Miguel Rivas Venegas*

Exnominated Anti-Semitism? Reframing the Paranoid Hate-speech of Spanish National-populism

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Abstract: The aim of this publication is to critically rethink Manfred Böcker's classic notion of "Antisemitismus ohne Juden" (Böcker, M. 2000. *Antisemitismus ohne Juden: Die zweite Republik, die antirepublikanische Rechte und die Juden. Spanien 1931 bis 1936*. Berlin: Peter Lang) and to translate it within the contemporary context of the Spanish *Nationalpopulismus* (Hirschmann, K. 2017. *Der Aufstieg des Nationalpopulismus. Wie westliche Gesellschaften polarisiert werden*. Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung; Wilp, M. 2019. "Konfrontation statt Konsens: Der Aufschwung des Nationalpopulismus in den Niederlanden: Die politische Auseinandersetzung um Migration und Integration." In *Rechtspopulismus in Einwanderungsgesellschaften*, edited by H. U. Brinkmann, and I. Panreck, 187–215. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften) represented by the radical party Vox España. The existence of a formula of "Anti-Semitism without Jews and without Anti-Semites" (Botsch, G., and C. Kopke. 2016. "Antisemitismus ohne Antisemiten?" In *Wut, Verachtung, Abwertung Rechtspopulismus in Deutschland*, edited by R. Melzer, D. Molthagen, A. Zick, and B. Küpper, 178–194. Berlin: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung; Wodak, R. 2018. "The Radical Right and Anti-semitism." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Radical Right*, edited by J. Rydgren, 1–33. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks Online) seems to acquire corporeity in the "Civil-War-like" lexical arsenals (Rivas Venegas, M. 2018. *Propaganda activities of Willi Münzenberg in Support of the Spanish Republic during the Spanish Civil War. An Approximation to His Visual and Rhetorical Communication Strategies*. Berlin: Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung / Münzenberg Forum, 2019) of a party acutely connected to its Francoist past and to the paranoia of the "Francmason-Jewish-Bolshevist" conspiracy. This article aims to offer new perspectives on the study of national-populism via the parallel analysis of its "lexical arsenals" and visual-performative dispositives, what we here and in further publications identify as the *messa in scena populista*. It aims to fulfill the complex task of identifying the latent or

*Corresponding author: Miguel Rivas Venegas, Department of Linguistics and Basque Studies, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of the Basque Country, Paseo de la Universidad, 5, 01006, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Álava, Spain, E-mail: m.rivas.venegas@gmail.com

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indirect traces of Anti-Semitism in a party that chose the Muslim community as its preferred and most visible scapegoat, applied the tested political formula of the transnational *nouvelle droite*, yet never fully abandoned certain aspects of the Francoist and Spanish fascist worldview.

Keywords: Nationalpopulismus, extreme-right, critical discourse analysis, Anti-Semitism, Spanish politics

1 Introduction: Contextualizing Vox as Part of the Post-modern National-populist Revolution

It is not xenophobia or Islamophobia to consider our western culture as superior to other cultures – it is common sense.

(Geert Wilders 2011. As quoted in Wodak 2015).

The words of Geert Wilders, one of the most long-term established representatives of the national-populist counter-reaction in Europe, are as familiar to the Spanish political arena today as back in 2011 when they were pronounced in the Netherlands. Specialists on Spanish politics, hate-speech and right-wing radicalism were commonly unaware of the unexpected rise of the national-populist stream in Spain (Casals 2001, 2001a) and considered the Francoist past and the agglutinating effect of the Partido Popular (PP) as effective vaccines against the uprising of transnational national-populism. Vox España,¹ the Iberian “alternative” to the so-called “old politics” represented by the conservative party, the Partido Popular, was founded in 2013 following the example of European parties such as Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) or the Front National. The rhetorical and visual propagandistic equivalences between the Spanish Alt-Right and the political national-populist “alternatives” – not surprisingly, one of the keywords of the Alt-Right movements across the globe – justifies the frequent mentions throughout this article to parallel European and transatlantic political platforms and parties such as the Identitäre, the Alternative für Deutschland, or Trumpism in the United States, all of them subject to analysis of an on-going research project of larger extent. The analysed textual materials include examples stretching from 2016 to 2021, both in the Spanish Congress and in the general election campaigns of 2019. Other textual items of particularly relevant political contexts such as the Catalan referendum of

¹ Also referred in the following pages as “the green party”, Vox’s corporate colour. The lime green tone chosen by the right wing party has been sometimes mixed with further shapes of green during campaign periods, particularly following camouflage, military patterns and using the Spanish flag to effectively link the political platform with the military forcers or the actively partisan “Law and order” Spain they aim to represent.

2017 and the political debate related with the COVID-19 crisis, as well as Twitter statements of Vox or their representatives are also subject to analysis, as they stimulated the comeback of *Juden-komplot*-based rhetorical repertoires.

In this context, particular attention will be given to the self-representation strategies and visual devices produced and shared by these movements or by further Alt-Right platforms, following the lead of Wilhelm Hofmann, Franz Lesske and Anne Marie Seward Barry, who underlined the necessity of studying visual communication artefacts in combination with textual materials without “artificially separating” the visible from the utterable (Hofmann and Lesske 2005, 12; Seward Barry 1997, 106). The presentation of these contemporary items coming from diverse contexts, accompanied with historic Anti-Semitic artefacts – as those belonging to the Katz Ehrental Collection, amongst others – will help us define the Anti-Semitic *Gegenwelt* (Winckler 1970, 104) of national-populism and its visual arsenals. The textual and visual dispositives presented here aim to provide a first glimpse on specific surviving “symptoms” of exnominated Anti-Semitism,² taking both visual artefacts and texts as “evidence” of equal relevance.³ Such materials illustrate the “survival” (or *Nachleben*, in a strictly Warburgian sense) of a specific phantasmagorical paranoia that shows to be highly up-to-date and extremely operative for the political interests of national-populism. The use of this “Warburg-like” methodology justifies the presentation of visual and textual items of dissimilar origin – sometimes directly related with Vox; in other cases with international platforms of equivalent ideology or with the Alt-Right media – here understood as components of a visual and textual *Atlas* of Anti-Semitism.

Before we begin analysing the lexical arsenals of Vox, and specifically the indirect traces of Anti-Semitism or the camouflaged presence of Anti-Semitic paranoid discourses, we will touch upon Kai Hirschmann’s definition of *Nationalpopulismus*, applied here and in other works (Rivas Venegas 2020) to contextualize Spanish right wing populism. Hirschmann, who identifies Populism mainly as “*Politikstil*” (2017, 21) but also as “*Einzelideologie*” (as ideology susceptible of being combined with other ideologies)⁴ gives a specific definition for the *mariage*

2 We make use and re-adapt Didi Hubermann’s notion of symptom, as he reflected about the concept of “nachleben” (survival) in Aby Warburg’s thought. See Didi-Huberman, G (2001) “Dialektik des Monstrums: Aby Warburg and the symptom paradigm”. *Art History* Vol: 24, 5 (pp. 621–645).

3 We share the views of Bing, as he claimed that images were not less secure guides to the actions, notions, and states of mind of those who used them than written documents. See Bing, “Fritz Saxl (1890–1948): A Memoir”. In: Gordon, D.J (1957) *Fritz Saxl 1890–1948: A Volume of Memorial Essays from His Friends in England*, (p.28) London: Nelson.

4 This stance can be related with the notion of Populism as a “way of making claims about politics” seen in the work of Ernesto Laclau (1985, 2005), Mouffe (2018), Michael Kazin (1995) and

of Nationalism and Populism that will be used throughout this article. *Nationalpopulismus* is defined by the German scholar as a combinative ideology or as “*Kombinationsideologie*” (Hirschmann 2017, 16), in which elements traditionally associated with left-wing political stances, such as the “*Ideologisierte Globalisierungskritik*”, coexist with right-wing radical “*Kulturalismus*” and “*kultureller Rassismus*”. Other distinctive features of *Nationalpopulismus* belong to both sides of the political spectrum: specifically, what Hirschmann labels “*Ideologisierter radikaler Konstruktivismus*”, a political interpretation of radical constructivism (Hirschmann 2017, 22–23). It is precisely this combinative character that unlocks the possibility of coexistence of an apparently incompatible praise of the “Judeo-Christian values and traditions” with a ferociously exnominated or partially visible Anti-Semitism. We believe that the *doublethink* phenomenon, described in Orwell’s 1984 as the capacity to hold and defend contradictory beliefs, is an inherent characteristic of these combinative political movements. This feature, on the other hand, reinforces Žizek’s definition of contemporary national-populists as fake-conservatives (Žizek 2020), and also coexists well with Wodak’s notion of “syncretic Anti-Semitism” (Stögner and Wodak 2014; Wodak 2018, 6).

We claim that the political success of Vox should be seen and studied as a shared accomplishment, as the tested political formula of some of its European and transatlantic political precedents and the influence of more experienced political think-tankers propels the significant escalation of Santiago Abascal’s Party. On the other hand, independent from the imported character of Vox political *messa in scena* and violent vocabularies, the party is characterized by the presence of highly symbolic features that reinforce its character as a product of a political laboratory. The president and co-founder, Santiago Abascal, was supported by some of the most radical factions of the Partido Popular. As political candidate, he possesses some valuable characteristics to be the perfect commander-in-chief of the unionist counter-revolution of Vox: a proud Spanish-Basque conservative whose family suffered from political prosecution – although the extent of such seems to be exaggerated in order to increase the political myth of Abascal – in the Basque Country during the Years of Lead related with ETA armed activities. Grandson of a Francoist Major and son of an historical member of the ultra conservative, post-francoist party Alianza Popular,⁵ Santiago Abascal possesses many

Conal Condren (2017), amongst others regarding the “thin centered” characteristics of populism, see Mudde C. and Kaltwasser C. (2012).

⁵ Alianza Popular (the Peoples Alliance) was a conservative electoral coalition founded in 1976 by former officials in the dictatorship of Francisco Franco and transformed into a political party by the Francoist Minister of Information (1962–1969) and Minister of interior (1975–1976) Juan Manuel Fraga in 1977. Refunded as the actual Partido Popular in 1989.

of the spectacularized key features of new Caesarisms represented by other authoritarian politicians such as Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump and Jairó Bolsonaro. Another relevant aspect, as we will explain in the forthcoming pages, to effectively construct the image of the “lone fighter” against a more or less specified “World domination” and globalist conspiracy, as the ultimate representation of the national in-group against its nemesis.

Alongside Abascal sit other relevant party figures that complete the Alt-Right constellation of Vox: Ortega Smith – lawyer, ex Special-Ops soldier, connected by blood with the retired Army General that presides over the Francisco Franco Foundation –; Espinosa de los Monteros – property developer, representative of the ultra-liberal stream inside of the party – and Rocío Monasterio, who comes from a Spanish-Cuban landowner family and represents the anti-feminist, pro-life counter-reaction inside of Abascal’s Party. The Green formation shall be seen, in this regard, as a particularly refined – in terms of pure expression of *Nationapopulismus* – peninsular version of the Alt-Right transnational revolution. It simultaneously follows the ideological stream of the *nouvelle droite* and also effectively unites the disenchantment of a heterogeneous extreme right electorate still characterized in Spain by a delicate ideological balancing act. The combination and coexistence of the still present Francoist nostalgia and the implementation of the Alt-Right political agenda – following the fake-news-based political projects of Trump, Putin or Viktor Orban – clearly converge with the counter-reactionary character of the party against Basque nationalism, as the vindication of a violent form of “españolidad” (Casals 2020, 29) defined the personal and political trajectory of many of the founding members.

