

Ideological and political radicalisation in contemporary western democracies: Cross-theoretical and empirical perspectives

Date: Thursday 1 June 2017

Venue: Seminar Room, European Studies Centre, 70 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6HR

Convenor: Lamprini Rori, SEESOX/ A.G. Leventis Fellow

Series: Programme on Contemporary Greece

Political radicalism and extremism no longer constitute marginal phenomena in European societies and politics. The consecutive financial crises, the Eurozone crisis, the refugee crisis, religious terrorism and geopolitical uncertainties create a multifaceted setting that exacerbates insecurity, anxiety and fears among European citizens. Distrust towards institutions and political elites gives rise to opportunities for radical actors to consolidate their position in the party systems, enhance their electoral appeal, influence policy making procedures and disseminate their extremist views in the mass and social media. Old and new forms of radicalization constitute essential chains in this process potentially leading to violent extremism. Over the last two decades, different expressions of radicalisation have made their presence felt in European democracies, constituting an issue of particular concern for European governments and EU institutions. Lawful manifestations of existing and emerging social movements have, in some countries, burst into violent protest and acts, whereas terrorist attacks now reach extended and increasing dimensions.

This workshop aims at a deeper understanding of radicalization as a complex and dynamic process, by focusing on the behavioral manifestations of both right-wing and left-wing radicalism in today's European democracies. It seeks to shed light on the particular mechanisms that lead to political violence and escalation, based on theoretical discussions and empirical findings. It will touch upon key academic approaches and aspects of the phenomenon, such as ideological foundations, emotional expressions and psychological parameters, organizational aspects and socialization in radical *milieux*, the withering of old political divisions, the role of mass media and communication in social media. It will try to elucidate causes, patterns and pathways from radicalization to violence. More specifically, the workshop will disentangle the particular weight of the micro level (individual), the meso level (social surroundings and group dynamics) and the macro level (the broader societal and political environment). Contributions will assess the role of personal relationships and group loyalty in violent political involvement. Special attention will be attributed to the boundaries between non-violent and violent radicalization, as well as to the in-between zones of conscious – direct aid or abet extremism – and unconscious acceptance of violence as a means of action, by individuals who do not personally undertake violence, but endorse or tolerate violence enacted by others.

Programme

- 10:15-10.45 **Registration and Coffee**
- 10:45-11:00 Opening remarks
Othon Anastasakis (St Antony's College); **Lamprini Rori** (St Antony's College)
- 11:00-12:30 **Ideological and psychological dimensions of radicalisation**
Chair: **Yaprak Gursoy** (St Antony's College)
Ideological radicalization towards violence
Jonathan Leader Maynard (New College)
Emotions, ideology and armed mobilization
Andrea Ruggeri (Brasenose College); **Stefano Costalli** (University of Florence)
Psychotic dimensions of radicalization: the cases of Breivik and Mair
Barry Richards (Bournemouth University)
Discussant: **Michael Freeden** (Mansfield College)
- 12:30-14:00 **Lunch break**
- 14:00-15:30 **Understanding the process of radicalisation**
Chair: **César Colino** (St Antony's College)
The cosmopolitan-parochial divide: What the 2017 Dutch elections result tells us about party and electoral competition in the Netherlands and beyond
Catherine de Vries (University of Essex)
The Indignados Movement as a trigger event for right-wing radicalization in Greece
Vassiliki Georgiadou (Panteion University); **Anastasia Kafe** (Panteion University)
Villains or Heroes? How partisan attachments influence judgments of political violence
Spyros Kosmidis (Lincoln College)
Discussant: **Michael Biggs** (St Cross College)
- 15:30-16:00 **Coffee break**
- 16:00-17:30 **Online and offline patterns of radicalisation**
Chair: **Ezgi Basaran** (St Antony's College)
Outside the echo chamber: online opinion polarization through motivated reasoning
Elias Dinas (Brasenose College); **David Asker** (University of Oxford)
Mining network and language data for understanding online political networks. The case of the far right and the far left in Greece
Lamprini Rori (St Antony's College)
Killing in the name of...: Political action on behalf of the people
Ben O'Loughlin (Royal Holloway)
Discussant: **TBC**
- 17:30-18:15 **Conclusions**
Chair: **Kalypso Nicolaidis** (St Antony's College)
Stathis Kalyvas (All Souls College)