Fascism, Liberalism and Europeanism in the Political Thought of Bertrand de Jouvenel and Alfred Fabre-Luce

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Preface

More than 70 years after the end of its era, fascism continues to haunt our political and cultural imagination. It is the classic Hollywood villain, the standard ingredient of dystopian science fiction and a multi-use political swear word. Its more attractive elements have permeated modern pop culture, and its symbolism survives in brands, emblems and music. Recently, it has also made its comeback in headlines of the international press. Although not primarily motivated by present-day concerns, this study was inspired by the lasting relevance of fascism. It sets out to explore this relevance, especially in relation to two other prominent modern political phenomena: Europeanism and neoliberalism.

This book is a reworked, updated and partially extended version of the doctoral thesis I defended at the European University Institute in November 2015. As it is the result of years of research in different countries, I owe gratitude to more people than I can possibly mention on these pages. First, I want to thank my supervisor Dirk Moses and my second reader Laura Lee Downs, who have both been crucial for the success of my thesis. I also express my gratitude to Professors Peter Romijn and Kevin Passmore, and to Heinz-Gerhardt Haupt, Kiran Klaus Patel, Anthony La Vopa and everybody working at the EUI history department, in whose midst it has been a true pleasure to pursue my research. During my MA years at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), Professor Frits Boterman gave me the guidance, inspiration, enthusiasm and historical Bildung that made it possible for me to imagine becoming a historical researcher in the first place.

My Florence years would never have been so pleasurable without the company of my Florentine friends, with whom I have shared so many unforgettable moments. Besides being a ‘community of scholars’, the EUI is also a great place because it is an endlessly inspiring and energising melting pot at all kinds of less scholarly levels. With Jonas, Gabriele and Karena, I have thrown myself down snowy mountain slopes, discovered unknown islands and cycled through the impressive landscapes of the Mugello and the Chianti. With Robrecht, I shared so many drinks, hikes, crappy football games, serious thoughts and laughs that I can’t wait for the next Benelux meeting with him, Griet and of course little Kasper and Suzanne. I have also experienced countless memorable moments with Matti, Vera, Alan, Sani, Kaarlo, Pol, Bart, Roel, Tommaso, Andrea, Brian, Carolina and so many others, and I hope that official and unofficial occasions will keep bringing us together.
Archival research brought me to Paris for several short and less short stays. I wish to thank Anne de Jouvenel and the descendants of the Fabre-Luce family for generously giving me access to their relative’s private archives, kept at the Archives Nationales and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. At this latter institution, I am grateful to conservator Michèle Le Pavec for preparing the manuscripts I wished to consult, and for her friendly and important guidance through the vast Jouvenel archive. I would also like to thank Anne de Simonin and Pascal Raimbault, who have been very helpful in directing me towards Fabre-Luce’s Épuration dossier. I am grateful to the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach for hosting me, for several snowy February days, in a studio right next to their beautiful archive, where I consulted the Ernst Jünger papers.

During the past years, my good old UvA has provided me with an academic refuge of the best kind. I am very grateful to James Kennedy and Jouke Turpijn for giving me the occasion to further develop myself as a visiting scholar and subsequently as a lecturer. My office mates, colleagues and friends, Tim, Frans, Josephine, Thomas, Alberto, Valentina, Guido, Eleá, Jan, Lisa, Karlijn, Robin, Lotte, Nathan, Merel and Marjet, made my working environment a fantastic place where I liked to spend time, albeit occasionally slightly too much time. The editors of Historisch Café deserve a special mention here, as do all the students of the Grand Tour historical study trip, with whom I have shared unforgettable experiences.

Although it would be impossible to mention them all, I want to thank all my Amsterdam friends – Tim, Micha, Tim, Matthijs, Ambi, Harmen, Ellen, Tim, Onno, Willemijn, Thomas, Bo, Ambi, Lea, Maria, Sterre and so many others – for supporting me, distracting me and most importantly for just being there. For general inspiration, I wish to thank Wamberto. The German, Italian, Austrian and Swiss national railways have carried me, the seldom-flying Dutchman, across Europe on so many occasions that they also deserve my gratitude. They gave me breathtaking views of the Alps and ample time to think, read and listen to music, while feeling weirdly happy. I sent ju för träweling.

Lastly, I want to thank my parents, Jette and Robert, for everything that I have done in life. And I thank my brother Bram and his family, Anne-Rose and Jonas, for being such great people. And finally, of course, my love Julia, with whom I share my life and who has given me our children Simon and Elsa. This book is dedicated to them.

Daniel Knegt
Amsterdam, 18 February 2017