

E EXTREME

June 2018

Volume 19

Number 2



Newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group
on Extremism & Democracy

Newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy

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The *e-Extreme* is the newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy. For any enquiries about the newsletter and book reviews, please contact the managing editors (newsletter@extremism-and-democracy.com).

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STANDING GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

REGISTER AS AN E&D STANDING GROUP MEMBER

In order to join our Standing Group (always free of charge!), you can join the Extremism & Democracy Standing Group at the click of a button, [via the ECPR website](#). If you have not 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 questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

WELCOME OUR NEW BOOK REVIEWS EDITOR

We are extremely happy to welcome Patricia Rodi as our new book reviews editor. Patricia is a Ph.D. student at Queen Mary University of London with a project on populist communication. If you want to review a book for us, we encourage you to get in touch with her at p.rodii@qmul.ac.uk. She will arrange delivery of a complimentary copy from your favourite academic publisher. We look forward to receiving reviews of the latest offerings in the fields of populism, extremism, and radicalism!

1ST SUMMER SCHOOL OF THE ECPR STANDING GROUP ON EXTREMISM & DEMOCRACY

The ECPR Standing Group on *Extremism & Democracy* is holding its first Summer School on 'Concepts and Methods for Research on Far-Right Politics' at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Florence, 25-29 June 2018. The event is co-sponsored by the Centre for Research on Extremism (C-REX), the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), and the Centre on Social Movement Studies (COSMOS)/Scuola Normale Superiore.

The Summer School focuses on the study of the far right in its populist, radical, and extremist manifestations. Its aim is to bolster and promote knowledge on the theoretical, empirical, and methodological underpinnings of contemporary far-right politics. The Summer School will focus on how to study and interpret the different manifestations of far-right politics across time, arenas, and national contexts. The Summer School will introduce students to concepts and theories explaining the conditions affecting far-right mobilisation and performance; and methods to tackle this phenomenon empirically. Despite the growing attention received by far-right political parties, social movements, and groups, we still lack a comprehensive conceptual and methodological toolkit to investigate its diverse expressions in the multi-organisational field. The Summer School will thus address young scholars and students, and discuss how to apply established research techniques to the study of far-right politics and create, retrieve, and manage available data.

Organisers: Pietro Castelli Gattinara (C-REX, University of Oslo) and Andrea L. P. Pirro (COSMOS, Scuola Normale Superiore)

Keynotes (open to all):

- 25 June 2018, 9:30-11:30 — Cas Mudde (University of Georgia) ‘The Study of the European Far Right: Towards a Fourth Wave?’
- 29 June 2018, 15:30-17:30 — Kathleen Blee (University of Pittsburgh) ‘Gender and the Far Right’

Lecturers: Matteo Albanese (University of Lisbon), Kathleen Blee (University of Pittsburgh), Giorgia Bulli (University of Florence), Pietro Castelli Gattinara (University of Oslo), Caterina Froio (Catholic University of Lille), Cas Mudde (University of Georgia), Andrea L. P. Pirro (Scuola Normale Superiore), Jacob Ravndal (University of Oslo), Andrej Zaslove (Radboud University)

CONTEMPORARY RADICALISM, POPULISM AND EXTREMISM: MOBILIZATION, FORMATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES (SECTION ENDORSED BY THE E&D STANDING GROUP)

The ECPR Standing Group on *Extremism & Democracy* is endorsing the Section ‘Contemporary Radicalism, Populism and Extremism: Mobilization, Formations and Consequences’ at the 12th ECPR General Conference, to be held in Hamburg, 22-26 August 2018. The Section is chaired by Michael Minkenberg (European University Viadrina) and Manuela Caiani (Scuola Normale Superiore).

