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Newsletter of the ECPR Standing Group on Extremism and Democracy

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STANDING GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMBERSHIP

The ECPR has recently made some improvements to the way its Standing Groups are presented on its website. These are designed primarily to provide more information in more user-friendly format to people who might be interested in joining a Standing Group. These developments also enable people to join a Group at the click of a button, via the ECPR website.

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 an ECPR member institution your membership to the Standing Group is automatic. If you are from a non-member institution we will need to accept your application to join, so you 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.

A second key change, is that membership to all Standing Groups is now annual, running calendar year. *You will therefore be asked to renew your membership in January each year*. This is the same process as joining, and only takes one click of a button.

Should you have any queries at all about this please do not hesitate to contact us at info@extremism-and-democracy.com or the ECPR at standinggroups@ecpr.eu.

KEEP US INFORMED

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

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

Finally, if you would like to get involved in the production of the newsletter, the development of our website, or any of the other activities of the Standing Group then please do contact us. We are always very keen to involve

more members in the running of the Standing Group! Email us at: info@extremism-and-democracy.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL FOR PAPERS: SECOND PRAGUE POPULISM CONFERENCE

Location and date: Prague, 23-24 May 2016 For further details: http://populism.fsv.cuni.cz/

The Institute for International Studies Charles University in Prague together with Heinrich Böll Stiftung organizes on 23 and 24 May 2016 the 2nd Prague Populism Conference titled "Current Populism in Europe: Impact on the Political Landscape". The conference is dedicated to a comparative analysis of individual EU member states where populism represents an important element of politics.

Within this context and aiming to explore populism from various conceptual, empirical and methodological perspectives, the conference encourages papers in the following topics:

- 1) Conceptualization and approaches towards "new" European populism
- 2) Populist attitudes towards refugees and migrants
- 3) Populism and new social movements in Europe
- 4) Welfare chauvinism and entrepreneurs in politics
- 5) Impact of populism on the political culture and political mainstream

Confirmed speakers: Hélene Miard-Delacroix (Paris-Sorbonne University), Paul Taggart (University of Sussex), Daniele Albertazzi (University of Birmingham), Takis S. Pappas (European University Institute, Florence).

Applicants are invited to submit abstracts of up to 300 words and short CVs to mejstrik.m@fsv.cuni.cz by 29 February 2016. Accepted papers will be announced on 15 March 2016. There is no conference fee for participants.

More details will follow on the conference website, where you can find a summary of the previous edition of the conference (http://populism.fsv.cuni.cz/). Any queries can be directed to the conference email address: mejstrik.m@fsv.cuni.cz

CALL FOR PAPERS: FRINGE POLITICAL PARTIES IN SOUTHEAST AND EASTERN EUROPE

Location and date: Ghent University, 9-10 May 2016

Organiser: Centre for EU Studies (Ghent University) together with the UACES Collaborative Research Network "Fringe Politics in Southeast Europe" For further details: http://www.cer.qmul.ac.uk/UACES%20Network/index.html

Abstract

Post-authoritarian transition in Southeast Europe (SEE) and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has proved particularly challenging for the consolidation of formal democratic politics. This is especially the case in the post-conflict territories in Former Yugoslavia, but also other countries in SEE and in CEE have been struggling with the liberal transformation of the successor states. The countries in these two regions span the spectrum of EU integration, from longstanding post-authoritarian Member States (Greece) and more recent postsocialist expansion of the EU (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia), to candidates (FYROM, Montenegro, Albania, Serbia) and potential candidates (Bosnia, Kosovo) in the Western Balkans. Thus far, however, existing research on politics in SEE largely ignores domestic political agency, particularly with regard to political actors (parties and movements) 'at the margins'. Indeed, to date the study of politics in SEE is often reduced to the institutionalised elites from the majority political parties and the influence of the EU and other international actors and events on these elites. To a lesser extent, this is also true for research on CEE. Moreover, comparative studies are lacking. The series of exogenous 'shocks' that has recently swiped through the region, namely the sovereign debt crisis, the refugee crisis and – in some cases - the growing assertiveness of Russia, is currently challenging the conventional consensus politics and is fueling Eurosceptic and anti-EU sentiment.

