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Political thought of the Third Position: Analysis in the context of Eternal Fascism according to Umberto Eco

Abstract

The Third Position is one of the marginal currents in contemporary political thought. This current was represented by the International Third Position established in 1989. The values, concepts and arguments for the annihilation of parliamentary democracies and forms of contemporary international relations put forward by this organization raise the question: is the political thought of the Third Position (represented by the International Third Position) a fascist one? In the present article the author has formulated a hypothesis, according to which the political thought of the International Third Position is an ideology that meets the definition criteria of fascism. To verify it, the author used the theoretical framework presented in a lecture by the Italian writer and intellectual Umberto Eco (1932–2016) delivered in 1995 at Columbia University. The main method of verifying the hypothesis was a critical analysis of the elements of political thought of the International Third Position and comparing it with the features (symptoms) of fascism formulated by Eco. The source material for the analysis include documents of the International Third Position, as well as documents of political parties and organizations that make up the ITP from Italy and Poland. An important source were the ideological and journalistic texts written by the leaders of this movement from the UK, Poland and Italy. In the article, each of the fourteen features of fascism proposed by Umberto Eco was analyzed in the context of the thought of the Third Position. The research hypothesis has been positively verified. The political thought of the Third Position does indeed meet the definition criteria of fascism.

Keywords: Third Position, Umberto Eco, fascism, far-right, political thought.

In democratic countries in the 21st century, ideologies, the implementation of which would lead to creating a totalitarian state, constitute a margin. Although they were widely discredited in the first half of the 20th century, the time that has

passed since World War II and the subsequent generational change that took place may be conducive the revival of ideologies such as fascism. They may not always be known as “fascism.” They can meet the criteria of fascism, although at the same time they do not refer to themselves as fascist, and their founders and supporters can distance themselves from fascism. It is important to remember that although such ideologies do not win much social public today, this does not mean that they will not have such support in the future. The scenario in which such ideologies achieve widespread appeal may seem unlikely, it cannot be ruled out. It may well be that under the guise of a “real democracy,” a political system will emerge that will be undemocratic.

The Third Position is one such marginal current of contemporary political thought, and this paper is aimed at analyzing an even smaller branch within the movement, represented by the International Third Position. Its activists called themselves “Political Soldiers.” The activity of the leaders of this marginal political movement and the values, concepts and arguments they proclaim for the annihilation of parliamentary democracies and forms of contemporary international relations cause research interest aimed at answering the question: is the political thought of the Third Position represented by the International Third Position fascist? This research interest is amplified by the fact that in both journalistic and scientific publications, the Third Position is called fascism, but the authors of the publication do not explain what connects it with fascism. Their claims are posited intuitively, and they do not take into account different interpretations of fascism as a movement, ideology and political system, or are simply *a priori* judgements posited from opposite ideological positions.¹

With this in mind, the author formulated the hypothesis that the political thought of the International Third Position is an ideology that meets the definition criteria of fascism. However, fascism itself is a fuzzy ideology and can occur in various forms. To verify it, the author used the theoretical framework presented in a lecture delivered in 1995 at Columbia University by the Italian writer and intellectual Umberto Eco (1932–2016). This lecture has been published in *The New York Review of Books*.² In this lecture Eco presented fourteen features of “Eternal Fascism” (or “Ur-Fascism”).

The main method of verifying the hypothesis was a critical analysis of the elements of political thought of the International Third Position and comparing it with the features (symptoms) of fascism formulated by Eco. The source material for the analysis include documents of the International Third Position, as well as

¹ See: C. Berlet, “What is the Third Position?,” Political Research Associates, 19.12.2016, <https://www.politicalresearch.org/2016/12/19/what-is-the-third-position> (accessed: 2.07.2019); “Third Position on the web,” SPLC, <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/intelligence-report/2015/third-position-web> (accessed: 2.07.2019).

² U. Eco, “Ur-Fascism,” *The New York Review of Books*, 22.06.1995, https://www.pegc.us/archive/Articles/eco_ur-fascism.pdf (accessed: 23.05.2021).

documents of political parties and organizations that make up the ITP from Italy and Poland. Ideological and journalistic texts written by the leaders of this movement from the UK, Poland and Italy were also important sources.

The research objectives, hypothesis and methods adopted have determined the structure of the presented article. Firstly, the origins of the International Third Position movement and its political thought were described, and then each of the fourteen characteristics of fascism formulated by Umberto Eco was analyzed in the context of the thought of the Third Position. The final part of the article contains conclusions and points to new research areas: political currents and forms of political ideas in which fascism may be hidden, that need to be explained.

