

Echoes of the Past: Fascism and Hate Speech in Italy's Current Political Climate

Piermauro Catarinella^{1*}, Suhardi Kram², Bang Jee Yoen³, Alfonso Min⁴, Izzat Syazwan Ab Halim⁵

¹Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Shah Alam, Malaysia

²Faculty of Sports Science & Recreation, Samarahan, UiTM Sarawak, Malaysia

³Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Shah Alam, Malaysia

⁴Human Rights Commission, Sabah office, Malaysia

⁵St. John's International School, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.90400433>

Received: 11 April 2025; Accepted: 15 April 2025; Published: 20 May 2025

ABSTRACT

In the aftermath of the September 2022 Italian elections, dominated by the victory of the *Fratelli d'Italia* (Brothers of Italy) party, a new government emerged under the leadership of Giorgia Meloni, who heads the aforementioned party. The incumbent prime minister, alongside fellow government officials, faces relentless accusations of being labeled “fascist” on a daily basis. This epithet is wielded by political adversaries, commentators, journalists, and leaders of left-wing factions, drawing historical parallels with the era of Benito Mussolini, the dictator who held power in Italy from 1922 to 1943. This study endeavors to dissect the contemporary connotations of the terms “fascism” and “fascist” within the framework of Mussolini’s legacy, mindful that his autocratic regime was dismantled and defeated eight decades ago. It seeks to elucidate the significance attributed to this terminology in the context of Italy’s contemporary liberal democracy, investigating the motivations, methods, and agents behind its routine invocation against the sitting Prime Minister and her administration, and assessing its societal repercussions. To address these inquiries, the researchers employ a qualitative case study methodology, incorporating systematic observation and analysis of press articles, televised debates, posters, advertisements, linguistic expressions, multimedia content, and emblematic propaganda materials. Through rigorous thematic and discourse analysis, this study illuminates the character of this novel brand of political rhetoric, unequivocally falling under the rubric of hate speech. The findings of this investigation underscore that the invocation of fascism is predominantly instrumental and ideological, unlinked from its historical context. Presently, political discord no longer hinges on the democratic and respectful contestation of ideas, as has been customary since the 1950s. Rather, it has assumed manifestations of intolerable physical and verbal violence, antithetical to the ethos of a democratic system, thereby impeding the fabric of national societal cohesion.

Keywords: Connotations of fascism, Hate speech, Italian liberal democracy, Political warfare

INTRODUCTION

Before their victory in the general elections of September 2022, the political party *Fratelli d'Italia* (Brothers of Italy) had never led a government and had consistently garnered around 4% of the vote over the past two decades. In contrast, the Democratic Party, the successor to the Italian Communist Party (PCI), has been a dominant political force in Italy, governing for many years, often in coalition with other parties. The exception to this dominance was from 2001 to 2006, during which Silvio Berlusconi served as Prime Minister (Ruffino, 2022).

Fratelli d'Italia ran its electoral campaign from June to August 2022, presenting its program to the Italian electorate and identifying its prospective coalition partners—Lega and Forza Italia—in the event of a victory. Proudly upholding its right-wing conservative roots, *Fratelli d'Italia* championed values such as the defense of the traditional family, Western identity, a free-market economy, freedom of expression, rejection of political correctness, and support for NATO, which were fundamentally incompatible with the progressive left, led by the Democratic Party (Di Bisceglie, 2024).

Unlike previous campaigns, the latest electoral contest was not characterized by a debate over competing political programs and visions for the future. Instead, the left-wing forces centered their campaign on the purported fascist threat and the risk of a return to Mussolini's dictatorship if Brothers of Italy were to win. Giorgia Meloni, the leader of *Fratelli d'Italia*, was portrayed as the direct heir of the fascist regime, poised to dismantle liberal democracy, sever ties with European institutions, and set Italy back by 80 years (Carnieletto, 2022).

Rather than promoting their own program, the left-wing political forces and their affiliated media sought to instill fear among voters about the resurgence of fascism and the consequent loss of freedom and fundamental rights. This strategy, however, proved unsuccessful as a majority of voters ultimately supported Giorgia Meloni and her party at the polls.



Figure 1. An electoral campaign poster from 2022 showcasing the Italian Democratic Party's messaging.
(Source: <https://www.wired.it/gallery/pd-campagna-elettorale-meme-scegli-letta/>)

Enrico Letta, the leader of the left-wing political forces, urged voters to reject *Fratelli d'Italia*, arguing that the party was the direct heir of Mussolini's fascist regime. The message conveyed was clear: the Italian Democratic Party (depicted in red) stands for democracy and EU institutions, while *Fratelli d'Italia* and Meloni (depicted in black) align with the authoritarian Russian President Vladimir Putin. However, Italian voters rejected Mr. Letta and his party, and subsequent events have disproven his claims. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Meloni's government, in solidarity with all EU and NATO member states, severed political, economic, and cultural ties with Russia and supported Ukraine by providing weaponry and hosting millions of refugees.

The Italian press, which supported the Partito Democratico and other left-wing political forces, attempted to instill fear in voters by warning that a fascist dictatorship would return under Giorgia Meloni and *Fratelli d'Italia*.



Figure 2. It illustrates June 2022 La Repubblica's front page. (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Repubblica/photos/a.196989226150/10156616674176151/?type=3>)

The headline reads: "One out of two Italians is scared that a fascist regime could return if *Fratelli d'Italia* wins the elections". Despite these warnings, the results of the September 2022 elections showed that Italian voters were not deterred by fears of *Fratelli d'Italia*. Giorgia Meloni has now been governing Italy for nearly two years, and there are no signs of a fascist dictatorship in the country (Borsa, 2024; Serra, 2024).



Figure 3 & 4. Depiction of the *Fratelli d'Italia* political leader wearing two Mussolini-era fascist uniforms. (Source: <https://www.dagospia.com/rubrica-3/politica/ldquo-mes-meloni-ha-perso-partita-anche-faccia-rdquo-379078.htm>; <https://fai.informazione.it/A87E47E8-A936-46E5-A70C-8EC6A56BC99E/Giorgia-Meloni-la-nipote-di-Mussolini-il-fascismo-nell-Italia-di-oggi>)

During the electoral campaign leading up to the September 2022 elections, Giorgia Meloni, the leader of *Fratelli d'Italia*, was frequently depicted as the *Ducetta*, a feminized version of Mussolini's nickname. Left-wing political forces often portrayed Meloni in military fascist attire, attempting to instill the idea of a fascist threat in the minds of voters. The Italian Democratic Party, as a member of the European Socialist group within the European Parliament, sought to influence other countries by presenting *Fratelli d'Italia* and Giorgia Meloni as the embodiment of anti-democratic fascism. Consequently, the foreign left-aligned press expressed concerns about the potential establishment of such a regime in Italy.



Figure 5. Illustration of July 2022 the Economist's front page. (Source: <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2022/09/22/how-afraid-should-europe-be-of-georgia-meloni>)



Figure 6. It depicts the September 2022 German magazine Stern's front page. (Source: <https://www.ilprimatonazionale.it/approfondimenti/meloni-donna-piu-pericolosa-deuropa-la-delirante-copertina-del-settimanale-tedesco-244540/>)

Both the UK publication The Economist and the German magazine Stern depicted Giorgia Meloni and her party as heirs of Benito Mussolini and his policies. They failed to conduct proper fact-checking on Italian political matters and were influenced by the ideological narrative of Italian left-wing forces. While the title of The Economist's front page posed the question of whether European institutions should fear a victory of *Fratelli d'Italia*, the article explicitly stated that this party has its roots in fascism. Thus, the British magazine rendered a severe and cutting judgment without a comprehensive understanding of Italian politics and the participating political parties, including *Fratelli d'Italia*. Stern magazine, on its front page, declared that "Giorgia Meloni is the most dangerous woman in Europe and her post-fascist party can win the elections in Italy with extreme consequences for us". Conversely, other international media outlets examined Italian political history more carefully and reached different conclusions from The Economist and Stern. For instance,

ABC News (Macdonald et al., 2023), when asked directly if Meloni is a fascist, stated: “It is important to get the definition of fascism correct. What constitutes fascism, from a political point of view? Essentially, embracing authoritarianism and totalitarianism as a mode of running a country, or conceiving a society. Then, it is correct to affirm that both Meloni and her Brothers of Italy party are not fascist. Fascism cannot co-inhabit with democracy. Meloni and her supporters are not trying to reverse democracy”. Fascism ended with the death of Mussolini, and Meloni (who was born after fascism was defeated) cannot be associated with the history of fascism; she is linked with the democratic history of the right in Italy. Brothers of Italy is a democratic party that believes in the republican constitution. The Guardian, a UK newspaper politically distant from Meloni and *Fratelli d'Italia*, quotes: “Political analysts the world over are now busy parsing Giorgia Meloni’s statements to determine if she is a fascist, a neofascist or a post-fascist. Are Italians seemingly willing to consider a return to the politics of their country’s darkest hour? The answers are: no” (Marsili, 2022). Since 1996, Meloni has consistently declared that she has never felt sympathy or closeness towards anti-democratic regimes, including fascism. Moreover, she has never committed anti-democratic actions during her political career (Harlan & Pitrelli, 2022). Her party never ruled the country before and had never surpassed 5% of preferences among voters. Perhaps in September 2022, Italian voters, especially those under 35 years old, decided to try something new because they were dissatisfied with the left-wing policies adopted over the past three decades (Pilo, 2022).

It is worth noting that following Meloni’s assumption of power and the commencement of her government’s administration of the country, the very same media outlets that had previously vociferated extensively, proclaiming *Fratelli d'Italia*’s leader as the reincarnation of the Mussolini regime, eventually acknowledged that fascism had not resurfaced in Italy. They publicly issued apologies, as depicted in the accompanying image. The international press came to realize that it had fallen victim to the crude propaganda of the Italian left (Napolitano, 2024).



Figure 7. Illustration of January 2024 The Economist’s front page. (Source: <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/01/meloni-ha-smentito-gli-scettici-leconomist-promuove-il-primo-anno-del-governo-italiano/>)



Figure 8. Illustration of May 2024 the Spectator's front page. (Source: <https://x.com/spectator/status/1786719428379332908>)

The strategy employed by the Italian Democratic Party and its allies to portray their adversaries as heirs of fascism failed to yield positive outcomes. Despite Giorgia Meloni's appointment as Prime Minister and the formation of a right-wing political government consisting of three parties—*Fratelli d'Italia*, *Lega*, and *Forza Italia*—after the September 2022 elections, this methodology persisted and continues to be implemented. Nonetheless, *Fratelli d'Italia* remains the leading party in terms of number of votes, as evidenced by the regional elections in March 2024 in Abruzzo and April 2024 in Basilicata (Balduzzi, 2024).

However, the opposition's attacks against Giorgia Meloni and the Italian Government have intensified, despite being proven wrong. Every political decision and legislative proposal put forth by the incumbent executive power is branded as fascist and dismissed without engaging in political discourse. The political opposition has failed to fulfill its role, which entails critiquing the government's measures deemed incorrect while also presenting alternative proposals (Ferri, 2024). Left-wing progressives and their intellectual counterparts no longer challenge the pronouncements or propositions of the governing right; instead, they fundamentally question its legitimacy to govern, branding it as fascist. Consequently, the essential dialogue between opposing political forces, crucial in mature democracies, is absent (Capezzone, 2024). Moreover, on issues of significant importance, collaboration between the government and the opposition is imperative for the greater good of society. However, the campaign rooted in animosity and slogans that hark back to the long-buried fascist past of 80 years ago exacerbates not only the political strife but also the lives of citizens (Magliaro, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emilio Gentile, a renowned historian and author of numerous works on fascism, published *Chi è fascista?* (Who is Fascist?) in 2019. Although this book was released prior to Giorgia Meloni's victory in the September 2022 elections, it provides valuable insights for evaluating whether the current political activities of the Italian Prime Minister bear any resemblance to the Mussolini regime or if the accusations against her are unfounded. Does supporting the needs of the people constitute fascist behavior? The Italian Prime Minister frequently invokes the term *popolo* (the people), which has led to her being branded as fascist by left-wing political forces. The term *popolo* is enshrined in the Italian Constitution, which declares in Article 1: *La sovranità appartiene al popolo* (Sovereignty belongs to the people). The left-wing critique of this term suggests that it is inherently fascist and non-inclusive because it uses the so-called extended masculine to include women as well (Catarinella et al., 2024). In their view, *popolo* should be replaced with *popolazione* (population), as the former is associated with a fascist and patriarchal regime. Furthermore, the regulation of migration from Africa to Europe is also labeled as fascist by the left, which advocates for a no-border ideology. They argue that the term "migrants" should be replaced with "moving people" (*person in movement*) to reflect a belief in unrestricted freedom of movement across borders. According to this perspective, the list of fascist nations and individuals worldwide would be extensive, as most countries today maintain some form of border control.

