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THE RISE OF THE NEW RADICAL RIGHT POLITICAL PARTIES IN EUROPE: PHASE OR DANGER TO THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY

Abstract.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, great number of political parties appeared on European continent which claimed to be part of the new radical right. The elections' results speak of a much bigger success of these parties in Europe. The new radical right becomes an important political factor in France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and many other European states. The subject of this paper will be the values and the rise of the new radical right political parties in Europe. This paper attempts to prove that the globalization, the economic status, the migration and the disappointment from the democratic modest ruling elites influence the emerging and rise of the new radical right in Europe that represents danger to the further development of the democratic and liberal flows in Europe. The main methods that are used are the following: method of analysis, historical, normative and political method. The general conclusion is that the new radical right political parties in Europe rely on nationalism, nativism, xenophobia, racism, intolerance and as such, they gain more support by European citizens, and are a danger to the peaceful development of the democratic societies in Europe.

Key words: politics, democracy, parties, radical right, economy, immigration.

Introduction

In the XX century, Europe witnessed the development, the rise and the fall of many ideologies. The Nazism, fascism and communism showed their grim face and plunged the world into hatred and wars. The fall of the Berlin Wall was a symbol of the victory of democracy over the totalitarian systems. The famous Francis Fukuyama in his prominent work "The end of history" will highlight the winning role of liberal

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democracy against other ideologiesⁱ and will conclude that the fall of the Berlin Wall marks the end of the ideologies, i.e. the end of the world, and that the liberal – democracy is the last station. However, very soon it was proved that within the democratic societies there were a number of contradictions and conflicts, which are looming the further development of these societies. Especially after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a number of parties began to appear in the states of Western Europe, which on the ideology axis have been located extremely right and have been associated with the values of the radical and extremist organizations. Defining them as part of the new radical right, these political parties, making a sufficient distance from the fascist and neo-fascist organizations and at the same time relying on nationalism, dogmatism, rigidity, exclusivity, authoritarianism, racism and xenophobia, have succeed in these last decades to become politically attractive for many people in Europe. Starting from the 80s of the XX century, the new radical right parties managed to earn many votes in France (National front), Belgium (Flemish Block), Austria (Party for freedom of Austria), Switzerland (Swiss People’s Party), Norway (Progressive Party), Denmark (Danish People’s Party), Italy (National Alliance and Alliance North), and thus become factor that affects the formation of political coalitions and current developments in the political systems of the abovementioned states. In this last decade, there is an emergence and reinforcement of the ideas of the new radical right in the countries of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe (Ataka, Golden Dawn, Jobbik). That shows that on the whole European continent the new radical right parties are gaining more and more support, and due to this many theorists detect them as great danger to the further democratic and liberal flows in Europe.

1. Defining the new radical right political parties

In order to define the new radical right political parties and in order to determine their place on the ideology axis, from the very beginning, it is very important to define what the terms *political party* and *ideology* mean. The term *political party* originates from the Latin word *pars* which means part of a particular wholeⁱⁱ. In theory, we encounter many definitions, but still for many theorists the most acceptable definition of the term *political party* is the one by the political scientist Joseph LaPalombara, who states that a political party is a relatively permanent organizational structure, inspired by a certain ideology, whose main goal is winning government

(independently or in coalition) or if the government is already won to hold it as long as possibleⁱⁱⁱ. From this definition itself, it can be noticed that each party bounds to a particular ideology. In political science the term *ideology* means a system of beliefs, ideas and visions for the society and for regulating the social relations through which the social groups express their interests^{iv}. Each ideology needs to provide an answer to three questions^v. First, it has to provide an opinion on the existing order. Second, it has to provide a model on how the order should look like and third to provide an answer on how the desired order should be reached. The human mind has a need to make a classification of the political parties and one of the most used classifications of the political parties is the classification according to their own ideology – right-wing parties or left-wing parties. The left-wing and the right-wing are principal semantic forms of organization of the chosen perceptions and space for expressing political values, attitudes and opinions^{vi}. Having that in mind, the family of the radical right is located on the end of the right side of the ideology axis. However, it should be kept in mind that the family of the radical right is quite heterogeneous and that its definition is way difficult than the rest of the political parties. Thus, the new radical right political parties, embracing all the values of democracy and refusing to be defined as anti– system parties, managed to get out of the neo-fascist organizations and political parties whose main goal is destruction of the liberal and democratic system and establishment of fascist regime^{vii}. Moving away from the fascist and neo-fascist organizations, and at the same time retaining the positions of nationalism, populism, dogmatism, rigidity, exclusivity, authoritarianism, racism and xenophobia many recognizable values have been created through which the new radical right parties in Europe have been defined^{viii}. The problem with the general definition of the new radical right among theorists is also present in determining its name. Thus, the new radical right often is encountered as extreme right, far right, radical right populism, right populism, anti-immigrational parties, ethno-nationalism, nativism, racist extremism, xenophobic populism etc^{ix}. After a long study of the theory dedicated to these parties it has been decided that in this paper the term new radical right is going to be used, considering that the new radical right differentiates from the far and extreme right, while, the rest of the terms seem too narrow in defining the political parties which belong to that ideological family.

