

# Political ideology of fascism: essential characteristics, mental prerequisites, key components

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**Abstract.** The authors of the present paper investigate the fascism ideology, reveal its social nature and critically scrutinize its key principles that characterize its matter. Special attention is payed to the research into historical context of fascism, its mental prerequisites that determined reactionary specifics of its ideological orientation. Noticing that today modern politics experiences far-right and neo-fascist trends, while there are no certain criteria to identify particular parties as neo-fascist ones, the authors suppose that one of the most significant criteria is the adherence to the ideology of standard fascism, which can be detected according to a set of key components.

## 1 Introduction

The history of post-Soviet Russia has been experiencing an acute political confrontation between various social groups, whose interests are expressed by relevant political parties, movements and organizations representing almost the entire political spectrum of the country. The right wing of this spectrum includes those who is traditionally designated as radical right and even fascist or neo-fascist groups. In this regard, Vladimir Lukyanov notes, that at the beginning of the XXI century, “in Russia and elsewhere in the world, fascist political forces, especially ultranationalist groups proclaiming ideas of national superiority increased their influence”, which was entailed by strengthening of the fascist ideology in people’s spiritual life [1].

As for Russia, this situation was reasoned by fact that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the influence of previously official communist ideology on people’s mass consciousness noticeably reduced. The reforms, that were introduced within the reign of President Boris Yeltsin and caused a sharp decline in the living quality of the most people in Russia, led to the discredit of liberalism, since the team of young reformers headed by Yegor Gaidar and Anatoly Chubais were inspired by this particular ideology while implementing their initiatives.

The weakening of positions of two previously powerful ideologies resulted in strengthening of the political influence of not only conservatively orientated politics, but also of those who were attracted by models borrowed from classical fascism in terms of politics and ideology. Although any manifestation of fascism in all spheres of public life is

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prohibited, despite the legal responsibility for the rehabilitation of Nazism [2], its devotees quite often declare themselves at various public events, officially denying their true political orientation but uncovering it at the mundane level. At the same time, until now, more than one hundred and fifty radical neo-fascist groups have been functioning in Russia, “embodying their ideology through criminal violence, including murder” [3]. On the other hand, as S.I. Zamogilny and M.A. Virich notice, too liberal interpretation of the term “fascism” leads to the fact that “a large number of authoritarian and nationalist trends” are considered fascist [4]. Moreover, quite often one can hear accusations of fascism against political forces known for their firm anti-fascist views. A good example is that communists are called “red-browns”, which represents a modification of an old mantra that was created in Western countries during the Cold War and indicates that communism and fascism are almost the same [5]. Politicians known for their patriotic statements, who defend the interests of indigenous communities and the sovereignty of the Russian Federation are often accused of adherence to fascist ideology.

In this regard, the task of clear identification of political practices and ideological attitudes regarding the possession or non-possession of the signs of fascism acquire not only political, but also scientific relevance. The first signs testifying of such an ideological orientation of a particular party or movement can be detected if addressing the ideological and political attitudes advocated by them.

Such a problem will be possible to solve by comparing politics with those who was adherent of the ideology of classical fascism, which, as noted above, like all other ideologies proclaimed by various parties, movements, state power, is a system of views and ideological attitudes reflecting relation to social life, political conflicts and problems in society. Political ideologies express the interests of certain social groups, but their developers aiming to increase the number of supporters in a “mass society,” often use attitudes designed to mask the true content of an ideological structure being popularized.

This tendency is especially visible in the political ideology of fascism, which, as A.A. Galkin said, “elevated such a hypocrisy to the level of a system and brought it to the highest degree of sophistication”, trying to hide its true class content [6] in order to effectively influence politically untaught population [6]. Similar features of fascist ideology are distinguished by specifics of fascism as a political movement and regime which represents a terrorist dictatorship manifesting the interests of the most reactionary group of monopolistic bourgeoisie who strived to keep their power under conditions of a systemic crisis that had been gathering strength in many capitalist states and had affected all spheres of social life. In particular, according to M.V. Dobrynina, fascism as a phenomenon is closely related to the processes taking place in a society: a crisis of public moods, which is accompanied by a crisis of social fabric [7].