Vox, a paradigmatic example of the Alt-Right uprising that is thriving as a result of globalization and as part of what some scholars labelled *Ressentiment Bewegungen* (Olschanski 2017) defines itself as the only alternative to “the coward right” and as the revulsive agent against Catalan and Basque nationalism, “migrant invasion” and “gender ideology”. The vertiginous escalation of the party was in many senses as unexpected as its creation – it shall be considered, as aforementioned, as an scission of the Partido Popular – in a country where the PP formed and united under the same banner different forms of the right-wing electorate. In the period spanning from the end of 2016 to the beginning of 2019, the radical national-populist party transformed political irrelevance into nationwide success: the 47.000 (0.20%) votes from the 2016 general elections became 3.6 million in November 2019 (15.09%) and granted the extreme right-wingers 52 seats in the Congress. During these three years, several aspects triggered the escalation of a political⁶ “alternative” whose values are based on the defence of a closed

6 See Simón Gómez, M. A. (2017).

national community, white male privilege, and national-unionist radical populism.

First, the polarisation of Spanish public opinion related with the Catalan political crisis; second, the virulent racist discourse, categorized here as a form of “racismo desde arriba” or “elite’s racism” (Van Dijk 1995, 2006, 2006a), characterized by a latent Anti-Semitism to be labelled here “exnominated Anti-Semitism”; last, another feature strictly compatible with the Francoist traditional discourse gives form to the violent *Weltanschauung* (worldview) of Vox: the paranoia of the so-called by right-wing extremists feminization of society, strictly connected by the rhetorical deployment of these right-wing radicals with foreign ideas, imported multiculturalism and globalization that is commonly correlated with key figures such as the “globalist elite” who are portrayed as the ultimate orchestrators of such pernicious feminization. The aforementioned asseverations of politicians such as Gert Wilders are effective rhetorical strategies to transcend any possible associations with older types of right-wing radicalism. Appealing to an ideologically conditioned common sense and calling for the defence of European values and traditions effectively modifies – by the mere effect of political euphemisms – the façade of radical political rhetoric making it easier to permeate the public opinion. An efficient substitution of the hate-speech of classic fascism identified by Viktor Klemperer as the *LTI* or *Lingua Tertii Imperii* (1947) by Griffin’s *Lingua Quartii Imperii* or *LQI* (2014) is accompanied with an equally successful self-representational revolution that we label here and in further publications the *Imago Quarti Imperii* of contemporary national-populism.

As we will explain through the following pages, abandoning certain forms of explicit Anti-Semitic hate-speech does not imply the dissolution of a *Weltanschauung* similar to the one that characterized the Coup of 1936 – which was also justified as a national revolt against the “Jewish conspiracy” – amongst the lines of Vox and its international partners. The fundamental task of the still growing rhetoric identified as the *Lingua Quartii Imperii* and that of its visual counterpart, what we call the *Imago Novii Imperii*, is to effectively perform an act of political camouflage. It unlocks a disruptive interruption of the preceding visual and textual vocabularies of the transnational extreme right, altering – if we quote Klemperer and follow the metaphorical explanation given by the German linguist – the “magical spell” of political language through the substitution of the “magic words”, albeit without altering the main objective of such “political spell”. The strictly cosmetic shift lies mostly in the surface and not in the core of these political movements; affects primarily their lexical arsenals – and only partially, as *LTI* keywords such as *Lügenpresse* gain now relevance at a transnational level – and self-representational repertoires. Furthermore, it encapsulates similar strategies of *Fendbildkonstruktivismus* (Olschanski 2017) together with paranoid violent

perceptions of the Jewish community. Radical “spell casters” and propagandists inside of Vox – or those who are part of the media supporting them – understood, mostly through the now shared experience of their international partners, the potential effectiveness of an old “political spell” – that of Anti-Semitism and the “Jewish conspiracy”, used as powerful multiplier of Olcshanski’s *Ressentiment* – in which the nemesis might be renamed or exnominated, but remain nonetheless the same. The poisonous character of such political *Sprachverwendung* (language use) persists, and the effect of the continuous exposure to these “arsenic-like vocabularies” (Klemperer 1947, 31) and the consequent destruction of truth can be paralleled with that of the 30 and 40s.

2 Here and There: Exnominated Anti-Semitism

The “Jew”, simultaneously present but never identified as such in the anti-cosmopolite and nationalist-ruralist discourse of Vox shall be associated with the communicational strategies of Žižek’s post-modern Alt-Right, a political stream obsessed with most of its traditional enemies but now armed with new visual and textual repertoires.⁷ Its aura – through the references to the totem figure of George Soros or the common attacks to the traditional “partners” of the so-called in the 1930s and 1940s “Jewish conspiracy” – remains perpetually present through a narrative of exnomination of powerful political consequences. The following intervention of Santiago Abascal took place in the Spanish Congress during the debate regarding the extension of the state of emergency related with the COVID-19 crisis of March 2020 and accurately represents the political stance of the green party towards the so-called “*progre*-millionaires”, “foreign agents” and “migration capos”. According to the words of the populist politician, the management of the sanitary emergency would be linked with uncontrolled immigration, the political conflict of the Basque Country and the allegedly shady figure of Soros, described as the man behind the Spanish Government. The liquid notion of past and present, facts and ideological myths, as well as the capricious combination of contenders of today, enemies of the past, imagined and imaginary nemeses construct the paranoid amalgam of Vox and artificially reinforce the national semiosphere⁸:

Señor Sánchez, Señor Otegi, Señor Otegi, Señor Sánchez. Ustedes no están de acuerdo en nada, salvo en demoler España y las libertades de alguna manera. Uno tras otro han salido a

⁷ See, on this regard, Tom Brass publication regarding populism and the agrarian myth. Brass, Tom. 2000. *Peasants, Populism and Postmodernism. The return of the Agrarian Myth*. London: Frank Cass.

⁸ See Lotman’s notion of semiosphere in Lotman (2010).

esta tribuna, los representantes que apoyan al gobierno, el comunismo bolivariano en distintas versiones; el separatismo golpista; el filoterrorismo (...) para pedirle que se sume usted a la disolución de España. incluso ha salido Bildu a decirle la buena dirección. La buena dirección par ETA, no para los españoles. Si usted va a pagar mil euros a todos los que vengan en pateras y acrediten haber sido víctimas de la trata de seres humanos, ¿cómo no va a haber un efecto llamada? O es que sólo está cumpliendo las órdenes que le ha dado ese individuo con el que usted tuvo la primera cita en el Palacio de la Moncloa? El señor Soros (...) no vamos a callar ante su colaboración con los narco dictadores comunistas, con los multimillonarios progres y con ETA. (Abascal 2020)

Abascal's paranoid discourse regarding the sanitation crisis and the balkanization process is a clear example of a subtle yet commonly present "*Judeus ex machina*" (Wodak 2018, 5) scapegoating strategy and political manoeuvre. Talking about the "dissolution" of the national community and the country itself directly connects the discourse of Vox with traditional Anti-Semitic related speech of national *Balkanisierung*. A notion systematically present in the lexical arsenals of 30 and 40s fascism not considered to be of Nationalsocialist creation but consistently present in Hitlerian discourse (Hitler 1942; 1926) and unanimously identified as LTI rhetoric,⁹ is often connected with the dissolution of national unity and with the atomization of national purity through racial admixture.¹⁰ The concept would find his own peninsular version in relation with the effects of peripheral nationalism, as the political tensions in Catalunya and the pro-independence movements were – back in the 30s and nowadays – one of the major concerns of peninsular fascist movements and of today's national-populists. Mentions to that process of national dissolution through balkanization are recurrent in Vox's discourse: as written in the official account of the party the 7th September 2018: "Tú eliges. O la España abocada a la invasión migratoria, la balcanización y el enfrentamiento civil. O la España de la vida, la libertad, el trabajo, la soberanía, la justicia y el honor."; The Danaes Foundation, a think-tank founded by Santiago Abascal, warned about the "balkanization of Spain" (Vélez 2019) and related it even with the survival of the *bable* language in Asturias; Vox Murcia gave support on Twitter to a symposium around the "balkanization of Spain" and the equivalences with the "Balkans

⁹ Hitler's reference to the *Balkanisierung* of Europe were a common argument against the enemies of the Nationalsocialist *Weltanschauung*. See Hitler, Adolf. 1926. *Mein Kampf*. München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP: "So wie nun Englands traditionelle politische Ziele eine gewisse Balkanisierung Europas wünschen und benötigen, genau so diejenigen Frankreichs eine Balkanisierung Deutschlands."

¹⁰ See concepts such as *Rassenchaos* (race chaos) or the typically LTI – due to its ironical character – *Rassenbrei* (race stew). For more information, see Dörr, Karin and Michael, Robert. 2002. *Nazi Deutsch/Nazi German. An English lexicon of the Language of the Third Reich*. London: Greenwood Press; Rash, Felicity. 2006. *The Language of Violence. Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf*. New York: Peter Lang.

paradigm” (Vox Murcia 2020); the same notion has been used as well in relation with the sanitation crisis, to describe the divergences between healthcare assistance capacity in the regions of Spain (Vox España 2020); already in 2021 and associated with the new Law on Education presented by the Government, Vox MPs in Alicante warned about the perilous character of the proposal, as it would provoke, through the defence of other co-official languages, the “balkanization of our Nation” (Ortolá 2021). The perpetual danger of national dissolution and the atomization of the in-group is presented in dramatically exaggerated “us or them” terms. Abascal’s notorious speech in the Party Congress of Vistalegre, the 7th October 2019 shall be seen as a clear example the polarization strategy of the candidate and his will to construct a scenario of national “*Zukunft oder Niedergang*”:

O ellos, o nosotros (...) O el consenso progre, o Vox. O la división autonómica, o la unidad nacional. O la tiranía izquierdista, o la libertad (...) o los españoles primero, o los inmigrantes ilegales. O pensiones dignas para las viudas o paguitas para los *menas*. O nuestras tradiciones, o la Fiesta del Cordero. O la Europa multicultural, o la Europa orgullosa de las raíces cristianas. O nuestra bandera pisoteada, mancillada y escupida, o nuestra bandera ondeando con orgullo. Queremos elegir. (Abascal 2019)

The origin of such political processes of national dissolution was, during the rise of the *falangismo* and today, allocated somewhere else, commonly related not with internal currents of thought and political discontent, but primarily with the influence of foreign “anti-national” agents. Some of the most prominent Anti-Semitic pro-Nazi intellectuals and founders of the first fascist groups in Spain, such as Ramiro de Ledesma Ramos, now quoted amongst the lines of Vox (Abascal 2019a),¹¹ are directly linked the “balkanization” of Spain with anti-national “cancerous” political processes: “A mediados del siglo XVII, ya corría por Europa un plan de desgajamiento y balcanización del territorio peninsular. Europa tiraba de Cataluña. Llegó a haber virreyes franceses. Se logró, no obstante, vencer ese proceso canceroso” (Ledesma Ramos 1938, 47). This monstrous narrative imagined the enemies of Europe as both cultural and racial predators, as “cultural beasts” (Ingebreetsen 2003), parasites and “foreign wolves”. Other fundamental figures of the Spanish fascist intellectual class and openly declared Anti-Semites such as Ernesto Giménez Caballero called for the unity of Europeans against the perilous effects of such enemies: “¿No es una locura seguir destrozándonos los europeos, balcanizándonos, mientras los lobos acechan nuestra exigüidad?” (Giménez

¹¹ “Para los españoles más humildes España es su único patrimonio. Sólo los ricos pueden permitirse no tener patria.” Reflections of Ramiro de Ledesma Ramos, as freely quoted by Abascal during the Pre-elections debate “El debate 4N”, TVE/Atresmedia 4th November 2019.