The International Third Position — organization, leaders, political thought

The International Third Position (ITP) is an ideological platform that was established in 1989 in the UK on the initiative of the leaders of the National Front and migrant Italian nationalists in the United Kingdom. The ideological face of the ITP was formed by the following political leaders: Derek Holland, Roberto Fiore, Nick Griffin and Troy Southgate.³ The first of them was the author of the term “Political Soldier,” which can be used to determine people that adhere to the ITP’s ideology. The name comes from a booklet penned and published by Holland published in the early 1990s.⁴ Roberto Fiore is a man who became known in the community of political radicals from the fact that he had fled Italy to the United Kingdom in 1980 due to being convicted of conspiracy in connection with a terrorist attack in Bologna, organized by one of Italian fascist groups active at the time. In the United Kingdom, he was arrested but not extradited to Italy. A trial in his case had been pending in Italy at that time, in which he was sentenced to imprisonment for the membership in a subversive organization. Fiore went back to Italy in 1999, after the case was barred by the statute of limitations. He was a MEP from 2008 to 2009, replacing Alessandra Mussolini. Earlier, in 1997, he co-founded the New Force party (in Italian: Forza Nuova)⁵ with Massimo Morsello (who died in

³ P. Witkowski, “Faszyzm? My jesteśmy gorsi!,” *Krytyka Polityczna*, 2.02.2019, <https://krytykapolityczna.pl/kraj/faszyzm-nop/> (accessed: 23.05.2021).

⁴ D. Holland, *Political Soldier; Declaration of Principles of the International Third Position*, London 1994.

⁵ Forza Nuova, “Chi siamo,” Forza Nuova, http://www.forzanuova.eu/?page_id=103 (accessed: 4.12.2016); I. Cobain, M. Taylor, “Language school run by Italian fascist leader,” *The Guardian*, 29.02.2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2008/feb/29/thefarright> (accessed: 4.12.2016); R. Wodak, *The Politics of Fear. What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*, Los Angeles-London-New Delhi-Singapore-Washington DC 2015; Ł. Woźnicki, “Winnicki zabrał do Sejmu delegację neofaszystów z włoskiej Forza Nuova,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 11.11.2015, <http://wyborcza.pl/1,75398,19170675,winnicki-zabral-do-sejmu-delegacje-neofaszystow-z-wloskiej-forza>.

2001). While in exile in the UK, Fiore ran joint business ventures with British nationalist Nick Griffin. Griffin left the ITP in 1991, and in 1995 he joined the British National Party (BNP) and was the publisher of the magazines *Spearhead* and *The Rune*. He was the chairman of BNP in the period from 1999 to 2014. In 2004, Griffin was arrested on suspicion of incitement to racial hatred. In 2005, he was accused of misconduct by using words or behaviors that had or could provoke racial hatred. He was cleared of all these allegations in 2006.⁶ Another activist, Troy Southgate, was in his youth associated with the skinhead movement, he was the lead singer of the band H.E.R.R., and he was sentenced in 1988 to eighteen months in prison for beating and maiming a communist activist. As part of the ITP he published magazines and brochures, e.g. such as *The Kent Crusader*, *Surrey Action* and *Eastern Legion*. In 1992, Troy Southgate left the ITP. He accused Holland and Fiore of hypocrisy and appropriating the funds of the organization. Together with his allies, he established a new organization, English Nationalist Movement, and then the National Revolutionary Faction. He also edited the web magazine *Synthesis*. Later, his activity was associated with the promotion of national anarchism.⁷ Therefore, Derek Holland and Roberto Fiore remained the ideologues of the International Third Position. In 1992, they were joined by a Pole, Adam Gmurczyk, and his political organization (or party) National Rebirth of Poland (in Polish: Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski).⁸

At the beginning of the 21st century, the ITP became a cadre organization of marginal significance in the British and international nationalist movement. However, the strength of the ITP was rooted in the tenacity of its individual elements, mainly the publishing and propaganda activity, as well as the political activity of the New Force party and its leader Roberto Fiore, as well as the organizational activity and journalism of Adam Gmurczyk and members of his political movement. However, after 2015, the party from Poland also lost its significance in the fragmented Polish nationalist movement. This party also became a cadre organization. However, the history of radical and extremist organizations proves that these movements collapsed and revived as a result of their transformation. It is thus difficult to predict the future of the ITP.

The name “Third Position” signifies the rejection of both communism and capitalism. A feature of the Third Position is the primacy of spirituality over materialism and the setting of goals for human existence in the of spiritual and temporal

html (accessed: 4.12.2016); R. Fiore, “Pamięci Massimo Morsello,” Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski, 10.03.2012, <http://www.nop.org.pl/2012/03/10/pamieci-massimo-morsello/> (accessed: 4.12.2016); “Roberto Fiore,” Parlament Europejski, Posłowie do PE, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/pl/41004/ROBERTO_FIORE_home.html (accessed: 4.12.2016).

