

Neo-Fascism as A Form of Reconstructing Classical Fascism

A Critical Review Regarding the Characteristics of Contemporary Neo-Fascism in German Society

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New fascism, unlike classical fascism, does not call for war, or rather, racial cleansing, but has moved towards the cleansing of oppressed immigrants under the name of cultural war.

The question of whether German society is on the eve of another fascism and a repetition of fascism in a different guise has long occupied the minds of a large part of the country's population and a significant portion of foreigners who would be among the first victims if fascists came to power. Adorno [1] said that he did not fear the danger of fascism (National Socialism) as an anti-democratic movement but rather feared the danger of fascism in the guise of democracy [2]. This fear of Adorno's was indeed realized at the very beginning of the formation of the democratic Federal Republic of Germany. The post-fascist state of Germany was a democracy without democrats, as Adorno's student Hans-Jürgen Krahel [3], one of the intellectual leaders of the 1968 student movement, had said. What rules in Germany is a post-fascist regime that, contrary to the myth and legend propagated by the post-fascist bourgeoisie since 1945, has never settled accounts with Nazism [4]. And the false project of building a wall between bourgeois "democratic" parties and fascism, or the project of denazification of politics within the framework of the bourgeoisie, is nothing more than an aesthetic, consumable, but ultimately useless promise [5].

Reinhard Kühnl [6] defines fascism as the ideology and movement of seeking the future through a return to the past, which is based on the foundation of a unified nation and the Führer principle, the preservation of private ownership of the means of production, the scapegoat philosophy, and imperialist militarism. As the Marxist historian Ishay Landau [7] says, fascism is nothing but the offspring of liberalism and conservatism and a form of hypercapitalism, contrary to its demagogic pseudo-revolutionary and pseudo-socialist propaganda before gaining power [8] [9]. Fascism, contrary to the perceptions of Comintern representatives like Georgi Dimitrov [10], is not merely the representative of the most reactionary, chauvinistic, and terrorist section of financial capital [11], but rather a movement and current that covers all classes and manifests itself in the form of a pseudo-revolutionary movement but is fundamentally hostile to any radical revolutionary action. The philosophy of fascism is built upon creating enemies and making oppressed human beings a scapegoat [12].

Theodor W. Adorno [13], one of the main representatives of the Frankfurt School in exile in 1945/46, along with writers such as Else Frenkel-Brunswik [14], Daniel J. Levinson [15], and R. Nevitt Sanford [16], opened up a series of issues related to the authoritarian personality by relying on psychological discussions about the reasons for the formation of fascism [17]. Although these discussions speak some truths about fascist movements and personalities, they fall into an epistemological error in understanding the phenomenon of fascism because they reduce it (as Alfred Sohn-Rethel says) not to the logical process of the capitalist system for capital accumulation relying on a form of absolute and relative surplus value, but rather to a cultural phenomenon [18].

Wolfgang Fritz Haug [19] speaks of the fascization of the bourgeois subject and fascism as a form of aesthetic, consumable promise and pseudo-socialism [20] [21]. Leon Trotsky [22], August Thalheimer [23], and Otto Bauer [24] speak of fascism as an extension of Bonapartism and call fascism the Bonapartism of the twentieth century [25] [26]. Clara Zetkin [27] calls fascism the movement of the unorganized and unmobilized hungry masses. Bertolt Brecht [28] calls fascism the naked face of the capitalist system. Reinhard Kühnl calls fascism one of the forms of bourgeois rule and a type of romantic ideology that seeks future liberation by returning to the past. Ernst Nolte, in his habilitation thesis titled "Fascism in Its Epoch," attempted to examine fascism as a phenomenological phenomenon. He called fascism not a form of liberalism or a continuation of conservatism or totalitarianism or any form of Marxism, etc., but rather the expression of "a strange phenomenon and the transnational character of an epoch" [29].

A Look at the Situation of Political Parties in Germany

The German people are heading towards one of the most critical elections in the history of post-fascist Germany, an emergency election, at a time when the Ampel (traffic light) government, consisting of three parties – the SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany), Die Grünen (The Greens), and the FDP (Free Democratic Party) – which had been one of the most repressive and warlike governments in German history since the time of Hitler's Nazism, practically demonstrated its incompetence as a result of corruption and abuse of power. With the spread of distrust among these three parties, the German President Steinmeier [30] officially dismissed the Minister of Economy Christian Lindner, the Minister of Justice Marco Buschmann, and the Minister of Education Bettina Stark-Watzinger on November 7, 2024 [31]. With the dismissal of these three ministers, the rule of one of the most right-wing and authoritarian governments in German history ended, and the issue of an emergency election was placed on the parliamentary agenda. The traffic light government, during the Ukraine-Russia war – contrary to the false claims of the Green Party as part of this coalition – became one of the most militaristic regimes in Europe.