In this situation, fascist movements and regimes besides launching a persecution of their political opponents (communists, socialists, bourgeois democrats) of the unprecedented scale, but also make efforts to expand their social base, appealing to the petty-bourgeois, marginal strata of a certain part of the working class. The solution of such a problem involved the introduction into the fascist ideology of provisions that were consonant with the mindsets of these social strata, the creation of illusory views that fascism expresses their interests, brings benefits to a country and people and protects them from all kinds of internal and external threats.

The underside of fascism’s desire to recruit people and turn the majority of population into its devotees is the introduction of provisions that often contradict each other, which gives an eclectic sound to the ideology. For instance, fascist ideologists, having proclaimed the idea of aristocracy, gladly spoke of the national unity; having talked about the national and racial superiority of the ethnic group itself, they advocated the creation and strengthening of unity of the fascists from all countries; fierce attacks on Marxism were

accompanied by statements about their own “socialism”, which did not stop praising the constructive role of national capital; the positioning of their “revolutionism” did not stop swearing fealty to feudal traditions; the primitiveness of mythologies, which determined the content of their ideology, addressed to the social lower classes was combined with attempts to express ideas by means of academic language, with a view to an audience with a higher social status. A combination of such a kind is a consequence of the desire of fascism to adapt to the situation prevailing in the society by using numerous demagogic techniques, following the path of political mimicry.

## **2 Materials**

The ideology of fascism should not be understood as a set of isolated ideas, principles and myths that are occasionally mechanically connected in accordance with the prevailing political conjuncture. The fact is that the basis of the fascist ideology consists of the provisions found in various reactionary doctrines and interpreted in an ultimately extremist way, but so that each of them could correspond to the others, substantiating them, thereby pointing on alleged presence of logical connections. Therefore, the question of their compatibility is no longer relevant. Ultimately, militant anti-democracy, rabid communism, anti-Marxism, etatism, militarism, chauvinism, expansionism, the cult of power, nationalism, racism, etc. become the structural elements of fascist ideology. It should be noted that the mentioned features are inherent in ideological structures taken into service by all movements, parties and regimes covered by the generic concept of fascism. However, a more specific approach allows distinguishing such national varieties of fascism as Italian fascism, German Nazism, Spanish Francoism, the Chilean military fascist regime (the list is not limited by these items), each of which has its own specific features, which in the field of theoretical structures expression is manifested through the increased attention and value substantiation of each ideological component.

If racism, the doctrine of “valid and invalid peoples” was the basic component in the ideology of German national socialism, then, in Italian fascism, the basic component is etatism. This resulted in the exaltation of the fascist state as the implementation of order and justice, appearing as the legitimate successor of the ancient Roman powers. The presence of this specificity does not change the essence of the fascist ideology, which appears in the form of spiritual education that is reactionary, anti-scientific, irrational and mythological in terms of content. This spiritual education is associated with a number of doctrines that reject the ideas of humanism and ideals of the age of Enlightenment, contain the apology of social inequality and extreme forms of abuse and oppression that have taken place in human society. At the same time, as V.S. Surguladze wrote, there were widely used theories and doctrines that appeared before the fascism originated [8].

One of the authors of this kind doctrines was French psychologist and anthropologist Gustave Le Bon, who stated that the people in their actions are guided only by an unconscious instinct and act as a destructive force, therefore the aristocracy comprising the authorities in order to retain power must appeal to people’s imagination, emotions, not to their reason [9].

Another French sociologist Joseph Arthur de Gobineau formulated the foundation of the racist component of fascist ideology, substantiating the idea of racial inequality. Being a supporter of the elite organization of society, he believed that equality means the triumph of mediocrity, and therefore the hierarchy based on racial affiliation should be an alternative to it [10].

The issue of managing the masses became the subject to speculate for Italian authors Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca, whose writings were familiar to Mussolini, who stood by the idea that politics is manifested through the struggle of the elites, in whose hands the

masses are the tool for achieving a certain goal.

