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Populist Radical Right Parties in Eastern Europe

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Abbreviations

CEE:	Countries of Eastern Europe
CENAA :	Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs
DSSS:	DĚLNICKÁ STRANA Sociální Spravedlnosti (Czech Worker's Party for Social Justice)
EERC:	European Roma Rights Centre
EU :	European Union
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
IPSA :	Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority
ISA:	International Sociological Association
LD :	Learning Disabilities
MP :	Member of Parliament
MSzP :	Magyar Szocialista Párt (Hungarian Socialist Party)
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NOP :	Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski
NPD:	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (German Nationalist Party)
LPR:	Liga Polskich Rodzin (<i>League of Polish Families</i> , a national conservative political party in <i>Poland</i>)
ONR:	Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny (Polish National Radical Camp)
PRM:	Partidul Romania Mare (Romania Mare Party)
PRR :	Populist Radical Right
PUNR :	Partidul Unității Națiunii Române (the Romanian National Unity Party)
USA:	United States of America

Abstract

One of the most popular topics of contemporary political science and widely discussed is the emergence of Right – wing extremism in Europe.

In this paper it will be discussed and deployed not only the phenomenon but also its emergence and the role that played factors not only from the present but also from the past as for example the role of Communist Legacies in the succession or not of the Radical Right parties in the modern political landscape. The analysis will proceed with the presentation of countries from central, eastern and southeastern Europe as cases and tools that will provide the reader with the mental provisions to understand the complexity of the under examination multidimensional subject.

1. Introduction

During the last years it widely said that Right wing Parties had swept Europe with their electoral results. Which are the indicators that have as result more and more people to lean towards this view?

Is this exclamation true or it is more than that, in the upsurge of the complex phenomenon called Radical Right? Can we characterize the emergence of Radical Right Parties in Eastern Post-Communist Europe a success story or not?

In this paper we will try through a comparative study and examination to shed light on the not so popular region of Eastern Europe.

In this paper we will proceed with a presentation and study of the broader regional context at first and secondly by presenting the populist radical parties and the dynamic that each party or organization has in countries of Eastern and Central Eastern Europe.

The approach took under consideration both factor of demand side thesis as well as supply side factors, taking into account the peculiarities of the Region.

At the beginning, Extremist and Radical Right formations were parts of bigger umbrella anticommunist formations, but soon enough, after the first elections, their ideological differentiations became apparent as the disintegration of the anticommunist bloc was accelerated. (Mudde, 2005)

Over the last years, more and more Populist Radical Parties or extreme formations or even neo-nazi groups are collaborating to each other, and as it will be shown in different sections. Starting from the ideological by exchanging views in big Radical Right forums or through widely known internet pages to more practical ones by doing

joint marches or sending delegations in each other festivals. It is evident that joint actions the last years tend to become a common behavior revealing a kind of solidarity among that kind of formations.

The most indicative case towards that direction is the cultural influence that Western Europe and especially the well organized Nazi and extreme nationalist groups are exercising to Central European countries like Slovakia , Czech Republic , Slovenia etc (Mude, 2007; Kopeček, 2007).

Unfortunately, due to shortage of space, it can not be discussed in what extend the Central European Radical right scene is being shaped by their neighbors.

Internet pages, face book and media, hate concerts, camps and outdoor activities are only some of the means that the Radical community uses in order to promote its message.

Over the last years, minority laws, laws about positive segregation towards minorities of any kind, laws about citizenship and etc., brought live discourses and debates over the parliament, resulting to polarization situation that is highly exploited by Radical Right.

Moreover, subjects and campaigns around the role of Nation, Nation identity and threat, that globalization poses to it, have a positive impact for the upraise of such parties (Ellinas, 2012).

One of the most interesting things that this research revealed is the various forms and different expressions that the movement adopts in order to be more appealing taking under consideration the peculiarities of the region the cultural background having not a monolithic organization as it is widely believed but a constantly changing way of perceiving and acting from case to case making it difficult to be curbed if the counter act policies are not well formed or to put it in other words more case based.

In Eastern Europe Homophobia is a spread phenomenon that it can be classified as one of the most serious phobias and threats not only for radical right parties but also for different ideological oriented parties and for other various sections of the society in an effort “behaviors” like these, if not prosecuted by the law, to be seriously stigmatized by the society. (*Hannus, 2012*)

2. Defining Radical Right

During the last years far right parties have won more academic attention than any other political family in Europe. Empirical data explain this rapidly growing academic interest , over the last sixty years, no other party family did not have such important election results in so many countries in such a short amount of time.

Scholars came up with plenty of definitions typologies and labels, taking for instance the term the “New Right” and the most widely used term which is Radical Right.

It is also called as Populist Right and Extreme Right, in this effort we came up with only the most popular ones. (Archeimer, 2012).

According to Pierro Ignazi Professor of Comparative Politics at the University of Bologna and Chairman of the Research Committee for Political Sociology of IPSA and ISA, a party in order to be categorized as Extreme Right party has to fulfill 3 criteria.

1st it must be located at the right end of the left-right continuum with no other party located righter 2nd it should have link with Fascist mythology and principle and last but not least it must express values opposed to the democratic system with accompanying policies towards the de-legitimation of it.(Kopeček, 2007).

According to Thompson (1990) radical right party defined as a party that scored high on social authoritarianism and nationalism.

That type of parties could be called as either highly nationalistic or extremely socially conservative.

If a party presents high score on one only level and low on the other dimension, it can not be classified as a radical right party (Busticova, 2013).

The first element that it must be pointed out is what in other words described earlier as the conceptualization of the other for instance in Western Europe the role of the other have the immigrants especially those that came outside of the European Union. On the contrast in Eastern Europe the phenomenon of migration is of minor importance, here the “otherness” is fulfilled by the role minorities in the state Historical or not the minorities are represent as scapegoats or even as the long arm of a neighboring state with irredentist aspirations. (Kopeček, 2007).

