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Apartheid, authoritarianism, and anticolonial struggles viewed from the Right: critical perspectives on A. James Gregor's search for fascism in the Global South[1]

After his commitment to the eventually failed defence of segregation in the United States during the 1960s, political scientist A. James Gregor (1929-2019) created an extensive oeuvre on the history of Fascism and its ideology. While personally remaining an *éminence grise*, his ideo-centric approach proved influential in international academic discussions. He helped foster an approach centred on the representation of ideological aspects of Fascism at the expense of the critical analysis of other historical elements, thus obscuring Fascism's societal roots. Moreover, Gregor's definition of Fascism, intrinsically linked to his understanding of a developmental dictatorship, blurs the line between colonialism and anticolonial struggles. In his works on Fascism in the Global South, written during the Cold War, Gregor does not find developmental regimes akin to the Mussolini dictatorship among the largely pro-Western right-wing authoritarianisms that emerged

1 The author owes his deepest thanks to Katrin Becker for the kindest support imaginable.

in the Tricont, but rather within the largely left-wing national liberation fronts and the political systems they built up. This peculiar verdict is linked to Gregor's own apologia of historical Italian Fascism and more recent right-wing dictatorships in the so-called Third World, like, for instance, the Apartheid regime, and to his simultaneous denigration of anticolonial struggle as it was pursued i.a. by the anti-Apartheid movement. Through a critique of ideology which delineates and analyses Gregor's argument evolving around these themes, this article contests his political compass in his search for Fascism in a historical-critical manner and offers an alternative proposition on how to identify the historical and contemporary role of far-right politics in the world system of capitalism.

Keywords: anticolonialism, apartheid, developmental dictatorship, fascism, A. James Gregor

The legacy of an influential scholar

When influential political scientist A. James Gregor (1929-2019) died on 30 August 2019, the most vocal obituaries for one of the "grey eminences" (Papanastasiou 2007: 124) in the field of Fascist Studies did not hail from his North American home. While Gregor was held in high esteem by international colleagues such as Zeev Sternhell (1986: VII) or Stanley Payne (1995: XIII) during his lifetime, the most emphatic condolences were expressed by exponents of the political (Far) Right in Italy. For example, Renzo Morera (2019) praised the Professor Emeritus of the University of California as "the professor who loved Italy"[2] in the country's foremost newspaper *Corriere della Sera*. Morera (2010) is a former combatant of the final incarnation of the Mussolini regime, the so-called Republic of Salò in the last phase of World War II. At the same time, Valerio Benedetti (2019), a leading member of the notorious Neo-Fascist Casa Pound movement, called Gregor the "greatest expert of Fascist ideology". Some of Gregor's, mainly Italian, admirers gathered in late 2020 to celebrate their forebear's work in an online conference. The by-now published hagiographic proceedings of that event include an article by Phillip Gray, the only contributor to the volume currently residing and working in the Global South.[3] According to Gray, a self-professed conservative in the tradition of the US-American New Right (Gray and Mattingly-Jordan 2018), Gregor's analysis of Fascism as the proto-type of a developmental dictatorship "serves as an active area for investigation in comparative development studies and postcolonial studies" (Gray 2021: 92).

2 All non-English sources are translated by the author, except where stated otherwise.

3 Gray is a political scientist at the Texas A&M University campus, located in the authoritarian Gulf monarchy of Qatar.

Gray refrains from explaining in detail how Gregor's work should serve this purpose, especially what with its alleged fruitfulness as regards postcolonial studies. His remark nonetheless serves as a point of departure for a more critical perspective on Gregor's work in this article. Although Gregor's ideo-centric[4] theses have proven highly significant for the development of the international academic discussion on Fascism (see the detailed critical survey in Becher 2020), he has remained an *éminence grise*. A critical look at Gregor's search for Fascism[5] in the so-called Third World, and his corresponding findings, not only sheds light on the work of an important but often overlooked scholar but also serves as a contribution to research on contemporary and historical forms of far-right politics in the Global South more generally. Gregor's approach obscures *societal root causes of Fascism* (Clemenz 1972), naming Benito Mussolini as having "fabricat[ed] an ideology that carried within itself the potential of the future political victory" as early as 1919 (Gregor 1979b: 233), and, as will be shown, blurs the line between colonialism and anticolonial struggle. Thus, a historical-critical scientific disputation of his approach is needed. Accordingly, the article analyses Gregor's work and contests his definition of Fascism which is intrinsically linked to his understanding of a developmental dictatorship, for which, in his view, historical Fascism delivered the paradigm (see e.g. Gregor 1969: XIII). It encompasses intertwining outlooks on classical European, especially Italian Fascism, anticolonial movements in Tricont[6] nations and the South African Apartheid regime. Here, the reader encounters two 'Fascisms' within Gregor's politically biased works, displaying a view from the right[7]: a benign White Fascism and a dangerous Black 'Fascism', both intersecting with conceptions of race. In this, a marked continuity with Gregor's own support for the US segregationist cause in the 1960s is to be found. Hence, the article offers an alternative proposition on how to identify the place of Fascism within the world system of capitalism (Amin 1991). For this purpose, the necessary critique of ideology[8], following the Marxist tradition (Losurdo 2020: 431), extends

4 Roger Griffin, as one of the most prominent proponents of ideo-centrism in Fascist studies, has accurately described the potential problems of his own approach in a summary of positions critical toward the latter. He delivers a nutshell definition in a textbook contribution co-written by Constantin Iordachi (2018: 557), in which he describes said approach as "excessively centred on ideology", thus "deflect[ing] attention from fascism as a form of action, activism and government, and social praxis".