The formation of the ideology of fascism, primarily Italian, was influenced by the work of the writer Gabriele D'Annunzio, who glorified violence in his works, positioned himself as a hero, esthete, warrior, towering above the crowd. Houston Stewart Chamberlain, the Germanized Englishman, also had great influence on the ideology of German Nazism. He rejected the institutions of parliamentary democracy and became a proselytiser of German supremacy, nationalism, racism and social Darwinism.

Fascist ideologists payed special attention in works of massive thinkers to the provisions of conservative and reactionary orientation, or to those arbitrarily interpreted beyond the historical and semantic context, on the basis of their own worldviews. First of all, this refers to cultural heritage of Schopenhauer, Hegel and Nietzsche. Thus, from the standpoint of social pessimism, Schopenhauer, reflecting on the depravity of human nature, exemplified by manifestations of envy and malice emanating from representatives of the social lower classes, who are hostile towards gifted people, comes to the conclusion that the purpose of our existence "...cannot be anything else, except the knowledge that we would not have been better" [11]. Such a low assessment of mankind, combined with Schopenhauer's assertion that the world is ruled not by the mind, but by the will, is clearly aligned with the irrational, dehumanistic, voluntarist ideas proclaimed by fascist "theorists." In Hegel's philosophy, these theorists brought to the forefront the elevation of Prussian statehood, which appeared as the highest embodiment of the "objective spirit", nationalist ideas, the apology of war as an event contributing to the improvement of society.

The fascist ideology was significantly influenced by the doctrine of Nietzsche, the philosopher who called for the reassessment of the system of values proclaimed by thinkers of the Enlightenment, who saw these values as the embodiment of slavish morality, which he opposed to the "morality of masters", of "blond beasts", creators of culture, bearers of "will to power", holders of the right to commit violence and be cruel to the "human herd", which is doomed to suffering and hard work. In his work "On the Genealogy of Morality" Nietzsche composes a laudatory ode to "blond predators, a race of conquerors and masters": "Who can command, who is by nature "master", who steps forth violent in work and gesture – what has he to do with contracts! With such beings one does not reckon <...>, they come like fate <...> too terrible, too sudden <...> where they appear something new stands there <...> a ruling structure <...> they do not know what guilt is" [12].

Nietzscheanism takes a special place among the reactionary movements of social thoughts of the late XIX – early XX centuries. Of course, it would be a mistake to consider Nietzsche literally a forerunner of the ideology of national socialism, since his views are quite contradictory, and the arguments are abstract and closely related to cultural issues. At the same time, Nietzscheanism includes the provisions, which can be found in a number of reactionary doctrines that were converted to the context of political practice by their more precise authors. The influence of Nietzscheanism is clearly observable in works of the German philosophers Wilhelm Dilthey and Georg Simmel, who, like Nietzsche, contributed to the establishment of a new school of thought – "philosophy of life". The followers of this school denied the rationalistic approach in cognitive activities in favor of the intuitive; they saw "the will to power" manifested by imperialist powers in their struggle for the world repartition. The result of this struggle should have been the acquisition of expansion space by German nation [13].

### **3 Results**

The ideology of fascism contains some provisions borrowed from the works of participants of the "conservative revolutionaries" movement. This movement attracted philosophers, writers and publicists, who also experienced a noticeable influence of Nietzscheanism.

They came to the conclusion that in order to preserve foundations of the existing social system that was threatened by the existence of the left parties and movements, it was necessary to execute radical reforms dismantling obsolete social institutions and to apply dictatorial methods if needed, even if it would involve fierce physical violence. In their theoretical speculations, “conservative revolutionaries” sought to spread ideological influence widely over the general population, including the working class. They eagerly talked about choosing the “third path” between Marxism and liberalism, about national socialism, spoke critically of the bourgeoisie and complementarily of working people.

