between social movements studies and urban studies, a type of approach that is being increasingly used by political scientists, sociologists, and geographers concerned about the dynamics of urban social mobilization in the context of a neoliberal political economy. The book is organized around 29 anti-gentrification campaigns covering the period of one decade in 10 cities in the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Resisting Redevelopment is divided into three main parts, one theoretical and two empirical. The first part sets the scene for the comparison and elaboration of the concept of experiential tools to define contemporary neoliberal politics of urban development, in which global city status is achieved by displacement and social injustice. This part also presents the author’s methodological choices. Experiential tools serve varied purposes: from city branding to facilitation of citizen mobilization, these tools contribute to participants’ commitments and enthusiasm, encouraging them to socialize and have fun. Experiential tools can also promote solidarity among participants and in some cases are a significant element of a protest’s success, such as the case of the Yougay neighborhood in Santiago (Chile), which successfully blocked extreme gentrification by relying heavily on experiential tools and wider networks.

The second part of the book is dedicated to the elements of successful protests. Pasotti emphasizes the ways protesters were able to achieve success using experiential tools for sustainable citizen engagement as part of a new repertoire of contention. To explain success, the author discusses displacement and the drivers of resistance, arguing that protesters’ success is often unexpected in the face of dominant pro-growth regimes and coalitions (p. 7). Here, she explores the concept of experiential tools in practice, as participants become able to define their own identity, enjoying socialization and promoting solidarity in public events that (re)connect them to the city space—festivals, art expositions, games, heritage documents, and city walks, to cite a few. In other words, in conjunction with other variables, such as wider networks, previous protest experiences, and the presence of strong allies, experiential tools can shape and define mobilization values and identities.

The third part of the book focuses on the policy impact of protest. In analyzing not just the most successful cases, Pasotti examines variation in the outcomes of protest, with attention to the various degrees of success in different political contexts.

As an important contribution to urban studies and contentious politics, Resisting Redevelopment opens the door for new understandings of why people mobilize and how social movements grow and expand. The book addresses such a rich collection of cases, contexts, social actors, and forms of collective action that it would be impossible to give equal attention to them all in this short review. Consequently, I mention three important contributions.

The first is its expansion and operationalization of the concept of experiential tools. Building from previous work on “frame alignment process” (David A. Snow et al., “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation,” American Sociological Review, 51 [4], 1986), Pasotti shows that experiential tools are a key instrument for successful protest action. In showing why and how protesters used experiential tools, the book brings this approach to prominence and emphasizes how the sense of belonging to a place can serve to trigger collective action (in combination with the other elements previously mentioned).

The second contribution points to the dual role of cultural producers in gentrification as meaningful political actors. While producing arts and resistance, cultural producers simultaneously help make areas considered unworthy or rundown more palatable for the wealthy population, thereby making these areas more attractive for tourists and investors. Several cases in the book illustrate this point, but it was in the case of Boyle Heights (Los Angeles) that the role of cultural producers in the gentrification process surfaced most strongly.

The third contribution relates to the book’s research design. Embracing an innovative qualitative comparative analysis approach, the author presents clear reasoning for the selection of cases (based on city indexes) and the logical criteria for inclusion and exclusion of cases. Setting up the variables of interest clearly in the beginning helps clarify the presentation of cases and the theoretical analysis. Pasotti is in fact a skillful writer, and the presentation of cases and narratives of protest makes this book a pleasant read. A line of argument not developed in the book, however, was a focus on development alternatives. When the urban space is the center of overlapping cultural, economic, and spatial conflicts, innovative approaches might be pushed forward into day-to-day practices. A further area of research could be how innovative protest experiences are integrated into legal and governance systems.

Overall, the book offers a valuable discussion of contentious politics and urban redevelopment in the context of resistance to gentrification. It should appeal to those interested in urban social movements and contemporary struggles against gentrification around the globe.


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In Extreme Reactions, Lenka Bustikova has executed a masterful analysis of one of the most vexing questions of our day: Why have radical right parties flourished in some
postcommunist East European countries while remaining marginal in others? She uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to arrive at her answer: radical right parties achieved their greatest success in those countries that have sizable (but not too sizable) minorities, particularly when those minorities are perceived to enjoy external backing by kin states, thus posing a credible threat to the dominant group’s sovereign control over the state. Where minorities are larger and more threatening, like the Russians in Ukraine, would-be radical right party voters shift their support to mainstream nationalist parties that are perceived to be more effective sovereign counterweights to an empowered minority. By contrast, where minorities are smaller and less threatening but still sizable, like the Hungarians in Slovakia, there is likely to be more sustained support for radical right parties.

