

# Transatlantic Practices of Fascism(s) and Populism(s) from the Margins

---

The Cultural Politics of “Us” versus “Them”

**Edited by**  
**Reindert Dhondt, Monica Jansen and**  
**Maria Bonaria Urban**

First published 2026

ISBN: 978-1-032-46362-9 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-032-46686-6 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-38285-0 (ebk)

---

## Introduction

Studying Interconnected Practices of  
Fascism(s) and Populism(s) from a  
Transatlantic Perspective

*Reindert Dhondt, Monica Jansen, and*  
*Maria Bonaria Urban*

(CC BY) 4.0

DOI: 10.4324/9781003382850-1

The Open Access version of Introduction was funded by the University of Groningen and Utrecht University.

# Introduction

## Studying Interconnected Practices of Fascism(s) and Populism(s) from a Transatlantic Perspective

*Reindert Dhondt, Monica Jansen, and  
Maria Bonaria Urban*

### Fascism and Populism from the Margins

Both Europe and Latin America have frequently been regarded as the cradle of populism. In recent decades, two strands of populism have dominated the media and the collective imagination, each associated with a different region. The populist socialism of the so-called Pink Tide governments in Latin America, embodied by former presidents such as Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and Rafael Correa in Ecuador, is characterised by charismatic leadership, a focus on the redistribution of wealth, and an ethnically inclusive language that resonates with indigenous people and Afro-Latinos. In contrast, the more recent, predominantly right-wing populism in Europe, personified by Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, and Marine Le Pen in France, is marked by exclusionary ethno-nationalism, a nativist and anti-immigrant rhetoric, and economic laissez-faire. However, this opposition significantly reduces the complexity of the political landscape in both regions, where diverse forms of populism continue to evolve and intersect. Since the European debt crisis of 2008, left-wing populist movements such as Greece's Syriza and Spain's Podemos have been joined by several others, including Jean-Luc Mélenchon's La France Insoumise (France Unbowed) and Italy's Five Star Movement, each pushing back against austerity measures and the political status quo. Meanwhile, in Latin America, a wave of right-leaning populist leaders has come to prominence, including Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Javier Milei in Argentina, and Nayib Bukele in El Salvador. The latter, along with figures like Ecuador's president Daniel Noboa, represent new "big-tent" populist parties that defy easy categorisation on the traditional ideological spectrum. Noboa, for example, aligns himself with the social policies of Brazil's Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, yet has also implemented *mano dura* or hardline policies against violence, leading to increased militarisation of his country's law enforcement – raising concerns among human rights observers, particularly regarding the impact on vulnerable groups who are often rendered "disposable" or "ungrievable" through discursive and affective frames of de-subjectivation, as illustrated by the rhetoric about Mexico's War on Drugs, the securitisation of the U.S.-Mexican border, and the instrumentalisation of the Haitian and Venezuelan refugee crises and the Central American transmigration. Both the fallout of the 2008 global financial crisis and the growing public perception of security threats have contributed to the

## 2 *Transatlantic Practices of Fascism(s) and Populism(s) from the Margins*

rise of leaders who exhibit authoritarian tendencies and promote divisive politics that evoke the ghosts of fascism.

To fully grasp these new tendencies, we argue that it is crucial to re-examine European (neo)populisms in tandem with those in Latin America, a region that Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser have described as having the “most enduring and prevalent populist tradition” (*Populism* 27). Latin America is also the place where modern populism – or what the Argentine historian Federico Finchelstein has described as “populist postfascism”, epitomised by Argentine Peronism (*From Fascism to Populism in History* 81) – first took root. After 1945, as fascism became politically untenable and morally discredited in Europe, it evolved into populism, emerging first in Latin America before expanding to other parts of the world. Colonel Juan Domingo Perón, who visited fascist Italy and Nazi Germany and deeply admired Mussolini, adapted the fascist legacies to the context of an electoral democracy and the Cold War. While Perón distanced himself from fascism’s inherently violent and dictatorial aspects and incorporated the lower classes into political life, he nonetheless actively sought to undermine democratic pluralism. Finchelstein’s approach seeks to reinscribe the fascist tradition within our understanding of populism, moving beyond ahistorical and often normative interpretations. It also calls for transcending the predominantly Eurocentric literature on the topic. Moreover, to understand the increasingly authoritarian drift and the violent methods employed by Latin America’s populist left, as currently exemplified by Venezuela’s populist-turned-dictator Nicolás Maduro and Nicaragua’s strongman Daniel Ortega, it is vital to revisit the fascist roots of populism and study their intersections. Undoubtedly, the twenty-first-century Latin American radical leftist movements resemble in some ways the first modern populist regimes of the 1940s and the Cold War à la Perón, but many of them also seek to subvert democracy by eroding the rule of law, subjecting it to the discretion of a single leader who portrays himself as a messianic saviour. In this respect, there are striking continuities with fascism, and dismissing the term as historically inaccurate, overused, or conflated risks overlooking its ongoing relevance for describing diverse authoritarian and illiberal scenarios and disregards the complex genealogy that continues to shape populism today.

The present volume brings together different disciplines to study these complex entanglements of populism(s) and fascism(s) “from the margins” and to analyse their multiple genealogies as distinct yet converging intellectual and political histories. It deliberately opts for a comparative and transnational perspective on authoritarianisms within a transatlantic framework, as it was in Latin America where fascism and populism first intersected. The volume builds on Finchelstein’s insight that, when studying transnational fascism and populist movements, “the center can be seen more clearly from the margins” (*From Fascism to Populism in History* 125). Finchelstein compellingly argues that a Trump-centred view of recent political history is myopic. Trumpism does not come out of the blue, nor does it explain Orbánism or Berlusconiism, which predate it. All too often, Europeanist and Americanist political scientists and historians leave out the historical correlations between the United States or Northern Europe (seen as the “centre”) and

Southern and Eastern Europe and the Global South (the “margins”), adopting a stereotypical view of the United States and Northern Europe as distinctly modern and democratic (Finchelstein, *From Fascism to Populism in History* xii), and of Latin America as premodern or backward in democratic governance, marked by a long-standing tradition of caciquism, personalism, clientelism, and patrimonialism. Our perspective here is purposefully “ex-centric”, in the sense that Jorge Luis Borges describes it in his conference “El escritor argentino y la tradición” (“The Argentine Writer and Tradition”, 1951) with regard to the literary tradition: Argentine writers do not feel disadvantaged by their distance from the metropolitan centre but instead find creative freedom and irreverence in their peripheral position, unbounded by a singular, fixed viewpoint. Similarly, the marginal perspective that guides the present volume invites a broader view of the historical entanglements of populism and fascism, encouraging us to focus on the transfer of political ideas across the Atlantic and to defy conventional national or regional frameworks.

The case studies in this volume also interrogate the malleability of the “Us” versus “Them” opposition – or, in Latin America, the classical “civilization against barbarism” binary (Swanson) – that underpins much populist rhetoric, since, according to Finchelstein, “Fascists and populists shared a notion of the people as threatened by the ultimate enemies, which led to alarmist ideas of the onset of apocalyptic times and crisis that only their leaders could resolve” (*From Fascism to Populism in History* 95). In this rhetorical matrix, minority groups and foreigners, as well as the liberal elite establishment, have traditionally been scapegoated for the so-called national decline. It is telling that, in the build-up to the 2024 elections, Donald Trump did not only blame and demonise immigrants, but also pledged to deploy the military to liberate the country from “enemies within”, which is reminiscent of European fascist traditions and Latin American National Security Doctrines and military dictatorships, such as Pinochet’s in Chile, where violence and an infrastructure of repression were framed as justified national defence measures.

Following Finchelstein, viewing modern populism as a form of postfascism does not imply that fascism is confined to the past. Contemporary populism appears to reengage with fascist themes that Peronism once rejected, even seeking to undermine democracy from within. The so-called “Fascism Debate” over whether Trump’s politics represents a form of fascism has reignited repeatedly since 2015 (Steinmetz-Jenkins, *Did It Happen Here?*). Back then, most scholars and commentators rejected the epithet. However, Trump’s incitement of civic violence to overturn the election on 6 January 2021, prompted many academics and pundits to view the fascism analogy as increasingly relevant and even necessary. Nonetheless, in his most recent publications, Finchelstein cautions against the danger posed by the growing conflation of classical fascism with contemporary right-wing populism. He nonetheless describes Trump or Bolsonaro as would-be fascists because their “fascism is aspirational” (3). This suggests that certain authoritarian elements of fascism that postwar populists had set aside, such as its pursuit of permanent power, the use of extreme violence, propaganda rooted in lies and myths, or the idea of the people premised on *ethnos*, are resurfacing or on the verge of

#### 4 *Transatlantic Practices of Fascism(s) and Populism(s) from the Margins*

doing so. As a result, populism has the potential to mutate into fascism again. In this volume, we adopt Finchelstein's view that studying "the connected histories of fascism and populism, but also their contextual distinctions, reminds us why democracy matters and why wannabe fascists need to be stopped" (*The Wannabe Fascists* 4). This approach emphasises that contemporary authoritarian leaders may lack the full outlook of classical fascism, but share its foundational impulses, posing a significant threat to liberal-democratic governance. Since we are writing these pages in the aftermath of Trump's re-election as U.S. president, the questions underlying this volume become even more poignant and urgent.

In what follows, we outline recent trends in fascism and populism studies that inform the discussions within this volume. We begin by focusing on the transnational and transhistorical approach that underpins our methodology, one that frames the Europe-Latin America axis not only as a geographical and political space but above all as a symbolic one, around which images and memories were developed in an (anti-)fascist and populist key. We then turn our attention to the role of intellectual production and media discourses which, through different strategies, contribute to the construction of a fascist and populist imaginary centred on the concept of the enemy. Building on these premises, the following part of the introduction outlines the architecture of the volume through a series of case studies that deepen the lines of research introduced earlier and illustrate the centrality of transatlantic connections. The concluding section presents an overview of the different chapters.

#### **The Transnational as Method**

The mid-2010s have witnessed a transnational turn in (neo)fascism studies (Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism*), anti-fascism studies (García), and in far-right studies (Campos, Mammone et al., *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism* and *Mapping the Extreme Right*). Notably, our transnational approach stands in sharp contrast to postnational perspectives. The so-called "postnational turn" in the humanities is often attributed to the erosion of the nation-state, as evidenced by the European integration, or regional trade blocks such as Mercosur or NAFTA. This shift stems from the intensified communication and interdependence between the various regions of the world, commonly referred to as globalisation.

Aleida Assmann has described the position of transnational studies towards the national in the following terms: "Nations are not elided in this transnational perspective, but they are symbolically and politically recast. They are imagined differently as inherently and externally relational, embedded and contextualised, always implicated in and partaking of larger processes and changes" (Assmann 547). This means that national considerations are not ruled out as irrelevant, but instead are called into question, problematising thus the idea of a nation in its homogenising nineteenth-century formulation instead of merely dismissing it, while at the same time considering "transnational flows" (Appadurai). Indeed, the political struggle "in the name of the people" takes place within the context of the nation-state and is often informed by nationalist concerns, while it is simultaneously being shaped

by ideas, organisations, and agents which operate across borders, not in the least thanks to the Internet and social media (see as well De Cesari and Rigney; De Cesari and Kaya).