⁶ “Nick Griffin,” *The Telegraph*, 10.01.2006, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1399674/Nick-Griffin.html> (accessed: 3.07.2019).

⁷ A.T. Witzak, “Narodowy anarchizm Troya Southgate’a,” 5.07.2009, <http://www.konserwatyzm.pl/publicystyka.php/Artykul/3408/> (accessed: 18.08.2010).

⁸ P. Witkowski, “Faszyzm? My jesteśmy gorsi!”

realms. The main element of this political thought is radical nationalism. Participants in the ITP espoused religion, pointing to the rules of old traditionalist Christianity as a significant source of their views. In the economic field, they promoted distributism and corporatism as an economic system based on a multitude of different and equal entities, and on the dissemination of private property. According to ideologues of the Third Position, the economy should serve the people, not the other way around, as it is in countries that manage the economy based on the principles of neoliberalism. In opposition to the national policies pursued at the beginning of the 21st century advocating multiculturalism, the Third Position outlined the concepts of racial separatism.⁹ In the last decade of the 20th century, the ITP has become a fanatically anti-abortion, homophobic, anti-Semitic and ultra-Catholic organization.¹⁰

Features of fascism according to Umberto Eco and the political thought of the International Third Position

Can the ITP be considered an ideological platform of a fascist character? Were its elements (parties, organizations and ideologists) fascist in the ideological sphere? These questions can be answered by analyzing the components of political thought of the Third Position in the context of the fourteen features (symptoms) of Eternal Fascism proposed by Umberto Eco.

Cult of tradition and referring to mutually contradictory, syncretic and confused ideological sources¹¹

Third position ideologues undoubtedly draw from diverse ideological sources and traditions. These included, for example, Tridentine Masses, integral traditionalism, the hierarchical system and racial theories of the Italian philosopher Julius Evola, the distributism advocated by English writers Hilaire Belloc and Gilbert Keith Chesterton, as well as the idea of legionarism of the Romanian mystic and politician Corneliu Zelei Codreanu.¹²

The organizations brought together within the ITP are also emphasizing the demand to “return to the past” in their political agendas. The Italian New Force

⁹ “Third Position — 10 point declaration,” *Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski*, 1.01.2011, <http://en.nop.org.pl/third-position-10-point-declaration/> (accessed: 28.06.2016).

¹⁰ P. Witkowski, “Faszyzm? My jesteśmy gorsi!”

¹¹ The titles of the following 14 sections are close paraphrases of the features of fascism listed in Eco’s “Ur-Fascism,” at times slightly expanded upon by the author (P.M.).

¹² P. Witkowski, “Faszyzm? My jesteśmy gorsi!”, “The Third Position: The new nationalism and the new racialism,” *Fringe Watch*, 19.01.2006, http://fringewatcher.blogspot.com/2006/01/third-position-new-nationalism-and-new_19.html (accessed: 5.09.2018).

party wanted the renewal of the Lateran Treaties. The treaties were signed in 1929 between Cardinal Pietro Gasparri and Benito Mussolini. Years later, Italian nationalists still referred to these treaties, recognizing the Roman Catholic Church as the spiritual leader of the nation. In the thought of Italian nationalists, faith was associated with tradition; it accompanied the nation for two thousand years. Hence, according to New Force, it should be guarded and passed on to the next generations, while rejecting today's widespread nihilism and secularism. The party, declaring its defense of Italy's history and cultural heritage, wanted to repeal the laws against the freedom to promote despotic regimes, i.e. to abolish the law that prosecutes fascist propaganda. This postulate concerned the Act of 1993, pursuant to which fascist gestures and slogans supporting racial and ethnic discrimination are prohibited. These rules were called the "Mancino Law" after Nicola Mancino, one of the ministers in the Italian government. Nationalists, in turn, considered the actions to abolish this law a form of defense of Italian historical, cultural and religious heritage.¹³

The National Rebirth of Poland also stood out from other Polish nationalist groups by the diversity of ideological sources and borrowings from foreign ideologies. This organization followed, first of all, the models of Polish nationalism, but in a selective way. It only considered the national-radical current of Polish nationalism to be its prominent precursor. It also referred to the principles of distributism, legionarism and the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church from before the Second Vatican Council.¹⁴

A typical example of the pluralism of ideological sources and traditions is the thought of one of the co-founders of the ITP, Troy Southgate. He referred to the idea of *Jamahiriya* [people's rule] of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and expressed in the latter's *Green Book*, and the distributism of Chesterton and Belloc, declaratively based on the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, as expressed in the Encyclicals of Leo XIII (*Rerum Novarum*) and Pius XI (*Quadragesimo Anno*). In the 1980s, Southgate, influenced by, among others, Chesterton, converted to Roman Catholicism and joined the traditionalist circles around the association of apostolic life named the Society of St. Pius X (*Fraternitas Sacerdotalis Sancti Pii X*, FSSPX), also called the Lefebvrists.¹⁵

¹³ Forza Nuova, "8 Punti," Forza Nuova, http://www.forzanuova.eu/?page_id=542 (accessed: 4.12.2016).