Day	Panel	Time	Room
Thursday 23 August	P249 <i>Left-wing populism in Southern and Western Europe</i> Chairs: Michael Minkenberg (European University Viadrina) and Paloma Caravantes-Gonzalez (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey)	09:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	P163 <i>Far Right 'Movement Parties' in Europe</i> Chairs: Ondřej Císař (Charles University in Prague) and Manuela Caiani (Scuola Normale Superiore)	11:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	P089 <i>Contemporary radicalism between offline and online mobilization</i> Chair: Louis Wierenga (University of Tartu)	15:50	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
Friday 24 August	P147 <i>Europe, the European Union, and Opposition from Radical Left and Radical Right "Populists"</i> Chairs: Manès Weisskircher and Julia Rone (European University Institute)	09:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	P518 <i>Welfare chauvinism and the radical right</i> Chair: Steven Van Hauwaert (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)	11:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	P078 <i>Conceptual approaches in the study of radical right and its impact</i> Chair: Michael Minkenberg (European University Viadrina)	14:00	VMP 8 F loor: 2 Room: 207
	P370 <i>Radicalism and immigration: strategies and consequences</i> Chair: Caterina Froio (Lille Catholic University)	17:40	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 206
	P038 <i>Built to bend? Populist and radical parties' influence in the multi-level political arena</i> Chair: Andrea L. P. Pirro (Scuola Normale Superiore)	17:40	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
Saturday 25 August	P262 <i>Measuring Populism from Political Text: (Thin) Ideology, Rhetoric, Discourse Quality, Civility and Linguistic Style</i> Chairs: Julian Bernauer (University of Mannheim) and Denise Traber (University of Lucerne)	09:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	P406 <i>Roundtable: The Ideational Approach to Populism</i> Chair: Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (Universidad Diego Portales)	09:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 206
	P351 <i>Populism as an individual-level construct amongst people and elites</i> Chair: Steven Van Hauwaert (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz)	11:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207

	<p>P416 <i>Social movements and policy outcomes: How right-wing grassroots groups influence foreign policy</i> Chair: Sofia Tipaldou (University of Manchester) and Ioannis Galariotis (European University Institute)</p>	11:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 206
	<p>P352 <i>Populist attitudes: theoretical considerations and empirical insights</i> Chairs: Marcel Lewandowsky (Helmut-Schmidt-University/University of the Armed Forces Hamburg) and Nicole Marlen Loew (Freie Universität Berlin)</p>	14:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	<p>P158 <i>Explaining the rising mobilization and support for the radical right and populism</i> Chair: Simon Franzmann (Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf)</p>	14:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 206
	<p>P369 <i>Radical right impact in Eastern Europe: agenda-setting and policy effects</i> Chairs: Anca Florian and Malisa Zora Zobel (European University Viadrina)</p>	16:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 207
	<p>P520 <i>What about the Five Star Movement? Systemic causes and effects of the M5S rise</i> Chairs: Lisa Zanotti (Universidad Diego Portales) and Enrico Padoan (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile)</p>	16:00	VMP 8 Floor: 2 Room: 206

UPCOMING EVENTS

CALL FOR PAPERS: IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE

Conference: In the Name of the People: Representing the People in Twenty-first Century Politics

Organising institution: University of Navarra

Location and date: Pamplona, 22-24 November 2018

Deadline for submissions: 31 July 2018

For further information: www.unav.edu/en/web/instituto-cultura-y-sociedad/discurso-publico/representing-the-people

In today's world, shaken by the effects of globalization, the aftermath of the financial crisis and widespread political corruption, people in many countries are reaching out for radical political solutions. In many parts of Europe, experts have perceived a growing mistrust of conventional politics: as the perceived gap between citizens and their representatives has widened, new political formations have arisen that promise to shake up the status quo and give more concrete expression to people's real needs and desires. Such groups vary according to region, taking on many different forms (right-wing, left-wing, nationalist), but many of them have been classified as "populist", in that they claim to give voice to "the will of the people". Their self-presentation gives importance to aspects of identity that position them as diametrically opposed to supposedly hegemonic groups, and the ensuing dichotomy is emphasized by heightened degrees of affect. Their multimodal messages provide a broad field of study for discourse analysts, as well as for experts in traditional and new media.

The three-year project "Imagining the people in the new politics: debates on the will of the people in public discourse across Europe" (MINECO project: FFI2015-65252-R El demos en el imaginario de la nueva política: el debate sobre la voluntad popular en el discurso público en Europa) has explored how the discourses of the new political parties and movements in Europe project the concept of "the people" ("demos") and articulate it with other ideas, centring on the period of instability following the financial crisis of 2008. In this final conference, In the name of the people: representing the people in twenty-first century politics, we propose to open up the debate on discursive representations of the people to a broad cross section of experts in political discourse, discourse analysis, multimodal analysis, media studies and political communication.