2. Ideological matrix of the new radical right political parties

Among the new radical right political parties and the positions that they represent there is a radical heterogeneity, but still, there are certain issues for which all political parties that belong to this family have same or similar positions.

First of all, the new right-wing party presents itself as a party close to the people, i.e., the voice of common people^x. Accepting the values and the rules of democracy, the new radical right parties highlight that the corrupt technocratic governments had caused the crisis of the representative democracy. According to them, common people are too far from the decision making processes and that is one of the reasons why they feel alienated from their institutions. Therefore, the new radical right parties promote greater degree of direct democracy through which the voice of the common people should be heard^{xi}. Should we look through referenda that have been prompted by the new radical right parties, many decisions have been taken that have been part of the programs of these parties. Such is the example with the referendum in Switzerland, through which the use of burqas by members of Islamic religion in Switzerland has been banned. Also, the political parties of the radical right accused the mainstream and moderate political parties with great passion that they have not succeeded in providing answers and solutions to the accumulated economic problems in Europeans societies. The new radical right parties believe that radical changes are needed, which the moderate political parties do not have the courage and determination to take, in order to solve the problems with the financial crisis and immigration.

Second, the parties that belong to the new radical right are supporters of the so-called nativism and ethno-nationalism. The nativism and the ethno-nationalism indicate that one country should be composed of one nation solely. The elements that are not part of that nation (members or ideas) represent fundamental danger to the national country.^{xii} Thus, members of the new radical right parties call upon the concept of national country based on the theory for national sovereignty. According to them, the nation is an organic, collective and indivisible body^{xiii} composed of members that speak the same language, have the same culture, customs, blood and history. For the new radical right, the representatives of minority groups cannot be integrated into society if they are not assimilated^{xiv}. Immigrants and representatives of other minority groups either have to be assimilated or they have to leave the state. Therefore, the new radical right parties criticize severely and reject the positions of

multiculturalism and the idea of popular sovereignty. The term *radical* itself can be defined from two aspects. On the one hand, the term *radical* could represent a need of change from the root, but on the other hand it could also mean going back to the roots^{xv}. In this regard, the new radical right political parties are going back to the roots, i.e., they refer that the source of the sovereignty in one society should be the nation, an understanding that refers to the XVIII and XIX centuries, when the first national states in Europe have been created and were based on the principle: one nation – one country (l'Etat-nation).^{xvi}

In recent years, the new radical right parties wishing to move away from the nationalistic organizations and to be closer to the European voters have been called on the theory of ethno-national pluralism. Ethno-national pluralism implies that the different national identities should be kept, and in that direction, the national identities of the immigrants should also be kept, but each national identity should stay and be developed in its own state^{xvii}. According to this concept, the different national identities should not mix because it leads to their weakening on short term, and on long term it leads to a possible destruction. Using the theory of ethno-national pluralism, the parties of the new radical right are trying to mask the nationalism in between their own ranks.

Third, the anti-immigrant policy is dominant between the new radical right political parties^{xviii}. The anti-immigrant attitude refers to immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees. It can be freely said that the anti-immigrant policy is one of the most recognizable characteristics of the new radical right political parties. The approach of the new radical right political parties toward the immigration in all West European states is identical. The immigration represents a cultural and economic threat to the indigenous population of Europe and because of that the immigrants should be taken back to their native state. Moreover, the new radical right parties are committed to introducing legislation that will maximally reduce the possibility of settlement of people from other countries. The radical right defends its anti-immigrant position on two levels – cultural and economic level.