It is our contention that the often celebratory postnational approach overlooks the complex interrelation between national and other levels of governance or cultural production (regional, supranational), as well as the wave of anti-globalist and anti-cosmopolitan sentiments. In this sense, transnationalism can be seen as “a critical mode of postnationalism” (Castle 256), or as a corrective to both methodological nationalism and postnationalism, as Serena Bassi, Loredana Polezzi, and Giulia Riccò suggest by referring to the “transnational as method” (Bassi et al.). In other words, transnationalism is not only a theme in the cultural narratives or political discourses we analyse, understood as a social phenomenon or a historical condition that characterises our current era of instant interconnectedness and social acceleration. Rather, it is a critical lens or methodological tool that should shape our questions and analytical framework, emphasising the interplay of multiple scales both within and beyond the nation-state. This also implies going beyond facile analogies between Hitler and current-day autocrats when analysing far-right memories. Rather than just asking how tropes, memories, and symbols derive from the National Socialist era, we should engage with broader and more complex genealogies by considering the “*longue durée* of states of emergency” and charting mnemonic resources that shape “transnational, racist nationalism”, in the words of Neil Levi and Michael Rothberg (364, 357). Instead of solely focusing on interwar European fascism, we argue that memories of authoritarian populism from the margins and of postwar, postfascist contexts are essential to better understand how new extremist political subjects and imaginaries are constituted in the present.

### **Towards a Transhistorical and Transatlantic Approach to Fascism(s) and Populism(s)**

Building on Finchelstein’s insight that the concept of modern populism is rooted in fascism (*From Fascism to Populism in History* xi, xiii), this volume thus seeks to examine how Europe’s fascist and far-right legacies have influenced models of autocratic governance in today’s increasingly globalised context, where illiberal tendencies gain political force.

Although the historiography of fascism is vast, and it is beyond the scope of this volume to encompass its full depth, we highlight some influential contributions to the field that have informed this collection of essays. Notably, in 1995, Stanley G. Payne, one of the leading scholars in the field, considered fascism still the vaguest of the major political concepts (Payne 3), underscoring its limitations as an analytical tool for understanding today’s political movements. However, scholars have made considerable efforts to define and map its transformations, from its postwar articulations to the current resurgence of the radical/extreme right on a global scale.

Historical writing on fascism has, in fact, been shaped by two tendencies: on the one hand, some scholars have approached fascism as a concept that can be applied to different contexts and temporalities; on the other hand, others have focused

mainly on specific national case studies. The risks of approaching fascism as a trans-historical phenomenon have been highlighted, among others, by Emilio Gentile, who has studied Italian fascism as “la via italiana al totalitarismo” (the Italian road to totalitarianism) (Gentile x). According to Gentile, one of the main difficulties in developing a general theory of fascism lies in the impossibility of comparing individual case studies within a singular framework, also because the phenomenon reached different levels of development in each context. Nevertheless, the comparative approach in the historiography of fascism has experienced, in the words of Aristotle A. Kallis, a “dramatic revival of academic interest” (9) from the 1990s onwards. Since then, in fact, research has approached fascism without the ambition of providing an all-encompassing definition, focusing instead on its ideological essence and leaving room for the exploration of the variety of its national articulations (Kallis 9–10), including the universalist ambitions of fascism (Albanese).

An important contribution is Robert O. Paxton’s reflection on fascism as a system and a dynamic process rather than a static phenomenon. In his article “The Five Stages of Fascism” (1998) and then in his book *The Anatomy of Fascism* (2004), Paxton has explored the nature of fascism through a cycle of five stages that could serve as a useful tool for comparing different fascist regimes at “equivalent levels of development” (Paxton, “The Five Stages” 3). Moving beyond the traditional dichotomy between fascism as a movement and as a regime, he argues that fascism progresses through the following stages before becoming fully established within a given national context: the initial creation of fascist movements; their consolidation as political parties; the acquisition of power; the exercise of power; and, finally, either radicalisation or entropy (11). However, not all fascist movements reach the same stage of development, as their trajectories are shaped by unique historical contexts. Paxton thus advocates for studying “fascism in motion” (10), which entails examining the specific conditions that allow fascism to emerge and evolve, as well as its interactions with other political and social actors. Moreover, fascism’s malleability in time and space should be seen as an opportunity to better understand the factors that allowed certain fascist movements to succeed and others to fail, making it possible to identify certain recurring trends or variabilities (10). In doing so, Paxton offers what he calls a “strategy” (*The Anatomy of Fascism* 15) for bringing together similar phenomena in different contexts and temporalities.

In recent years, a new and interesting attempt to approach the genealogy of fascism from a comparative perspective must be found in the neologism “postfascism” coined by Enzo Traverso. According to Traverso, fascism “has not only been transnational or transatlantic, but also transhistorical” (Traverso, *The New Faces* 5), thanks to the fact that it has been used in collective memories to describe phenomena in different geographies and temporalities. However, despite being at the core of our political imagery, fascism “seems both inappropriate and indispensable” (5) to fully grasp the contemporary political scenario, hence his preference for a concept that evokes both continuity and change. For Traverso, defining the new far right is inconceivable without drawing comparisons to fascism, even though it no longer qualifies as such. As he explains, “[t]he new right is a hybrid thing that might return to fascism, or it could turn into a new form of conservative, authoritarian, populist democracy. The

concept of postfascism tries to capture this” (quoted in Allen and Cortés). Traverso thus underscores the distinction between postfascism and neofascism: while the latter seeks to revive fascism, the former represents a “metamorphose” of historical fascism. Postfascist movements may, in fact, have no “ideological continuity with classical fascism” (*The New Faces* 6) as they are embedded in the politics of the twenty-first century, and the outcome of their evolution is still unclear.<sup>1</sup>

The idea that (neo)fascism should be considered as a transnational and trans-historical concept (Albanese and del Hierro; Toro; Mammone, *Transnational Neofascism*) can also be found in the writings of scholars working in fields other than history, such as in Umberto Eco’s successful article “Ur-Fascism”, first published in *The New York Review of Books* in 1995, coinciding with Berlusconi’s first election as prime minister. The semiotician identified the Italian case not only as the first example of totalitarianism in chronological terms, but also as “a synecdoche, that is, a word that could be used for different totalitarian movements” (Eco 3), not “because fascism contained in itself . . . all the elements of any later form of totalitarianism. On the contrary, fascism had no quintessence. Fascism was a *fuzzy* totalitarianism, a collage of different philosophical and political ideas, a beehive of contradictions” (3–4). It is possible, in fact, according to Eco, to “eliminate from a fascist regime one or more features, and it will still be recognisable as fascist” (5). Moreover, Eco points out the privileged relation between the leader and the people (i.e., the “good” people entitled to sovereignty), as “Ur-Fascism is based upon a *selective populism*” (8). This means that it sidesteps the conflicting interests and heterogeneity of non-hegemonic groups, but also the will of the majority: “the People is conceived as a quality, a monolithic entity expressing the Common Will. Since no large quantity of human beings can have a common will, the Leader pretends to be their interpreter” (8). Written thirty years ago, “Ur-Fascism” – despite its flaws – remains striking in its depiction of Italian fascism and its insights into recurrent patterns in contemporary populisms.

The reflection on fascism, as well as its semantic reformulation, remains an ongoing process. Notably, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari have offered an extension of the term through their theory of “microfascism”. This concept describes any situation, even on a small scale, where power relations and abuse of authority occur. Such dynamics include, for instance, those rooted in sexism or racism, phenomena that are far more pervasive and predate historical fascism (Gagliardi and Pasetti 248). Scholars like Brad Evans and Julian Reid have further expanded on this theory in *Deleuze and Fascism*. While these broad formulations underscore the enduring relevance of fascism in contemporary debates, it is crucial to historicise totalitarianism through a comparative and transnational lens. Only by examining its origins and its intersections with populism can we fully grasp the genealogies of today’s authoritarian regimes.

### **Imaging the Europe-Latin America Axis as a Shared “Latin Space”**

The trend of cultural activism embodied by figures such as Eco is not new: it should be placed in a broader framework in which writers and artists across the political

spectrum have been not merely instrumental, but essential in shaping, mediating, or challenging hegemonic discourses and imageries. As Marla Stone convincingly shows in her book *The Patron State* (1998), unlike the Nazi regime, Mussolini refrained from identifying fascism with a specific artistic style. On the contrary, he gave artists the freedom to experiment as long as they were not explicitly antifascist. The regime mainly sought, in fact, the “consent of artists, and the association between art and the state was one of mutual recognition and legitimation under official tutelage” (“The State as Patron” 207). The result was what Stone calls a context of “hegemonic pluralism” (Stone 206), namely “the acceptance, appropriation, and mobilization of a variety of aesthetic languages in the pursuit of consent and legitimation and in the search for a representational language evocative of the fascist new era” (206). Moreover, the support provided to artists and intellectuals must be understood in the wider context of the regime’s cultural politics and diplomacy, which extended far beyond the national borders, particularly to countries with significant Italian migrant communities, such as Argentina or the United States (Fotia; Pretelli “Il fascismo” and “Italia e Stati Uniti”). This dynamic of artistic and cultural engagement has been examined from a transatlantic perspective in two recent studies, both of which adopt distinct yet complementary transnational approaches, linking Europe and Latin America during the first half of the twentieth century.

An attempt to trace the role of right-wing intellectuals in the transatlantic transfer of ideologies is Valeria Galimi and Annarita Gori’s *Intellectuals in the Latin Space during the Era of Fascism* (2020). This volume situates individual trajectories of artistic and intellectual activism within broader cultural networks, exploring the “global lives” of transnational agents who operated across borders in both state and non-state organisations (Galimi and Gori, “Hybridizing Ideas in the Latin Space” 3). Central to the study is the concept of a “Latin space” – understood as both a geographical and an imaginary construct – that fostered transnational conservative and far-right thought, offering an alternative to the model of the “Italian-German axis” typically seen as the primary channel for spreading the fascist political model (“Hybridising Ideas in the Latin Space” 2). Various contributions in this volume show how such a Latin space emerged through a process of hybridisation and ongoing adaptation of the fascist model that took shape within the Europe-Latin America connections (7).

The study *Continental Transfers* (2022), edited by Maximiliano Fuentes Codera and Patrizia Dogliani, focuses on Italy, Spain, and Argentina as part of the “Latin space” between 1914 and 1945. The editors employ the concept of cultural transfer as a methodological tool to grasp how images, discourses, and practices of artistic, intellectual, and political engagement are appropriated and recreated across national contexts (“Introduction” 2–3). They foreground Latinism as “a supranational horizon” central to both imperialist and fascist visions, as well as to nationalist ideologies in Spain and Argentina (“Introduction” 5). Federica Bertagna’s contribution highlights, for example, that fascist engagement with Latin America began as early as 1924, when the cruise ship *Nave Italia* visited Latin American harbours with large communities of Italian descent. The ship aimed to promote

Italian products and works of art while strengthening political and cultural ties with the so-called “Latin nations” of America (Bertagna 124). While Argentina, with its large Italian immigrant community, became a key focus of fascist cultural propaganda, Bertagna stresses the inherent ambiguities and limited political success of these efforts (127–31).

Like the previous two books, the current volume examines transatlantic cultural practices during fascism, extending its analysis beyond the Second World War to trace continuities and ruptures into the present. It places particular emphasis on contemporary cultural expressions and forms of activism. By adopting a Europe-Latin America framework and envisioning a supranational horizon, the volume challenges typologies informed by Western European politics, addressing ethnocentric biases and drawing attention to underexplored transnational phenomena such as socio-economic populism. This form of populism, which implies a specific conception of the people, remains prevalent in several Latin American countries but extends beyond the “Latin space” and continues to be understudied (see de la Torre).

