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Newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group  
on Extremism & Democracy

# Newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism and Democracy

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# STANDING GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

## REMINDER: REGISTER AS AN E&D MEMBER

As we informed you in our previous newsletters, the ECPR now holds all membership lists for its Standing Groups in its central database. In order to join our Standing Group or to continue your membership you can join a Group at the click of a button, [via the ECPR website](#). If you haven't already done so, please register as a member so that our list is up to date and complete. In order to join you will need a MyECPR account, which we assume many of you will already have. If you do not have one, you can [create an account](#) in only a few minutes (and you need not be from an ECPR member institution to do so). If you are from a non-member institution we will need to accept your application to join, so your membership status (which you can see via your MyECPR account, and on the Standing Group pages when you are logged in to MyECPR) will be 'pending' until we accept you.

Should you have any queries at all about this please do not hesitate to contact us.

## ECPR GENERAL CONFERENCE, PRAGUE

The ECPR General Conference will this year be held in Prague from 7-10 September.

The Standing Group on Extremism and Democracy endorsed the section 'Populism and Political Extremism: Between Change and Persistence' (S52), chaired by Steven van Hauwaert and Caterina Froio. Below you can find more information about this section and the various panels.

For several decades now, populism and political extremism have been prominent political phenomena and have attracted wide scholarly attention. Initially, political research was mainly concerned with understanding the emergence and the potential challenges of populism and political extremism in contemporary democracies. Now, after an intensive research tradition of more than thirty years, scholars are investigating persistence, resilience and consolidation of these initially marginal phenomena. Populism and political extremism are often interpreted as a result of the shortcomings of the current political system(s), as they provide a continuous and inherent set of challenges

to the functioning of contemporary European democracies. Numerous parties that represent such positions have both consolidated on an organisational (internal) and representational (external) level. The prominence and spread of such ideas throughout the vast majority of European electorates and democracies has been unmistakable.

While most research has been oriented around the challenges, far right parties (and movements) provide to traditional (established) politics, recent scholarship seems to have taken a particular interest in populism, both as a phenomenon and as a challenge to traditional politics.

Despite this, large-scale consensus remains generally absent, and this both on a conceptual and an empirical level. First, most divergent opinions still exist when scholarship addresses who the contemporary voices of populism and political extremism are and what exactly their messages are. Second, different views emerge when research touches upon the notion of 'impact' or 'influence', and particularly the extent or degree thereof. Third, even though scholars agree on the challenging nature of these phenomena as such, little convergence exists around how challenges are defined and to what extent (if at all) they change today's politics. Populism and political extremism affect politics through different channels, either adopting 'mainstream' features or promoting change in traditional political agents/processes. This invites further research, nourished by distinct paths and approaches, to broaden the overall understanding of these dynamics of change and persistence.

This Section combines different conceptual, theoretical, methodological and empirical approaches in order to examine the multifaceted and persistent impact populism and political extremism have on the different layers of European democracies. This includes – but is not restricted to – research on (i) conceptual/methodological debates surrounding populism and political extremism, (ii) the internal and external (supply-side) components of parties and partisan actors, (iii) individual and contextual determinants of support for populism and political extremism, (iv) on- and off-line discourses by populist and politically extremist actors, (v) direct or indirect paths towards political (policy) influence, and (vi) old and new patterns of mobilisation.

This Section will bring together several substantive and methodological research traditions from various disciplines, with a particular interest in those who seek to bridge some of these thematic areas. At the same time, this section seeks to harmonise and unify different analytical focuses. More specifically, we provide a comprehensive analysis by including (i) comparative contributions including – but limited to – CEE and West European countries, (ii) supply- and demand-side dynamics, (iii) national and supranational levels of analysis, and (iv) dynamics within and beyond the electoral arenas. We do not favour any

specific methodological approach over any other, but this Section particularly promotes mixed-method, comparative and innovative approaches.

The Section consists of the following panels:

P026 Broadening the Scope of Political Extremism: Gender, Religion and Media

P062 Conceptual and Theoretical Insights into Populism and Political Extremism

P142 Extremism, Populism and the Far-Right in Context

P182 Individual Determinants of Support for Populism and Political Extremism

P226 Left-Wing Populism in (Southern) Europe: Historical Anomaly or Paradigm Shift?