Proposals are invited for paper presentations of 20 minutes + 5 minutes for questions. A title + abstract of maximum 250 words should be submitted to the

conference email (demos@unav.es) before 31 July 2018. Abstracts should report original research and should provide the context, objectives, method(s), and results of your study. The notification of acceptance will be on August 30th. The working languages of the conference are English and Spanish. In the case of proposals intended for one of the three specialized panels, the name of the panel should be stated clearly at the top of the page. A maximum of two proposals may be submitted per author provided that one of these is co-authored or a contribution to a panel. We propose to publish at least one volume of collected papers from the conference, from the main sessions or the panels. Details will be sent out at a later date.

All proposed submissions (papers, posters or round table participation) will be blind peer reviewed, under the supervision of the scientific committee.

CALL FOR PAPERS: THE NEW RIGHT AND THE NEW LEFT

Organising institution: LSE European Institute

Location and date: London, 12-13 November 2018

Deadline for applications: 30 July 2018

In recent years two seemingly contradictory claims have gained salience in public as well as academic debates. On the one hand it has been argued that European societies experience a growing polarisation. On the other hand, it was claimed that the left-right-scheme has become obsolete. If both claims are true, which are the poles marking the extremes of the polarisation if not the left and the right? Many alternative categories have been put forward. For some the new division is one of a “pure people” against a “corrupt elite”. For others it is a cosmopolitan vision of the world against nationalist one. Still others believe it is winners against losers of globalisation, autochthones against immigrants, culture against technocracy or even the West against Islam.

This workshop wants to shed light on yet another antagonism that is pervasive but less openly put forward: the polarisation between what is perceived as rational politics and politics of emotion and affect. Both the New Left and the New Right justify their novelty by declaring the old right-left opposition obsolete, by drawing on emotions to mobilise support and by politicising individuals beyond partisanship who normally show little interest in politics. At a more general level, one could even say that both are driven by the desire to turn politics into an emotionally charged field and move away from a purely rational understanding of politics.

The papers should focus on the continuities, ruptures and crossovers in the politics of emotion and affect that underpin the emergence of the European New Left and the New Right. The terms New Right and New Left have been chosen deliberately as both terms do not only describe the narrow realm of political parties but social phenomena at the intersection of culture and politics. Possible questions to be addressed are:

- What is the emotional politics of the New Left and the New Right? How do the followers and/or opponents of these movements experience, suppress, highlight, manage and negotiate these emotions?
- Which emotions do new Left and new Right movements render as right or wrong for their political visions?
- What are the histories of politics of emotions and emotional politics for Left and Right?
- What are the continuities and ruptures in relation to the politics of affect of the New Left and the New Right?
- Which role does culture, religion, gender, identity, ethnicity and/or race play in appealing to and denying certain kinds of emotions?
- What do these movements mean for minorities, especially Muslims?
- What is the place of spirituality and myth in the New Left and the New Right?
- How have the New Left and the New Right transformed over time and how have these processes of transformation been manifested in terms of emotions?

Selected papers presented during the workshop will be published in a special issue.

Please submit a 200-word abstract and 50-word speaker biography to jj.gopffarth@lse.ac.uk by July 30th. Successful applicants will be notified by July 30th. Travel and lodging will be provided for up to 600£ for presenters from outside Europe, 400£ for those from Europe. For any questions please contact the organisers Dr Esra Ozyurek (e.g.ozyurek@lse.ac.uk) and Julian Gopffarth (jj.gopffarth@lse.ac.uk).

Keynote speeches: Cynthia Miller-Idriss (American University), David Graeber (LSE), Jan Kubik (Rutgers University/UCL)

SUMMER SEMINAR ON NATIONALISM, RELIGION AND VIOLENCE

Organising institutions: Charles University in Prague and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Location and date: Prague, 18-29 June 2018

For further information: <http://nrsschool.fsv.cuni.cz/>

The Summer Seminar on Nationalism, Religion and Violence (June 18-29, 2018) organized by the Charles University in Prague and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, supported by the CEFRES–French Research Center in Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Slavonic and East European Studies (UCL), University of Birmingham, Humboldt University of Berlin, the Institute for the Study of Strategic Regions and with kind support of the Department of Adult Education and Personnel Management of the Charles University is ready to launch its sixth year with a special focus on the topics of ethnic and religious diversity, migration, and transformation. A key goal of the Summer Seminar is to contribute in a substantial way to the study of violence and to catalyze the growth of the study of violence as a field.