5 This refers to Gregor's (2000) article of the same title as well as to his (2006) monograph similarly titled.

6 Tricont is a denotation for the whole of the three continents of Africa, Asia, and Latin America from an anticolonial perspective.

7 This refers to Julius Evola's (2013) pamphlet with a similar title containing his right-wing 'critique' of historical Fascism.

8 The article follows Leo Kofler's (1975) concept of ideology.

to the ideology of Fascism itself as well as Gregor's (and his acolytes') account of it and highlights the crucial distinctions between colonialism and anticolonialism blurred in Gregor's work.

Mussolini instead of Marx: developmental regimes in the Global South

While it may be viewed as an exaggeration, A. James Gregor (1974: 139) was not completely wrong when he claimed, in his monograph on *The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics*, that Italian Fascism "is perhaps the least understood political movement of the twentieth century". As irony would have it, Gregor's own writings do not enhance this understanding, at least not if they are received uncritically. The "prolific author of some 45 books and monographs" (Hsia Chang 2021) offered an interpretation of Fascism, concentrating on its alleged "theoretical and ideological substance that was both interesting and sophisticated" (Gregor 1979b: X – see the antithesis in Mack Smith 1980), rendering the movement and the regime it instigated as revolutionary and as pursuing modernising aspirations. For more than half a century, Gregor's publications, many of them released under the auspices of celebrated publishing houses, regularly crossed the border to outright apologia. However, Gregor saved some of his most lucid expositions in this vein for very special occasions.

For instance, the Berkeley Professor appeared in Rome in 1983 in order to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Benito Mussolini, *il Duce* of Italian Fascism, joining among others Italy's most important apologetic historian Renzo De Felice, far-right entrepreneur Giuseppe Ciarrapico, the then-president of the Italian Neo-Fascist Party MSI[9] Nino Tripodi, and the editor-in-chief of the MSI's newspaper, Alberto Giovannini. Delivering *in nuce* material that would be the basis for the praise he was to receive by the contemporaneous Italian Far Right upon his death, Gregor (1991: 4818)[10] paints Mussolini as the single most important

9 The self-professed Italian Social Movement (Movimento Sociale Italiano, MSI) was founded in 1946 by former officials of the Republic of Salò. Current Italian prime minister Giorgia Meloni started her political career in its youth wing and her Fratelli d'Italia are heirs to the MSI tradition.

10 The text was originally published in Italian shortly after the conference in a Rome-based journal with Neo-Fascist ties (Gregor 1983a). A few years later the piece was assembled in an edited volume, together with the interventions of the aforementioned and further contributors to the celebrations in honour of Mussolini. This book also collected speeches of praise for manifold aspects of the *ventennio nero* (the Italian historical period between 1922 and 1943/45) and corresponding lections for the then-present that were held on the occasion of other festivities the Italian Far Right had organised for the *Duce*. In addition to Gregor (1986) the book featured i.a. Neo-Fascist leaders Giorgio Almirante and Pino Rauti as well as eventual foreign minister Gianfranco Fini. The quotations in this article are taken from the English version of Gregor's speech that was published in 1991.

politician and thinker of the century: "Mussolini put together a movement and established a regime that sought to address not only specifically Italian problems, but problems that were more generic in character – problems that have come to characterize the twentieth century in its entirety. In effect, [...] Mussolini was the progenitor of a vast, if ill-defined historic movement, that to this day continues to influence the lives of much of mankind." As the founding father of the epoch of modern authoritarianism (Gregor 1991: 4823), Mussolini "may have been the first exemplar of a continuing series of important contemporary historic figures, and the system he created may be paradigmatic of a broad and as yet ill-defined class of revolutionary movements that, for good or ill, will continue to shape our century, our lives, our fortunes, and our futures" (Gregor 1991: 4832).

Listing leaders who fronted movements of this kind or regimes that were directed by such movements and construing them as developmental dictatorships for the purposes of 'Third World' countries, Gregor (1991: 4829) collects very different, in some cases opposing political figures as Mussolini's alleged heirs in the second half of the 20th century: Juan Perón (Argentina), Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Fidel Castro (Cuba), Mao Zedong (China), Chiang Kai-Shek (Taiwan), Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam), Enver Hoxha (Albania), Muammar al-Gaddafi (Libya), and Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana). In another instance, he adds African leaders Léopold Senghor (Senegal), Sékou Touré (Guinea), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), and Modibo Keïta (Mali) to the list of possible emulators of the Mussolini model (Gregor 1968: 277). While the mention of Chiang[11] signals the inclusion of at least one ruler who is to be characterised as right-wing (Davies and Lynch 2002: 303), the majority of these leaders are usually understood to be leftists of different shades. It is striking that these are identified as heirs of Fascism, whereas Gregor (1999: 13) exculpated the Italian Far Right, with whom he was celebrating the anniversary of Mussolini's birth, claiming that the "MSI's program was not, in any significant sense, Fascist." However, according to Gregor (1991: 4828-4829), "every revolutionary regime characterizes its responsibilities as those identified by the theoreticians of Fascism. Its task is to liberate the 'proletarian nation' from the trammels of 'international plutocracy' or the 'multinationals'. Rapid economic development, an undertaking Marx had assigned to the 'bourgeois epoch', has now become the obligation of the revolutionary state and the 'vanguard leadership'."

