

# E EXTREME

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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 ([ecprextremismanddemocracy@gmail.com](mailto:ecprextremismanddemocracy@gmail.com)).

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# STANDING GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear *e-Extreme* readers,

We hope you are well, wherever you may be.

Read on for the usual mix of announcements, reports, reviews, and alerts to keep on top of all the recent developments related to ‘extremism and democracy’. This *e-Extreme* issue includes a report on *Extremism & Democracy’s* section at the 2023 ECPR General Conference, as well as a new section which presents interviews with expert scholars who comment on contemporary developments in politics on the extremes of the political spectrum.

Please get in touch with your contributions and ideas for the next issue and don’t forget that the ECPR Standing Group on *Extremism & Democracy* has an official Twitter account ([@ecpr\\_ed](https://twitter.com/ecpr_ed)) where you can follow us for the latest news and updates, calls for papers, and must-read publications.

## REGISTER AS AN E&D STANDING GROUP MEMBER

You can join the ECPR Standing Group on *Extremism & Democracy* always free of charge and at the click of a button, via the ECPR website (<https://ecpr.eu/Groups>). 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 you are accepted.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

## CALL FOR REVIEWERS

*e-Extreme* is now offering scholars the opportunity to review articles! If you want to share your review of the latest published articles in the field of populism, extremism and radicalism and have it published in *e-Extreme*, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us via: [ecprextremismanddemocracy@gmail.com](mailto:ecprextremismanddemocracy@gmail.com).

## E&D ROUTLEDGE BOOK SERIES

The Routledge Book Series in *Extremism and Democracy*, which publishes work that lies within the Standing Group's academic scope, covers academic studies within the broad fields of 'extremism' and 'democracy', with volumes focusing on adjacent concepts such as populism, radicalism, and ideological/religious fundamentalism. These topics have been considered largely in isolation by scholars interested in the study of political parties, elections, social movements, activism, and radicalisation in democratic settings. Since its establishment in 1999, the series has encompassed both influential contributions to the discipline and informative accounts for public debate. Works will seek to problematise the role of extremism, broadly defined, within an ever-globalising world, and/or the way social and political actors can respond to these challenges without undermining democratic credentials.

The series was originally founded by Roger Eatwell (University of Bath) and Cas Mudde (University of Georgia) in 1999. The editorial team now comprises Caterina Froio (Sciences Po), Andrea L. P. Pirro (Scuola Normale Superiore), and Stijn van Kessel (Queen Mary University of London). The editors strongly encourage ideas or suggestions for new volumes in the book series, both from established academics and early career researchers.

To discuss any ideas or suggestions for new volumes in this book series, please contact the editors at: [ecprextremismanddemocracy@gmail.com](mailto:ecprextremismanddemocracy@gmail.com).

## 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!

# UPCOMING EVENTS AND CALLS

## MORE CALLS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The E&D website is kept up to date with job opportunities and conference calls: <https://standinggroups.ecpr.eu/extremismanddemocracy/category/news/>.

If you have any announcements you would like to share, do send them our way.

## SUMMER SCHOOL OF THE STANDING GROUP ON EXTREMISM AND DEMOCRACY

Organised by the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism and Democracy and sponsored by the Center for Research on Extremism, this Summer School, which is tailored for PhD Students, will focus on the application of established research techniques to the study of far-right politics.

During the expertly curated five-day programme, the applicants will be introduced to the concepts and theories explaining the conditions affecting far-right mobilisation and performance, and methods to tackle this phenomenon empirically. The participants will also focus the retrieval and effective management of diverse data sources.

The workshop will take place in the University of Oslo, Norway, between 1-5 July 2024. In these five days, the workshop will include two keynote speeches, eight classes on the main theories and methods for the study of far-right politics, daily sessions for student presentations and a daily trip to the Hegnhuset Learning Centre in Utøya.