In addition to the fact that the new radical right parties represent the common people, they represent themselves also as a parties that protect the European and national values. In this regard, they believe that the immigrants who have migrated have values and customs that are incompatible to the western values and that they represent a threat to the survival of the western values^{xix}. The increasing number of immigrants

on European soil represents danger to the national cohesion, national culture and national way of life of the western societies^{xx}. The fear of disrupting the national culture is greatly expressed towards Islamic immigrants^{xxi}. The new radical right political parties believe that Islamic immigrants have issues adjusting to the western way of life because the values in Islam are completely opposite from the values of one democratic society and that it is not possible to adjust them to one another. According to them, Islamic immigrants have trouble accepting the equality between men and women, the freedom of speech, the separation between the religion and the state, which on the other hand represent thorough values of the western world.^{xxii}

As regards the economy level, the members of the new radical right party believe that the immigrants contribute to the increase of unemployment, underground economy and are burden to the state's budget^{xxiii}. The supporters of the new radical right believe that the immigrants take over the jobs of the indigenous population and with that they influence the increase of the unemployment rate among indigenous population. The members of the new radical right political parties very often raise the voice against asylum seekers and refugees believing that they burden the social and economic system of the country. For them, the benefits of the state's welfare should be guaranteed solely for the indigenous people.^{xxiv} In science, this position of the new radical right political parties is known as Welfare chauvinism.

It should be mentioned that in the countries of Western Europe dominates the anti – immigrant attitude. This is the case because these countries are the most attractive and the most affected by the number of immigrants. The anti-immigrants attitude is rarely met in the programs of the new radical right parties that come from Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe^{xxv}. Unlike Western Europe, the countries from Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe are not an attractive destination for the immigrants; therefore the focus of these countries' new radical right parties has been moved from the immigrants towards everything that is different from their nation^{xxvi}. The new radical right political parties that originate from Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe are dominated by distrust towards the members of minority groups and towards members of other state, mostly people from neighboring countries.

Fourth, the new radical right political parties are against further European integration. According to them, the European integration process influences the reduction of the national governments' responsibilities in economic and social economy^{xxvii}. Considering that this situation violates national interest, the new radical

right political parties are opponents to further centralization of the European Union because that represents violation of the national states' sovereignty. For them, the European Union should be organized as a Union of national states with an aim to defend European values from the increasing number of immigrants^{xxviii}. Furthermore, a number of new radical right political parties call upon democratic deficit of the European institutions.

Fifth, the new radical right is great opponent of the globalization processes. For the new radical right parties the globalization is an evil which is imposed from outside^{xxix}. As in the fields of immigration, also in the field of globalization, the new radical right political parties defend their position against globalization on two levels: cultural and economic level.

On one hand, the new radical right political parties believe that globalization contributes for many changes, which represent a threat for erosion of national identities and national culture^{xxx}. The globalization process, according to them, can lead to extinction of national cultures and national languages because the globalization contributes for spreading and imposing of unified values, which are influenced by USA's values^{xxxi}. From here, it is completely clear why the new radical right political parties oppose globalization, having in mind the fact that the new radical right introducing themselves as a protectors of the national culture and the national languages. Moreover, the members of the new radical right emphasize that the process of globalization also influences the reduction of barriers for the immigrants to enter. As it was already mentioned, for the new radical right the immigrants are the biggest threat to national cohesion, national culture and the national way of life of the western societies.

On the other hand, globalization contributes for many changes in the economic sector of the countries (formation of post-industrial societies). The changes in the economic sector under the baton of globalization cause emergence of winners and losers^{xxxii}, i.e., people who profit from the modernization of society, and also people who cannot adjust to the changes and are left jobless. For the new radical right the losers from the globalization process are the common people^{xxxiii}. In this regard, the new radical right political parties introducing themselves as parties of the common people have no doubt that they should raise their voice against globalization as a process that increases the knot between the rich and the poor.

3. What are the reasons for the rise of the new radical right political parties

The rise of the new radical right political parties is connected to large number of reasons.