P329 Populist (radical right) parties in present times: Revisiting support base and policy impact

P331 Populist Parties & Mainstream Party Competition: Issues & Frames, Strategies & Reactions

P393 Tamed, Radical or Professionalised? Populists and Power in the 21st Century

P407 The Far Right as Social Movement: Theory, Practice and Empirical Evidence

P426 The Populist Politics of Euroscepticism amidst Critical Junctures

## **BLOG SERIES: TROUBLE ON THE FAR-RIGHT - EUROPEAN CHALLENGE, NATIONAL ACTORS, LOCAL PRACTICES**

In Europe, the far right is gaining momentum on the streets and in parliaments. By taking a close look at contemporary practices and strategies of far right actors, the blog series explores this right-ward shift of European publics and politics. It assembles analyses of changing mobilization patterns on the local, national and transnational level and their effects. International experts scrutinise new forms of coalition building, mainstreaming and transnationalisation tendencies as aspects of a diversified far right politics in Europe.

Link to the series: <http://www.sicherheitspolitik-blog.de/fokus/trouble-on-the%2AD-far-right-european-challenge-national-actors-local-practices/>. The contributions will be published later this year in an edited volume (Transcript, Edition Politik series).

## TEAM POPULISM

Under the directorship of Dr. Kirk A. Hawkins (Brigham Young University, Provo, USA) Team Populism brings together a pool of renowned American and European scholars to study the causes of populism. The project group seeks to answer why some populist parties, leaders or movements are more successful than others. Its general argument is that populism is best understood as a unique dimension of ideas among voters that is activated by context and the framing of politicians. The Team expands on this broad framework by studying multiple levels of analysis, and draws on different methodological tools, including experiments, surveys, and comparative analysis. To facilitate this work, individual teams are organized around functional tasks.

The website of Team Populism, which includes further information about its activities, events and publications, is <https://populism.byu.edu>.

## KEEP US INFORMED

Please keep us informed of any upcoming conferences or workshops you are organizing, and of any publication or funding opportunities that would be of interest to Standing Group members. We will post all details on our website. Similarly, if you would like to write a report on a conference or workshop that you have organized and have this included in our newsletter, please do let us know.

Please also tell us of any recent publications of interest to Standing Group members so that we may include them in the 'publications alert' section of our newsletter, and please get in touch if you would like to see a particular book (including your own) reviewed in e-Extreme, or if you would like to review a specific book yourself.

Finally, if you would like to get involved in the production of the newsletter, the development of our website, or any of the other activities of the Standing Group then please do contact us. We are always very keen to involve more members in the running of the Standing Group! Email us at: [info@extremism-and-democracy.com](mailto:info@extremism-and-democracy.com).

# CONFERENCE REPORT

## SECOND INTERNATIONAL PRAGUE POPULISM CONFERENCE

Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic  
May 23<sup>rd</sup> – May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

By Martin Mejstřík  
*Charles University in Prague*

On Monday May 23 and Tuesday May 24 the second international Prague Populism Conference was held in Prague. The conference was organized by the Institute of International Studies at Charles University and the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut Prag. The venue of the conference was the Goethe-Institut. The conference was held under the auspices of the rector of Charles University, prof. Tomáš Zima, and the ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Arndt Freiherr Freytag von Loringhoven, who also opened the public part of the event.

The intention of this event in Prague was to analyze and examine the growth of contemporary European populism. This radicalization and the spread of populism represent one of the most acute challenges to European liberal democracies. To understand the dynamics of populist behaviour and strategies in European societies, it was important to analyse the (mis)use by populists of the current refugee crisis, major geopolitical events, terrorism, economic and social grievances and the lack of solidarity among the EU member states. The conference was focusing also on another important aspect, which is the penetration of the mainstream political space by populist attitudes and the resulting shift in the entire political landscape within the EU.