3 The phenomenon of radical right in Eastern European Countries

3.1. Communist Legacies and their impact in the formation and success or failure of Populist Radical Right parties in Eastern Europe.

In the first chapter we will put under examination the role of communist legacies and by what manner they influenced or played an important role in the success or failure of Populist Radical Parties in the post – communist era. (Bustikova & Kitschelt, 2009).

In other words it will be examined how the legacies can provide us with hints in order to understand the political behavior in the post –communist era.

There are three types of legacies: the first is the legacy of national-accommodative communism, the second is the legacy of patrimonial communism and the last one is the legacy of bureaucratic-authoritarian communism (Bustikova & Kitschelt, 2009).

This important tool will highlight the power relations between the Ruling party and the society or other institutions of power and what kind of relations existed and in which level they were based upon on clientelistic relations upon repression and authority enforcement , charismatic leadership etc. (Kitschelt et.al. 1999).

The communist apparatus in each country will be examined through the scope of Kitschelt's argument about the three different communist configurations with the first to be: the degree of questioning of the party policies both at the intra-group level and at the intergroup level.

The second variation has to do with the level of popular dissent, a situation that, as we will see subsequently, varies a lot from country to country (this variation is not solely depend upon the party, but also on other variables besides it).

The 3rd variation has to do with structural concepts and under which principles and doctrines the state is operating (Kitschelt, 1995).

3.2. Patrimonial Communism

The first communist legacy is the Patrimonial Communism. In this situation the countries were solely modernized from the top to the bottom with the most of the people to be part not of well-organized industrial society, except some areas, but on the other hand to be involved in agriculture. (Bustikova & Kitschelt, 2009).

Patrimonial regimes pop up in countries with a history of authoritarian rule and weak socialist organizations. An indicative case is Romania, when before the communist rule the communist party of Romania had less than 1000 members (Verdery, 1995).

Under these conditions, the externally driven installations of communist regimes used clientelist channels and violent repression of the opposition, as means of imposing their dictatorial Rule, leaving no room for dialog or contestation of the status quo (Vobolevičius, 2009).

Countries of southeastern Europe such as Romania, Bulgaria, but also countries like Russia, Ukraine and Belarus belong in this case. One of the main characteristics of Patrimonial Communism, responsible for the name it bears, is the little space for opposition both at the level of the party and overall .

The fringe bureaucratic institutionalization has, as result, the development of networks revolving around patronage and clientelism (Kitschelt 1995).

Due to the weak institutionalization of the society and the negligible opposition, the power holders during the communist years survived politically and they were serious operators of the transitional process at first and secondly they became members of the transitional post-Communist successor parties.

3.3. Bureaucratic Authoritarian Communism

Bureaucratic authoritarian Communism made its appearance where there was a great popular support, mainly among the workers in the urban centers. One of its primal features is the use of well-organized bureaucratic platform in order to confront internal well-organized bourgeois (Vobolevičius, 2009).

The next type of communist system is called bureaucratic -authoritarian communism and it could be met in Czech Republic and the former German Democratic Republic with Slovakia to have features both of bureaucratic -authoritarian communism and Patrimonial communism. Its key features are high level of bureaucratization, but on the other hand the little scope for consideration over politics.

It was based on the high mobilization of its working class supporters and that's where it is based about the aforementioned countries, countries with strong working movement and industry (Kopstein, 2003 ; Kitschelt 1995).

3.4. National - Accommodative Communism

The last Communist type, called National- Accommodative Communism, or and up to point had some tolerance to other views, outside the political line of the party. In this category belong countries as Poland and Hungary, alongside with ex – Yugoslavian countries, such as Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia.

This type of communism was developed in countries with some kind of middle class, with the regime to have an arrangement between the party and society and not based solely on repression and clientelistic behaviors. (Kopstein, 2003).

In this type of communist authority, the Communist Regime faced some kind of Nationalistic opposition which, in accordance with the low level of support among the working class, did not permit them to impose harsh measures and grievous oppression to the society (Vobolevičius, 2009).

It was spent special attention around this topic(legacies), due to the fact that : as it is highly considered legacies play an important role in the post-communist political environment, both by examining social and cultural reflections of the past, in order to have a behavioral pattern in order to understand or even predict the future (Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2009).

Other variable that it must be highlighted, outside role of Communist legacies, is the existence or not of cultural, linguistic or ethnic minorities in the territory of the country.

An element of higher importance, considering the fact that they are presented among the basic enemies of the nation as scapegoats, easy perceived targets due to their socio-cultural ethnic, or even sexual, differences.

A common applied strategy is the polarization of the society with one pole consisted by the enemies of nation, such as the aforementioned minorities, or the Jews, the corrupted elites and the foreign institutions and forces and on the other pole them (Bustikova, 2013; Mudde, 2007).

To put it in other words, the socio-political construction of identity and specific the sense of belonging is cultivated not solely by the group intra-conceptualization as a hole, but, to a great or even greater extend, of the conceptualization of the other. . (Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2009; Bustikova, 2013).

Moreover, other key concepts and measures, that will help us understand better , not only the Communist but also the post – Communist political landscape plus the political developments that occur regarding the rise of the “New right” or in other words Right-wing Extremism in Eastern Europe, are the following factors .(Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2009).

The first factor, that will be discussed further, except the role of Communist Legacies, is the geographic location and proximity of a country with Western European Countries and also the distance that divides local with European decision making centers.

The main reason beneath this factor is that proximity can act positively in order democratization and western values to be adopted in the double or even triple transition process, if we take under consideration that some countries faced also political anomaly that, in some cases, resulted even in small scale armed conflicts or worse in full scale war (Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2009).

Moreover the role of sociocultural and religious background in the political development plays a significant part and thus subsequently it will receive a fair amount of attention, especially with example of Poland and the vital role that religion played in order Right wing parties to emerge.

Except that the exploitation of national and religious sentiments of the people by extremists in order elevate themselves in key positions is a common populist practice, that meets no borders or nations that also happened in Poland when Radical Right-wing Mps and ex hooligans were appointed, fortunately for a short period of time, in prestigious government Positions (Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2009).