Focusing on the Southern origins of populism and fascism naturally challenges the tendency to overidentify fascism with the German experience, which, for understandable reasons, has been dominant in the United States and many European countries such as the Netherlands – though this is gradually shifting (see, for example, Couperus and Tortola). It also prompts questions on the troubling parallels between, on the one hand, present strongmen and interwar European fascism (Ben-Ghiat) and, on the other, the outgrowth of domestic fascist traditions, as illustrated in *Fascism in America: Past and Present* (Rosenfeld and Ward). It is therefore crucial to recognise that fascism was not a strictly European phenomenon and that many discussions are anchored in Latin America. Consider Brazilian integralism, the incorporation of elements of Italian fascism into Juan Domingo Perón’s government, the fascism *sui generis* of Hitler-admirer General Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay, or the influence of the Nazis’ infamous Night and Fog Decree (1941) on the *modus operandi* of the forced disappearances during the 1970s and 1980s Dirty Wars in Argentina and Chile, where former SS officers advised Pinochet’s junta.

This also invites us to reconsider the situatedness of our own knowledge production, urging us to bring specialists like Nadia Urbinati or Margaret Canovan into dialogue with non-European theorists of populism and the people, such as Ernesto Laclau or Enrique Dussel, Carlos de la Torre, and Federico Finchelstein. By doing so, we can reassess ruptures in the histories of fascism and populism and better unpack the complex forms of legitimation employed by populist leaders, allowing for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of appropriation and symbolic lineage at play.

### **The Revival of the Writer and Intellectual as a Defender of Democracy**

The revival of Eco’s text in recent years, together with the increasing number of publications on fascism(s) and populism(s) in a transatlantic perspective, should be seen in the context of a widespread interest in the subject, in parallel with the

political turn to the right that we have briefly outlined. At the same time, we are witnessing a revival of the historian of mentalities (Filippi) and of the writer and intellectual who is fully engaged with political and ethical issues of contemporary society. For instance, Michela Murgia's commitment to anti-fascism, gender issues, and LGBTQ+ rights in Italy has made her one of the strongest voices in the public debate. She has become a public "enemy" of conservative and far-right groups in Italy, as well as one of the most targeted by "haters" on social media. Of special interest for this volume is Murgia's satire *Istruzioni per diventare fascisti* (*How to Be a Fascist: A Manual*), whose unreliable narrator links contemporary populists to "our historical role models" (86) in Axis Europe, declaring that "fascist is as fascist does" (14).

To illustrate this trend, we zoom in here on the striking and illuminating example of the worldwide success of the writer (and academic scholar) Antonio Scurati, who, with his cycle of novels about Mussolini, has made it his mission to teach the lessons of fascism. The five volumes, published between 2018 and 2025 (*M. il figlio del secolo – M. Son of the Century*; *M. l'uomo della Provvidenza – M. The Man of Providence*; *M. Gli ultimi giorni dell'Europa – M. The Last Days of Europe*; *M. L'ora del destino – M. The Hour of Destiny*; *M. La fine e il principio – M. The End and The Beginning*), have reached a worldwide audience, translated into dozens of languages and widely disseminated through a variety of cultural products and practices (Urban). In an interview with the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, Scurati explicitly compared Mussolini's charismatic political style with that of contemporary populist leaders such as Vladimir Putin and Matteo Salvini; the latter was the Italian minister of the Interior at the time and responsible for a repressive anti-immigration policy (Urban 462). The television series *M. Son of the Century* (Wright 2024), presented at the 2024 Venice Film Festival and broadcasted by Sky in 2025, has been framed in line with the book, as a detailed retelling of the history of Italian fascism and as a dramatic wake-up call about the dangers of populism at a time of crisis for liberal democracy (Nizza).

Thanks to the success of his novel on Mussolini, Scurati has become a regular guest and political commentator in Italian and international media. Locating his writing and cultural practices in the tradition of civil literature, he has repeatedly claimed his political and ethical commitment to anti-fascism and democracy against the risks posed by populism (Urban 464–65). It is no coincidence that one of his most recent works is the publication of a speech he gave at the *Rencontres Internationales de Genève* on 29 September 2022, just a few days after Fratelli d'Italia won the Italian elections and Giorgia Meloni became prime minister. In this text, entitled *Fascismo e Populismo. Mussolini oggi* (*Fascism and Populism. Mussolini Today*), Scurati examines the link between fascism and populism and argues for the need to defend democracy, which is more fragile than we think. Making a comparison with the cultivation of a vine, Scurati invites the readers to take care of such a delicate plant, since democracy requires a daily effort to flourish (*Fascismo e Populismo* 93).

Scurati's cultural activism should be located in the same tradition of artistic transnational networks and agents that operated along the transatlantic axis, being

fuel for (anti-)fascist imagery in the first half of the twentieth century. However, this volume also argues that the transmedial and transnational mediation of Scurati's works must be analysed within the broader context of artists and intellectuals reclaiming the stage and their public role in an increasingly mediatised and post-truth society. Indeed, as the unreliable narrator of Murgia's *How to Become a Fascist* reminds us, having an abundance of instruments of mass control that fascism never had (12–13), makes it possible to exploit an “ageing democratic system and dominate it without ever making use of military force, internal or external” (13).

If we look at the Italian case, it is striking how the Meloni government is implementing cultural policies aimed at tightening control over public opinion: from increasing media censorship to endorsing far-right television personalities and publications, and appointing directors of public cultural institutions who align with the government majority or are at least willing to conform to its vision. The battle for cultural hegemony, however, is increasingly being fought on social media. Two of the most striking recent cases of Italian political intervention against intellectuals critical of the government include the censorship of Scurati's monologue on anti-fascism, which was scheduled for broadcast but cancelled at the last minute (20 April 2024) (Baccaro), and the exclusion of writer and Camorra expert Roberto Saviano from the list of authors selected for the 2024 Frankfurt Book Fair.<sup>2</sup> Both incidents were widely reported and sparked heated debates in the media, with several writers expressing solidarity with their colleagues. However, in Scurati's case, Meloni cunningly chose to defend her government against accusations of censorship through a Facebook post, in which she released the text of the monologue and blamed the writer for allegedly demanding a too high fee to appear on the talk show.<sup>3</sup>

A very similar scenario seems to characterise the interventionism of the state in public cultural institutions, such as the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Rome. The museum has recently hosted exhibitions and events that are closely aligned with Meloni's government and far-right imagery (Angelucci),<sup>4</sup> such as the exhibition “Tolkien. Uomo, Professore, Autore” (“Tolkien. Man, Professor, Author”), dedicated to J.R.R. Tolkien, the fantasy author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, who has been surprisingly appropriated by the neofascist movement in Italy since the 1970s and, for instance, is still a cultural reference for Premier Meloni (Ricciardi). The 2024 exhibition *Il Tempo del Futurismo (The Time of Futurism)* in the same museum has faced sharp criticism from the international press for its lack of historical contextualisation (Celis; Polovedo). According to the Galleria Nazionale's website, the exhibition, promoted and supported by the Ministry of Culture, aims to be “inclusive, didactic, and multidisciplinary, targeting the general public, especially younger generation as its audience”.<sup>5</sup> It celebrates Futurist art alongside early twentieth-century technical innovations such as Marconi's radio, cars, and aeroplanes. In doing so, the exhibition traces a genealogy, situating national artistic creativity within a lineage of Italian inventiveness up to the present, but it almost entirely neglects the connections between Marinetti's Futurist movement and Mussolini's regime. Because

of this, the exhibition has sparked a significant online debate, illustrating how the cultural struggle permeates and fuels everyday politics.

Against the backdrop of the global rise of a postfascist and populist right, the study of curatorial, together with cultural and artistic practices has therefore become even more urgent, not only to trace how ultranationalist, racist, and exclusionary ideas are constructed in contemporary mediatised societies but also how they might become mainstream as they are put into practice. Writers such as Scurati, but also the authors of this volume, all stress the power of language to modify the perception of reality and to mobilise the people, since, as Murgia says, “words create behaviour, and those who control words control behaviour” (14).

To sum up, cultural and artistic practices are at the very heart of politics. In a “glocal world”, migrant mobilities and ethnic, racial, and gender diversities are often perceived and presented as a threat by the identitarian politics of far-right movements, but also more inclusionary forms of populism often rely on scapegoating disparate sectors that supposedly break down the national unity or the cohesiveness and uniformity of the people, thus establishing a fracture within the political community. Exploring the afterlife of fascism in modern times means, therefore, addressing the following questions: What discourses contribute to the social and political polarisation of “Us” versus “Them”? How are the “enemies” of today’s transnational far right and populist movements constructed in the digital space, and how do legacies of fascism contribute to shaping their imagery in political discourse, social media, and cultural practices? Which slogans and tropes are recycled in fascist and populist discourse, and how do they serve as empty signifiers, open to divergent interpretations by various target groups?

### **“Us” versus “Them”: The Populist Triangle**

Populist discourse is not bound to a particular ideology or type of regime, but it has a conceptual matrix with three core concepts, known as the populist triangle (Laermans). In this model, the sovereign people, characterised by a unified *volonté générale*, and the leader form the base, while the political and socio-economic elite occupy the top. Both the people and the elite are portrayed as homogeneous entities. Within this anti-establishment and highly moralising discourse, the elites or oligarchies are depicted as an immoral enemy threatening the purity of the people, as a corrupt, selfish, and hypocritical political class disconnected from the people’s will. Conversely, populist leaders are cast as redeemers, often claiming humble or working-class origins, even when this claim is demonstrably untrue. This fundamental political cleavage, reminiscent of Carl Schmitt’s antagonistic concept of the political (see Mouffe), contrasts the rulers with the ruled. The people are represented as a unified whole with a single consciousness, or “le Peuple-Un” (the people-as-one) in Claude Lefort’s terms. In this sense, populism is fundamentally at odds with pluralism.

In countries like Argentina, the current social and ideological gap is in some respects reminiscent of historical binaries that divided the nationhood and collective identity into two irreconcilable groups, between *el pueblo* (*the people*) and

*la oligarquía* (or the *antipueblo*, *oligarchy* or *anti-people*). Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's foundational *Facundo: Civilización y Barbarie* (*Facundo: Civilization and Barbarism*, 1845), which had a huge impact on Latin American thought, is populist in the sense that it frames politics as a Manichean confrontation, as a pre-given and natural reality instead of a discursive construct that reflects particular interests. Sarmiento's rhetoric based on an "Us" versus "Them" logic contrasts foreign-leaning Unitarians, associated with liberal intellectuals who defended a progressive civilisation project, and traditionalist Federalists, often landowners aligned with the popular masses, *gauchos*, and indigenous people who he depicts as chaotic, irrational, and untamed. In other cultural and ideological contexts, the precise interpretation of the concepts of elite and people varies. Additionally, the populist triangle may sometimes include a fourth element: the excluded "Others" or subaltern sectors, positioned beneath the triangle, such as ethnic minorities in ethnopolitics, or intellectuals and avant-garde artists who are seen as outside the realms of the "common people".

The rise of a conservative wave after the so-called Pink Tide of left-wing governments in Latin American democracies, as described at the start of this introduction, along with the crisis of liberal democracy in contemporary societies all over the world, makes the study of transnational collective memories of fascism and public violence urgent as never before. With a special focus on the interplay between discourse, culture, and society, this volume therefore aims to explore how past and contemporary cultural artefacts and practices, as well as institutionalised and popular forms of memorialisation, concur in creating, mediating, and contrasting old and new images and narratives in defence of an essentialist "Us" against "Them", which is to be identified with "the Other" framed as an existential threat to the nation. Adopting a transnational and interdisciplinary perspective from the margins, the volume is therefore structured along four pillars: genealogies, practices and discourses, representations, and testimonies, which form the structure of this volume and are explained and illustrated with examples in the next section.