¹⁴ J. Tomaszewicz, "Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski i jego wizja 'Katolickiego Państwa Narodu Polskiego' jako współczesna wersja narodowego radykalizmu," [in:] *Różne oblicza nacjonalizmów. Polityka — Religia — Etos*, ed. B. Grott, Kraków 2010, pp. 171–220; K. Karczewski, *Ani liberalizm, ani marksizm. Koncepcje ideowo-polityczne współczesnego polskiego narodowego radykalizmu na przykładzie Narodowego Odrodzenia Polski*, Szczecin 2015, <https://pl.scribd.com/doc/297083132/K-karczewski-NOP> (accessed: 3.12.2016).

¹⁵ A.T. Witczak, "Narodowy anarchizm Troya Southgate'a."

Traditionalism that implies the rejection of modernism and the spirit of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment, the Age of Reason, is seen as the beginning of modern depravity, and therefore as irrationalism

The ITP's stance on the changes that began in the Enlightenment era was outlined in the organization's most important document, the "Declaration." The history of the world that began during the Enlightenment was identified by the ITP as a period of immorality. According to the ITP, it is natural that the renewed world can only be built on the basis of moral order. The Third Position believed that it was necessary for people to understand that there is good and evil, truth and falsehood in the world, and not a series of subjective choices, as materialists claimed. For the ITP, the family is the foundation and center of society, and its strength and unity are to be the source of the nation's happiness. In order to introduce moral order, the ITP decided that it was necessary for subsequent generations not only to be taught "pure" book knowledge, but also to sacrifice and spiritually improve, which would shape a righteous and noble man. This was to be a way in which people were supposed to free themselves from modern immorality.¹⁶

In the third point of the "Declaration," the ITP has stated that it is an opposition to materialistic philosophy:

The French Revolution of 1789 was the primary event which thrust philosophical materialism onto the world stage. In the intervening two centuries, the power of Organized Naturalism in all its diverse forms — that is to say, the systematic tendency to deny in theory and practice the reality of Soul and Spirit — has grown steadily to the point that it now threatens to engulf the entire world. Materialism in its war with the Spirit has taken on many forms; some have promoted its goals with great subtlety, whilst others have done so with an alarming lack of subtlety, but all have added, in greater or lesser measure, to the growing misery of Mankind. The forms which have done the most damage in our time may be enumerated as: Freemasonry, Liberalism, Nihilism, Capitalism, Socialism, Marxism, Imperialism, Anarchism, Modernism and the New Age. Each of these creeds — materialist at base — is philosophically wrong and discredited in practice. Thus, the Third Position condemns them all unreservedly, and affirms that opposition to all forms of Materialism is central to the ideology of the Third Position.¹⁷

The cult of "action for action's sake." Action does not have to be preceded by reflection because the latter is a sign of weakness. Culture is suspect and intellectual milieux are approached with suspicion

Analyzing the manifestations of activity and infinitesimal social support for the political thought of the Third Position, one cannot help the impression that the

¹⁶ "Third Position — 10 point declaration."

¹⁷ Ibidem.

ITP was acting in order to act. The founders of this movement were distinguished by above-average activity, which, however, was ultimately ineffective. They founded and transformed various types of political organizations and parties, organized demonstrations, published newspapers and magazines, edited websites, published books and brochures. This kind of activity was explained by the leader of the National Rebirth of Poland, Adam Gmurczyk; “But success is never the effect of passivity and stagnation. ‘Help yourself and God will help you,’ the Jesuits used to say, and this absolutely right motto should guide us in our daily work. Failure to fight in a just cause is the most serious sin in life that can by no means be forgiven by the Lord.”¹⁸ For the Third Position, the new type of man who will live a nationalist life every day, a man who will be the guidepost and inspiration, is the type that should join the army of Political Soldiers.¹⁹

Disagreement is treason. The critical spirit makes distinctions, and to distinguish is a sign of modernism

In the ITP’s political thought, any manifestation of opposition to the principles of Third Position was considered heresy, betrayal or disloyalty. It could not be otherwise, because the ITP’s ideological principles were a reflection of God’s law, and one cannot disagree with God’s will. The ITP’s “Declaration” states:

The Third Position asserts that all healthy societies are built upon recognition of God’s Law and the rights of Truth, and not upon the civil constitutions and Bills of Rights that have been foisted upon us by vested interests striving to promote liberalism and relativism. It is foreseen that the clear enunciation of Moral principles by the Church will assist the citizen in daily, secular duties — to the benefit of Church, Society and Individual.²⁰

Fascism is racist, as it exploits fear of intruders and of difference

According to the ITP, mankind consists of a mosaic of races and cultures. However, there are people who would like to destroy this wealth of human races, so as to replace it with a rootless and identity-less conformism, where the concepts of race, nation and culture will be meaningless. Therefore, the Third Position opposed and rejected multiculturalism. Instead, it supported the concept of racial separatism. It declared that various racial groups should cooperate with each other for mutual good, respecting each other. According to the ITP: “In the struggle to preserve human diversity, resettlement of races to their countries of origin will play a major role, and will directly aid the struggle to build a more peaceful world.”²¹

¹⁸ A. Gmurczyk, “Nowoczesny nacjonalizm,” *Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski*, <https://www.nop.org.pl/nowoczesny-nacjonalizm/> (accessed: 2.07.2019) [transl. by P.M.].

¹⁹ D. Holland, *Political Soldier*, p. 9.

²⁰ “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

²¹ *Ibidem*.

It seems, however, that such an approach to human races was justified by the ITP only by the belief that the diversity and hermetic separation of human races would be better than their mixing, because it was so in the past and it is natural. It is worth asking, however, why the mixing of human races would be worse and detrimental to humanity, and the separation of races and the inability of their biological interaction would be better? For the ideologues of the ITP the answer is simple: because so dictates the law of God and the objective truth. On the other hand, no support for racial separatism is to be found in the Bible. Nonetheless, this raises a different question: does racial separatism have a hidden agenda, based on a belief that races are classified into better and worse ones, and the mixing of better races with worse one causes a reduction in the value of those better ones? If the ITP's answer to this question were positive, it would mean that the political thought of the ITP is racist.

New Force's program is openly and outspokenly opposed to immigration. The party sees it as a threat to the harmonious coexistence of nations, anathema to Europe's cultural heritage, and the form of the drainage of migrant peoples. Hence, the party called for curbing immigration and the return of immigrants to their countries of origin.²² Party members claimed that the problems of immigration to Europe stemmed from the French Revolution, which undermined the Christian identity of the continent, paving the way for relativism and atheism. The fight against Catholicism led to a situation where the empty space left by receding Catholic religion has been taken by Muslims.²³ Moreover, according to Roberto Fiore (leader of the New Force), immigration was used to be a way of acquiring new voters for the mainstream political parties. He also stated that, in the long term, the policy of contemporary governments in Italy would lead to the adaptation of school curricula to the needs of foreigners, who in some schools already accounted for 60% of the students. In terms of welfare policy, immigrants were supposedly being treated better than the Italians.²⁴

Fascism derives from individual or social frustration

It would be possible to verify this feature of fascism in the context of the ITP's political thought if fascism gained social support. Meanwhile, such organizations like the ITP are not popular, in fact they positioned well on the political margin. It can therefore be concluded that the level of opposition and frustration towards

²² Forza Nuova, "8 Punti."

²³ "Forza Nuova: islamizacja postępuje dzięki walce z katolicyzmem," Europejskie Nacjonalizmy, 20.01.2015, <https://nacjonalizm.wordpress.com/2015/01/20/forza-nuova-islamizacja-postepuje-dzieki-walce-z-katolicyzmem/> (accessed: 3.07.2019).

²⁴ "Roberto Fiore o Unii Europejskiej, Ukrainie i Rosji," Europejskie Nacjonalizmy, 10.12.2013, <https://nacjonalizm.wordpress.com/2013/12/10/roberto-fiore-o-unii-europejskiej-ukrainie-i-rosji> (accessed: 3.07.2019).

the principles of the democratic state and the capitalist economy is not sufficient to increase fascist tendencies in society. It can also be inferred that fascism was superseded by populism, sometimes ideologically close to fascism. It can be concluded that consumer society is not interested in any changes in its position. The only social activity it undertakes is of a hedonistic nature. In an essay entitled “Integralna rewolucja” [Integral revolution], Adam Gmurczyk wrote:

It was certainly a masterful move of the globalist forces: The media, the university departments and publishing houses have been populated by intellectually mediocre, but thus devoted, followers of the philosophy of self-indulgence at all costs. [...] This is so, because the civilization consumerism — the Wunderwaffe of the demoliberal system, is nothing more than a developed stage of slavery.²⁵