4. Contemporary Eastern European Radical right Parties

4.1. Radical extremism in Bulgaria – Ataka coalition

The case of Bulgaria is an indicative paradigm of uniqueness and diversion that composes the political family which, according to many, is increasingly gaining ground.

Almost 25 years after the demise of communism and as the fading of the 2 opposed poles of power (Communist and Anti-Communist) becomes apparent, with many politicians to have not only switch sides but also ideologies (ex extreme right wing or communist members to reappear as today democrats), new cleavages are emerging in a rapidly changeable political environment (Todorov, 2013).

In all above must be added the frustration and disappointment that people feel, due to the changes that occur in Bulgaria, changes that shape the democratic face of Bulgaria. As a consequence to the short version aforementioned reasoning, we can argue that political void has been created and this vacuum came to fill.

This fertile ground allowed Populist Radical Right movements, formations and parties to emerge and blossom in Bulgaria, tending at the end of day to be characterized as they wish (not as something extreme) but as a political player in the current political landscape part of bigger Political family.(Vingenin, 2011).

Despite the fact that, in the vast majority of Post – Communist countries, Radical right parties emerged straight away after the demise of Communism, in the case of Bulgaria, due to several reasons, that evolution didn't occur.

It was not up until 2005 when the ultranationalist party, called the Bulgarian National Movement of Ataka (Ataka, Natsionalen Sayuz Ataka), not only managed to surpass the electoral threshold of 4 %, but gain over the 8 % of the votes ranked 4th with 21 seats out of 240 (Wikipedia, 2013a).

That development, as it was expected, shocked the political system of Bulgaria (Vingenin, 2011).

Although, many authors had predicted the reduction of the Ataka, that doesn't not concedes either with reality as the elections on 12 May 2013, declared that Ataka is not passenger from the political scene but a fully legitimate political actor, nor with the exclamation that Populist Radical Right in Bulgaria is diminishing.

In this section we will analyze the reasons of Ataka's electoral success, or on the other hand not failure, the party's positions and actions.

We will also talk about the aggressive political speech and what's the impact in the Bulgarian society, by taking under consideration as an indicative measurement, the recent electoral results, among other indicators, in an effort to understand and develop counteract strategies in order to tackle the phenomenon.

The first thing, that it must be taken into account, is the fact that up until 2005 no Radical Right Party in Bulgaria had managed to succeed and surpass the electoral threshold and get into the parliament (Smrčková, 2009; Todorov, 2013).

This is quite contradictory situation, compared with other country -cases where PRR Parties not only managed to get elected but also be part of the government in the newly formed democracies, taking for instance the PRM party in Romania, a case which will discuss later on. (Smrčková, 2009)

Ataka is a coalition of nationalist organizations under Volen Sidirov, an ex journalist that became known through a talk show, which became its vehicle in order to enter the political life of the country, as he was already popular. (Wikipedia, 2013b).

But what triggered the rise of: PRR in Bulgaria after 2005 and which are the main topics of their discourse; it will be the main theme under examination in this chapter.

Ataka's manifesto is consisted by 20 positions. In prominent position are topics around protectionism of economy anti EU and NATO stance.

Furthermore, according to party positions minorities are top one enemy of the nation and consisted by people, according to the leader of Ataka that can not be characterized as Bulgarians.

Typical is the outspoken animosity against the ethnic religious Turkish minority and its political expression, the party that called "Movement for Rights and Freedoms". (Todorov, 2013)

Many centric positions of the Party are revolving around arguments about the primacy of the nation and state obviously ideologically influenced by Italian Fascism. (Todorov, 2013; Popova, 2013).

Another explanation could possibly be that the voters were tired from the same politicians and wanted to try something new, a change or a new formation that would refresh the already congested political landscape, or at least they wanted to believe that they had an option, besides well known politicians who, a lot of times, were involved in scandals or even in its most extreme expression of liberal democracy (Genov, 2010)

Despite, under which circumstances these groups gain power, it is obligatory the democratic forces, both inside the country and across Europe in general, to not underestimate neither the expressions nor the message which such type of organizations are promoting, and move towards a common direction in order to tackle the phenomenon through coherent and stable policies (Abbass et.al., 2011).

4.2. Hungary – Jobbik

One of the trickiest cases, that this paper had to deal with, is the Hungarian case. This, due not only to the fact that Jobbik, the PRR party, has broad electoral resonance, but, according to assessments, because of the tremendous impact that performs to the society. In this section it will be analyzed.

The question that we have to address is why Jobbik is so appealing to many different categories of people, taking for example the fact that the party is extremely popular among young highly educated Hungarians, which is one of the ingredients of its success.

This is quite important, considering the fact that the majority of other PRR parties are basing their electoral strength to poorly educated voters, who are the most vulnerable during this period of economic crisis and, thus, it's easier to be proselytized or get influenced (Mahony, 2013).

Although the phenomenon of Radical Right, populist or not, is not depend only on demand side theories and paradigms, as for example the crisis, it is vital to mention that although Hungary was in crisis and managed to repay to IMF of its outstanding debt earlier than it was initially expected, that did not happened without cost. (*EurActiv.com, 2013*).

A possible explanation, according to "Katalin Halasz" (2009), is that Jobbik success, not only at the electoral level but overall, was that it gave a sense of belonging to people, based on a oversimplified ideology of hate, but on the other hand it united great populations under a common purpose. These people perceived themselves, according to the party statements, as the "true Hungarians".