### **Genealogies, Practices and Discourses, Representations, and Testimonies**

The first pillar, *Genealogies*, investigates the transatlantic legacies of the concepts of nationalism, fascism, and populism, alongside the roles played by intellectuals, activists, and global movements, in shaping and resisting contemporary far-right imaginaries. It adopts a historical, philosophical, and terminological approach to the phenomena identified with fascism and populism, recontextualising them within recent political debates on populism, the radical/far/extreme right and neo/post/anti-fascism. Mapping these transatlantic legacies within contemporary ideological imaginaries requires, as has been said, a historically contextualised approach. Phenomena such as fascism must be revisited through recent discussions on populism and postfascism, recognising the semantic inflation of terms like populism. For instance, the cartoon that accompanied the 2016 *New York Times* opinion article "Hugo Chávez and Trump", written by the exiled Venezuelan novelist

Alberto Barrera Tyszka, juxtaposed a Chavista beret with the campaign slogan “Make America Great Again”, portraying Trump as a modern-day *caudillo*. This image captures the populist spirit of the times we live in (Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist”) and illustrates the polemical use of “populism” as a catch-all term for everything liberal opinion makers tend to dislike. However, such comparisons between left-wing and right-wing populism also open avenues for further analysis, bringing together a vision of populism as antagonistic to the liberal principles of democracy with one that focuses on the democratising promises of populism, which, as seen in Venezuela, often culminate in competitive authoritarianism. It also urges us to review container concepts like “the people” and “populism” with the lens of critical theory, and to distinguish between neoliberal discourses of crisis and counternarratives of “crisis-scapes” (Bolets et al.). According to the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, “Today crisis has become an instrument of rule” that “legitimize[s] political and economic decisions that in fact dispossess citizens and deprive them of any possibility of decision” (Agamben, “The Endless Crisis”), underscoring the need for a nuanced understanding of how crises are weaponised in populist discourses.

In this sense, the international press has scrutinised Milei’s austerity policies to understand how Trump’s second term may look like in terms of its impact on social security. Journalists and opinion makers have noted how Trump and Elon Musk have repeatedly praised Milei’s economic “shock therapy” and “chainsaw” approach – hallmarks of his self-proclaimed anarcho-capitalism – suggesting the influence of Argentina’s ultra-libertarian President on Trump’s policy may be significant, despite the markedly different economic conditions of the two nations (Plummer). Likewise, the self-styled solidarity and proximity of Meloni to Milei, who was granted Italian citizenship during a state visit in December 2024 at Meloni’s behest, overemphasise their affinities, which are rooted in their shared anti-woke stance in the global culture wars, while sidestepping the notable divergences in their economic agendas.

The contributions contained in the second pillar, *Practices and Discourses*, show how the populist appeal can effectively take shape (discursively or affectively) either through personalist leadership (top-down) or via social movements such as the Tea Party in the United States, the Five Star Movement in Italy, or the Indignados in Spain (bottom-up). In this context, we might also think of transnational grassroots movements, such as the alterglobalisation movement or Occupy Wall Street, which enact prefigurative politics through the creation of counter-institutions, as well as the use of protest tactics and anti-fascist symbols beyond national borders (Della Porta). Bottom-up and top-down politics can also be inextricably enmeshed, as the example of the 2018 protests in Nicaragua shows, where both anti-government and pro-government protesters drew on practices and discourses from the 1979 Sandinista revolt.

The populist leader is believed to embody the will of the “silent majority” and voices it in a transparent, supposedly unmediated way. In this sense, populist discourse negates its own status as discourse, whereas, obviously, populist leaders participate discursively in the construction and articulation of the will of the people

(Laermans 129). Linguists, therefore, examine the constitutive metaphors, tropes, and speech figures within populist rhetoric, revealing how what appears to be plain, straightforward language and “common sense” operates in very complex ways. They map how the polysemic notion of populism is used and circulates in political and media discourses, either as a pejorative term or as a democratic corrective that gives voice to under-represented and disenfranchised groups. An example of this kind of discourse analysis is the research project TrUMPo (Tracking the Uses of Populism in Media and Political Discourse) based at the Université Catholique de Louvain. Their publications on the uses of the terms populism(s) and populist(s) in Spanish-, French- and Dutch-speaking media in Spain, France, and Belgium offer valuable insights for analysing the polarisation of “Us” versus “Them” in different, but interrelated, national democracies with different forms of social discontent.

The third pillar, *Representations*, encompasses cultural (re)mediations of gendered, ethnic, racial, and social memories and identities of fascism(s) and populism(s), and of violence and resistance in Europe and Latin America during the interwar period and today. Examples discussed in this volume underscore the strong links between Europe and Latin America while highlighting the transhistorical connections and legacies of fascism and anti-fascism. Fuentes Codera and Dogliani argue that cultural transfer within a transnational framework should be seen not only as an exchange, but also as “a source of inspiration for new meanings and practices that give rise to transnational political movements and processes” (Codera and Dogliani, “Introduction” 3).

These transnational practices and the ongoing examples of “plurimedial constellations” (ErlI and Wodianka; ErlI) of fascist and populist narratives also raise the question of the role of aesthetics and genres in rendering these imaginaries. Think, for instance, of the Latin American connection between populism and the narrative mode of melodrama – often regarded as a marker of Latin-Americanness – with its penchant for pathos and black-and-white oppositions: its characters are either extremely virtuous or exceptionally malicious. Since the mid-1990s, the theme of Nazism has led to an avalanche of novels by Spanish-American writers, especially by the “postnational” writers of the Crack generation (Jaimes), who rejected magical realism and set several of their novels in Nazi Germany instead of contemporary Mexico. But also, Roberto Bolaño skilfully and revealingly connects Hitler with Pinochet and current-day femicide in works such as *La literatura nazi en América* (*Nazi Literature in the Americas*, 1996) and his magnum opus *2666* (2004), providing new insights into fascism’s constitutive violence – not to mention the endless list of novels and films on Nazi refugees in the Southern Cone and, more recently, the TV miniseries on *Colonia Dignidad* (*Dignity Colony*, 2021), the agricultural colony founded in central Chile by emigrant Nazi Germans that became infamous for the torture and murder of dissidents during the military *junta*.

The cultural production of writers and filmmakers whose identities bridge Europe and Latin America offers another compelling area of study. A notable example to mention here is the Italian filmmaker Marco Bechis, renowned for internationally acclaimed films such as *Garage Olimpo* (1999) and *Figli/Hijos* (*Sons and Daughters*, 2001), which focus on the atrocities of Videla’s regime. Born to a

Chilean mother and an Italian father, Bechis spent his formative years in Chile and Argentina during the dictatorship. His work has always been intensely political, shaped by his personal experiences as both a victim and survivor of Argentina's Dirty War (Tabanelli). Reflection on authoritarian power dynamics is undoubtedly at the heart of his fictional and documentary works: from *Baires-Sarajevo* (1999), about the Balkan War, to *La terra degli uomini rossi* (*Birdwatchers*, 2008), dedicated to the struggle of the Guaraní-Kaiowá Indians to reclaim their land in Amazonia, to the documentary *Il sorriso del capo* (*The Smile of the Leader*, 2011), which interweaves historical footage of Mussolini's regime with the story of the author's father, who was imprisoned in a concentration camp during the Second World War, and the web series *Il rumore della memoria* (*The Noise of Memory*, 2014), later adapted into a film with the same name (2015), and dedicated to the Holocaust, with the participation of Vera Vigevani Jarach, one of the founders of Madres de la Plaza del Mayo, and Liliana Segre, an Italian survivor of the Jewish genocide.

Throughout his artistic career, Bechis has consistently engaged with the theme of political violence. In his book *La solitudine del sovversivo* (*The Solitude of the Dissident*, 2021), he reflects on his past, including his testimony during the trial of those responsible for his illegal detention and torture. This autobiographical text serves not only as a compelling account of the violence inflicted upon individuals labelled as "internal enemies" of the Argentine nation but also as a chronicle of the transnational and transatlantic networks of fascism(s) and protest movements in the 1970s.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, it highlights the mediation of memories of political violence as a continuous process that persistently shapes new representations of fascism and resistance.

Finally, in the fourth pillar, *Testimonies*, academics, activists, and artists reflect on the question of how to conceive of art and activism in terms of cultural practices of transnational anti-fascism. These actors operate in diverse social and geographical contexts, yet they share a heightened awareness of the dangers posed by neofascism and populism to democracy. Mark Bray et al., in a special issue of *Radical History Review* on fascism and anti-fascism since 1945, mention that "the necessity to expand our understanding of fascism" also holds for anti-fascism because "rather than completely disappearing after the war, both fascism (and the far-right politics it influenced) and anti-fascism persisted over the following decades, albeit frequently in very different forms and contexts" (Bray et al. 4). However, there has been a tendency among scholars to dismiss "radical deployments of anti-fascism" by postwar groups and movements as "gross distortions of the concept's historical meaning", and this lack of attention paid to postwar anti-fascism motivated co-editor, historian, and activist Bray to write *Antifa: The Anti-Fascist Handbook* (5). The editors mention as well existing studies on postwar anti-fascism that mainly focus on issues of historical memory, such as the edited volume *Rethinking Antifascism* (García et al.). This collection contains a concluding essay by Traverso in which he explains how, in the Italian context, historian Renzo De Felice's revisionism of fascism has been crucial to understand fascism as a historical phenomenon but has at the same time expelled the "paradigm of anti-fascism" from being part of

that same history (324–25). Viewed in an international context, the discussion on revisionism signals the problem that “anti-antifascist” historiography “distorts the possibility of charting the movement’s history and of understanding its relationship with present-day democracies” (García et al. 10–11).

Bray, who was one of the organisers of Occupy Wall Street, explains in an interview that he based his handbook *Antifa* on interviews with anti-fascist activists across Europe and North America, as well as on historical research. *Antifa* centres on the primary goal of contemporary anti-fascism: “halting the growth” (Bray in Schargel and de Oliveira Góes Guimarães 210) of fascism and far-right politics before they become entrenched in communities, societies, and cultural spaces. This involves stopping their advance before they are “considered significant by society” (210). As Bray notes, this often results in “some of the greatest successes of anti-fascist movements exist[ing] in a kind of hypothetical limbo where you would have to actually ascertain the importance of their achievement” (210).

In the same interview, Bray recommends reading Jack Z. Bratich’s *On Microfascism*, which underscores misogyny as central to fascism and advocates for a “micro-antifascism” grounded in the ethics of mutual aid and everyday care. He also encourages the reader to engage with journalist and activist Natasha Lennard’s *Being Numerous: Essays on Non-Fascist Life* (2019) as a source of insight and inspiration. In an interview, Lennard underlines that “anti-fascist” cannot be viewed as an “identity”, since “microfascisms” permeate “so much of life under capitalism” (Lennard in Evans 113). Instead, she frames anti-fascism as a set of “confrontational tactics” (114), including “riotous protest” and “counterviolences”, which she argues are legitimate when seen in the context of the “background violences” that shape the lives of so many people (116). In a similar vein, Rick Dolphijn and Rosi Braidotti, in their edited volume *Deleuze and Guattari and Fascism* (2022), view community-building as the basis for collective action. However, they propose an affirmative, nonviolent approach to anti-fascism, stating that “This is not a simple or pain-free process, but anger alone is not a project; it needs to become a constitutive force directed not only ‘against’, but also in favour of something” (14).

The editors of the special issue “Anti-fascism/Art/Theory” of *The Third Text* investigate the social force of anti-fascism in contemporary art and theory and warn against inward-looking forms of anti-fascism, which allow “for a certain enjoyment of one’s own anti-fascist position” (Dimitrakaki and Weeks 276). They start from the assumption that oppositional thinking is not an effective model once the values of fascism and anti-fascism have become transversal and inherent to the current democratic system. This difference between a negative politics of opposition and more diffuse practices of ethical art-making could be identified with the shift from an aesthetics of “resistance” to one of “resilience” (Steinbock et al.).

