

EMERGENCE OF RIGHTIST POLITICS IN THE WORLD: AN OVERVIEW

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Received: 15 Dec 2017

Accepted: 22 Dec 2018

Published: 09 Jan 2018

ABSTRACT

The political ideologies are broadly categorized into three groups such as leftist ideology, rightist ideology and centrist ideology. The 1920s and 1930s saw the fading of traditional right-wing politics. Post-war Europe and the USA have seen the emergence of extreme right-wing politics, fuelled by several factors. The developments in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s necessitate the inclusion of recent studies which illustrate the growth and potential of the extreme-right phenomena in the post-communist context. The radical right has reemerged as an electoral force in Western Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand democracies. The political landscape of Western Europe has undergone rather radical changes over the past two decades. The emergence of the new radical right stands out as a principal event, along with the emergence of the new social movements and related political parties. The right wing political leaders do not approve the principle of egalitarianism since they believe that hierarchy is the order of nature. The right-wing politics has affected the common people who have become prominent losers of globalised economic processes. The people are facing the problem of identity crisis since the goal of right-wing radicals is an ethnically homogeneous society.

KEYWORDS: Rightist Ideology, Right Wing Politics, Radical Right, Egalitarianism

INTRODUCTION

The political ideologies are broadly categorized into three groups such as leftist ideology, rightist ideology and centrist ideology. The leftist ideology represents the state ownership and monopoly which benefits the working proletariat. The rightist ideology represents the private ownership and monopoly which benefits the capitalists and dominant powers. The centrist ideology represents the liberal democracy, socialism and social democracy which benefit the people and others. The rightist ideology is diametrically opposite to leftist ideology which emerged across the globe in the post-industrial revolution period. The champions of rightist ideology include the conservatives, capitalists, classical liberals, nationalists and on the far-right racists and fascists. The emergence of rightist politics in the world is amplified in this article on the basis of qualitative research methodology

Emergence of Rightist Politics

The 1920s and 1930s saw the fading of traditional right-wing politics. The mantle of conservative anti-communism was taken up by the rising fascist movements across the globe. When communist groups and political parties began appearing around the world, their opponents were usually colonial authorities and the term right-wing came

to be applied to colonialism. The old master frame of the extreme right was rendered impotent by the outcome of the Second World War. The innovation of a new, potent master frame before the extreme right was able to break electoral marginalization. It combined ethno-nationalist xenophobia, based on the doctrine of ethno-pluralism, with anti-political-establishment populism. In the decades immediately following the Second World War, the liberal democracies of Western Europe enjoyed a remarkable degree of social and political stability.

The beginnings of extreme-right groups date back to the immediate post-war period, although they continued to be typified by their underground character in Switzerland. The extreme right has become established as a subculture that exhibits dimensions of youth culture which is structured through individual organizations, ideologies and publications. The right wing political forces are bent upon checking the immigration and reduction of the foreigners in Italy. The right wing political leaders have cultivated the anti-establishment attitudes and demonstrated radical criticism of government migration policy. The neo-liberal positions and nationalist and exclusionist demands appeals both to well-off and less well-off voters.

Post-war Europe and the USA have seen the emergence of extreme right-wing politics, fuelled by factors such as rapid socio-economic change, the appeal to nationalism, the failures of mainstream political parties and the campaigns on issues such as immigration, security and unemployment. Scholars have focused mainly on Western Europe, but developments in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s necessitate the inclusion of recent studies which illustrate the growth and potential of the extreme-right phenomena in the post-communist context.

The radical right has reemerged as an electoral force in Western Europe, Canada, Australia and New Zealand democracies. The political landscape of Western Europe has undergone rather radical changes over the past two decades. The emergence of the new radical right stands out as a principal event, along with the emergence of the new social movements and related political parties.