Also we must include in our assessment the Historical fact that Hungary is a country without one free election during the interwar period feature, that must be taken into account as the democratic transition is something totally new in a country that had developed political reflexes outside the democratic norms .(*Kopstein, 2003*)

Jobbik can be considered as a successful case, because it managed to build strong group identity by, at first, putting aside and aggregate minorities, gypsies, Jews or homosexuals. (Halasz, 2009)

Although Jobbik was created in 2003 and in the beginning manage to gather only 2.2 percent, soon its electoral percentages skyrocketed to 14.77 %, in the European parliament elections in 2009. One year later climbed to 16.67 percent, at the domestic parliament elections, shocking not only its opponents but also Europe, becoming the 3rd biggest party in Hungary. Above all, it was not that Jobbik is a Populist Radical Party, but a party with strong nazi ideological influences and it wish to apply them towards all the people that did not fit with the profile of the "True Hungarians", as they visualize themselves. (Gaillard and Paris, 2010; Nagy et.al., 2013)

Jobbik, also, became known for its severe anti - Jew stance, which is proclaimed openly without fear, in a society that not only confronts anti Jew feeling with social contempt but in many ways promotes them.

In December 2012, a MP from the Hungarian Extreme-right wing party Jobbik asked a list to be created with all politicians of Jewish origin, as they were considered as a threat for national security (Ramalingam, 2012).

Jobbik became popular and widely known through its paramilitary organization, called the "Hungarian Guard", which through its radical actions gained many supporters. Since 2007 and according to European Roma Right Center (ERRC, 2012), the attacks against Romani people have increased, with at least 8 people to lose their lives and dozens to be seriously injured, by people that have connections with extreme radical right organizations .

Clashes, between Roma and Members of Radical groups, occur, taking for example what happened in 14-15 of August in 2009 when members of the Hungarian Guard went to Sajóbáony, after the invitation of a local politician, “to put some order”.

Another extreme example, on April 2009 reported about 38 Romani families who were hiding in the forest, after their expulsion, by the Hungarian Guard, from the city Jánoshalma, With the Mayor asking to leave the country at the end of the day, the families fled to Strasbourg where they considered being able to seek asylum in France.

These are just a few of the incidents, that were recorded and concern not individual cases but large groups of Roma people, that were brutally attacked or had forced to flee out of the country, and even violently expelled . Thus, it can be said that we do not have to deal with isolate incidents but steps of a biggest plan. (EERC, 2012)

There is also an argument that applies towards the demand side theory. According to it, the rapid demise of the left, and especially of the MSZP, in a very short period of time created a political vacuum that Jobbik was eager to fill, by taking advantage of this opportunity.

At this point and in order to have a better understanding about Jobbik phenomenon, it is obligatory to go back and investigate the polarization of Hungarian politics right after 1989. The aforementioned element (the polarized political landscape) was also the tool and the mean that made the aggressive speech of Jobbik to sound attractive.

Polarization as a concept had its use not only during the Cold War but also after the end of it in the Hungarian political landscape. A tool that helped the political players to draw lines and create cleavages between them, as the most of them had striking similarities around their economic program. It was a tool that permitted them to distinguish, for example, at the sociocultural level and therefore to build their political constructions in order to gain the power (Palonen, 2009).

A major reason for this decline in popularity for the MSZP was that the policies that applied, as governing party, was totally juxtaposed to those that was announced during his electoral campaign. (Nagy et.al., 2013)

4.2.1. What Jobbik stands for?

In this chapter we will make an effort both to define and analyze the most important thesis of the party and the way that it perceives the world.

The first element, a common one across the region, is the broad sense of anti-communism exploited not only by Jobbik but, in many cases, by Fidesz the contemporary ruling party in Hungary. (Nagy et.al., 2013)

This fertile ground was exploited by Jobbik, presenting itself as the pole of opposition against the previous regime, but also against to successor parties and extreme liberals, accusing the members of other parties that they managed to retain after the demise of communism (Nagy et.al., 2013)

This thesis was boosted by populist demagogic rhetoric's that had a twofold task, on the one hand, to accuse all the other political forces as successor parties with all that it implies, and on the other hand, to promote political nihilism a vital instrument in order that their hate speech to be easily perceived.

In other words, this instrument (political nihilist theory) permit Jobbik to promote its oversimplified political program and first of all to tag the other political parties under the labels of "corrupted elites" or "successor parties".

The polarized system can be considered as a remnant of a previous era that perceived the world in opposing sides between allies and enemies, where the boundaries between "us and them" were clearly cut ideologically, culturally and economically. (Palonen, 2009; Nagy et.al., 2013).

This populist concept of "us" and "them", Jobbik successfully reproduced and highlighted in his program talking about corrupt elites – traitors- minorities – Jews – Roma and others (homosexuals) that trying to steal not only the state but above all the pride of the "True Hungarians" (Nagy et.al., 2013).

4.2.2. Us and them

The reason that this concept is so popular both in politics, but also in several other areas outside them, can be considered the fact that this is an easy way to stigmatize the other group, by the reproduction of stereotypes in order "them" to be understood as something, if not evil, at least not normal or less human and, in extreme cases as we study now, not human at all (Wikipedia, 2013c).

This technique, at the same time, elevates the people inside the group as something different of the rest, presenting them as something better than the "others" or more specifically other groups, boosting both their constructed social identity, but also their self- esteem.

The concept "us" and "them" can be understood if we take into account what has been written by social psychologists about this subject and more specifically about the topic of social identity theory and identity constructions, concept that was first introduced by Tajfel (1978) and later by Tajfel and Turner in 1979 (Trepte, 2006).

Therefore this convenient polarization is widely used by the Populist Right wing parties, as constitutes a win - win situation for them with twofold gains, to be more specific, not only stigmatizes and excludes the outsiders but shapes the persons inside the group in order to comfort and be applicable to groups doctrines and obey orders without asking questions or challenge the content of these.

That kind of moral boost has as target to generate an image of superiority and, at the end of the day, has a consequence the detachment from the rest of the society as a way to engulf its people to members and transform them to soldiers.

The type of behavior that social categorization provokes is social comparison. Social comparison is a kind of behavior under the right circumstances and under the

guidance of a fanatic leadership can result towards racist or exclusionary behaviors (Trepte, 2006).

