

European far-right parties, their politics, ideology, leaders, and history. The book adds to the vast research literature on the far-right and on populism in two main ways: Firstly, it includes an interesting description of the origins of fascism and other far-right movements starting from their historical roots in the nineteenth century. Secondly, the book actually includes the whole of Europe, including Russia and Eastern Europe, and their far-right movements.

It is not surprising, given that the book does include the entire Europe, that the authors end up asserting that the far-right is ideologically and politically heterogeneous and, therefore, the whole phenomenon is difficult to define. Their historical assessment, which does not overlook the local specificity of far-right parties, emphasizes the flexibility and adaptability of these movements, that is, their willingness to change even some grounding ideological and political starting points should the situation so require. The book examines the far-right political agents that function both inside and outside the representative democratic systems. The relations between these inside and outside factions are looser or tighter depending on the historical and local factors.

After the historical introduction, the book moves onto discussing the developments taken place after the Second World War. The defeat of fascism as a result of the war forced the far-right parties to redefine themselves. Particularly, the race question and anti-Semitism turned into ideological stumbling blocks after the Holocaust. The open propagation of racial hatred was removed from the public view, but race theories never disappeared anywhere, not even in Eastern European countries where the states officially opposed racism and fascism. The authors wonder why Eastern European communism was never able to destroy the pre-war ideological framework, but instead, after the fall of communism, these old ideologies and the related far-right parties were quickly established again, sometimes even with the same exact names. It was possible for these pre-war far-right politicians and ideologies to function, at least to some extent, during the socialist period in these countries, which developed models of national socialism, such as Poland, Hungary, and Romania. However, any pro-fascist publishing activities had been forced to move away from the Eastern European countries together with those exiled into Spain (where Franco's administration supported the far-right), Canada, the USA, Argentina, and Australia.

The European Far-Right

Jean-Yves Camus & Nicolas Lebourg: *Far-Right Politics in Europe*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017. 310 pp. ISBN 9780674971530

The book on the European far-right by the French researchers Jean-Yves Camus and Nicolas Lebourg, originally published in French in 2015, has quickly been translated into English. The translation was clearly a well-grounded decision, as the book offers a multifaceted overview of the

In pondering the legacy of communism (or rather of the so-called real socialism) and Nazism in Europe, the authors bring forth the figure of Aleksandr Dugin, a far-right ideologue operating in Russia, who is known for creating and propagating neo-Eurasianism and who has tried to turn Soviet conservatism (Soviet nostalgia) into revolutionary nationalism. The starting point for Dugin, like for many other Eastern European far-right figures, is the critique of the ideologically and economically degenerating liberal West, which allows these figures to elevate even the isolation of the Soviet society from Western influence into an object of adulation. Dugin's thinking includes essentialist ideas about the special character of the Russian people and its endangerment should the cooperation with the West lead into the adoption of Western values and political systems. Similar nationalistic essentialism is present also in the thinking and discussions of other Eastern European far-right parties and movements.

The Eastern European far-right parties and movements are characterized, according to Camus and Lebourg, by the following factors: anti-Semitism, racism against the Roma people, and the notion of unity or at least the common fate of the Slavic

peoples. Slavic peoples should not aspire to pluralistic democracy like Western countries. In addition, charismatic leaders are significant in the Eastern European far-right parties and movements (just like in many Western European far-right parties). The authors point out that often these Eastern European far-right leaders have previously been members of leading mainstream parties, which they link at least partially to the close connection between real socialism and nationalism in these ex-socialist states. Western ideologies and values are suffering defeat in Eastern Europe, which has led to and will lead in the future to increasing destabilisation and to the rise of nationalistic parties.

At the end of the book the authors predict that, because the far-right has been flexible and capable of producing new militant and cultural activities and hegemonic discourses, it is reasonable to expect that the far-right will be a part of the political and ideological scene in Europe in the foreseeable future. However, they do point out that there are a few societies in Europe in which the far-right has no support, such as Ireland, Iceland, and the small principalities (e.g. Monaco). The authors claim that although Ireland has experienced an economic crisis and multiculturalisation due to migration, the

reason for the lack of far-right in Ireland can be connected to the way that both the right- and left-wing parties in Ireland value the unity of the nation. In addition, the particularity of Ireland in this regard can be explained by the Irish Republican Army that channelled revolutionary thinkers towards the cause of Irish unity instead of far-right causes, and therefore no far-right political traditions have formed in Ireland.

After the Second World War, the fascist and far-right states in Europe failed aside from Franco's Spain and Salazar's Portugal. After this, there has only been one far-right coup in Europe, in Greece, but all these countries have since then returned to democratic order. The authors attribute the longevity of Spanish and Portuguese far-right governments to the isolation of the nation from the outside, in which also the resilience of socialist countries was grounded. The authors regard democratic systems as extremely dangerous to far-right parties. Participating in representative democracy has almost always meant defeat for the far-right; although in some cases the far-right has achieved such political success that it has been able to change the political system to one that suits it better.

The authors end the book by asserting that the far-right will be

capable of finding new means of securing the future of states and nations through isolation and withdrawal from globalisation during its various future phases. The future of the far-right rests on the economic crisis caused by neoliberalism and on the migration crisis caused by various factors. Because neither of these problems shall be solved in the near future, the far-right will find support in Europe.

Far-Right Politics in Europe is clearly an interesting and rather compact account of the European far-right. Like many books in its genre, it has its obvious short-comings, the most serious of which is the point of view it takes on the far-right itself. The authors use various party political publications, ideological test and documents, newspaper articles and documents as sources to create a general picture of the phenomenon and to offer some speculative theoretical explanations for their observations. They criticize the common economic explanations of the rise of the far-right by comparing the political events in Northern Catalonia and Southern France. Both areas have experienced similar economic success despite being peripheries in their own countries, but only in the other (France) has the far-right gained support. Catalonia is

naturally a particular area, but this comparison exemplifies how generalizing explanations should also take account of local specificities and histories. This point is further made by the different emphases of the various European far-right parties and movements. The book lacks almost completely any reference to the experiences and views of the far-right party members themselves. Belonging to and being active in far-right groups and associations has significance for the people involved. If the meaning of this political activity for these agents is not understood, the explanations and predictions are built on insufficient empirical ground.

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