This change of positionality on the axis of fascism and anti-fascism also implies that cultural resistance does not only place itself within the confrontational framework of contesting the hegemonic order in the moment of its happening. It also offers imageries and narratives to overcome the trauma of the movement’s defeat while fostering constructive alternatives for future scenarios of transgenerational transmission of anti-fascist resistance. Cultural memory scholar Ann Rigney has

formulated the “memory-activism nexus”, which makes it possible to examine the interplay between memory activism, the memory of activism and memory in activism (i.e., “how the cultural memory of earlier struggles informs new movements in the present”, Rigney “Remembering Hope” 372). She analyses how memories of protest can go beyond the “traumatic paradigm” and turn the negative memory of violence and defeat into a “carrier of hope” (368) for a better future. Rigney speaks of “hope against hope”, in the sense that hope has an anticipatory logic and “indicates an enduring attachment to something of value in face of its present absence and past denial” (370). Memories in activism are mediated by cultural carriers, a process that Rigney defines as follows: “It involves multiple operations whereby information is structured, circulated in society, and made available in material forms with which people both individually and collectively engage” (“Mediations of Outrage” 707).

While Rigney focuses on the interplay between memory and activism, Ruth Ben-Ghiat shifts attention to the immediate and tangible dimensions of resistance. She ends her volume *Strongmen* with a reflection on culture as a vehicle for protest and observes that, while “social media helps to overcome the cynicism and paralyzing fear that authoritarian states foster”, resistance at its core “remains anchored in physical presence: people reclaiming public space and making a different nation visible and audible” (209–10). This brings us to our last example: the anti-G8 protests in Genoa 2001 and the cultural carriers of its anti-fascist memory activism.

To occupy space has been the main strategy of the anti-globalisation protests against the G8 summit in Genoa on 19–22 July 2001. The so-called “battle of Genoa” has been remembered as an unprecedented violent clash – described by Amnesty International as “the biggest suspension of democratic rights in a Western country since World War Two” – between two opposed logics of crisis: the one of the crisis rhetoric adopted by the State and supported by mainstream media to legitimise repressive politics, and the one of crisis as critique embodied by the protesters, of critical judgement of a political order to be subverted or resisted symbolically to create a civil space for realising alternatives (Boletsi et al. 2–3). This binary opposition, between perpetrators and victims, between “bad” and “good” protesters, has been enforced by the violent actions of the Black Bloc. The riotous behaviour of this group of protesters has been identified with anarchist practices of dissent as well as with the infiltration of policemen to create a state of exception that could justify excessive measures of repression, including torture. Three main episodes of violence frame the so-called “facts of Genoa”: the death of 23-year-old activist Carlo Giuliani, who was shot by a policeman in alleged self-defence on 20 July in Piazza Alimonda; the raid on the Diaz school on the night of 21 July where 82 out of 93 protesters were severely beaten up on the suspicion of hiding Black Blocs; and finally, on 21 July, the “inferno” of the police station of Bolzaneto, where 250 protesters from the Diaz school together with other arrested activists were tortured and kept in prison for several days without access to lawyers or contact with their families.

Over time, contrasting cultural carriers have shaped the plurimedial memories of Genoa, oscillating between narratives of trauma and defeat and those of hope

and resistance. The use of violence has been linked to fascist residues in the Italian police force and has evoked Latin American imaginaries of repression. Bolzaneto, for instance, has been called a “lager” and the “Italian Garage Olimpo”, drawing a parallel to the notorious Argentine detention centre. Similarly, assistant chief of police Michelangelo Fournier, former deputy chief of Rome’s flying squad, when put on trial in 2007 for the raid on the Armando Diaz School, compared the violence inflicted on unarmed protesters to a “Mexican butcher’s massacre”. These wordings and other references to state violence in Latin America have framed the traumatic memory of the anti-G8 protests in Genoa since 2001.

In the many testimonies across different media that make up the “counter-archive” of Genoa,<sup>7</sup> protesters described feeling like outlaws pursued by the police, drawing parallels to the experiences of victims in Pinochet’s Chile and Videla’s Argentina. Like the Latin American *desaparecidos*, those arrested were tortured at the Bolzaneto station and were missing because the police refused to give any kind of information to their relatives. The Genoa Social Forum spoke of 50–100 *desaparecidos*. Furthermore, among demonstrators there was the general fear that they were witnessing the unfolding of a right-wing *golpe*, an idea further fuelled by the policemen in the Bolzaneto station who tortured the protesters while singing “un, due, tre viva Pinochet...” together with anti-Semitic, racist, and right-wing songs (Azzellini 1309). There was the suspicion that officers were able to unleash such violence without fear of repercussions, particularly after the coalition of right-wing parties led by Silvio Berlusconi won the May elections and appointed Gianfranco Fini, head of the postfascist party Alleanza Nazionale (National Alliance), as deputy minister.

The commemorations of the G8 counter summit in 2021, 20 years later, have seen a shift of focus from a cultural memory of trauma towards one of remembering hope (Rigney), with an emphasis on constructing a forward-looking memory to be carried on by new generations (Jansen). A keyword during the 2021 commemorations has been the notion of the archive, which Rigney analyses as an act of “prefigurative remembrance”. She argues that “archives have a future orientation” (Rigney, “Prefigurative Remembrance” 1195) and that “the self-archiving of social movements represents a distinct form of future-oriented memory work” (1196). This can be briefly illustrated through two oral history collections published in 2021, both from an activist point of view, that can be identified as anti-fascist. The first, Gabriele Proglío’s *Ifatti di Genova (The Facts of Genoa)*, aims to reconstruct a resilient oral history of the G8 as a “counter-archive” (Proglío 9), moving beyond the traumatic framework of the “death of the movement”. The more than 50 interviews with protesters from the Piedmont region show how the Latin American imagery not only relates to notions of *golpe*, dictatorship, and *desaparecidos*, but also to alternatives identified with the 1994 Zapatista revolt in Chiapas and South America’s experience with the self-organisation of local rural communities. The second publication of oral memory (Bracaglia et al.) originates from the so-called “cerchi della memoria” (circles of memory), which were organised by oral history scholar Alessandro Portelli in 2016 in Rome (Portelli). Here, the memory of protest is even more present and explicitly configured as the memory of Latin American

revolt. Both volumes show how Latin America's legacies of fascism, populism, and revolution propel at the same time memories of indignation and of resilience, which form together the cultural carriers of hope against hope.

### **Outline of the Book**

The opening section on *Genealogies* features a chapter by Carlos de la Torre, a world-renowned expert on global populisms (*Populisms; The Routledge Handbook of Global Populism; Global Populisms*). In Chapter 1, de la Torre compares how the categories of “the people” and its enemies are articulated in fascism and in different varieties of populism. Both fascism and populism appeal to the people against internal and external existential enemies and construct the political as a struggle between friend and enemy. Yet they differ in their methods and the intensity of violence used against enemies. Fascism employs paramilitarism and war, whereas populism tends to confine its violence to the symbolic and discursive realms. Similarly, their approaches to political legitimacy differ: fascists replace elections with plebiscitary acclamation, whereas populists rely on elections as the sole legitimate means of attaining power. De la Torre also highlights the internal diversity of populism. Right-wing populists construct notions of “the people” and “the enemy” through cultural and ethnic criteria, often exploiting fears of pollution or contamination by the “Other”. In contrast, left-wing populists mobilise sentiments of resentment, envy, and justice, framing their narratives around socio-economic divisions. This chapter raises critical questions: Why do populism and fascism differ in their use of violence? What are the boundaries between these phenomena? When and how did fascism adapt to democratic contexts, and under what conditions might populism transform into neofascism? These and other questions are discussed in detail in de la Torre's insightful analysis.

Joost de Bloois, in Chapter 2, shows how “the people” function as a recurring figure in Giorgio Agamben's thought. Tracing this concept across his work reveals that “the people” emerge as the primary political subject. Despite Agamben's attempts to formulate an alternative subject, such as the “whatever singularity”, “the coming community”, De Bloois argues that it is possible to speak of Agamben's philosophical *populism*, in the sense that the fundamental elements of politics are ascribed to “the people”. The political subject in Agamben is not “the citizen”, “the council”, or “the commune”, but “the people” as historically, culturally, and linguistically specific form-of-life that, as such, speaks the truth of politics. This notion is paradoxical in Agamben's work: on one side, “the people” represent a uniform, universal political subject; on the other, it refers to an indigestible remainder that cannot be integrated into any universalising dialectics, as irreducibly fragmented, that is to say: particular, embodied, and locally situated. De Bloois contends that the assumed existence of “the people” underpins Agamben's analysis of European political thought as biopolitics. The history of politics in the West, in Agamben, becomes synonymous with the various genealogies of the (living) people against the State-as-automaton, the *oikos* against the *polis*. This chapter demonstrates how, in contrast to Agamben's thinking of anarchy and potentiality,

his thinking also includes a populist line of thought, a philosophical populism of sorts that draws on Pasolini, Heidegger, and Debord.

The second section, *Practices and Discourses*, presents a series of case studies on contemporary uses of (social) media and rhetoric. It explores their deployment by both populist and party activism, and by anti-fascist cultures of resistance, with a focus on grassroots initiatives. Juliennne Weegels, in Chapter 3, explores the crisis of legitimacy faced by Nicaragua's current Sandinista government, rooted in its unfulfilled claim to popular sovereignty and promises of social justice. Daniel Ortega's 2006 campaign vowed to make "the people president", yet after three consecutive terms, his government dismantled the separation of powers, allied with traditional elites, monopolised the electoral system, and prioritised economic deals with foreign companies over addressing deep poverty. By 2018, Sandinista control extended across public life, making party affiliation essential for institutional employment, while Nicaragua remained one of the poorest nations in the Western Hemisphere. In April 2018, mass protests erupted against the lethal police violence that targeted pension reform demonstrators. Protesters reclaimed revolutionary symbols, transforming the Sandinista slogan "Free fatherland or death" into "Free fatherland to live!" Despite widespread resistance by means of barricades, roadblocks, and university occupations, Ortega's government responded with escalating repression. Protesters were labelled "vandals", "terrorists", and "coup-mongers", facing persecution, imprisonment, and state terror. The government's brutal "Clean-up Operation" deployed riot police and paramilitary forces, resulting in over 300 deaths, hundreds of injuries, and more than 1,600 detentions. The analysis focuses on how both opponents and supporters of the Ortega regime engage with the historical legacy of the Sandinistas. Weegels approaches their discursive production from a functionalist perspective, as they foster an "Us" versus "Them" divide, with both sides claiming to speak and act on behalf of "the people".

A defining characteristic of populist rhetoric is its reliance on constructing a stark "Us" versus "Them" political antagonism. In Chapter 4, Ricardo Connett conducts a comparative analysis of this dynamic in the discourse of two prominent figures from Spain's populist political parties: Pablo Iglesias (Podemos) on the radical left and Santiago Abascal (Vox) on the radical right. Using a Corpus-assisted Discourse Studies methodology, Connett examines two self-compiled corpora of oral speeches by these leaders, shedding light on both shared and distinct rhetorical strategies. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study explores how Iglesias and Abascal employ nominal forms and other lexical units to define the identity of their in-group and stigmatise the out-group. The analysis uncovers significant differences in the ways Iglesias and Abascal configure the "Us" versus "Them" antagonism, reflecting the impact of their ideological positioning on populist discourse.

In Chapter 5, Simon Cecchin Birk reflects on the political priorities of Italy's populist Five Star Movement (FSM) from 2013 to 2019. When FSM first garnered attention at the 2010 regional elections, many scholars highlighted how the party did not conform to traditional political categories and likened its policies "beyond ideologies" to "eclectic populism" and to its populist counterparts on the right.