A father of this movement was Oswald Spengler, whose book "The Decline of the West", full of Nietzschean motifs and allusions, which was written by the end of the First World War, gained popularity in Germany. Spengler imagined and described the future of Europe with deep pessimism. Under the influence of the tragic events that he had witnessed, he predicted a quick decline and death for Europe and the West in general, pointing that this event “means no more and no less than a problem of civilizations” [14]. He associated the observed crisis trends with the transition from “culture” to “civilization”, as well as with the extinction of the “Faustian man” – the creator of the European culture (resembling Nietzsche’s uberman), replaced by a man who represented just an “inorganic mass”.

As far as right-wing views and sentiments in Germany were strengthening, Spengler in his later works came to the conclusion that the salvation of European culture from the “corrupting influence” of liberalism and Bolshevism requires the advent of a new Caesar, a dictator. Addressing the Prussian military-state traditions, he connected them with the idea of "Prussian socialism" based on the concept of a common good and authority.

Another follower of the “conservative revolution” idea – Ernst Junger, agreeing with Nietzsche on the statement that the will to power is inherent in everything, stated that this will is manifested and implemented the most fully during the war, which appears as a triumph of life. That is why Germany, which was led by a strong man who had come to power, must battle with its enemies. Such a scenario would become possible with the total mobilization and “domination of workers” whose traits are readiness to obey the government, love to the order and authority – the qualities lacking in bourgeois [15].

If the theme of socialism and the position of the worker in society were discussed in the works of Spengler and Junger, then their fellow-thinker Möller van den Brook focuses on issues of national and racial unity, the basis of which should be biological and spiritual unity. Dreaming of the victory of the “revolution”, which appears as a counter-revolution, he claimed that its result would be the creation of the Third Reich, the forerunners of which had been the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation and the Hohenzollern Empire, the father of which is Otto von Bismarck who united Germany with “Iron and blood”.

A brief review of ideological content of all the above-mentioned theories, doctrines, conceptual approaches allows suggesting that the ideology of fascism, as Russian author A.S. Blank notes, “did not arise from nothing, its coming was predetermined by the entire course of the development of reactionary socio-political thought in the past, especially in the late XIX – early XX century” [16].

In the context of the exacerbating crisis of the capitalist system, these theories were assimilated by fascist ideology, the content of which was determined by the aim of all reactionary forces to forestall the further development of revolutionary trends, which were clearly observable in a number of countries in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Fascism, being a preventive form of counter-revolution, along with systematic mass terrorizing its political opponents, uses such a tool as brainwashing of population, during which in people’s minds the structure of fascist ideology and its key components, aimed to substantiate each other, proving the rightness of statements made. Thus, rejecting communism and socialism in their Marxist sense, as well as the liberal-democratic model of

capitalism, considering them as forms of social structure and worldview that contradict the nation, state, Aryan moral values, the fascist ideology postulates the need to choose a way of social development that is different from both capitalism and communism, which both having a number of insuperable defects. In terms of capitalism, the example of such a defect is the confrontation between a working class and the bourgeoisie, instead of which their cooperation should come. This change is considered an essential condition for national unity and greatness, which corresponds to the ideal of "genuine national socialism", proclaimed by German Nazis who sought to demagogically defeat the anti-capitalist moods shared by a large part of people.

From this perspective, fascism considered Marxism with its doctrine of the class struggle, proletarian dictatorship and abolition of private property. Adolf Hitler said that the meaning of his life was to struggle against Marxism, which, according to Alfred Rosenberg – another Nazi Fuhrer, was waged "with a steady sense of purpose and persistent obduracy" [6].

## 4 Discussion

According to the ideology of German Nazism, which has succeeded in terms of social demagogy, Marxism is an international doctrine that undermines national unity, serves the international Jewish plutocracy and is incompatible and hostile to genuine socialism, which is a "social model of a national type and a superclass nature". Blaming Marxism and communism (German Nazis preferred to use the term "Marxism") and referring to the fact that one of the founders of the theory of scientific communism was the Jew Karl Marx, Nazi ideologists concluded that it was necessary to pursue anti-Semitic politics and a finally solve the Jewish issue.

Fascist anti-Marxism (anti-communism) had a pronounced foreign-policy orientation, acquiring an anti-Soviet and anti-Bolshevik shape. This is illustrated by the statement of Adolf Hitler in his book "My Struggle" about the need to organize armed intervention against the Soviet Union.

