

A NEW GEOGRAPHY IN A NEW AGE: THE CONSTRUCTION OF LOCAL AND GLOBAL IDENTITY IN THE DISCOURSE OF AN ITALIAN RIGHT-WING PARTY

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Abstract: *The study analyzes the discourse of the Italian right-wing party Lega Nord ('Northern League'), focusing on a corpus of 12 texts issued between 2007 and 2014. The methodology applied is van Leeuwen's (2008) approach to discourse as social practice, within the larger framework of critical discourse analysis. The analysis of the corpus focuses on the construction of legitimation strategies in the party discourse and on the representation of local, national and European identity. Results show that the identity of the party as a social actor remains constant, while the definition of the represented collectivity changes. The party sometimes claims to represent the Italian people confronting the danger of immigration, while at other times it defends the inhabitants of Northern Italy in front of the danger represented by the South. Traits which are characteristic for right-wing political discourse, such as populism and xenophobia (e.g. Caiani, della Porta 2011) are constantly represented, in the Lega Nord texts, by a contestation of current geographical and statal boundaries, and an attempt to impose a new geography, based on a marked delimitation of the North from the South and of Italy from other states.*

Keywords: *identity, otherness, radical right, immigration, discourse analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

During the last decades, the enlargement of the European Union has led to similar rights and obligations for more member-states. Besides the socio-political dimension, the EU integration encompasses a cultural dimension as well, based on the enforcement of a specific set of values considered as 'European', for example equality, cooperation and protection of human rights. Based on such considerations, it is argued that a new form of supranational identity, the European one, emerges. Still, the process of European integration appears to be never completed or fully accepted by all member states. Instead, it seems to be challenged by dissonant voices, such as nationalist parties or extremist organizations in diverse European countries. This study focuses on a specific case, namely the discourse of an Italian political party, the Northern League (*Lega Nord*-LN). LN claims to be a right-wing party and explicitly rejects criticism which defines it as anti-European; however, there are instances when the statements made by LN politicians seem to contradict this stance. The present research focuses on different texts issued by the party's office or delivered by prominent members in the last years,

aiming to assess (1) how the European identity is constructed in regard to the national identity in this party's discourse and (2) whether its current discourse reveals any traits which indicate a radical right orientation in the party's ideology.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

The history of the party begins in the 1980s, with the formation of the Lega Autonomia Lombarda. After having gained first a seat in the provincial assembly, the political organization expanded considerably, merging with other regionalist groups, so that in a decade it became the largest political party in the North of Italy (Cento Bull, Gilbert, 2001:8-9). The alliance became a political party and changed its name to Lega Nord in the early 1990s. At present, LN has representatives in the Italian Parliament. Its electoral success and the constant presence on the Italian political stage in the last decades indicate that the party has a considerable group of supporters and electors. Cento Bull and Gilbert (2001:11) point out the important role played by the founder, Umberto Bossi, for the success of the party. However, there are also other elements which influenced the LN success, as the socio-

economic situation of Italy and the problem of corruption among public representatives (Cento Bull, Gilbert, 2001:13-15).

Obviously, the role played by LN in Italian politics needs to be linked to the larger social and political background and to the characteristics of the voters themselves. Italy is one of the states which contributed to the foundation of the European Community and the time and the extent of the EU membership appear to be important factors influencing the citizen's attitudes in regard to the EU (Bruter, 2005). Still, the current conception of the EU among the Italians is not a very unitary one, as Pitasi *et al.* (2005) acknowledge 'a sort of suspicion and distrust towards the European Community among Italians' in the 1980s, which is attributed to the partial rejection of the manifest ideated by Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi. Such distrust has been more recently followed by a more positive view of the EU, as an economic benefactor for Italy (Pitasi *et al.*, 2005: 144). In their study, Pitasi *et al.* identify a 'nationalist' attitude as one of the four major types of attitudes manifested by the Italian people in regard to the European identity. The persons sustaining this view displayed a marked loyalty towards their nation-state and, simultaneously, aversion towards the EU; without completely rejecting the idea of Europe, the 'predominance is given to Italian belonging' (Pitasi *et al.*, 2005:148-149). The study indicates the existence of a segment of the Italian voters with nationalist orientation, and thus more inclined to vote for right-wing or radical right party.