4.3. Czech Republic

The case of Czech Republic presents particular interest given that although the country has long tradition and thus it is expected to have at least one strong Radical Right party which does not occur as Radical right formations gather marginal electoral results. Take for example Worker's Party for Social Justice (DSSS) that did not exceed 1.14 per cent of the votes in the parliamentary elections in 2010 (Mareš, 2012c; Walach, 2011).

In contradiction to that since 1989 in the country exists strong underground radical community which is responsible for several attacks. The most important ideological streams are the neo-nazists and the nationalists. The ideological fragmentation continues with the first category to be divided into dogmatic neo-Nazism, pagan neo-Nazism, autonomous neo-Nazism (Mareš, 2012c)

The first case confirms the initial claim about cultural influence of CEE countries from German Nazism, as according to the thesis of dogmatists they perceive themselves as Aryan nation denying the confrontation between Czechs and Germans and agreeing with properties returning to the Germans that expelled from Czechoslovakia between 1945- 1948 when the president Beneš applied the plan in order to deal with the "German problem" in the post – war context as other countries such as Hungary and Poland did (Mareš, 2012; Wikipedia, 2013d).

At this point we should stress the fact that DSSS the most significant extreme right wing party was outlawed by the Supreme court due to its xenophobic racist beliefs. Among its values are criticism and hate towards elites, immigrants, minorities .This is an action similar to that the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, tried to apply several times in an effort to outlaw the NPD the German Nationalist Party (Wikipedia, 2013e).

Minorities is serious matter when we are talking about Central Eastern European countries especially with ethnic minorities or Roma which in many countries are victims of segregation and stereotypes or even racism attacks (Mareš, 2012)

At this point we should pause, examine and assess measurements and behaviors that were adopted by the state in order to tackle Populist radical right parties organization or neo – nazi hate groups. Also we must take into account the role of media in the contemporary era as they are bearers of power and serious players when it comes to delicate issues of identity, minorities, crime and others topics frequently used by PRR Parties in the top of their agenda.

4.4. Poland

Now the research will proceed with the Polish case. In this case it is observed the absence of Radical or extreme Radical party, with the ideological borders of politics between the Right and radical right to be very difficult to be noticed.

Instead of the typical case of one Populist Radical Party existing in the parliament of this country, we have to confront with a situation which comes in complete contradiction with the previous ones as there are numerous extreme neo – Nazi and other extreme youth organizations with anti-parliament feelings and actions (Pankowski, 2011).

Many groups in Poland are known about their street action and existence rather than their political existence or ambitions. These ambitions had never been fulfilled, even when organizations took the great step and changed themselves in order to transform to parties. On the other hand in contrast to their intentions they only managed to collect marginal results and thus they were unable to enter the parliament. LPR case is matching in this category soon enough its electoral failure meant to be the result of its dissolution (Pankowski, 2011, 2012).

The main topic that had been promoted was the strong right wing nationalism and open anti-EU and anti – NATO sentiments, as well as anti-Semitism which can be considered as a distinctive characteristic of the Polish Self Defense ,one of the most anti- Semitic organization among many in Poland (Norris 2005; Van der Brug & Fennema, 2009).

Although in Western Europe there is high-calibrated anti-Semitism, in Eastern Europe anti-Semitic sentiments can be expressed openly without any repercussions. On the contrary that kind of Rhetoric in many Western European countries not only is severely criticized by the society but also is banned by law (Wilson & Hainsworth, 2012).

But as it was said at the beginning, radical right or exclusionist and xenophobic discourse are not a privilege of a specific party or organization but a practice that is widely applied by other parties and power holders proceeding in a categorization where in the first pole we had the people that were included in the group according to the aforementioned theoretical concept of social identity as well.

In one hand the people that fit this profile are called self-characterized as “true” Polish while the others, are excluded . The same situation with identical way of thinking, was mentioned before, in the Hungarian case (Rydlinski , 2011).

Also, the social repercussions of the global financial and economic crisis can not be missed from the plan that swept Europe (Rydlinski , 2011).

Another organization with strong nationalistic background is ONR (Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny)and as its name declares it is an organization with Radical character that seeks for radical changes, changes that are opposed to Liberal Democracy as it is

considered as one of the biggest Enemies of Europe. Furthermore, except LD social rights are at the target of this organization and instead of rights what is more needed according to them is a justice society based on law and order and above all in hierarchy visualizing a stratified society rather than one based on democratic values (Rydliński, 2011).

One of the most notable organizations is the *National Rebirth of Poland (Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski –NOP)*, which has been one of the most dynamic extreme-right organizations and been active both on the streets and in the youth scene since the demise of communism. It must be also stressed the strong anti-EU and NATO character of the organization with prepositions for formation, even guerrilla groups in order to attack NATO forces in Poland's soil, considering them (NATO troops) nothing more than occupation forces (Pankowski, 2011; Langenbacher & Schellenberg, 2011).

Furthermore another organization which composes the right wing scenery called also Falanga in contrast to what we have seen Falanga is another active organization ultra nationalist that is ideologically based in the Polish Catholic triangle of God, Honor and Fatherland. (Wikipedia, 2013f; Rydliński, 2011).

Falanga also like the previous organization believe in the role of the army and not only that but it promote the catholic army service in order the country to be again in the place it belongs. It is not taken without notice that Falanga members went to fight in Syria in the recent civil war in a attempt to defend Christian values which are the cornerstone of Poland's new radical right (Wikipedia, 2013f).

Far right political actors are integrated, in other political parties beside Populist Radical Right -wing parties with the state to provide them the opportunity to influence public opinion through media and to have access to political processes and funds as long they do not run over the limits in Poland (Tvda, 2011).

That fact can be proved if we consider that in 2007 populist radical Right -wing actors via the government coalition of right wing parties with ex- neo-Nazi radicals with hooligan background, found to hold although for short time prestigious government positions. That had as a result the social and political outcry with demonstrations against certain people in order to be removed from the post entrusted to them. (Pankowski, 2011)

Ideological Background: The core of the Ideological narratives that the most of these organizations are exploiting have to do with arguments not so much based on the neo-nazist trend as it had been said in the case of the Central Eastern Countries which were greatly influenced by the German National Socialism but instead, from the North American Extreme Right.