The central aim of this workshop is to explore and gain a better understanding of the political parties 'at the margins' in SEE and CEE, including those espousing anti-EU or Eurosceptic discourses. In particular, the workshop would like to chart the impact of those recent external shocks on the political choices, strategies, tactics and relevance on fringe parties and their political elites in SEE. Comparative analysis of countries within SEE and CEE is encouraged.

The workshop welcomes papers that focus on one or more of the following questions:

- To what extent have external shocks given rise to the emergence of radical parties at the fringes of established party systems in SEE and CEE?
- How have fringe parties in SEE and CEE been reacting to the recent external shocks?
- How does this compare to 'internal shocks' as also being catalysts for the consolidation of fringe political parties?
- To what extent do fringe parties in SEE and CEE (try to) challenge the status quo in their countries as a result of the recent external shocks?
- What impact does the emergence of fringe parties have on the actions of established parties in SEE and CEE in light of the recent external shocks?
- How have political parties at the fringes gained electoral support in recent local and/or national (and/or European) elections in SEE and CEE?
- What is the relationship between recent social movements and 'fringe' parties?
- How about the link between populism both exclusive and inclusive and fringe political parties?
- What is the role of personalistic fringe parties?
- Does the European level provide an opportunity structure for fringe parties in SEE and CEE?

The workshop's geographic definition of SEE includes Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania, Bosnia, FYROM, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania and Serbia. Central and Eastern Europe comprises Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic. Relevant comparisons between SEE and CEE countries are equally welcomed. The goals of the workshop are to provide insights into the political strategies and tactics of fringe parties in these countries and to discuss the impacts these actors may have for the meaning of democracy in the two regions. The workshop welcomes papers that engage with fringe political parties that cannot be considered "mainstream", including – but not limited to – far right and far left parties, Muslim parties and ethnic minority parties.

We are looking for contributions in the form of contextualized case studies, focusing on one or two fringe parties or offering a comparative perspective within or across SEE or Eastern European countries, or between SEE countries and other post-socialist countries in Eastern Europe. We welcome both quantitative analyses (e.g. based on electoral data from local and/or national polls) and qualitative analyses (e.g. based on content analysis of political party manifestoes).

Participation by junior researchers is encouraged. The aim of the workshop is to publish a selection of the papers from the event in a peer-reviewed journal special issue or edited book.

To propose a paper, please send an abstract (up to 500 words) and a short biographical note (200 words) to ceusghent@gmail.com by 31 January 2016. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by 15 February 2016.

Accommodation will be fully covered. Full drafts (6,000-8,000 words) of the papers should be sent to the workshop organizers by 20 April 2016.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS: A MODERN HISTORY OF POLITICS AND VIOLENCE

Series Editor: Paul Jackson, University of Northampton, UK

A Modern History of Politics and Violence is a new book series that scrutinises the variegated histories of political violence in the modern world. It publishes research monographs, edited collections and reference works that explore the movements, cultural settings and wider contexts that have allowed political violence to become seen as, somehow, desirable. As well as considering the protagonists of violence, the series also examines the impact of violence on victims, and its longer-term implications for modern societies too.

Current titles in the series explore themes such as European fascism and genocide, but the series is also seeking submissions that explore contexts beyond Europe, examining political violence in in Asian, African and the American settings too. Moreover, it seeks proposals that engage with themes such as gender, politicized faith, and transnationalism in relation to political violence.

A Modern History of Politics and Violence encourages submissions from leading and established scholars as well as early career academics.