Daniele Capezzone, in his 2023 work *E basta con 'sto fascismo* (Enough with This Fascism), critiques the lack of substantive arguments and innovative ideas from left-wing political forces in their efforts to attract voters. As a liberal, Capezzone highlights the hypocrisy of left-wing representatives who deny the legitimacy of a government that has secured a significant electoral mandate. The core issue, according to Capezzone, is that this government is openly right-wing, marking a departure from the historical norms of republican Italy. He argues that the left's fixation on fascism reflects their broader political obsession. During election campaigns and public debates, the left invokes the specter of fascism as a rhetorical strategy, owing to their perceived inability to offer compelling alternatives to potential voters. Incidents - whether factual, plausible, presumed, or fabricated - that can be used to metaphorically brand the right with fascist associations are often exaggerated and amplified. Conversely, when left-wing groups engage in actions that infringe upon the freedom of speech of others, there is a tendency to downplay or ignore such instances. Capezzone recalls incidents where intellectuals, writers, or politicians were barred from Italian universities due to their dissenting viewpoints, which did not align with left-wing ideology. He emphasizes that fascism was defeated 80 years ago and that contemporary political forces, entrusted with governing, pledge adherence to a constitution that embodies the values of freedom and democracy. In a liberal Western democracy, invoking fascism serves no constructive purpose. Instead, there must be a commitment to upholding democratic values, particularly the principle of allowing the expression of opposing ideas. Regrettably, this fundamental principle is often overlooked or disregarded by left-wing forces.

In *Realpolitik. Il disordine mondiale e le minacce per l'Italia* (Realpolitik. World Disorder and Threats to Italy) published in 2024, Giampiero Massolo examines the current global geopolitical tensions and their impact on Europe and Italy. As a former director of the Italian Secret Service, Massolo poses several critical questions: What constitutes Italy's national interest, and why should the government be concerned with it? What threats do EU countries face in the rapidly evolving international landscape? From whom and what should EU member states defend themselves? How significant are national and European intelligence agencies? How might the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza influence the balance of power? What role can Europe play with the United States and China? How is Russia maneuvering, and what are the implications of the recent Hamas attack and Israeli military response for the Middle East? Does the concept of the West remain relevant? And what is the current significance of the North Atlantic Treaty? Before addressing these questions, Massolo emphasizes the necessity of having an efficient political system in every country to ensure that governments can function effectively and promptly following elections. Many EU countries with parliamentary republican systems experience delays in establishing executive power post-election. In the current international context, governments must make strategic decisions swiftly, whereas the EU's political system appears outdated and inefficient. Massolo notes the lengthy process involved in forming the European Commission, where EU citizens elect only members of the European Parliament. Subsequently, political parties engage in protracted negotiations to appoint the President of the European Commission and its members. He advocates for a reform that would allow EU citizens to directly elect the President of the European Commission through a liberal and democratic vote. Additionally, Massolo highlights the case of the Netherlands, where the political elections took place on November 22, 2023, yet, six months later, the identity of the new prime minister remains uncertain. He argues that each EU member state should implement procedures to facilitate the swift and stable formation of governments. The current Italian Prime Minister's proposal to allow citizens to directly elect the head of the executive branch aligns with modern standards of efficiency and democratic integrity. However, the Italian Democratic Party perceives this proposed constitutional reform as a fascist assault on Italian democracy.

In *Fascisti della parola* (Fascists of the Word), published in 2023, Vittorio Feltri explores the critical role of language in democratic systems and the implications of its restriction. Feltri argues that totalitarian regimes have historically sought to control both language and thought, citing the legal norms imposed during Benito Mussolini's dictatorship, which banned the use of foreign words and free expression. Although fascism was defeated eighty years ago and Italy now operates under a liberal and democratic Constitution that guarantees "freedom of expression and thought", Feltri contends that this right has become increasingly curtailed in recent years. He asserts that the restriction of language cannot be attributed to right-wing forces, which are characterized by conservative values. The political left, which was defeated in the September 2022 elections and now accuses the right of fascism, has enforced a restrictive set of principles known as political correctness.

This ideology now condemns certain words, such as *zingaro* (gypsy), *cieco* (blind person), *immigrato* (immigrant), *bidello* (janitor), *sordo* (deaf person), *frociaggine* (homosexuality), *la Nazione* (the Nation), and *povero cristo* (poor fellow), even traditional greetings like *Buon Natale* (Merry Christmas), and ideas that conflict with left-wing views. Individuals who use such terms may face sanctions, including job loss or social ostracism. Feltri argues that political correctness, while not legislated, operates as a form of dictatorial imposition that conflicts with democratic principles. He asserts that this form of censorship, which suppresses freedom of expression, is a modern manifestation of fascism, perpetrated by left-wing political forces.

Oikophobia is a relatively widespread phenomenon, particularly in Italy and other Western countries, characterized by a rejection of culture, history, customs, institutions, and anything associated with national identity. This aversion leads some left-wing politicians and intellectuals to label those who defend national identity and promote the value of the nation as “chauvinists”, “racists”, “sovereignists”, and “fascists”. While oikophobia has significant implications, it remains underexplored and insufficiently debated. In contrast, much attention is given to xenophobia, which involves fear of foreigners and is a concern across various cultures and political contexts. However, there is less awareness of oikophobia as a distorted perspective on political life that can lead to harmful consequences. Spartaco Pupo’s book, *Oicofobia: Il ripudio della nazione* (Oikophobia: The Repudiation of the Nation, 2023), addresses a significant gap in Italian social and political studies. Aimed primarily at young people, the publication seeks to educate them about the subtle manifestations of oikophobia and to encourage appropriate countermeasures. The term oikophobia, derived from the Greek *oikos* (house) and *phobia* (fear), was first popularized by the conservative English philosopher Roger Scruton. In a 1993 article titled Oikophobia, published in *The Journal of Education*, Scruton criticized what he perceived as an intellectual rejection of national identity. Pupo contends that since the end of World War II, nationalism and national pride have increasingly faced hostility, due to their association with Nazi and fascist totalitarian regimes. Oikophobia is a characteristic of contemporary left-wing ideology but was not present in historical left-wing forces from the 1960s and 1970s, nor is it found in conservative political forces. It is often used as a political tool against conservative forces accused of nationalism and, by extension, fascism. However, Pupo argues that both Nazi Germany and Mussolini’s fascist Italy were not genuinely nationalist but rather imperialist, driven by expansionist ambitions rather than a desire for national defense.

Research Aims and Questions

In Italy’s political landscape, contentious battles between opposing parties have been characterized by robust and vigorous discourse. Historically, political factions employed satire as a means to discredit and challenge their rivals, drawing from the Latin teaching of Orazio’s *castigat ridendo mores*, which advocates critiquing opposing customs through humor. Satire has proven to be a potent tool in swaying voter sentiment, and Italian politicians traditionally refrained from resorting to hate speech against their opponents. However, since the rise of *Fratelli d’Italia* to power, the language and rhetoric employed by left-wing political factions and their media outlets have taken a notably aggressive and confrontational turn.

The primary objective of this research paper is to explore the nature of these aggressive discourses and to address the following questions:

- 1) What factors have prompted led left-wing progressive forces to employ accusations of fascism against the current Italian Prime Minister and other government officials, despite evidence suggesting that such tactics have had no discernible influence on Italian voters, as evidenced by recent election results?
- 2) Does the current expression of antifascism align with the fundamental principles of democracy?
- 3) What are the repercussions of these inflammatory speeches within the political landscape and broader society?

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a qualitative approach aimed at providing an in-depth understanding of the discourse surrounding contemporary Italian politics. The methodology encompasses the following components:

- 1) **Study Design:** The research employs a case study methodology, recognized for its effectiveness in investigating complex issues within their real-life context (Yin, 2018). By focusing on specific cases and contexts, the study seeks to elucidate the nuanced dynamics of political communication and antifascist discourse within the Italian socio-political landscape.
- 2) **Data Collection:** Data were collected through systematic observation and analysis of various sources, including posters, advertisements, linguistic expressions, and multimedia content produced by left-wing political parties. To broaden the scope of analysis and capture multiple viewpoints, the study also examined contemporary newspaper articles and online videos featuring public debates on fascism and hate speech. Media sources were selected based on three key criteria: relevance to the research topic, ideological diversity, and prominence in public discourse. For print and digital journalism, the analysis included prominent Italian and international newspapers and magazines such as *La Repubblica*, *Il Manifesto*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Libero Quotidiano*, *Panorama*, *Il Giornale*, and *The Guardian*. These outlets were chosen to ensure a range of left-leaning, centrist, and right-leaning perspectives. Online videos were drawn primarily from YouTube and the official social media channels of political organizations and televised debate programs, with preference given to content with high viewership and engagement. The selected materials span the years 2021 to 2024, covering the period leading up to and following the 2022 general election, which saw the victory of *Fratelli d'Italia*.
- 3) **Data Analysis:** The collected data underwent a rigorous qualitative analysis using both thematic and discourse analytic techniques. Initially, the data were organized and subjected to open coding to identify recurring patterns, topics, and rhetorical strategies. Codes were then grouped into broader thematic categories such as historical memory, national identity, antifascism, and populist rhetoric. Discourse analysis focused on language use, framing, and narrative structures to examine how meanings were constructed and contested across different media. The iterative nature of the process allowed for continuous refinement of categories and ensured analytical depth and coherence. All data were manually coded to enable close interpretative engagement with the material.
- 4) **Limitations:** Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the selection of media sources may introduce potential selection bias, as the choice of materials inherently reflects editorial priorities and ideological leanings. Second, media content itself carries inherent biases that may shape the framing of political discourse, potentially influencing the interpretation of findings. Finally, restricted access to confidential policy documents and internal communications of political parties limits the ability to fully capture behind-the-scenes decision-making processes and the broader institutional mechanisms influencing public discourse. Despite these constraints, the study employs a rigorous analytical approach to mitigate bias and provide a comprehensive understanding of political and antifascist discourse in contemporary Italy.

The utilization of qualitative methods allows for a nuanced exploration of complex socio-political phenomena, facilitating a deeper understanding of the discursive strategies and socio-political dynamics shaping contemporary Italian politics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The left-wing political forces formulated their electoral campaign leading up to the September 2022 elections by levying accusations of fascism against the *Fratelli d'Italia* party and its leader, aiming to instill fear in voters regarding a potential resurgence of the Mussolini dictatorship. However, the election outcomes did not validate this approach. *Fratelli d'Italia* emerged as the frontrunner, garnering the highest number of votes, surpassing all other contenders (Mattia, 2023). Contemporary studies in political analysis and strategy emphasize that attacking and demonizing opponents does not yield electoral success; rather, it often produces the opposite effect. Voters are not swayed by attempts to change their perspectives; in fact, they are often disconcerted by being portrayed as lacking in autonomy and freedom, thereby reacting unfavorably. Depicting political adversaries as monsters is also perceived as an implicit acknowledgment of weakness, which is not conducive to political success (Ronchin, 2024). Furthermore, a significant portion of the Italian populace perceives fascism as a relic of the past, a subject of interest primarily to historians, and does not perceive any imminent fascist threat in the government led by Giorgia Meloni. The two following surveys demonstrate this.

