

The Extreme Right in Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Switzerland

The Extreme Right in Western Europe

Review
The Mediterranean Countries
Switzerland
Summary

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Before we begin . . .

- ▶ No seminar on July 1
- ▶ Because I have other (pointless) obligations
- ▶ So: no religion

Last week

- ▶ Two representative monarchies/ liberal democracies
- ▶ Both with long histories of high levels of (non-Western) immigration
- ▶ Two very different electoral systems
 - ▶ Tiny, marginalised, old-fashioned, slow-to-modernise Extreme Right in the UK
 - ▶ Modern, strong, (close to) acceptable Extreme Right in NL
- ▶ **Which other parties do BNP and PVV resemble most?**

Today

- ▶ Three countries with long authoritarian histories and a (mostly) weak Extreme Right
- ▶ One country with a long democratic history and a strong Extreme Right (?) party

What did they have in common?

- ▶ Late and selective modernisation/industrialisation, huge agricultural sectors
 - ▶ Small, marginalised, radicalised working class
 - ▶ Impoverished peasants (vs. rich land-owners)
 - ▶ Smallish middle-class
- ▶ Very strong position of the church
- ▶ Split, underdeveloped societies, left behind by developments in north-western Europe



Where did they differ?

- ▶ Colonialism
 - ▶ Greece a relic of the crumbling Ottoman Empire
 - ▶ Spain severed from its American dependencies during 19th century; basically finished as a colonial power by the end of the 19th century
 - ▶ Portugal lost Brazil in 1822 but regained/retained territories in Africa
- ▶ Monarchy
 - ▶ Portugal: Monarchy ends with 1910 revolution
 - ▶ Greece: Constitutional monarchy; kings frequently in exile during 20th century, republic from 73/74
 - ▶ Spain: Republic in 1873/74, restoration, Second Republic from 1931-39
- ▶ Maybe not so different: complex and ongoing, often violent political struggle – a “Mediterranean Model” ?

The Extreme Right in Spain: History

- ▶ Military coup and early Falangist movement (Primo de Rivera father&son) with little public support
- ▶ Falange movement initially “modern”, though with a Catholic twist
- ▶ Civil war and Franco’s dominance of Falange party from 1937
- ▶ More an odd mixture of Catholic-authoritarian ideas + military rule than a proper Fascist movement
- ▶ Transition in 1975 managed by former members of regime; some involvement in the creation of the PP
- ▶ Several tiny, traditional Falangist parties

The Extreme Right in Portugal: History

- ▶ 1926 Military coup → “Estado Novo” from 1932 (Salazar, †1968)
- ▶ Suppressed native Fascists (1934); authoritarian, Catholic regime
- ▶ Regime survived colonial uprisings and Salazar’s death
- ▶ Finally ended by the Carnation Revolution (1974)
 - ▶ A left-leaning military coup (!)
 - ▶ Very low levels of violence (!)
 - ▶ Military managed de-colonisation and transition to democracy (!)
- ▶ Left-wing bias in Portuguese politics; Extreme Right extremely weak
 - ▶ “Christian Democrats” PDC (< 1%)
 - ▶ “Social Democratic Centre” (CDS/PP) – not

The Extreme Right in Greece: History

- ▶ Communists vs. Anti-Communist forces
- ▶ Military rule 36-41; war with Italy from 1940; German involvement and occupation from 1941
- ▶ Civil war 46-49 left Greece devastated and split
- ▶ Military rule 1967-74 (Papadopoulos) → transition to democracy, republic
- ▶ Largely irrelevant Extreme Right, but ...
 - ▶ “National alignment” (?) – royalists, traditionalist, ND defectors, (6.8% in 1977)
 - ▶ Progress Party and National Political Union (EP elections 1981/84)
 - ▶ Political Spring (4.9% 1993): ND splinter, tough(er) on Macedonia
 - ▶ The Church under Archbishop Christodoulos

LAOS

- ▶ 2000- Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS)
- ▶ Funded by Karatzaferis
 - ▶ Former controversial ND MP, expelled from the party
 - ▶ Owner of small radio/TV stations and a newspaper
 - ▶ Dozens of controversial statements (by Greek standards)
- ▶ Electoral successes
 - ▶ 2004: 2.2%
 - ▶ 2007: 3.6%
 - ▶ 2009: 5.6%
- ▶ Pro-church, populist, anti-immigrant
- ▶ Allegedly anti-Jewish, anti-gay
- ▶ Suspicious of Turks, Macedonians, Albanians
- ▶ Somewhat dodgy, but: things *might* be planted by competitors