We welcome proposals for new books in the series

We are keen to continue the growth of the series and are actively looking for proposals for future volumes. If you have a proposal that you think may fit, please do get in touch with the publisher or series editor, details below. We will be delighted to give you feedback on your idea, and guarantee a swift response to any enquiries: Series Editor | Paul Jackson, Senior Lecturer in History, School of Social Sciences, University of Northampton, Park Campus, Boughton Green Road, Northampton, NN2 7AL

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Recent and Forthcoming titles:

- A British Fascist in the Second World War: The Italian War Diary of James Strachey Barnes, 1943-45, Claudia Baldoli & Brendan Fleming (2014)
- British Fascist Antisemitism and Jewish Responses, 1932-40, Daniel Tilles (2014)
- Civil Uprisings in Modern Sudan: the 'Khartoum Springs' of 1964 and 1985, W. J. Berridge (2015)
- Transnational Fascism in the Twentieth Century: Spain, Italy and the Global Right-Wing Extremist Network, Matteo Albanese and Pablo del Hierro (2016)
- A Comparative History of Persecution and Victim Experience: Colonisation, Slavery and the Holocaust, Kitty Millet (2016)
- Colin Jordan and Britain's Neo-Nazi Social Movement: Hitler's Echo, Paul Jackson (2016)

ANNOUNCEMENT: VOX-Pol

VOX-Pol is an EU Framework Programme 7-funded academic research network focused on researching the prevalence, contours, functions, and impacts of violent online political extremism and responses to it. In December 2015, VOX-Pol launched an Online Library on its website: <u>www.voxpol.eu</u>. The Library currently lists over 250 publications related to various aspects of violent extremism and terrorism and the Internet, which makes it the biggest such collection available in one place online today. Users can download open access material directly or, where the material is protected by copyright, are taken directly to the publisher version. The Library contains publications in a variety of formats, including audio and video, and is fully searchable.

VOX-Pol's Online Library's contents will be updated on a regular basis by promptly adding access and/or links to new material as it is published. As the resource is meant for use by those researching, teaching, or otherwise tasked in relation to violent online political extremism, VOX-Pol also welcomes suggestions for material that you think should be added to the Library, whether authored by you or others. All such suggestions and any other feedback should be emailed to: onlinelibrary@voxpol.eu.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST RIGHT-WING TERRORISM - PERSPECTIVES FROM POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY AND THE SOCIOLOGY OF LAW

University of Applied Sciences, Duesseldorf, Germany, 4-5 December 2015

By Fabian Virchow (University of Applied Sciences, Duesseldorf)

The interdisciplinary conference "Legal Proceedings against Right-Wing Terrorism - Perspectives from Political Sociology and the Sociology of Law" taking place from 4-5 December 2015 at the University of Applied Sciences in Duesseldorf aimed at examining the existing sociological research on the impact of right-wing extremist crimes. The conference has been set up to discuss some possible answers to the various questions raised when talking about right-wing extremism.

The conference has been organized by the sections Political Sociology and Sociology of Law of the German Sociological Association, in cooperation with the Research Unit on Right-Wing Extremism at Duesseldorf University of Applied Sciences.

In the introduction Fabian Virchow emphasized the interdisciplinary constellation of the speakers – with expertise from law, sociology and history - and how it could contribute to a differentiated and sophisticated view on the topic. The impact of litigations on the political landscape, their similarities and differences with respect to application of current law and the balance between security and freedom has been analyzed from multiple perspectives.

Beatrice de Graaf (Utrecht) presented her narrative and associative approach of a "performative perspective on terrorism trials". She explained how the litigations serve a variety of purposes, and that these differ depending on the interests of he involved actors.

Maik Fielitz (Frankfurt) dealt with the prospects and pitfalls of the legal proceedings against the Greek neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn. 2013 party chairman Michaloliakos and several other members of the party leadership have been arrested with the charges of forming a criminal organization.

Tore Bjorgo gave an insight into strategies used in the legal proceedings against Anders Breivik, and how these changed during the process. The attack committed by Breivik July 22, 2012 drew the attention of the global community, amongst other factors because of its' high degree of complexity, the extreme brutality, the high number of victims, as well as their often very young age.

Galadriel Ravelli (Bath) demonstrated the balance of power between national and international actors in the case of the attempted murder of the Chilean Christian Democrats Bernardo Leighton. Leighton, a former vice president, has been one of the few who stood up against the coup d'état of Pinochet in 1973, and lived in exile in Rome at the time of the attempted murder.