Regardless of how the above doubts can be resolved, it should be pointed out that fascism grows not only from social, but also individual frustration. It concerns individuals and sub-groups in large social groups such as young people. It was them to whom Fiore, Gmurczyk and Holland addressed their propaganda. Its content is reflected in a fragment of the Final Conflict web blog: “It is that the whole gang of them have to go, that ‘normal folks’ should stand against the political parties and their machinery, to take the reigns of power from those who are so busy milking the system whilst the UK goes to the dogs.”²⁶

The obsession with a plot, both international and domestic, which shapes nationalism

The message of the ITP’s “Declaration” “exposed” the conspiracy of Jews who took over the world. The ITP declared that it opposed the Zionist movement that violates rights of the Palestinian nation, which was seen as a violation of a people’s right to self-determination. The movement was against the political, economic and territorial imperialism of Zionists. The authors of the “Declaration” wrote:

Zionism as an organized political movement is little more than a century old, and yet in that time it has built a power structure of colossal proportions that straddles the globe. This structure includes not only the illegal Israeli regime, set up on the stolen land of Palestine, but also the power bases that Zionists have constructed in the spheres of Politics, Economics and the Media, especially in the USA and Europe. Needless to say, this power structure exists to serve and extend the interests of International Jewry, and this can only be done at the expense of the indigenous populations who have lost control of their countries to this discriminatory creed.²⁷

²⁵ A. Gmurczyk, “Rewolucja integralna,” [in:] A. Gmurczyk, D. Holland, A. Doboszyński, *Polityczny żołnierz. Podręcznik narodowego radykała*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 6, 10 [transl. by P.M.].

²⁶ Final Conflict, “The party system is corrupt: Time for it to end,” Final Conflict, 15.05.2009, <https://finalconflictblog.blogspot.com/2009/05/party-system-is-corrupt-time-for-it-to.html> (accessed: 3.07.2019).

²⁷ “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

The ITP differed from openly neo-fascist or neo-Nazi organizations in the fact that the latter called their enemies explicitly. This is what the neo-Nazis of Blood & Honour did, for example.

The conspiracy, according to the ITP, was not organized solely by the Jews. Derek Holland said: “The ranks of our enemies are immense: the banks, the Communists, the Freemasons, the Zionists, the Capitalists. They have money and power; they dominate the media; they control whole armies through their control of governments; they inject corrosive ideas into the bloodstream of the nation which enfeeble us, make us apathetic, make us a pushover.”²⁸ New Force demanded a prohibition on the activity of Freemasonry and secret societies. The party stated that it was part of a struggle to prohibit the activity of all Masonic organizations, as well as those which operate in conspiracy and secrecy.²⁹ The National Rebirth Poland wanted to prohibit the operation of groups, organizations and parties, acting for foreign countries, removal of foreign military units from Poland and abandon all “integrative” activities with the European Union leading to the liquidation of the Polish State.³⁰

The followers [of fascism] feel humiliated by the ostentatious
wealth and force of their enemies. The enemies are considered
very strong and very weak at the same time

According to the Third Position’s ideology, the modern world is dominated by money and the pursuit for money. The existence of individuals, families, communities, regions, peoples and cultures is continually determined by their “economic capacity to live.” Money, which was initially only a useful means for making life easier, became the first determinant of life. This led to countless horrors, wars, hunger, pollution, genocides and consumerism destroying the spiritual side of humanity.³¹

The power and strength of the international financiers in the Western world is matched by the moral decay of Western civilization and its imminent decline. Therefore, the civilization, along with its leaders, is both strong and weak at the same time. Enemies of the Third Position have, in addition to the almost limitless propaganda and financial resources, an inexhaustible source of support: imperfect people who want to live in an easy and enjoyable way.³²

²⁸ D. Holland, *Political Soldier*, p. 11.

²⁹ Forza Nuova, “8 Punti.”

³⁰ “Zasady programowe NOP”, Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski, <https://www.nop.org.pl/zasady-programowe/> (accessed: 3.07.2019).

³¹ “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

³² A. Gmurczyk, “Rewolucja integralna,” p. 19.

Life is lived for struggle. Life is permanent warfare. Pacifism is trafficking with the enemy. Enemies have to be defeated, there must be a final battle, after which the movement will have control of the world. Such a “final solution” implies a further era of peace, a Golden Age, which contradicts the principle of permanent war

In the ITP’s political thought, the struggle and activity of Political Soldiers is at the heart of theory and practice:

the Third Position seeks to build a New Social Order that it recognizes that all peoples and cultures, who adhere to the basic tenets of the Third Position, must work together closely in an air of mutual trust and support. Since the victory of a National Revolution in one part of the world is a victory for all Third Positionists, it follows that each affiliated member must be prepared to give moral, financial or technical assistance, where possible, should a revolutionary situation emerge in any given country. Parochialism in an age when the One World Ideology is striding to total victory is a complete negation of everything we profess, and thus is vigorously rejected by the Third Position.³³