Cecchin Birk, instead, starts from the assumption that the social agenda of FSM has been underestimated, while it has always been at the core of the party's "redemptive politics", thus positioning itself as a European version of Latin American materially inclusive populism (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, "Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism"). In fact, the distinction between exclusive and inclusive populism is material when based on denying or providing access to resources such as jobs and welfare services and to additional state resources. This explains why FSM can be seen as the populist response to austerity with its redemptive promise to bring about genuine democratic governance of the European debt crisis which hit Italy especially in 2014. FSM thus represents a broader populist wave in Southern Europe, alongside Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain, which blurs the line between materially exclusive and inclusive populism in Europe and Latin America. According to Cecchin Birk, understanding the complexities of populist movements like the FSM is essential, as they seek to merge direct political participation with state intervention, striving to fulfil democratic ideals and address citizens' needs.

The third section, *Representations*, examines cultural depictions and memories of fascism(s)/populism(s) and resistance in Europe and Latin America, both during the interbellum and in contemporary contexts. Chapter 6, by Stefano Tedeschi, analyses the travel diaries of Arnaldo Cipolla (*Montezuma contro Cristo – Montezuma against Christ*, 1927) and Mario Appellius (*L'aquila di Chapultepec – The Eagle of Chapultepec*, 1929), which exemplify fascist Italy's vision of Mexico and Latin America, with lasting political and cultural implications. The chapter starts with a reflection on *latinità* as ideology in Italian travellers in Mexico in the 1920s. During this period, Pan-Latinism took on varied national interpretations and conflicting ideological frameworks, ranging from transatlantic solidarity to neo-colonial cultural projects. The fascist reinterpretation of the myth of Latinity, rooted in the works of Gabriele d'Annunzio, positioned the Italian nation as the direct heir of the ancient Latin civilisation. This narrative extended to Latin America, as reflected in the writings of Cipolla and Appellius, whose articles were later compiled into travel diaries. These journalist-travellers played dual roles: introducing the Italian public to the "exotic" world of Latin America while serving as cultural and political emissaries of fascist ideology abroad. Italian travellers in 1920s Mexico thus embodied a neo-colonial project in which Latinity became a tool to assert cultural superiority, framing Latin America within a fascist vision of transatlantic influence and domination.

In Chapter 7, Laura Moure Cecchini explores how transatlantic exchanges of artists and fascist aesthetics reshaped Latin American political art during the inter-war period. Moure Cecchini focuses on the early 1930s career of Antonio Berni (1905–81), one of Argentina's most renowned figurative artists. She analyses his fraught relationship with fascism as an ideology and an aesthetic that intertwined Berni's work with that of Mexican muralist (and avowed Stalinist) David Alfaro Siqueiros, as well as with Argentine fascist cultural politics. Like other Latin American artists, Berni lived many years in Paris, where he was an active member of the surrealist group. He returned to Buenos Aires in 1930, shortly after General Uriburu's military coup, which adopted Mussolini-inspired corporatism and

violence but initially lacked Italian fascism's focus on art as propaganda. Berni's first exhibition after his return – a surrealist critique of Argentine fascism – was held at the Amigos del Arte, an elite, government-funded association tied to the local oligarchy. Despite its innovative approach, the show failed to achieve any political resonance, ignored by the press and confined to elite circles. In contrast, Siqueiros' 1933 visit to Argentina, also sponsored by Amigos del Arte, sparked controversy. Siqueiros exhibited politically charged works and delivered inflammatory lectures that horrified right-wing Argentine newspapers, especially those associated with Uriburu's paramilitary organisations inspired by the fascist *squadristi* (blackshirts). Despite facing censorship, Siqueiros remained in Argentina for ten months, contributing to the Communist magazine *Contra* (*Against*) and collaborating with Berni and other leftist artists on a mural designed as a direct challenge to what they saw as fascist, bourgeois, and elitist art. His visit marked a pivotal moment when Argentine fascists began recognising art's political power and catalysed debates on politically engaged art in Latin America.

In Chapter 8, Benjamin Loy examines the legacy of fascist and reactionary literature in Latin America, focusing on the Chilean case, from Miguel Serrano to the writers who supported Pinochet's regime. When Roberto Bolaño published *La literatura nazi en América* in 1996, his collection of right-wing and extremist writers' biographies was initially seen as a playful reinvention of metafictional encyclopaedias in the style of Jorge Luis Borges. However, there exists a significant tradition of real reactionary and fascist writers in Latin America, often overlooked due to the humanities' focus on leftist and progressive thought. Loy's chapter addresses the evolution of reactionary aesthetics and discourses in twentieth-century Chile, with their imaginaries of cultural decadence and nationalist regeneration, beginning with racist and anti-Semitic works like Nicolás Palacios' *Raza chilena* (*Chilean race*, 1918). A central figure in this tradition is Serrano, known for his concept of "Esoteric Hitlerism". His writings, including *El cordón dorado* (*The Golden Cord*, 1978) and *Adolf Hitler. El último avatara* (*Adolf Hitler: The Ultimate Avatar*, 1982), blend Western esotericism with Hindu influences and critique modernity's rational, democratic ideals. The chapter also highlights other key figures like Enrique Campos Menéndez, Álvaro Puga Cappa, and Fernando Emmerich Leblanc, whose writings influenced Pinochet's nationalist cultural policies. By analysing their positions and writings, Loy reveals the role of literature in shaping reactionary cultural and political movements in Chile during and after the dictatorship.

Karen Genschow examines, in Chapter 9, the literary works of Mariana Callejas, a Chilean right-wing writer known for her involvement with Pinochet's secret service and her participation in the assassinations of two former ministers of the Allende government. Callejas, who gained some fame in the 1970s and 1980s, has been the subject of multiple representations in film and literature, such as Roberto Bolaño's novella *Nocturno de Chile* (*By Night in Chile*, 2000), often focusing on the contrast between her role as a mother and wife and her criminal activities. These portrayals typically exploit the fascination with violence committed by women, sidelining her literary output. The chapter tackles the question of how to approach

works by authors with problematic ideologies, especially in light of Callejas' right-wing views and her active participation in crimes. Genschow proposes an analysis of Callejas' autobiography and short stories to explore her ideological and ethical configuration, situated within the repression and human rights violations of the Chilean dictatorship. Central to this analysis is the concept of infamy, which plays a crucial role in both Callejas' self-representation and the reception of her work. More specifically, by focusing on the aesthetics of Callejas' texts (beyond her role in the literary field during the Chilean dictatorship), Genschow seeks to uncover the ideological underpinnings of her work, specifically her right-wing views on race and class superiority. The analysis not only addresses the specific case of Callejas but also offers a broader ethical reflection on how to engage with literary works written by perpetrators of violence and repression.

The fourth and final section, *Testimonies*, presents three testimonials on grassroots practices from the fields of cultural activism and cultural heritage. Isabella Pinto reflects in Chapter 10 on participatory art and activism ("artivism") against neofascism, patriarchy, and neocolonialism from the cultural margins of contemporary Rome. She takes the standpoint of the "modest witness", borrowing the term from Donna J. Haraway to indicate the need to testify the present with inclusive scientific knowledge, and adopts the practice of "diffraction", which entails a method of reading texts comparatively to disrupt the boundaries of time and place. From an anti-fascist perspective that privileges artivism, she believes that literature and art practices can serve as a vehicle of defascistisation and decolonisation. She shows how this works with the example of "(we) are not Gil", an intervention by a feminist scholars' collective at WeGil – the ex-GIL (*Gioventù Italiana del Littorio – Italian Youth of the Lictor*) building inaugurated in Rome's Trastevere quarter in 1937 – for the performative art festival Short Theatre in which she participated in 2019. The renaming as WeGil by the Regione Lazio has become the object of prefigurative politics through the collective's diffractive reading of Ennio Flaiano's colonial novel *Tempo di uccidere* (*Time to Kill*, 1947) and Gabriella Ghermandi's postcolonial rewriting *Regina di fiori e di perle* (*Queen of Flowers and Pearls*, 2007).

In his testimonial contained in Chapter 11, the Italian writer and journalist Giovanni Dozzini, reflects on his career as a writer, journalist, and cultural promoter. Author of six novels addressing critical social issues such as migration, fascism, the Italian resistance, and the persecution of Jews during the Second World War, Dozzini views writing as inherently political. For Dozzini, literature's political impact lies in its power to engage with ideas, foster dialogue, and challenge perspectives. He sees its enduring relevance in its capacity to raise questions, offering a plural space where readers can simultaneously consider diverse viewpoints and emotions. In his view, this ability to provoke thought and encourage self-reflection is the most vital function of literature.

In Chapter 12, the third and last testimony, artist and researcher Jonas Staal reflects on the construction of enemy figures in historical perspective across diverse ideological frameworks. He is particularly interested in how propaganda shapes adversaries to establish an effective "Us" versus "Them" dynamic, focusing

on four key cases: the German “Hun” in British World War I propaganda, the Jew in Nazi propaganda, the Russian invader in liberal-democratic propaganda, and political/financial elites in emancipatory propaganda. He argues that propaganda relies on depicting enemies as simultaneously existentially threatening and absurd, fostering both fear and confidence in eventual triumph. A critical distinction, however, is drawn between oppressive propaganda, which targets vulnerable minorities, and emancipatory propaganda, which challenges entrenched political and financial power. The chapter concludes with a case study from the author’s own artistic practice, illustrating an attempt to subvert and reframe the dominant narratives of the so-called War on Terror.

Finally, in his afterword, Federico Finchelstein reflects on how this volume succeeds in bringing the study on fascism(s) and populism(s) from the margins a step further by including cultural practices and productions in the debate on genealogies. Finchelstein critiques simplistic understandings of fascism and populism, urging a more nuanced interdisciplinary approach that acknowledges both transnational histories and national contexts, as put forth in this book. He highlights the continuing relevance of historical fascist ideologies, especially in light of contemporary figures like Donald Trump, whose rhetoric and actions echo the authoritarian regimes of the mid-twentieth century. The afterword underscores the perils of political dehumanisation, the erosion of democratic institutions, and the normalisation of violence in today’s political landscape, warning of the rising influence of populist and authoritarian ideologies that threaten democratic values and global pluralism.

To conclude, this volume argues that mapping and comparing transatlantic contemporary narratives, experiences, and practices, examined through case studies such as those mentioned earlier, and through the contributions to this volume, will help reconstruct the European legacies of populist and (anti-)far-right movements in a transnational and transhistorical setting. By adopting cultural transfer as a methodological tool, it sheds light on how cultural memories of political violence and resistance are the objects of cultural exchange and continue to mobilise people today. The volume underscores the importance of studying populism and fascism together, as part of a converging intellectual and political history that connects both sides of the Atlantic, and as the blueprint of present and future political and cultural interventions in the public sphere. Such a perspective enables a reassessment of the ruptures and discontinuities in the histories of fascism and populism, and to critically examine genealogical forms of legitimation by populist leaders and their opponents, going beyond national traditions. Ultimately, the volume demonstrates that many contemporary debates on how to resist fascism(s) and populism(s) are deeply anchored in a prefigurative politics of the margins.

## Notes

- 1 Traverso criticises the inclusion of left-wing and right-wing populism under the same conceptual umbrella of postfascism (*The New Faces* 18). For Traverso, left-wing populism in Latin America, although not based on “genuine forms of democracy” (*The New Faces* 18) such as charismatic leadership and plebiscitary deliberation, has been “the

most consistent form of political resistance to neoliberal globalization” (18) because it has sought to redistribute wealth and include those who are usually excluded from the political system (*The New Faces* 18). Instead, populist parties in Western Europe, with their xenophobia and racism, represent a reaction to the crisis of liberal democracy (19).