First, it allocated one hundred billion euros to the German army from taxpayers' pockets – taxpayers who overwhelmingly belong to the working class – and then, with financial and logistical support for the right-wing and post-Soviet regime in Ukraine, it practically caused rampant inflation in Germany in this war, which made the working class of this country significantly poorer. The Ukraine war began precisely during a period when the Corona crisis had caused widespread rampant inflation in Europe and around the world. However, the Ukraine war significantly deepened the economic and political crisis in Europe. Following the Ukraine war, in which Germany was directly and indirectly involved, one of the greatest crimes of the present century occurred, namely the attack by the fascist and occupying regime of Israel on Gaza in response to the crime of October 7, 2023, a crime that lasted for over 467 days and resulted in one of the greatest genocides in contemporary history with American and German weapons. One of the crimes that claimed more victims than the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and destroyed ninety percent of the buildings and infrastructure of Gaza, the largest open-air prison and concentration camp in the world [32].

The traffic light government, on the one hand, under the name of Staatsräson (reason of state), its responsibility and commitment towards Israel and the protection of this country due to the systematic killing of Jews by the Nazis in the past, increased its arms exports to occupying Israel tenfold during a time when Palestinians were under daily bombardment by the Zionist fascist regime, and thus played a major role in

the direct genocide of Palestinians. It is said that 98 percent of the bombs dropped on the people of Gaza were gifted to Israel by Germany and the United States. On the other hand, the post-fascist German regime, a regime that considers itself a continuation and indebted to Nazism, is trying to heal the wounds of Holocaust victims by supporting the genocide of Palestinians and supporting other Holocausts through aiding a fascist regime similar to Hitler's Nazism, namely the Zionist fascist regime. For this reason, it had officially established a pseudo-fascist military rule within Germany under the name of "fighting anti-Semitism" and sought to clean its dirty and bloody hands with the clothes of immigrants by portraying anti-Semitism as an imported phenomenon related to asylum seekers who have come from countries of the so-called Third World under Islamic regimes.

In this regard, the far-right German police relentlessly pursued political activists, students, and activists supporting Palestine, arresting people in their homes for Instagram posts in the style of the cyber police of the Islamic Republic, and attacking student activists in universities, sit-ins, protests, strikes, and pro-Palestinian demonstrations.

The traffic light government, in the style of all populists and far-right governments, instead of fighting racism in its entirety, strengthened rampant state racism against immigrants from Islamic countries by searching for "anti-Semitism" among the immigrant community. This action is essentially treating cancer with the plague, and it is inherent in all bourgeois regimes that when they want to distance a crisis from themselves, they look for other victims, victims who have played no role in that crisis, but these very victims are viewed as scapegoats by right-wing governments.

The March of Bourgeois Parties Towards Fascism

It is in this situation that far-right parties like the AfD (Alternative for Germany) are heavily exploiting the crisis and, with a fascist assault from the right on the authoritarian liberal and center-right bourgeoisie, are trying to push society towards absolute fascism. Center-right parties like the Social Democrats, the Greens (Die Grünen), the Christian Democrats and Christian Socials (CDU/CSU), and the neoliberals (FDP), and even the Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW), which split from the Left Party, instead of confronting the increasing fascization of post-fascist German society, are adopting the rhetoric of the far-right and the fascists of the AfD and reproducing it in another form. For example, when the Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance [33] accepts the demands and slogans of the NPD (National Democratic Party of Germany), a party that is essentially the remnants of the Nazi Party and Hitler's fascist regime, demands such as "!"Ausländer raus" (Foreigners out!) and reproduces them in another form like "Unser Land wünscht sich weniger Migration" (Our country wishes for less migration). Or when the center and social democratic parties one after another loudly proclaim the program of deporting asylum seekers and simplifying deportation, then one must conclude that these parties are in fact not seeking to fight the far right and not only lack the ability to resist the new fascist current but are themselves behind the new fascism [34].

When all German parties, from the Left Party to the fascist AfD, hung the flag of the fascist regime of Israel on their party headquarters after the Hamas attack on Israel and declared full solidarity with Israel, none of these parties expressed solidarity with the tens of thousands of Palestinians slaughtered by the fascist regime of Israel. Even the Left Party, which is a postmodern Querfront (cross-front) coalition of liberal, Zionist, and nationalist leftists and Keynesian social democrats, expelled Ramsis Kilani [35], a Trotskyist and Palestinian-origin member of the party, for supporting Palestine. However, the Querfront known as Antideutsch (anti-Germans) and Zionofascists like Dietmar Bartsch and Gregor Gysi and other

reactionary anti-communist Zionofascists who support the genocide of the Palestinian people remain at the head of this party. Not only does the Left Party not expel these authoritarian Zionist Querfronts, but these individuals are themselves the agents of expelling defenders of Palestine within the Left Party [36].