The workshop will offer the participants the opportunity to grasp the conceptual and theoretical foundations of far-right politics; to draw on comparative empirical expertise on far-right mobilisation, electoral performance, and violence; to understand the rationale and practices of a number of methods employed to study far-right politics, at the micro, meso, and macro levels; to learn to confidently rely on mixed-method approaches and methodological pluralist practices in their own research project; to present their research and receive feedback from leading scholars in the field; and to network with junior and senior scholars.

The deadline for applications is 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 and if interested you can apply through the ECPR website: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/261>

## ANTI-TRANS AND ANTI-GENDER MOBILISATIONS IN THE (FAR) RIGHT

This is a call for chapter contributions to an edited volume on anti-trans and anti-gender mobilisation as (far-) right politics. The point of departure for this endeavour is research on the (far) right. Researchers have increasingly turned towards investigating the (far) right and its relations to gender, as well as anti-gender endeavours. Yet, much of the literature retains a simplistic focus on traditional notions of masculinity and femininity and ‘family’ politics on one hand, and homo- and femo-nationalism as signifiers of liberality on the other. Moreover, the connection between research on the far right and the growing literature on the so-called anti-gender movement remains limited. We recognise that gender is an inherent and critical – but historically contingent – dimension of (far-) right ideology, which in recent years has increasingly taken the form of ‘anti-gender’, and more specifically anti-trans, politics.

The anti-gender movement is a coalition of disparate actors who have organised in opposition to what they term ‘gender ideology’ since the early-to-mid 1990s. This reactionary assemblage, which also includes religious groups, ostensibly charitable organisations, as well as liberal and ‘gender-critical’ feminist actors, has collaborated transnationally to undermine women’s and LGBTQI+ rights and protections. In recent years, the anti-gender movement and the right generally has increasingly mobilised against transgender rights, sometimes with great effect, e.g. through legislative change and media campaigns, which has gone hand-in-hand with increasing harassment and violence. This issue demands increased scholarly attention. Therefore, the proposed edited volume seeks to collect and consolidate necessary knowledge on institutional and grassroots, national and transnational anti-gender and anti-trans mobilisations.

We call for contributions from any discipline, looking specifically at anti-genderism and transphobia as forms of right-wing politics (as opposed to forms of hatred and prejudice alone). We are looking for contributions covering a wide range of political and geographical areas, and want to explicitly invite work that focusses on regions beyond the global north. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to: discourses; policy-making; politics of knowledge; online and offline mobilisation; political violence and harassment; the impact of transphobia and anti-gender politics on its targets; mainstreaming and normalisation; actors and networks; intersections of transphobia, racism, and male supremacism; funding structures; and historical dimensions and precedents.

If interested, please send a title, abstract (250-500 words), and short bio to the lead editors: Celestine S. Kunkeler ([celestine.kunkeler@c-rex.uio.no](mailto:celestine.kunkeler@c-rex.uio.no)) and Iris Beau Segers ([i.b.segers@stk.uio.no](mailto:i.b.segers@stk.uio.no)).

The deadline for submissions is 7 April 2024. Please feel free to circulate this call within your networks.

Sincerely,

Celestine S. Kunkeler, University of Oslo (they)

Iris Beau Segers, University of Oslo (she)

Audrey Gagnon, University of Ottawa (she)

Katherine Kondor, The Norwegian Center for Holocaust and Minority Studies (she)

Greta Jasser, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (she)



## THE MANY CONTEXTS OF RADICALISM, POPULISM, AND EXTREMISM: FROM THE LOCAL TO THE TRANSNATIONAL

Call for panel and paper proposals at the ECPR General Conference in Dublin, 2024. This section (S45) is endorsed by the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism & Democracy.

This section offers a forum for scholars working on radical, populist, and extremist challengers of democracy. Embracing theoretical and methodological pluralism, it will gather panels and papers focusing on diverse issues, including antidemocratic and antipluralist discourses and ideologies, individual-level attitudes, party and movement action forms, organization, and strategies, as well as the impact of political mobilizations on and beyond the ‘mainstream’.