The conference was dedicated to a comparative analysis of individual EU member states where populism represents a significant trend in politics. To understand the nature of the success of populists, various researchers from all around Europe discussed causes of this phenomenon. Within this context, the conference encouraged papers on the topics of conceptualisation and approaches towards European populism; populist attitudes towards refugees and migrants; populism and new social movements in Europe; populist attitudes towards the EU; the impact of populism on the political culture and political mainstream; and welfare chauvinism and entrepreneurs in politics.

There were three keynote speeches delivered by major European experts in the field of populism: Prof. Paul Taggart (University of Sussex) who spoke about



*Four different forms of populism in contemporary Europe*; Prof. Reinhard Heinisch (University of Salzburg) who answered the question: *Are aspects of the mass party model alive and well in populist parties?*; and Prof. Michael Freedon (University of Oxford), who discussed the topic *Populism and ideology: A problematic pairing*. During the public part of the event, there was also a speech of Prof. Heinz Bude dedicated to *The Populist Moment: Fear, Hate, Hope*, and a subsequent evening discussion about impact of populism on political systems with distinguished speakers from Central European countries (András Bozóki, Pavel Barša, Heinz Bude and Reinhard Heinisch).

During the event there were ten panels dedicated to both theoretical and general approaches towards populism, populist attitudes and electoral behaviour, and to various case studies of countries where populism traditionally constitutes important part of political and party systems (Hungary, Poland, and Italy), or where it is becoming a new emerging power (Germany, Czech Republic). In total there were over fifty participants from over twenty countries participating in the conference.

As an output of the conference a special issue of the *Czech Journal of Political Sciences* is planned to be published in spring 2017. The programme of the conference is available here:  
<http://populism.fsv.cuni.cz/Conference%20programme.pdf>

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE EVENT OF CHARLIE HEBDO: IMAGINARIES OF FREEDOM AND CONTROL

Edited by Alessandro Zagato (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015), 124 p.  
ISBN 978-1-78533-075-9, 12.99 USD (pbk.).

Reviewed by Paul Timmermans  
*Portland State University*

Terror is taking the world stage. In 2015, the so-called Islamic State (ISIS) inspired dozens of terrorist acts, including the December 2 attack in San Bernardino and the mass-murderous attack of November 13 in Paris. Twelve persons lost their lives at the office of the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* on January 7, also in Paris. Although ISIS did not directly instigate the January 7 attack, it is believed responsible for the series of similar attacks. In *The Event of Charlie Hebdo*, Bruce Kapferer refers to this attack, including its scenes of death, as “the theater of the absurd”—because such scenes were split apart, visually, into both their most-tragic and yet also their most-fêted parts (p. 93).

Introduced by Bertelsen and Zagato, this edited volume includes an afterword by Kapferer—which has the insightful title “When is a Joke not a Joke? The Paradox of Egalitarianism.” The volume is thin, in terms of size, but the seven chapters are dense. Although these chapters were authored by distinct anthropologists, their insights can easily be shared in Political Science courses. Jacob Hjortsberg’s chapter is thoughtful and honest (Hjortsberg enjoys cartoons, by *Charlie Hebdo*, depicting “Islamic terrorists as non-believers”) and especially the seven-page chapter by Maria Dyveke Styve (“The Thought-crimes of an Eight-Year-Old”) is required reading.

A terrorist act is like a theatre act. But not all theatre is like tragedy. Still, after audiences responded, Kapferer’s analogy began gaining currency. Audiences occupied the moral high ground. They helped advertise comical cartoons, copied from the *Charlie* magazine. But the analogy to absurdity, or at least to a very strange combination of tragedy and comedy, is more fitting than the analogy to theatre. For, the mass march of January 11 throughout France, in retrospect, appears a bit less about tragedy than about “the great spirit of egalitarianism” and how it delivers comic relief, by itself, as “egalitarianism is its own joke” (p. 111, p. 106). The march appears less about mourning the victims than about defying the terror threat (certainly in comparison to a mass meeting in Dresden, hours earlier) by means of the Republic’s first concept (equality). On the eleventh of the first month, thus, millions of marchers in France form a crowd by somewhat exaggerating a security risk, and by over-stating a threat but, in that moment, are actually also busy under-stating their own

victimization. They speak as victims of terror, yet their anti-extremism signs take a jokingly defiant tone.