While, in Gregor's view, Fascism plays a paradigmatic role for revolutionary developmental regimes, its place in history displays a dialectical tension with its simultaneous uniqueness – a view which he successfully inserted into the

11 In the *Encyclopedia Americana* Gregor (1996) categorised Taiwan as a successful authoritarian regime with modernising aspirations. Meanwhile, Chiang was considered a hero among Italian Neo-Fascists (see e.g. Zoratto 1986).

Encyclopedia Americana when authoring the lemma on Fascism (Gregor 1998). In his opus magnum *The Ideology of Fascism*, Gregor (1969: XIII) defines Fascism "as a developmental dictatorship appropriate to partially developed or underdeveloped, and consequently status deprived, national communities in a period of intense international competition for place and status". He expected "the revolutions in underdeveloped countries facing the same problems and entertaining the same aspirations toward status in international competition to take on some of the criterial attributes of, and provide essentially the same vindications as, paradigmatic Fascism". Gregor's (1969: XII) identification of the Mussolini dictatorship "as the first revolutionary mass movement regime which aspired to commit the totality of human and natural resources of an historic community to national development", leads to the question of how he actually conceives 'development'. He uses the term "to refer to a comprehensive process of socioeconomic change that includes emphatic attitudinal and institutional alterations requisite to the creation of a modern productive system. Development refers to both modernization – the secularization of belief systems, the invocation of scientific techniques for the resolution of problems, the urbanization of populations, increments in literacy, the reduction of parochialism and regionalism, and the expansion of information and communication systems – and industrialization – the employment of technological innovation to enhance per capita productivity, the spread of commerce, and the expansion and diversification of manufacturing and extractive plants, as well as the steady and sustained growth of the gross national product. Conjoined with development understood in this broad sense is political development, the increased regulative and extractive capability of the state." (Gregor 1979a: 303) Consequently, Gregor (1979a: XII) goes so far as to argue that failing "to appreciate Fascist modernizing and industrializing intention" is a failure to grasp Fascism and its ideology.

As already hinted at with Gregor's nod to Marx, the relationship of said ideology to Marxism is something to be dealt with, especially in a context that concerns the role of Fascism and Marxism in a decolonising world. Marxism's legacy has made itself visible in the anticolonial struggles of the 20th century (Losurdo 2016) and continues to do so in 21st century decolonisation (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Ndlovu 2022). Gregor (1978: XI), however, looks maliciously at the "curious intellectual perversity that led the academicians of our time to imagine that the revolutions that characterize the twentieth century were somehow inspired by Marxism". *Prima facie* this seems to contradict another of his findings which conversely constitutes one of his core formulae: "Fascism was, in a clear and significant sense, a Marxist heresy. It was a Marxism creatively developed to respond to the particular and specific needs of an economically retarded national community condemned, as a proletarian nation, to compete with the more advanced

plutocracies of its time for space, resources, and international stature" (Gregor 1979a: 121). This seeming contradiction alludes to a tension in the foundation of Gregor's main theses. To understand this, it is important to know that Gregor, in his early writings of the 1950s published in the journal *The European*, associated with British Fascist politician Sir Oswald Mosley, schematically constructed two distinct types of 'Marxism': On the one hand, a negatively perceived deterministic-materialistic variant, that would eventually result in dogmatic communism, in which man is a mere passive pawn of objective historical developments; on the other, a creative-idealistic variant, in which man makes history. Gregor (1956) lent the latter his sympathy and tied Fascism to it, although its descriptions actually bore more resemblance to syndicalism, since Gregor identified Georges Sorel as one of its pillars. Thus, Gregor's preferred, heretic 'Marxism' resembled a political tendency that was the heir to Marxism's most prominent competitor within the labour movement, i.e. anarchism (Hofmann 1971: 18).

In line with Gregor's declared goal to "undermine our Marxists" (cited in accordance with Jackson 2005: 194), stated in the early 1960s, this alleged 'Marxism' contrasts sharply with what is usually understood as Marxist especially as regards class struggle, internationalism, and human emancipation. This becomes apparent with an exemplary look at the trajectory of Edmondo Rossoni. The former syndicalist rose to the position of national leader of the Fascist pseudo-unions during the time of the regime. In the spring of 1926, he declared that the "conquest of colonies for the fatherland" would only be possible via "the cooperation between capital and labour, organised solidly and in a Fascist manner" (cited in accordance with Slobodskoj 1948: 82-83). No sign of a social movement was traceable here. Moreover, what was left of syndicalism amounted to a class-collaborationist corporatism in the service of a colonial empire, integrating the labour force by terror.[12] Legitimising the violent prevention of a potential outcome of class struggles that could bring about a redistribution of societal labour, Rossoni's proclamation indicates the demarcation line between the aspect of a purposeful programme and the element of manipulative demagoguery within the ideology of Fascism. While the former has to be identified by analysing Fascism praxeologically (Reichardt 2004), the latter guides Gregor's approach which "leaves him quoting uncritically from Mussolini's writings" (O'Brien 2005: 7).