At the microlevel, Bustikova’s theory is intuitive yet powerful. She argues that radical right parties emerge in response to electoral and policy victories by their “bilateral opposites,” parties that seek to extend state resources or recognition to ethnic minorities. She defines radical right parties as parties that combine exclusionary nationalist appeals with social conservative elements. Along with Cas Mudde (Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe, 2007), she argues that populism is not a constituent characteristic of radical right parties, because their ideology can also be elitist. Instead, support for extremist parties surges due to increased fears of status loss by the ethnonational dominant group. This, in turn, occurs in response to a period of governance by “ethnoliberal” parties (ELP) that favor strengthening ties to the European Union. In her formulation, the party systems of postcommunist European states are characterized by four main blocs—the ethnoliberal party on one end of the sovereignty spectrum, the radical right party on the other end, with two “proximate mainstream” parties in between.

Electoral support for radical right parties rises in reaction to periods of ethnoliberal rule during which the ELP’s mainstream party has offered concessions to ethnic minorities as a way of securing their political support (and, in the 1990s, accession to NATO and the EU). In response, a certain segment of the ethnonational dominant group will vote for radical right parties due to fears that the dominant group (“their” group) is losing dominance over state institutions and resources. Bustikova thus puts forward a demand-side theory that challenges both naïve economic theories that radical right parties emerge or strengthen strictly due to economic insecurities, and cultural backlash theories that extremist parties emerge in response to perceived loss of cultural dominance and xenophobia. Bustikova develops an argument that weaves together elements of these two demand-side accounts. In her view, radical right parties are likely to garner higher electoral support, increasing their chances of exceeding the threshold for representation in parliament and sometimes winning a place in the governing coalition. At the microlevel, economic insecurity combines with ideological opposition to minority concessions to increase the likelihood of an individual’s support for radical right parties.

Bustikova presents her theory in the first two chapters of the book and then turns to a cross-national analysis in chapter 3. Here, she uses demographics and then maps over-time electoral and public opinion data across East European countries to show that fears of status reversal by the dominant group produces upicks in support for right-wing parties, but that this effect is mediated by the size and perceived threat of the minority group. Chapters 4 and 5 contain integrated case studies of radical right parties in Slovakia and Ukraine, respectively. These studies combine observational dataset analysis of opinion and electoral data in both countries with three survey experiments (one in Slovakia and two in Ukraine). She finds that the radical right parties in Slovakia—the Slovak National Party (SNS) and later the Slovak Brotherhood—gained their greatest support after the main ethnic Hungarian party was included in the governing coalition and was able to secure policy concessions for the minority. That Hungarian ethnic party was the SNS’s bilateral opposite. Using survey and electoral data as well as a survey experiment, she shows that SNS voters were uniquely motivated by strongly held preferences that Hungarians should receive fewer benefits. She also shows that support for the far right rose in the wake of salient minority concessions.

Likewise, the radical right party in Ukraine—Svoboda—had a short-lived breakout victory in response to the emergence of the Russian-minority-dominated Communist Party (Svoboda’s bilateral opposite) that governed together with Yanukovich’s Party of the Regions, yielding pro-minority legislation and policies. This triggered the rise of Svoboda, whose voters strongly opposed government support to the Russian minority. Bustikova’s survey experiments reveal that what set Svoboda voters and sympathizers apart from supporters of Tymoshenko’s All-Ukrainian Union “Fatherland” party was their strong opposition to government transfers to the Russian minority. She explains Svoboda’s subsequent decline as a function of would-be supporters’ assessment that the Russian-backed Russian separatists required a bigger counterweight than what a marginal right-wing party could provide.

Bustikova’s reaction theory explains not only the variation in the successes of radical right parties across Eastern Europe but also shifts in the fortunes of these parties over time. It advances the field by integrating backlash and grievance theories into an argument that encompasses both. In doing so, it answers many questions but raises still others.