Keynote lecture: Stathis Kalyvas (Yale University)

THE POPULIST POLITICS OF EUROSCEPTICISM IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Conference: 32nd Meeting of the Italian Political Science Association (SISP)

Panel chair: Andrea L. P. Pirro (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Location and date: Turin, 29-30 November 2018

The European Union (EU) has been exposed to multiple stresses during the past decade. Virtually every EU member state has been affected (albeit to varying degree) by the negative consequences of the economic and financial crisis that unfolded after 2008. While the actual causes of this crisis are manifold, its occurrence primarily emphasised the structural limits of the Eurozone as a currency union without fiscal coordination. Just as the economies of member states were exiting the most severe phase of the crisis and finally undergoing recovery, a new crisis struck the EU. Amid an increasingly instable international political scenario, asylum seekers from near East and African countries reached EU borders in exceptional numbers.

The 2015 refugee crisis put under considerable strain the internal decision-making of the EU – not to mention the consensus about international principles of solidarity. In June 2016, finally, the decision of the UK's referendum to opt for 'Brexit' has the potential to be at least difficult, and at worst a full-blown crisis for EU crisis in terms of its legitimacy and need for reform. Already in the months preceding the 2014 European Parliament elections, a number of journalistic accounts anticipated a populist Eurosceptic landslide as one of the likeliest outcomes of the vote. While this alarmist scenario did not materialise in full, the

reason for assuming a populist takeover in times of crisis rests both in the ideological persuasion(s) of these actors and the loss of legitimacy that recently affected the EU. Populist organisations traditionally voiced their opposition to 'Europe' on the basis of a composite series of arguments; moreover, their ability to profit from moments of (real or perceived) crisis instinctively elevated them to potential beneficiaries of these particular junctures.

With the proposed panel, we set out to investigate and systematically tackle the intersection of populism and Euroscepticism in the face of the multiple European crises. Populism and Euroscepticism have surged to the level of becoming empty signifiers in public debates; as we argue, the relationship between populism and Euroscepticism is neither necessary, nor consequential. Most importantly, even when these features are found in unison, they are liable to adapt to changing socioeconomic, cultural, and political circumstances. We believe that the crises that have hit the EU over the past decade offer critical instances of change - and it is indeed the crucial element of 'crisis' that we intend to factor into the equation. Crises have been long interpreted as macro-level background conditions favouring the surge of populist parties; however, very little attempts have been made to address how populists perform crises. The panel critically connects the unfolding of the Great Recession, the refugee crisis, and Brexit to the Eurosceptic discourse of populist parties across a number of cases.

NORDIC CONFERENCE ON RESEARCH ON VIOLENT EXTREMISM: THEORY AND PRACTICE

Organising institution: C-REX, University of Oslo

Location and date: Oslo, 29-30 November 2018

The Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX) at the University of Oslo is pleased to open this call for papers for the 2018 Nordic conference on research on violent extremism. The aim of the conference is to present empirical and theoretical research on violent extremism which 1) is carried out by researchers based in one of the Nordic countries, or 2) addresses violent extremism in one or more Nordic countries. The conference also seeks to enhance the conversation and interaction between researchers and practitioners working in the field. It welcomes research-based submissions by practitioners, and the participation of practitioners as conference attendees. The conference is genuinely multi- and interdisciplinary, interested in both theory and practice, and encourages submissions that are problem-solving as well as critical in their orientation. Comparative approaches will be appreciated. The call is for abstracts for paper contributions as well as for suggestions of full panels (consisting of four papers).