Recent decades have seen the ‘mainstreaming’ and normalization of various forms of political radicalism and extremism across the globe. In the process, notions of place have become increasingly salient in the scholarly debate on the antidemocratic and antipluralist challenges to democracy. Today, populist actors exercise pressure not only on national parliaments, but on all levels of political decision-making: from local to regional and from national to supranational contexts. Radical actors have diversified, and now involve a broad array of organizational forms that campaign at different levels of democratic polities. At the same time, scholars have noted the spread of extremist attitudes within and across populations, marked by important regional and national variations.

Crucially, the different levels of radical, populist, and extremist mobilizations interact in manifold ways, raising new research questions of whether and how local, national, and global issues, forms of action, and strategies impact each other through ‘upscaling’ and ‘downscaling’. Clearly, processes of globalization have strongly impacted such actors, for instance visible in the adoption of new issues and strategies around the climate crisis, COVID-19, gender politics, and new and old geopolitical conflicts. Concurrently, local disputes around issues, such as infrastructure, migrant housing, or energy policies, are often embedded in modes of the ‘glocal’ political economy and uneven development, and together with other local(ized) grievances, they have given rise to a highly polarized rural-urban divide, around which antidemocratic and antipluralist actors construct emotional appeals. Moreover, the challengers to democracy gain increasing traction around antiglobalist discourses and the continued questioning of international organizations, such as the European Union and the United Nations, posing challenges to international collaboration and alliance-building.

Considering these developments, scholars call for studies of how radicalism, populism and extremism affect the policy cycle at the sub-national, national, and supranational levels. To further understand these processes, this section invites contributions that explore whether and how antidemocratic and antipluralist actors shape politics at different levels and scales, both in terms of policy-making, political deliberation, and attitudes. Scholars are invited to propose papers and panels that offer new theoretical and methodological perspectives and broadly cover the aspects listed below. Preference will be given to innovative panels that

mirror the diversity of the ECPR research community in terms of career stage, gender, ethnicity, and regional expertise, and we strive to ensure the participation of early career scholars.

- **Issues, Ideology and Frames:** Which old and new issues are salient in radical, populist, and extremist mobilizations in local, national, and transnational contexts? How do actors frame old and new geopolitical conflicts and global crises? What are the legacies of the spread of conspiracy narratives during the COVID-19 pandemic? To what extent do antidemocratic and antipluralist actors draw on transnational discourses at the domestic level? What is the relationship between local, national, and transnational issues and frames?
- **Forms of Action:** How do radical, populist, and extremist actors mobilize around old and new issues at different scales? How do local, national, and transnational electoral and protest campaigns differ? What is the role of online mobilization in relation to offline forms of action?
- **Attitudes and Expectations:** What is the role of individual-level attitudes in the rise of radical, populist, and extremist mobilizations in local, national, and transnational contexts? How do attitudes shape varying support for such movements and parties in different locations? What are the current drivers of opposition towards international organizations and globalization? What explains current levels of trust in political institutions at all policy-levels? What is the role of place-based attachments for explaining political attitudes?
- **Political Communication and Media:** How do radical, populist, and extremist actors communicate their issues within and across electoral and protest arenas in local, national, and transnational settings? How do their discourses affect local, national, European, and international debates? What is the role of both established and novel types of (social) media in communicating in different contexts?
- **Party and Movement Organization:** What are the particularities of radical, populist, and extremist party organization at the local, national, and transnational level? How are parties and movements structured in terms of leadership? What is the role of local and regional strongholds for party organization and street mobilization? What is the role of parties' youth organizations at different levels of politics?
- **Party Competition and Strategies:** How do radical, populist, and extremist parties compete across all levels of decision-making? What are the differences between their local, national, and transnational campaigns? How do these parties shape coalition-building and policy-making? What are the strategies by 'mainstream' parties in response to their radical, populist, and extremist competitors?
- **Impact and Consequences:** How do radical, populist and extremist party and movement actors influence political discourse and policy-making at different levels of polity? To what extent do they drive the mainstreaming and normalization of extreme ideas and ideologies across societies?
- **Responses and Counterstrategies:** How are radical, populist, and extremist actors threatening (liberal) democracy at the local, regional, national and supranational level? What is the impact of such parties in (sub-)national governments? How have EU institutions responded to the rise of populist national