Rejecting the Marxist vision of the patterns of historical development and the doctrine of class struggle, which was to be replaced by intra-class and intra-national solidarity, the ideology of Nazism brought to the forefront the racial theory which stated that the world history was the struggle of various peoples for power and domination. Referring to this theory, the ideologists of Nazism argued that their worldview is based on racial consciousness and racial belief [16]. For instance, one of the most famous ideologists of Nazism, Rosenberg in his book "The Myth of the Twentieth Century" defined peoples belonging to the Aryan Nordic race, the bearers of high culture, full of all kinds of moral virtues, creators of great civilizations. The Aryans in their turn are opposed by culturally incapable hostile races, the struggle against which has been waged for thousands years, and "this is a struggle of races rather than classes, a struggle against one another". Mixing Aryans with other races leads to bad consequences: the ideals of backward southern peoples are adopted by Aryans and entrenched in their souls, while their own unique racial values are forgotten, which is manifested at the state-political level through rejecting aristocratic administration in favor of democracy. When there is the latter, according to Rosenberg, "the mob pursues and mocks those who are higher and worthier", and "slaves shout about freedom and proclaim equality between men and women" [17].

Death for the once great empires results in spiritual and physical decrepitude of the race, the revival and "purification" of which is the historical mission of the Germans, who remained their devotion to Aryan Nordic values. But Germany is threatened by a power and worldview in a shape of Dionysian, Jewry, Catholic universalism, humanism, democracy, Marxism [18].

In pseudo-scientific arguments of this kind, flavored with ideas of an irrational and mystical kind, one can easily find the intention to embed into minds of Germans the idea of their exclusiveness and belonging to some illusory community, to cultivate in them hostile attitude to other peoples, to prepare them for the participation in the upcoming wars of aggression, which Nazi Fuhrers intended to unleash.

Racial theory is supported by ideas of a nationalistic, chauvinistic, expansionist nature, by the cult of power and war, which is regarded as something inevitable, serving as a necessary condition for the growth of the nation's power, purge of the state and its public life from all wrong and evil.

Combining racist provisions with those proclaimed by Erich Ludendorff and Karl Haushofer – the “footsteps” of German geopolitics, who was close to Hitler and his attendants, Nazi ideologists stated that “Germans were a people without sufficient space” while racially inferior peoples possess vast territories and therefore should be expelled from them by any means, and the war is the most effective of them [16]. In addition, racism in fascist ideology appears as a criterion for the development of moral and legal norms. According to Hermann Rauschning, a former associate of Hitler, the Nazi Fuhrer intended to expand the living space of the Germans as of a “global nation” [19]. This meant that moral and legal norms retained their significance only among Germans. The “true Aryan” is not obliged to follow the instructions, as applied to representatives of other races and peoples. Moreover, for the prosperity of their race they can commit acts that contradict with the norms of all-human morality. In this regard, the statement of one of the highest Nazi Hierarchs Heinrich Himmler is very illustrative, that he “wonders whether other peoples live in wealth or die of famine” “to the extent that we need slaves to maintain our culture”. [16]. Hitler's statements had the same spirit. According to these statements the worldview of a people, the nature of their economic activity, and the priorities of foreign and domestic policy are determined by racial principles. Declaring that the Germans were a nation that was not contaminated by other-racial impurities, so it was the most consistent with the racial ideal, Hitler concluded that the Germans had the right to dominate the world, and exterminate people of the "lower race". The higher race is always right, subjugating and eliminating other nations. As the leader of the Third Reich predicted, after forgetting about its high mission, the higher race would be destroyed itself [20].

Proceeding from this, Nazi ideologists and agitators described an aggression war against the Soviet Union for German population as a confrontation between Europe and Asia, a struggle between the Aryans representing the German Reich and the "subhuman" [20].