Matthew Feldman (Teesside) opened the second day of the symposium with an examination of the extent to which the consumption and the creation of neo-Nazi literature - postings, instructions or manifestos – could lead, or at least contribute, to the actual commission of a crime.

Marc Schwietring (Göttingen) conducts, together with Samuel Salzborn (not present), research of the currently ongoing NSU Trial. In this trial, as in the preceding investigational procedure, the democratic shortcomings of the current German judicial system are becoming apparent.

Joost van Spanje (Amsterdam) presented his research project "Defending democracy or damaging democracy?" which will start in 2016. In this project, the research team is dealing with the question of what effect legal actions against far right parties and the prosecutions of their leaders, as well as the prospect of a potential party ban, have on their electoral support.

Badrinath Rao's (Flint) presentation pointed out the growing power of Hindu-dominated nationalism in India and related right-wing extremist acts of terrorism. In one of the most densely populated countries on this planet, the Hindu-nationalists supply a comfortable majority of the government.

As a closure of the conference, Massimiliano Livi (Münster) and Hartmut Aden (Berlin) were invited to give a short comment on their perspectives of the discussed topics.

Key questions that arose included whether the performance of the relevant actors in judicial proceedings concerning terrorist attacks were more important than the offense committed. Further, does the strengthening of farright groups have its roots in current social developments within our societies?

The conference facilitated a more holistic and multi-faceted discussion of common points of interests between academics of different disciplines. It thereby contributed to a further development of this strand of research, in which many questions are still unanswered and many aspects still unexplored. By bringing diverse areas of expertise together, and thus a plurality in theoretical and methodological approaches, the conference casted light on the question of how modern democracies should deal with right-wing extremism.

BOOK REVIEWS

FRANCE AND FASCISM: FEBRUARY 1934 AND THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICAL CRISIS

Brian Jenkins and Chris Millington, eds. (London: Routledge, 2015), 201 pp., ISBN: 1138860336, £90 (hbk).

Reviewed by Lewis Young Teesside University

Given the current political situation in France, and indeed across Europe and America, France and Fascism: February 1934 and the Dynamics of Political Crisis is an especially relevant collection of essays that would prove useful to scholars of both historical and contemporary fascism. Published as part of the new Routledge Studies in Fascism and the Far Right series, Brian Jenkins and Chris Millington have produced a forensic analysis of the events of *six fevrier* and its place within the political narrative of France and its political groups. The authors have carried out new research, and examined a varied number of themes and issues surrounding the February events – the nature of the veterans' movements, the role of 'conspiracy', and the aftermath, to name but three. In doing this, Jenkins and Millington challenge the assumption perpetuated by 'immunity thesis' scholars – those who see the February events as exceptional to France, not part of wider context – that the riots were of no threat to French democracy.

The primary focus of this book is to tackle what Jenkins regards as the 'shaky methodological foundations' on which the 'standard interpretation of six fevrier rests'. Jenkins sees three major issues with the prevailing view of the February events: its teleological approach which has seen many scholars argue in favour a linear presentation of French history and the appointment of Gaston Doumergue as Prime Minister as the outcome; the parochialism of its proponents which has resulted in a 'blindness to the transnational dimensions of historical change'; and the emphasis on the so-called 'longue durée' which ignores the impact of events such as the Great War and Russian Revolution. The 'immunity thesis' scholars are challenged for their inconsistent position which sees them accept the Great War and Russian Revolution as instrumental in changing the external context of Europe, but leaving the internal political context of France untouched. One example used to counter this oversimplification is the birth and growth of the veterans' leagues in interwar France. While Jenkins and Millington accept that these leagues followed in the tradition of right-wing extra-parliamentarianism such as the Catholic Action Française, they are keen to stress that the leagues were also 'a response to developments in French politics, informed at once by the experience of their pre-war counterparts, and a broader trend in post-war European extreme rightwing politics'. Thus the leagues were to some degree replicating what was happening in places like Germany and Italy, and responding to the rise of Communism as much as the malaise of the French Third Republic. Nor, do the authors argue, were the leagues distinct from the veterans' associations that existed alongside them. As Millington shows, membership to both were fluid and the politics of the biggest association – the *Union Nationale des Combattants* – often chimed with the those leagues regarded by 'immunity thesis' scholars as away from the mainstream. In doing this, Millington shows that the February events are multi-faceted, and cannot discount factors external to France.