leaders? How do civil society, media, and other political parties respond to radical and illiberal actors at the local level? • Methodological Approaches: How can new qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques advance our understanding of the role of radical, populist, and extreme actors and attitudes at all levels of polity? How can we operationalize and measure individuals' attitudes towards and expectations of different levels of polity? How do individuals conceive of democracy at the local, regional, national, and supranational levels?

This section is chaired by Sabine Volk (University of Helsinki, [sabine.volk@uni-passau.de](mailto:sabine.volk@uni-passau.de)) and Anita Nissen (Aalborg Universitet, [anissen@dps.aau.dk](mailto:anissen@dps.aau.dk)).

## **RADICAL RIGHT MOVEMENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY: MOBILIZATION, FORMATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES**

This is a call for papers for a panel (no.10) at the ECPR General Conference in Dublin, 2024 focusing on ethnographic and qualitative approaches to the study of the far-right.

In recent years, academic research has focused extensively on understanding the rise of the far right across the globe. Yet, few scholars directly engage with far-right groups, and fewer encourage their research subjects to answer questions in their own terms – particularly within the field of political science. In her introduction to the *Ethnographies of the Far Right* (2007), Kathleen Blee notes that only recently scholars began to move away from the ‘externalist’ view of the far right and acknowledge the need to closer, anthropological angle. “To understand why far-right groups emerge”, she writes, “in particular socioeconomic contexts thus requires analysis of individual and collective identities, the ways in which people come to see right-wing extremism as a means of exerting claims based on these identities, and the processes by which far-right groups recruit members and supporters” (2007: 120). This, however, presents unique challenges – methodological, ethical, intellectual and emotional. These challenges have been compared to walking a double tightrope (Blee, 2002; Damhuis & de Jonge, 2022). On the one hand, how do researchers present themselves to gain trust, even though their respondents might be distrustful of researchers? On the other hand, how do scholars (despite potentially disagreeing profoundly with their interlocutors) develop enough rapport so that respondents are willing to share their story? Should scholars, refrain from voicing their political views during and/or after the interview? Or do they have an obligation to be transparent? How do they respond when interlocutors voice racist or misogynist comments? How do they relate to these “repulsive others” when at the same time, there may be some, apolitical issues they agree on? And how do they, as researchers, cope with the constant exposure to hateful content, conspiracy theories, or otherwise discriminatory views that advocate a future in which they would not like to live?

These dilemmas ultimately boil down to the fact that the scholarly obligation to 'do no harm' to research subjects (e.g. by 'demonizing' them) conflicts with the moral imperative to distance scholars from the views propagated by far-right actors. This panel aims at providing an intellectual space where scholars can think about these dilemmas and share their experiences of conducting ethnographic work in far-right milieus. The organisers welcome papers that account for messiness, chaotic and difficult nature of fieldwork, where emotional, analytical and personal factors are sometimes at odds. They are especially interested in papers that make room for researchers' positionality and that auto-ethnographically discuss the impact of gender, class, race and political views on academic work and arguments involving the far-right.

If interested, contact Léonie de Jonge (<mailto:leonie.de.jonge@rug.nl>) and Michal P. Garapich ([m.garapich@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:m.garapich@londonmet.ac.uk)) before the 14th of January 2024.