12 Antonio Gramsci (1977: 191) foresaw this characteristic of the later Fascist regime as early as 1920: "No violence will be spared in subjecting the industrial and agricultural proletariat to servile labour: there will be a bid to smash once and for all the working class's organ of political struggle (the Socialist Party) and to incorporate its organs of economic resistance (the trade unions and co-operatives) into the machinery of the bourgeois State."

Gregor's exercise nonetheless serves a two-fold purpose: he awards Fascism with a revolutionary and progressive side which it inherits from its alleged socialist origins and, at the same time, Marxism is painted as potentially bearing fruit from a political agenda akin to Fascist totalitarianism.[13] This is of use for any project of rehabilitation with regard to Fascism, since it not only frees the latter from its reactionary reputation but Fascism is also portrayed as superior to 'classical' Marxism, transcending all the shortcomings Gregor attributes to it. The Far Right thus appears as the true initiating force of vital radical politics in the 20th century, adequately equipped for a developmental course (Gregor 1974: 400). This discourse serves conservative projects of discrediting anticolonial movements in the Global South as totalitarian threats.

Fascism and 'proletarian nations'

A case in point is Gregor's treatment of "[n]ational insurgency and anticolonialist movements in Africa" (Gregor 1969: 365) in the 20th century and their "attempt to close the enormous gap separating them [...] from the developed nations of the earth" (Gregor 1968: 278-279). According to Gregor (1968: 279), this attempt puts them in "international competition" that is "drawn not along class lines of the international proletariat versus the international bourgeois class, but between proletarian [...] and privileged nations". Quoting US-American geostrategist Zbigniew Brzeziński's fears of "[g]rowing anarchy in the Third World", involving "racist and nationalist passions" and creating "major pockets of disruption and chaos in the world" in the epigraph to the final chapter of *The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics*, Gregor (1974: 394) joins those sceptical toward processes of decolonialisation that had escaped (Western) control. Enter the two 'Fascisms' in Gregor's oeuvre: while he praised Italian Fascism as what he viewed as a relatively benign variant of modernisation in the final book published in his lifetime (Gregor 2019: 100-101), the 'Fascist' chimaera Gregor situates in the liberation fronts of the Global South during the Cold War looks less favourable. Conjuring the image of an imminent flood of the masses turning the orderly world upside down, an image

13 The classical doctrine of totalitarianism as formulated e.g. by Carl Joachim Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzeziński (1965) is of doubtful scientific value in its phenomenological equation of Fascist and socialist political systems (Hagtvet and Kühnl 1980: 34-35). It might be useful to speak of a Fascist totalitarianism as regards the Italian case as, in the political sphere, the historical period characterised by the claim to all-pervading power after the end of the initially pursued "system of compromises with other [bourgeois – Ph.B.] political groups" (Togliatti 1976: 140) and as, in the economic sphere, a phase of increased state intervention in service of finance capital (Togliatti 1976: 24), replacing the preceding *liberista* economic policy on the one hand (see Mattei 2022) and to ensure a more effective control of the working force according to capitalism's needs on the other (Togliatti 1976: 103).

present within the anti-democratic fibre of historical Fascism as well (Landa 2018), Gregor (1974: 402) argues that "the prevailing rates of population growth in Africa, Asia, and Latin America" make it likely that "the nationalist contest for space and for resources in those areas" becomes "increasingly exacerbated".

In attributing the "malevolent features" of an "originally benign" historical Fascist racism to the alleged "political pressure of association with National Socialist Germany", Gregor (1968: 311) apologetically neglects home-grown Italian racism. By contrast, he (1974: 402-403) paints the prospective horrors of 'Third World' Fascism in the bleak colours of looming genocidal violence. With a peculiar wording, he speculates that in those places where decolonising struggles "become particularly vicious and taxing, one can even expect some form of racism to manifest itself – to produce a variant of the exacerbated fascism that makes racism a technique for maintaining high emotional salience, commitment, and dedication. If it is the case that there are fascisms of various degrees of malevolence, the form that might well accompany struggles for living space in South Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia might very well develop into racial fascisms not far removed, in terms of potential horror, from that which laid waste to Europe during the Second World War."

Similarly, Gregor (1974: 406) indicates "that the demands of rapid economic development, population pressure, the presence on the southern tip of the continent of non-Negroes, the existence of a racial fault that cuts across North Africa dividing Arabs and blacks, conjoined with the pervasive sense of status deprivation that afflicts the new nations of the continent, might very easily give rise to, or has given rise to, modern analogues of the ugliest of pre-war fascist movements." In a period when the Apartheid regime in Pretoria had already unleashed *its actual* violence, on which Gregor fails to comment, he (1969: 370) furthermore warns of *other potential* dangers, since "black Africa's effort to resolve the problem of a white South Africa might very well take on the character of a military adventure. To all this one must add the potential violence which hovers over Africa's non-Negro minorities given the Africanist postures of some of its indigenous nationalist movements."