- 2 In the end, Saviano was able to take part in the *Buchmesse* because he was invited by the Fair’s president himself, Jürgen Boos, and by associations from the German publishing world, following his exclusion by Mauro Mazza, the extraordinary commissioner appointed by the Meloni government to draw up the list of Italian authors who would participate (Gergolet).
- 3 Meloni on Facebook (20 April 2024): [www.facebook.com/giorgiameloni.paginaufficiale/posts/985213292972214](https://www.facebook.com/giorgiameloni.paginaufficiale/posts/985213292972214).
- 4 In October 2024, the presentation at the Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea of a book by Italo Bocchini, a member of the Fratelli d’Italia party, provoked protests from museum staff. In response, the director reportedly forwarded the names of those who protested to the Ministry and other authorities (De Ganthuz Cubbe).
- 5 On the exhibition “Il Tempo del Futurismo”, see: [lagallerianazionale.com/mostra/tempo-del-futurismo](https://lagallerianazionale.com/mostra/tempo-del-futurismo) where it is also possible to download the official press release (cms. [lagallerianazionale.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Comunicato-Stampa-II-Tempo-del-Futurismo.pdf](https://lagallerianazionale.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Comunicato-Stampa-II-Tempo-del-Futurismo.pdf)).
- 6 For an account of the condition of Argentine exiles in Italy, see Calderoni.
- 7 The archive of court cases related to the events of the Genoa G8 protests, compiled by Carlo Bachschmidt in collaboration with the lawyers of the Genoa Legal Forum, is now housed in Bologna at Vag61, the Centro di documentazione dei Movimenti F. Lorusso C. Giuliani.

## References

- Agamben, Giorgio. *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. U of Minnesota P, 2000.
- Agamben, Giorgio. “The Endless Crisis as an Instrument of Power: In Conversation with Giorgio Agamben.” *Verso Blog*, 4 June 2013, [www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/1318-the-endless-crisis-as-an-instrument-of-power-in-conversation-with-giorgio-agamben](https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/1318-the-endless-crisis-as-an-instrument-of-power-in-conversation-with-giorgio-agamben). Accessed 27 Sept. 2024.
- Albanese, Giulia, editor. *Il fascismo italiano. Storia e interpretazioni*. Carocci, 2021.
- Albanese, Matteo, and Pablo del Hierro. *Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century: Spain, Italy and the Global Neo-Fascist Network*. Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Allen, Nicolas, and Martín Cortés. “Fascisms Old and New: An Interview with Enzo Traverso.” *Jacobin*, 2 Feb. 2019, [www.jacobin.com/2019/02/enzo-traverso-post-fascism-ideology-conservatism](https://www.jacobin.com/2019/02/enzo-traverso-post-fascism-ideology-conservatism). Accessed 21 Sept. 2024.
- Angelucci, Caterina. “La mostra sul Futurismo a Roma figuraccia internazionale. Escono articoli sul *New York Times* e sul *Pais*.” *Artribune*, 17 Dec. 2024, [www.artribune.com/arti-visive/2024/12/figuraccia-internazionale-mostra-futurismo-roma/](https://www.artribune.com/arti-visive/2024/12/figuraccia-internazionale-mostra-futurismo-roma/). Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.
- Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. U Minnesota P, 1996.
- Assmann, Aleida. “Transnational Memories.” *European Review*, vol. 22, no. 4, 2014, pp. 546–56.
- Azzellini, Dario. “G8 Protests, Genoa, 2001.” *International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest*, edited by Immanuel Ness, Blackwell, 2009, pp. 1307–12.
- Baccaro, Antonella. “Rai, monologo di Scurati cancellato: ecco cosa è successo. Dal confronto sul compenso al timore di violare la par condicio.” *Corriere della Sera*, 21 Apr. 2024, [www.corriere.it/cultura/24\\_maggio\\_29/buchmesse-2024-italia-saviano-15ed821a-1d25-11ef-83e4-ce0c4f6ca004.shtml](https://www.corriere.it/cultura/24_maggio_29/buchmesse-2024-italia-saviano-15ed821a-1d25-11ef-83e4-ce0c4f6ca004.shtml). Accessed 24 Dec. 2024.

- Barrera Tyszka, Alberto. "Hugo Chávez and Trump." *The New York Times*, 21 Sept. 2016, section A, p. 9.
- Bassi, Serena, Loredana Polezzi, and Giulia Riccò, "Introduction: Critical issues in Transnational Italian Studies." *Forum Italicum*, vol. 57, no. 2, 2023, pp. 273–88.
- Bechis, Marco. *Baires-Sarajevo*. Studio Azzurro, 1999.
- Bechis, Marco. *Garage Olimpo*. Classic, Nisarga and Paradis Film, 1999.
- Bechis, Marco. *Figli/Hijos*. Storie and Cecchi Gori Group, 2001.
- Bechis, Marco. *Bird Watchers*. Classic, 2008.
- Bechis, Marco. *Il sorriso del capo*. Cinecittà Luce and Karta Film, 2011.
- Bechis, Marco. *Il rumore della memoria*. Il Corriere della Sera and Karta Film, 2014–2015.
- Bechis, Marco. *La solitudine del sovversivo*. Guanda, 2021.
- Ben-Ghiat, Ruth. *Strongmen. Mussolini to the Present*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2020.
- Bertagna, Federica. "The Idea of *Latinità* in the Political Culture of Fascism in Latin America: The Argentine Case." *Continental Transfers: Cultural and Political Exchange Among Spain, Italy and Argentina, 1914–1945*, edited by Maximiliano Fuentes Codera and Patrizia Dogliani, Berghahn Books, 2022, pp. 117–39.
- Bolaño, Roberto. *Nocturno de Chile*. Anagrama, 2000.
- Bolaño, Roberto. *La literatura nazi en América*. Editorial Seix Barral, 2008.
- Boletsis, Maria, et al., editors. *Languages of Resistance, Transformation, and Futurity in Mediterranean Crisis-scapes: From Crisis to Critique*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. "The Argentine Writer and Tradition." *The Total Library: Non-Fiction (1922–1986)*, edited by Eliot Weinberger, translated by Ester Allan, Penguin Books, 2001, pp. 420–27.
- Bracaglia, Ilaria, et al., editors. *Genova 2001–2021. Cerchi della memoria*. Kairos, 2021.
- Bratich, Jack Z. *On Microfascism: Gender, War, and Death*. Common Notions, 2022.
- Bray, Mark. *Antifa: The Anti-fascist Handbook*. Melville House Publishing, 2017.
- Bray, Mark, et al. "Editors' Introduction." *Radical History Review*, vol. 138, 2020, pp. 1–9.
- Calderoni, Giulia. "Una storia di accoglienza e solidarietà: il caso degli esuli argentini in Italia negli anni Settanta e Ottanta." *Viaggiatori: Circolazioni, scambi ed esilio (secoli XII–XX)*, special issue *Vite di esuli. Percorsi artistici, politici e professionali tra Cinquecento e Novecento*, edited by Fabio D'Angelo, vol. 1, no. 2, 2018, pp. 387–428.
- Castle, Gregory. *The Literary Theory Handbook* Wiley Blackwell. Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.
- Campos, Rodrigo Duque Estrada. "The International Turn in Far-Right Studies: A Critical Assessment." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol. 51, no. 3, 2023, pp. 892–919.
- Canovan, Maragaret. "Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy." *Political Studies*, vol. 47, no. 1, 1999, pp. 2–16.
- Couperus, Stefan, and Pier Domenico Tortola. "Right-wing Populism's (ab)use of the past in Italy and the Netherlands." *Debats. Revista de cultura, poder i societats*, vol. 4, 2019, pp. 105–18.
- Celis, Barbara. "El futurismo pierde su contexto político en la gran apuesta cultural del Gobierno Meloni." *El País*, 5 Dec. 2024, [elpais.com/cultura/2024-12-05/el-futurismo-pierde-su-contexto-politico-en-la-gran-apuesta-cultural-del-gobierno-meloni.html](https://elpais.com/cultura/2024-12-05/el-futurismo-pierde-su-contexto-politico-en-la-gran-apuesta-cultural-del-gobierno-meloni.html). Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.
- De Cesari, Chiara, and Ann Rigney, editors. *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales*. De Gruyter, 2014.
- De Cesari, Chiara, and Ayhan Kaya, editors. *European Memory in Populism. Representations of Self and Other*. Routledge, 2020.
- De Ghantuz Cubbe, Marina. "Dipendenti della Gnam contro la presentazione del libro di Italo Bocchino, segnalati dalla direttrice al Ministero. La Cgil: 'Violata la libertà d'espressione'." *la Repubblica*, 4 Oct. 2024, [roma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2024/10/04/news/dipendenti\\_gnam\\_contro\\_libro\\_di\\_italo\\_bocchino\\_segналati\\_dalla\\_direttrice\\_al\\_ministero-423535293](https://roma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2024/10/04/news/dipendenti_gnam_contro_libro_di_italo_bocchino_segналati_dalla_direttrice_al_ministero-423535293). Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.

- de la Torre, Carlos. *Populisms: A Quick Immersion*. Tibidabo, 2019.
- de la Torre, Carlos, editor. *The Routledge Handbook of Global Populism*. Routledge, 2019.
- de la Torre, Carlos, and Trethep Srisa-nga. *Global Populisms*. Routledge, 2021.
- Della Porta, Donatella, editor. *Global Diffusion of Protest: Riding the Protest Wave in the Neoliberal Crisis*. Amsterdam UP, 2017.
- Dimitrakaki, Angela, and Harry Weeks. "Anti-fascism/Art/Theory: An Introduction to What Hurts Us." *Third Text*, vol. 33, no. 3, 2019, pp. 271–92.
- Dolphijn, Rick, and Rosi Braidotti. "Introduction: How to Live the Anti-fascist Life and Endure the Pain." *Deleuze and Guattari and Fascism*, edited by Rick Dolphijn and Rosi Braidotti, Edinburgh UP, 2022, pp. 1–19.
- Dussel, Enrique. "Cinco tesis sobre el populismo." *Filosofías del Sur. Descolonización y transmodernidad*. Akal, 2015, pp. 219–48.
- Eco, Umberto. "Ur-Fascism." *The New York Review of Books*, June 22, 1995, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1856>.
- Erl, Astrid. "Generation in Literary History: Three Constellations of Generationality, Genealogy, and Memory." *New Literary History*, vol. 45, 2014, pp. 385–409.
- Erl, Astrid, and Stephanie Wodjanka, editors. *Plurimediale Konstellationen: Film und Kulturelle Erinnerung*. Walter de Gruyter, 2008.
- Evans, Brad, and Julian Reid, editors. *Deleuze & Fascism: Security: War: Aesthetics*. Routledge, 2013.
- Evans, Brad, and Adrian Parr, editors. *Conversations on Violence: An Anthology*. Pluto Press, 2021.
- Filippi, Francesco. *Mussolini Also Did a Lot of Good. The Spread of Historical Amnesia*. Translated by John Irving, Baraka Books, 2021.
- Finchelstein, Federico. *From Fascism to Populism in History*. U of California P, 2017.
- Finchelstein, Federico, and José Ragas. "Kast, chi è l'erede di Pinochet candidato in Cile." *Domani*, 18 Nov. 2021, <https://www.editorialedomani.it/politica/mondo/kast-erede-pinochet-cile-elezioni-bk2yedd6>. Accessed 20 Sept. 2024.
- Finchelstein, Federico. *The Wannabe Fascists. A Guide to Understanding the Greatest Threat to Democracy*. U of California P, 2024.
- Fotia, Laura. *Diplomazia Culturale e Propaganda attraverso l'Atlantico. Argentina e Italia (1923–1940)*. Le Monnier / Mondadori Education, 2019.
- Fuentes Codera, Maximiliano, and Patrizia Dogliani, editors. *Continental Transfers: Cultural and Political Exchange Among Spain, Italy and Argentina, 1914–1945*. Berghahn Books, 2022.
- Fuentes Codera, Maximiliano, and Patrizia Dogliani, "Introduction." *Continental Transfers: Cultural and Political Exchange Among Spain, Italy and Argentina, 1914–1945*, edited by Maximiliano Fuentes Codera and Patrizia Dogliani, Berghahn Books, 2022, pp. 1–11.
- Gagliardi, Alessio, and Matteo Pasetti, editors. "Fascism in the Public Sphere of Post-Fascist Italy." *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2024, pp. 245–50.
- Galimi, Valeria, and Annarita Gori. "Hybridizing Ideas in the Latin Space: Transnational Agents and Polycentric Cross-Border Networks." *Intellectuals in the Latin Space during the Era of Fascism: Crossing Borders*, edited by Valeria Galimi and Annarita Gori, Routledge, 2020, pp. 1–11.
- Galimi, Valeria, and Annarita Gori. "Hybridizing Ideas in the Latin Space: Transnational Agents and Polycentric Cross-Border Networks." *Intellectuals in the Latin Space during the Era of Fascism: Crossing Borders*, edited by Valeria Galimi and Annarita Gori, Routledge, 2020, pp. 1–11.
- García, Hugo et al., editors. *Rethinking Antifascism: History, Memory and Politics, 1992 to the Present*. Berghahn Books, 2016.
- García, Hugo et al. "Beyond Revisionism. Rethinking Antifascism in the Twenty-First Century." *Rethinking Antifascism: History, Memory and Politics, 1992 to the Present*, edited by Hugo García et al., Berghahn Books, pp. 1–19.