Sustained economic growth, growing individual affluence, and the expansion and perfection of the welfare state each contributed to a social and political climate conducive to political compromise and consensus while eroding support for extremist solutions on both the Left and the Right. It was expected that each of these conflicts would benefit the Left, even if the demands of students, women, minorities and engaged citizens appeared not necessarily compatible with those of the traditional Left.

Communism became a global phenomenon and anti-communism became an integral part of the domestic and foreign policies of the United States and its NATO allies. Throughout the Cold War, colonial governments in Asia, Africa and Latin America turned to the United States for political and economic support. The United States made anti-communism the top priority of its foreign policy and many American conservatives sought to combat what they saw as communist influence all over the globe. The religious fundamentalists have played a major role in the expansion of right wing politics in Europe and America.

The high level of movement between France and French North Africa meant that political ideas travelled between the regions in 1890s. The fascist groups in Europe had influenced the Africans to accept right wing politics (Shimoni and Levine, 1974:36). The liberals and conservatives were anti-communist in America. In Europe's history, there have been strong collectivist right-wing movements, such as in the social Catholic right that has exhibited hostility to all forms of liberalism (including economic liberalism) and has historically advocated for paternalist class harmony involving an

organic-hierarchical society where workers are protected while hierarchy of classes remain (Payne, 1983:30). In Europe, the Eastern countries remained hostile to capitalism and industrialism. The Western European countries accepted capitalism as a way of life.

The capitalists formed alliances with the Right during their conflicts with workers and other champions of egalitarianism. The right-wing libertarianism supports a decentralized economy based on economic freedom. The right wing politics is broadly supportive of the institutions of the monarchist Old Regime (Linski, 1984:26). The right wing politics practically means the conservative or reactionary section of a political party or system (Goodsell, 1988:15).

Rightist Politics in 1980s

In the early 1980s right-wing populist parties and movements began to stage a dramatic comeback throughout a growing number of democratically-based countries. These movements succeeded in mobilizing and exploiting popular resentments against immigrants, minorities, and the political establishment. As a result, the radical populist Right has become a severe and potentially destabilizing threat to the democratic system.

There were no indigenous fascist movements in Africa. But the post-war regimes are excluded from political science typologies of fascism however. The external colonial powers and tribal, religious and ethnic loyalties had affected the African fascism since liberalization had not taken place until much more recently (Griffin, 1991:18). The right wing political ideologies are also chief protagonists of conservatism in American politics.

The conservatives ascended to power by reconstructing their ideology and building an independent movement during 1970s – 1990s (Himmelstein, 1992:19). During the depression of the 1990s the welfare state was no longer taken for granted, as economic crisis led to high unemployment and huge structural changes, with big cutbacks in industrial production. There has been a substantial acceleration in the ideological shift from the nationalism of the Nazi movement to an internationally oriented ideology of white power.

The right wing parties have gained power in the world after the collapse of Communism in Central and Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1991. The radical right activities can have pernicious effects even if right-wing extremists do not themselves succeed in obtaining seats in government. The right wing political thinkers reject the concepts of individualism, liberalism, modernity and social progress. They are advocates of right-wing populism which is a combination of civic/ ethno-nationalism with anti-elitism. They also defend the existing order and endorse the theory of Charles Darwin.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was dismantled by Gorbachev on December 26, 1991 and Commonwealth of Independent States was created in the wake of globalization. The fragmentation of the Left was responsible for the rise in rightist political force and marginalization of the disadvantaged sections of society in the Western Europe (Betz, 1994:07). South African politics was dominated by the white minority which had an institutionalized form of racism in the apartheid system. As such it proved a fertile ground for the development of groups inspired by European fascism (Marx, 1994:27).

The New Right consists of the liberal conservatives, who stress small government, free mark (Betz, 1994:07). At functional level, the political economies do not follow the corporatist or national syndicalist models that define fascism and

there is no philosophical or political culture of fascism in Africa. Some regimes had added an ideological dimension in the shape of Marxism-Leninism (Payne, 1995:32).