The event of January 11 is known as the “Je suis Charlie” event. Although the Republic of France was never under attack, audiences act as if the State’s public leadership requires their protection: their “Je suis Charlie” sign derives from the rebellious slaves who, in the film *Spartacus*, protect their leader (Spartacus) from certain death by identifying themselves as him. This means that audiences actively mimic, and self-identify as, the State and *its* moral and prosecutorial hierarchy. While the State conducts its business as usual, the crowd projects a fear of losing that hierarchy onto the State—and the crowd so ends up enforcing the existing hierarchy. By re-presenting *Charlie’s* blasphemous cartoons, the crowd not only tries to enforce the State’s moral rule of equality, however. It also ends up insulting individuals: anyone may feel offended—probably less by the fact that, than by *how* the prophet is portrayed in *Charlie*. So, any citizen or schoolchild who fails to identify as “Charlie” may suddenly be ostracized: a pro-democratic protest is placed on an “anti-democratic foundation” (p. 98).

Styve’s chapter is a report on how a young boy was suspected, by the State, of making “apologies for terrorist acts.” When prompted by an elementary schoolteacher, the boy could not identify as “Charlie” (he would not endorse the cartoons) and was therefore questioned by police. France had criminalized precisely such “apologies” in November 2014. Additionally, the National Assembly continues to permit courts to find suspects, of plotting terrorist acts, guilty by association (*association de malfaiteurs terroriste*). Formal suspicion of “non-Charlies” and vilification of suspects would be unlawful, but as the crowd somehow enters into the State and into its application of legal rules, the State still casts unwarranted suspicion on “Muslims and blacks” (p. 41). In equally applying the rule, equality is nonetheless violated.

A similar “paradox of egalitarianism” occurs in chapters by Knut Rio and Axel Rudi. In both chapters, Herbert Marcuse’s *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* illustrates why free speech is not an equal right (p. 20, p. 31). If it would be, then anyone may incite hatred or speak as a sexist and racist agitator. This would only be equal. The exception to this hypothetical rule is that not anyone may incite hatred, but the issue is that this exception must confirm the rule. Restrictions on equal speech rights must not restrict these rights in order for them to remain equally applicable. The paradox is that speech, in order to remain free, cannot be non-protected, first, and cannot be equally protected, second. From this paradox, a political issue emerges.

Marine Le Pen may compare Muslims to Nazi occupiers, says the court, but no French citizen may compare Jews to Nazi occupiers. France legally restricts speech, but she does not restrict the type of speech French Muslims may think

of as blasphemous. The issue is not government hypocrisy, however. The issue is that “isolation and loneliness” enhance the power of the paradox. Isolation plays tricks on everyone, so on pro-ISIS and anti-ISIS individuals as well. Isolation is the lens through which the legal hierarchy seems to have failed: merely immoral behavior, or disrespect, seems more like unjust and unpunished behavior. As spectators of State failure, then, both the pro-ISIS individual and the anti-ISIS crowd become more intent on strengthening hierarchy.

When the majority disrespects minorities, then its “right” to do so is as equal as any minority’s “right” to disrespect that majority, for as long as they do not harm one another—within the liberal representation model. Unfortunately, this model is non-functioning. A tremendous tension is growing, but this is no longer a tension between the formal representatives of minority and majority groups. It is one found between the desires of the individual and a desire to call forth some sort of crowd-enforced hierarchy. The ISIS sympathizer differs from the voter for a populist party such as Le Pen’s, but their difference appears to have been trumped by their similarity: both feel ostracized or disrespected. What Le Pen has in common with ISIS, however singularly, is that they attract an individual whose “desires, traumas, and idiosyncrasies” have been misrepresented and misunderstood by an existing hierarchy, and who craves nothing more than (more) respect (to re-cite Slavoj Žižek’s words, pp. 48-51).