In 1968, the renowned publisher Random House released Gregor's work on *Contemporary Radical Ideologies*, in which a similar picture of the menace of Black "racial chauvinism" is painted and a "potential source of continental if not worldwide threat" is evoked (Gregor 1968: 312). Whereas Gregor (1982) was extremely indulgent in his apologetic look at Fascist atrocities in 1920s Italy, depicting them as a mere reaction to left-wing violence, he portrays the guerrilla fighters of several national liberation fronts in the Tricont as reincarnations of not so charitable looking Fascist warriors: He claims that "[o]nce again the hero

'half-soldier and half-monk' conjured up by José Antonio [Primo De Rivera]", the leader of the Spanish Fascists in the 1930s, "the 'worker-soldier' of Ernst Jünger", the German nationalist writer[14], "and the 'warrior youth' of Robert Brasillach," the French antisemite agitator and collaborationist, "have become the models for revolutionary youth throughout the underdeveloped world" (Gregor 1974: 412). In sum, the project of White Fascism, as implemented in Italy before 1945, looks friendly and deserves empathy and even sympathy, while the Black 'Fascism' Gregor locates in the anticolonial struggles of the post-war era looks ugly and is depicted as a real danger.[15]

This seemingly inevitable juxtaposition of White vs. Black harks back to Gregor's own earlier activism concerning 'race relations': In the 1960s, Gregor was personally involved in an attempt to deter democratic endeavours of integration in the fields of education and housing in the United States, joining the combined efforts of conservatives, Neo-Nazis, and elements of the Southern segregationist establishment (Jackson 2005). In an article for the *Eugenics Review* he wrote: "Anything more than a casual or temporary contact between widely diverse races, in precapitalistic as well as capitalistic times, provokes prejudice and discrimination and a subsequent rationalization for felt preferences" (Gregor 1961: 221). In line with his own depiction of the alleged "elementary social fact" of "preference for one's kind" as quasi-natural, racial prejudice is just "the obverse image of preferential association" (Gregor 1961: 222).

In view of Gregor's thoughts on the subject of Fascism in the Global South, the critical social scientist is faced with two major problems: first, it is obvious that Gregor's analysis of developmental regimes is at least as determinist as the Marxist bogeyman he paints. The inevitability with which Gregor underpins the Fascist option as the most sensible solution to the compulsion to modernise – resulting from a competition between nations that is presented as almost inescapable – corresponds to the teleological trait that he ascribes to the Marxist interpretation of history (Gregor 1965).[16] In Gregor's writings we see "the Fascist perpetrators [...] stylised as the vicarious agents of a practical, albeit rather decrepit, *Weltgeist*" (Fritzsche 1998: 328). Second, Gregor renders colonialist and anticolonialist projects indistinguishable when he points at supposed Fascist

14 Evoking Jünger to depict tricontinental liberation movements as Fascist did not prevent Gregor's (1976) contribution to a right-wing Italian journal for which Jünger served as an international editor.

15 In this article, the terms "black" and "white" are understood as social categories in accordance with Balibar and Wallerstein (1991: 198-200).

16 It is interesting to note that Gregor (1963: 13870), in a letter to Raya Dunayevskaya, was ready to acknowledge that his then-forthcoming *Survey of Marxism* was "quite pedestrian" apart from "the only good part", i.e. "the section on the early Marx" – and even that merit has since been disputed by critics (see e.g. Restuccia 1970).

traits in African national liberation movements and in regimes built up by those movements. This is of particular importance as regards Gregor's parallelisation of the "language" of early 20th century Italian Nationalism, crucial in affording Fascism its programmatic substance (Togliatti 1976: 36), and "anticolonialist Africa" (Gregor 1969: 378). While it is true that some of the latter's proponents spoke of their countries as 'proletarian nations', it is doubtful whether this focus on nations as "historical protagonists" actually "bespeaks a greater kinship to fascism than it does to any form of socialism" (Gregor 1968: 306). Senegalese Marxist Lamin N'Diaye (1963: 61) attributed the usage of the formula 'proletarian nations' among his African Socialist contemporaries to the influence of "Pierre Moussa, a French 'technocrat' and general inspector of finances" who in the late 1950s had released a book on the subject (Moussa 1959). N'Diaye (1963: 63) dismisses the term on the grounds that it obliterates the capitalist causes of (post)colonial exploitation and that it is "an invitation to end the struggle for total political and economic liberation, to cut off all contact with the working class in the capitalist countries, and to avoid the choice between capitalist or non-capitalist courses of development" (N'Diaye 1963: 64). What is more, the aim for which Italian Fascism had tried to mobilise with the notion of the Apennine peninsula being a 'proletarian nation' differed heavily from the project of anticolonial liberation. As early as 1916, Antonio Gramsci (1972) criticised the concept with reference to the leading Italian Nationalist and subsequent Fascist Enrico Corradini: Plundering terminology with a Marxian sound, Corradini, in Gramsci's view, uses the term 'proletarian nation' to legitimise the aggressive ambitions of the Italian upper classes, thus propagating imperialist war. Gramsci was proved right – twice: The first time during the so-called Great War while Gramsci wrote about Corradini; the second time in the Fascist period beginning shortly after World War I and leading up to World War II. Corradini's (1973: 159) explicit pursuit of "colonial expansion", like Rossoni's, thus clearly did not amount to questioning imperialism, as the anticolonial movements later would, but rather to the recommendation of climbing the ladder among the imperialist powers to which Italy already belonged, albeit at a position that was perceived as lower than Nationalists and Fascists desired. This expansion was to be undertaken at the cost of oppressed nations, as was the case in Italy's wars in Libya in the 1920s and in Ethiopia in the 1930s. Fascist Italy's bloody race for a 'place in the sun', which it pursued as a self-professed 'proletarian nation', cast a dark shadow on the populations of other nations, especially in Africa. We thus witness a peculiar case of retortion, i.e. "a triple procedure of reprise-reappropriation, of misdirecting and redirecting an adverse argument" (Taguieff 2001: 7), in Gregor's insinuation that anticolonial movements harbour similar ambitions as the colonial oppressors of yore.