Keynote speakers: Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen (Copenhagen University) and Benjamin R. Teitelbaum (University of Colorado)

DISCOURSE THEORY: WAYS FORWARD

Organising institution: Center for the Study of Democracy, Signification and Resistance

Location and date: Brussels, 7-8 February 2019

For further information: www.researchcentredesire.eu/discourse-theory.html

DESIRE, the centre for the study of Democracy, Signification and Resistance (www.researchcentredesire.eu) is happy to host the colloquium 'Discourse Theory: Ways Forward'. The aim of the colloquium is to critically and constructively consider where Discourse Theory is at this moment, and to reflect on ways forward for discourse theoretical approaches to society, politics, communication and media. In particular, the colloquium will focus on five topics:

1. The discursive and the material
2. Discourse theoretical perspectives on political economy
3. Discourse theoretical perspectives on health, ageing, and the body
4. Populist discourses and discourses about populism
5. Discourse theory and visuality

Keynote speakers: Ruth Wodak (Lancaster University/University Vienna) & Michael Freeden (Oxford University)

KEEP US INFORMED

Please keep us informed of any upcoming conferences or workshops you are organising, 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 organised 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. We are always keen on receiving reviews from junior and senior scholars alike!

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, please do get in touch. We are always very keen to involve more and more members in the running of the Standing Group!

BOOK REVIEWS

CAS MUDDÉ. THE FAR RIGHT IN AMERICA.

LONDON AND NEW YORK: ROUTLEDGE, 2017. 132 PP., £14.99 PAPERBACK. ISBN: 9781138063891.

Sorina Soare

University of Florence

The Far Right in America collects Cas Mudde's op-eds, articles, interviews, and blog posts on the topic of the US far right between 2009 and 2017. The thirty-three texts gathered in the volume explore and discuss the influence of far-right movements in US politics at both federal and state level. In parallel, Mudde openly reflects on the emergence of the Trump phenomenon within the Republican Party. Overall, the volume provides the readers with a rich, detailed and balanced view of the most important developments concerning the American far right in the last century with the open aim of contributing less to the academic debate and more to the political/public debate. Indeed, as argued in the preface, far-right politics used to be considered a Western European peculiarity and only a marginal phenomenon in the US context. Significantly, not only was there a crowded community of scholars working on European far-right movements and parties both in Europe and in the US, but American political debates showed limited interest in terms like 'radical' or 'far right' when applied to the local context (Chapter 18, 28). The situation has changed over the last decade and this collection of articles gives an insight into this intricate world and the expanding influence of the far right in the most recent presidential elections. The volume is thus an extremely engaging and stimulating account of American politics, filtered through the lens of the history of radical- and far-right movements, their ideological features and organizational characteristics. It is also the by-product of a public debate that is increasingly aware of the threats to liberal democracy from within American society. Beyond the robustness of the analyses, the volume also has the advantage of employing an easy communicational style, adapted for a broad audience.

In order to explore the status of the far right in the American context, the volume begins with an introduction to the conceptual framework, providing an extremely useful overview of the keywords (i.e. far right, right, extreme and radical right, nativism, authoritarianism and populism) in close connection with the context of liberal democracy. One of the most important contributions of this volume is the dexterity Mudde employs in transforming complex and technical subject matter into engaging debates. In this regard, both his clear distinction between radical

and extreme right in terms of democracy and his synthetic distinction between right and left are extremely useful. The solid and complex definitions provided in the first chapter are successfully transformed into a rich narrative about the different subsets of the far right and radical right. Having clarified the concepts, the volume proceeds with a short history of the far right, from the Know Nothings of the mid-19th century to the more recent Tea Party. Covering more than 150 years, this short history is extremely informative. Mudde successfully illustrates the consistent presence of far-right movements in American history, albeit for the most part a history comprised of fringe elements. Without contesting the fact that far right politics was mainly a phenomenon on the margins of US politics, Mudde charts not only the longer history of the phenomenon on American soil, but also its relevance, in particular when it comes to nativism. However, Mudde underlines the fact that the far right has failed to become a federal force, mainly because of its organizational weaknesses and the strengths of the two-party system (p. 4). Still, across time and space, Mudde rightly points to the continuous influence of the far right at the state and local level, a particularly fertile breeding ground for the US far right in the 21st century.