The key idea that is highly promoted has to do with the value of homogenizing the nation in terms of population as also in cultural terms (pinpointing the role of Catholic Church and Religion).

To put it in other words Polish means Catholic, “Polish identity has always been associated with the Church, and the language of conversation with God has been

Polish.” these are the words that Alicja Grzeskowiak the speaker of the Polish senate used in a speech. That exclamation all together with statements of Zygmunt Wrzodak, leader of the Solidarity trade union, that the forces of the nihilist leftists want to destroy the fatherland where Catholic faith was born. The speech ends with the leftists to be presented like red daemons attacking the holy faith. The conclusion that can be extracted is that in Poland the Populist Right wing Rhetoric is enriched with religious elements and used by various social actors outside the already expected ones (Pankowski, 2011).

Last but not least these groups are exploiting through populist discourses the broad anti-Communist and anti-Russian sentiment in order to become more appealing and popular to the masses.

4.5. Extreme Right Wing parties in Slovakia

From all that it was said before about Central European Countries Slovakia is not an exception. Radical Right groups in the country are divided in 2 different ideological poles the First one is consisted by those that belong to a structured group with obvious ideological and cultural or life style influences (neo-nazi culture) most of them derived from Germany .

When the second pole is composed by those that are not so outside oriented or influenced nationalists with another distinction to be the loosen type of their structural organization that kind of groups could be characterized as Autonomous Nationalists, inspired by the Slovak Fascist state of 1939-1945 (Nociar, 2011).

Extremism is not only a local phenomenon that it is detached by the surrounding environment . Radical right extremism can be the reason of cross border tenses that under the right circumstances if they are escalated can be revolve into the destabilization of a whole region. (CENAA, 2013; Mares, 2012a).

The effects of globalization of extremism are obvious, with international cross-border cooperation between extremist groups (Germany-Czech Republic-Slovakia-Hungary) to become subject of discussion in many forums. Apart from that the whole subject can be also examined as part of something broader. The topic can be also approached under the scope of terrorist globalization focusing on the negative repercussions that has in peace and stability of a regional system or sub-system.

Segregation alongside with poverty and extremely high unemployment rate leads towards frustration and has as a result the misjudgment of situations. Citizens give their trust to those that under different circumstances would viewed as something totally different than it is conceived now under the severe pressures that many European Societies are under (CENAA, 2013)

Although Slovak nationalist party had, for a long time, anti-Hungarian rhetoric, in 2010, it made a turnaround when it entered into friendly relations with a smaller

Hungarian organization Hungarian National Front and had proceed with propositions of cross-border cooperation.

Thus in 2010, Slovak Brotherhood with its Hungarian counterpart and a Serbian organization called Nacionalni stroj, organized a march in Komarno with participants of other smaller organizations (Mareš, 2012a, 2012b).

The aforementioned paradigm is only a little piece of a broader image in a cooperation that moves on several levels at the cultural level and sub-cultural level with joint manifestations and forums and which are promoting ideas outside the principles of democracy dangerous for the stability of the democratic system.

Cooperation that is targeting education in order to distort historical facts and promote their “truth” about what really happened in one of the darkest times of worlds history the Second World War in order to justify brutalities that committed by their ideological ancestors.

The Role of Media is of crucial importance as they in the modern era not just channels of communication but shapers of thoughts and consciences (Mareš 2012a, 2012b; Mudde, 2007).

4.6. Romanian Nationalistic and extremist discourses and Parties

After the demise of Ceausescu's in Romania many Nationalistic anti-communist Parties came up with a more radical aggressive manner regarding to subjects did not took the needed attention under the former regime but also as a form of rupture with the communist past (Turcanu, 2010).

Romania although presents many similarities with Central European Countries it also presents fundamental differences especially at the part that has to do with the way that Radical right Parties came up in the post – communist context.

Radical right parties emerged right away in Romania in various formations either in or out the government coalitions.

The first reason for the rapid ascent of the extreme right in Romania can be explained by the fact that there was already the appropriate conditions in order that kind of development to occur ,as it already known Ceausescu's Regime used widely the nationalist card in order to remain in power .

That kind of act created soil ground in order after the fall new forces to be eager to fill the void that was created.

Additionally another important assistance towards that direction had been the climate of tension that has existed during the fall, with the execution of Ceausescu, the developments in Timisoara, and last the strained relations with the Hungarian minority to serve as a catalyst in order Parties like National Unity (PUNR) and

Greater Romania Party (PRM) to receive large electoral share in the first elections (Cinpoes, 2012).

The Greater Romania Party is the most significant Extreme Right Romanian Party in the post-Communist era, it was founded in 1991.

At the beginning it could be characterized as a rather successful party with political discourses borrowed by the previous regime revolving around subjects that have to do with the Hungarian minority and overall anti – Hungarian sentiments.

Moreover their hate repertoire includes anti-Communist and anti-Jew feelings with anti- gypsy feelings to become more apparent as the time passes in an effort to enrich the list with the foes of the people according to PRM populist rhetoric (Turcanu, 2010).

PRM hate speech targeted from the first time the Hungarian community in Romania and accused it that had as a goal to be segregated from the rest of the country referring especially to Transylvania where the Hungarians are the majority. Also among the targets of PRM was to take under its control the Bessarabia and Bukovina regions (Cinpoes, 2012)

5. Approaches developed in order to explain the support for extreme-right parties

Different kinds of approaches have been developed in order to explain the support for extreme-right. Both thesis from demand and supply side had been taken under consideration.