Caballero 1943, 13). A discourse that gathered the then desired and now finally accomplished objective of mutual political collaboration against the enemies of right-wing radicalism. The myth of the perilous “intellectual Jew”, the “parasitic Jew” (Dörr and Michael 2002, 31; Rivas Venegas 2018a, 71) and the “anti-national Jew” (Wodak 2018) coexists now with that of the “*progre*-philanthropic-millionaire” represented by Soros or Sutherland, and agglutinates under a clear form of syncretic Anti-Semitism (Stögner and Wodak 2014, 2015; Wodak 2018, 6) both the traditional right-wing discourse against the NGOs depicted as agents of the left and the anti-elite rhetoric that particularly characterizes the offensive-phase (Papadima 1998, 512) of *Nationalpopulismus*. The pseudo-revolutionary tone of this “*emanzipatorischen Populismus*” (Bedorf 2019) offers a narrative of demonization in which the reactive manumission revolt of “the people” against the elites is constructed as a vindication of national sovereignty combining the cultural-racial *widerstand* (resistance) versus globalitarian anti-national rulers and their instrumentalized migrants:

Open Arms [a Spanish NGO focused on Sea Rescue in the Mediterranean] no es una ONG, es una base operativa de la extrema izquierda, en connivencia con las grandes multinacionales y bancos. Cuando atacan a Italia atacan, en realidad, la soberanía, la identidad y la convivencia en Europa. Los inmigrantes son su mercancía política. Nada más. (Abascal 2019b)

The COVID-19 sanitation crisis and the resulting economic challenge following the outbreak of the pandemic radically boosted the expansion of paranoid conspiracy theories and the incorporation of notions such as that of “the red pest” employed both by Vox (Toscano 2020; Tersch 2020) and the reactionary press (Periodista Digital 2020; A. Rojo 2020) linking the Government, their alleged “obscure anti-national partners” and the pandemic. Some of the claims to revolt and military uprising by Vox MPs were made through Social Media, acquiring immediate repercussion and several thousands of shares: Vox MP Rocío de Meer openly asked for a military reaction against the Government after the outbreak of the Pandemic, reminding the military forces that they are obliged to defend the nation, not the Government: “Hoy más que nunca, es hora de recordarle al ejército que la nación, no es lo mismo que el Estado. Y que ellos juraron lo primero. #ProtejamosEspaña” (De Meer 2020). Raúl Marín, in charge of Vox’s communication in La Rioja made use of a rhetorical question to ask for the immediate cease of the Government and the supreme command of the King Felipe VI:

¿Sería una locura aceptar que este Gobierno está absolutamente sobrepasado por la situación y que lo mejor sería que tomase el mando del país, S. M. El Rey Don Felipe VI con un consejo de especialistas y profesionales en cada materia de Gobierno? ¿Tan difícil es? (Marín 2020)

Further Vox politicians were claiming for such actions even before the dramatic escalation of the COVID crisis in Spain: the EU Vox Parliamentary member Hermann Tersch requested for military intervention against the government and its “partners in crime, referred to as “terrorists, communists and putschists” in January 2020:

Parece que todos los cómplices de Zapatero desde el etarra Otegi a los comunistas Iglesias y Garzón se esfuerzan por hacer inevitable la aplicación del Artículo 8 para que las Fuerzas Armadas interrumpan un obvio proceso golpista de voladura de España como nación. (Tersch 2020a)

The pandemic unlocked rhetorical possibilities both associated with the lexical and visual repertoires of Spanish fascism and transnational Anti-Semitism, as it facilitated the comeback of a hate-speech based on body/nation-infection metaphors commonly associated with the enemies of the in-group and specifically with the Jews.¹² It is an indicator and as enhancing factor of a constantly growing paradigm: the comeback of a genuine “*retórica guerracivilista*”,¹³ a radical language use directly related with Civil War and pre-war lexical arsenals of

12 See, for more information regarding the lexical arsenals of Anti-Semitism in Spanish 1930s pro-nazi fascism, Rivas Venegas, Miguel. 2018. *Hacia una Lingua Novi Imperii: retórica visual y lenguajes de la violencia del fascismo español y primer franquismo (1931–1945)*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

13 Despite the merely pragmatic early “Philo-Semitic” statements of fascist intellectual Giménez Caballero (known as *Gecé*) or the eventual sublimation of the colonial Moroccan troops present in the literary and artistic production of early Francoism, the Anti-Semitic stance of the regime and that of the builders of its rhetoric –from Giménez Caballero to Ramiro de Ledesma, Onésimo Redondo, amongst other founder members of the JONS and the Falange – is in our opinion beyond debate. Caballero proved to be a highly chameleonic propagandist and a profit-seeking agitator. *Gecé* was Pro-Catalan when convenient: author of radical statements against the Catalans (criticised their “Judaic, merchant spirit” in 1924) turned into a “Philo-Catalan” in 1927 when it suited his personal interests, after receiving the economic support of catalanist Francesc Cambó; became a fervent falangista during the rise of the party of José Antonio; a Philo-Nazi when the regime was close to the Third Reich and radically Francoist when seemed the best political manoeuvre to gain distance from the decadent, instrumentalized Falange after 1937. Regarding the Philo-Semitic character of Caballero, further authors have been quite explicit: “En septiembre de ese año [1929] Giménez Caballero se la vendió [*La Gaceta Literaria*] a la editorial CIAP, propiedad del presidente de la Comunidad Israelita de Madrid y antiguo senador liberal, Ignacio Bauer. Fue entonces cuando la revista acentuó su interés por el mundo sefardí. Ese mismo mes Giménez Caballero inició el primero de sus dos viajes a los Balcanes para visitar las comunidades sefardíes. La presencia de éstas por todo el ámbito mediterráneo era para él una posibilidad más de expansión del imperialismo cultural y de la consiguiente influencia económica y política de España, como de hecho venía postulando el filosefardismo español desde las campañas regeneracionistas del doctor Pulido a comienzos del siglo XX. Lo que no le impedía mantener y expresar ocasionalmente sus ideas claramente antisemitas” (Álvarez Chillida 2010, 272).

Spanish fascism and reactionary political movements in 1936. In this regard, lexical arsenals from the past, freshly shaped “snarl words” (Hayakawa 1939), neologisms and renewed paranoia of foreign intervention coexist and merge in a myriad of forms. Vox’s exnominated Anti-Semitism and virulent Islamophobia will tend to appear together under schemes of “shared responsibility” as part of a anti-national conspiracy of larger extent and assorted with further forms of racism prevalent throughout the lines of the Green party.¹⁴ They will most probably tend to be presented in such forms (“Jews command, other anti-nationals obey”, according to this logic) in a wider variety of Alt-Right contexts (Erb and Kohlstruck 2016), as the connection between transnational national-populist political actors is constantly growing. The simultaneous use amongst radical right-wingers of a neologism, a “snarl word” (Hayakawa 1939, 27) such as “fake news”, and the vindication of a purely *LTI* (Klemperer 1947) or “Nazi Deutsch” (Dörr and Michael 2002) concept of similar connotations, that of *Lügenpresse*, symbolizes by itself the chameleonic features of the Alt-Right revolution. The representatives of this “political alternative” are willing to maintain certain – cautiously used and strictly decodified by the in-group – references to the past, but articulate their discourse with new repertoires to look substantially different.

Frente a unas instituciones de oligarquías, élites y burócratas que permanecen impasibles ante la invasión inmigratoria ilegal que azota España, Italia o Grecia y que reparte millones entre las ONGs (...) frente a su no Europa federal, su no Europa globalista, su no Europa totalitaria, de élites y burocracias, queremos y defendemos, como la gran mayoría de los europeos, la Europa de las naciones, la Europa de la libertad, la Europa necesaria para este momento histórico y la única Europa posible. (Abascal 2020a)

Similar vocabularies and lexical arsenals are now seen as part of an intercontinental *Lingua Quarti Imperii*. Such *Sprachverwendung* stimulates the construction of “the other” as a cultural nemesis or as *Kulturzerstörer* without necessarily pointing out the difference between the “variety of others” to be confronted with the nationalist holistic community. The “Anti-Semitism without Jews” of the Spanish Civil War mutated into the aforementioned “*Antisemitismus ohne*

¹⁴ Hate-speech against the Chinese community or against China in general terms. As seen in other political contexts, the COVID-19 reinforced racism and Anti-Semitism, also and particularly correlated with conspiracy ideologies. See, in relationship with the German case, *Verschwörungsmmythen und Shoa-Verharmlosung – Antisemitismus in der Corona-Krise*, streamed June the 23rd, 2020. Organisations such as the Amadeu Antonio organised a digital counter-reaction campaign against the escalation of theories around the spread of the virus and the implication of Jews. See *Verschwörungsmmythen und Antisemitismus um das Corona-Virus*: <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/verschwuerungsmmythen-und-antisemitismus>.

Antisemiten” (Marin 2000) through different procedures;¹⁵ Vox and the PP manifest clear signs of “secondary revisionism”; both political actors avoid condemning Francoism or the Coup,¹⁶ or openly praise the Francoist regime or the putsch itself, justifying in a more or less explicit manner the political circumstances that motivated the uprising. Santiago Abascal Ortega Smith and MP Joaquín Robles are authors of paradigmatic statements regarding the legitimacy of the *golpe*, highlighting the “illegal” character of the democratic government attacked on 1936:

Digamos que fue un movimiento cívico militar. En él no intervino todo el Ejército, sino sólo una parte. Tenía que ser así. En aquel momento, como dices, la nación estaba partida por la mitad. (Abascal 2019c)

Se han empeñado en rescribir la historia y decir que la república era paradisíaca, democracia, paz y orden, y que luego llegaron unos tiranos que acabaron con aquella democracia, paz y orden (...) [en el franquismo] había elecciones, pero siempre las ganaba el régimen. (Ortega Smith 2020)

Condenar el franquismo no tiene ningún sentido puesto que somos herederos y la historia es la que es. No se puede cambiar al gusto ideológico del gobierno de turno, no se pueden coger 40 años de la historia y meterlos en la basura como si no hubieran existido. (Joaquín Robles 2019)

Amongst the initial reasons to revolt against the Government in 1936, as extensively analysed in several publications (Álvarez Chillida 2002; Gijón 2010; Rivas Venegas 2018; Yerushalmi 1993), virulent Anti-Semitism and the paranoia of an external complot orchestrated by an amalgam of Jews and Freemasons – the *Juden-Freimauerei komplot*, identified as the “conspiración Judeo-Masónica” in Spain – played a central role in the discourse-building strategies of the Francoist coalition. What we identify as “exnominated Anti-Semitism”, an up-to-date feature of post-modern Alt-Right hate-speech¹⁷, exists on different levels. It is characterized by the presence of a myriad of strongly biased depictions of the

¹⁵ See, in relation with this notion of Anti-Semitism without Anti-Semites, Marin, Bernd. 2000. *Antisemitismus ohne Antisemiten. Studien zur Vorurteilsdynamik*. Vienna: Campus, 2000. *Antisemitismus ohne Antisemiten. Autoritäre Vorurteile und Feindbilder*. Frankfurt am Main/New York: Campus Verlag.