It is debatable whether LN can be simply labelled as a 'nationalist' party. Because of its claims to regional autonomy for the Northern Italian region, LN programme has been viewed as 'regionalist populism' (Ennsner, 2010:159). According to other researchers, LN discourse presents consistent traits which indicate its positioning as a radical right party (Mudde, 2007) or as a 'nationalist, populist right party' (Jaschke, 2001:10). It is precisely this 'borderline' character of the party what makes it worthy of more detailed examination (Ennsner, 2010).

3. CORPUS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The corpus examined is formed of 12 texts which have been issued during the last seven years. The majority of them are parliamentary speeches delivered in the Italian Parliament by MPs from the

LN group. Two texts represent statements authored by Roberto Marraccini, which present LN's point of view in regard to the European integration of Italy and the role which Italy should play at the European level. Finally, two other texts are brief newsbulletins (*Lega Nord Flash*) addressing the larger public and explaining the party's position regarding Italy's situation in the international context. Free Internet access to all texts was available at the time when the corpus was gathered.

The framework used relies on the critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach, especially because of its concern for its focus on 'social problems and political issues' (e.g. Van Dijk 2001:353). The analysis of discourse is constantly correlated to various social parameters, in order to better understand the relations of power, dominance or status between the participants or in the larger social setting (e.g. Van Dijk, 1985:5). CDA takes on a constructivist perspective, assuming that 'power relationships are not natural and objective; they are artificial, socially constructed intersubjective realities' (Fowler 1985:61). CDA includes several distinct frameworks for the study of discourse, of which van Leeuwen's social action approach will be applied for the purpose of the present analysis. According to this perspective, social practices are 'socially regulated ways of doing things' (van Leeuwen 2008:6) which are represented in the texts produced in a specific society or context. Starting from the investigation of texts, it is possible to reconstruct the discourses on social practices, which encompass 'contextually specific legitimations of these social practices' (van Leeuwen, 2008:105). Van Leeuwen identifies four main types of legitimating strategies: authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoesis. The analysis of the corpus will focus mainly on the strategies of authorization and moral evaluation, showing how these strategies are used in the LN discourse in order to legitimate its position as a significant social and political actor and to construct various categories of in- and out-groups.

4. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The main traits currently associated with the radical right are: populism, xenophobia, nationalism and socio-cultural authoritarianism (Mudde, 2007; Caiani and della Porta, 2011:182). As a consequence, the current analysis searched for discursive manifestations of nationalism and xenophobia in the corpus.

Although the texts examined cover a span of seven years time, a general feature of the texts is their coherence. An illustrative example, in this sense, is represented by two manifests signed by the LN secretary, Roberto Marraccini, in the spring of 2007 and in the spring of 2014. The main topics brought up in the latter bulletin are very similar to those of the former, although political, economical and social realities have changed, both in Italy and on the international scene. Furthermore, these topics are also similar with those identified by Cento Bull and Gilbert (2001) in their study. Such coherence of content can be interpreted as constancy, but also as an indicator of a particular conservatism and rigidity of LN political programme. Moreover, the repetition of the LN claims is an indicator of the fact that the political goals set by the party have not been achieved yet.

2.1 The construction of local identity through intra-national hierarchization. The discourse of LN presents variations in regard to the construction of the in-group it claims to represent. As the name *Lega Nord* shows, the party has been created in order to represent the interests of a specific group of Italians, distinguished from the other Italian citizens because of the geographical area inhabited: the Padania or the region around the river Po, in the Northern Italy. This delimitation is clearly expressed in the texts issued by the party as an organization: for example, the journal *La Padania*, with the logo ‘The voice of the North’ (*La voce del Nord*) or, the logo ‘for the independence of Padania’ (*per l’indipendenza della Padania*) following the party’s name, as it appears on the manifest dated May 2014. The political programme of the party has at its core a geographical hierarchization of the national territory: the northern regions of the country are considered to have a stronger economy than the southern ones and, consequently, to contribute more to the state budget.