At this paper thesis had been proposed such as the “social isolation thesis” ,the “ethnic competition thesis” and last but not least “normal pathology thesis” all these theoretical norms are widespread in text in simpler words in an attempt to understand the phenomenon in many aspects (Van der Brug and Fennema, 2009; Mudde, 2008)

As it was said at the beginning there are various reasons for the up rise of Nationalistic xenophobic or neo-Nazi organizations over the last decades not only in Europe but also in USA and Russia even in its most Radical form with half of global neo-Nazi supporters to live in Russia.

5.1. What kind of people are voting for these Parties?

According to Betz explanation, support for radical right parties derives from people that feel insecure by the changes in a fragile constantly changing economic environment in the modern societies.

Lower education workers feel uncertain and usually pessimistic about what the future will bring them while they have to compete with immigrants which due to their situation are willing to do any kind of job at low prices.

They have been characterized as the “losers of modernity” (Betz, 1998) (Van der Brug et.al., 2000)

In contradiction scholars, like Van der Brug et.al. (2000), argue that this is not necessary and the electoral support toward that kind of parties can surpass social boundaries and attract voters beside the already defined as the “losers of modernity”.

Furthermore, it was pinpointed that supporters of Radical Right parties are motivated by the same sort of ideological and realistic assessments and support for already established parties. (Van der Brug and Fennema, 2009)

Also it is highly discussed among many that such a vote also can be characterized or perceived as a kind of protestation against the already established politicians. A phenomenon that can be viewed also in the Western part of Europe and overall (Van der Brug et.al., 2000).

According to Van der Brug et al. (2000) protest voting is a rational, goal-directed activity. In order define the “protest vote” we ought to have a look towards the motives that underlying them.

The protestation vote is a complex phenomenon. That kind of vote at the end of the day does not intend to form policies and affect the way that politics are exercised ,but on the other hand express disappointment or even discussion for the already established political system and political elite. (Mudde & Van Holsteyn, 2000).

Moreover a prime reason used as a protractor in order people to vote that kind of parties is the belief that kind of voting will frighten or shock these elites, which is exactly what the protest voter wants to accomplish ,and since radical right parties are usually faced like the pariahs of the public life thus people votes for them (Van der Eijk & Franklin, 2009).

At the end of the day are the PRR party voters xenophobic, racists, ideological supporters of neo-Nazi and fascist ideologies or just people in confusion due to the aforementioned reasons in a mercurial period of time that puts them under severe pressure and stress?

Can it be both? And if it can what precedes and what comes next?

Many have been arguing about dissatisfied citizens and voters that feel excluded from the society, therefore they find their mean of expression to the pariahs of the political life, the PRR parties, but except that although they are quite less as a group in these parties are included voters that vote for ideological reasons from mediocre immigration and minority skeptics that feel insecure with all these changes to people that are true believers of Nazism (Lubbers & Tolsma, 2009)

In a rapidly changeable environment many parties gain a broad audience by developing views around subjects deterioration of immigration a very sensitive

subject especially in western countries with prepositions of even putting landmines in the borders in order to prevent although this exclamation was made by Greek MP such kind of statements and in the same logic could be met easily in Eastern European countries when the conversation reaches themes around internal minorities, as there are widespread anti-Semitic and anti-gypsy feelings .

Other popular subjects have to do for instance with the regulation of the free market with suggestions regarding custom duties targeting on the enhancement of domestic market via trade protectionism through barriers (Anderson, 2006).

As it is already mentioned in order the fruit of fascism to thrive it must be some kind of enemy that must be addressed as part of militaristic logic within the framework of which they operate.

In the most Western European countries the migration phenomenon is marginal and that is the reason that the main foe is not immigrants but minorities.

That also can be proved if we take under consideration the fact that in countries where exist big minorities of any type, socio-cultural, linguistic or other types of otherness (homosexuals) the Populist Right Wing parties are usually more successful.

Foes can be found in the face of Roma, Jews, Islamists, Homosexuals, Ethnic and Religious minorities, people with different kind of color or people with developmental disorders (Ljujic et.al., 2012).

In this across- Europe phenomenon great responsibility given to those who legitimize this stance by “borrowing” populist radical right speech and doctrines in order to become more appealing and gain more votes.

That kind of behavior is very risky and poses a great danger to democracy, as extreme behaviors and views presented as something normal (Langenbacher. & Schellenberg, 2011).

As it was mentioned earlier the importance of belonging to a group is resulting by the human emotional need, someone to be not alone but an accepted and if it's possible a respected member of a team.

Even if the group is called family, friends or a football team, or even a more radical and aggressive formation as the under examination matter,” these people have an inherent desire to belong and be an important part of something greater than themselves” that feeling is described as belongingness and has to do with the sense of belonging to a group, a fact that above else helps people define who they are (Wikipedia, 2013g).

5.2. Radical Right Parties and the role of Media

In this chapter it will be developed role of media modern era particularly in within the context of the rise and fall in popularity of PRP.

From the beginning of the chapter, it is important to stress that due to the qualitative kind of information it is very hard to reach a firm conclusion about the accurate amount of influence that the media can perform on the electoral success but in most cases big media attention in favor of them showed that had positive in their image and helped them to score bigger at the electoral process (Mudde, 2007).

At this point and in order to support the above claim we will quote the example from Poland where religious and politics is strongly correlated.

In this example we will make reference to the role of the political subculture of Radio Maryja and the formation of what is called as Religious Right or to put it simple Religious Extreme Right (Pankowski, 2011 ; Nowak & Riedel, 2009).

First of all it is obligatory to say that Polish society is one of the most Religious societies with the role of Catholic Church to be significant both at the Communist and Post-communist era viewed by many as a strong pole of opposition.

The radio first started to broadcast in 1991 and although initially had a small share as the time passed by the radio became more and more popular enlarging its share to such an extent in that its discourses managed to reflect in public opinion polls.

The most interesting thing was not only that it helped Radical Right politicians to gain seats at the parliament but the fact that politicians also took under consideration its sayings meaning that a station transformed to political actor influencing the way if not doing politics (Nowak & Riedel, 2009)

That example it is not the only one if it is examined carefully in which countries Radical Right wing Parties managed to either emerge and quickly consolidate their power or increase their electoral rates significantly we will come up with the conclusion that this effort is strongly correlated with the stance that media kept against concerning them.