¹⁶ The PP considered in 1999 that condemning the Coup was “imprudent”, as it could generate a polarization between good and bad. In 2003, they voted against a similar initiative in the Congress. In 2007, it was blocked again and PP MP Mayor Oreja declared he “refused to condemn anything regarding the past of Spain (...) something that represented a wide proportion of Spaniards”. During the same interview with *La Voz de Galicia*, Oreja claimed the Regime represented “a placid period” (Mayor Oreja 2007). A similar proposal was blocked by the PP in the Spanish Congress on 2015.

¹⁷ See Klinker et al. (2018).

“external enemy” facilitating the reconstruction of a narrative – a form of *Mythenfabrikation* or myth-assemblage – constituted with the characteristics of the archetypal *ewige Jude*. An eternally omnipresent, powerful and rich, yet voracious cultural contender rhetorically constructed as a reaper of nations and national identities. A wandering figure, a man with no land, a cosmopolitan nemesis and a bearer of disgrace – through the previously called “*africanización de Europa*”, in the words the most philo-nazi fascists intellectuals in Spain –, is now considered responsible for the migration processes and arrival of political refugees. In the Spanish case, these “globalitarian” representatives are also blamed for being the ideological architects of secessionist movements inside of the State, and hide behind the institutions, mimicking the narratives and visual representations of “Jews behind power” through the now repeated paradigm of the “globalist agenda”. The statements of MP Inés Cañizares or those of Transports Commissioner De las Heras shall be seen as revealing examples of such discourse:

Para este Gobierno la única agenda es la de Pablo Iglesias, la agenda globalista (...) ustedes no aprovecharon [the PP] los años de bonanza para sanear las cuentas porque no redujeron partidas de gastos inútiles que ahora aprovecha el Gobierno social-comunista para seguir dopándolas en medio de esta gran crisis. (Cañizares 2020)

La Agenda 2030 no es más que un movimiento globalista que busca el cambio del statu quo por un nuevo orden donde uno de los objetivos es la destrucción de la soberanía de las naciones, la apertura de fronteras y la movilidad migratoria (...) Quién ha votado un nuevo orden mundial, acaso la soberanía no reside en el pueblo español? ¿Acaso han preguntado a los ciudadanos si quieren sustituir los valores de la civilización occidental por sus políticas globalistas? (De las Heras 2020)

The liquidity between *Feindbilder* (images of the enemy) from past and present are vital for the construction of an enemy simultaneously codified as “new” – therefore more terrifying, as the unknown is particularly frightening – and “old” or “long-lasting”, depicting the current fight of the in-group as a battle for national survival:

Sin las Navas de Tolosa, la batalla de Lepanto y Carlos V creo que todas las señoras de esta sala vestirían el burka (...) hechos históricos que pusieron freno a la invasión islamista en Europa, y lo he querido traer a la historia reciente, donde las políticas de los Angela Merkel, los George Soros, Emmanuel Macron, es decir el globalismo relativista, ese que ha abierto las fronteras de Europa. (Ortega Smith 2019)

Vox, considered in many regards as the direct heir of Francoist National-Catholicism and *Falangismo*, supports similar forms of radical Caesarism, partisan vocabularies and violent *escuadrismo* as those that constituted the ideological core

of the Francoist regime.¹⁸ The links between the “national resistance” praised today by Vox, the so-called national “Reconquista” – a term used both during the Catholic counter-offensive after the Muslim conquest of the eighth century but also during the Civil War with similar connotations – are so strong amongst the ultra-nationalist in-group supporting Abascal’s party that there is no need to explicitly point to the “enemies of before”, as they seem to remain identical to the “enemies of today”. Certain procedures, such as the systematic vindication of a “transnational conspiracy of the left-wing elites and their partners” to be found in some of the newsreel or Youtube political channels directly connected with the right wing party, such as *La Contra TV*, repeat quite similar discourses as those of the Civil War, deployed by the same intellectuals and military men vindicated today by Vox. Back in 1936 and only a few months after the beginning of the Civil War, Juan Pujol, director of the *Informaciones* newspaper – generously funded with capital coming directly from Joseph Goebbels’s Ministry of Propaganda – connected the religious persecution in Castile and Andalucía with direct orders coming from Paris or New York. The Rotary Club, the British, the French and the American Jews were, according to Juan Pujol’s radical discourse, behind the destructive impulses and the iconoclastic *razzias* of both anarchists and communists deep inside Andalucía:

El puño en alto es un ademán ritual de la Sinagoga (...) El bruto que en Castilla, Extremadura o Andalucía corta la cabeza a los santos de madera, obedece a la impulsión religiosa del Samuel o el Levy que en Londres, París o Nueva York parece un perfecto hombre de mundo, cuyas únicas e inocentes distracciones de sus negocios consisten en las comidas rotarias. (Pujol 1936, 3)

The arguments used by key speakers of the radical right – self-identified as “specialists” focused on the figure of George Soros and his multifaceted “conspiracy in Spain” – construct a form of out-group amalgam (Van Dijk 2004) that closely resembles the words of Pujol and other Anti-Semitic agitators of 1930s and 1940s Spain. The greatest success of the ideological and rhetorical architects of the *Lingua Quarti Imperii* was, precisely, to achieve the reconstruction of an equally radical worldview with similar levels of violent *Feindbildkonstruktivismus* while avoiding the employment of certain unpopular totem words. The discourse quoted below presents a post-modern narrative of the myth of the “*Verjudung*”

18 Violent actions against the Muslim community, homosexuals, LGTBI activists or political enemies of the far-right were often accompanied with the battle cry “viva Vox”. Although there is not always a proof of the direct connection of these attacks and the party – as it is difficult to know if they were somehow directly organized or orchestrated by Vox – they are a clear consequence of the violent stimulus of Abascal’s and his fellow party members hate-speech. See, on this regard, <https://www.europapress.es/sociedad/noticia-jugador-rugby-profesional-alvaro-fernandez-denuncia-agresion-homofoba-grito-viva-vox-20200529180600.html>.

(Judaization) of different spheres of power; the political independence and the authority of the social Democrat President Pedro Sánchez is questioned, as Soros and other “globalists” are considered *de facto* to be pulling the strings of the Spanish government:

La ciencia y la filantropía [está] al servicio de la deconstrucción cultural, social y espiritual de las naciones. Eso es el mundialismo y la gobernanza mundial y no tiene nada que ver con la cooperación entre Estados y la investigación científica (...) me aterra que izquierdistas y globalistas aprovechen la pandemia del Coronavirus para imponer sus Agendas. (Buxadé 2020)

The association both with the past – Spanish second Republic President Manuel Azaña was accused of being controlled by the International Jewry and Freemasonry – and with the allegedly legitimate political counter-reaction of the self-labelled “nationals” in 1936 are obvious: openly declaring the Government as a marionette in the hands of the “anti-nationals”, mixing the perturbing motivations of “secret meetings”, anti-constitutional coalitions, the so-called instrumentalization of the Media and the orchestrated arrival of “immigration freighters” ultimately aims to justify the overthrowing of the Government even through military intervention,¹⁹ as repeatedly suggested by Vox at the end March, 2020:

El gran proyecto de George Soros en España es lo que ha pasado en Catalunya desde hace dos años. Llevaba años trabajando en (sic) por romper España, por confrontar España, crear disensión interna, lo ha conseguido (...) Pedro Sánchez que después de llegar a la Moncloa tuvo un encuentro con George Soros (...) Y poco después vemos como van llegando a España masivamente buques de inmigración, vemos como la televisión pública acaba en manos de socialistas o de la ultra-izquierda y como se forma un gobierno con fuerzas frankenstein, un gobierno no con fuerzas constitucionales sino con fuerzas anticonstitucionales, es decir, separatistas, filoterroristas, ultraprogresistas, comunistas (...) su proyecto es hasta 2030, que es el periodo que tiene la ONU para implantar ideología de género que le beneficia a George Soros. (Villamor 2019)

Such discourse triggers, through the accumulation of violent snarl words, a narrative easy to link with traditional “monster narratives” (Ingebreetsen 2003; Cohen 1996; Williams and Prince, 2018) associated with the Jews. The so-called dissolution of the nation takes place as result of the “Frankenstein government”, a widely extended neologism now present both in the right-wing radical press,²⁰

¹⁹ “Abascal pide la intervención del Ejército un día después de que Casado rompiera el consenso en el estado de alarma”, *El Diario.es* https://www.eldiario.es/politica/abascal-casado-gobierno-dimision-coronavirus_1_1221521.html.

²⁰ Initially used by the former PSOE Vice president Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba to attack any possible political agreement with Podemos, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya and the Partido

Youtube channels, Vox and Partido Popular discourses, pseudo-political analysis of Alt-Right think-tankers. The coalition government of the Social Democrats and Podemos, enabled through the abstentions of Basque and Catalan nationalists and *soberanistas*, is conceived and depicted as the walking dead. This monstrous character is not only constructed through the combination of the impossible: the amalgam of Freemasons, Jews, communists, anarchists, *dinamiteros* and *mujer-zuelas libertarias* back in 1936 and “neo-communists, *separatistas*, philo-terrorists, “ultra-progresists” and “narco-comunists” today but also through the allegedly final intervention in such plan of an otherized individual of equivalent external anti-national characteristics. Additionally, and to reinforce this monster narrative present in the Alt-Right milieu of German speaking countries and in Spain, amongst others, labelling such a political contender a monstrous “poisoner” remains a common rhetorical strategy of radical national-populists. *Judenvergiftung* (Jewish poisoning) was one of many Nazi neologisms associated with the parasitic actions of the Jewish community amongst those “racially fit”. The so-called poisonous effects of the Jewish community not only harmed the national in-group in racial terms; according to the radical worldview of National Socialism, such *Vergiftung* implied a cultural contamination and a dissolving process that affected the cultural foundations of the Germans. This is how the “poisoning effects” are denounced by a transnational Alt-Right reaction that feels comfortable sharing a same goal and an equal totem word, the aforementioned “Reconquista”. “*Vergiftung*” appears to be related with the politics of Soros towards Germany in the Alt-Right German channel *Laut Gedacht* (2018) as if the common, democratic procedures of German politics were at stake due to the perilous inference of Soros and the “*Globalisten*”. Only some politicians from different contexts, – where the taboo of Anti-Semitism has different political consequences – such as president Recep Erdogan, referred to Soros as the “famous Hungarian Jew”.

The transnational *Generation Identitaire*, through their German-speaking branches (the *IBÖ* and the *IBD*, *Identitäre Bewegung Österreich* and the *Identitäre Bewegung Deutschlands*) referenced on several occasions the links between the “radical left-wing conspiracy” and George Soros. The *Info-Direkt Magazin*, closely connected to the Alt-Right extremists, charged the out-group amalgam represented by Soros and its allies with the slogan “*George Soros & Co STOPPEN!*”.