Hjortsberg cites Žižek to demonstrate why the terrorist is so rarely a monster and why, instead, the terrorist became the symptom of an unresolved dilemma: the dilemma of how to equally represent those who feel unequally represented, or fully misrepresented. As the existing order fails to take itself seriously, the terrorist identifies with moral hierarchy—by similarly over-stating threats and by exaggerating for comic effect. But unlike members of the crowd, the terrorist remains individualistic in over-identifying with hierarchy. Then, a private desire becomes a command: “respect equally!”

Hjortsberg could be suggesting that whereas the crowd fails to issue “any commands that we can take seriously”, it is the lone terrorist who cannot accept the crowd’s failure “to live up to serious moral commands” (p. 77). This is how the terrorist’s over-identification with hierarchy turns into both a rejection of the crowd as well as its imitation, and yet remains symptomatic of an overwhelming loss of formally-liberal representational institutions. In conclusion, the brutality of ISIS-inspired attacks is a form of mimicry. Even when it is poor imitation or bad hyperbole, it somehow mimics the aerial bombardments and bloodshed perpetrated by military and government leaders. The fact that such mimicry amounts to absurdity does not make it less tragic.

## TOLERATING INTOLERANCE: THE PRICE OF PROTECTING EXTREMISM

Amos N. Guiora (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 224 pp., ISBN: 9780199331826, £59.00 (hardback).

Reviewed by Natalie Alkiviadou  
*Vrije University Amsterdam*

Amos N. Guiora's book *'Tolerating Intolerance: The Price of Protecting Extremism'* sets out to look at religious and secular extremism and the extent to which the State can interfere with rights such as that of religion and expression, for purposes of combatting extremism. It does so against the backdrop of six countries, namely Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States and Israel. It uses examples from these case studies to define and conceptualise the line that lies between legitimately regulating the aforementioned freedoms and effectively tackling the phenomenon of extremism all within the realm of comparative study.

A particularly interesting aspect of the book is its methodology. More specifically, the author sent a questionnaire to experts from a wide range of fields in the countries under consideration and incorporated their responses in his analysis. Questions raised therein were related, *inter alia*, to the definition of extremism, the dangers extremism poses to society and the power of the Internet in the facilitation of extremist movements. This method allowed for a broad spectrum of views to be presented since the respondents came from different countries and professional backgrounds such as academia, religious institutions and policy making. It is this melange of backgrounds which renders this book applicable and relevant for readers from many disciplines. Furthermore, the richness of the book emanates from the large number of examples used for purposes of illustration and discussion such as the civil rights movement, Breivik's mass murder and the reactions which resulted from Charlie Hebdo caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed and the Innocence of Muslims.

The book commences with a definitional framework of extremism that is established through a balancing of competing rights and interests. Extremism is not automatically granted a negative status, with the author differentiating between positive and negative extremism. In this realm, he puts forth the civil rights movements to illustrate the distinction between the two types of extremism and meticulously argues that perspectives and interests are the driving forces behind one's understanding of extremism. He concludes with a narrow definition of extremism. As the author notes, this is a necessity given that 'the essence of democracy is a mosaic of voices, opinions and beliefs.' (pg.167). In the second chapter, the book explores the dangers which extremism poses to society, reiterating again the importance of narrowly comprehending

danger and its meaning so as to avoid illegitimate silencing of legitimate activities. Using Rousseau's social contract as a theoretical basis for his analysis, this chapter emanates from the premise that extremists do, in fact, pose a danger to society and that the State has a duty to protect individuals from such dangers. In this ambit and through several examples, he considers the issues and consequences of a State's failure to act, its toleration of intolerance and its treatment of extremist speech and expression of faith. Chapter three is dedicated to the issue of multiculturalism, demonstrating the relevance which the author perceives this to have in the sphere of extremism. The analysis of this chapter is based on the position that the State over-protects the rights of minority groups and ignores the dangers attached to multiculturalism. The result of this is that the State unintentionally violates the rights of two groups, namely the rights of members of the majority group and the rights of vulnerable members of the minority groups, such as those deemed by the group to have violated group morals. Both these groups are at risk of the effects of multiculturalism, such as the creation of extremist groups within minority communities. The next chapter considers the harm which results from religious extremism, using the practices of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as the core examples for purposes of analysis. Following that, there is a discussion on the role of the Internet and Social Media in facilitating the development of extremist movements. An appraisal of contemporary social tensions resulting from phenomena such as economic crises and immigration is then given with the author seeking to demonstrate the interrelation between such phenomena and extremism. He moves on with a chapter on free speech and hate speech, assessing classical scholars such as Mill, Voltaire and Hobbes and presents examples such as Rushdie's 'The Satanic Verses.' The book is concluded with recommendations on how to tackle extremism.

