

Global Populisms and their Impact

ANNA GRZYMALA-BUSSE

Populism is on the rise: but to understand this phenomenon, we should first clearly conceptualize it and recognize that populism takes on different forms in various historical and political contexts. These “populisms” pose a threat to modern liberal democracy. As Poland and Hungary show, populists exclude entire swathes of society from the polity, and undermine the formal institutions and the informal norms of democracy.

**“Neoliberalism is Fascism and Should Be Criminalized”:
Bulgarian Populism as Left-Wing Radicalism**

VENELIN I. GANEV

The main argument presented in this essay is that the politics of Ataka, the most successful and influential populist party in Bulgaria, should be construed as a form of left-wing radicalism. Originally a nationalist formation, over the last decade Ataka has evolved into a broader social movement that blames free markets, neoliberalism, and US led neocolonialism for the country’s misfortunes. Today its activists routinely assault liberal democracy as a political system unable to cope with the evils of capitalism, and seek to marginalize political actors and social constituencies identified as pro-western.

Taking Far-Right Claims Seriously and Literally: Anthropology and the Study of Right-Wing Radicalism

AGNIESZKA PASIEKA

Departing from an overview of current mass media discourse on the far right, this article suggests why and how social scientists could contribute to a better understanding of current socio-political changes. In presenting an anthropological perspective, it discusses methodological, conceptual, and ethical challenges to conducting research on and with radical right-wing activists and supporters.

Draining the Swamp: Understanding the Crisis in Mainstream Politics as a Crisis of the State

ABBY INNES

This paper examines Poland, Hungary, the UK and the US the most surprising cases of populist reaction. It argues that the social polarization caused by the failures of hyper-liberal reforms to the state, and the association of Social Democratic parties with those reforms, has provoked alienation from liberal democratic politics.

Trump, Putin, and the Future of US-Russian Relations

PETER RUTLAND

This article traces the structural roots of the current crisis in US-Russia relations (the weakening of US hegemony and the resurgence of Russian power), and chronicles the series of contingencies that accompanied Donald Trump's rise to the presidency and his chaotic first few months in office. The details of Russia's influence over the results of the election through the release of hacked Democratic Party emails, and over the composition and policy of the new Trump Administration, are still emerging. The chances of a "grand bargain" between Trump and Putin look increasingly remote, however. Russia's efforts to dabble in American politics seem to have blown back, and made rapprochement between Moscow and Washington more difficult. This is unfortunate, since cooperation between the two sides to resolve a number of pressing global problems, from the wars in Ukraine and Syria to climate change, is urgently needed.

Kompromat Goes Global?: Assessing a Russian Media Tool in the United States

SARAH OATES

The Russian and American media spheres converged to an unprecedented degree during the 2016 US presidential elections when reports of a possible dossier on Donald Trump emerged. This article considers the degree to which the media tactic of *kompromat*, which is the Russian abbreviation for "compromising material," can infiltrate the US media ecology.

Red Scares and Orange Mobilizations: A Critical Anthropological Perspective on the Russian Hacking Scandal

JULIE HEMMENT

This essay considers the Russian hacking controversy, which has been a prominent theme of the US Presidential election season. Tracking the context and contours of the scandal, I consider some of the anxieties, phobias and cultural logics that animate it (both in Russia and the US) and reflect on the dynamics that drive it.

Exclusionary Egalitarianism and the New Cold War

BRIAN PORTER-SZÚCS

It seems clear that there is a common ideological foundation linking Putin, Le Pen, Orbán, Erdoğan, Trump, Kaczyński, and others, but labeling that ideology has been difficult. Many in the media have called them "populists," but this term can be misleading and imprecise. This essay focuses on Poland in order to propose a genealogy that transcends conventional divisions between left and right. The phrase "exclusionary egalitarianism" helps us recognize the intertwined commitments to both racism and nationalism on the one hand, and an opposition to inequalities of wealth and status on the other. While the analogy to the radical right of the 1930s is helpful, there is an even closer link to the "national communists" of the 1960s and 1970s.