Nacionalista Vasco, amongst others. Rubalcaba, who represented some of the most conservative factions amongst the Social democrats, believed that being dependant of the political support of the secessionist movements and Podemos would put the “unity of Spain” at risk. “Such pact would not be an agreement of the left, it would enable a Frankenstein investment” (Rubalcaba 2016). It was only after the effective implementation of such agreement in 2019 when the neologism became a trend amongst right-wing radicals.

Following the onset of the sanitization measures and the mild lockdown in Germany, groups of extreme right-wingers, including a mixture of the so-called “citizens of the Reich” and radicalized *preppers* (preparationists, also known as survivalists) went to the streets to protest against the “manipulative manoeuvres of Bill Gates, the OMS and the globalists”, one of the key nicknames applied to “Soros and his partners”. The faked confrontation between the national community and the “*Globalisten*”, present during the mentioned protests, crystalized worldwide through the asseverations of one of the most influential ambassadors of Alt-Right paranoid discourse and counter-reaction, resulting in president Trump stating that “the future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots”.²¹ Unsurprisingly, one month after the intervention of Donald Trump, Vox campaigned for the general elections of the 10th of November under the slogan “The future belongs to patriots. Vox Plus Ultra. Spain Plus Ultra” (Vox España 2019) claiming that patriotism “was a natural feeling now to be improved” and generated the same dichotomous antagonism pitting “patriots vs. globalists and separatists”. “The globalists” became, even according to the ultra-reactionary Spanish press (Okdiario 2020) the protagonists of the Motion of no confidence proposed by Vox against the Government by end 2020: “El futuro no pertenece a los globalistas, pertenece a los patriotas #Mocioncontralamafia” (Vox Europa 2020) became the battle cry of the failed vote of no confidence. The ideological core shared by Abascal, Trump, the German YouTube Alt-Right channels and partisan journalists like Villamor or the pro-Kremlin propaganda seen on *Russia Today* are similar. Rhetorically and programmatically equivalent, such core is characterized by the presence of the very same snarl words that articulate transnational national-populist worldview. The connections between “the man behind power”, the women’s March against Trump and the “regime change” in “several countries” are explicitly underlined in the Spanish version of *Russia Today*:

Donald Trump llevaba solo un día gobernando cuando miles de personas salieron a las calles de EE.UU. para protestar en su contra. Según la mayoría de las crónicas periodísticas en medios anglosajones, se trató de “una enorme acción espontánea”. Pero “espontánea” no sería la palabra más precisa si se tuviera en cuenta un dato que muy pocos mencionan: una reportera del Wall Street Journal descubrió que al menos 50 de los movimientos organizadores de la marcha tienen vínculos con el multimillonario George Soros (...) El especulador y magnate George Soros fundó y patrocinó numerosas organizaciones no gubernamentales que apoyaron procesos subversivos en varios países. (*Russia Today* 2017)

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 and during the June protests related with the death of George Floyd, Vox representative at the EU Parliament and spokesperson

²¹ Trump at the United Nations, 24th September 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDtn8K2n2wg>.

of the party's Political Action Committee, Jorge Buxadé, depicted the tension between the Trump administration and the protesters as a “world war” between “civilization” and “terrorism”, “globalists” and the “*progre* millionaires”. Buxadé, a politician with a proudly acknowledged falangist past,²² stimulated the classical conspiracy narrative where too many coincidences with no possible alternative explanations aligned to ultimately confirm the final responsibility of few:

Curiosamente en EEUU estalla una violencia radical la misma semana que el president Trump decide que EEUU va a dejar de participar en ese circo en el que se ha convertido la Organización Mundial de la Salud, dependiente de la ONU, al servicio del gobierno comunista chino. Al servicio de la mentira generalizada de la ocultación de datos y de la propagación de propias (sic) fake news. Y la misma semana que el presidente Trump se enfrenta a la todopoderosa red social de Twitter. Por supuesto todo esto está perfectamente orquestado, es una estrategia política a nivel global. (Buxadé 2020a)

The figure of Soros is to be understood not strictly as a personal obsession of global national-populism, but as a practical symbolical artefact, as he possesses most of the key features of an extreme-right supervillain: he belongs to the economic elite, a claim that permits the activation of the “anti-oligarchic”, mass-mobilization-oriented discourse of the extreme right. Even though this discursive strategy is not ultimately implemented to defy the establishment, it can be extremely effective and facilitate the support of the working class and precarious workers, following the path of further *Ressentiment-Bewegungen* (Olschanski 2017) worldwide. On the other hand, Soros, Hungarian with North-American citizenship born György Schwartz, can also be depicted as a “man with no land”, thus facilitating his presentation as an agent of an anti-national conspiracy, categorizing him as a “wandering Jew” and activating powerful latent narratives without strictly identifying him as such; his role as the active founder and supporter of multiple NGOs permits to make him ultimately responsible for a myriad of happenings, political

²² Falange Española de las JONS, the Spanish fascist party, was founded by José Antonio Primo de Rivera in 1934, as a result of the previous coalition between the *Juntas Castellanas de Actuación Hispánica* and the pro-nazi political platform from Madrid, Ramiro de Ledesma's *La Conquista del Estado*. Falange gained political relevance and increased radically its numbers only after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936. Even though the political relevance of the fascist party in the putsch and during the Francoist regime is beyond debate, the Unification decree of 1937 – a political manoeuvre that gave Franco control both over Falange and the Carlists, now united under his personal command-initiated a long disarticulation process that resulted in the instrumentalization of the Falange. Many of the aspects that made Falange a fascist party remained nonetheless present in the Francoist regime, described by many scholars as a “régimen fascistizado”. See, related with this notion of “dictadura fascistizada”, SAZ, Ismael. “El franquismo ¿régimen autoritario o dictadura fascista? In TUSELL, Javier (coord). *El régimen de Franco (1936–1975) política y relaciones exteriores*. Madrid: UNED, 1993.

actions and citizen mobilizations. It reinforces, simultaneously, the traditional stance of the extreme-right towards NGOs linking them concurrently to the left and to a demonized “*progre-transnational oligarchy*”. The main difference, by example, between the discourse of a man like Juan Pujol and that of another journalist and propagandist such as Villamor is the exclusion of the word “Jew” on the rhetorical, amalgam-like discourse of the latter. *Intereconomia*, one of the long-established TV channels of ultra-reactionary groups in Spain and supporters of the “alternative” represented by Vox, referred to the “Lords of the planet” Soros and Peter Sutherland – also named the *pontifex* of the “New World Order” by other extreme right media such as *La Gaceta* – through highly recognisable lexical arsenals. Para-scientific affirmations, allusions to the palindromic character of Soros’s family name and its eventual relation with the Kabbalah, as well as the supposed to be nomadic, obscure, anti-national character of the family – based on their migrant past and their interest on Esperanto – appear together as part of a TV show with an unquestionable political stance: “The deplorable ones. Lords of the Planet”:

Detrás de todas y cada unas de las movidas (sic) mundialistas de los últimos años, de todas, que si manifestaciones en Ucrania, que si ONGs en Rusia o en Hungría, que si ONGs que atienden inmigrantes masivos que vienen (...) siempre aparece un mismo personaje, George Soros y su fundación abierta o Open Society (sic) (...) es un idealista, y como es un idealista ha dedicado su enorme fortuna a su sueño, que es el de un mundo sin naciones, sin fronteras, sin identidades. (*Intereconomiatube* 2017)

The existing nuances between the discourses of contemporary agitators and the lexical and visual arsenals of the past are enough to guarantee a different façade for a similar ideological core. *Intereconomia*, now re-labelled *El Toro TV*, announced a new investigation regarding the strong connections between the MPs the Social-democrat Government and “totalitarian Globalism”. The possibilities for these reactionary groups – now at a certain extent united under the political project of Vox – increased exponentially though a myriad of until now unused political agitation strategies: right-wing social media gurus, radical influencers and YouTubers became the spearhead of a radical counter-reaction that renounced previous forms of political performance and communication while maintaining both their ideological essence and certain rhetorical features intact: the new, highly mediated extreme right gains preponderance through YouTube, “conspiracy-based” channels with similar names. *Laut Gedacht*, for instance, is well followed by the Alt-Right community and self-labelled “*Querdenker-Bewegungen*” (“alternative-thinking” movements) in German speaking countries. *Laut Gedacht* presents itself as an initiative of a small group of young activists that shall be seen as a product of a more complex, extremely well interconnected Alt-Right

transnational movement. Regardless of the younger touch of the German case, ideological similarities between the content of such channel and that of *Alto y Claro TV* (interestingly, almost a Spanish version of the notion of *Laut Gedacht*) are remarkable and follow a similar political agenda. The German case shares many topics found in the growing channels of the Spanish Alt-Right: self-labelled “*Aktivisten*” air extremist views on topics such as the “*Klimalüge*”, “*Islamisierung im Kinderfernsehen*”, “*Privatschule statt Multikulti*”, “*Chemnitz bleibt Deutsch*”, or “*Integration ist eine Lüge*”. Even though the topics shall be linked with the national-populist transnational agenda if the addressee of such messages is more or less aware of the radical worldview shared in this channel, the image of the violent hooligan that the majority of the German electorate still associates with far-right views is notably absent. While everything looks substantially different, the channel’s ideological *kern* (core) remains stable: there are attacks against the media, blames against the government and Merkel’s CDU on the grounds of political decisions perceived to favour migrants and refugees, and blatant accusations against George Soros and other supposed funders of a transnational left-wing conspiracy. There is a common denominator of a re-signified and re-coded notion of the “national awakening”, not explicitly enunciated through classical forms such as the notorious National socialist slogan “*Deutschland erwacht!*” – seen in many banners, posters and publications of the party, hailed in meetings all around Germany – but following the similar narratives around the national-racial awakening of the nationalist in-group. The “*España en pie*” – the battle of a sublimated “*Volk*” which will eventually become the final achiever of the so-called “*Reconquista*” – was initially articulated as the “national resistance”; long before the now clear political success of the green party, the formation of Abascal was presented as the “Spanish resistance” (“*Somos la Resistencia*”, in their own words and according to their early campaign slogan). The racial and racist content of such rhetorical arsenals, even though not always explicit, are reinforced through the desired association between the uprising of the party and the Spanish “*Reconquista*” of the eighth century.²³ The rhetorical exaltation, both in Spain and at a transnational level, of narratives in which the national community is encouraged to “wake up” or to “stay vigilant”, to “defy the lies of the system” in a myriad

23 Even when applied strictly to the historical process that occurred on the Spanish Peninsula between the 8th and the 15th century, the term “*Reconquista*” is highly controversial and the subject of debate among scholars. It has been argued that the term was never actually used by contemporaries and only came to be incorporated into the nationalist lexicon during the 19th century, its subsequent strong presence in conservative contexts being the product of ideologically motivated “rhetorical exaltation”. See González Jiménez, Manuel. 2005. “*Recuperación y expansión de los reinos cristianos. La cruzada contra el Islam*”, In *España Medieval y el legado de Occidente*, edited by Senacex-Conaculta, 63–76. Madrid: Lunwerg Editores.

of ways, can be seen in the very name of some of this Alt-Right channels – *La Contra TV*, *Alto y Claro TV*, *Laut Gedacht* –; “to wake up” and to “stay vigilant against eventual government manipulation” shall be seen as a sibylline strategic movement towards the eventual implementation of national-populist “liquid truths”. It sounds like a subtle invitation towards the acceptance of the multiplicity of “veracities”, following Pomerantsev’s (2015) analysis – “Nothing is true, everything is possible” – of Putin’s Russia.