The positive valorization of the North in comparison to the South forms therefore a strong topos in the LN discourse and the legitimation of this argument is realized in various modes. A legitimating strategy by means of authorization is implied, when the speakers appeal to ‘the authority of tradition’ (van Leeuwen 2008: 108). Tradition is frequently mentioned in the texts issued by LN or in the speeches delivered by party members, forming an argument which is difficult to challenge. In the following example, tradition is invoked linguistically through the use of the syntagma *da sempre* (‘for always’), positioning the

facts on an ambiguous temporal segment. Here, the legitimation through tradition is associated to another cultural form of legitimation, which appeals at the national pride, creating the imaginary context of a competition between Italians and foreigners:

Ex. (1): “And it should be noted that, within the unique European market of the euro, the only reality which meant competition for the German manufacturer – and it still means, I dare say – is the Italian manufacturer and, especially, the Padanian one, who, since always, has maintained the value of our exports high.” (LN_Parlam_9)

In other cases, as the newsbulletins issued by the party show, the discourse valorizing the North and incriminating the South becomes more violent.

Ex. (2): “The healthy economy under attack. THEY MASSACRE ONLY THE NORTH. Taxes in order to give money to the South.

The new taxes for the first house, envisaged by Mario Monti’s maneuver, will bring to Rome various billions. More than two thirds of the taxes on the houses will have to be paid by the regions of Padania. And they are deemed to grow exponentially with the revision of the cadastral surveys, in comparison to a South where it is talked about 2 millions of buildings which are *inexistent* for the IRS.

Then, there is the IVA – which will increase by 2 points – of which 75% will be paid by the Padania, because of the degree of tax evasion, which it is known to grow as the latitude decreases. Finally, in the North there are three quarters of the pensions (often earned very hard, with 40 years of work).

In brief, the Government, instead of accelerating – having majority – the federalist reform, in order to fight the historical wastes of the South, pounces on the most productive part: the workers, small and medium-sized companies and the craftspeople of the North.” (*Lega Nord Flash*, no.77, January 2012; italics in original)

This fragment synthesizes the LN rhetoric of intra-national differentiation, by presenting the perspective of economic justice in opposition to the one of fraud. The differentiation of the Italian North from the South, although it is sustained by LN through the use of economic arguments, never remains a merely financial problem. Instead of appealing to the strategy of rationalization, according to van Leeuwen’s framework, the party brings into discussion a moral evaluation, by attributing to the geographical area in the north positive values as ‘honesty’ and ‘hard work’, while the values attributed to the south are ‘deceit’,

‘corruption’, ‘evasion’. The northern region is described symmetrically at the beginning and at the end of this text by appealing to terms which contain a favourable evaluation ‘healthy economy’ (*l’economia sana*) or a comparison: ‘the most productive part’ (*sulla parte più produttiva*). Having this positive construction of the Northern area as a starting point, two types of oppositions are formed in this text.

First, a contrast is formed between the image of Northern Italy and that of the South. The latter one is constructed by repeated references to economic fraud. This is first realized by an allusion ‘a South where it is talked about 2 millions of buildings which are *inexistent* for the IRS’ (*un Meridione dove si parla di 2 milioni di immobili inesistenti per il fisco*). Then, the comparison is enhanced through an irony (*del tasso di infedeltà fiscale che notoriamente sale vertiginosamente mano a mano che scende la latitudine*). In both cases, the negative presentation of the South is made by the use of the authority of tradition or an impersonal authority: the verb *si parla* (‘it is talked about’) or the adverb *notoriamente* (‘notoriously’). In the final paragraph, the conclusion of the negative construction of the South is realized through an adjective with superlative value: ‘the historical wastes of the South’ (*gli sprechi storici del Sud*).

A second script opposes the North of Italy to the Italian government, which is often presented in LN texts through the reference to *Roma* (Rome). In the general frame of the LN rhetoric, the isolation of the capital appears to be one more form of delineating symbolic geographic boundaries within the same nation. The text above leaves place for another interpretation: according to the LN viewpoint, wastes and fraud increase proportionally towards the South of the country and, hence, Rome appears also to be more corrupt than the Northern Italy. The opposition between the northern citizens and the government is clearly expressed throughout the text by the selection of terms which are value-laden, some of them coming from the register of war or fight (‘economy under attack’ /*colpita l’economia*; ‘they massacre only the north’ /*massacrano solo il nord*) or the final verb ‘pounces’ (*si avventa*), alluding to the action of a predator. According to this logic, the northern region is presented as an innocent victim, whose misery is an act of injustice. The party assumes the role of the defender of the people’s interests, organizing its rhetoric according to a ‘local populism’.