- Gentile, Emilio. *Fascismo. Storia e interpretazione* (2002). Edizioni Laterza, 2008.
- Gergolet, Mara. "Roberto Saviano: 'Sulla Buchmesse la Germania solidale con me. La censura non è riuscita a delegittimarmi'." *Corriere della Sera*, 29 May 2024, [www.corriere.it/cultura/24\\_maggio\\_29/buchmesse-2024-italia-saviano-15ed821a-1d25-11ef-83e4-ce0c4f6ca004.shtml](http://www.corriere.it/cultura/24_maggio_29/buchmesse-2024-italia-saviano-15ed821a-1d25-11ef-83e4-ce0c4f6ca004.shtml). Accessed 24 Dec. 2024.
- Il Tempo del Futurismo* (03/12/2024-28/02/2025), [www.lagallerianazionale.com/mostra/tempo-del-futurismo](http://www.lagallerianazionale.com/mostra/tempo-del-futurismo). Accessed 24 Dec. 2024.
- Jaimes, Héctor, editor. *The Mexican Crack Writers: History and Criticism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Jansen, Monica. "Da *Per sempre ragazzo a Future*: Le antologie della 'speranza' dopo il trauma del G8." *Contronarrazioni Il racconto del potere nella modernità letteraria: Atti del XXII Convegno Internazionale della MOD 17-19 giugno 2019*, edited by Elisabetta Mondello, et al., Edizioni ETS, 2023, pp. 101–18.
- Kallis, Aristotle K. "Studying Inter-war Fascism in Epochal and Diachronic Terms: Ideological Production, Political Experience and the Quest for 'Consensus'." *European History Quarterly*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2004, pp. 9–42.
- Laclau, Ernesto. *On Populist Reason*. Verso, 2005.
- Laermans, Rudi. 2012. "Populisme als buitengewone politiek: naar een Weberiaanse interpretatie." *Sociologie*, vol. 8, no 1, 2012, pp. 127–51.
- Lefort, Claude. *L'invention démocratique*. Fayard, 1981.
- Lennard, Natasha. *Being Numerous: Essays on Non-Fascist Life*. Verso 2019.
- Lennard, Natasha. "What Does an Anti-Fascist Life Feel Like?" *Conversations on Violence: An Anthology*, edited by Brad Evans and Adrian Parr, Pluto Press, 2021, pp. 212–17.
- Levi, Neil, and Michael Rothberg. "Memory Studies in a Moment of Danger: Fascism, Postfascism, and the Contemporary Political Imaginary." *Memory Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2018, pp. 355–67.
- Mammone, Andrea. *Varieties of Right-Wing Extremism in Europe*. Routledge, 2013.
- Mammone, Andrea. *Transnational Neofascism in France and Italy*. Cambridge UP, 2015.
- Mammone, Andrea, et al., editors. *Mapping the Extreme Right in Contemporary Europe: From Local to Transnational*. Routledge, 2012.
- Mastrandrea, Angelo. "Bolzaneto, il Garage Olimpo italiano." *Il Manifesto*, 11 Sept. 2013.
- Meloni, Giorgia. *Post on Facebook*, 20 Apr. 2024, [www.facebook.com/giorgiameloni.paginaufficiale/posts/985213292972214](https://www.facebook.com/giorgiameloni.paginaufficiale/posts/985213292972214). Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.
- Mouffe, Chantal. *On the Political*. Routledge, 2005.
- Mudde, Cas. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government & Opposition*, vol 39, no. 3, 2004, pp. 541–63.
- Mudde, Cas, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. "Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America." *Government and Opposition*, vol. 48, no. 2, Apr. 2013, pp. 147–74.
- Mudde, Cas. *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 2017.
- Murgia, Michela. *Istruzioni per diventare fascisti*. Einaudi, 2018.
- Murgia, Michela. *How to be a Fascist: A Manual*. Translated by Alex Valente, Penguin Books, 2020.
- Nizza, Paolo. "*M - Il figlio del secolo*, la serie Sky sul Duce presentata a Venezia 2024. La recensione." 6 Sept. 2024, [tg24.sky.it/spettacolo/serie-tv/2024/09/06/m-il-figlio-del-secolo-recensione](https://tg24.sky.it/spettacolo/serie-tv/2024/09/06/m-il-figlio-del-secolo-recensione). Accessed 27 Sept. 2024.
- Payne, Stanley G. *A History of Fascism, 1914–1945*. U Winsconsin P, 1995.
- Paxton, Robert O. "The Five Stages of Fascism." *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 70, no. 1 March 1998, pp. 1–23.
- Paxton, Robert O. *The Anatomy of Fascism*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2004.
- Plummer, Robert. "Milei, Musk and Maga: Is Argentina influencing the US?" *BBC News*, 13 Dec. 2024, [www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5y86vovwneo](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5y86vovwneo). Accessed 15 Dec. 2024.

- Polovedo, Elisabetta. "Critics Complain That Italy's Government Is Interfering in the Arts." *The New York Times*, 13 Dec. 2024, [www.nytimes.com/2024/12/13/world/europe/futurism-exhibition-rome.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/13/world/europe/futurism-exhibition-rome.html). Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.
- Portelli, Alessandro. "Improvvisamente ci accorgemmo che c'era una storia." *Genova 2001–2021. Cerchi della memoria*, edited by Ilaria Bracaglia et al., Kairos, 2021, pp. 9–15.
- Pretelli, Matteo. "Italia e Stati Uniti. 'Diplomazia culturale' e le relazioni commerciali dal fascismo al dopoguerra." *Italia contemporanea*, vol. 241, 2005, pp. 523–34.
- Pretelli, Matteo. "Il fascismo e l'immagine dell'Italia all'estero." *Contemporanea. Rivista di Storia dell'800 e del 900*, vol. XI, no. 2, Apr. 2008, pp. 221–41.
- Roglio, Gabriele. *I fatti di Genova: una storia orale del G8*. Donzelli Editore, 2021.
- Ricciardi, Vanessa. "Dove nasce la fissazione della destra (e di Giorgia Meloni) per Tolkien e Il signore degli anelli." *Domani*, 14 Nov. 2023, [www.editorialedomani.it/politica/italia/giorgia-meloni-destra-tolkien-signore-degli-anelli-da9irlku](http://www.editorialedomani.it/politica/italia/giorgia-meloni-destra-tolkien-signore-degli-anelli-da9irlku). Accessed 27 Dec. 2024.
- Rigney, Ann. "Remembering Hope: Transnational Activism Beyond the Traumatic." *Memory Studies*, vol. 11, no. 3, 2018, pp. 368–80.
- Rigney, Ann. "Mediations of Outrage: How Violence Against Protestors is Remembered." *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, vol. 87, no. 3, 2020, pp. 707–33.
- Rigney, Ann. "Prefigurative Remembrance: Archiving as Activist Mnemonic Practice." *Memory Studies*, vol. 17, no. 5, 2024, pp. 1195–1212.
- Rosenfeld, Gavriel D., and Janet Ward, editors. *Fascism in America: Past and Present*. Cambridge UP, 2023.
- Scurati, Antonio. *M. Il figlio del secolo*. Bompiani, 2018.
- Scurati, Antonio. *M. Son of the Century*. Translated by Anne Milano Appel, HarperCollins, 2022.
- Scurati, Antonio. *M. L'uomo della Provvidenza*. Bompiani, 2020.
- Scurati, Antonio. *M. e gli ultimi giorni dell'Europa*. Bompiani, 2022.
- Scurati, Antonio. *Fascismo e populismo. Mussolini oggi*. Bompiani, 2023.
- Scurati, Antonio. *M. L'ora del destino*. Bompiani, 2024.
- Scurati, Antonio. *M. La fine e il principio*. Bompiani, 2025.
- Schargel, Sergio, and Julia de Oliveira Góes Guimarães. "Between Antifascism and Antifa: A Conversation with Mark Bray, Author of *Antifa*." *Revista Brasileira de História*, vol. 43, no. 92, 2023, pp. 305–21.
- Steinbock, Eliza, et al., editors. *Art and Activism in the Age of Systemic Crisis: Aesthetic Resilience*. Routledge, 2021.
- Steinmetz-Jenkins, Daniel, editor. *Did It Happen Here? Perspectives on Fascism and America*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2024.
- Stone, Marla Susan. *The Patron State: Culture and Politics in Fascist Italy*. Princeton UP, 1998.
- Stone, Marla Susan. "The State as Patron: Making Official Culture in Fascist Italy." *Fascist Visions: Art and Ideology in France and Italy*, edited by Matthew Affron and Mark Antliff, Princeton UP, 1998, pp. 205–38.
- Swanson, Philip. "Civilization and barbarism." *The Companion to Latin American Studies*, edited by Philip Swanson, Routledge, 2003, pp. 69–75.
- Tabanelli, Roberta. "The Violence of History in Marco Bechis's Argentina." *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film*, vol. 9, no. 2–3, 2011, pp. 127–46.
- Toro, Daniele. "Fascist Transnationalism. The Networking between the German, Austrian, and Italian Radical Nationalist Milieux during the Long 1920s." *Fascism. Journal of Comparative Fascist Studies*, vol. 13, 2024, pp. 13–37.
- Traverso, Enzo. "Antifascism between Collective Memory and Historical Revisions." *Rethinking Antifascism: History, Memory and Politics, 1992 to the Present*, edited by Hugo García et al., Berghahn Books, 2016, pp. 321–38.
- Traverso, Enzo. *The New Faces of Fascism. Populism and the Far Right*. Verso, 2019.

- Urban, Maria Bonaria. "Narrare il fascismo nell'era digitale: storia, memoria e transmedialità in *M. Il figlio del secolo*." *Annali di Italianistica*, special issue *Fascism in Italian Culture (1945–2023)*, edited by Guido Bartolini et al., vol. 41, 2023, pp. 445–72.
- Urbinati, Nadia. "Political Theory of Populism." *Annual Review of Political Science*, vol. 22, 2019, pp. 111–27.
- Warmuth, Nick. "Comparative Fascist Studies and the Transnational Turn: First Comfas Convention." *Fascism*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2019, pp. 109–13.
- Wright, Joe, director. *Mussolini: Son of the Century*. Sky Studios, 2025.