Examples can be drawn from Austria and Hungary.

On the contrary that kind of behavior and although it can be perceived as the least harmful ,it arms the radical right supporters and elites with the argument that due to their anti-systemic stance and actions they deprived the right to participate to the debates. It is frequently support by them by using populist discourses that there is a conspiracy a plan against them by the elites. (Kitching, 2011).

But, why is the role of media so important?

The role of media is very important in order that kind of parties to be kept alive at first and secondly through them to launch their campaigns both at local and also at national level. As it is already said Extreme-right wing formations are not enjoying high publicity at television and press so they are “sailing” their “product” via internet

Internet or in other words the *network of networks* is consisted by millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, either local or global a mean extremely useful for various actions . In our case it is widely used for reasons as

recruitment, mobilization and hate or racist propaganda via Blogs, channels or social network platforms as face book (Wikipedia, 2013h).

That poses a real danger as neo-nazi gain credibility appearing as part of a broader community and not something that is cut off and strange appealing to wider audiences part of which are consisted by young internet users (Ramalingam, 2012).

Moreover it is highly important to stress the impact that radical right wing parties have relatively to the power that have to politicize topics around immigration and legitimize their stance in the political life through the intervention of media whether this is direct or indirect.

Intended or not their stance usually acts in favor of that formations especially in time of crisis where already existing anti-immigration and anti-minority sentiments became even more sturdier (Goodwin et.al., 2010; Mudde, 2007).

5.3. The role of education

The role of education is one among the most important indicators for voting or even participating in extreme right parties or paramilitary formations as Radical Right groups are more popular among people with lower or medium education than those which have received higher education (Arzheimer, 2012).

Although is not something that always happens deterministically but due to some reasons one among many is that for example low-skilled immigration might be seen as a form of threat for these people as it might had a negative impact on wages in some sectors such as, for example, the service industry or work in the fields etc and on the other hand curtail job opportunities as due to the lower cost many employers might prefer to use immigrants instead of natives for the same job.

That kind of antagonism called by Belanger and Pinard as ethnic competition is boosted by the willingness of people to do every kind of job for small amount of money in order to earn their livelihood (Arzheimer, 2012; Belanger and Pinard, 1991).

Finally we must express our belief that the appearance of PRR parties is not a product of either of transition process of the worldwide economic crisis but the contempt of democracy as a systematic practice in recent decades and the acceptance forms of racism in every day life (Marvakis et.al, 2013).

The role of education is the last card that democracy has in her deck as it can dispel ignorance and hate providing the people not with a certain kind of knowledge that leads towards stratification of society but with the tools in order to avoid to be cached in the trap of extremism.

6. Conclusions and Counter actions facing racism and Hate

In order to tackle radical right parties it is obligatory to form a long term strategy which will be targeted against not only those that are part of these groups and organizations but confront the general climate of intolerance that in many countries of Eastern Europe is promoted by very different authority centers for various reasons .

Either with feasibility aiming electoral gains and other times accidentally many well known first class politicians express opinions that do nothing more than harm to certain people if not by targeting them as something alien to the community or subnormal at least by circulation of stereotypes perpetuating an already harmful situation (Hannus, 2012).

Let's take for instance the words of the Bulgarian Minister of Culture Vezhdi Rashidov which had said recently in an interview that he "finds the gays to be the most unpleasant community, since they combine the worst qualities of women and the most despicable qualities of men" (Sofia news agency, 2012).

This, in combination to other statements, only rekindles the racism towards people stigmatizing them socially by putting them in the margin (Hannus, 2012).

Society and institutions should and must find ways to defend against populist discourses that have as one and only target to replace democratic values with those that via nihilism promote the demise of the democratic system and the distortion of truth.

Anti- Elite Rhetoric accompanied hate speeches against political establishment taking for example hate speech against immigration policies, multiculturalism, affirmative action and political correctness has a goal to capitalize the on going social frustration.

Towards this direction slogans and speeches about the negative impact of multiculturalism is a common practice among many political actors using that as a goal -directed activity for the dissemination and strengthening of stereotypes in order to use them as an ideological core easy to be fully and quickly assimilated (monterat guibernau).

People more and more lose their hope and thus attracted to ethnic nationalism as it was described in earlier chapter. Except that in many Eastern European Countries the levels of corruption are really high on the other hand politicians either are involved in scandals or have not the slightest intention to solve these matters thus the populist discourse about corrupt elites under some conditions and under talented leadership can bring to Extremists positive results.

Furthermore according to my personally belief I propose that in order to curtail the power of these groups either they appeared in the political landscape as single – policy parties or they transformed in the process enriching their agenda with other topics outside their cornerstone they have to be faced with 2 different manners.

First of all the democratic political system should demonstrate zero tolerance against any form of violence and extremism that puts at risk the proper functioning of the state.

Second, the governments via their actions must pursue to ameliorate the conditions of living for their citizens. People in many countries of the "so called" European periphery are facing the ghost of unemployment or the lack of career prospects, or even they earn low wages.

On the other hand petty or grand corruption accompanied with the violation of the democratic institutions by the same political actors that presented themselves as democrats leads to frustration and anger having as a result people to lose their trust to the institutions and be vulnerable to nihilist or totalitarian theories.

What is vital for a successful counteraction against nationalistic extremism is the continuous unrestrained cooperation of the democratic countries by exchanging views strategies and expertise as a mean to address a cross-border phenomenon.

Last but not least the fight against extremism is not given only at social and political level but also at the level of sports and teams.

We are talking especially about football teams a sport that is among the most popular across Europe and what is need in this situation has no big differences from what is proposed before , it should be generated and introduced a universal plan across Europe in order racism and Hate to be substituted by values of tolerance and respect.

That kind of Campaigns will have as goal to prevent Hooliganism both on the football fields and on the parliaments.

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