Perhaps one of the most intricately complex domains which this book tackles is that of multiculturalism. Placing this issue within any discussion of extremism is inherently tricky given the messages or underlying overtones that may result from the mere choice of taking such a path. The author notes that in order to discuss the issue of multiculturalism and place it within the sphere of extremism, it is firstly important to discuss the nature of the relationship between the immigrant community and the host country. His overall position is that some immigrants reject western values despite the host country's 'largess and embrace.' Several issues arise from his stance on immigration and multiculturalism. Firstly, the author habitually uses the term "host country" without making any distinction between newly arrived immigrants and those who have lived there for several generations or between those who inhabit such countries temporarily or permanently. Secondly, the author argues that there exists 'disturbing evidence' (pg.38) that some immigrants reject values such as tolerance and inclusiveness, relying on findings by other authors and statistics from sources such as the Sunday Telegraph to support his position. Although he

says that this is only applicable for *some* immigrants, it is apparent from his writings and lack of reference to positive aspects of multiculturalism and the presence of immigrants that he holds the reality to include more than just some immigrants. Furthermore, in the chapter on contemporary social tensions, the author argues that there exists a perceived and real interrelation between economic crises and immigration. To reinforce this position, the author uses statistics on the employment rates of immigrants and non-immigrants in France, Germany and the United Kingdom and refers to news articles from sources such as the BBC News but also the Right Side News which is a portal of conservative news and opinions. Three issues arise from this approach. Firstly, arguing that there exists a link between immigration and economic crises is (as with introducing the issue of multiculturalism into a discussion on extremism) inherently problematic as it subsequently becomes hard to steer away from dangerous generalisation. Secondly, using sources such as the Right Side News dilutes the neutrality of the research. Thirdly, putting forth figures of the employment rates of immigrants and non-immigrants in three countries (only one of which is examined in depth in this book) does not demonstrate, in a well-rounded manner, the serious argument made by the author, namely that there exists a link between a dwindling economy and immigration. However, when discussing contemporary social tensions, the author comes into conflict with his own previous arguments. More particularly, when discussing multiculturalism, he speaks of the hosting society's 'largess and embrace' and, when discussing immigration, he quotes Tillie and Slooman who, amongst others argue that Dutch society has rejected immigrants with examples such as that 'young men are turned away at clubs and cafes, and young women with covered heads are insulted.' (pg.91). He subsequently uses such findings to argue that 'marginalisation from mainstream society often leads to radicalization among young immigrants and natives alike.' (pg.98) Thus, on the one hand, it could be argued that the author's outlook on immigration and multiculturalism embraces the divide that exists between ethnic and immigrant communities apparent in several Western countries. For purposes of the book, this subsequently prevented a neutral discussion on societal relationships from taking place. However, on the other hand, he incorporates extracts in relation to the harms done by ethnic populations to those who are perceived as outsiders.

In addition to the above, restricted objectivity can also be discerned in relation to his stance against what he describes as Islamic extremism. Although this book purports to discuss both secular and religious extremism, the examples from the latter seem to supersede even in cases where other secular examples could be utilised for purposes of illustration, particularly those from the far-right movement. When discussing the Internet, the author refers to Islamic extremist websites and separatist websites but makes no reference to far-right white supremacist websites such as Stormfront or Blood and Honour's website. Further, when making reference to the differentiation between lone wolves,

such as Breivik, and terrorist organisations he refers to Al-Qaeda, Hamas, IRA and the Tamil Tigers to illustrate the latter. No reference is made to groups such as Golden Dawn who have committed crimes (even murder) due to an extremist ideology. It is these subtle paradigms which appear in the book which demonstrate that, although it seeks to consider both religious and secular extremism, and, although examples are put forth in relation to both, and taking into account that reference is made to extremist acts and rhetoric of Orthodox Jews and Fundamentalist Christians, the fact undoubtedly remains that the focus is on Islamic extremism.