As noted before, the strengths of this small volume are directly connected with the features of the heavyweight scholar behind the gifted stylist writer of editorials. For example, there is the simple and thought-provoking analysis (chapter 3) of the paradoxes of one of the most debated phenomenon of the last decades, the Tea Party, whose rhetoric was bound up with the distinction between a Jeffersonian populist view of democracy and their staunch defence of the Madisonian constitution that echoes America's fourth president's distrust of the people. For a non-American public, the volume offers the opportunity to test part of the rich conceptual toolbox provided in chapter 1 in relation to the acts of political violence committed by the American right (chapter 4 and 5). These first chapters provide the reader with an easily understandable account of the evolution of the far-right movements from the militia movements of the 1990s (chapter 5) to the Tea Party and, closer to our time, the rise of Trump (Trumpism and Trumpista).

While the author moves mainly chronologically through the history of the topic, thematic sections are also provided. This balanced analysis helps the reader to better grasp the place of Islamophobia in American politics, considering that, although no avowedly Islamophobic party exists, numerous candidates in the presidential primaries presented anti-Islamic stances (chapter 8). In this context, Mudde makes use again of his academic background and provides a clear outline of the conceptual boundaries between racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia. The latter is characterized by forms of fear and prejudices motivated by both an ethnic dimension and a perceived threat to the way of life. In the increasingly visible Islamophobic discourse in the US, Muslims are portrayed less as a menace in terms of ethnic purity and more in relation to the threat they are perceived as

embodying to American/Western civilization. On this point, Mudde convincingly identifies a resemblance between contemporary Islamophobia and the anti-communism of the Cold War. In both cases, the enemy was those who were said to be out to destroy the American (Western) way of life. As during the Cold War, the political mainstream appears to be united in targeting radical Islam, although divided over whom to fear (p. 29). Similarly, there is a wide diffusion of conspiracy theories regarding powerful global forces and sleeper cells infiltrating American soil and the federal administration.

From chapter 9 (out of 33), the volume turns its attention to the Trump phenomenon (i.e. Trump the persona, Trumpism and its paleo-conservative ideology, and the Trumpista, its voters). On this point is extremely interesting and useful to see the transparency with which Mudde recalls his incorrect prediction that Trump would lose. Mudde's changing viewpoint on the 2016 Presidential elections starts from what was the most common assumption among experts and journalists – that Trump could not win even the primary – and progressively turns towards explaining how the outcome was possible (chapter 15).

In his attempt to frame Trump's success, Mudde starts with an attempt to understand the Trump phenomenon in its complexity, beyond the simple and simplistic diagnosis of populism. While 'Trumpismo', with its incoherent and shifting views, is portrayed as "a functional equivalent" of the European populist radical right with a strong American twist (chapter 13, 24) and Trump's supporter base is similar to the core electorate of the Western European populist radical right parties, Mudde convincingly argues that Trump (the persona) does not fit among the pantheon of traditional populist leaders: "in contrast to the rich history of US populism, Trump is an anti-establishment elitist. *He* is better than everyone, i.e. both the elite and the people!" (p. 33). Similarly, Mudde demonstrates the weaknesses in the simplistic comparison drawn between Sanders and Trump as both being populists (chapter 10, 14). He argues that Sanders is first and foremost a "confused social democrat" (p. 46) whose discourse is built around the class struggle, and who rarely identifies himself with the American people.

Contesting from the very beginning oft-repeated analyses that depicted Trump as (radical right) populist, Mudde progressively depicts Trump as an amalgam of ideas and visions, whose origins can be traced back to the GOP's decades of rightward evolution, in particular with reference to the preferences of Republican presidential contenders since the 2000s that have echoed extreme versions of conservatism. Interestingly, Mudde emphasises the difference between the *mainstreamness* of the GOP leadership (at a federal level) and the complex situation at a state level, where "authoritarianism and nativism run rampant among governors and legislators alike" (p. 39). This tension between the more or less

mainstream conservative identity of the federal GOP and the radicalism of the GOP at state level echoes a decade-long radicalization of the grassroots. Mudde outlines how Trump is the outcome of this tension, arguing that the 2016 GOP primaries shed light on the huge tension between the party establishment and its supporters (chapter 13, 19). However, Mudde goes beyond the GOP-based explanations and takes into account a broader perspective (chapters 15, 16, 21). In the attempt to isolate the causes of the rise of radical right populism, Mudde convincingly illustrates the importance of going beyond the so-called “received wisdom” and, in particular, beyond those diagnoses that connect the rise of populism to the “revenge of the losers of globalization” (chapter 26, 27). In his understanding, populism looks set to remain on the crest of a high wave even after the end of Great Recession and, consequently, the challenge for the future is to “create a politics that is more fair and inclusive to all” (p. 60) and to empower citizens “to defend liberal democracy rather than frighten them into submitting to alleged fascism” (p. 81).