The Reactionary Rightist Forces in 1990s

The reactionary right looks to the past and is aristocratic, religious and authoritarian (Eatwell, 1999:11). The right-wing extremist parties may be capable of distorting the political agenda and forcing the government to take up issues that it might otherwise have ignored or treated differently (Ramet and Roger, 1999:34). The European Union was a direct result of a determination among European politicians to prevent future violent conflicts in Europe after World War II. The European Economic Community was established subsequently to remove trade barriers between them and move towards creating a 'common market'. Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom, Greece, Austria, Finland and Sweden have become members of the European Union and accepted Europe's single currency – the euro in 1999. The term 'fascist,' used so freely these days as a pejorative epithet that has nearly lost its meaning (Payne, 2001:31). The North Africa also suffered from fascism promoted by the western capitalists.

A number of pro-fascist aristocrats had made their homes in Kenya during the 1930s. They organized pro-Nazi groups in Rhodesia during the Second World War. They also provoked violent confrontations with members of other parties, using hand grenades and bombs, and served as one of the death squads that massacred Tutsis in the Rwandan Genocide (Scherrer, 2003:35).

A separate Constitution was adopted in 2003 for the benefit of various countries which were part of the union. About 25 Member States had ratified the Treaty in 2006. This paved the way for the expansion of right wing politics in Europe under the ideology of economic liberalization.

The Europe is more on the 'right' than on the 'left' path according to the results of various elections. The right wing politics is reflected in the new fascist parliamentary grouping perpetrated permanent breaches of convention in the continent. The people have come to accept xenophobic, extremist or even anti-Semitic parties in the EU governments without an outcry from the democratic camp. The progressive forces have not effectively confronted the right-wing extremism in Europe. The right wing politics has promoted anti human rights, anti-democratic, anti-Semitic, homophobic and Islamophobic tendencies which have threatened the progressive forces. Populist parties in Europe are increasingly setting political agendas in the wake of right wing political domination.

There is no significant emergence of far-right party in the United States but the phenomenon appeared to be multiplying in Europe. A variety of radical-right-wing movements and parties have grown in the new EU member countries. The right-wing extremism in Europe is an international phenomenon which is directed against liberal democracy. The top-down politics has belittled the people and benefitted the dominant powers. The right-wing populism is rather an expression of a political style – transcending party boundaries, perhaps even partially transcending camps.

The rise of new political competitors on the radical right is a central feature of many contemporary European party systems. Changes in social structure and the economy do not by themselves adequately explain the success of extremist parties. Instead, we must look to the competitive struggles among parties, their internal organizational patterns, and their long-term ideological traditions to understand the principles governing their success. But the success of these parties depends on the strategy employed by the right-wing political actors.

The term extreme right-wing has also been applied to movements including fascists, Nazis and racial supremacists (Adams, 2001:01). The political right opposes socialism and social democracy. Right-wing parties include conservatives, Christian democrats, classical liberals, nationalists and on the far-right racists and fascists in the world (Davies, 2002). Nationalism had become a prominent trait of the right-wing (Adams, 2002:02). The right-wing politics involves in varying degrees the rejection of some egalitarian objectives of left-wing politics, claiming either that social or economic inequality is natural and inevitable or that it is beneficial to society (Grant, 2003:16).

The recent history of Africa has been marked by some dramatic and significant developments on the continent's political terrain. These developments have been as varied as they have been contradictory. They have also constituted a major source of challenge to political theory as different schools of thought grapple with them in terms of their weight and meaning. The transitional process has registered important new shifts in African politics which ought to be acknowledged for their significance in Africa's post-independence history.

The new market-based model of development of the IMF and the World Bank amidst popular opposition is yet to serve as an acceptable or workable framework for the constitution of a new social contract. There is a need for developmental democracy as a framework for restoring Africa to a path of economic growth based on inclusive and democratic approaches (Olukoshi, 2004:29).

