

Направление «Социология»

Профиль:

«Сравнительные социальные исследования/Comparative Social Research» КОД - 193

Время выполнения задания – 180 мин., язык ответа – английский.

Максимальное количество баллов - 100.

They may bring a Russian-English dictionary but no prepared notes of any kind. The test will be completely in English.

The exam will be composed of 2 sections. Students may use sheets of blank paper in order to take notes, but official answers must be provided in the test booklet.

I. Short Essay. Sample comparative-historical problem. (максимально – 50 баллов).

Students will be presented with a table with countries as rows and country traits as columns. The table cells will contain either '1', meaning that a trait is strong or pronounced in a given country, or '0', that the trait is weak or small.

Write an essay that identifies the conditions that are necessary and/or sufficient for a '**Legal Equality of Same-Sex Partnerships/Marriage**' to emerge in a country based on the presence of the other traits. Students should describe their logic for arriving at the given result and assume the cell entries are correct.

Table 1

Country	High inequality	Strong Information Economy	Recent sexual revolution	More than 50% of population justify pre-marital sex	More than 50% of population have university education	Allow for marriage or registered partnership of Same-sex couples
China	1	0	0	0	0	0
France	0	1	0	0	1	1
Germany	0	1	1	1	1	1
India	0	1	0	0	0	0
Italy	1	0	0	0	1	1
Japan	0	1	0	1	1	0
Netherlands	0	0	1	1	1	1
Russia	1	1	1	0	1	0
Turkey	1	0	0	0	0	0
USA	1	1	1	1	1	1

II. Long Essay. Develop a research proposal. (максимально – 50 баллов).

First, read the article by Feyda Sayan-Cengiz & Caner Tekin.

Then, fulfill the following task by writing an research proposal on the topic of the text:

The authors argue that populist far right parties instrumentalize gender and women's rights in order to create the image of an "Other", in particular by reference to Islam. They establish a relationship between the rise of the populist far right and a gender ideology. At the same time, far right parties or populist right movements are also known for their conservative views on family and gender issues and their advocacy of a traditional family model.

Sketch out a research proposal that can test and analyze some aspect(s) of the relationship between populist far right movements and gender and women's equality today across a range of countries. Be sure to define a research question, define your concepts, list hypotheses and the reasoning behind them, and describe in details your methodology and the elements of your methodology (sampling, data gathering, and analysis technique) that you will use to answer your question.

The 'gender turn' of the populist radical right

By Feyda Sayan-Cengiz & Caner Tekin.

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/rethinking-populism/the-gender-turn-of-the-populist-radical-right/>

Gender perspectives are essential to understanding the means through which populist radical right parties instrumentalize women's rights, often in profoundly contradictory terms.

Over the past couple of decades, a central element in western political discourse and politics has been the 'othering' of Muslim migrants in cultural terms. Their cultural difference was here accentuated and quite often exemplified through stereotypical representations of gender relations, the attire of women and their alleged seclusion in the domestic space. These representational practices duly opened up opportunities for the populist radical right to engage in the debate through the adoption of a discourse that ostensibly defends women's rights.

This discourse marks Muslim migrant communities as inherently oppressive of women and demarcates the former from "native people", hence allowing anti-migrant views to acquire the veneer of human rights and, therefore, become more palatable. As a result, gender has become a central category for analyzing and understanding the discursive strategies of the surging European populist radical right parties.

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The European populist radical right's 'gender turn' constitutes a key aspect of the culturalization of migration, which we will focus on here by taking a look at the cases of France and Germany. Both populist radical right parties in these two national contexts demonstrate how the populist-radical right creates "insider" and "outsider" distinctions through representations of "migrant" and "native" gendered bodies.

Culture makes a comeback

As the Cold War's ideological and polarizing influence receded in Europe and, as Germany unified once again, culture was making its comeback in national and Europe-wide politics. In a changing political landscape in which ideological politics were losing ground, right-wing radicalism could therefore more strongly articulate cultural nativism as a common ground against fragmentation. As Mark Sedgwick points out, many new right thinkers in France and Germany were envisioning a conservative revolution that would preserve the cultural peculiarities of Europe and its nation-states, and protect them from Muslim migration and even American influence. With the Maastricht Treaty and the subsequent attempts at a political union, the populist radical right parties also spoke louder for mobilization against European integration and its migration regime. During that decade, however, the efforts of far-right fractions to unite did not succeed. The attempts of the National Party of Germany were foiled, as the German public reacted against the increasing neo-Nazi violence targeting Muslim migrants, while in France the National Front remained marginal due to its anti-Semitic stance.

In the western world globalization had already become an uncontested and binding norm, but in the 1990s few regions faced such a considerable scale of integration of socioeconomic activities and communication as western Europe did. As Magnus Marsdal suggests, rejecting migration on the grounds of labour protection had, at the time, lost its cogency, while using cultural difference as a reason to oppose immigration was usually a more credible option. What is more, as neoliberalism was eroding the welfare state and its attendant policies in western Europe, the conception of social welfare was progressively transforming from being a right to a "privilege". As a result, the far-right used welfare as an object that must be "defended" against migrants who were represented as "lazy" and "dependent on welfare benefits". Over time, instead of labour protectionism, a putative cultural onslaught against Europe acquired prominence in right-wing anti-migration campaigns, especially from the 2000s onward.