4.2. The de-construction of the global European identity. A particularity of LN discourse is that the local identity which characterizes the in-group is sometimes glossed over and a different mode of identification is forwarded. The shift from one definition of the in-group to another is linked to the topic of discussion. When issues of foreign affairs are under debate, LN politicians construct through their discourse a coherent and homogeneous in-group based on ethnicity. The differences between the North and the South of Italy lose their importance and the Italian identity is sustained and opposed to other national or supranational identities.

Throughout the last two decades, research in political science has indicated the possibility for the emergence of a ‘European’ identity, based on the expansion of the EU and its growing importance as an actor on the international scene (e.g. Robyn, 2005; Bruter, 2005). European identity seems to be generally understood as commitment to a particular set of values, such as freedom, democracy, tolerance, cooperation, as the expression of a new ‘age’ in international politics, opposed to the period of the Second World War. These general values are reiterated, in varied forms, in the discourse of the political parties in the EU member states, no matter their ideology; it can be observed that the affirmation of commitment to the ‘European values’ has become a topos of contemporary political discourse.

The position of the LN politicians in regard to the existence of a global European identity appears to be circumspect. In this regard, LN discourse faces a challenge, because an explicit denial of the EU values would mean a negative singularization of the party, while at the same time, the EU policies collide with the party programme. The party states its position by means of a corrective strategy, which is linked to the strategy of self-legitimation, presenting the party in a positive light. The definition of ‘Europe’ represents almost a topos in LN discourse, which is based on a linguistic as well as a conceptual correction, trying to neutralize the criticisms brought against LN by its opponents:

Ex. (3) “... to reject the prejudice about the anti-Europeanism of Lega Nord. Because Lega Nord is not – let’s say it clearly – against Europe. But against Europe as it has been construed until now.” (LN_Marraccini_1)

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The positive presentation of the LN, as the only political formation which is truly visionary and concerned for the interest of the people, is more extensively realized in the following example.

Ex. (4) “When the League was trying, on that occasion, to show the problems which would have been created in the real society, everybody called us insurgents, everybody called us persons who did not understand, did not understand what great opportunities Europe offered. On the contrary, we saw far. We saw far and today everybody can see the present: if anybody had listened to us, we would have seen, probably, a bit of the future as well.” (LN_Parlam_10)

This strategy contributes to the creation of a particular type of authority, distinct from the personal or the expert authority originally advanced by van Leeuwen. What is introduced here is a group source, which can be termed as ‘party authority’. Its expertise consists in the political programme proposed, which is here presented as better than all the rest, and in the wisdom of the party leaders, presented here as more prudent than all other politicians. A further trait emerging from these examples is the awareness of the speaker or author about the necessity of constructing and legitimating his party, the necessity to respond to criticisms in regard to the anti-European stance sustained by LN. In these texts, be it manifestoes or parliamentary speeches, the speaker explicitly tackles and rejects the accusations brought to LN by other political actors.

According to Pentland (1973), two major positions regarding the European integration can be distinguished: the functionalist and the pluralist view. The former sustains the importance of international cooperation and policies, while the latter emphasizes the importance of national sovereignty, which needs to be preserved by the states, even in the context of their membership to international organizations. To this taxonomy, Robyn (2005: 10-18) adds a third position, the nationalist one. These categories are useful for the understanding of LN position on European integration and cooperation: the party shows a dominant nationalist position, which it attempts to present as a ‘pluralist’ one. The main critic which LN brings against ‘Europe’ is the presumed attempt to destroy the sovereignty of the member states. According to this logic, the threats posed by EU policies are multiple: political, economic, but

also cultural. This idea has been emphasized in the speech delivered by Luciano Dussin in the Italian Parliament, regarding the ratification of the Lisbon treaty:

Ex. (5) “Thus, it will be the task of the Government majority [...] to act in such a way, that our state will have the power – I wouldn’t say to impose – but to signal its demands. Since the demands of other states have been accepted – because what I’m saying is written in the Lisbon Treaty, black on white – it is desirable that the other member states accept an Italy which enters, but maintaining her dignity (Applause from the deputies of the group Lega Nord Padania). Such dignity is useful to us, in order to be able to have access to the ‘control panels’, or better said, the panels of Government, not as humble servants, but as leading people. Because our history has nothing less than the histories of other member states – we can even say, with a touch of pride, that we could be a guideline for others, in the construction of common life – we can go on with our values and our wealth.” (LN_Parlam_7)

