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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 (extremismanddemocracy@gmail.com).

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STANDING GROUP ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear *e-Extreme* readers,

Happy new year from us at *e-Extreme*!

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’.

Please do get in touch with your contributions and ideas. In the meantime, take care.

WELCOME TO NEW E&D STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee of the Standing Group is stepping down at the end of 2021, after seven (Andrea and Stijn) and four (Caterina) wonderful years in post. We would like to share the results of the recent SG Steering Committee election, which confirmed the following successors: **Léonie de Jonge** (University of Groningen), **Daphne Halikiopoulou** (University of Reading), and **Annika Werner** (Australian National University). A warm welcome to the newcomers. You will be hearing from the new Steering Committee in January 2022.

The outgoing Committee members – Caterina Froio (Sciences Po), Andrea L. P. Pirro (Scuola Normale Superiore), and Stijn van Kessel (Queen Mary University of London) – would like to thank everyone who cast a vote in the recent elections and everyone who has helped sustain and develop the SG over the years. It takes nice people to build a healthy community and it has been a privilege to be able to count on the affection and support of the members of this SG.

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: extremismanddemocracy@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: extremismanddemocracy@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

3rd SUMMER SCHOOL ON ‘CONCEPTS AND METHODS FOR RESEARCH ON FAR-RIGHT POLITICS’

We are delighted to announce that the call for applications for the 3rd E&D Summer School on ‘Concepts and Methods for Research on Far-Right Politics’ will open mid-January 2022.

The event will take place at Sciences Po, Paris, 4-8 July 2022, and include the following keynote speakers and instructors: Cas Mudde, Nonna Mayer, Tore Bjørgo, Kathleen Blee, Linda Bos, Pietro Castelli Gattinara, Maura Conway, Caterina Froio, Andrea Pirro, and Andrej Zaslove.

THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE FAR RIGHT WEBINAR SERIES

This webinar series, co-organized by the Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX) and International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), aims to highlight far right milieus in geographical areas traditionally under-researched in studies of the far right, namely, beyond Europe and North America. It takes a global approach towards situating the far right landscape across Asia, Australasia, Africa, and Latin America. Sign up to receive invitations for this webinar series.

The series is moderated by Dr. Eviane Leidig (ICCT) and Professor Cas Mudde (C-REX and University of Georgia, US).

For more information see: <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/events/2021/global-perspectives-on-the-far-right/>

RESEARCHING THE FAR RIGHT: METHODS AND ETHICS WEBINAR SERIES

This webinar series, co-organized by Polarization and Extremism and Research Innovation Lab (PERIL) and the Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), aims to initiate and facilitate a much needed discussion about the methodological,

ethical, political, personal, practical and professional issues and challenges that arise when researching far right parties, protest movements, and violent actions. The topics addressed in the webinars are largely inspired by the volume ‘Researching the Far Right: Theory, Method and Practice’ (Routledge, 2020) edited by Stephen Ashe, Joel Busher, Aaron Winter and Graham Macklin. The webinars are moderated by Cathrine Thorleifsson (C-REX) and Brian Hughes (PERIL).

For more information see: <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/events/2021/webinar-methods-ethics/>

RIGHTNOW! BLOG (CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON EXTREMISM)

On the “RightNow!” blog you will find commentary, analysis and reflection by C-REX’s researchers and affiliates on topics related to contemporary far right politics, including party politics, subcultural trends, militancy, violence, and terrorism. “RightNow!” also provides a platform for republishing op-eds by our core team of experts (with due acknowledgement of course) which have been published by newspapers and on other blogs in order to further highlight the breadth of our work here at C-REX. To submit proposals and comments, contact the RightNow! editor Iris Beau Segers.

For more information see: <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/right-now/>

BOOK REVIEWS

LÉONIE DE JONGE

THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF RIGHT-WING POPULIST PARTIES IN THE BENELUX COUNTRIES

ROUTLEDGE, 2021. 224 PP. ISBN 9780367502515

Petr Oskolkov

Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences

This book presents an extremely useful theoretical and empirical overview of the right-wing populist parties of the Benelux countries. The book's basic premise is that the classic demand and supply paradigm is insufficient to explain both the success as well as the failure of populist actors. Indeed, right-wing *populism* in Western Europe is commonly researched as a success story of this "pathological normalcy" (Mudde, 2010). The failures of populists, however, remain understudied. One exception to this neglect was the attention paid to the absence of successful right-wing populist parties in southern Europe, yet this is no longer at issue since populist contenders such as Vox (Spain) and Chega (Portugal) have filled that void.