In attempting to make sense of the Trump phenomenon, Mudde also formulates a critical assessment of the discipline of political science in the USA, which was not only taken by surprise by “every single right-wing phenomenon of the past decades” but has also had difficulties in finding convincing explanations for them (p. 63). In direct connection with his critique of US political science (Chapter 18), the last chapter provides the author’s suggestions for readings about the topic of radical right in the US, a list useful to any reader (academic or not) interested in going beyond simplistic diagnosis and alarmist verdicts about populism and democracy.

All in all, one of the most challenging inputs of this volume is the forecast that both in the USA and in Europe populism is set to stay – and less in its radical-left dimension and more in its radical-right forms. In direct connection, Trumpism is described as “a pathological normalcy” or, in other words, a radicalization of mainstream views, and, as such, “won’t disappear with Trump” (p. 93).

The Far Right in America is an opportunity for any reader interested in understanding the origins of the far right in the USA, with an in-depth focus on the origins of President Trump’s rise. Although written in the form of succinct analyses with relatively simple language, the volume becomes a useful resource for journalists, scholars and students, and more generally for every reader with an interest in politics. It offers solid and sound definitions of the concepts and applies the conceptual toolbox with rigour to present-day issues in line with a solid historical reconstruction. Definitely, this is a text to read if interested in going beyond simplistic diagnoses and alarming forecasts about democracy.

JEFFREY KAPLAN. RADICAL RELIGION AND VIOLENCE: THEORY AND CASE STUDIES.
LONDON AND NEW YORK: ROUTLEDGE, 2016. 423 PP., £ 36.99. ISBN: 9780815348313

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Radical Religion and Violence: Theory and Case Studies presents a selection of Jeffrey Kaplan's significant contributions to the study of extremism, religious movements, and violence. Jeffrey Kaplan has authored a vast number of academic publications on right-wing extremism and religious radicalism. He can be undoubtedly considered a pioneer in the application of participatory observation to field research, and this anthology represents a successful effort to retrace Kaplan's ability to deploy such methodology to the study of the diverse systems of religious radicalism that he has investigated during the last thirty years. Such particular type of *festschrift*, which – the author himself underlines with an inch of irony – is usually published post-mortem, resulted in a comprehensive volume reviewing Kaplan's main contributions thematically, rather than chronologically. Therefore, as the title suggests, the main objective of the anthology is to offer a compendium of high-value research exploring the interconnections between religious radicalism and violence, which might be extremely relevant for experts in the field of religiously motivated terrorism. Nevertheless, the volume represents a precious tool for anyone interested in primary research in the social sciences as well, since the author's disposition for an empirically grounded research and in-depth, ethnographic interviews under the umbrella of the interpretative approach sheds light on the very value of such an approach, which might be beneficial for policy intervention also.

Kaplan, applying an “intellectual effort” that Geertz defines as thick description (1973, p. 311-312), provides a compelling insight of one of the most challenging phenomena in social science – the motivations behind individuals' violent and extremist acts. Through participatory observation, a peculiar method for the interpretative inquiry, Kaplan was able to establish a close relation with people involved in extremist movements in the US. This fundamentally changed what had been written on the topic before, particularly as far as religious radicalism is concerned. In methodological terms, Kaplan's innovative approach frames the subjects under study as sharing a common humanity with the researcher themselves. In his own words, “*this is to suggest that all human beings can be approached on a human level. That contact can be made. This human contact will in turn invariably neutralize the caricatures which skew scholarly analysis and distort the historical record*” (p.11). Hence, Kaplan's primary aim is allowing the reader to understand the inner motivations underlying what he calls, drawing on Campbell (1972), the “cultic milieu” of denizens: “*In the superfluity of feeling and dearth of understanding, researcher and subject come together as one. Each of the articles contained in this volume may best be seen as attempts to allow the reader to feel what the men and*

women inhabiting the lands deep in the terra incognita feel and to allow us all, subject, reader, and author, a chance to find understanding” (p.18). By way of example, examining the turn of the millenarian movement from non-violent witness to violent activism, Chapter 7 (entitled “Absolute Rescue”) not only presents the rescue movement carried on by anti-abortionists from an emic perspective (that is to say by using their own categories of representation), but also tries to put the reader in the position of the rescuers themselves. This approach, which likely originates from his biography as he mentions in the introduction, informs his epistemological position.