One might attribute this problem to the ideo-centric approach of taking "fascism's ideological dimension seriously" (Griffin 2011: 97), which often amounts to a certain positivism that lets the Fascists' propagandistic self-representation slip into a definition of Fascism with no regard to actual history, often conflicting with propaganda. Gregor, however, is not even consistent within his own ideo-centrism. While Fascist primary sources are regularly quoted at length in Gregor's writings, especially when they serve to portray the Mussolini regime as a "rosewater dictatorship" (Landa 2018: 187), the African Socialist leaders, presumed as strong contenders for the next Mussolinis, are only highly selectively cited. This is especially clear when taking the decided stance of Tanzanian Christian Socialist leader Julius Nyerere into account. His 1967 text "Socialism is not Racialism" was published before the above-quoted utterings by Gregor but ignored by him when locating Fascism on the African continent, as Nyerere's position clearly counters the US-American scholar's narrative. Nyerere (1967: 69) unequivocally stated that "fascism and racialism can go together, but socialism and racialism are incompatible". He views Fascism as "the highest and most ruthless form of the exploitation of man by man; it is made possible by deliberate efforts to divide mankind and set one group of men against another group" (Nyerere 1967: 70). Seeking national liberation while retaining the category of class, Nyerere (1967: 69) adheres to the humanist aims of socialism, according to which there should be "no exploitation of one man by another". Identifying "human equality" as the "basis of socialism", he claims that "[s]ocialism is not for the benefit of black men, nor brown men, nor white men, nor yellow men. The purpose of socialism is the service of man, regardless of colour, size, shape, skill, ability, or anything else." Thus, the project of Tanzanian national liberation did not stray from universalism and was clearly at odds with Fascism. And yet, Nyerere (1967: 70) did not claim that there were no traits of Fascism to be found in Africa at all, but he suggested that they were not present in his own country but rather further down south: in South Africa.[17]

Apologia for apartheid and pro-Western authoritarianism

Back-to-back with Gregor's treatment of African Socialism in his *Contemporary Radical Ideologies*, the reader finds a chapter on Apartheid (Gregor 1968: 221-276). This is of high interest, given the ubiquitous references to White South Africa in the above-quoted writings of Gregor. This is even more interesting bearing in mind that, along with Nazi Germany and Apartheid South Africa, the segregationist US-American South was one of the "three great racist regimes" (Jackson 2005:

17 An analysis similar to Nyerere's view of South African Fascism can be found in the works of Walter Rodney (e.g. 2018: 113 and 183).

5) of the last century – and that Gregor had tried to come to its rescue in the 1960s, as illustrated above. Gregor (1969: 245) dissociates the Apartheid regime, as it was established in South Africa after the National Party's ascent in 1948, from Fascism. While the peculiar features of the political system that ruled South Africa between 1948 and 1994, like the existence of a white parliament elected on the basis of a racially exclusive franchise, indeed pose a problem for the characterisation of the Apartheid regime (Wolpe 1988: 46-47), the question whether "South Africa might fall under the categories provided by a theory of fascism" (Kühnl 1972: 76) has been investigated in a serious manner by critical scholars (see the overview in Wolpe 1988: 24-47) – but not by Gregor. In addition, many of the guerrilla fighters in the armed wing of the African National Congress explicitly viewed themselves as successors to the struggles for the defence of the Spanish Republic in the 1930s or as heirs to the fight against the Axis powers in World War II (Hyslop 2021: 77, 92), thus placing themselves in the tradition of Anti-Fascism – and not in the tradition of 'Fascism' which Gregor diagnosed as being virulent within the anticolonial movements.

Reading Gregor's denigration of the insurrectionary forces of the Global South as being on the verge of conducting genocidal violence, it is hard to believe that he looks at the same movements who in the South African case only resorted to armed anti-Apartheid resistance after the Pretoria regime deliberately chose to crush peaceful protests, especially at the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 (Butler 2012: 36-37). And yet, even under these circumstances the anti-Apartheid movement never ruled out other forms of opposition struggle, such as "mass mobilisation, underground organisation and international solidarity" (Butler 2012: 45). After the consolidation of the regime in the period from 1948 to 1960 by way of 'legal' measures suppressing the political organisations of the left and of black liberationists, the period after Sharpeville was characterised by an increasingly armed suppression of the now completely illegalised opposition (Wolpe 1988: 66-71). However, with an obvious nod to the exclusively white parliament in Cape Town, Gregor (1968: 266) even affirms that "South Africa tolerates a multiparty parliamentary apparatus", thus glossing over the oppressive curbing of any real pluralism. Since South Africa saw no parliamentary representation of people of colour at the time of Gregor's writing, his praise of the Pretoria Regime's faux-pluralism is unsubstantiated. The reader is also unable to find any hint at state terror in Apartheid South Africa in his writings. It further poses no problem for Gregor (1968: 269) that "the National [P]arty considers that it possesses the right to rule the majority of the population occupying the territorial confines of South Africa" and he even upholds that the elitist rule the White Nationalists exercise is not "oppressive in the ordinary sense of term".