Pseudo-scientific discourses, such as that of the economist and scholar Juan Antonio de Castro, represent a common and oft repeated list of “enemies” – labelled by him the “Soros set” – responding to the *Feindbildkonstruktivismus* (Olschanski 2016, 2017) of classic fascist paranoia, unifying the “other” under the banner of the “Jew” but in this case, and as we claim is common during the time of the *Lingua Quarti Imperii*, systematically avoiding any direct identification or out-group labelling procedures that would link these alternative right-wing radicals to the not alternative, far from effective rhetorical repertoires of traditional right-wing extremism. The rhetorical pirouettes of radical think-tankers, authors, politicians and opinion-makers permitted to construct a non-existent “Soros set” mimicks the equally histrionic amalgam of the “Jewish conspiracy”. The aforementioned exercise concerning the “exnomination of the Jew” acquires corporeity in a political discourse where the margins between left and right are erased. Such form of understanding the political – connected to certain aspects of Aleksandr Dugin’s thought and worldview – simultaneously imagine a clash not of ideologies but of communities and identities against well-organized *Weltfeinde* whose only goal is to dismember nations and dissolve both national communities, sexual identities and Christian values. The inner logic of this discourse permits the unproblematic coexistence of much unexpected *travel partners* such as LGTBI movements and ISIS members, both mortal enemies of the Alt-Right ideology and commonly considered as part of the “Sorosian Set”. These elements portray a subtle form of transformed, exnominated Anti-Semitism in which the nominated nemesis might be allocated somewhere else: commonly, among the Muslim population, refugees, the LGTBI community, the left and the “intellectuals”. The logic of both the fascist and contemporary right-wing radicalism language use and its *Weltanschauung* permits, on the other hand, to exchange, combine and reconstruct the “other” through certain strategies identified with what Teun Van Dijk labelled as the “amalgam” procedures of national-populism (2004). Something that has been explained in further publications through the revealing statement of Carlist²⁴

²⁴ Reactionary, nationalist and Catholic monarchists, the Carlistas supported 1936 putsch and were a strong political force from 1833 until their gradual instrumentalization under Franco’s regime, starting with the decreto de unificación of 1937. This decree forced the Carlistas, as we

groups published during the Civil War: “*los rojos de hoy son los moros de ayer*” (the Reds of today are the Moors from yesterday). Radical right-wing and fascist perception concerning the outside of the national semiosphere reveals to be simultaneously flexible and stiff, as the multiplicity of “out-groups” and the nature of those who articulate their schmittean *Freund-Feind* discourse are susceptible to overlap and endlessly mutate. The Jewish community can be depicted as *Kulturzerstörer* accompanied with equivalent, virulent islamophobic lexical arsenals. Unifying and mixing multiple “defining others” under the same banner and as part of a unitary paranoid discourse, is achieved through an act of mimicry equivalent to that of the Francoist discourse, which still shapes contemporary Spanish *Nationalpopulismus*. In 1936, Jews were depicted simultaneously as rich and miserable, powerful and wretched; their so-called allies, a non-defined, liquid mixture of anarchists and communists, as chaotic and well organized; characterized by methodical characteristics, which dehumanized them but at the same time portrayed them as “turba”. The violence of Francoist and falangist propaganda clearly followed what Wodak identified as the “*Judeus ex Machina*” phenomenon (Wodak 2018, 17 and Wodak 1989, 153). The perilous presence of “the Jew” – identified as such during the 30 and 40s, nowadays acknowledged as ultimate organizer of an anti-national conspiracy in subtler manners – itself justified the violent reaction of the national community:

La otra noche tuve la contrariedad de oír por la radio a la inmunda Margarita Nelken. Cuando se me habla a mí de la obsesión respecto de la intervención judía en España, me basta para conservar la tranquilidad de conciencia el recuerdo de esta mujer infame, saco de todos los pecados y agente de la judería soviética tan endemoniado que ya muchos años antes del Alzamiento nacional estaba consagrada a envenenar a nuestro pueblo, no sólo poniendo en práctica las artes demagógicas en que las gentes de su raza son duchos instintivamente (...) que esta mujer doblemente extranjera, porque haciéndose pasar por originaria de Alemania no es sino una judía de la especie más vil, hubiera logrado representar a una porción del pueblo español en el Parlamento, era ya cosa vergonzosa y abominable. (Pujol 1939, 1)

Though Vox represents a hybridization of the *nouvelle droite* – they are less reluctant to embrace their “unpopular past”, including the now demonized lexical arsenals – other aspects found in the Spanish political arena strictly belong to the political strategies of transnational national-populism and can be associated with the now common exchange between less whitewashed “peripheral cases” and developed political platforms, such as the FN or Geert Wilders’s PVV in the Netherlands. Amongst these features, the use of what Ruth

mentioned before, to unite with the fascist party Falange and to obey the commands of their from then on supreme commander of the Militia, Franco himself.

Wodak identified as the “right-wing populist *perpetuum mobile*” (Wodak 2015, 2016) shall be seen as one of the most successful strategies, for various reasons. Recent examples show why these racist statements – not necessarily directed towards the Jews but against further “defining others” – are extremely effective in many ways: having been infected by the COVID-19 on April 2020, Vox MP Ortega Smith posted a video on Twitter where he made the following declaration: “My Spanish antibodies will defeat the damned Chinese virus” (Ortega Smith 2020a)

The statement, issued from one of the most radical individuals and key speakers of Vox could be taken by some sectors of the population exclusively as a provocative declaration, thus relativized although simultaneously assimilated; others, specifically the radical spheres of Vox’s in-group, decode it as a genuine proof of the extremist core of the party. This will allow the most convinced Francoist-nostalgic faction amongst Vox electorate to re-confirm that Santiago Abascal’s party still is the best suitable alternative to the so-called “coward right” or “derecha complejada”. Simultaneously, this win-win strategy and no-win situation for the media towards national-populist rhetoric guarantees parallel side-effects: systematic provocation and the use of certain tropes require either to translate the focus to that radical statement, condemning it, or to ignore it, therefore facilitating the expansion of such assertions. This systematic political strategy allows right-wing populism to set the political agenda and distract both the media and the electorate from important news or relevant decisions (Wodak 2015). Both Vox and the Partido Popular, particularly through the actions taken either by their spokespersons or through chosen members of the party – who will assume this role as a “decoy agitator” on a long term basis, thus routinely attracting the attention of the media – have been using this strategy in particularly sensitive moments when political tension has been extreme: during electoral periods, through the celebration and after the repressive actions taken towards the Catalan referendum of 2017; throughout the COVID-19 crisis or before the Basque elections of 2020. In these cases, powerful lexical arsenals, many of them strictly connected with the *Lingua Novii Imperii* (Rivas Venegas 2018) of the Francoist putschists and the Spanish fascists, triggered strong narratives that blurred past and present, linked nemeses from the past with demonized political challengers of the present, and in many cases, transposed political reality of the “Jewish-Freemason-Bolshevist Conspiracy” of 1936 to that of 2017 or 2020.

For instance, the blatant accusation of Ortega Smith towards the *Trece rosas*, a group of thirteen under-age girls accused of been red *collaborateurs*, judged in a military court and executed in August 1939 is a revealing paradigm of this strategy: using a widely known crime in the Spanish State to be reshaped and manipulated, generating a radical form of Orwell’s blackwhite

phenomenon. Accusing the *Trece rosas* of being “rapists and assassins” – Ortega Smith was strictly conscious of the fake, impossible to defend condition of such statement – is not to be interpreted as a sign of political dilettantism, but both as a revealing example of the *perpetuum mobile* strategy and as a paradigm of the politics to come: the aforementioned idea of “nothing is true” seen in Russian politics under Putin (Pomerantsev 2015, 2016, 2020), the tentative of reconstruction of the past under Viktor Orbán’s command – a state-funded form of Adorno’s notion of “*Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit*” – seem to be established inside the political strategies of Vox as in the Putin administration’s worldview. This generalized relativization of truth (Prozorov 2016) also affects, as we will see through the following pages, the faked narrative towards the “globalists”, linking iconographies and hate-images from the past with the *Imago Quarti Imperii* of exnominated Anti-Semitism.

3 The Visual Paradigm: Imago Quarti Imperii and Exnominated Anti-Semitism

A parallel analysis of visual propaganda of movements ideologically linked with the transnational Alt-Right and radical Spanish media facilitates an understanding of the symbolic yet effective change of paradigm of both lexical and visual arsenals of exnominated Anti-Semitism. The aesthetics of some of this photomontages and memes circulating on the Internet appearing commonly in right-wing extremist forums or reproduced in Twitter amongst political communities close to Vox, continue with a long-lasting tradition of visual propaganda regarding the “Jewish conspiracy”. These materials, not necessarily produced by the party but in direct ideological harmony with their political agenda, language use and *Feindbild-konstruktivismus*, reinforce the previously analysed lexical arsenals of Vox, display equivalent narratives towards the eternal *Kulturzerstörer* and align well with a worldview composed by traces of Anti-Semitism formulated now in different, veiled terms. Though some of the addressees of such images might not be fully aware of it, these materials are strictly connected with the lexical arsenals and visual dispositives condensing the discourse of the Jew behind the backdrops, the figure that stands behind power: the perpetual whisperer, the timeless manipulator, the eternal wanderer. The rise of populism and the dichotomy presented by national-populists, the aforementioned “patriots vs. globalists” and the specific conditions of the post-democratic political scenario (Crouch 2000) in which confidence regarding the political caste disappears, facilitates the reincorporation and acceptance of certain paranoid iconographies. The generalized post-parliamentary

cynicism (Rivas Venegas 2020) and the inherent characteristics of the uncritical “post-citizen” (Moles Plaza 2014, 122),²⁵ the ultimate receiver of the national-populist visual dispositives shared *ad aeternum* in Social Media, permits the efficient construction of what Elias Canetti named the “hunting pack” (Canetti 1981, 97) and justifies the comeback of traditional scapegoating figures. The analysis of selected visual materials exposes the translation of similar iconographies that aim to reinforce both the inherent characteristics of the national-populist “hunting pack”, offering a “*Judeus ex machina*” simultaneously camouflaged and recognisable. Peter Sutherland (1946–2018), Irish businessman and UN Special Representative for International Migration, was amongst the preferred enemies of national-populist propaganda, as he possessed most of the characteristics of the Alt-Right superlative nemesis. As chairman of Goldman and Sachs, server of numerous of international organizations, and promoter of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, the Irishman of Jewish ancestry fully incorporated the features needed to become the scapegoat-target of the exnominated Anti-Semitism associated with these *Ressentiment Bewegungen*.