France and Germany

Economic and security crises in the western world and the eurozone added to the common anxieties, which right-wing populists deployed in their anti-migration rhetoric. The increase in the number of terrorist assaults and violent militancy allegedly motivated by the Islamic faith were integrated into an arsenal against immigration from the East. Populist radical-right campaigns saturated with violent and inferior images of Islam to justify the innate differences between Europe's "native" populations and immigrants often mobilized gender to this effect.

While a common tendency to instrumentalize gender and women's rights discourse to draw boundaries between "insiders" and "outsiders" is evident throughout Europe, how this is done differs depending on the particular national context. Gender-based discourses are integrated into national trajectories of long-term debates on gender, national identity and culture, as part of the pragmatic efforts of contemporary radical right wing populist parties to widen their appeal. France's National Rally (Rassemblement National – formerly Front National) is a case in point. Under its current leader, Marine Le Pen, the party has gone through a transformation in the context of the "de-demonisation" policy she has been pursuing since 2011 in order to extend its appeal to a wider electorate base. In an effort to reformulate the party's rhetoric in liberal-secular terms, Marine Le Pen changed the party's policy on a number of issues that affect women: it abandoned its condemnation of abortion (defining it now as a "sad necessity"), and started to defend the free allocation of parental leave to both parents and the possibility of them sharing it, signalling a

significant rupture with her father's leadership. Breaking with more traditional representations of women as passive and housebound, the party's official rhetoric as well as its visual propaganda cast French women in active roles, prioritizing their representation as liberated resisters defending French national identity and women's rights against Muslim migrants.

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In this war of liberation, they are led by Marine Le Pen, portraying herself as “the woman of modern times”, “a free French woman, who has been able to enjoy during her life very dear freedoms, acquired by [French] mothers and grandmothers” and who “fear[s] that the migration crisis will mark the beginning of the end of women's rights”, although this novel rhetoric is in stark contrast with her party's legislative record on issues of gender equality.

In this context, the party frames the wearing of the Islamic headscarf, not only as an alien practice, but also as an “attack” against French Republican values, and recasts the headscarf ban, not as a punitive measure against Muslim women but as a means of protecting women's rights. Strikingly, in its 2017 manifesto, the party vows to “fight against Islamism” under the title of “defending the rights of women”, in the same breath with the promise to work to eliminate women's precariousness in the job market. This is a blatant attempt to formulate the party's exclusionary and Islamophobic position in liberal (as opposed to nativist) terms, as a matter of concern for women's fundamental rights.

Germany's far right AFD (Alternative für Deutschland) similarly defends the prohibition of the headscarf. In its 2017 Manifesto for Germany, the party declared that “the headscarf as a political-religious symbol of Muslim women's submission to men negates integration efforts, equal rights for women and girls, and the unimpeded development of the individual.” (p. 49) In other words, the party argues that the headscarf should be banned, first, as it is an obstacle to integration, and second, as it impedes equal rights for women. However, when it comes to the policies on “native” families and raising “native” children, the party takes an openly anti-feminist stance. It goes so far as to reject gender quotas (joining the French National Rally), gender education (as it is allegedly “an intervention in the natural development of children”) and denounces government funding of gender studies, claiming that “gender ideology” denies “natural differences between sexes and specific roles within the family”.

Moreover, AFD blames day-care facilities, full-time schools, and encouragement for women's employment for harming the traditional family structure. In other words, the party underlines gender equality and women's freedom in its defence of the headscarf ban, on the one hand, but it essentializes gender difference and burdens women with reproductive and domestic duties on the other hand.

The apparent contradiction between these two positions becomes even more obvious when one considers the party's visual materials for elections. Some examples include posters that visualize German women with their heads cropped and thus disregard their identities. Some others portray them as pregnant women who “reproduce the nation”, as beautiful bodies wearing bikinis rather than burqas, or as victims of Muslim migrant men's sexual aggressiveness, who are to be protected and saved. In Germany's populist radical right, Woman, whether of an immigrant or “native” origin, become the instrument of a nativist discourse that draws borders between “insiders” and “outsiders”.

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Profound contradiction

The gender sensitivity of right-wing populism does not represent an ahistorical case but an instance of the ways in which western politics is increasingly leaning towards the culturalization of migration. Second, this turn to gender and emphasis on women's equality reveals an array of discursive strategies that link Islamophobia with an illusory sensitivity towards women's rights and the need to defend them in the same breath, allowing the populist radical right to appeal to broader constituencies. Using gender perspectives is essential to understanding these means, through which populist radical right parties instrumentalize women's rights in eclectic, pragmatic and often profoundly contradictory terms, to mainstream their anti-migrant, Islamophobic and nativist politics.