The moderate right, typified by the writings of Edmund Burke, is tolerant of change, provided it is gradual and accepts some aspects of liberalism, including the rule of law and capitalism, although it sees radical laissez-faire and individualism as harmful to society. The moderate right often promotes nationalism and social welfare policies. The radical right includes right-wing populism and various other subtypes. The extreme right' has four traits like anti-democracy, nationalism, racism and the strong state (Eatwell, 2004:12).

The right wing political leaders accept the inequalities of wealth, status and privilege. They also emphasize the values of order, patriotism, social cohesion and a personal sense of duty that makes the individual responsive to the system helplessly (Johnson, 2005:21). The Right has gone through five distinct historical stages: (I) the reactionary right sought a return to aristocracy and established religion; (II) the moderate right distrusted intellectuals and sought limited government; (III) the radical right favored a romantic and aggressive nationalism; (IV) the extreme right proposed anti-immigration policies and implicit racism; and (V) the neo-liberal right sought to combine a market economy and economic deregulation with the traditional Right-wing beliefs in patriotism, elitism and law and order (Augoustinos et. al. 2006:04).

Radical right is a term developed after World War II to describe groups and ideologies such as McCarthyism, the John Birch Society, Thatcherism and the Republikaner Party. It has also been applied to clearly democratic developments. Scholars have also divided the right into five types: reactionary, moderate, radical, extreme and new (Berlet, 2006:06). The far-right has supported fascism and corporatism (Gregory, 2006:17). The right-wing nationalism was influenced by Romantic nationalism, in which the state derives its political legitimacy from the organic unity of those it governs. It is also known as cultural conservatism which supports the preservation of the heritage of a nation or culture and often sees deviations from cultural norms as an existential threat (Frohnen et. al. 2006:14).

In recent years, the right has become a powerful force in many parts of the world including the United States. New Right and New Christian Right conservative movements have strengthened the right wing politics and white supremacist movements (Kathleen and Kimberley, 2010:25). The left-right schema serves the purposes of orientation and

communication, offering the public shortcuts to understanding complex political discourses and parties tools to shape discussion and attract support. The left–right schema is likely to remain an important feature for both vote choice and party-system stability (Jou, 2010:22).

The right wing politics includes nationalists, nativist opposition to immigration, religious conservatives and historically a significant presence of right-wing movements with anti-capitalist sentiments including conservatives and fascists who opposed excessive materialism inherent in contemporary capitalism (Kahan, 2010:23).

The right includes both economic and social conservatives in America (Kaplan, 2012:24). The parties of the centre-right generally support liberal democracy, capitalism, the market economy. The far right usually favors an absolutist government, which uses the power of the state to support the dominant ethnic group or religion and often to criminalize other ethnic groups or religions (Fortuyn, 2012).

The Radical-Right Movements

In the post-war era far right groups promoted fascism in Africa (Merk and Weinberg, 2014:28). The radical-right movements have attracted the attention of scholars and activists in Europe. They have given a serious thought to identifying appropriate strategies against right-wing extremism and xenophobia in the region. The extent of involvement with the radical right ranges from ignoring it or deliberately excluding it from political affairs to erecting a cordon sanitaire. The emergence of radical right and countering the new trends has been seriously debated to formulate public opinion and facilitate the consolidation of liberal and democratic forces.

Most of the presidents in Africa have ruled for long time out of personal greed for power even though they assumed office in the name of people and democracy. Their individual preferences play a much more limited role compared to the collective interests of the groups they represent. Nelson Mandela was a honorable exception since he truly represented the democratic aspirations of the people of South Africa. In Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe was more as a hostage of the people's power than its architect. There are often more complex social dynamics behind political decisions in Africa.

The emergence of populist radical right parties has changed the interaction of party competition within Western European countries. The rise of populist radical right parties has created bipolarizing party system. The rise of the populist radical right has had on the logic of coalition formation. The populist radical right parties have not fundamentally changed party systems in Western Europe irrespective of conceptualization and operationalization (Cas, 2014:08).