# **INTERVIEW WITH AN EXPERT**

## **THE RISE OF THE SWEDEN DEMOCRATS**

**Interview with Dr. Ann-Cathrine Jungar, Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer at Södertörn University**

### **1. How can we explain the rise of the Sweden Democrats?**

Sweden was, until the parliamentary breakthrough of the Sweden Democrats (SD) in 2010, described as an exception with no populist radical right parliamentary representation. This description was not completely true as Ny Demokrati (New Democracy, ND), a populist right-wing party combining liberal economic position with anti-immigration, surpassed the electoral threshold in 1991, and despite not being seen as a legitimate party, acted as an informal support party to the centre-right government. Due to internal conflicts and a weak party organisation, ND failed in the elections of 1994. As such, there was a demand for populist anti-immigration policies already in the 1990s, but the supply was weak. The SD only attracted between 1-2 per cent of the voters due to its extremist ideological legacy of neo-nazism and extreme nationalism. When Jimmie Åkesson became party leader in 2005, the SD initiated a process of normalisation through ideological moderation, organisational restructuring, and distancing itself from the past, for example by excluding extremist groups and individuals. Immigration was not a salient issue at the time of the parliamentary breakthrough of the SD, but became so later, which is part of the explanation for the increasing electoral support in all the subsequent parliamentary elections and its position as the second largest party – after the Social Democratic Party – in the Swedish parliament and, since 2022, a support party to the centre-right minority coalition. Finally, the societal context before and after 2015 put pressure on Sweden – a state that used to be known for its liberal immigration policies – including increasing immigration levels, issues of gang criminality, and criminal penetration of the state. This contributed to the attractiveness of SD.

### **2. What are the political implications of the Sweden Democrats' electoral success?**

The establishment and electoral growth of the SD have radically transformed the Swedish political system. Indeed, the socio-cultural dimension has become a relevant political cleavage in the previously one-dimensional Swedish political system in which the socio-economic left-right used to structure party competition, voting patterns, and government formation. Government formation became particularly complicated in 2014, as well as in 2018, when the SD was a relevant party for government formation as neither the centre-right nor the centre-left controlled a majority. The other parliamentary parties set in place an isolationist strategy towards the SD at the time of its parliamentary breakthrough. Specifically, they declared that they would not negotiate or cooperate with the SD, triggering a process of political party repositioning that led to the disintegration of the two-bloc constellation between the centre-right

and the centre-left. The Centre party and the Liberals supported the centre-left government to ensure a parliamentary majority. After the refugee crisis in 2015 the government set in place more restrictive migration and integration policies, and the parties of the centre-right – the conservative party *Moderaterna* and the Christian Democratic party *Kristdemokraterna* – formulated more restrictive positions as well. This did not prevent the continued electoral growth of the SD, and after the parliamentary election in 2018, the two centre-right parties gradually opened up the door for talking and cooperating with the SD, of which the present government with the SD acting as a support party is the result. This cooperation is regulated by an agreement – *Tidöavtalet* – and the SD has been successful in pushing through their views on migration, integration, and criminal policies.

### **3. Are far-right politics normalized in Sweden?**

Yes, and this process has been rapid. The refugee crisis in 2015 was the starting point when all the parliamentary parties, except for the Centre party, the Greens, and the Left party, repositioned with restrictive positions on immigration, integration, and criminal policies. They have also adhered to the frames of the SD as to what are the explanations for the problems in Sweden, namely liberal migration policies, failed integration, and Islam as a culture foreign to Swedish values and traditions. As described above, the SD is normalised as a legitimate party to support the government and is included in the political majorities at the local and regional level. In 2022, the party leader Jimmy Åkesson was invited for the first time to the Nobel festivities, organised by the Nobel price foundation, which is a marginal, but yet indicative sign of the normalisation of the SD. Jimmy Åkesson declined the invitation, saying that he did not want to attend since representatives from Iran, Russia, and Belarus were also invited.

### **4. Did the Sweden Democrats' success influence European far-right parties and if so, how?**

The Sweden Democrats is presently one of the most successful populist radical right parties in the Nordic region and Europe. The party has arrived at this position by learning from other like-minded parties, most notably the Danish People's party, on organisation and strategy. As a member of the European Conservatives and Reformists group in the European Parliament, to which the Finns party returned this spring after a visit the Identity and Democracy group, the SD cultivates its relationship with the Finns party and has developed a relation with other far-right representatives. The SD youth association is particularly embedded in European national-conservative environments, most notably in Hungary. The SD has indeed drawn inspiration from other parties, but as a previously ostracized party attaining power, it would not be surprising if the AfD, in a similar situation, has learned lessons from the SD, as well as its closest allies, such as the Finns party.