In a situation where the German economy is in recession, where poverty and unemployment have spread, the issue of the environment has become a serious problem, and in the absence of a radical communist and revolutionary mass party in Germany, the center-right is moving further towards the far-right and fascism every day and is in fact embracing fascism. Fascism, through demagogic propaganda, by blaming immigrants as the weakest layers of the working class, by attacking trade unions, by trying to attack critical education in schools and universities, by normalizing misogyny and patriarchy, etc., tries to offer a false promise of liberation.

The economic program of the new fascism in Germany is neoliberal to the core and does not differ from the program of the center parties, and in many cases is even more neoliberal than the most neoliberal program of parties like the Free Democratic Party (FDP). Despite superficially presenting itself as opposing war, the AfD wants to allocate five percent of the state budget to the military, while the current far-right government has allocated only three and a half percent of the state budget to the military, a budget allocated from the pockets of taxpayers for a far-right organization like the German army, and workers will have to pay the price for the one hundred billion euros the government has allocated to this armed extremist organization known as the army for years, because the consequences of compensating this one hundred million fall on the workers. The response of big bourgeoisie to the crisis in Germany is to impose a military rule and militarize society [37].

The right-wing and conservative Christian Democratic Party led by Friedrich Merz [38] managed to pass an anti-immigrant agreement consisting of five articles with a majority of votes in the Bundestag on January 24, 2025. These articles are:

1. Repatriation of asylum seekers at all German borders,
2. Facilitating the possibility of arresting asylum seekers by state police,
3. Providing more prisons for deportees,
4. Allowing states a free hand in deportation on behalf of the government,
5. Arresting dangerous and criminal fugitives for deportation. [39]

These five proposed articles are not only against the "constitution" and the laws of the Geneva Convention for asylum, but they also officially declare a fascist military rule and endanger the existence of the European Union. Fortunately, in the second round for the approval of these anti-constitutional, anti-immigrant, and fascist laws, Friedrich Merz did not succeed in gaining a majority of votes, and several members of parliament within his own party voted against these laws. Of course, the issue of forming a coalition government consisting of the fascist AfD and the far-right conservative and neoliberal Christian Democratic Party has not yet been taken off the table [40].

The coming to power of neo-fascism in Germany will, of course, have differences compared to classical fascism. In Germany, given that almost the vast majority of households have foreign members within their families, the physical elimination of foreigners in the way Hitler and the Nazis intended is practically impossible for German neo-fascist parties, including the AfD and the Christian Democrats, in the current situation, and widespread social and street resistance is on the way. Ultimately, new fascism, as a movement that preys on the weak like all other fascisms, will rely on the expulsion of the most subordinate and weakest

layers of immigrants and asylum seekers who do not have high productivity for the future fascist state and fascist capitalists, and will manage the issue of immigration in a controlled, fascist, and racist manner within the framework of capitalists' interests. Of course, it is necessary to point out in the end that if fascist rule becomes certain after the election on February 23, 2025, the hands of terrorist neo-Nazis will be more open for killing and harassing immigrants, and state and daily racism will proceed much more than before and in a more rampant manner.

What is happening in Germany is a kind of "flexible" fascism [41] that, while attempting to reconstruct old fascism, is in fact seeking a different form of fascism and continuous military rule. This new fascism, on the one hand, like National Socialism, seeks to use legal means to gain political power, and on the other hand, unlike National Socialism, it is trying to turn the economic war with oppressed people and immigrants into a cultural war and hide the real source of poverty and misery of the working class through cultural propaganda and reduce it to the cultural problems of immigrants who are constantly engaged in tax fraud, stabbings, etc. In this regard, the role of the media in shaping neo-fascist thoughts is very prominent.

Simon Strick [42], in his book "Right-Wing Affects: Emotions, Affects, Strategies of Digital Fascism," well presents the issue that today the slogan "No sex with Nazis" has practically become an empty slogan, and everyone goes to bed at night with digital fascism, meaning the smart phones that have fascized many platforms in virtual space through algorithms [43]. Whether fascism will come to power in Germany or not will become clear soon, but is this fascism the same as Hitler's National Socialism? I must say no. The new fascism is in fact a form of authoritarian and police capitalism that, on the one hand, sheds crocodile tears for Jews and supports Zionist networks, and on the other hand, first attacks vulnerable asylum seekers and immigrants and then moves towards the less vulnerable layers of immigrants.

New fascism, unlike classical fascism, does not call for war, or rather, "racial" cleansing, but has moved towards the cleansing of oppressed immigrants under the name of cultural war. New fascism may not kill directly and may not need crematoria, and may still accept "skilled" and ordinary immigrants for cheap labor and menial jobs, but this fascism, while needing foreigners for many service and other jobs, constantly makes vulgar racist attacks against them and considers them the cause of the misery of native workers, so that it, as the representative of authoritarian bourgeoisie, can easily feed on the blood and sweat of native and immigrant workers.

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