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New Series: Concept Corner Concept Corner is a series of short interviews with academics focused on a specific idea or concept.





Publications

Fico is Back, but Illiberalism in Slovakia Faces Headwinds

Lenka Buštíková expounds on the results of the latest Slovakian election, wherein an illiberal coalition won and formed a new government. She details the contours of the Slovakian illiberal scene and the prospects for illiberalism in the country going forward.



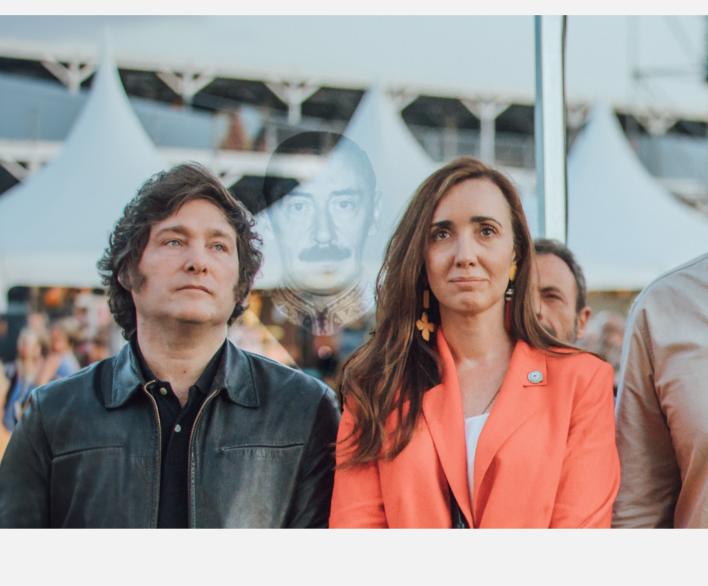
Argentina's Elections: The Milei-Villarruel Ticket Threatens Return of Neo-Fascist Videla Regime in **Modern Garb**

Leandro Fernandez profiles Javier Milei, the far-right candidate for Argentina's presidency, detailing his admiration for military Argentina's 20th-century dictatorship and his ultra-libertarian economic policies.



The 2023 Dutch General **Elections: Can the New** Political Landscape Help to **Solve the Polycrisis?**

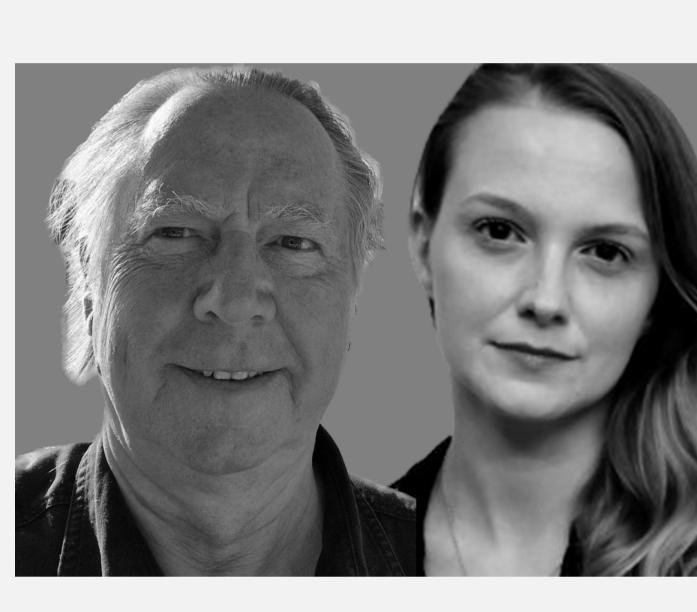
Gulnaz Sibgatullina surveys the Dutch political landscape ahead of its elections, pointing to fissures and convergences between the contending parties, as well as the key issues animating the campaign.