First, in the very beginning it has to be mentioned that the radical political groups, whether they are located on the left or the right side of the ideology axis, they become attractive for the citizens in times of economic and financial crisis. As of 2008, Europe finds itself in severe economic and financial crisis. As a consequence of the economic and financial crisis, a number of European citizens have been left jobless. The unemployment rates are growing and the current political elites find it very difficult to deal with the consequences from the economic and financial crisis.

Second, it has to be taken into account the influence of the charismatic leaders and the functioning of the new radical right political parties. Usually, the heads of the new radical right political parties are young, strong, charismatic leaders and leaders with prestigious academic diploma^{xxxiv}. Leaders, who succeed in showing themselves, on the one hand as direct people who discuss in a language that is understandable for the common people, while, on the other hand, they represent themselves as preachers who have special mission to call and solve the problems with unemployment and immigration.^{xxxv} The positive influence and the role of the charismatic leaders in politics have been monitored ever since Aristotle, to this day.

In the functioning of the new radical right political parties they use new technologies for the elections campaign and new media. Almost all new radical right parties possess perfectly designed websites and are also active in promoting their policies through social network like Facebook or Twitter^{xxxvi}. It should be specially emphasized that the number of the party members of the moderate political parties in Western Europe is decreasing; the new radical right political parties manage to recruit and to include in their politics many young people.^{xxxvii}

Third, it can be freely said that the success of the new radical parties, among other things, is due to and is because of the disappointment of the citizens from the functioning of the moderate political parties. Today, the representative democracy is in crisis, and many citizens feel ignored and distant from their political institutions and from the political process. A growing percentage of European citizens see the moderate political parties as corrupt and alienated organizations^{xxxviii}. If we look, in almost all Western European countries the executive government becomes far more powerful than the legislative one, and the participation of the common citizen in the

political process is minimal. The dissatisfaction with the functioning of the democracy is used by the new radical right political parties, which emphasize that radical changes are needed in the functioning of democracy, calling for greater use of direct democracy and open election lists^{xxxix}. Introducing themselves as an alternative to the traditional political parties and a protest against the corrupted political elites, the new radical right parties manage to attract many supporters who are dissatisfied with the current functioning of the moderate political parties and the representative democracy.

Fourth, the number of immigrants especially in the countries of Western Europe is constantly rising. The surveys of the public opinion in the countries of Europe indicate that 2/3s of the citizens in European countries believe that the upper limit of immigrants' inflow has been reached and that the inflow has to stop^{xl}. The economic financial crisis is additionally increasing the knot between the indigenous people and the immigrants. There is a general perception that the immigrants take the job positions of the European citizens^{xli}. In the countries of the European Union, as a consequence to the white plague, there is a moral panic that the European values have been endangered and that they will be repressed by the immigrants' values, amongst whom a rise in the natural growth has been noticed.^{xlii} It can be freely said that the new radical right parties have placed the problem with immigration in the center of the political discourse. Their positions have caused creation of anti-immigrants' positions even among moderate political parties. Although part of the moderate political parties, it is extremely rare today to find a conservative party that has a positive attitude towards the issue of multiculturalism and immigrants. The leaders of Germany (Merkel), France (Sarkozy), and the United Kingdom (Cameron) have repeatedly publicly declared that the idea of multiculturalism has been dead. However, the leaders of the new radical right say that the moderate political parties lack the strength and courage to fight the problem of immigration. The anti-immigrant policy is the central issue in the programs of the new radical right political parties and contributes to be attractive for many citizens. Taking into account the public opinion of European citizens towards the issue of immigration, theorists predict that in future the anti-immigrant and the anti-Islamic rhetoric will be even more intense in the new radical right parties.^{xliii}

Fifth, the fall of the Berlin Wall had a positive influence on the deepening of the European integration. With the adoption of the Maastricht Treaty, from economic union, Europe finally became a political union. The Amsterdam, Nice and Lisbon