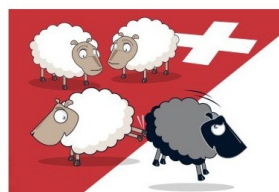
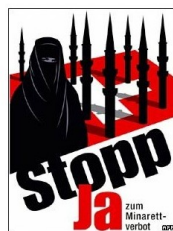
The Extreme Right in Switzerland: History

- ▶ Long history of prosperity and consensual democracy (after civil war in the 19th century), neutral during the wars
- ▶ Some support for xenophobic parties since 1960s: “Swiss Republican Movement”, “National Action”, “Vigilance” – up to 19% in sub-national elections
- ▶ Late 1980s: “Car-drivers party/Freedom Party”; “National Action” → “Swiss Democrats”
- ▶ 1990s: Zurich wing of the SVP (Blocher) discover anti-immigrant issue and replaces Swiss Democrats et al.
- ▶ SVP strongest party in Switzerland
- ▶ Parties highly de-centralised plus language barriers; very unusual political system (“magic formula”)

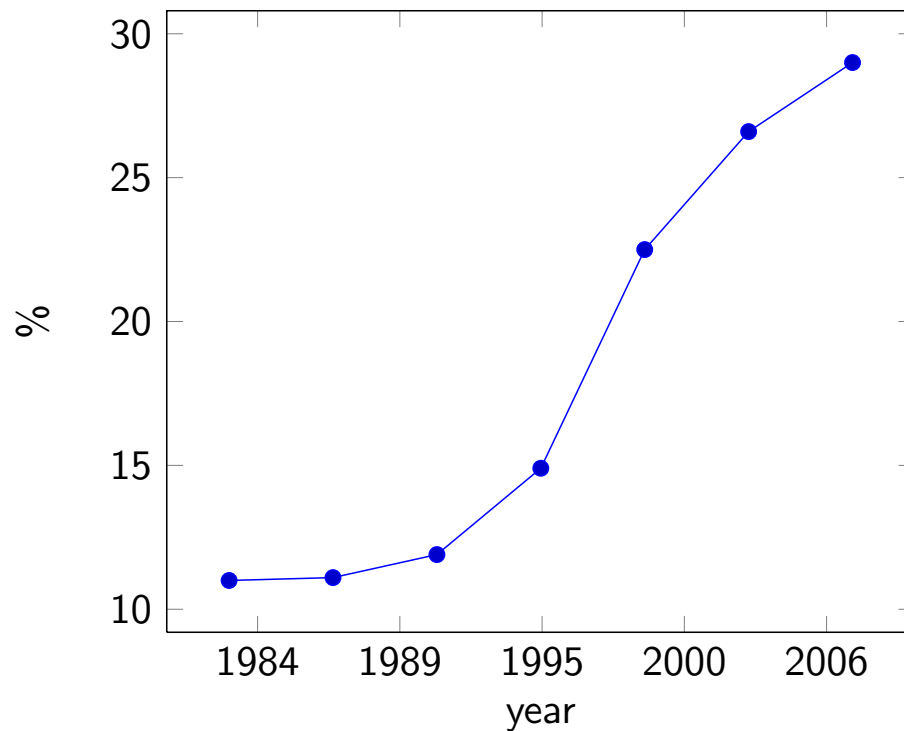
SVP

- ▶ French/Italian name: Union of the centre
- ▶ Created by merger of two smaller and older parties with a agrarian/petty bourgeoisie bases
- ▶ Originally, partly a social-liberal party
- ▶ Transformed into a right-leaning, national and populist catch-all by Blocher during 1990s
 - ▶ Born 1940
 - ▶ A self-made billionaire
 - ▶ A gifted orator and populist (by Swiss standards)
- ▶ Socially conservative; anti-German, anti-EU, anti-immigrant
- ▶ Party split in 2008 → (BDP in Bünden, Berne, Glarus, ...)
→ SVP now completely dominated by “Zurich faction”

SVP: Controversial posters



National electoral results: SVP



Summary

- ▶ Failure in Spain + Portugal
- ▶ Mixed success in Greece
- ▶ Striking success in Switzerland

Class questions

- ▶ How is LAOS different from your average Extreme Right party?
- ▶ Why is the Extreme Right so *unsuccessful* in the Iberian Peninsula?
- ▶ Like the PVV, the FPÖ and some other parties, the SVP claims to defend liberal rights (freedom of speech, women's rights) against Islam. Can you build a case against this argument?