Other topics are tackled with the same forensic approach. The lack of a coordinated plan - so often held up as 'evidence' that the event was not an attempted coup, is shown to be inadequate, with Jenkins succinctly arguing that this is based on the flawed analysis that Hitler and Mussolini's rise to power were as a result of a fascist coup d'état. That both were brought into government via the democratic process shows us the manner in which some historians have cherry-picked events to suit their argument. Furthermore, Jenkins argues that the conspiracies - even if imagined - only helped to fuel the beliefs of the French left and right, opening up a series of potential outcomes rather than one circumscribed end-point. In another chapter, Millington rejects the triumphalism of 'immunity thesis' scholars who see the failure of the leagues to execute the - now rejected notion - coup as a blow for French democracy. Rather Millington suggests that due to the numerous possible outcomes, the February events acted a 'mobilising myth' for anti-parliamentary groups, and forced them to shift tactics. Moreover, the removal of Daladier and his replacement as Prime minister by Doumergue, suggests that, at least in the short term, the leagues' had had some success.

Ultimately, Jenkins and Millington argue that 'what has to be rejected is any idea that the Republic was protected against authoritarian overthrow by its democratic "political culture". Firstly, they argue that a single culture is 'absurd' and deterministic. In reality France in the interwar period should be seen in a wider European context. Moreover, this theory of democratic immunity is a dangerous stance to take as it allows political parties to ignore an active far-right. This book is a timely reminder of the dangers of complacency – a complacency perpetuated by 'immunity thesis' historians. The French Front National, like the French Right and leagues before it, was defeated in recent weeks not because of the robustness of France's 'political culture' but due to a system that favours 'two-way' elections and political coalitions. Only now does it appear that the mainstream parties of France are beginning to understand that this may not always be enough.

THE IDEOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF THE DIRTY WAR. FASCISM, POPULISM, AND DICTATORSHIP IN TWENTIETH CENTURY ARGENTINA

Federico Finchelstein (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 214 pp., ISBN 9780199930241, \$58 (hardback).

Reviewed by Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser Universidad Diego Portales

Argentina has always captured the imagination of academics and pundits alike. This is partly explained by the fact that this Latin American country very often produces unexpected political, social and economic outcomes. For instance, at the beginning of the 20th century Argentina was one of the wealthiest nations in the world. Yet, instead of integrating to the 'developed world' the country suffered a series of economic shocks and several political crises during the 20th century. At the same time, although Argentina was an agrarian society at the beginning of the 20th century, the Congress established the universal, secret and compulsory male suffrage in 1912, converting the country in a pioneer in matters of enfranchisement. Last but not least, despite its history of political instability and military interventions, Argentine democracy survived the 2002-3 economic collapse, which was the most severe depression in the country's history.

Federico Finchelstein's book should be seen as a novel attempt to gain a better understanding of Argentina's paradoxical nature. The paradox analyzed in the book is a fascinating one for those interested in extremism and democracy, namely, how is it possible that a dictatorship took place in a country that has been characterized by a robust middle class with strong liberal credentials? As the author affirms at the beginning of the book, "[o]ne of the reasons I became a historian was because I wanted to understand how the so-called Dirty War could have become a reality in a modern nation with a strong, progressive civil society" (p. 1). Just to clarify, the Dirty War – or *guerra sucia* in Spanish – was the name used by the Argentine military junta for the process of state terrorism and political cleansing that the country underwent between 1974 and 1983.