What the reader gets instead of a critical view on South African state terror is an exposition of Apartheid ideology informed by Gregor's uncritical appraisal of pro-government sources, highlighting one major pitfall of his ideo-centric approach. While Gregor (1968: 240) concedes that "Afrikaner intellectuals (for a variety of historic reasons) were for some time under the influence of National Socialist thought", he asserts that Apartheid "seems to be an autogenous development of the Afrikaner community under the stress of crisis conditions". Gregor's bias very clearly informs his 'analysis'. Hence, said conditions, according to Gregor, are not generated by the colonialism of a special type that the South African regime represented at the time (Wolpe 1988: 28-35), but are influenced by "a pervasive fear of literal extinction on the part of the white community" (Gregor 1968: 253). In line with an earlier comment of his, according to which "[h]istory records no greater tragedy than the attempt by a number of societies to accommodate peoples of visibly divergent race" (Gregor 1961: 222), Gregor displays sentiments similar to those harboured by Wilhelm Röpke (1964: 13), one of the core figures of neoliberalism and forebear of the West German social market economy, who, in his own infamous Apartheid Apologia, called the prospect of "full political equality" for non-White South Africans "national suicide". Both Gregor and Röpke delivered early instances of the 'White Genocide' narrative, most prominently fuelled by former US President Donald Trump in the recent past but originating among exponents of the contemporaneous South African Far Right (Ward 2018). This narrative is central to contemporary discourses of Apartheid nostalgia. In cases where Gregor (1968: 267) mentions repressive methods in passing, such as the 1950 Suppression of Communism Act, he calls them simple "defensive measures", not unlike his representation of Italian Fascist violence in the 1920s. It is telling that Gregor attributes a merely reactive character to the dictatorial methods with which the National Party criminalised not only Communist and other left-wing activities but increasingly discriminated against every opposition to Apartheid. He was obviously ready to evoke South Africa's anti-Communism in order to secure the regime a place in the Western world and to highlight Pretoria's role in the struggle against anticolonial struggles and against any opening of pathways beyond capitalism.

Within the world system of capitalism several options to block such pathways have established themselves in the history of the last century. One of these options is what Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman (1979: 10) call the "Totalitarian Free Enterprise 'Development Model'" of "client fascist states". This model seeks to destroy "all forms of institutional protection for the masses, such as unions, peasant leagues and cooperatives, and political groupings, making them incapable of defending themselves against the larger interests served by the state" (Chomsky and Herman 1979: 11). Thus, seeking and allegedly finding Fascism on the side of

anticolonialism, is an absurd venture – but, given the persistence of the Cold War doctrine of totalitarianism, which differs from Chomsky's and Herman's usage of the term[18], an effective one, nonetheless. This is why it is interesting to note that Gregor, in his commitment to what he perceived as US-American security interests, had also been closely connected to Filipino dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the 1980s (Shalom 1990), another exemplar of what Chomsky and Herman (1979) polemically, but based on a much broader foundation of sources, dubbed "Third World Fascism". According to Gregor (1983b: 9), who uttered these words in a publication for the highly influential neo-conservative Heritage Foundation, the allegedly totalitarian anticolonial movements can give birth to "totalitarian systems [which] are almost always anti-American in orientation, while their authoritarian counterparts are almost always neutral or pro-American". It is not hard to guess where his sympathies with regard to this problematic distinction would lie. And it goes without saying for Gregor that friends of the 'West' like Marcos classify as authoritarian while anticolonial movements appear to be totalitarian. Dictators like Marcos, i.e. "open market authoritarianisms that share significant affinity with Western ideology" (Gregor 1983b: 8), exemplify the bright side that Gregor wants to see in Fascism, while the bleak 'Fascism' Gregor projects on to anticolonial movements serves to delegitimate the latter. If it is true that "[t]he 'idea' always disgraced itself insofar as it differed from the 'interest'" (Marx and Engels 1980: 102), then it is necessary to spell out the connection between the ideas dealt with in this paper and the underlying material interests: making sense of 'Western ideology' means speaking of "capitalist interests: domestic and foreign, short-term and long-term and actual and potential" (Lulat 2008: 157). These are the interests to which Gregor pledges allegiance. "U.S. foreign policy concerns" were not only aligned with Marcos and Apartheid South Africa but also with other contenders for 'Third World Fascism', such as the Pinochet regime in Chile, the Somoza government in Nicaragua, or the Shah dictatorship in Persia (Lulat 2008: 157). In their role as scholars from the Global North critical of imperialism, Chomsky and Herman (1979: 16) formulated that the juntas of the Global South were and are "*our* juntas". Doing this, they attempted to raise attention for Western responsibilities and complicity. In a curious way, their notion has been validated by Gregor's defamation of anticolonialism and simultaneous discursive rescue of Third World regimes of the Far Right.