One might ask, for example, whether the focus on far-right parties does not mask the wider reactionary dynamic of which they are a part. Bustikova acknowledges, in fact, that there is often little light between the mainstream
proximate and the radical right party. Sometimes the mainstream proximate co-opts the platform of the extreme right, effectively “crowding out” any potential right-wing contender. In Hungary and Poland, for example, the mainstream conservative parties co-opted the positions of the far right, weakening the existing far-right party and preventing right-wing party entrants, respectively. In Hungary, the post-2010 ruling Fidesz Party adopted the ideological position of the Jobbik Party to such an extent that Jobbik engaged in ethnic underbidding in the 2018 and 2020 elections in order to remain electorally relevant—even cooperating with its liberal nemesis to try to push the ruling Fidesz Party out of its commanding positions in local and national elections. In doing so, the radical right party and its proximate mainstream “traded places” on many issues, including opposition to accepting refugees and the question of whether the George Soros-backed Central European University should be forced out of Hungary. Although Jobbik still adheres to many of its right-wing ideological positions, a focus on the fortunes of this party misses much of the picture of radical right-wing politics in Hungary.

That said, the core of Bustikova’s account finds empirical support in Hungary. Survey research by Karács and Róna (“The Secret of Jobbik: Reasons behind the Rise of the Hungarian Radical Right,” *Journal of East European and Asian Studies* 2(1), 2011) showed that the intensity of anti-Roma attitudes is indeed the principal factor separating Jobbik supporters from their more mainstream Fidesz counterparts. Moreover, Jobbik supporters are strongly opposed to government support for the Roma minority, also consistent with Bustikova’s predictions. However, another reason for Jobbik’s breakthrough in the 2009 European Parliamentary Election was certainly the significant uptick in intercommunal strife between the ethnic communities in the year leading up to the election and the accompanying increased focus in the media on “gypsy crime,” which redounded to the benefit of a party that promised to solve the “Roma problem.” Jobbik’s anti-capitalist, anti-establishment message also strengthened its appeal to voters opposed to western integration or dissatisfied with the benefits provided by the postcommunist system (András Kovács, “Antisemitic Prejudice and Political Antisemitism in Present-Day Hungary,” *Journal for the Study of Antisemitism* 4, 2012). This suggests that a broader complex of factors comprised the reactionary dynamic that led to Jobbik’s historic breakthrough.

In light of this, the question may be asked whether the real action is not between parties but in wider reactionary movements in society. Such movements are sometimes manifested in the radicalization of mainstream conservative parties, sometimes in increased support for marginal extremist parties, and sometimes in both. It may be true, as Bustikova observes, that it is rare for radical right parties to move from the margins to the mainstream, but both the German National Socialists and the Italian Fascists came out of the margins to become their countries’ ruling parties—the first at the ballot box and the second through royal appointment. In other words, two of the most important right-wing dictatorships in history had their origins in broader reactionary movements that catapulted once-marginal parties into positions of total power. It cannot be ruled out that one or more of today’s contemporary far-right parties could completely eclipse their mainstream conservative counterparts—as the National Socialists did to the German National People’s Party in the 1930 federal election. In none of these cases was the boundary between mainstream and extreme right-wing parties clean.

If, in contrast, we accept that understanding the success of far-right parties is important in its own right (whether or not they remain marginal), then it is worth asking what other things make these particular parties distinct from their mainstream counterparts. To answer this question, the ideological characteristics of these parties deserve further investigation. Notably, anti-Semitism, authoritarianism, and anti-establishmentarianism are also hallmarks of Jobbik (Zsolt Enyedi, “Paternalist Populism and Illiberal Elitism in Central Europe,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21(1), 2016), as they are of other far-right parties in the region and elsewhere. And whereas anti-Roma sentiment in Hungary has remained relatively constant over time, anti-Semitism increased substantially after 2006, sentiments that correlated strongly with support for Jobbik. Yet, it is not clear why this is the case or what role, if any, these additional hallmark features play in the story being told here.

None of these questions detract in any way from the quality of Bustikova’s book, a shining example of problem-oriented research that convinces the reader, step by careful step, of a general theory of right-wing party success and failure in the region of Eastern Europe. It also offers future researchers a promising template to guide further investigation of the right-wing political dynamic in the region and beyond. *Extreme Reactions* is sure to become essential reading for any student of the radical right, as well as anyone seeking to understand the fortunes of right-wing parties in Eastern Europe and in PR systems around the world.

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Relatively few studies of local governance in authoritarian contexts seek to develop a theory with potential applications beyond the site of study, in part because of the prevailing belief that local politics are irrelevant to the