Agora

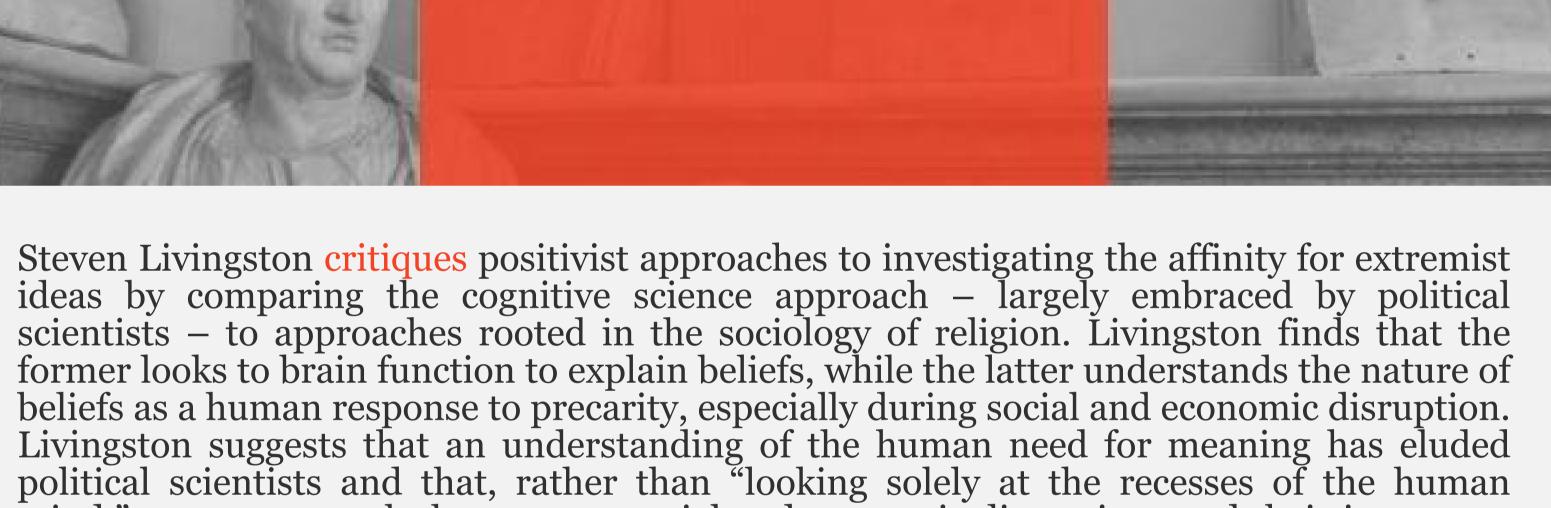
Michael Minkenberg and Zsuzsanna Végh on the Radical Right in Eastern **Europe and its Effect on Liberal Democracy**

Michael Minkenberg and Zsuzsanna Végh radical-right how parties discuss undermine democracy in Eastern Europe, the role that mainstream parties play, the concept of illiberalism, and more.





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systems of meaning is needed. Bernadett Lehoczki sheds light on the ways in which right-wing populism and sovereigntism interact with the international arena by looking at two leaders who embody these ideas, Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and Hungary's Viktor Orbán. Lehoczki studies the behavior of Brazil and Hungary in the United Nations, the European Union, and the Organization of American States, and finds that rather than quitting international organizations, populist leaders prefer to find like-minded allies among member states. Moreover, they employ harsh rhetoric, abstain from votes, and utilize veto powers "in an attempt to reshape the direction of IOs when they see their countries' sovereignty and/or their domestic power as threatened."

mind," a new approach that centers social and economic disruptions and their impact on

Democracy Fatigue: An East European Epidemy examines the deterioration of democracy and the rise of populist forces in 21st-century Europe, starting from the premise that the 2008 economic crisis lies at the heart of these developments. Contributors suggest that "polarization of the electorate can set in motion a radicalization that strengthens authoritarians at the expense of democrats." They also aim to distinguish between Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe, noting that authoritarian attitudes are more pervasive in the latter context, and therefore explain the differences in support for "defective democracy."

Jiří Navrátil and Ondřej Císař analyze the perceived influence of managerial populism on transactional advocacy organizations (TAOs) in the Czech Republic. They find that, contrary to dominant narratives, there is not a uniform impact of populist governance on advocacy organizations and that differentiating between TAOs and other advocacy organizations is necessary. Moreover, their findings demonstrate how TAOs compensate for changes in their environment by reconnecting to European political processes.

Economic Policies of Populist Leaders: A Central and Eastern European Perspective

provides a comparative analysis of Central and Eastern European economies and explores

the economic impacts of populism in those countries in the region that have seen some form of populist rule. Moving away from a strictly macroeconomic perspective, contributors to this volume ask "who gets what under populist rule?" In doing so, they show that Central and Eastern European populists have heavily reshaped redistributive policies but have not abandoned budget constraints. Instead, "there has been a tendency to disregard the institutional constraints of decision-making in the economy and, in turn, to redefine the regulatory framework and property rights structure of the respective economies." The Christian Right in Europe: Movements, Networks, and Denominations argues that on the coattails of the US Christian Right, and the global far-right more generally, ultraconservative Christians in Europe are joining forces to reshape Europe. Their

protagonists and the entangled networks that work to abolish liberal democracy in Europe behind the scenes. Jakub Charvát describes in detail the history of Hungary's electoral reform under rightwing populist leader Viktor Orbán. Charvát argues that the post-communist system of 1989 offered "a stable and consolidated institutional framework," but that Orbán's 2010 victory – wherein his party gained a parliamentary supermajority – tempted him and the party to guarantee electoral success in the future, a temptation that culminated in the 2011 change to the country's electoral laws.

