

Book Reviews

António Costa Pinto, *The Blue Shirts: Portuguese fascists and the New State*, Boulder: Social Science Monographs (2000), 271 pp. ISBN 0-88033-982-9 (cloth)

This book is an abbreviated translation of the author's doctoral thesis, *O Nacional Sindicalismo e Salazar: o fascismo português no período entre as duas guerras*, taken at the European University Institute's Department of History in 1992, and which was previously published in Portuguese in 1994 under the title *Os Camisas Azuis: ideologia, elites e movimentos fascistas em Portugal, 1914-1945* (Lisbon: Estampa).

This study analyses the emergence of fascist movements in Portugal, and in particular, Rolão Preto's National Syndicalist movement ('*Nacional Sindicalismo*' – the Blue Shirts) and its relationship with the regime of António de Oliveira Salazar and its single party, the National Union ('*União Nacional*').

The first chapter looks at the foundation and subsequent development of the integralist national movement, Lusitanian Integralism ('*Integralismo Lusitano*'), and several of the other radical right-wing groups that emerged during the Portuguese First Republic of 1910–26. The ideological development of National Syndicalism's charismatic leader is traced back to his days as a leading member of '*Integralismo*'. Costa Pinto analyses the factors that led to the emergence of fascism in Portugal, and how this contributed to the collapse of the First Republic and the establishment of the Military Dictatorship in 1926.

The second chapter concentrates on the formation of National Syndicalism in 1932 (the last and main fascist movement to emerge in Portugal), and examines both the ideology and the political activities of this movement. The third chapter sketches out the movement's organizational structure and provides us with a social profile of both its ordinary members and its leaders.

The fourth chapter makes a social political comparison between National Syndicalism and the National Union. Here the author seeks to clarify the distinction between a fascist party (National Syndicalism) and an authoritarian regime single-party (National Union). National Syndicalism was a fascist party led by young men, mainly students, intellectuals and army officers who sought to encourage the mobilization of Portuguese society into a mass party. The National Union, on the other hand, was formed and led by an older, more traditional and conservative, generation with the purpose of uniting its supporters into one non-mobilizational party.

The conflict between National Syndicalism and Salazar's regime in the subject of the fifth chapter. In 1933, the regime provoked a schism within the fascist movement, and integrated its more moderate members into the New State's official apparatus. National Syndicalism's more radical leaders, including Rolão Preto, were arrested and subsequently deported overseas before the movement was finally outlawed in 1934.

The sixth chapter analyses National Syndicalism during its clandestine period of 1934–45. Until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, National Syndicalism concentrated its efforts on resisting Salazarism in the hope of causing its downfall, and was responsible for the 1935 *coup d'état*.

After 1936, however, it degenerated into a mere 'sub-culture' that was determined not to allow itself to be integrated into the regime. A significant proportion of National Syndicalism's supporters joined those organizations within the regime that were most mobilizational in nature, and most fascist in appearance, although these bodies were always to occupy a secondary position within Salazar's New State.

In the final chapter, Costa Pinto makes a comparative analysis of Portuguese National Syndicalism with other fascist movements.

International comparative studies of fascism often ignore the Portuguese case, and when, on the few occasions that it is mentioned, the New State is usually described as being a conservative authoritarian regime, rather than fascist (for example, see Costa Pinto's later work, *Salazar's dictatorship and European fascism: problems of interpretations*, New York, 1995). Nevertheless, this is a debate that is far from being resolved, given that historians such as Fernando Rosas, Enzo Collotti, Manuel Villaverde Cabral and Manuel de Lucena continue to label the Portuguese New State as a form of 'generic fascism' – Lucena has even concluded that Salazarism is best described as 'fascism without a fascist movement'. This book by Costa Pinto, however, demonstrates well the value of maintaining the distinction between a traditional and conservative right that rejects mobilization, and a radical right that is composed mainly of youths who are seeking to create a mass movement. As far as Costa Pinto is concerned, Salazarism exhibited none of the mobilizational tensions of its fascist peers, but instead promoted apathy and consensus. In Portugal, the more interventionist and modernist elements remained in the minority, and although fascist groups and movements, such as National Syndicalism, did exist and they did contribute to the overthrow of the liberal republic, they were not involved in the creation of the stable dictatorial alternative at the beginning of the 1930s. Some Italian observers, sent by Mussolini to Portugal to report on the reality of the Portuguese political situation, arrived at the same conclusion as Costa Pinto: 'Portugal is not a fascist country'.

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