The Alt-Right newspaper *La Gaceta*, amongst other national-populist media, made reference to the death of the “interplanetary pontifex of the New World Order” and promoter of the replacement migration policies not only through the deployment of lexical arsenals that could continue with the paranoid narrative of the “*Judeus ex Machina*”; the presence of a photomontage of equivalent ideological radicalism (Figure 1) facilitates the effective demonization of a figure presented as the ultimate alien-oligarch, enemy and manipulator of the masses. The “*Rassenchaos*” and “*Rassenbrei*” discourse related with the migration policies associated with Sutherland is presented through recognisable iconographical deployments, following traditional visual hierarchies and compositions of a long-standing tradition amongst visual Anti-Semitism. In this photomontage, the figure of Sutherland fills the centre of the composition, not menacing over the globe alike countless pre-war or Third Reich propaganda depictions of the *Ewige Jude* that emphasized his “otherness” as a cultural beast or as seen in the propagandistic poster of the exhibition *Le Juif et la France* (Figure 2), but following the anti-oligarchic logic present in parallel Anti-Semitic materials. The *Fendbildkonstruktivismus* of this image connects with the discourse of the *Verjudung Deutschlands* through the allegedly hazardous effects of highly qualified influential professionals (Figure 4) and intellectual elites, leaving aside the danger of “radical otherness due to religious fanaticism” seen in other Anti-Semitic artefacts and

²⁵ According to Ramon Moles, the post-truth requires necessarily a post-citizen, an uncritical, tame citizen prepared to “digest doctrine without offering any intellectual resistance to it”.

Figure 1: Sutherland as “Pontifex” *La Gaceta*, 9th January 2018.

Figure 2: René Péron “Le Juif et la France”, lithography for the itinerant exhibition in Nancy, 1942. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of Gary and Nina Wexler.

focused on a narrative that easily reaches the “losers of Globalization” (Williamson 2002).

The oversized figures present in these three examples (Figures 1–3) are articulated – regardless of the iconographic content and the opposition of the cultural beast as “religious fundamentalist” or as “the hazardous oligarch” – through a similar, recognisable narrative of greediness, pointing out the will of almighty

Figure 3: “...now this Jewish dream about ruling the world disappears under the blows of awoken nationalism!” offset litograph for the Grand Anti-Masonic Exhibition, Belgrade, 1941. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Katz Family.

power and their character as malevolent world-spinners. In all of these cases, the ultimate responsibility of the “national decadence” or globalization falls on a single figure, depicted simultaneously as unitary and recognisable – “the Jew”, the *Judischer Großunternehmer* (as businessman or investor, Figure 4), Soros or Sutherland –, multifaceted and omnipresent, more or less explicitly identified as the controller of the so-called “Stupid Goyim” (Figures 5 and 6). This notion, that of the “dumb Goyim”, present through different variations, latent or explicit, named as such or suggested through the depiction of the servile Gentiles under “Freemason and Jewish commands”, syncretic or specific, can be seen in the particularly ferocious classic depictions of the Nazi propagandist Philipp Rupprecht alias Fips in *Der Stürmer* and is nowadays commonly present in the Social Media, as seen in notorious caricatures from US cartoonist Ben Garrison, amongst others.

The submissive character of the Gentiles, summarized in Fip’s caricature assertion “*Was kann mer doch alles machen mit die Gojim!*” (Figure 5), can be easily traced through a variety of visual artefacts. The devious characteristics of this interplanetary *Weltfeind* are presented both as a result of an inherent deceitful racial character associated with the Jews and with the decadent stupidity of the “useful idiots”, product of a now rarely identified but still operative notion of an

Figure 4: Alfred Vogel, “Verjudung Berlins 1932”, colour poster, Verlag fur nationale Literatur Gebr. Rath, Stuttgart, 1938.

Figure 5: Fips, “Was kann mer doch alles machen mit die Gojim!” *Der Stürmer* Newspaper, 1929.

Figure 6: Ben Garrison, “Wunderbar!”, Social Media cartoon, 2016.

absent “*Rassenbewußt*”.²⁶ The same “*nützlicher Idioten*” – according to AfD’s Alexander Gauland²⁷ – seen now in Alt-Right propaganda of German-speaking countries, or associated directly with Soros (Figure 8) in Fidesz’s propaganda of 2019. We claim that the “totem words” (Rebollo Torío 1975) or key concept of “useful idiots” as used by right-wing national-populists today represent a variation of the idea of the “stupid Goyim” in disguise, and shall be seen as part of a strategy towards the implementation of exnominated Anti-Semitism of larger extent. Labelling those who are outside of the semiosphere of the national-populists as deceived idiots, manipulated bureaucrats (Figures 7 and 8) and puppets also facilitates the expansion of the fake-news and the alternative-truths: Moles’s post-citizen (2014), as the ultimate product of the expansion of post-democratic cynicism, will be particularly keen to embrace alternative narratives. Accepting that political decisions are made somewhere outside the sphere of politics, as claimed by Colin Crouch (2000), accelerates the spread of the *narratio* of the absolute ruler from outside of the political arena, and opens (again) the door to the “Jew behind the backdrops” paranoia.

²⁶ According to the definition provided by Dörr and Michael, “Race consciousness. Pride in one’s own race. Awareness of and willingness to act on behalf of the German race.” In this case, the parabola of the “stupid Goyim” would work as its antithesis, as the “dumb Goy” acts not on behalf of the interests of its own race (*Rassengesund*, according to the Nazi worldview), but serving the Jewish interests.

²⁷ See <https://www.welt.de/regionales/berlin/article148980515/Gauland-nennt-Fluechtlingshelfer-nuetzliche-Idioten.html>.

Figure 7: “Hinter den Feindmächten: der Jude”
US Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection,
1941.

Figure 8: “Önnek is joga van tudni, mire készül Brüsszel!” Fidesz’s campaign, 2019.

According to this logic, absolute rulers require their servile counterparts: Abascal and his party identify as the “*tontos útiles*” of the independence movements all political actors that do not directly oppose the *soberanistas* in Catalunya.²⁸ The “*tontos útiles*” and the “*nützlicher Idioten*” are, according to the worldview of right-wing radicals, traitors to the fatherland – the LTI concept of “*Volksverräter*” is repeated in public meetings and demonstrations, such as the last mass-meetings of the extreme right in Berlin against the Government measures regarding the COVID-19 pandemic –, allocated outside from the boundaries of the in-group, and thus de-nationalized as slaves or *collaborateurs* of the “anti-national”.

The discourse behind Ben Garrison’s “*Wunderbar*” (Figure 6) follows equivalent metaphorical presentations as the notion of the hazard hiding behind official power (Figure 8) or sneaking behind national emblems (Figure 7) is presented in this case as an exposed menace, not like a falling backcloth but as an uncoiling truth. Merkel’s allegedly secret plans for Europe’s future, to become the “European globalist edition”, according to Ben Garrison’s caricature, are supported by the “Soros Inc.”. Presenting the US-Hungarian investor as a man who wants to rule the world as if it was an incorporated business reinforces the idea of “human merchandise” that fills the centre of the nationalist counter-reaction. The presence of a three-sided polygon on Merkel’s necklace once again references Freemasonry and completes the classical narrative of the *Juden-Freimauerei Komplot*.

According to the national-populist dichotomist narrative that artificially confronts deceived *Volksverräter* with vigilant patriots, grasping the truth hiding behind the backdrops implies discovering the true nature of the anti-national: “you also have the right to know what Brussels is preparing for you” (“*Önnek is joga van tudni, mire készül Brüsszel!*”, Figure 8) or “99% reject illegal immigration. Don’t let Soros have the last laugh”, (“*99% elutasítja az illegális bevándorlást. Ne hagyjuk, hogy Soros nevéssen a végén!*”) (Figure 9). Both propaganda banners, depicting Soros as the grinning man behind power, are indeed not far from the demonized laughing, grinning Jews from *Der Stürmer* “*Wenn Juden lachen*” (Figure 10).

In this regard, the latent (in this case less exnominated and more explicit than in other examples) Anti-Semitism of Fidesz’s propaganda is directly linked with a tradition of visual dispositives associated with the iconographical repertoires depicting the devilish-manipulative grinning Jew (Figures 11–13).

The “last laugh” (Figure 9) mentioned during the 2017 presidential campaign in Hungary connects iconographically, ideologically and programmatically not only with the active, far from being remnant worldview of the grinning Jew depicted in

²⁸ See <https://www.libertaddigital.com/espana/politica/2019-03-07/abascal-responde-al-boicot-del-psc-al-gran-acto-de-vox-en-barcelona-sois-los-tontos-utiles-del-separatismo-1276634378/>.

Figure 9: “Ne hagyjuk, hogy Soros nevéssen a végén!”, Fidesz campaign, 2017.

Figure 10: “Wenn Juden lachen” *Der Stürmer*, US Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, approximately 1937–1938.

these 20th century visual artefacts, but also with the Alt-Right media campaigns in Spain. The same figure is portrayed through several graffiti and spontaneous poster interventions in the streets of Budapest not only as the one “having the last laugh” but also as the “dirty Jew” (“*Büdös Zsidó*”, again Figure 9), and seems to crystallize in photomontages such as the one seen *La Contra TV* as they were denouncing the “penetration of Soro’s postulates on the political programme of the Social

Figure 11: “Belief me”, 1906 postcard. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Katz Family.

Figure 12: “Lachpillen von und für “unsere Leut””, 1924, Molitor’s Wiener Humor-Bibliothek, No. 4, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Katz Family.

democratic party (PSOE)” (Figure 14) and therefore in the Government agenda. The “Jewish last laugh” of the grinning Jew requires its necessary complementary counterpart, the servile “stupid Goy”, in this case the puppet-president Pedro

Figure 13: grinning Fagin, ca. 1920, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Katz Family.

Sánchez. The “final laugh” seems to be, also in the Spanish context, a direct consequence of the dissolving action of the *Volksverräter*, a narrative supported as well by the established myth of the 1808 “*afrancesados*” and the 1936 “*arrusados*”, *collaborateurs* of external powers, identified as traitors to the fatherland, consequently de-nationalized and vilified. It is not by chance that the ideological heirs of Francoism – a regime that identified their opponents as servants of the “Judaic-Bolshevik conspiracy” and accused them of having “impure blood” (Núñez Seixas 2006, 245) – are keen to stimulate a narrative in which racial treason, cultural dissolution through Jewish intervention and *marionettism* play a central role. The transnational ideological foundations of right wing extremism are still based on Anti-Semitic key concepts such as “*artfremdes Blut*”, “*Blutbewußtsein*”, “*Blutecht*”, “*Blutkreis*” (Dörr and Michael 2002, 102) or “*conciencia de sangre*” (Rivas Venegas 2018, 59) of strong pure/impure blood connotations; albeit these lexical arsenals may be marginal enough not to be openly used in public discourses by politicians²⁹ – some of them are nonetheless employed by Alt-Right supporters in

²⁹ Despite this and as mentioned before, some particularly radical politicians from Vox identified the fight against the COVID pandemic as a battle of “blood-brothers and their Spanish antibodies against the damned Chinese virus”. See <https://www.elmundo.es/espana/2020/03/14/5e6ca55421efa01c0a8b46ae.html>.

Figure 14: “Soros logra que Pedro Sánchez introduzca algunos de sus postulados en el programa del PSOE”, *La Contra TV*, 10th May 2019.

Anti-Corona demonstrations, amongst other contexts – and are latently present and effectively spread through visual dispositives.