Survey 1: SWG Survey (April 12–17, 2023)

A national survey was conducted between April 12 and 17, 2023, involving a representative sample of two million Italian citizens aged 18 and above. The survey was commissioned by SWG, a well-established market research and political analysis firm in Italy. The survey methodology included random sampling from a broad geographical area across Italy, ensuring a balanced demographic representation in terms of age, gender, and region. The survey used the CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing) method for data collection. The margin of error for the survey was reported at $\pm 1.5\%$. This survey revealed that only 19% of Italians believed the government exhibited fascist tendencies, while 40% stated that “The current government is not inspired by Fascism”, and 28% said, “The current government is conservative, but entirely unrelated to Fascism”. Additionally, 13% of respondents did not answer.

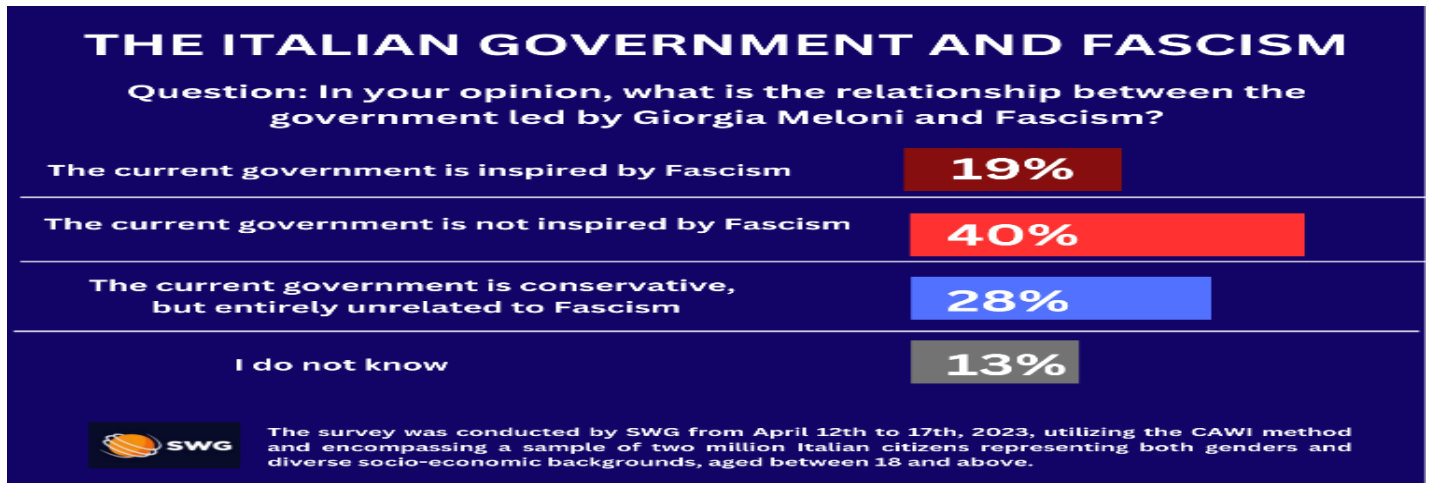


Figure 9. It depicts the results of a survey conducted between April 12 and 17, 2023, among two million Italian citizens aged 18 and above. (Source: <https://tg.la7.it/sondaggi/il-sondaggio-swg-solo-4-elettori-della-lega-su-dieci-si-dicono-antifascisti-uno-su-due-in-fdi-17-04-2023-182323>)

Survey 2: Noto Sondaggi Survey (April 23–30, 2023)

A second survey conducted between April 23 and 30, 2023, polled four million Italians aged 18 to 60 of diverse genders and backgrounds. This survey was commissioned by Noto Sondaggi, one of Italy’s leading polling institutes, and also utilized the CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing) method for data collection. The sample was stratified to ensure a balanced representation of Italy’s demographic profile, including factors such as region, age, and gender. The margin of error for this survey was reported at $\pm 1.2\%$. The survey revealed that the majority of Italians did not harbor fears of a fascist resurgence, attributing their confidence to the resilience and stability of Italy’s democratic institutions. In this second survey, respondents were asked: “Do you fear that Fascism might return in Italy”? The results showed that 59% of those polled replied, “No, I do not fear that Fascism will return”, while 29% answered, “Yes, I fear that Fascism might return”. The remaining 16% stated, “I do not know”.



Figure 10: It displays the results of a survey carried out in Italy between April 23 and 30, 2023, among four million people aged 18 to 60. (Source: https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2024/04/25/news/sondaggi_politici_25_aprile_italiani-422723466/)

Despite experiencing that stirring up the specter of fascism fails to convince voters and does not yield positive results in terms of public support, the Left has opted not only to persist in its confrontation on the issue of fascism but to escalate it further. Following the establishment of the government and the initiation of efforts to enact the electoral program, the Left launched an even more aggressive campaign, targeting not only *Fratelli d'Italia* and its leader (as was the case during the electoral campaign) but all members of the government. The term “fascism” has been supplanted by “Nazism”, and instances of sexism and verbal aggression, particularly directed towards women, have resurfaced (Grossi, 2024). The current government has determined that immigration must be regulated by law due to Italy’s inability to accommodate millions of individuals from various parts of the world, the majority of whom may not qualify for political refugee status and will consequently be compelled to live clandestinely (Cantisani, 2023). The departure of overloaded and weary boats from Libya and Tunisia leads to numerous fatalities each year, as the Italian navy lacks the capacity to patrol the entire Mediterranean Sea. According to statistics from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than 63,000 migrants have perished or gone missing in the decade spanning from 2014 to 2024 (Baudino, 2024). The agreement signed between Italian Prime Minister Meloni and Albanian counterpart Rama aims to curb illegal immigration has been endorsed by fifteen EU countries (Pucci, 2024), many of which are governed by left-wing factions such as Germany or Denmark. Despite these policy decisions by the incumbent government, the Italian left not only fails to present alternative solutions but also resorts to derogatory epithets, labeling President Meloni as a “neonazi” and “bastard”.

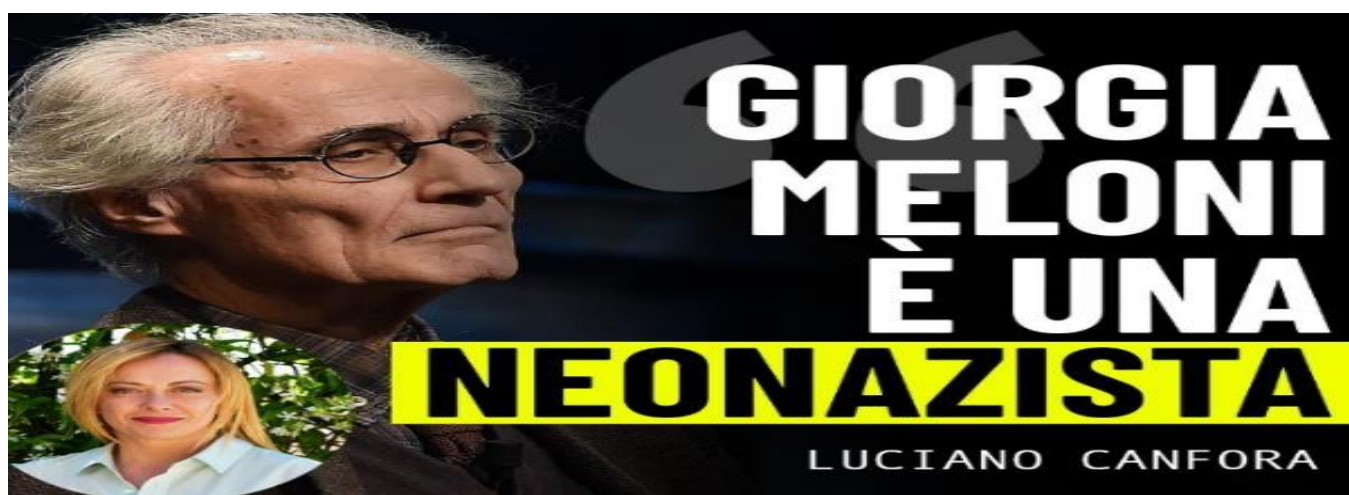


Figure 11: On April 12, 2024, left-wing Professor Luciano Canfora labels Giorgia Meloni as *una neonazista* (a neo-Nazi). (Source: <https://www.giorgiameloni.it/2022/04/12/fdi-meloni-da-canfora-parole-inaccettabili-la-querela-non-gliela-toglie-nessuno-video/>)



Figure 12: On October 13, 2023, left-wing writer and member of the Italian Democratic Party Roberto Saviano refers to Giorgia Meloni as *bastarda* (bastard). (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyYDXxBQ64o>)

The proposals regarding migration put forth by the Italian government have been incorporated into the “Pact on Migration and Asylum”, marking the first European legislation on this matter, which was ratified by the European Parliament on April 10, 2024. Following eight years of impasse among the 27 EU member states, the new European law establishes binding regulations for each country. Notably, European Commission President Von der Leyen and European Parliament President Metsola—both politically distant from right-wing conservative values—did not face the same derogatory epithets directed at Prime Minister Meloni (Cantarini, 2024).

Regarding constitutional reforms, and in alignment with the electoral program articulated during the election campaign, the governing administration has advocated for the direct election of the prime minister by the citizens. Presently, mayors of Italian municipalities and presidents of regions are directly elected by the voters, and the government seeks to extend this empowerment to the selection of the head of government. This proposed reform, commonly referred to as *il premierato* (the premiership), aims to expedite the identification of the prime minister immediately following elections. The current parliamentary system necessitates that political parties engage in post-election negotiation to identify a viable coalition for governance and a potential executive president (Barolini, 2024). Although the parliamentary republic outlined in the Constitution has consistently remained in effect in Italy, there have been proposals for constitutional reform aimed at granting greater authority to the head of government to enhance stability. Initiatives in this vein were pursued in 1997 by Massimo D'Alema, as well as by Matteo Renzi in 2020, both former prime ministers of the Democratic Party (Leo & Gonzato, 2023). All proposed reforms to amend the Constitution require extensive engagement in discourse, and as such, the government has extended an invitation to the opposition to contribute ideas, suggestions, or counter-proposals. Nevertheless, the left has dismissed this reform proposal as fascist without making any attempt to engage in dialogue with the government.

HOME / POLITICA

Premierato "fascista", l'ultima bufala della sinistra



Figure 13: Left-wing political factions label the premiership constitutional reform as “fascist”. (Source: <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/39162268/premierato-fascista-ultima-bufala-sinistra.html>)

The proposal for the direct election of the prime minister, like any constitutional reform, is subject to varying interpretations. Advocates argue that it offers several benefits, including fostering political stability, instilling confidence in foreign investors, enhancing citizen engagement in governance, and preserving the powers of Parliament and the President of the Republic (Conte, 2024). Conversely, opponents contend that this reform could undermine the position of the head of state, who may find themselves subordinate to a popularly elected prime minister. The perceived risk of this reform lies not in the resurgence of fascism but in the potential creation of a hybrid system that strays from both presidential and parliamentary models, leading to ineffective governance rather than posing a direct threat (Rigatelli, 2024). The proposed reform entails a lengthy process, allowing ample opportunity for deliberation and amendments. Initially, parliamentary approval must be secured through two separate votes, after which citizens will have the opportunity to voice their opinions through a referendum (Battisti, 2024). Additionally, it is pertinent to recognize that the direct election of the head of the executive is a feature of numerous democratic nations across Europe and beyond (Aversa, 2023). However, in Italy, some factions on the left have resorted to evoking the specter of Nazism, citing Hitler’s direct election by the people as a cautionary comparison.