18 In this regard, Chomsky and Herman are as close to Togliatti (and Gramsci's 1920 prophecy, for that matter) as they are distant from Friedrich and Brzeziński – see footnotes 12 and 13.

Conclusion and prospects

While the Apartheid regime in South Africa is history, the problems this paper deals with are not. Shortly before his death, Gregor (2019: 105) stated that "Africa is the home of impressive demographic and resource potential. It cries out for the suppression of mismanagement and corruption, and for growth and industrial development. That any of that might be accomplished without draconian political controls is devoutly to be wished, but unlikely." This time, the former Berkeley Professor's prophecy of looming authoritarianism on the continent seemed more like an, albeit reserved, recommendation on how to adequately handle new threats to "Western" interests, rather than a warning of the wave of national liberation movements the world saw in the second half of the 20th century. However, the echoes of the summoned spectre of allegedly totalitarian anticolonialism are still present.

In what claims to be a search for Fascism, Gregor obscures the close link between [...] Fascism and attempts to block the historical process of liberation of colonial peoples" (Losurdo 2015: 103) and simultaneously paints anticolonial struggles as a new, dangerous totalitarian 'Fascist' threat. Gregor's identification of 'Fascism' in the Global South within anticolonialism strengthened a discourse that got pro-Western client Fascist states, deemed "pro-American", merely "authoritarian", and inclined to the "open market", out of the line of fire. While this discourse clearly bears the signs of the Cold War, its discursive formations still serve causes relevant to the 21st century. This is even more evident when bringing together the takes of Gregor and Carl Schmitt. In an essay published in the early 1960s under the impression of large guerrilla or partisan movements in the Global South, the former crown jurist of the Third Reich, much like Gregor, saw "racial enmity against the white" (Schmitt 2007: 59) in those movements. Schmitt (2007: 13) further reminded his readers that "in fighting the partisan anywhere, one must fight like a partisan". Gregor's findings, camouflaging *policy as science* (Strünck 2008), have recently found their way into a campaign of a serious discursive retortion (and distortion) in his homeland, where the North American Right, with explicit and ubiquitous reference to Gregor's interpretation of Fascism, accused their left-wing opponents of 'Fascism' (D'Souza 2017). The sophisticated strategy of equating the (Far) Right and the (Anti-Fascist) Left for the benefit of the Right, analysed by Reinhard Opitz (1999: 375) already some 40 years ago, gains new relevance for discussions on Fascism in the Global South: "One can now recommend strengthening the Right as a preventive measure against a new Fascism (by which, of course, one really means the Left) – which, freed from all demagogic masquerades, means in plain language nothing other than recommending the crushing of the Left by the Right."

Thus, the lesson inclined readers might draw from Gregor (and Schmitt) is that in order to fight the faux-Fascists of the largely left-wing, allegedly totalitarian anticolonial movements (or their contemporary heirs today), one must answer with a true, in its own account 'pre-emptive' Fascism in authoritarian, pro-Western attire. This conclusion is not far-fetched, considering Gregor's sympathies for right-wing dictatorships such as the Apartheid regime alongside his denigrations of anticolonial movements. Once again, the Far Right would find a proper place within the world system of capitalism, this time as "openly authoritarian forms of direct Western command and a recolonization totally opposed to the Great Convergence". The latter denotes "the rise of certain former colonial areas" as seen in recent years, which could have the potential of "bringing a massive global redistribution of wealth and power" (Azzarà 2021). With Gregor's (2019: 92) own sympathetic look at former US President Trump as one of the figureheads of Western authoritarianism in populist disguise, it is doubtful where Phillip Gray's hint at Gregor's fruitfulness as regards postcolonial studies leads us. A recent political comment, in which Colombia's first left-wing president (and former guerrilla fighter) Gustavo Petro was denounced as a 'Fascist' while Italy's new right-wing prime minister Giorgia Meloni (and former MSI member) was portrayed as a mere 'Patriot' with explicit recourse to the works of A. James Gregor (Villota Gómez 2022), indicates the direction of this slippery path. If the stimulation Gregor's writings supposedly offer for postcolonial studies amounts to positions of sympathy for new authoritarian measures against attempts of said Great Convergence, critical scholars must be ready to defend the anticolonial heritage of postcolonial studies.[19]

19 This merits special attention in times when the de facto Foreign Minister of the European Union Josep Borrell (2022b) warns that "the jungle could invade the garden", juxtaposing the "European garden" against "[m]ost of the rest of the world" and recycling metaphors used by Apartheid apologists (see Becher, Becker, Rösch and Seelig 2021: 82-83). The urgency of defending the anticolonial heritage increases, considering that Borrell (2022a) locates "a lot of authoritarian regimes" as being "on our side", while lamenting that important countries in the Global South acting "according to their interests" are "not always following us", pointing at contemporary Mexico as yet another example of a left-wing national liberation project in a world characterised by "messy multipolarity" (see also Norton 2022a and 2022b).

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