### **5. How should left-wing political parties deal with the rise of the Swedish far-right?**

Well, this is a difficult question, but based on how the Swedish social democrats, and the party-associated trade unions have dealt with the SD, neither the initial

confrontation nor the post-2015 adaption has prevented the transfer of voters from the Social Democrats to the SD. The Social Democrats have, as the parties of the centre-right, adapted to SD positions, and recently published a report that their immigration and integration policies failed and have contributed to the present situation as to integration, gang criminality, etc. Whether the Swedish social democrats will attempt to outbid the radical right as the Danish Social Democrats have tried to do seems to be underway, but the effect of such a transition is difficult to predict in the Swedish case, as it would probably shake the party internally. The Social Democratic repositioning on Swedish membership in NATO has not been complicated and given the recent statements and reports from the leadership, we can expect that the Social Democrats are taking up the competition with the SD.

# REPORT ON THE ECPR GC2023 E&D SECTION

## POPULISMS BETWEEN ILLIBERALISM, ANTI-LIBERALISM AND POST-LIBERALISM

By section co-chairs Gianfranco Baldini and Hugo Canihac  
*University of Bologna and University of Strasbourg*

The section we had the pleasure of organizing at the ECPR General Conference 2023 in Prague, “Populisms Between Illiberalism, Anti-Liberalism and Post-Liberalism”, sought to cast a fresh light on a pressing issue: How is populism related to political liberalism and its increasingly popular challenger, ‘illiberalism’? While the tension between (democratic) popular sovereignty and (liberal) limitations on its exercise is far from new, this question has taken on increasing practical significance, as assaults against institutions and values at the heart of political liberalism – the rule of law, judicial independence, rights, pluralism, etc. – have become a hallmark of populist movements across the world – in Europe, Brazil, India, or the US. And yet, despite its booming uses, the meaning of illiberalism remains much contested conceptually, as well as unclear empirically. This section thus set out to understand the exact nature of the contemporary populist challenge to political liberalism.

The number of proposals received for this section, endorsed by the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism and Democracy, comforted us in believing that our research community had much to contribute in understanding these pressing issues. We received about 140 proposals, including 10 pre-structured panels, for only 10 panels initially allocated. While it was eventually possible to relocate some papers and panels to other sections (for which we are very thankful!), and to increase the number of panels up to 13, this considerable amount of proposals demonstrates the strength and dynamism of research on these issues. However, it also implied a high rate of rejection, and, therefore, long discussions and hard choices regarding some papers. In this regard, to be transparent as to our selection criteria, we have aimed at constructing coherent panels comprising the most promising papers, as well as reflecting the diversity of the ECPR community in terms of gender, career stage, nationality and subdisciplines.

The section brought into dialogue works on different contemporary (or, more rarely past) cases, from different regions of the world that often remain separate from each other. It also embraced methodological and theoretical pluralism to cover a broad variety of research questions – some allowing to take stock of existing research, others opening new avenues for future work. Several panels attempted to clarify the meaning(s) of illiberalism, by exploring contestations of liberal democracy in different contexts, and reflecting on the *Varieties of illiberalism* and on *Varieties of illiberal formulae across political parties, citizens, and civil society actors*. Others focused on *supply and demand* by analyzing individuals’ attitudes towards liberalism, as well as the evolving mobilization strategies of far-right parties, ranging from *mainstreaming* to *online activism*. Relatedly, the mobilization of *opponents to populist parties and leaders* was also scrutinized. Another group of panels were more specific in their discussions. Some explored



specific regions – namely *Latin America and Europe* – to assess how illiberalism and populism have recently reshaped their political landscape, while others concentrated on particular policy-areas affected by illiberal measures – as *gender and equality*. Finally, a last group of panels was dedicated to exploring newer issues emerging on the agenda of political science – from the *politics of post-truth* often connected to the raise of populism, to innovative *methodological approaches* in the study of these multifaceted and sometimes challenging phenomena.