Treaties have continued the path traced by the Maastricht Treaty and have predicted further transfer of authority by national Governments to Brussels. Today, most of the economic and social politics are created under the influence of Brussels. The competence of the national authorities in this regard are limited and very often national governments, in order to align their legislation with the European one, decide to make moves that are unpopular among their citizens^{xliv}. The feeling that the problems are being solved far from the common people and that the national governments are limited in seeking and implementing solutions adversely affects the position of the moderate parties in European states. Offering themselves as unique counter-response to the ideas for European integration, the new radical right parties were becoming more attractive to the citizens, who were skeptic about the functioning of the European Union. Moreover, the European Union is faced with a major problem regarding her democratic capacity.^{xlv} Only the European Parliament from the central European Union institutions draws the legitimacy directly from the European demos. Nevertheless, having in mind that the European Parliament in almost all issues is dependent on the EU Council of Ministers and that on the last elections for EU parliamentarians, only 34 % of the citizens of the member state of EU went to the elections which shows that the position of the European Parliament is problematic too. Such a situation is causing further anger among common people which the new radical right parties manage to use, offering ideas for hyper – democracy.

Sixth, the new radical right political parties succeed in attracting a number of supporters from the working class^{xlvi} i.e. voters body that traditionally belongs to the left side of the ideology axis. There are several reasons why the radical right parties are becoming attractive for the members of the working class.

The interests of the working class during the XX century were defended and represented by the labor parties (social-democratic, social and communist political parties) and by the trade unions, which during the XX century were a very strong interest group. Today, the situation is way different. On the one hand, the fall of the Berlin Wall and communism led to decline of the ideas of socialism and solidarity.^{xlvii} On the other hand, the globalization and deindustrialization have caused major changes in the economic sector which resulted in weakening the industrial bases of the European economies and creation of economies oriented towards the services sector.^{xlviii} These reasons have led to a decrease in membership, and also the power of the trade unions in the European countries. Regarding the labor political parties it

should be kept in mind that with the fall of the communism there is also, a fall of the socialist and communist parties, but the social – democratic parties instead of being parties of the working class, they begin to become parties of the middle class, which is positively inclined towards the post-industrial society.^{xlix} As we have already mentioned, the globalization is creating winners and losers. Often, the biggest losers in the globalization of the European countries are representatives of the working class who have a problem adjusting to the newly occurred economic conditions¹. Furthermore, most of the immigrants who come on European continent possess poor education and competencies that match the job positions of the working class and with that they are a direct competition for the job positions of the indigenous people which is bound to the working class. Presenting themselves as parties of the common people who raise the voice against globalization, modernization and immigration, the new radical right parties are becoming attractive to the working class because most of it is affected by the problems that arise from globalization, modernization and immigration. At a time when the trade unions are weak, the labor parties either in free fall or concentrated towards the middle class, the new radical right parties are an only option for the members of the working class.

Conclusion

In the last few decades, the political parties that belong to the new radical right manage to gain up to 10% to 25 % of the European citizens' votes and with that to become important factor in the functioning of the political systems in Europe. The constant support of over 20% for the new radical right parties in Switzerland and Austria, as well as the major success of the National Front at the local elections in France in 2014, speak that the rise of the new radical right parties must be seriously analyzed.

Focusing against globalization, immigration, European integration, multiculturalism and offering ideas for hyper – democracy, the new radical right parties are emerging as serious and unique alternative to the traditional moderate political parties. At the same time, the increasing level of immigration, the increased European integration and globalization, as well as the major crisis of the representative democracy and democratic deficit of the European Union are factors which contribute to the fact that the new radical right parties are parties that are interesting for many citizens of the European countries. Furthermore, the young and charismatic leaders of the new

radical right parties, in combination with the successful use of the new technologies for the elections campaigns and new media by the new radical right parties, contribute the new radical right parties to attract new party members and supporters, especially among young people. Managing to sufficiently move away from the fascist and neo-fascist organizations, while relying on nationalism, dogmatism, rigidity, exclusivity, authoritarianism, racism and xenophobia, the new radical right political parties represent a major threat for the liberal values and flows in the European countries. Although not defined as anti – system parties, the new radical right parties possess characteristics that are opposite from and dangerous for the European values and so their election success represent quiet but major danger to the European democracies. In the marginalization of the new radical right parties the moderate political parties will have the biggest role, which in the period to come will have to earn back the trust of the European citizens in the democratic institutions and the traditional political parties. The successes of the moderate traditional parties, the increased trust in the democratic institutions, coping with economic – financial crisis and increased integration of the immigrants in European societies will be the best cure against the rise of the new radical right political parties. Otherwise, there is a risk that the heads of the European democracies will be parties that possess qualities that are opposite the European democracies.

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