According to Adam Gmurczyk, the weakness of modern Europe lies in the negation of anti-Semitism. According to him, anti-Semitism has always been the strength of European civilization:

Europe, the center of the whole Christian civilization, is dying. She is dying because she is deprived of her main vital force, anti-Semitism. [...] Europe was great, it was Christian, because it was anti-Semitic. Anti-Semitism, however, is not a simple negation of a certain type of culture and a set of behaviors. Indeed, our civilization was born as a truly creative rebellion against the Jews. The answer to the Judaic envy was the love of neighbor, to the Semitic bestiality — the Christian culture, to the religious perfidy — the fidelity to God and His commandments.³⁴

The rejection of anti-Semitism can therefore be interpreted as a rejection of the struggle, a permanent war the other side of which was supposed to be its opposite: peace, culture, national identity and Christian morality. They are not possible to achieve without anti-Semitism. But the end of anti-Semitism through the physical annihilation of the Jews would be the end of civilization, the ideal model of which is shaped by the Third Position’s political thought. Such is the paradox of this current of political thought.

³³ “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

³⁴ A. Gmurczyk, “Antysemityzm – fundament Cywilizacji,” *Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski*, 13.08.2018, <https://www.nop.org.pl/2018/08/13/adam-gmurczyk-antysemityzm-fundament-cywilizacji/> (accessed: 2.07.2019) [transl. by P.M.].

The popular elitism and the contempt for the weak

The ITP advocated for government by the people. In the ITP concepts, everyone and all people together were to be the elite:

This program of political decentralization we call Popular Rule. In its essence, it is a system of self-government by the people which starts at the level of the lowest socially viable unit, and extends through a series of organically linked structures to the national level. It is the direct participation of the entire adult population in the decision-making process — local, regional and national — and draws its strength from the fact that the entire people express their wishes and have these acted upon by duly appointed delegates.³⁵

However, at the same time, the ITP did not tolerate those people who did not live in accordance with the moral principles which the ITP considered right, guided by the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church (as the ITP declared). It did not tolerate the weak, among which they counted, for example, homosexuals and Jews, as well as those who had succumbed to the philosophy of consumerist life. It did not tolerate those who did not want to be Political Soldiers.

The cult of heroism associated with the cult of death.

Everybody is educated to become a hero

The “Declaration” of the ITP leaves no doubt. The education and upbringing of a new generation of Political Soldiers is one the main tasks of the organization:

The Third Position likewise asserts that for this Moral Order to come into being, it is vital that the young, as well as future generations, are taught not merely book knowledge, but also the path of self-sacrifice and spiritual perfection, which give rise to individuals that are virtuous and honorable. By such means, we will raise a people qualitatively superior in all respects to the increasingly dehumanized hordes deliberately being turned out by contemporary “education.”³⁶

Emphasizing the heroism of Political Soldiers, Derek Holland also referred to the idea of Romanian legionarism with the slogan: “Long live death!”³⁷ According to him, a Political Soldier should value faith and ideals more than life.³⁸

The cult of machismo (masculinity, manliness), and hence the disdain for women and nonstandard sexual habits

The ITP opposed divorce and homosexuality, finding them contrary to God’s law and negating the “life-giving principles of the Third Position as an Ideology

³⁵ “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

³⁶ Ibidem.

³⁷ D. Holland, *Political Soldier*, p. 18.

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 11.

and Way of Life.”³⁹ The National Rebirth of Poland in the program document entitled “Wytyczne NOP” [Guidelines] state that the nation’s strength is founded on a healthy and strong family. The organization sought to restore traditional moral values. The party was involved in promoting physical culture, which was intended to contribute to the proper development of young generations, all the while combating what they saw as social pathologies and deviations.⁴⁰ An example of this was the use of the *zakaz pedałowania* (“no faggots allowed”)⁴¹ symbol, which was directed against homosexuality. The image depicted a picture of two men during sexual intercourse, inscribed in the graphic of a slightly modified “no parking” road sign.

The Third Position only gave women the opportunity to pursue traditionally understood social roles of a wife, mother, housewife, or a party activist. Emancipation ideas were associated by ideologues of the Third Position with modernism and feminism. Therefore they were contrary to the traditional social moral order.

Selective populism. Rights of individuals are insignificant,
and the People is conceived as a monolithic entity expressing
the Common Will. This common will is interpreted by the Leader,
and in fact the people are only called on to play the role
of the People The people is a theatrical fiction

The features of Third Position populism include praising the nation and aversion to political parties. The ITP and its member organizations shared the postulate of common governance, according to which harmony and peace within the nation and among nations can be achieved when the nation achieve material and spiritual unity. This idea was expressed in opposition to the practice of democratic states, in which, according to the ITP, nations were being broken up by egoistic interests, and the power was held by unrepresentative political parties and cliques. Therefore, the ITP advocated common governance.