All these panels generated lively – sometimes heated – discussions, and we believe this reflects the liveliness of research on populism and illiberalism today, in Europe and beyond. While it is not possible to summarize the wealth of debates generated during these discussions, a few points are especially worth highlighting. First, over the years, populism scholarship has come to strongly engage in fruitful dialogue with general questions of political science – in terms of supply and demand, of political leadership or of governmental practice. This move in part reflects the evolution of populist parties and movements themselves, and is illustrated by the growing number of reflections presented in Prague on the ‘mainstreaming’ of populist parties. Second, emerging research has undertaken to investigate new empirical fields (e.g. online activism, the politics of truth), thus extending the questions asked beyond the traditional issues dealt with by populism scholarship. Third, while research on populism has reached maturity, illiberalism remains a much-debated category. In particular, further research will need to carefully assess its origins and emergence, its coherence in light of the multiple forms it can take, and its usefulness to account for concrete policy processes. In this regard, collaborative work with political theorists or historians remains rather scarce. Finally, it appeared from the multiple cases analysed that illiberalism should not automatically be treated as a synonym of populism: Populist movements have different ways of being illiberal, and older mainstream parties or groups can on occasion recourse to illiberal tools. Thus, understanding in detail the interactions between populism and illiberalism will require further work.

The organization of such diverse panels, and the vibrant discussions this generated during the five days of sessions, as well as during the breaks was, as such, very rewarding for us. This was facilitated by the impeccable work of the organizing committee in Prague, and by the support of the Chairs of the Standing Group Léonie de Jonge, Daphne Halikiopoulou and Annika Werner, of the panel organizers, and of the presenters. We can only be grateful for this opportunity, and hope that this will be further carried on in next year’s conference at University College Dublin, Ireland.

## BOOK REVIEWS

MAGALI DELLA SUDDA. "LES NOUVELLES FEMMES DE DROITE."

HORS D'ATTEINTE 2022: 320p. 978-2-38257-028-9 9782382570289

Danka Lebreton

*University of Amsterdam (UvA), The Netherlands*

Published in 2022, Magali Della Sudda's new book *Les Nouvelles Femmes de Droite* ('The New Right-Wing Women') maps women's involvement in right-wing movements and parties in France in the past ten years. This book, written in French, sheds light on a diverse group of women and organizations that, each in their own way, have intertwined far-right ideas and theories about women. The author relies most heavily on content analysis sourced from online platforms utilized by right-wing movements, parties and figures like Facebook pages, YouTube videos, radio shows, media articles and websites, and draws on qualitative data like ethnographic work and interviews with movements' members.

Della Sudda's main hypothesis is that, in response to a push for gender equality by the socialist government in France between 2012 and 2017, conservative and religious networks reactivated, and in the following years fostered collaboration among various right-wing organizations to revive their political activism. The women presented in this book all criticize feminism's theorization of patriarchy, seeing modern feminism as a harmful movement that does not capture the problems of today's France. Most importantly, all of these women are activists in organizations promoting conservative or restitutionist political ideas, the former involving a willingness to preserve the current social and economic order and the latter referring to another right-wing stream that differentiates itself by a strong anti-capitalistic stance.