The iconographic distance and ideological divergences between the alien, smiling rich man with bad intentions represented through the “Belief me” paradigm (Figure 11), the blood-drinking Fagin (Figure 13) and the countless visual representations of Soros and Sutherland as almighty commanders, “Globalist capos” of the anti-national masses (Figures 15–17) represented as blood-sucking spiders (Figure 20) are far smaller than might be assumed at first glance. Visual arsenals effectively reinforce, not as subsidiary tools of *Hasssrethorik*, but as equally relevant propagandistic dispositives, the recodified myth of the Jewish manipulator, the *Einflüsterer* (Brodnig 2017), as described in modern Alt-Right German propaganda regarding the “*Globalisten*” that filled numerous visual Anti-Semitic materials where “the Jew” whispers to the men in power, controlling their actions (Figure 15). The visual materials and lexical arsenals – the term “Globalist capos” is a revealing example – firstly used by traditional neo-Nazis such as Democracia Nacional in Spain (2016) and now incorporated to the rhetorical repertoires of Vox in their fight against the equally labelled “capos globalistas” (Vox Europa 2020a). They shall be seen as a renewed version of the myth of the “racial mixer” and the *Rassenschänder* – a notion that in classical Anti-Semitic NSDAP rhetoric crystalized through the neologisms *Mischlingstum*, *mischrassig*, *Mischlinge* – in disguise. The “bags of Sorrows” associated with the US-Hungarian millionaire (Figure 17) are those of multiculturalism, communism and ultimately, racial death (*Rassentod* according to the LTI neologism) and national decadence.

The aforementioned notion of the Jew behind the backdrops coexists well narratively, ideologically and in terms of visual composition strategies with the

Figure 15: “Tik milo burbulas” (Only a soap bubble), black ink caricature, Lithuania, ca. 1947.

Figure 16: Photomontage depicting Sutherland as “globalist capo”, Democracia Nacional party website, 2016.

vaudeville, the spectacle, the theatre scenario: the never fully extinguished myth of the *Verjudung* of all spheres of power and political decisions, the understanding of politics as a farce in hands of the “anti-national Jew” (Figure 18) finds its own slightly-renewed version in the current times of the expansion of national-populism. The justified (but incorrectly canalized, through racist, Anti-Semitic, or nationalist nativist paranoia) fear towards the end of national sovereignty in hands of international corporations, combined with the generalized *Ressentiment* towards the elites, once again unlocks the spread of iconographies that reproduce the *pulling the strings* paradigm (Figure 19) commonly associated with the Jews. As seen in Ben Garrison’s notorious caricature, the rotten, Masonic hand of the

Figure 17: Ben Garrison, “Bags of Soros”, Social Media cartoon, 2016.

Rotschilds controls the US-Hungarian investor pulling the strings of the military and security advisors of US Government. Independently from the obvious compositional convergences, both images, that by Garrison and the one produced for the Grand Anti-Masonic exhibition, explicitly underline the parasitic nature of nominated or exnominated Jews; depict them as bearers of death and disgrace (through the crowning *tottenkopf* in Figure 18 or as a result of their “rotten” character, Figure 19); picture them as a hazard coming from above, a notion that inevitably make them more scary, as they enter the national semiosphere from a calculatedly otherized space; on the other hand, such iconographic portrayal, that from overhead hazard and the presence of a web of strings inevitably links this caption with another commonly reproduced image, that of the *Jüdische Spinne* (Jewish spider).

The iconographic tradition of the Jewish spider (Figures 20 and 21) as controller of the world might be – along with other secondary animals, such as the octopus, the bat or different forms of vermin or bloodsucker – one of the most repeated amongst transnational Anti-Semitism. The study of such visual dispositives, their relevance in the construction of the racist narrative of planetary control of the Jewish community amongst nations through the specific representation of the Jewish spider as Pontifex of the globalist revolution (still identified as a project *Transnational Judenstadt* amongst neo-Nazis) and as controller of finances and politics could well be by itself the object of study of a Monograph. What interest us here is not the categorization of such, as we say, *ad aeternum* and transnational depiction of the *Jüdische Spinne*, but the reincorporation and exnominated reinterpretation of a long-established iconography in the context of post-democratic

Figure 18: “A Jew is holding strings in his hand” offset lithograph for the Grand Anti-Masonic exhibition, Belgrade, 1941. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, Gift of the Katz Family.

Figure 19: Ben Garrison, Trump’s former National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster and retired Gen. David Petraeus manipulated by Soros, Social Media cartoon, 2017.

national-populism. Even though in rare cases and in very specific contexts this figure will be openly identified as a Jew, the *Imago Quarti Imperii* will tend to reproduce similar hate images albeit avoiding an ultimate identification of the nemesis that would link these movements to already surpassed forms of marginal

Figure 20: “La telaraña de Soros se extiende por España y Europa”, Democracia Nacional, February 2020.

Figure 21: “Die Ausgesaugten” (the sucked dry ones) *Der Stürmer*, 1st February 1930.

neo Nazism. The growing political scepticism amongst uncritical citizens, the understanding of the political as a strictly spectacular puppet theatre, and the disenchantment of these *Ressentiment Bewegungen* with the political castes gives, once again and maybe more than ever, great chances of success to a political agitation strategy based on the visual arsenals of the almighty anti-national [Jewish] spider behind power.

4 Conclusions

As we have seen through this article, the extremely syncretic, *doublethink*-based ideological core of contemporary *Nationalpopulismus* permits the harmonic coexistence of incompatible characteristics inside the exnominated nemesis: Soros and the globalist elite, as well as its alleged to be international partners from the extreme left, can be simultaneously globalization-oriented and ideological architects of small-scale peripheral nationalism. According to this Orwellian 1984 *doublethink*-style logic, the international enemies of nations and traditions are willing to atomize national identities though a no borders policy while simultaneously supporting the creation of new nations – Catalunya as sovereign independent state in the Spanish case, for instance –; they are, according to Alt-Right propaganda, powerful oligarchs of exnominated Jewish ancestry ultimately behind the currently preferred *Weltfeind* of these movements, an unclear amalgam of migrants and Muslims, alleged to be terrorists, national-tradition atomizers and cultural reapers. The simultaneous, non-hierarchical analysis of lexical arsenals and visual dispositives, here understood as equally relevant artefacts of the national-populist worldview, reveal nuances and meanings that would otherwise be incomplete without the concurrent study of the *Lingua Quarti Imperii* hate-speech and its political *messa in scena*. The methodical examination of iconography and the confrontation of both lexical and visual materials from past and present reveal equivalences of deeper significance, unveil tinges of hidden Anti-Semitism that would be otherwise only partially decoded: the allusion to migrants and political refugees, described by Santiago Abascal as Soros's “merchandise and nothing else”, acquire a deeper meaning and further significance when seen in contrast with both contemporary and classical Anti-Semitic visual materials from diverse origin. These “politically-oriented goods”, these human lives in danger described by the Vox politician as “merch” of the NGOs that the populist leader aims to demonize, shall be seen as another radical version of the narrative of the cheating Jew. In the discourse of Spanish Alt-Right scholars, the “Set” associated with Soros or the Rotschilts works as a neologism for “*Komplot*”. Confronting the words of professor De Castro, one of the most quoted scholars

amongst the lines of the Spanish Alt-Right with those of the newspaper director Pujol serve as concluding example of the convergent character of both lexical arsenals:

Creo que todo el mundo conoce ya los componentes del “set”. Pueden citarse, entre migración masiva sin fronteras, matrimonios del mismo sexo, pro-abortismo extremo contrario a la defensa de la vida, aceleración de la agenda LGTBI con la sexualidad como “construcción social”, integración de Ucrania en la UE, enfrentamiento con los Estados Unidos, pero solo con el de Donald Trump, desestabilización y fragmentación de España, a través del apoyo mayoritario del grupo al independentismo golpista catalán, condena irremisible a Hungría por no aceptar el “set”, guerra feroz mediática y política contra Rusia, lucha contra una supuesta islamofobia de los europeos, protegiendo al Islam, a veces por encima de las creencias mayoritarias en nuestras sociedades, ruptura radical con el cristianismo y los valores en los que se fundamenta. (De Castro 2019)

¿Contra quién estamos luchando los españoles? No es sólo contra nuestros compatriotas marxistas, ni contra la hez de las grandes ciudades europeas, fauna de puertos y arrabales febriles, piojería de los *slums* y de los barrios malditos, ni contra la vasta y triste Rusia. O, mejor dicho, no es contra todo eso solamente. Empujando a esas hordas, alentándolas, dirigiéndolas, está el Comité Secreto Israelita que gobierna el pueblo judío distribuido por el mundo, obstinado ahora más que nunca en dominarlo. (Pujol 1936, 3)

Saving the obvious rhetorical differences between this extract from the intervention of the Alt-Right scholar and the assertions of men like Pujol, the equivalences amid both narratives are clear: the enemy-building strategies of both worldviews underline the existence of a conspiracy simultaneously national and international, acknowledge the perilous consequences of such collaboration regarding the survival of the national community identified with the political in-group; create a direct antagonism – as commonly seen in the discourse of counter-reactionary sectors of the Francoist coalition and as part of the national-populist rhetoric – between the survival of the national community and the implementation of specific political victories (feminism, women emancipation, LGTBI rights, etc.); re-incorporate notions coming strictly from the discourse of the European “Africanización” (Costa 1902, 86; Pemán 1931; Redondo 1931) or the “*Verniggerung Europas*” present in the LTI hate-speech; in both cases, behind these multifaceted, international complots, a lonely figure (named or anonymous) stands as the organizer of the revolution. Both in the discourse deployed by Pujol and De Castro as paradigmatic examples of the fascist and Alt-Right *Weltanschauungen*, the future is essentially conceived under the antagonist notion of “*Zukunft oder Untergang*”, where a racially-homogeneous in-group faces survival or national disintegration. As seen in Francoist rhetorical repertoires and Alt-Right discourse in Spain, the relationship between secessionist movements, external enemies, migrants and “radical feminists” is outlined through “snarl words” such as 1936s

keyword “comités de ramerías” (whores committees) or 2019s “feministas indepes” (“pro-independence feminists”, according to the popular Alt-Right key-concept). The logic behind this *Feindbildkonstruktion* imagines women simultaneously as *Untermenschen* and almighty contenders, in terms to be clearly correlated with the also contradictory construction of “the Jew”. Associations between political enemies of the radical right – emancipated women as traitors to the fatherland, external *others* identified or not as Jews, through exercises of exnominated Anti-Semitism – are found in transnational *Nationalpopulismus* in a wider sense, as they belong to a growing stream in which “*der Jude*”, and other nation-atomizers such as the “*emanzipierte Frau*” seem to be related as allegedly active agents of national degeneration processes (Hermann 2020, 33). Understanding both women and migrants as agents or as “*Herrschaftsinstrument der ‘mächtigen Elite’*”, as empowering instruments in hands of the elites, effectively connects the classical discourse of the *Rassenschänder* (the racial destroyer) and their operational artefacts of the past with the allegedly puppets of the present times: according to the Alt-Right misogynist and racist logic, deceived-totalitarian women, “useful idiots”, “merch-migrants”. This narrative is susceptible of a fast expansion and is easily compatible with the contemporary outbreak of anti-elite *Ressentiment*, and shall be understood as part of a counter-reaction towards the “global *Verjudung*”. Articulated under different visual and textual vocabularies, this fear concerning a more or less exnominated judaization crystalizes during the times of “collective hysteria” (Berardi 2007) with the construction of the conspiracy theories of the COVID-19 era, mixed with contemporary paranoia regarding the *Volkstod* of the Europeans and the “*Grand Remplacement*” (Camus 2011); such *Kulturzerstörung*-related fears are strictly complementary to the reactive worldview of the “Europe of the Hundred flags” and its rhetoric, specially inclined to expand itself through the highly visual character of the Social Media, the ultimate multiplier of national-populist visual dispositives, lexical repertoires and radical *messa in scena*.

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