthermore, the latter defends the idea of a Europe with Christian roots as opposed to other civilizations that threaten it (Islam).

Another clear difference is the populist nature of the new radical right that the far-right lacks. This marked anti-establishment populism (antipolitical elites) is a central element of the populist radical right, and for this reason, these groups also receive this distinction in the nomenclature used to differentiate them. Far-right usually eludes this rhetoric, strategy, or political stance, since these groups do not just criticize the governing political elite but also the political system in on itself.

In this way, the far-right has a political conception that has been inherited from fascism, and which is anti-system, anti-democratic, anti-pluralist and anti-parliamentary. The populist radical right, however, is theoretically democratic, even though some authors think that its notion of democracy is "instrumental" (Rodríguez-Aguilera de Prat, 2012: 62). Furthermore, its notion of democracy is constrained since it prioritizes natives (national preference). According to Roger Griffin (2000), they accept the liberal system but demand the expulsion, marginalization or segregation of those people who do not belong to the autochthonous ethnicity, that is, they advocate for an "ethnocratic liberalism".

To conclude, we have analyzed the risk that these groups pose for the governability and the quality of democracy. The far-right, given its political irrelevance, does not pose a threat to democracy, except in the Hellenic case that has been mentioned. Nevertheless, the electoral rise of the populist radical right has meant an increase in their political relevance in practically all of Europe, which does pose a significant risk to the quality of democracy, especially because of its ethicist principles and its palingenetic ultranationalism. We have uncovered a double challenge to democratic governance: on the one hand, these parties can achieve quotas of power that may allow them to implement their policies, and on the other hand, there is a possibility that their political discourse will contaminate the political system itself.

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