Moreover, it is without doubt that choosing certain case studies for this book and having experts from each country respond to the same questionnaire has resulted in rich and useful information for readers. However, there is no justification for choice of case studies and how an in-depth study of these countries facilitates a better understanding of extremism. Furthermore, there are two countries which one would have expected to have been (at least partially) incorporated into the book, namely Greece and Hungary. These two countries have been considered by a variety of agencies, such as the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency, as hotbeds for violent right-wing extremism. As such, in a contemporary discussion on extremism (including secular extremism), a reader could have anticipated an assessment of *inter alia*, the trial of Golden Dawn in Greece and the activities of Jobbik in Hungary.

Notwithstanding certain debatable approaches adopted and possible generalisations, this book is relevant for scholars from a wide range of fields, who want to learn more about extremism or who already study the subject and wish to broaden their knowledge on it. Due to the variety of responses to the questionnaires and the abundant amount of examples of practices, rhetoric and cases that exist throughout this book, the reader is kept interested throughout.

## **THE POLISH QUARTERLY OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: SPECIAL ISSUE ON EUROSCEPTICISM (VOLUME 24, NO. 2, 2015)**

Reviewed by Dragomir Stoyanov  
*Sofia University/VUZF University*

Euroscepticism research already has an established tradition, but academic interest in this topic increased significantly after the unfolding of the economic crisis of 2008. The articles in this issue of Polish Quarterly of International Affairs suggest that Euroscepticism is a truly European phenomenon that can be observed both in Western and Eastern Europe. In this sense it is neither a regional phenomenon nor it is dependent on how well established a particular



democracy is. Euroscepticism easily travels across the political and social borders and all societies of the European Union are affected. This volume pays specific attention to the performance of different Eurosceptic parties in a variety of European countries in the European Parliament (EP) Elections 2014. The composition of this journal is as follows: an introductory chapter by Natalie Brack, followed by eight case studies, dedicated to Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and Party of Free Citizens (SSO) (Ladislav Cabada), Alternative for Germany (AfD) (Ryszarda Formuszewicz), Sweden Democrats (SD) (Niklas Bolin), Fidesz and Jobbik (Jeffrey Stevenson Murer), Front National (FN) (Renaud Thillaye and Claudia Chwalisz), Congress of the New Right (KNP) (Karol Chwedczuk-Szulc and Mateusz Zaremba), and its charismatic leader Korwin-Mikke (Szymon Bachrynowski); New Flemish Alliance (N-VA) (Stefan Mercier). The volume concludes with an interview with Robert Ford on the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). The authors' analyses in the chapters are based on various primary and secondary sources, including party programmes, media announcements, roll-call data, as well as scholarly publications.

In the introductory chapter Brack reiterates that Eurosceptic parties are present in all EU countries. Yet, she argues that due to varied domestic contexts we can observe not one Euroscepticism, but rather many Euroscepticisms that are "strongly embedded in the national context" (p. 10). The interplay of the variation based on domestic contexts and common features of Euroscepticism is the cross-cutting theme of the issue.

To begin with, the authors employ different typologies of Euroscepticism. Some prefer the already classical distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' Euroscepticism; others propose a more nuanced approach and distinguish Eurorealist and Eurointergovernmentalist party positions. The latter two refer to the parties that show little enthusiasm about European project in general, but regard it from a more pragmatic point of view. For example, in the chapter by Cabada, ODS is presented as a Eurorealist, and SSO as a Eurosceptic party. In Belgian case, N-VA is also described as a Eurorealist party which aims to utilize the EU's regionalization instruments for their aim of achieving independence for Flanders.