All in all, Kaplan’s anthology is remarkably enjoyable and would appeal to a wide audience. The structure of the volume reflects Kaplan’s purpose of uncovering the situated meanings of violent events as these come out the lived experiences of actors, whose voices and agency are instead overlooked in mainstream studies. Thus, after a rather compelling introduction, Kaplan explains his methodological stance by responding to Robbins’ article, “*Religious Movements and Violence: A Friendly Critique of the Interpretive Approach*” (1997), which had labelled Kaplan’s approach as interpretative for the first time. Kaplan takes that critique into account and clarifies some controversial – and in his view also partially misunderstood – points, which are instead to be considered major methodological strengths. In this regard, as Kaplan explains, it is important to note that the interpretative approach cannot be intended as apologetics of violent actions or intentions, since one should distinguish “between seeing through the eyes of the other and buying into the world view of the other” (p.4). Nevertheless, the author points out that entering in the world of radical right-wing groups has not been an easy task. In fact, while the highest degree possible of detachment is fundamental to conduct participant observation, it is also true “that a dynamic is established that cannot help but affect both the scholar and the movement” (p.39). Indeed, detachment is recognized to be a key coping strategy while studying violent and extremist phenomena. In the pages opening the volume, Kaplan says: “*What I learned most of all was the destructive nature of ego. To this day these lessons formed the basis of how I relate to my work. There is a process of total absorption, an ability to remain detached from events—especially violent events—while they are occurring, which is invariably followed by a lack of attachment, of ego, which is so great that once involved in another project I would commonly forget about the previous publication altogether*” (p.16).

Then, the reader is guided through Part II of the volume, which introduces the core themes of Kaplan’s work: among many other important notions, in particular, the concept of leaderless resistance, the radical right transnational movement possibility of ramification, and the concept of cultic milieu. Consistently with Kaplan’s specific expertise, namely participant observation and cultural historical approach, the first and second part of the volume are of rare quality, having the merit of “(...) *presenting the reader with the world as seen through*

the eyes of the adherent, regardless of how repugnant that view may be to a mainstream audience” (p. 48). Such concepts and research approaches represent the *fil rouge* that is applied to a series of case studies, which are presented in Part III.

Finally, Part IV displays the most recent trajectories of Kaplan’s research that are mainly focused on the concept of tribalism. The three articles presented in this last part rely on the notion of new tribalism, and two of them are co-authored with Colonel Christopher P. Costa. However, these recent articles are found to be at odds with Kaplan’s earlier attention to interpretive and empirical research. If the aim of the interpretive researcher is “seeing with the eyes of the other”, in fact, Kaplan most recent work rather results in the production of Orientalist frames, which formulate a typology of tribalism on the basis of moral labels (i.e. malign and positive tribalisms) and without embracing a context-specific sensibility. Quite clearly, Kaplan’s recent evolution took a different path. This is all the more surprising given Kaplan’s long exposure to the Middle East. To a certain extent it could be considered an attempt to frame a new conceptualization of tribalism within the post 9/11 emphasis on Islamic terrorism in security studies, but the result seems to be normatively biased and not empirically supported.

However, in the introduction the author himself places different emphasis on the four sections structuring the volume. He specifies that Part II “*requires less in-depth discussion than does the part on methodology. Of far greater import, and presumably the primary reason that Routledge asked me to produce this retrospective, are that the articles in significant ways are pioneering in the field of religious violence and religiously motivated terrorism. These are the core of my work*”. Hence, despite some controversial passages in his recent work, the relevance of the volume should be located into a broader picture. In this sense, Kaplan’s pathbreaking approach draws attention to the need of understanding violent actions and attitudes within their situated context, as he did with the innovative and remarkable investigation on radical religious movements.

PUBLICATIONS ALERT

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