Tonia Mastrobuoni, sconcerto a La7: "Meloni eletta, come Hitler"



Figure 14. Tonia Mastrobuoni, a spokesperson of the left-wing faction, compares Italian Prime Minister Meloni to Adolf Hitler. (Source: <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/personaggi/39258165/tonia-mastrobuoni-omnibus-la-7-giorgia-meloni-eletta-come-adolf-hitler.html>)

Prominent figures on the left express opposition to the concept of direct prime ministerial elections, branding it as either fascist or Nazi in nature (Montanari, 2024). However, historical perspectives reveal contrasting views within leftist circles. For instance, Pietro Calamendrei, a prominent lawyer and resistance fighter, espoused a different stance during the formulation of the current Constitution. Calamendrei emphasized the necessity of a stable government for democracy to function effectively. He cautioned against the misconception that a presidential republic inherently poses a risk of descending into dictatorship. In fact, Calamendrei argued that in Italy's historical context, dictatorship arose not from a presidential system but rather from a parliamentary one (Carioti, 2024).

The conservative-led Meloni government aims to replace school forms that currently use the terms *genitore uno* (parent one) and *genitore due* (parent two) with the traditional terms *mamma* (mother) and *papà* (father). Conversely, the left and the influential LGBTQIA+ lobby advocate for retaining the current terminology out of respect for families with same-sex parents (Valeri, 2023).

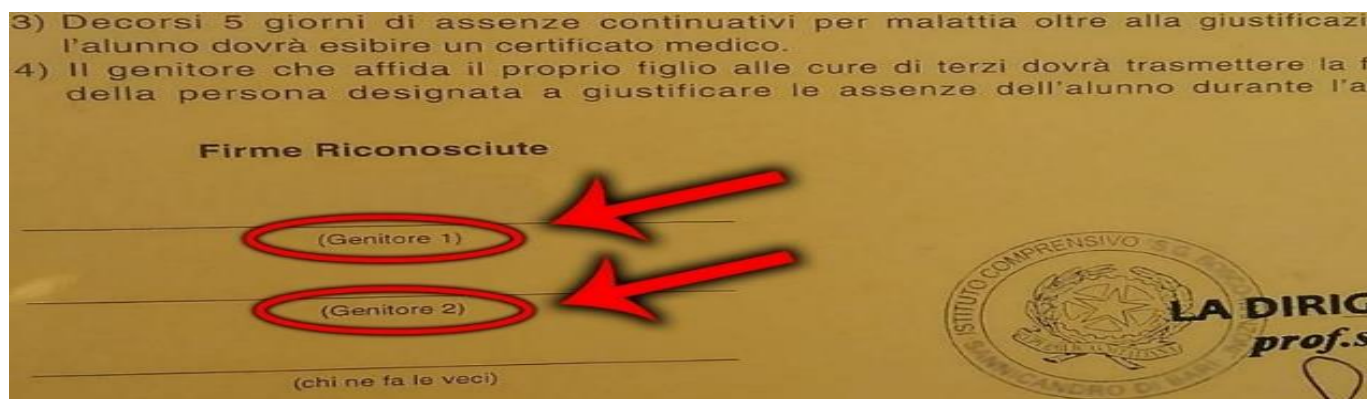


Figure 15: It illustrates a school document where the terms mother and father are replaced by *Genitore 1* (Parent one) and *Genitore 2* (Parent two). (Source: <https://www.rainews.it/articoli/2024/02/corte-appello-roma-carta-didentita-ok-genitore-1-e-2-famiglie-arcobaleno-bocciato-un-decreto-del-ministero-interno-del-2019-guidato-all-epoca-da-salvini-2020b1b7-30d5-4d57-9543-c68fdc411cfc.html>)

Furthermore, the government plans to restore the original name *Festa della Mamma* (Mother's Day), which is celebrated on the second Sunday of May in the majority of countries worldwide, including Italy. Previous left-wing administrations had replaced the term *mamma* (mother) with *genitore 1* (parent one) during their tenure in Italy.



Figure 16. Depiction of a past alteration by the former left-wing government, replacing the term *mamma* (mother) with *genitore 1* (parent 1). (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/giorgiameloni.paginaufficiale/photos/d41d8cd9/10152378875457645/?paipv=0&eav=Afamj5shMDrzej2b-k2xXYIS6Eb0xXKAzIApJg0zBkOTk-6GOfc15-0 xICMa3Cd7Tm8&rdr>)

The government's proposal has drawn vehement opposition from left-wing and left-aligned political factions, who argue that it undermines the rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals (Celletti, 2024). Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and Vice Prime Minister Matteo Salvini have faced insults and death threats for advocating such measures. Notably, three prominent figures from the left-wing political spectrum publicly disparaged Meloni. Asia Argento referred to her as *La schiena lardosa di una fascista* (The fat back of a fascist), Oliviero Toscani described her as *Ritardata, brutta e volgare* (Retarded, ugly and vulgar woman), and Carlo Calenda likened her to *La versione burina del Ku Klux Kan* (The yokel is a member of the Ku Klux Kan).



Figure 17. Depiction of remarks made by three prominent representatives of left-wing political forces regarding Giorgia Meloni. (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/FdI.paginaufficiale/photos/giorgia-meloni-grassa-brutta-ignorante-cafona-ritardata-burina-borgatara-sono-so/2054452624654021/>)

Furthermore, two murals containing death threats aimed at incumbent Vice Prime Minister Salvini have surfaced, although the perpetrators remain unidentified. It is noteworthy that left-wing political entities have refrained from condemning these threats or expressing solidarity with Salvini.



Figure 18. Depiction of a mural bearing the inscription *Salvini deve morire* (Salvini must die), discovered in Milan on November 2, 2023. (Source: <https://www.dire.it/02-11-2023/974075-salvini-minacciato-di-morte-a-milano-la-lega-la-condanna-sia-unanime/>)

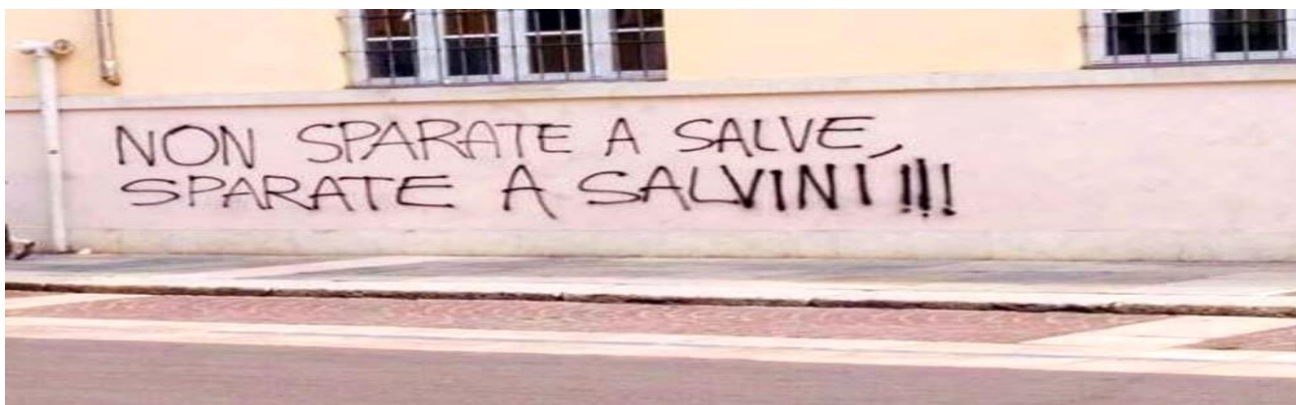


Figure 19. Illustration of a February 2024 mural in the city of Parma, featuring a notable death threat: *Non sparate a salve, sparate a Salvini* (Do not fire blanks, shoot Salvini). (Source: <https://www.today.it/rassegna/salvini-scritta-muro-parma.html>)

Francesco Lollobrigida currently serves as the Minister of Agricultural Policy and Food Sovereignty. However, left-wing political factions have expressed discomfort with the term “sovereignty”, perceiving it as reminiscent of fascist terminology (Dessi, 2023). Despite these associations, the concept of food sovereignty finds its origins in the late 20th century, initially coined by *Via Campesina*, an international coalition of farmers comprising 182 organizations across 81 countries. This term has since been adopted in various documents and policies worldwide, from Latin America to Canada, as well as by international organizations such as the United Nations and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). In a 2013 document from the Government of Quebec, the concept of food sovereignty was emphasized, prioritizing the food needs of communities over economic profit, fostering the development of local economies, and reducing wastage. It is crucial to note that “food sovereignty” does not equate to autocracy or fascism. Rather, it denotes the right of communities to determine their food policies independently, free from external pressures driven by private interests. It embodies a multifaceted concept that underscores the interconnection between regions, communities, and food systems (Martarello, 2022).

Interestingly, the designation of food sovereignty mirrors that of the French Ministry of Agriculture. The Italian government’s adoption of this term reflects France’s ability to safeguard its agricultural products and

national interests. Therefore, why should Italy not similarly have the prerogative to protect its culinary heritage? Is Minister Lollobrigida's advocacy for the Mediterranean diet and his efforts to combat "Italian-sounding" products - often misappropriated and marketed with altered names such as "American Parmesan" or "Croatian Prozek" - a reflection of Nazism? These initiatives aim to safeguard Italian farmers from the threats posed by multinational corporations promoting artificial, lab-produced foods (Cuomo, 2024).



Figure 20. Illustration of the official title of the French Minister of Agriculture in 2024: "Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty". (Source: <https://www.euractiv.fr/section/agriculture-alimentation/news/le-concept-de-souverainete-alimentaire-au-coeur-dune-guerre-ideologique-et-politique/>)

The Italian left refrains from criticism when the term is used by the French Ministry. However, when embraced by a minister within a Meloni-led government, it suddenly becomes associated with fascism or Nazism. In a recent television debate, Professor Donatella Di Cesare referred to Minister Lollobrigida as a *governatore neo hitleriano* (neo-Hitler governor) due to this perception (De Conto, 2024).



Figure 21. On April 18, 2023, left-wing professor Donatella Di Cesare referred to Minister Francesco Lollobrigida as a *governatore neo hitleriano* (neo-Hitler governor). (Source: <https://www.la7.it/dimartedi/video/lollobrigida-di-cesare-la-sostituzione-etnica-e-il-cuore-dellhitlerismo-18-04-2023-481144>)

In the United States, it is inconceivable for parties to divide on July 4th, the day of independence from English rule, or for the French to bicker on July 14th, the national holiday commemorating the storming of the Bastille in 1789, the event that ignited the revolution reshaping Europe and the world. On these occasions, both the majority and the opposition come together to honor the country's flag and sing the national anthem. This tradition reflects the maturity and responsibility of the ruling class, observing a day of ceasefire where historical remembrance precedes current political tensions, safeguarding the sense of national unity (Di Muccio, 2024). However, in Italy, the left prevents opposing political factions from participating in the April 25th Liberation Day event, which marks Italy's freedom from Nazi-Fascist dictatorship. During April 25th commemoration, the left assumes the authority to determine who can partake, effectively delineating the line between righteousness and malevolence. Consequently, members of the current government, deemed as fascists, are excluded from April 25th festivity (Sallusti, 2024).