Whilst populist radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe maintain broad similarities with their West European counterparts, they come across as a distinct phenomenon worthy of study in their own right (Pirro, 2015:33). The far right in Austria, Romania and Ukraine has changed the electoral fortunes of the populist radical right in Europe. The American social conservatives have exported far right ideology and laid the foundations for resurgent social conservatism in post-Communist Eastern Europe and Russia.

Right-wing politics has brought about right wing extremism which is a global phenomenon. The extreme right is continuously extending its cross-border networks in the present times. The anti-democratic attitudes are dramatically spreading in the world in the age of globalization. The right-wing extremists try to use certain discriminatory attitudes to establish themselves in politics and in society through different strategies and structures. There is a notable boost in right-

wing extremism in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and other continents. The right wing politics has given birth to right-wing extremism, which has threatened the lives of the marginalized sections of society.

Contemporary Right Wing Politics

The radical right-wing populist parties are becoming increasingly influential in Western European democracies. Their electoral support is growing, their impact on policy-making is substantial, and in recent years several radical right-wing populist parties have assumed office or supported minority governments. They have also expanded their issue profiles, moderated their policy positions, toned down their anti-establishment rhetoric and shed their extreme right reputations to attract more voters and/ or become coalition partners (Akkerman et. al, 2016:03).

In Central and Eastern Europe, radical right actors significantly impact public debates and mainstream policy agenda. But despite this high discursive influence, the electoral fortune of radical right parties in the region is much less stable. The extent to which such tactics play a role in radical right electoral success and failure is still a subject for debate. Advancing an innovative, fine-grained approach on the mechanisms and effects of party competition between radical right and mainstream parties should be addressed by the scholars and stakeholders of democracy (Bartek, 2016). The Freedom Party of Austria has become the most popular rightist party in Austria, with its support growing fastest among young voters (Shuster, 2016:37).

The immigration has become one of the most contentious political issues in Western Europe consequent on right-wing mobilizations focusing on the Syrian refugee crisis. The transnational dynamics of visual mobilization by comparing the translation of right-wing nationalist with left-wing has become an important feature of right wing politics. While right-wing political activists create a shared stereotypical image of immigrants as foes of an imaginary ethno-nationalist citizenship, left-wing counter-images construct a more complex and nuanced imagery of citizenship and cultural diversity in Europe (Doerr, 2017:10).

The scholarship on the populist radical right has become a 'minor industry'. In addition to the ample static country-comparisons, upcoming studies could pay more attention to the fact that both populist radical right actors and its environment are dynamic over time. Since the stances and supporters of street movements are difficult to investigate with conventional methods such as surveys and manifesto coding, scholars could rely more on social media data (Jasper and Immerzeel, 2017:20).

CONCLUSIONS

The right wing political leaders do not approve the principle of egalitarianism since they believe that hierarchy is the order of nature. They also state that people are created differently and government should abide by the hierarchy. The right libertarians reject collective or state-imposed equality as undermining reward for personal merit, initiative and enterprise. The right wing politics is diametrically opposed to communism which represents state capitalism. The struggle between monarchists and communists was often described as a struggle between the Right and the Left. The nationalism is considered right-wing, especially when it opposed the internationalism of the communists. The right-wing politics has affected the common people who have become prominent losers of globalised economic processes. The right wing politicians are bent upon dismantling the pillars of the welfare state. There is a strong relation between right wing politics and subjective deprivation. The people have become non-entities due to right wing politics since they are replaced by

vested interests. The right wing politics has been founded on the authoritarian political ideas. The right-wing players nourish anti-democratic and anti-parliamentarian feelings. They also use people's frustration and disenchantment with the performance of the political system for their own purposes. The people are facing the problem of identity crisis since the goal of right-wing radicals is an ethnically homogeneous society.

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