While, unlike in Germany, the racial issue did not play such a significant role in the ideology of Italian fascism, then its etatism predetermined a tendency to establish the cult of power, government, praise of all manifestations of chauvinism, expansionism and militarism, which, according to Benito Mussolini, testified to the vitality of the nation, since all peoples "tend toward imperialism" when they have reached the top of their historical development. The absence of such tendency indicates the decline.

As the goal of his foreign policy, Mussolini proclaimed building a powerful empire that would possess the strength and power accumulated in hands of the "new generation of warriors". He wanted to give a military nature to everything and raise people's military spirit. He based on the idea that "not to be strong is a crime, peacemaking is stupid" [21]. As Mussolini and his clique believed, the internal policy of the fascist state should be aimed at the elimination of all opponents, even if it would entail a civil war [22]. Statements made by Italian and German fascists about their readiness to pursue politics through violence, terror, and warfare completely corresponded to their extremely hostile attitude to democracy, no matter wherever and in what age it prevailed. In relation to bourgeois democracy, it was an issue of eliminating constitutionally enshrined rights and freedoms of citizens, existing democratic institutions, or total emasculation of their sense and goals.

The ideologists of fascism substantiated the necessity to carry out such radical reforms, which lead to the establishment of a terrorist dictatorship, by the fact that bourgeois democracy ("vile republic", according to Hitler) is not able to solve problems facing the country. Being a weak form of power, it does not express the interests of the people, instills corruption. It is associated with Jewish plutocracy and dooms the state to complete degradation. Mussolini, proving the failure of public administration based on the principles of liberal democracy, figuratively stated that the goddess of freedom was dead and her corpse was already decaying [23]. The obsolete political regime should have been replaced by a centralized autocratic democracy built by the fascist regime, which in practice implied a refusal of allowing the population to somehow influence the policy of a totalitarian state.

Such an organization of political life, which reduces the role of the population in the state life to marginal participants fulfilling plans of the ruling elite, was substantiated in Hitler's thoughts. He assumed that there was a need to create a political organization of society that elevates the individual over the mass. The latter was supposed to obey this individual, since National Socialism recognizes not only the significance of race, but also the creative power of an individual, who gifted the mankind with all sorts of goods and conveniences. This idea is poorly compatible with the ideas of racial community and class solidarity. In order to resolve this contradiction, Nazi theorists stated that the intention to enslave a person was the characteristic of Marxism. They sought to popularize the idea that under National Socialist rule, belonging the elect circle is not determined by wealth or social origin, but only by personal qualities, creative talents, ability to express the needs and spirit of the people.

According to the testimony of Otto Strasser, who represented the "left" trend in Nazism, Hitler, when speaking in front of the "bigwigs of industry", directly stated that a nation can be revived only through efforts of an individual, since the masses are blind and stupid [24]. The anti-democratic essence of the ideology of fascism is clearly reflected in the leader principle (Fuhrer principle), which should have predetermined public and political life. According to one of the highest Nazi functionaries Robert Ley, the Fuhrer principle is based on the recognition of authority that is embodied in the personality of the Fuhrer – the leader of the German nation. Ley was a consistent supporter of Hitler's policy and had great preferences in the activities of the German Labor Front DAF. [25].

The leader principle implies that the Fuhrer is endowed with absolute, unlimited power, which has no resemblance to the power based on the conclusion of a social contract. In addition, the Fuhrer principle underlies the construction of the entire system of state power, built in the form of a hierarchical structure, within which each state or party official within their competence has extensive powers, but is subordinate to someone who is at a higher level, who occupies a more significant position. Glorification of leader principle as a principle of the political organization of society and an indispensable condition for the implementation of political activity, occupies one of the central places in the ideology of Italian fascism. According to Mussolini, the government of a state is like playing the violin which is in the hands of the maestro. This role was assigned to the Duce – the fascist leader, who due to his position, could not have relatives or friends and should have not distinguished anyone by his trust [21]. The anti-democratic element in the ideology of fascism is inseparable from etatist ideas about the activities of the state, vested with enormous power authorized to intervene and regulate all spheres of public and private life, and most importantly acting as an instrument for the implementation of terrorist dictatorship.