The contestation of the EU integration is made through a shift of topic. The speaker equates the ratifying of the treaty of Lisbon with a possible cancellation of symbolic, cultural features. As a consequence, he highlights the importance of the cultural dimension of the national identity and asserts the Italian identity as a source of common pride. The appeal is made to the past, to history as a source of legitimation. In this case, history is compared to the history of other European states; the speaker manages to create a hierarchization of the past, implying that some states are historically inferior to others. The emphasis on the image of the country, which shifts to an ambiguous ‘we’ pronoun, is part of the populist rhetoric, aiming to create a connection with the mass of electors, by proposing an image with which they can only identify. The texts above show how LN rejects the existence of a common supranational or global identity at the European level. In their political programme, LN representatives present their stance as support for a federalist Europe, while depicting the EU structures as a menace for the Italian state. The affiliation to such structures and the activity taken by the Italian government leads to strong criticisms from LN, because the relationship between the EU and their state is viewed as hierarchical, with the Italian officials ‘taking orders’ from the European institutions.

Foreign authorities do not represent the only type of out-group which LN presents negatively. As their view of the nation is based on ethnic

homogeneity (Jaschke, 2001: 16), the out-group is constituted by foreigners or by those who do not share the Italian nationality. LN constructs the image of Italy as a victim, a country which is exposed to the danger of being invaded by foreign immigrants. Its xenophobic rhetoric is manifest in various texts and it has been considered the key trait of the party discourse (Harrison, Bruter, 2011).

The rejection of immigration is not a particularity of LN; the negative attitude towards foreigners remains a constant dimension in the programmes and discourses of European right-wing parties, while the other characteristic traits (populism or authoritarianism) may vary. As Ivarsflaten (2008) found out, studying the grievances used by populist right parties in seven countries of Western Europe, the grievance over immigration is the only one which has been used constantly by all successful right-wing parties. This finding is in line with other research which points out that, in the last decades, constant immigration to Europe has led to a change of the political agenda in many states (Jaschke, 2001: 11) and also contributed to an increase in the citizen's level of dissatisfaction with the policies of the state authorities.

The example chosen to illustrate the xenophobic dimension of LN discourse is represented by a short speech delivered by the deputy Marco Rondini, in the Italian Parliament in February 2014. The matter discussed was an interpellation made by a group of members of parliament and addressed to Cécile Kyenge, the Minister for Integration. The interpellation asked her to explain the reason why she decided not to attend a public event organized in Brescia, in September 2013. According to the procedure, after the minister presented an explanatory speech, one of the MPs who made the interpellation, Marco Rondini, was invited to state whether he considered the explanation satisfying or not.

His evaluation of Kyenge's answer was in general a negative one, as Rondini criticized the explanation for being insufficient and ambiguous. What is interesting about Rondini's brief speech is the manner in which he takes advantage of the opportunity to address the minister and introduces more topics of discussion. One of the topics concerns Kyenge's statement, while the others regard her entire activity as a minister, the activity of the government and the policies of the international organizations, especially the EU. A further and more general topic tackled by Rondini regards the immigration policies sustained by the

government and the foreign immigrants themselves. His entire statement consists of a strong criticism, directed against two targets: a wide and vaguely defined target (which encompasses the 'enemies of the nation'), and an individualized target, in this case Cécile Kyenge.

Ex. (6a) "... you are the minister of an Italian government and you should represent the hopes and instances of the communities which have made, one generation after another, the history of the peninsula. And, still, it is not so. You perform wonderfully the role of the one aiming to guarantee the «right to invasion». You are one of the material executors of that kind of happily assisted suicide of our identity, which is planned by those who consider we are all citizens of the world and who tenaciously pursue the annihilation of diverse cultures, which they would like to see reduced to [the status of] historical exhibits in a museum." (LN_Parlam_5)

Rondini's criticism follows two dimensions: at the beginning of the speech, he indicates the 'correct' or desirable manner of behaviour for the minister, then the minister's actual actions, emphasizing the contrast between the 'right' path to follow and the 'wrong' things that have been done. He accuses Kyenge of being more concerned about the immigrants coming to Italy than about the ethnic minorities which have been living in Italy for generations. Further, Rondini also belittles Kyenge by denying her role as a politician and a member of government: she is presented as a mere executor of a plan ideated by others. The parallelism based on the repetition of the pronoun 'you' at the beginning of successive phrases highlights Kyenge's role as a negative agent. Rondini's entire argumentation here is based on a false premise, the presupposition that a group of enemies of Italy really exists. The recourse to such premise contributes to highlight the role taken by the speaker and by his party as promoters and defenders of the national identity:

Ex. (6b) "It is significant that the Letta government, created, just as the Monti government, in order to place itself in the service of the EU, includes ministers like you, who tend to despise our identity."