Figure 22. This image portrays the celebration of *Festa della Liberazione* (Liberation Day) on April 25, 2024, in Milan. The banner displayed by the Italian Marxist-Leninist party reads: *Ieri contro il fascismo di Mussolini, oggi contro il neofascismo di Meloni* (Yesterday against Mussolini's fascism, today against Meloni's neo-fascism). (Source: <https://www.panorama.it/news/politica/25-aprile-festa-liberazione-contro-governo-meloni>)

In the lead-up to the European elections scheduled for June 8 and 9, 2024, left-wing political factions have opted to vilify candidates from opposing parties rather than elucidating their own propositions for the European Parliament. Notably, the terminology “enemy” has supplanted the more conventional term “adversary” in contemporary discourse (Gasparini, 2024). One such candidate, General Roberto Vannacci, represents the *Lega* (League) party, which is allied with *Fratelli d'Italia*. Recently, Vannacci released an electoral advertisement encouraging voters to mark an X next to his name. In Italian, the letter X is referred to as “*Decima*” (the tenth) because of its association with the Roman numeral system. This innocuous directive, however, triggered allegations of fascism and Nazism from the left-wing camp, asserting that the X symbol recalls a group of Italian fascist soldiers who fought alongside the Nazis during World War II. Historical scholars specializing in this era have refuted such claims, clarifying that the *Decima* (X) was an elite military unit of the Kingdom of Italy from 1939 to 1943, distinguished by the award of 34 gold medals. Importantly, members of this corps were neither fascists nor aligned with Nazi ideology. A museum in Malta, established by the British, commemorates the deeds of the *Decima* (X) and its commander, Mario Arillo, who played a pivotal role in safeguarding the port of Genoa in 1945 against German demolition efforts (Carpani, 2024). It is pertinent to note that prior to 2022, military personnel participating in the Republic Day parade on June 2 used to chant *Decima*. However, in the current context, any allusion to this word, particularly the X symbol, is ideologically associated with fascism, Mussolini, and his dictatorship (Perri, 2024).



Figure 23. This image showcases the electoral advertisement of candidate Roberto Vannacci, urging voters to mark the *Decima* (the X) on his political party's symbol. (Source: <https://www.adnkronos.com/politica/europee-vannacci-spot-x-mas-news-4BcZhuu0CLHufPP6CNtx08>)

Portrayed as a Nazi sympathizer, Mr. Vannacci has faced comparisons to members of the Ku Klux Klan and has even received death threats.

HOME / POLITICA

Prima di Domani, il fango di Zan contro Vannacci: "Sembra del Ku Klux Klan"



Figure 24. On April 29, 2024, during a television political program, Democratic Party MP Alessandro Zan remarked: Vannacci looks like a member of the Ku Klux Klan. (Source: https://mediasetinfinity.mediaset.it/video/primadidomani/lunedì-29-aprile_F313089701007501)

HOME / POLITICA

Generale Vannacci? "Uccidiamolo": la frase-choc nella chat creata da Giannini



Figure 25. On May 4, 2024, certain left-wing members proposed to kill Mr. Vannacci, expressing: "Uccidiamolo" (Let's kill him). (Source: <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/39180355/generale-vannacci-uccidiamolo-frase-choc-chat-massimo-giannini.html>)

While the EU Commission and Parliament, along with the international press, acknowledge the legitimacy and commitment to democracy of the current Italian government, the left-wing political forces in Italy persist in labeling any parties or individuals not aligned with their progressive ideals as fascist or Nazi sympathizers (Dell'Orco, 2024).

Remarkably, sexism, which had largely been absent from political discourse since 2019 following the adoption of the Council of Europe guidelines (Calderwood & Sanchez, 2019), has resurfaced following the establishment of the Meloni government. It is quite paradoxical that the left, often positioning itself as a champion of women's rights, is now resorting to such offensive and derogatory language. In a true democracy, where respect for all individuals is inherent, insults directed at women, whether they hold high office or are ordinary citizens, should never be tolerated (Maffioli, 2022). Unfortunately, contemporary history professor Giovanni Gozzini at the University of Siena has been permitted to employ deplorable and sexist language, a particularly egregious offense given that it occurred within an academic institution—a bastion of culture, education, and intellectual discourse. His actions demonstrate a flagrant disregard for the democratic principles of pluralism and respect for human dignity, which are fundamental tenets of the Italian Constitution.



Figure 26 &27 depict instances where left-wing Professor Giovanni Gozzini addresses Giorgia Meloni, employing vulgar and sexist expressions such as *Una Vacca* (Slut) and *Una Scrofa* (Whore). (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PKzGNd0Daw>)

The use of sexist and offensive language by President of the Campania Region Vincenzo De Luca, a prominent figure within the Democratic Party, should warrant condemnation from all quarters, including members of his own party. Engaging in politics should not involve resorting to derogatory language, especially directed towards individuals, and particularly women. What kind of exemplary political conduct does a regional president exemplify when referring to the head of government as *stronza* (asshole), or describing city councilor Valeria Ciarambino as *chiattona* (ugly fat), or branding former Rome mayor Virginia Raggi as *infame* (hideous girl)? (Lima, 2024).

While this study primarily focuses on the use of “fascism” as a rhetorical tool by left-wing forces, it is equally important to consider the broader spectrum of political discourse. The party *Fratelli d'Italia*, along with its right-wing allies, often emphasizes themes such as national sovereignty, traditional values, and cultural identity. Although these narratives are not explicitly fascist, some critics argue that certain symbolic elements - such as nationalist slogans or references to a “great Italy” - may subtly recall aspects of Italy’s authoritarian past. Nevertheless, party leaders have consistently rejected any link to historical fascism, framing their stance as patriotic conservatism rooted in democratic principles.

Notably, other opposition parties - such as *Italia Viva* and *Azione* - which do not support the Meloni government, refrain from using this kind of polarizing rhetoric. Unlike the left-wing forces, these centrist parties deliberately avoid accusations of fascism and have openly criticized such language as counterproductive and alienating. Leaders from both *Italia Viva* and *Azione* argue that branding the current government as fascist not only lacks credibility but also irritates a significant portion of the electorate, who view such accusations as exaggerated and disconnected from present-day realities. This distinction highlights that the antifascist rhetoric is not a uniform strategy among opposition parties and underscores the need for a more differentiated analysis of political communication in contemporary Italy.

As previously highlighted (Ronchin, 2024), the strategy of accusing political adversaries and labeling them as fascists and Nazis, a tactic largely dismissed by the majority of Italian voters and the international press, does not yield electoral success. Political analysts, as well as many voters within the Democratic Party and the progressive sphere, question the rationale behind employing such a counterproductive approach. Some speculate that the left’s inability to propose compelling alternative policies leads them to resort to militant and ideological anti-fascism as a refuge (Donzelli, 2024). Others suggest that the perpetuation of the ideological divide between fascism and anti-fascism serves to obstruct complete national reconciliation. In a fully pacified nation, political entities within Parliament would readily acknowledge each other as legitimate representatives, contingent upon voter endorsement in accordance with the principle of alternation inherent in mature democracies (Argento, 2024).

There are those who argue that the proclivity for violent language and behavior is intrinsic to the left’s DNA, stemming from an underlying intolerance that manifests in aggression, animosity, and physical coercion. Incidents reported to law enforcement and statistical data consistently implicate individuals affiliated with leftist ideologies as perpetrators, with those aligned with right-wing perspectives often being the victims. The

persistent invocation of fascism to depict Italian conservatives as antidemocratic entities seeking to reinstate a dictatorship has tangible repercussions on the lives of ordinary citizens. Instances of vandalism targeting the headquarters of *Fratelli d'Italia* and *Lega*, as well as attacks against individuals based on their political affiliations, can be attributed to the portrayal of conservative factions as symbols of fascist rule (Feltri, 2024).

Furthermore, it is posited that the left-wing political factions, which have held power for the past three decades, exhibit an inability to accept electoral defeat, regardless of the electorate's majority mandate. By branding political opponents as fascists and Nazis, any potential for dialogue, even contentious discourse, between the ruling government and the opposition is effectively nullified (Rizzo, 2022). Such a lack of dialogue not only undermines democracy but also jeopardizes the nation's unity, transcending the interests of any single political party. The conduct exhibited by the Italian left during the 2000s diverges significantly from the past, emphasizing a phenomenon known as oikophobia. This term refers to a fear or aversion towards one's own home, culture, or traditions. It is often used to describe a disdain or rejection of one's own national identity or heritage in favor of adopting or embracing foreign or global ideologies (Pupo, 2023). During the 1980s and 1990s, the left comprised political parties that are no longer active today, and their ideological framework differed from the current paradigm.

The Italian Constitution, formulated in the aftermath of the Mussolini regime's downfall, embodies not only antifascist principles but also liberal and democratic values, championing freedom of expression and political participation for all citizens. While antifascism is integral to the Constitution, it is just one aspect among many others, including popular sovereignty, individual rights and responsibilities, and the pursuit of dignified livelihoods through labor. Continuously resorting to singular arguments, such as accusations of fascism or personal attacks, to discredit political opponents tends to alienate voters. Instead, politicians should focus on addressing contemporary issues rather than rehashing historical grievances from over eight decades ago (Bocchino, 2024). Giorgia Meloni's victories were achieved democratically under existing electoral laws, unlike Mussolini's ascent to power through coercion and anti-democratic measures in 1924. Criticisms against Meloni should be based on the merits of her policies, rather than resorting to baseless accusations of fascism. Persistently labeling Meloni and her supporters as fascists only serves to bolster her popularity among those disillusioned with the left's perceived lack of innovative solutions and overreliance on moral posturing (Ichino, 2024). The tendency of some members of the Italian left to vilify right-wing conservatives as proponents of dictatorship overlooks the diverse historical contributions to antifascist resistance. The struggle against Mussolini's regime encompassed individuals from various political ideologies, including Liberals, Socialists, Catholics, Conservatives, Communists, and Monarchists. Moreover, significant contributions to the resistance effort came from right-wing factions, underscoring that antifascist values transcend partisan divides and cannot be exclusively claimed by any single political faction (Zola, 2024).

If the numerous accusations of fascism leveled by the left against opposing factions since 2022 were substantiated, it stands to reason that many prosecutors would have conducted investigations and subsequently prosecuted these alleged "fascists". This is because the XII transitional rule of the Constitution explicitly prohibits the reconstitution of the dissolved fascist party (Gentilucci, 2024). The persistent accusations of fascism and Nazism indicate that the left has lost its ability to engage in reasoned argumentation and instead resorts to crude language, verbal aggression, and defamation in public discourse. The art of persuasion through reasoned argumentation appears to have fallen out of favor, with a noticeable lack of dialectical prowess. The practice of bullying and silencing others, sometimes through intimidation, renders political discourse aberrant and repugnant, contributing to a declining voter turnout and widening the gap between citizens and politics. Political analysts and pollsters anticipate a historically low turnout in the upcoming European elections scheduled for 8 and 9 June, with fewer than 50% of eligible voters expected to participate (Carinci, 2024). Some courageous left-wing intellectuals acknowledge that discussing fascism in 2024 is senseless, considering that the dictatorship was defeated almost a century ago and democracy has reigned sovereignly since 1946. Furthermore, citizens are generally uninterested in the topic as there is no discernible fascist threat on the horizon (Volpi, 2024). Despite efforts by left-wing political forces to denounce the Italian government and its members to the European Commission, Justice Commissioner Christian Wigand, after reviewing the complaint, dismissed the allegations, affirming that Italy is not experiencing a fascist regression and that the country's democracy remains robust (Leardi, 2024).

Since assuming power, the right-wing Conservative government led by Giorgia Meloni has faced consistent demands from the left for a formal declaration of anti-fascism from all ministers and majority parliamentarians. However, it is worth noting that existing laws do not mandate members of the government to declare themselves anti-fascist (Renzi, 2024). Moreover, on numerous occasions, Prime Minister Meloni has publicly declared herself an antifascist, anti-communist, and opponent of any form of dictatorship or totalitarianism, a sentiment echoed by her ministers (Giubilei, 2024).