The ideology of fascism considers the state as a social phenomenon of a spiritual, moral order, since it represents the whole nation so should not be opposed to it. It has to fulfill the tasks on nurturing in a nation of certain qualities, which among others include the most valuable quality – ability to obey [21]. According to Mussolini's definition, fascism is



totalitarian, and the fascist state, being a synthesis of all values, expresses the whole life of people, propels it and dominates over it [26]. Pointing to the significance of the state's activity aimed at the achievement of goals proclaimed by the fascist party, one of its leading ideologists Douglas Gentile wrote that fascism tends to rebuild forms and content human life, humans themselves and their character and faith, which to be achieved requires discipline and power over people's minds [22].

According to the research of German Nazis, who put their semantic emphases a little differently, the state is the incarnation of a racial community and its mission, which consists in fighting for the protection of the race. According to Rosenberg, nation as a historical value is higher than a state, since the latter is just a form of organizing the nation's life. Free development of a nation is something that the state should be concerned about [17].

In the context of discussions on the significance of state activities for the Aryan race, fascist ideologists assigned to a person a small part of an executor of the state's instructions, of a tool used to achieve "supreme goals" proclaimed by the Führer and his attendants. The judgment given by Hitler in his book "My Struggle" is an example of this idea. Hitler spoke about unacceptability of making decisions of the state level according to the "majority of votes", since this should have been an exclusive right of "persons in charge". His judgements also regarded the assignment of only advisory functions to parliaments and municipalities.

According to the ideologists of fascism, a properly organized state will help achieve the previously mentioned goal: an overcoming of social fragmentation and elimination of class struggle and "egoistic atomism" of individuals. In the ideology of Italian fascism, such a model of relationship between classes was manifested through the intention to create a corporate state, where corporations (bodies consisting of representatives selected from entrepreneurs and employees) would facilitate the establishment of interclass cooperation. Hoping that corporations by means of efforts of fascist party members, who were represented there, would manage to reconcile the interests of the parties without strikes and lockouts, Mussolini declared that in the future corporations would perform a function of parliament on economic issues [21]. Hitler came up with similar plans, proposing the creation in the Nazi state of estate representative bodies endowed with advisory functions. Those estates, as B.L. Khavkin wrote, acted as an analogue of fascist corporations [27]. This actually refers to endowing the fascist state with comprehensive totalitarian functions and rejection of the class struggle. Substantiating the need for class harmony as the embodiment of the national socialism's ideal, its apologists who were skillful in social demagoguery adopted the organic theory of the state, which according to this theory is considered as an analogue of a living organism, the primary cells of which are independent individuals, while organs are the estates [28, 29].

At the same time, speaking of the tendency of fascism to make demagogical play with contradictions and problems of bourgeois society, it should be noted that this practice acquired various scales of spreading, depending on specifics of the political situation. For instance, during the existence of the Weimar Republic, the Nazis, who proclaimed themselves revolutionaries, exposed the vices of liberal democracy, condemned usury, the power of money, wanted to stop unearned incomes, demanded the confiscation of profits from any kind of dubious transactions. However, having come to power, having established close contacts with big business, the Nazi leaders became noticeably milder in their blames, preferring to talk about the differences between "parasitic" and "creative" capital, activities of which comply with the principles of "national socialism".

## **5 Conclusions**

The defeat of fascist countries in World War II, defamation of their political ideology and

practice, prosecution of fascist leaders and functionaries for crimes against humanity – all these events diminished, yet not erased fascism from the political life of all countries including those where during the prewar and war years there were no fascist or pro-fascist parties in power. Moreover, the current followers of fascism have modified their guise; they usually deny any relation to the pre-war fascism, which allows talking about the phenomenon of neo-fascism. They also declare themselves in modern Russia, which is the successor of the Soviet Union and the country that played the most significant role in the defeat of neo-fascists' ideological and political predecessors. This fact evidences that there is still a threat of a new rise or even coming to power of fascism in many countries of the world. To eliminate this threat, the state anti-fascist policy should be more consistently implemented, the phenomenon of fascism should be scrutinized more deeply and comprehensively, modern forms and core characteristics of fascism should be detected.

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