Throughout his entire speech, Marco Rondini displays a position of authority in regard to the minister Kyenge. First, his discursive superiority is based on procedural elements: being a MP, he has the right to question a minister. Second, another type of superiority becomes also manifest,

especially in the last sections of the speech, and it is based merely on the speaker's ethnic identity. Using irony, Rondini gives advises the minister to buy an Italian dictionary, implying that she does not know the Italian language and neither the Italian reality:

Ex. (6c) "If the Italian state gives you the money [...] you should buy yourself a dictionary and you'll find out that *meticcio* (mestizo/ mixblood) refers to a person born of parents with different racial or ethnic backgrounds. For example, Brasil is very *meticcio*, but Italy is not."

Rondini's argumentation is based on powerful topoi like the topos of threat and that of the people as a victim (Wodak et al., 2009), which is one of the key topoi in LN discourse. The key idea sustained by the LN politician is that Italy suffers because of a foreign menace, that of the immigrants. The idea of threat is constantly indicated by the constant use of terms connected to the semantic field of 'death': 'suicide'/'*suicidio* (4 occurrences); 'annihilation' /*annullamento*; 'tragedies'/'*tragedie*'; 'holocausts'/'*olocausti*'; 'annihilation'/'*annientamento*'; 'to delete'/'*eliminare*'; 'to cancel'/'*annullare*'; 'disappeared culture'/'(*cultura*) *scomparsa*'; 'process of extinction'/'*processo di estinzione*'; 'the death (of Italy)'/'*morte (dell'Italia)*'; 'we are dying'/'*stiamo morendo*'; 'our identity is deleted'/'*cancellata la nostra identità*'. The abundance of such terms gives a sense of tragedy and urgency to the entire speech. This idea is argued through the appeal to authorization strategies: for example, Rondini quotes the work of an Italian scientist, claiming that the Western culture is likely to disappear in the future 50 years. Another argument refers to the alleged high birth-rates among Oriental populations, leading the speaker to conclude: "The death of Italy is already happening especially for this reason, because nobody fights to make her live, because nobody cries for her" (*La morte dell'Italia è già in atto soprattutto per questo, perché nessuno combatte per farla vivere, persino perché nessuno la piange.*). The conclusion of Rondini's speech appeals one more time to a false authorization based on 'common knowledge', in order to plead for the rejection of immigrants:

Ex. (6d): "Popular wisdom used to say: [take] a wife and oxen from your own region. And this is a message, the future which we would like to deliver to the future generations, not a reality where there is no more the feeling of belonging to a community, where our identity has been deleted because of the

migratory waves which bring nothing good to our society."

The excerpts above illustrate how the speaker combines the authorization strategy with the moral evaluation, leading to a highly emotional discourse, which is xenophobic and populist at the same time.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis shows that LN discourse has remained considerably constant during time, by maintaining a few key topics. One of them regards the autonomy of the North of Italy and the separation from the South. A more general topic is connected to the rejection of immigrants and of foreigners. It is visible that LN proposes different modes of identification through its discourse. The in-group represented oscillates from the local identity, that of the people in northern Italy, to a 'national' identity which is based on ethnic belonging. According to this logic, LN discourse advances a clear hierarchization, placing the Western civilization, but more precisely the Italian one, above other cultures and ethnicities. The representation of Italy and of the world is constantly made in terms of identity and otherness, with one opposing the other, as the party promotes a rhetoric of war and threat. The perspective of identities in conflict leads to a clear rejection of the European structures and identity as well, as LN represents the relation between national and supranational identity as a necessarily conflictual one. The party discourse therefore shows traits which are characteristic for the radical right position.

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- Ex. (6). Rondini, M. Speech delivered in the Italian Parliament. 13 February 2014. Available <http://www.camera.it/leg17/410?idSeduta=0173&tipo=stenografico#sed0173.stenografico.tit00020.sub00010.int00040>