What makes the book under review especially important for populism scholars is that Léonie de Jonge draws our attention to two relatively neglected research problems. First, in countries that are politically, historically, and culturally quite similar to each other, why has right-wing populism had such different fates? This problem is analysed in the book by juxtaposing the Netherlands and Flanders to Wallonia and Luxemburg. Second, what is the role of mainstream parties and the media in the rise of right-wing populist contenders? The latter question is answered by leaving aside the well-established demand-and-supply explicative scheme. As shown by the example of the Benelux states, even if supply structures are abundant and demand grows steadily, a party cannot gain electoral success without a more broadly understood political opportunity structure. This structure includes the ways in which mainstream political parties behave. If they fully reject any cooperation with the right-wing populists and avoid co-opting their standpoints on immigration and the EU, a populist actor is highly unlikely to succeed (as has been the case in Luxemburg and Wallonia). The strategy adopted by traditional media is also of utmost importance, since the media is the main tool used by populists to attract votes. If media outlets totally ignore populist actors and try not to politicize the issues salient to their electorate then populists are

further obstructed. This strategy, however, may prove extremely difficult for a newspaper or a TV channel to pursue: if they follow the path of a business structure, they are incentivised, whether they like it or not, to react to the popular demands of their customers. This problem may be solved by adopting a formalized *cordon sanitaire* in the media against the right-wing politicians. Yet while it seems de Jonge is cautiously positive about the *cordon* imposed by the media actors and the political parties in Wallonia, the southern region of Belgium, I am more doubtful regarding its feasibility, and how sustainable such a strategy is for the future.

Last but not least, the methodology employed by the author is also worth mentioning. It is a qualitative study, based on numerous interviews with politicians and media practitioners, as well as secondary sources. De Jonge provides not only a political scientist's perspective, but also an almost encyclopedic historical overview of the far-right in Belgium, Luxemburg, and the Netherlands, which makes the book valuable not only for populism scholars, but also for historians and all those interested in the political processes in the Low Countries. De Jonge claims to employ the ideational approach to populism – one of the three most widespread in the political science, i.e., ideational, strategic, and discursive (Gidron & Bonikowski, 2013). The most widely cited authors writing within that approach are Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (2017), who understand right-wing populism as a (thin-centered) ideology of its own. However, it seems to me that De Jonge's research is rather situated at the crossroads of several approaches: her minimal definition also has some traits inherent to the discursive approach (Laclau, 2018; Moffitt, 2020), since she understands right-wing populist parties as parties that "follow a rightist ideology and employ a populist style" (de Jonge, 2021, p. 31).

To sum up, the new book by Léonie de Jonge is able to broaden the research horizons of populism studies and goes beyond a simple case study. By comparing the cases using a MSDO (most similar cases, different outcomes) strategy, the author provides valuable findings regarding the explanations for the success (and failures) of right-wing populist parties in general, and proposes some interesting tracks for further research in this field.

Petr Oskolkov (PhD in Political Science) is Senior Researcher at the Institute of Europe within the Russian Academy of Sciences, where he is head of the Center for the Studies of Ethnic Politics. Currently, he lectures at MGIMO University (Moscow) and at Lomonosov Moscow State University.

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RAKIB EHSAN AND PAUL STOTT

FAR-RIGHT TERRORIST MANIFESTOS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

HENRY JACKSON SOCIETY, 2020. 28 PP. £9.95. ISBN: 978-1-909035-55-3.

Callum Downes

University of Exeter

The publication of pre-attack manifestos by far-right terrorists has been a prominent component of politically inspired violence for some years (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 3). For instance, Anders Breivik's pre-attack manifesto "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence" received global attention following his far-right inspired terrorist attacks in Norway (Kundnani, 2012). However, many recent far-right inspired terrorist attacks have been carried out by people who are not associated with traditional far-right organisations but are part of a looser transnational far-right movement (Mulhall, 2021: 12-13). In order to understand the theoretical motivation behind this type of violence and contribute to the development of effective political responses for tackling far-right terrorism, Dr Rakib Ehsan and Dr Paul Stott's report "Far-Right Terrorist Manifestos: A Critical Analysis" conducts a qualitative assessment of three 2019 far-right terrorist manifestos to provide insight into the ideological convergence and divergence of far-right terrorism (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 4-5).

Ehsan and Stott begin their qualitative assessment of far-right terrorist manifestos by exploring Brenton Tarrant's "The Great Replacement". Its analysis reveals that the belief that Muslim migrants are replacing white people is dominant throughout (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 6-8). In order to address this perceived demographic and cultural threat that Muslims allegedly pose, Tarrant's manifesto aspires for an 'uprising across "brother nations"', reflecting the growing effort among the far-right to form a cross-continental alliance (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 6). It may be of surprise that Tarrant documents his support for left-leaning economic policies, referring to unionisation, the minimum wage, and the threat