HOME / POLITICA

Salvini: "Per sinistra e giornalisti io e Vannacci come Satana. Ma sono antifascista"



Figure 28. On May 1st, 2024, Vice Prime Minister Matteo Salvini declared: *Sono antifascista* (I am antifascist). (Source: <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/39198537/salvini-sinistra-giornalisti-vannacci-satana-ma-sono-antifascista.html>)

What does it entail to be antifascist in contemporary times? Is this designation synonymous with being democratic? The concepts of anti-fascism and democracy are distinct. While one who is consciously and genuinely democratic and liberal may also be antifascist, the converse is not necessarily true. Put differently, democracy encompasses anti-fascism, yet the reverse is not always the case. Fascism, as a dictatorship, orchestrated the deaths of numerous individuals, imprisoned political dissidents, and, following its alliance with Nazi Germany, subjected millions to concentration camps, including Jews, gypsies, and homosexuals. Rejecting fascism involves not only denouncing these atrocities but also respecting the ideas of others, listening to opposing viewpoints, and refraining from engaging in acts of violence, verbal or otherwise, against political opponents. Those who uphold these principles are primarily democratic and liberal, subsequently aligning with antifascism (Macioce, 2024). The terrorists of the Red Brigades, who in the 1970s murdered journalists, politicians, judges, entrepreneurs, and students in the name of communist proletariat superiority, were unquestionably antifascists. However, they did not align with democratic principles because democracy does not condone violence as a means of political struggle (Soglio, 2024). Is it democratic to expel a 94-year-old man, who fought fascism and was detained during World War II in the concentration camp of Dachau, from the celebration of 25 April simply because he was accompanied by his daughter Letizia, a mayoral candidate for a non-left party? (Moratti, 2024). Is it democratic to prevent Minister Anna Maria Bernini from attending a conference at the University of Pisa by left-wing student collectives in the name of anti-Zionist anti-fascism? (Renzullo, 2024). Under the guise of anti-fascism, Silvia Sardone and Anna Maria Cisint, two politically engaged women who express their ideas through books, are compelled to live under police protection due to the numerous death threats they have received (Nicoletti, 2024). Intimidating Jewish students residing in Italy, who have not voted for Prime Minister Netanyahu and labeling them as fascists and Zionists, might be perceived as an act of "anti-fascism", but it does not conform to the principles outlined in the Constitution (Marrocco, 2024). Hence, it appears that the current understanding of anti-fascism does not align with the tenets of the Italian Constitution, which, while emerging from the aftermath of fascism, is grounded in liberal and democratic ideals. Anti-fascism, as a significant phenomenon paving the way for democracy, is a collective legacy that ought to seamlessly integrate with the principles of liberty and mutual respect. However, when ideological anti-fascism manifests as anti-Semitism or is wielded violently against proponents of conservative ideologies, it contravenes constitutional values (Montesano, 2024). In contemporary times, the political landscape has taken on an increasingly radical tone, posing a threat to national cohesion. This palpable vulnerability has the potential to sow dangerous tensions not only among political factions but also throughout civil society. The ongoing campaign leading up to the European elections is emblematic of this heightened political polarization (Bartoloni, 2024). Candidates are intensifying their stances in an effort to rally their electoral base, often resorting to aggressive rhetoric against their opponents, framing them not as

mere competitors but as enemies. However, this confrontational approach from the left and the deepening divide between political parties has left many voters disenchanted. Instead, they yearn for politicians to prioritize addressing their concerns and those of the nation, rather than engaging in contentious debates, hurling insults, and levying ideological accusations (Pastore, 2024).

Verbal violence often escalates into physical confrontations, with numerous instances of political activists being attacked on the streets while trying to distribute or put up posters. The case of Anna Maniscalchi, running for the municipal council in Prato, Tuscany, is unfortunately not unique. It is inconceivable that in 2024, in Italy, someone could be insulted and beaten by fervent “anti-fascists” simply for freely promoting their political ideas. This toxic climate is largely a result of the left’s tendency to demonize opponents fiercely and irresponsibly (Bocchini, 2024). The situation in cities such as Rome, Milan, Bologna, Pisa, Naples, and Catania is tense. For over two months, leftist students and members of the anti-fascist organization *Cambiare Rotta* have coercively occupied universities, preventing any teaching or research activities from taking place. They demand that all ties with Israeli institutions be severed and refuse any dialogue with rectors, academic staff, and the Minister of University and Scientific Research. While other countries like the USA, France, and Germany have seen police forcibly evacuate such occupations, the Meloni government in Italy is attempting to avoid escalating violence and thus has not deployed law enforcement to intervene (Bertolli, 2024). When hate and verbal violence infiltrate politics and democratic institutions, they inevitably spread throughout society, further poisoning the social climate.

Given their privileged status derived from political influence and economic affluence, politicians are expected to exemplify ethical conduct for the broader populace. There exists a palpable risk of revisiting the tumultuous atmosphere reminiscent of the 1970s, characterized by escalating political and subsequently societal upheavals, culminating in the emergence of communist and fascist terrorism (Gonzato, 2024). The pervasive discord within society stems from the prevalence of violence and animosity among divergent political factions. Addressing the overarching challenges facing the nation - including the energy crisis, inflation, the integration of second and third-generation immigrants, urban street security, tax evasion, ecological transition, workplace safety, and global competitiveness - demands a concerted effort marked by cooperation and constructive engagement from all political entities. Both governing and opposition parties are urged to collaborate in a collective endeavor to confront and resolve these pressing issues, thereby mitigating the detrimental effects of perpetual political strife. The populace seeks tangible solutions and expresses fatigue with a political establishment perceived as derelict in its responsibilities (Pellizzetti, 2024).

It feels as though centuries have elapsed since May 1974, when Italians were tasked with voting in a referendum concerning the legislation governing divorce for married couples. During this period, two distinct ideological blocs emerged: the Christian Democracy (DC) and the National Right Social Movement (MSI), advocating for the repeal of the law, opposed by a coalition comprising major secular parties such as the Communist (PCI), Socialist (PSI), Republican (PRI), Liberal (PLI), and Social Democratic (PSDI) movements. The Vatican State also actively participated in the referendum campaign. Despite the intense ideological confrontation between opposing political factions, there was a notable absence of violent or offensive language employed by politicians towards their adversaries. The referendum culminated in a victory for proponents of divorce (59.1% versus 40.9%). This event underscored the commitment of all political forces to democratic principles, preserving societal cohesion regardless of individual stances on the issue. Today’s political landscape starkly contrasts with the decorum and mutual respect exhibited by political parties of that era (Cosimelli, 2024).

Italian politics has undergone a significant transformation, particularly evident when compared to just a few years ago. Antonio Padellaro, a journalist and writer, highlights key events from 2019 when political representatives from divergent factions convened to discuss critical issues for the collective welfare of the nation. These instances serve as a poignant reminder that not long ago, political parties maintained mutual respect and refrained from viewing opponents as enemies or resorting to violence in their discourse (Boezi, 2024).

While this study suggests that the left-wing use of fascist rhetoric primarily serves as a political tool, it is important to consider the historical context of fascism in Italy. The collective memory of Mussolini’s

dictatorship and the trauma of World War II are still vivid for some of the older generations who directly experienced life under fascism. However, it is crucial to note that the current political discourse, especially from younger left-wing political actors such as those in the *Partito Democratico* and *Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra*, is not shaped by personal memories of Mussolini's regime. These political figures, most of whom are under 50 years old, cannot be seen as having direct historical anxieties about fascism. Furthermore, figures like Liliana Segre, a Holocaust survivor who experienced fascism firsthand, have never accused Giorgia Meloni or *Fratelli d'Italia* of engaging in fascist rhetoric, despite the left's frequent invocations of fascism. In fact, Segre, who has been unjustly accused by elements within the left of being a secret agent of Zionism (Nissim, 2024), remains uncritical of Meloni's government on these grounds. This suggests that the left-wing discourse on fascism is more likely a strategic ideological tool rather than a reflection of historical trauma or fear.

CONCLUSION

The prevailing climate of animosity towards the current Prime Minister reflects the inability of left-wing political factions to present compelling arguments that resonate with the electorate. Survey data suggest that Italians do not perceive a fascist threat. The repeated assertions that the government is fascist - therefore anti-democratic and oppressive - fail to garner electoral support. In a robust and mature democracy, the discourse between opposing political forces, each with its own historical context and vision for the state and society, should unfold in an atmosphere of calm and mutual respect. Addressing the nation's pressing issues, such as educational dropout rates, street violence, prison overcrowding, and illegal immigration, would likely yield more effective outcomes if tackled collaboratively by both the government and the opposition (Pasero, 2024). Unfortunately, the daily rhetoric of hate speech from left-wing factions, aimed at discrediting those who govern after winning legitimate elections, reduces politics to a violent contest akin to a boxing match. The persistent accusations of fascism and Nazism directed at the head of government and other ministers are rooted in ideological bias rather than factual reality. If Italy were indeed under a fascist regime akin to Mussolini's, all civil liberties, particularly the right to vote, would be suspended. Under fascism, citizens were denied the right to vote; however, since the Meloni government assumed power in October 2022, six regional and numerous municipal elections have taken place. In 2023, voters in the regions of Molise, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lazio, and Lombardia cast their ballots, and in 2024, elections were held in Piemonte, Basilicata, Abruzzo, and Sardegna. Additionally, candidates from left-wing political forces secured victories in the municipalities of Florence, Perugia, Rovigo, Lecce, Bari, and others. Italians thus question: where is the fascism? The pervasive use of hateful rhetoric should have no place in a democratic society and must not be tolerated. There was a time when political opponents were considered enemies to be eliminated at any cost, including through physical violence, armed struggle, and civil war. A healthy democratic process requires that adversaries acknowledge and listen to each other, so that through normal discourse, one's ideas might prevail, or a compromise might be reached at a point of balance (Occone, 2024). However, the continued demonization of political opponents exacerbates societal tensions.

In the 1960s, Pietro Nenni, a prominent leader of the Italian Socialist Party, famously advised: "Attack ideas, never people". This lesson is one that many should revisit (Campanella, 2024). Today, Italy faces a serious risk of reliving the era of terrorism orchestrated by the Red Brigades in the 1970s, when judges, journalists, university professors, and politicians were brutally murdered. Then, as now, expressions such as "setting fire to fascists is justified" or "killing a fascist is not a crime" were widespread and frequently invoked. The resurgence of such rhetoric after more than half a century should be profoundly alarming (Indini, 2024).

The manifestations of hatred perpetrated by left-wing political forces against conservatives, often labeled as fascists and Nazis to be overthrown by any means necessary, are not exclusive to Italy. Similar acts of violence have occurred in other European Union states, such as Germany and Slovakia, where non-left-wing political leaders have been killed by leftist supporters. These criminal activities are particularly dangerous as they undermine the foundations of democracy and the cohesion of society as a whole (Maurelli, 2024).

Beyond electoral dynamics, the persistent use of hate speech in political discourse poses serious risks for Italy's democratic fabric. When ideological battles are framed as moral absolutes - where opponents are not merely wrong but inherently evil - it discourages civic participation and fosters disillusionment with democratic processes. Citizens may retreat from public life, perceiving politics as a toxic and dangerous arena

dominated by hostility rather than constructive debate. This environment also accelerates political polarization, making compromise increasingly difficult and isolating moderate voices. The long-term consequence is a weakened civic culture, where dialogue gives way to mutual suspicion, and adversaries are dehumanized rather than engaged. If unchecked, such trends could lead to the erosion of social trust and the destabilization of democratic institutions, not by means of authoritarian repression, but rather via the gradual hollowing out of democratic norms and the erosion of civic responsibility.

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study examines the hate speech employed by Italian left-wing political forces against their opponents, who assumed power following democratic elections in September 2022. The frequent and unfounded accusations of fascism and Nazism directed at the incumbent Prime Minister and other ministers may erode peaceful coexistence within civil society. Italian politics has deviated from its previously esteemed decorum, a time when parties such as the Christian Democrats, Communist Party, and National Right Social Movement consistently employed solemn and respectful language. In times of crisis, these parties collaborated for the nation's greater good. The verbal aggression and hatred exhibited by left-wing forces towards the *Fratelli d'Italia* (Brothers of Italy) party and its members have the potential to incite physical violence, including assaults, murders, and beatings, against those labeled as "enemies". The authors acknowledge the limitations of their research. At first glance, the study may appear biased as it focuses on hate speech perpetrated by left-wing political forces against their right-wing counterparts. However, the political landscape following the September 2022 elections, in which *Fratelli d'Italia* achieved an unprecedented victory and elected Italy's first female Prime Minister, has sparked significant interest. The attempts to undermine President Meloni's government through accusations of fascism and Nazism - claims that neither the Italian judiciary nor European authorities recognize as substantiated - are a key focus. Additionally, the international press has extensively covered the significance of Italy's first female head of government (Gonzato, 2024). The researchers are also aware that right-wing parties and figures are frequently accused of employing hate speech, though it typically targets groups or organizations perceived as threats to Western values rather than political opponents. This distinction could serve as a potential avenue for future research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this research. No financial or personal relationships with other individuals or organizations have influenced the research process or the results presented in this study.