One of the common observations shared by all authors is that "domestic politics remain their [parties'] main focus and the supranational level is secondary" (Brack, p. 15). For example, Chwedczuk-Szulc and Zaremba present KNP as a party that uses EP elections as a stepping stone for domestic politics in Poland. Niklas Bolin argues that SD's purpose is to use their success in EP elections as a "spillover effect" in the general elections, and Formuszewicz claims that for AfD "there is no doubt that the party functionaries acting as MEPs will focus on the domestic political scene" (p. 58). At the end of the volume, in his interview, Ford

also argues that UKIP “is entirely domestically focused” and that supranational arena is of secondary importance for the party (p. 171).

Participation in the EP seems to be an important element in these parties’ effort to increase their domestic legitimacy. Several parties (e.g. FN, AfD, and N-VA) use the EP as an opportunity for their party to present itself as a responsible and ready to govern actor at the national level. For FN, the EP “is a useful vehicle for gaining visibility and prominence in the national political landscape in France” (p. 113). In addition, being part of the EP provides parties with access to financial support (UKIP) and transnational contacts (Jobbik).

Another commonality is that hard Eurosceptic parties tend to be situated in the periphery of party competition (KNP of Korwin-Mikke in Poland, Jobbik in Hungary, and UKIP in the UK), while soft Eurosceptics and Eurorealists are mainly parties close to or part of domestic mainstream. There is also a trajectory of movement from the periphery to the center, which is related to softening of Eurosceptic rhetoric. Thus, in the case of FN, the party is making efforts to soften its radicalism, to professionalize and improve its public relations policy in order to start looking as a party capable to govern. However, there is also “a tension between the willingness to improve the party’s credentials and the need to stay out of the system” (p. 104). Similar tensions can be observed in the cases of Jobbik and UKIP.

Both in Western and Eastern Europe, Eurosceptic parties from the right wing are concerned with issues of centralization of political decision-making at the EU level and the sovereignty of the member states. For example, in the case of AfD, there is a fear connected with the Euro as a common currency and the loss of economic and financial sovereignty. However, for many Eurosceptic parties (e.g. SD and UKIP) the socio-economic issues are less important than socio-cultural issues. Eurosceptic parties are highly sensitive to the issues of free movement of people and migration and their possible impact on security, criminality, social cohesion and cultural identity. As Ford argues for the case of UKIP, these parties are listening to the fears of people who had been “left out of the conversation” (p. 165) for the last twenty years, and had no outlet for legitimately expressing their views.

The case studies presented here show that Eurosceptic parties differ in their visions of security. While some parties (e.g. SSO and N-VA) see NATO as a necessary project that needs to survive and to guarantee security of all European countries, other parties (e.g. FN and Jobbik) are very critical of this security organization. The attitudes towards NATO are also closely connected to the relations between Eurosceptic parties and Russian Federation. In several cases (e.g. SD, KNP, Jobbik, FN), Eurosceptic parties look very positive upon having close relations with Russia. These parties admire the authoritarian governance

in Russia; the position of Putin as a strong leader; the uncompromising defense of national interests; and believe that prosperity and economic development should be above the liberal-democratic rights. Those parties which support the role of NATO as a security provider (e.g. N-VA and UKIP) are, on the contrary, much more sensitive about Russia and aim “for stronger stance against [it]” (p. 160)

This edited volume of *Polish Quarterly of International Politics* is very timely and provides rich empirical material. In the volume we can find valuable information about each case, including information about the historical origin and development, electoral statistics, roll-call data, comparative data on party stances, vote loyalty, vote coherence etc. Yet, this information is not regarded beyond particular case studies; the links between them are not emphasized, and the overarching theoretical framework is not provided. At the end of the volume the reader expects to see a concluding chapter that would attempt to summarize the findings of the case studies and situate them in a more theoretically informed comparative framework. Unfortunately, this expectation is not fulfilled. Despite these weaknesses, however, the volume is an important and useful contribution to the literature on Euroscepticism, helping us to understand this increasingly relevant phenomenon in the European Union.

# PUBLICATIONS ALERT

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