posed by profit-driven corporations (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 6). Following their analysis of Tarrant's manifesto, Ehsan and Stott examine John Earnest's "An Open Letter". Much like Tarrant's manifesto, Earnest shares a concern about the replacement of white people; however, Earnest blames this perceived threat on an "international Jewry". (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 9). The two manifestos can be further differentiated on the grounds of Christian-fundamentalism, as Earnest frames the Jewish-sponsored replacement as not only ethnic but also a religious matter (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 9-10). Earnest also documents the inspiration he drew from Tarrant's far-right attack for his terrorist attack (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 11). Finally, Ehsan and Stott turn their attention to Patrick Crusius's "The Inconvenient Truth". Much like Earnest, Crusius also expresses his support for Tarrant's terrorist attack and the belief that white people are being replaced in a demographic and cultural sense (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 12). In contrast with Tarrant and Earnest, Crusius's manifesto is distinctly more local in its focus, centring on the perceived invasion of Hispanic people in Texas (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 12). However, like Tarrant, Crusius's pre-attack manifesto documents support for left-leaning economic policies (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 13-14).

Following this qualitative assessment of each pre-attack manifesto, the report critically analyses the content discussed in chapters two to four. Renaud Camus's great replacement theory is identified as a common ideological influence, with each manifesto referring to this concept (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 15). Additionally, 'older neo-Nazi ideals' are also recognised as influential for Tarrant and Earnest's manifestos, with William Pierce's *The Turner Diaries* referenced by both authors (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 16). Ehsan and Stott's critical analysis also pinpoints shared support for left-leaning economic policies in both Tarrant and Crusius's manifestos, in addition to Crusius's focus on environmental issues, concerns not typically associated with the far-right (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 17-18). These arguments are recognised to appeal to mainstream audiences, revealing a significant part of the threat these pre-attack manifestos pose (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 18). Furthermore, the content analysis demonstrates that both Tarrant and Earnest's manifestos 'were deeply internationalist in their outlook', in contrast with Crusius's manifesto that focuses on domestic matters until the final paragraph (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 18). Ehsan and Stott also note the 'chain reaction' of far-right inspired terrorism (Macklin, 2019: 1), with all three manifestos documenting their admiration for terrorist attacks carried out by other far-right inspired terrorists in addition to influencing other far-right inspired terrorist attacks (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 19).

The final chapter of Ehsan and Stott's report focuses on what new policies should be recommended in light of their study. They propose a total of six new policies. The first three policies focus on what should be implemented at the national level. They suggest greater cross-community contact, that public authorities should make an effort to rebuild and regain the trust of those living in disaffected com-

munities, and that there should be a resurgence of interest in the possible connection between economic policy and the threat of far-right extremism (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 20-23). On the international level, they recommend that transnational far-right terrorism requires a coordinated international response and that politicians should recognise that recent demographic and cultural change is a significant experience that has been unsettling for some citizens. Additionally, they note that the current trend of publishing pre-attack manifestos may become outdated, but 'far-right terrorism will be with us for some time to come.' (Ehsan & Stott, 2020: 21-23).

One omission that may raise eyebrows is the report's lack of analysis regarding whether the left-leaning economic policies and environmental concerns raised by Tarrant and Crusius are part of the contemporary far-right's more comprehensive approach to appeal to mainstream audiences. For instance, is their documented support for these concerns genuine considerations or are they raised in an attempt to appeal to mainstream audiences whilst offering a veneer of credibility for their attacks? Furthermore, is their support for these concerns an anomaly, or does it reflect a broader trend among the far-right? Nevertheless, the absence of this analysis provides scope for further research in this field.

To conclude, this report provides a unique insight into the pre-attack manifestos of far-right inspired terrorists in 2019. Scholars who study or are interested in far-right extremism and terrorism should pay significant attention to this report.

Callum Downes is a PhD candidate in the Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology department at the University of Exeter. He is an early career research fellow for the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right (CARR). His doctoral research focuses on whether and to what extent the contemporary radical right suffers from epistemic injustice.

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PUBLICATIONS ALERT

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.

- Abromeit, J. (2021). The Concept of Pseudo-Conservatism as a Link Between The Authoritarian Personality and Early Critical Theory. *Polity*. <https://doi.org/10.1086/717191>
- Aldoughli, R. (2021). What is Syrian nationalism? Primordialism and romanticism in official Baath discourse. *Nations and Nationalism*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12786>
- Vicente, Á. (2021). Social Ties and Jihadist Participation: A Mixed-Methods Approach to the Differential Recruitment of Radicalized Youth in Spain. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1-19.
- Angevine, S. (2021). Aborting Global Women's Rights: The Boundaries of Women's Representation in American Foreign Policy. *Politics & Gender*, 17(4), 799-826, Article Pii s1743923x20000112. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1743923x20000112>
- Bachleitner, K. (2021). Collective identities amid war and displacement: Syrians and Syrian refugees re-imagine their country. *Nations and Nationalism*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12788>
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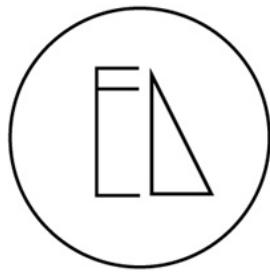
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