REFERENCES

1. Argento, F. (2024, April 26). Antifascismo, Rampelli: "Non capisco cosa si voglia ancora dalla Meloni. C'è chi ha bisogno dello scontro". Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/04/antifascismo-rampelli-non-capisco-cosa-si-voglia-ancora-dalla-meloni-ce-chi-ha-bisogno-dello-scontro/>
2. Aversa, A. (2023, November 8). Premierato: come funziona il sistema in Europa. L'Unità. <https://www.unita.it/2023/11/08/premierato-il-sistema-in-europa-e-negli-usa/>
3. Balduzzi, P. (2024, April 23). Maratona regionali 2024: cosa dicono i numeri dopo la Basilicata. La Voce. <https://lavoce.info/archives/104488/maratona-regionali-2024-cosa-dicono-i-numeri-dopo-la-basilicata/>
4. Barolini, A. (2024, March 3). Cos'è il premierato e cosa prevede la riforma costituzionale del governo Meloni. Lifegate Daily. <https://www.lifegate.it/premierato-definizione-riforma-governo-meloni>
5. Bartoloni, G. (2024, January 17). Social troppo polarizzati, gli elettori scappano dalla politica. Polarizzati e disaffezionati. Gli elettori scappano dalla perenne campagna elettorale. La Repubblica. https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2024/01/17/news/social_troppo_polarizzati_gli_elettori_scappano_dalla_politica-421897792/
6. Battisti, E. (2024, May 8). Senato, il premierato è costituzionale e la sinistra strepita. FdI: insultano, non hanno argomenti. Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/05/senato-il-premierato-e-costituzionale-e-la-sinistra-strepita-fdi-insultano-non-hanno-argomenti/>

7. Baudino, S. (2024, March 28). Migranti: nel Mediterraneo sono morte 28mila persone negli ultimi 10 anni. L'Indipendente. <https://www.lindipendente.online/2024/03/28/migranti-nel-mediterraneo-sono-morte-28mila-persone-negli-ultimi-10-anni/>
8. Bertolli, S. (2024, April 30). Dagli Stati Uniti all'Europa gli studenti occupano le università: stop agli accordi di ricerca con Israele. Euractiv Italia. <https://euractiv.it/section/diritti/news/dagli-stati-uniti-alleuropa-gli-studenti-occupano-le-universita-stop-agli-accordi-di-ricerca-con-israele/>
9. Bocchino, I. (2024, April 23). Di Martedì, puntata del 23 aprile 2024. La7. <https://www.la7.it/dimartedi/rivedila7/dimartedi-puntata-del-2342024-24-04-2024-539003>
10. Bocchini, F. (2024, May 9). Elezioni comunali 2024. Prato, aggredita candidata della Lega: "Erano in tre contro uno. Una vergogna assoluta". Durante il volantinaggio per la campagna elettorale. Firenze Today. <https://www.firenzetoday.it/politica/elezioni-comunali-2024-firenze/aggresione-candidata-lega-prato-maniscalchi.html>
11. Boezi, F. (2024, April 30). Antonio Padellaro: "Servirebbe oggi il rispetto tra Almirante e Berlinguer". Tutti pensiamo che il passato sia migliore del presente. Soltanto che in politica può essere vero. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/servirebbe-oggi-rispetto-almirante-e-berlinguer-2315922.html>
12. Borsa, T. (2024, April 26). Fascismo fa rima con conformismo: questo è il più grande problema di questo governo. Il Fatto Quotidiano. <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2024/04/26/fascismo-fa-rima-con-conformismo-questo-e-il-piu-grande-problema-di-questo-governo/7527059/>
13. Calderwood, I & Sanchez E. (2019, April 1). There's Finally an Internationally Agreed Upon Definition of Sexism. Here's Why That Matters. Global Citizen. <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/sexism-definition-council-of-europe-equality/>
14. Campanella, M. (2024, July 14). Trump, l'ultima follia della sinistra social: "L'attentato se l'è fatto da solo". Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/07/trump-lultima-follia-della-sinistra-social-lattentato-se-le-fatto-da-solo-e-se-fosse-successo-a-biden/>
15. Canieletto, M. (2022, September 26). La sinistra impari la lezione: la smetta col pericolo fascismo. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/adesso-basta-col-pericolo-fascismo-2070094.html>
16. Cantarini, S. (2024, April 11). Il Parlamento europeo approva il nuovo Patto su migrazione e asilo. I dieci testi legislativi per riformare la politica europea in materia di migrazione e asilo, come concordato con gli Stati membri dell'UE. Euractiv Italia. <https://euractiv.it/section/migrazioni/news/il-parlamento-europeo-approva-il-nuovo-patto-su-migrazione-e-asilo/>
17. Cantisani, G. (2023, September 12). La protezione internazionale in Italia negli ultimi anni. Neodemos. <https://www.neodemos.info/2023/09/12/la-protezione-internazionale-in-italia-negli-ultimi-anni/>
18. Capezzone, D. (2024, May 27). Capezzone: la crisi isterica permanente. Libero quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/piulibero/39438002/capezzone-crisi-isterica-permanente.html>
19. Capezzone, D. (2023, October 3). E basta con 'sto fascismo. Cari compagni, ci avete rotto..... Editor: Piemme. ISBN: 978-8856692136. <https://culturaidentita.it/cari-compagni-ci-avete-rotto-capezzone-mena-a-sinistra-e-sveglia-centro-destra/>
20. Catarinella et al. (2024, April 13). Enforcing Linguistic Transformation: The EU Parliament's Role in Italian Grammar and Lexicon Revision. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i4/21205>, Page 443.
21. Carinci, F. (2024, May 11). Il continuo "al lupo al lupo" della sinistra a cui non crede più nessuno. Nicola porro. Atlantico. <https://www.nicolaporro.it/atlanticoquotidiano/quotidiano/aq-politica/il-continuo-al-lupo-al-lupo-della-sinistra-a-cui-non-crede-piu-nessuno/>
22. Carioti, F. (2024, April 28). Premierato "fascista", l'ultima bufala della sinistra. Libero quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/39162268/premierato-fascista-ultima-bufala-sinistra.html>
23. Carpani, F. (2024, June 4). Niente "Decima" per gli incursori. E loro depositano le rose all'altare della patria. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/interni/borghi-contro-silenzio-imposto-agli-incursori-presentata-2330124.html>
24. Celletti, A. (2024, May 18). Il caso. Ecco perché il governo ha detto no alla dichiarazione Ue sui diritti Lgtb. Avvenire. <https://www.avvenire.it/attualita/pagine/lgbt-italia>
25. Conte, B. (2024, May 9). Premierato, l'economista: ecco perché garantisce "certezza" politica e fiducia agli investitori. Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/05/premierato-leconomista-ecco-perche-garantisce-certezza-politica-e-fiducia-agli-investitori/>

26. Cosimelli, S. (2024, May 16). Il referendum sul divorzio, il trionfo dell'Italia laica. Il referendum sul divorzio del 1974 fu uno dei momenti cruciali della storia della Repubblica, un simbolo di cambiamento in un contesto segnato da profondi contrasti ideologici. Storica. https://www.storicang.it/a/il-referendum-sul-divorzio-il-trionfo-dellitalia-laica_16754
27. Cuomo, A. (2024, June 2). Quando si tratta di mangiare, l'Italia tira da impazzire. Tra cibo e vino, mamma Italia dà la pappa a tutto il mondo. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cucina/quando-si-tratta-mangiare-l-italia-tira-impazzire-2328899.html>
28. De Conto, A. (2024, April 4). Lollobrigida porta in tribunale la Di Cesare che lo definì “neohitleriano”. Lei fa la vittima (video). Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/04/lollobrigida-porta-in-tribunale-donatella-di-cesare-che-lo-defini-neohitleriano-lei-fa-la-vittima-video/>
29. Dell'Orco, D. (2024, May 30). Von der Leyen loda Giorgia Meloni: “Come ha consolidato la sua posizione in Ue”. Libero quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/europa/39463951/ursula-von-der-leyen-giorgia-meloni-come-consolidato-sua-posizione-ue.html>
30. Dessì, M. (2023, December 4). Salvini incita i sovranisti e lancia l'assalto per cambiare l'Europa. “Sbaglia chi cerca alleanze a sinistra”. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/salvini-incita-i-sovranisti-e-lancia-l-assalto-cambiare-2250750.html>
31. Di Bisceglie, F. (2024, March 26). Cosa resta della Destra nell'era di Giorgia Meloni. Tarchi e le tre età della fiamma. Formiche. <https://formiche.net/2024/03/destra-msi-storia-marco-tarchi/>
32. Di Muccio, P. (2024, April 24). 25 Aprile. Perché la festa non mi fa giubilare. Il 25 aprile del 1945 la mia Patria fu liberata dall'esercito nazista e dal regime fascista. L'Opinione delle Libertà. https://opinione.it/editoriali/2024/04/24/pietro-di-muccio-de-quattro_25-aprile-resistenza-liberazione-storia-internati-militari-italiani-salvo-dacquist/
33. Donzelli, G. (2024, April 25). Diritto e Rovescio, puntata del 25 aprile 2024. Mediaset Infinity. https://mediasetinfinity.mediaset.it/video/drittoerovescio/puntata-del-25-aprile_F312803901004601
34. Feltri, V. (2024, June 3). Chiedo a Schlein: chi cancella la libertà? Mi rammenta i cosiddetti e più recenti “Anni di Piombo”. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/interni/chiedo-schlein-chi-cancella-libert-2329562.html>
35. Feltri, V. (2023, October 31). Fascisti della parola. Editor: Rizzoli. ISBN: ISBN-978-8817173841. <https://www.ibs.it/fascisti-della-parola-libro-vittorio-feltri/e/9788817173841>
36. Ferri, S. (2024, May 14). FdI presenta il programma per le europee: 15 punti per un'Europa più giusta. Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/05/fdi-presenta-il-programma-per-le-europee-15-punti-per-uneuropa-piu-giusta/>
37. Gasparini, A. (2024, January 16). Abbandonare la demonizzazione dell'avversario. Alterthink. <https://alterthink.it/abbandonare-la-demonizzazione-dellavversario/>
38. Gentile E. (2019, March 28). Chi è fascista? Editor: Laterza. ISBN: 978-8858136140. <https://www.laterza.it/scheda-libro/?isbn=9788858136140>
39. Gentilucci, P. (2024, January 19). Il reato di apologia del fascismo: la sentenza della Cassazione. Diritto. Portale giuridico. <https://www.diritto.it/reato-apologia-del-fascismo-la-sentenza-cassazione/>
40. Gonzato, A. (2024, May 30). Giorgia Meloni? “Stronza”, “Pesciarola”, “Naziststa”, “Bastarda”: i cento insulti incassati dal premier. Una raffica di insulti. Ma sono insulti democratici. Libero quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/39472835/giorgia-meloni-cento-insulti-incassati-premier-sinistra-non-puo-reagire.html>
41. Gonzato, F. (2024, July 24). Il governo può sciogliere CasaPound, a differenza di quanto dice Donzelli. Pagella politica. <https://pagellapolitica.it/articoli/governo-scioglimento-casapound-donzelli>
42. Grossi, L. (2024, May 2). L'insulto choc del rapper alla Meloni scatena la bufera. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/attualit/boccara-linsulto-choc-rapper-meloni-nel-primo-maggio-2316814.html>
43. Giubilei, F. (2024, June 1). Se a sinistra non basta mai la condanna del fascismo. La distanza tra una destra conservatrice e il fascismo. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/se-sinistra-non-basta-mai-condanna-fascismo-2328747.html>
44. Harlan, C. & Pitrelli, S. (2022, October 25). Italy's Giorgia Meloni sets agenda, says she has no sympathy for fascism. The Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/10/25/giorgia-meloni-italy-fascism/>