However, the people themselves must act within the Moral Order if their wishes are to be valid; that is to say, the people do not make the “truth” by voting, rather their political actions must conform to Objective Truth. If this were not so, we would be confronted by a crass majoritarianism where “truth” would vary from one day to the next, according to the mood of the people. Beyond the Individual, there will exist two distinct institutions whose tasks will include the upholding of the rights of Truth. Firstly, the State seen not merely as an economic entity, but one also possessed of political and social powers and duties.⁴²

³⁹ “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

⁴⁰ “Wytyczne NOP,” Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski, <https://www.nop.org.pl/wytyczne/> (accessed: 2.07.2019).

⁴¹ In Polish the phrase has an added layer of wordplay, based on fact the most common homophobic slur (*pedał*) also means “pedal.” As such, *zakaz pedałowania* could be translated to “no pedaling [i.e. “faggoting”] allowed.”

⁴² “Third Position — 10 point declaration.”

In a country where the concepts of the Third Position would be implemented, someone would have to determine what the truth is and what moral principles the nation should adhere to. It is the cadre party which would be the group to write the scenario in which the roles played by members of the nation would be defined.

Using Newspeak. Using impoverished vocabulary in order to limit the instruments for critical reasoning

Newspeak is a feature that can be fully revealed when the message in the communication process reaches a wider range than that is available to political movements from the political periphery. This is because since Newspeak is a feature of the party holding power in totalitarian states. But in democratic countries marginal parties also have access to mass media by way of publishing their own magazines (even if quite low-circulation ones), or via the internet. These published texts contain a multitude of individual words and whole sentences characterized by artificiality, used to generate emotions and aimed at manipulating human emotions and directing their behavior.

The documents and articles of the ITP and the organizations that formed it often contained terms militarizing social life. The terms of citizen and man were replaced by the Political Soldier and Lonely Scout.⁴³ In the program of Roberto Fiore's party the open and principled objection to immigration as well as the proposal to remove or expel immigrants from Europe were replaced by the concept of repatriation of immigrants, enabling them to return to Africa, helping to rebuild Africa and protecting the rights of African peoples to live in dignity on their own land.⁴⁴ In the program texts of Adam Gmurczyk's organization the world was presented as dichotomous, populated by a million-strong mass of good people and the evil elites that were exploiting them. This organization did not propose any reforms of the state, "because it is impossible to save a hovel, which still stands only owing to the iron shackles of economic oppression and police and political repression." Integration with the European Union allegedly led to the liquidation of Poland, and the pro-EU political elites practiced "political prostitution for the benefit of foreign countries."⁴⁵

To limit critical thinking, emotions were also evoked by using slurs and vulgar language. Their aim was to discredit ideological enemies and their description. Vulgarisms also had a delimitation function, i.e. they separated two social worlds: the world of one's own and the world of foreigners and aliens.

⁴³ A. Gmurczyk, "Rewolucja integralna," p. 23.

⁴⁴ Forza Nuova, "8 Punti."

⁴⁵ "Zasady programowe."

Conclusion

The above analysis leads to the conclusion that the political thought of the Third Position meets the definition criteria of Eternal Fascism, formulated by Umberto Eco. However, even a cursory analysis of the contacts of the ITP representatives with other organizations and political parties in Europe and elsewhere raises the question about similarities between the political thought of the ITP and elements of political thought of other political movements that do not directly identify themselves with the Third Position. However, they are keenly interested in international cooperation to oppose democratic states, neoliberalism and globalization in general. They motivate their opposition with ideas they portray as nationalistic. In view of the above, there is an urgent need for research into the political thought of such political currents as radical nationalism, national Bolshevism, national anarchism, white supremacy and Strasserism. At the beginning of the 21st century, they constituted a margin among the currents of political thought. Nevertheless, the multitude of organizations and their propaganda activity may indicate that this margin is expanding. This may cause a threat to democracy in the future.

A cure that could mitigate their significance may be the reduction of flaws of democracy on which radical movements build on their argumentation. This problem may be remedied by the dissemination of knowledge about the advantages of democracy and its mechanisms, as well as promoting culture and universal access to it, so that contemporary man is not passive in a machine run by demagogues and anonymous elites. Education and the formation of democratic mentality and customs, i.e. civil society may also act as a viable barrier to radical ideas. These postulates should be supplemented with actions to minimize income and property inequality within and between societies and the development of the middle class, which should be the foundation of a democratic state.

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