attempts often come in the form of uniting disparate movements, like anti-gender or anti-Islamic ones, and thus contributors to this volume offer new perspectives on the

With Romania's 2018 "Referendum for Family" as a case study, Oana Băluță explores the role of radical right digital media in alternative gender knowledge production. Băluță argues that anti-gender campaigns seek to create specific realities centered on alternative gender knowledge, with digital media playing a key role in this process. The findings also reveal that this alternative gender knowledge discredits ideas about gender, sexuality, and family as socially constructed and historically malleable.

regard to EU membership, claiming that 'until the recent illiberal turn in Poland's political scene, the dominant attitude toward EU law was "cautious friendliness." Kustra-Rogatka focuses on four areas – treaty ratification, judicial review of legislation, parliamentary scrutiny in EU affairs, and the role of sub-national entities in shaping Poland's EU policies - and finds that after 2015, the illiberal Law and Justice government combined rhetorical Euroscepticism with "a purely instrumental approach to the financial benefits of membership." Adam Klein examines the parallels forming between today's Hungarian and American right wing by investigating the media bases of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and former

President Donald Trump. Klein defines what he calls media capture, showing how certain

media markets "have been steadily transformed by loyalists of Orbán and Trump and have

become saturated in the narratives of their 'illiberal state' and 'America First' movements."

Aleksandra Kustra-Rogatka unpacks the dynamics of multilevel governance in Poland with

Then, he cross-analyzes 1,360 headlines, finding that Orbán and Trump's media produce parallel narratives linking antiliberal, antimulticultural, and antiglobalist themes. He notes that "in this converging brand of far-right-illiberal populism, liberals are presented, not as ideological foes, but as universal enemies of the state." Marcin Ślarzyński traces the gradual emergence and transformation of the right-wing electorate in Poland in the period 1993–2018 and points to the consolidation of right-wing partisanship as an organizing factor of the "illiberal moment." Ślarzyński finds that populist and authoritarian attitudes in Poland emerged in the 21st century as a way to distinguish between supporters of a right wing that was increasingly centered around the Law and Justice party, a phenomenon that occurred within the context of partisan rivalry but also fueled it. Ślarzyński then demonstrates the differences between West European

populist parties and those of Eastern Europe, where "crystallized class-based political identity and a social-democratic understanding of political economy" failed to exist, thus driving Eastern illiberals to utilize a different ideological repertoire than their Western counterparts. Melissa-Ellen Dowling dissects the role of so-called alt-tech platforms in the rise of the far right and the spread of anti-democratic ideologies. Using Australia as a case study, and specifically discourses of democracy on Telegram and Gab, Dowling finds that "far-right populist discourses in alt-tech communities predominantly support the processes of democracy and uphold most (though not all) of its values." The findings contribute to an

understanding of what is needed to safeguard liberal democracy in the context of rising illiberalism. Using Thailand and Myanmar as case studies, Marco Bünte discusses the origins, ideology, and impact of several uncivil society groups, investigating the latter's role in democratic backsliding/breakdown. Bünte argues that uncivil society can act as a useful resource for conservative elites seeking to derail democratization processes, especially during national crises. Moreover, uncivil society successfully pursues illiberal agendas by acting in tandem with established elites of the former, undemocratic, regimes.

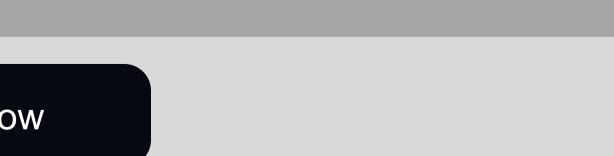
With Indonesia's contemporary polarization, socio-religious conservatism, growing state repression, and democratic backsliding as a backdrop, Ken M. P. Setiawan and Dirk Tomsa scrutinize Indonesian civil society's adaptability, resourcefulness and resilience, pointing at their success in sometimes halting or reversing anti-democratic-trends. The authors focus on women's rights groups and environmental activists and in doing so "illustrate under what circumstances progressive political activism in contemporary Indonesia can still be effective in upholding diagonal accountability and defending human rights."

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