45. Ichino, A. (2024, May 3). Antifascismo e impoverimento del dibattito sui contenuti offuscano gli errori del governo. Il Foglio. <https://www.ilfoglio.it/politica/2024/05/03/news/antifascismo-e-impoverimento-del-dibattito-sui-contenuti-offuscano-gli-errori-del-governo-6507497/>
46. Indini, A. (2024, June 25). Le parole della sinistra rimasta agli anni di piombo. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/parole-sinistra-rimasta-agli-anni-piombo-2338916.html>
47. Leardi, M. (2024, April 26). “Questione interna”. Sinistra smentita: pure l’Ue snobba il caso Scurati. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/europa/questione-interna-sinistra-smentita-pure-lue-snobba-caso-2314700.html>
48. Leo, D. & Gonzato, F. (2023, May 8). Che cos’è il “premierato” e perché se ne parla di nuovo. Pagella politica. <https://pagellapolitica.it/articoli/premierato-governo-meloni>
49. Lima, M. (2024, May 29). Quando De Luca definì “chiattona” e mostrò il dito alla grillina (video) il M5S s’indignò, oggi critica Meloni.. Secolod’Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/05/quando-de-luca-defini-chiattona-e-mostro-il-dito-medio-alla-grillina-video-il-m5s-sindigno-oggi-critica-meloni/>
50. Macdonald, H. et al. (2023, February 24). Is Italy’s Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni a fascist? ABC News. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-02-24/is-italian-prime-minister-giorgia-meloni-a-fascist/101999292>
51. Macioce, V. (2024, April 26). Antifascisti immaginari. Il fascismo non era uno spettacolo teatrale. Non era finzione. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/antifascisti-immaginari-2314318.html>
52. Maffioli, F. (2022, September 27). Cultura. La temperatura politica della lingua. Il Manifesto. <https://ilmanifesto.it/la-temperatura-politica-della-lingua>
53. Magliaro, M. (2023, April 18). Siamo governati dai nipoti di Goebbels, “Evidentemente sì”: botta e risposta Mazza-Di Cesare. Di Martedì. La 7. <https://www.la7.it/dimartedi/video/siamo-governati-dai-nipoti-di-goebbels-evidentemente-si-botta-e-risposta-mazza-di-cesare-18-04-2023-481147>
54. Marrocco, A. (2024, May 17). Tanti studenti ebrei si sentono isolati, non tutelati. Non ricordo un clima così pesante. Marco Camerini, preside della Scuola ebraica di Milano, racconta a Huffpost il clima di ansia e preoccupazione che vivono i ragazzi che frequentano il suo istituto. Huffington Post. https://www.huffingtonpost.it/esteri/2024/05/17/news/marco_camerini_preside_scuola_ebraica_milano-15908697/
55. Marsili, L. (2022, September 28). Italy’s Giorgia Meloni is no Mussolini – but she may be a Trump. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2022/sep/28/giorgia-meloni-mussolini-trump-europe-italy-elections>
56. Martarello, S. (2022, October 22). Passaggio di consegne al Mipaaf, Lollobrigida: “Sovranità alimentare non è un concetto fascista”. Terra è vita. <https://terraevita.edagricole.it/economia-e-politica-agricola/sovranita-alimentare-concetto-fascista/>
57. Massolo, G. (2024, May 10). Realpolitik. Il disordine mondiale e le minacce per l’Italia. Editor: Solferino. ISBN: 978-8828214533. <https://www.solferinolibri.it/libri/realpolitik/>
58. Mattia, TS. (2023, February 9). Perché gli italiani sono stati trascinati a destra da Fratelli d’Italia? Green European Journal. <https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/perche-gli-italiani-sono-stati-trascinati-a-destra-da-fratelli-ditalia/>
59. Maurelli, L. (2024, May 16). Slovacchia: l’attentatore di Fico è di sinistra, ma non si può dire. E’ un vecchio poeta pacifista. Secolo d’Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/05/slovacchia-lattentatore-di-fico-e-di-sinistra-ma-non-si-puo-dire-e-un-vecchio-poeta-pacifista/>
60. Moratti, L. (2024, April 25). Diritto e Rovescio, puntata del 25 aprile 2024. Mediaset Infinity. https://mediasetinfinity.mediaset.it/video/drittoerovescio/puntata-del-25-aprile_F312803901004601
61. Montanari, T. (2024, June 3). Meloni vuole abbattere la Costituzione. Piazza Pulita, puntata del 3 giugno 2024. La7. <https://www.la7.it/piazzapulita/rivedila7/piazzapulita-puntata-del-362024-04-06-2024-545807>
62. Montesano, T. (2024, April 26). Claudio Velardi, la lezione al PD. Libero quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/personaggi/39147073/claudio-velardi-mussolini-secolo-pd-smetta-antifascismo.html>
63. Napolitano, P. (2024, May 5). Schlein va da Scholz per screditare l’Italia. La leader Pd in Germania si inventa un regime nostrano. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/schlein-va-scholz-screditare-litalia-2317724.html>

64. Nicoletti, C. (2024, April 13). “Sotto scorta da anni per le minacce dei fondamentalisti islamici”: la storia dell'europarlamentare leghista Silvia Sardone in un libro. TeleNord. <https://telenord.it/sotto-scorta-da-anni-per-le-minacce-dei-fondamentalisti-islamici-la-storia-dell-europarlamentare-leghista-silvia-sardone-in-un-libro-70965>
65. Nissim, G. (2024, February 7). A Liliana Segre un'accusa inaccettabile. Gariwo MAG. <https://it.gariwo.net/magazine/editoriali/a-liliana-segre-un-accusa-inaccettabile-26894.html>
66. Ocone, C. (2024, June 15). Come è antidemocratico escludere l'avversario politico. Libero quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/39614175/antidemocratico-escludere-avversario-politico.html>
67. Pasero, G. (2024, August 3). Strage di Bologna, i familiari delle vittime del terrorismo si dissociano da Bolognesi. Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/08/strage-di-bologna-i-familiari-delle-vittime-del-terrorismo-si-dissociano-da-bolognesi-bignami-da-lui-parole-infamanti/>
68. Pastore, C. (2024, April 18). Il viaggio nella politica con Alessandra Ghisleri. La Stampa. https://www.lastampa.it/verbanio-cusio-ossola/2024/04/18/news/verbanio_la_stampa_sondaggi_ghisleri-14233500/
69. Pellizzetti, P. (2024, February 21). Alle urne la destra si presenta compatta, la sinistra pratica la disunione sistematica: ecco perché. Il Fatto quotidiano. <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2024/02/21/alle-urne-la-destra-si-presenta-compatta-la-sinistra-pratica-la-disunione-sistematica-ecco-perche/7451148/>
70. Perri, L. (2024, June 5). 2 giugno, il comandante del Comsubin: “Ecco perché ho ordinato ai miei uomini di non gridare Decima”. Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/06/2-giugno-il-comandante-del-comsubin-ecco-perche-ho-ordinato-ai-miei-uomini-di-non-gridare-decima/>
71. Pilo, A. (2022, October 3). Un po' di giovani spiegano perché hanno votato Giorgia Meloni. I dati delle elezioni 2022 parlano chiaro: anche i giovani hanno votato Fratelli d'Italia. Abbiamo chiesto ad alcuni under 35 e under 30 perché. Vice. <https://www.vice.com/it/article/y3p5jm/elezioni-2022-voto-giovanile>
72. Pucci, M. (2024, May 16). Migranti, modello Meloni: 15 Paesi Ue chiedono di fare accordi come quello tra Italia e Albania. Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/05/migranti-modello-meloni-15-paesi-ue-chiedono-di-fare-accordi-come-quello-tra-italia-e-albania/>
73. Pupo, S. (2023, March 27). Oicofobia. Il ripudio della nazione. Editor: Eclettica. ISBN: 979-1281106147. <https://picclick.it/Libri-Spartaco-Pupo-Oicofobia-Il-Ripudio-Della-235543326426.html>
74. Renzi, M. (2024, April 28). Diritto e Rovescio, puntata del 28 aprile 2024. Mediaset Infinity. https://mediasetinfinity.mediaset.it/video/drittoerovescio/puntata-del-28-aprile_F312803901004701
75. Renzullo, D. (2024, May 18). La ministra Bernini contestata dagli studenti. Il Tirreno Pisa. <https://www.iltirreno.it/pisa/cronaca/2024/05/18/news/pisa-la-ministra-bernini-contestata-dagli-studenti-a-pisa-mi-hanno-impedito-di-parlare-non-sono-democratici-video-1.100523186>
76. Rigatelli, F. (2024, January 29). Michele Ainis: il premierato è solo “sfascista”. Il costituzionalista affronta i nodi della riforma. Così com'è la riforma è peggiorativa perché cavalca malcostumi. La Stampa. https://www.lastampa.it/cultura/2024/01/29/news/michele_ainis_il_premierato_e_solo_sfascista-14028875/
77. Rizzo, D. (2022, September 26). Il Pd non è davanti a una sconfitta ma a un disastro epocale. C'è solo un rimedio possibile. Si può perdere, in democrazia ci sta. Fa parte delle regole del gioco. Il Fatto Quotidiano. <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2022/09/26/il-pd-non-e-davanti-a-una-sconfitta-ma-a-un-disastro-epocale-ce-solo-un-rimedio-possibile/6817920/>
78. Ronchin, F. (2024, May 26). Il presidente Usa sta impostando la stessa campagna elettorale della candidata democratica contro il tycoon. Nicola Porro. <https://www.nicolaporro.it/biden-come-hillary-clinton-i-2-errori-su-trump/>
79. Ruffino, L. (2022, July 18). Quattro grafici per capire la durata dei governi in Italia. Pagella Politica. <https://pagellapolitica.it/articoli/durata-governi-italia>
80. Sallusti, A. (2024, May 9). Anpi e Pd. L'altra repubblica. Che il 25 aprile non possa essere una festa di unità nazionale è chiaro. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronache/anpi-e-pd-laltra-repubblica-2319490.html>
81. Serra, B. (2024, January 18). The Normalization of Italy's Giorgia Meloni. New Lines Magazines. <https://newlinesmag.com/argument/the-normalization-of-italys-giorgia-meloni/>

-
82. Soglio, A. (2024, March 6). La nostalgia di Acca Iarentia è il male; quella per la Balzerani e le Br è il bene. Panorama. <https://www.panorama.it/news/politica/acca-larentia-balzerani-br-di-cesare>
 83. Valeri, V. (2023, October 27). Nelle scuole di Roma torna il “terrore gender”. Destra e Pro Vita contro Gualtieri. Roma Today. <https://www.romatoday.it/attualita/corsi-formazione-scuole-teoria-gender-pro-vita.html>
 84. Volpi, C. (2024, April 25). Antifascismo, Cacciari sferza la sinistra in (falso) allarme: ma quale pericolo fascista. Non esiste: di certo non con la Meloni. Cacciari disintegra l’architettura delle polemiche di sinistra sulla Meloni. Secolo d’Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2024/04/antifascismo-cacciari-sferza-la-sinistra-in-falso-allarme-ma-quale-pericolo-fascista-non-esiste-di-certo-non-con-la-meloni/>
 85. Yin, R. (2018). Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods. Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1506336169. <https://www.akademika.no/studieteknikk/metode/case-study-research-and-applications/9781506336169>
 86. Zola, M. (2020, April 25). L’antifascismo è anche di destra. Il contributo della destra alla lotta di liberazione è stato rilevante. East Journal. <https://www.eastjournal.net/archives/104798>