To answer the question of why Argentina experienced a brutal military dictatorship, Finchelstein shows that the country has a long history of extreme right thinking and behavior, which has permeated various political leaders and organizations. In fact, according to him, "[t]he Dirty War [...] needs to be explained in terms of the country's fascist genealogies" (p. 3). This means that despite its liberal character, Argentina always has had influential groups, which flirted with authoritarian ideas. In this regard, the key group that Finchelstein identifies is the nationalists: a set of intellectuals, who at the beginning of the 20th century denounced the negative effects of European immigration, were against communism and promoted a dictatorial form of government. An important aspect of the ideology of the nationalists was their emphasis on internal enemies, who allegedly were harming the moral foundations of the nation. The nationalists were relevant for the Argentine Patriotic League (a right-wing paramilitary force that was established in the early 1920s) as well as for various of the key figures behind the 1930 coup of José Felix Uriburu, who was in power until 1932.

After analyzing the ideological origins of Uriburu's dictatorship, in chapter 2 ("Catholic fascist ideology in Argentina") and chapter 3 ("Anti-Semitism, sex, and Christianity"), Finchelstein examines the evolution of the thinking and behavior of the nationalists and their allies, in particular the Catholic Church. Subsequently, the book includes a chapter titled "Peronist populism and fascism", in which the author not only offers a detailed account of the peculiarities of Peronism, but also explains why the latter despite its connections with Mussolini's and Hitler's political project cannot be seen as an example of fascism. In his own words: "If the question is asked if Perón was a fascist, the answer is no. But fascism did play an important role in the ideological genesis of Peronist populism" (p. 65). According to Finchelstein, there are three key differences between fascism and Peronism: (1) while fascism used democracy to destroy it and establish a dictatorship, Peronism originated in a military dictatorship but ended up establishing a populist democracy; (2) whereas fascism mobilized the middle classes, Peronism rallied the working class¹; and (3) "[w]hile fascism gave war, imperialism, and racism to Europe and the world, Peronism never provoked war" (p.72). Although Finchelstein does not offer a clear definition of populism per se, the arguments advanced in this chapter are interesting for thinking about the very topical debate about the ambivalent relationship between populism and democracy. In effect, he shows that Perón came to power through democratic elections but once in government he "[...] combined the expansion of social rights with the limitation of political rights. This novel form of politics later became the classic form of Latin American populism. An authoritarian version of electoral democracy, populism invokes the name of the people [...] to solve a perceived crisis of representation by suppressing democratic checks and balances" (p. 66).

An interesting aspect of the analysis of Peronism advanced by Finchelstein is that he shows that many nationalists became disappointed with Perón as he was not as radical as they wanted. As consequence, many of these disappointed nationalists radicalized their discourse and actions by supporting paramilitary organizations, which became highly relevant during the 1950s and 1960s. These paramilitary organizations not only polarized and terrorized society, but also played a key role during the last military dictatorship in Argentina (1976-1983). In fact, chapter 5 and chapter 6 are focused on the

¹ To support this argument, Finchelstein refers to the classic work of Gino Germani (1978), who was probably influenced by the arguments advanced by Seymour Martin Lipset (1960). However, Finchelstein does not take into account more recent literature, which shows that Nazi Germany mobilized not only the middle classes but also – and to a great extent – the working class. In this regard, see for instance, Fischer (1996).

analysis of the formation and evolution of two paramilitary organizations – Tacura and the Triple A – as well as the ideology of the Argentine dictatorship. Finally, the book concludes with a short epilogue, in which the author summarizes the main ideas of the manuscript, putting special emphasis on the influence that the nationalists have had on Argentine political culture.

All in all, this is a fascinating book for those who are interested in understanding the peculiarities of Argentina, particularly when it comes to making sense of the very rise of the military junta in a country with a robust middle class with strong liberal credentials. By offering a detailed history of the origins and evolution of radical right ideas in Argentina, Finchelstein sheds new light on the long history of political violence in this country. Nevertheless, the book can in some ways be disappointing for scholars who seek to find clear conceptualizations (e.g. fascism or populism) that can be used for studying other political realities.

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