Each of the book's six chapters focuses on a different stream of the radical right, allowing Della Sudda to compare the different movements and how they make sense of women's causes in light of their political ideals. The book is organized as follows. The first chapter dives into the *Manif pour tous*, a movement going back to 2012-2013 against new laws allowing same-sex marriage and adoption. This catalyst moment, the author argues, has led to the (re)emergence of right-wing women's movements. The chapter explores how conservative individuals and associations mobilized in 2012 and 2013 fought against same-sex marriage and adoption. Chapter 2 focuses on *Les Caryatides*, a women-only nationalist organization. The chapter delves into the history of nationalist women's activism, while examining the organization's ties to other nationalist movements and emphasizing women's perspectives. Here nationalist women are understood as white, Catholic, and politicized subjects whose role is to reproduce and to culturally promote the nationalist identity. The following chapter introduces the

concept of 'femonationalism' as first theorized by Farris<sup>1</sup>. The author highlights the ways in which the *Front National* (today: *Rassemblement National*) has attempted to interconnect the topics of immigration and the related feelings of insecurity to women's interests. She also discusses the amplifying role of social media with regard to femonationalist discourses. The fourth chapter illuminates the identitarian current, exploring how groups like *Génération Identitaire* strategize to appear more feminine, while analyzing women's roles within these male-dominated movements. The chapter also discusses women's movements, like *Belle et Rebelle* and *Collectif Nemesis*, presenting their founders, organizational development, and framing of women within the identitarian ideology. Chapter 5 focuses on conservative femininity, addressing how certain right-wing women's organizations understand women's role in society differently than modern feminism, through a 'restitutionist' lens. For example, the *Antigones*, a women's organization thoroughly studied throughout the chapter, advocates for a return to nature and anti-capitalist society framing devoted motherhood as women's ultimate role. The final chapter explains the notions of alterfeminism, integral feminism and conservative eco-feminism, while exploring their interconnections. Marianne Durano's integral feminism is tied to a right-wing understanding of 'ecology', in which feminism does not deny the specific nature of women and advocates for the protection of all forms of life through anti-abortion and anti-euthanasia stances. The conclusion also circles back to *La Manif pour Tous*, providing a comprehensive analysis overall.

Della Sudda's work is to be greatly appreciated. The studied movements are thoroughly presented with abundant details and relevant examples. This approach ensures clarity about the history and context of the movements and their attached political ideas. The recurring comparisons between the movements allow us to understand the uniqueness of each stream and its specificities. Key definitions thoughtfully provided before the introduction, coupled with the clear language used throughout the book, makes the author's work engaging, comprehensible and most importantly accessible to a broad readership, including to non-academic audiences with limited familiarity with social sciences. The book sheds light on a very broad topic, discussing right-wing women on a large spectrum from nationalists and identitarians to integral feminists.

However, the breadth of this book may come at the expense of in-depth analysis. The author provides a general understanding of these movements but does not attempt to relate examples back to the academic literature as much as some may expect. Additionally, knowledge on far-right movements becomes rapidly outdated due to frequent dissolutions and high turnover rates. Hence, some information in the book is already obsolete, emphasizing the importance of considering its timeliness while reading.

As we know, women are very underrepresented in the far-right sphere. While there exist a few research articles studying the presence of women in the French

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<sup>1</sup>Farris, S. R. (2017). *In the Name of Women's Rights*. Duke University Press; JSTOR. <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.uba.uva.nl/stable/j.ctv11sn2fp>.

far-right and right-wing sphere, a majority of them concentrate on the Rassemblement National. There is a noticeable gap in research when it comes to women's role in less formal right-wing movements, particularly those centered on women's issues with exclusively female memberships. *Les Nouvelles Femmes de Droite* thus deserves acknowledgement for bridging an important gap in the academic literature and acting as a starting point for researchers interested in diving into this topic themselves. In conclusion, this work provides a solid foundation for individuals wishing to gain a broad knowledge of how women's cause and right-wing political ideas have converged in the French context today.

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Our publication alert is based on a semi-automated search and can never be complete. Therefore, please tell us about any **recent** publications of interest to Standing Group members so that we may include them in our newsletter.

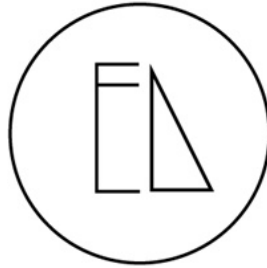
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