

**BASTL, Martin – MAREŠ, Miroslav – SMOLÍK, Josef – VEJVO-  
DOVÁ, Petra: Krajní pravice a krajní levice v ČR**

**Extreme right and extreme left in the Czech Republic**

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The publication called “Krajní pravice a krajní levice v ČR” (Extreme right and extreme left in the Czech Republic) is another example of the Masaryk University dominance in the political science research in the Czech Republic. This book which was published in 2011 by a team of authors fills a gap in the Czech radical movement research. It is specific in its field because it analyses both ideological poles, the extreme right and the extreme left. Related publications by these authors were published in the past, for example Josef Smolík: Football Hooliganism (2008), Miroslav Mareš: Right-wing Extremism and Radicalism in the Czech Republic (2003), or Martin Bastl: Radical Left in the Czech Republic (2002). There are usually old and outdated publications, so this book is requested and important in the Czech political science. In addition, research of radicalism or political extremism is a very modern and dynamic sub-discipline of political science because of terrorism and rising of this type of parties in the whole Europe. This publication focuses on the analysis of extreme political parties and organizations since the beginning of the new millennium to 2011, so there is relatively new information there. It is clearly divided into four chapters, and each ideological pole (extreme right and extreme left) consists of two chapters.

The first chapter written by Miroslav Mareš deals with communist movements in the Czech Republic. He claims that the beginning of communist movements in the Czech Republic dates back already to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when radical labour movements were created. The first analyzed party is the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM), and the Chapter One is mostly about this party. It is logical because the KSČM is the only communist party in the Parliament since 1989. Even if the KSČM is often referred to as a completely isolated party, the author points out that it is not entirely true. The KSČM voted for “pro-capitalism” Václav Klaus in the presidential election and broke up the isolationism in the communal level and created coalition, later in 2008 also at the regional level. Many youth organizations linked with communist ideology work in the Czech Republic. The oldest is the Communist Youth Union (KSM) which has become a mainstay of the dogmatic wing in the KSČM. Mareš adds that the Czechoslovak Youth Communist Union (SMKČ) has worked as a second KSČM youth organization since 2008, by contrast between these youth organizations there is big tension. The next types of organizations are dogmatic Marxist-Leninist organizations. They are defined not only to “democratic parties”, but to the

KSČM as well, which is perceived as a reformist party by itself. The KSC or KČ-ČSSP are a good example, however, both are marginal organizations. Mareš also focuses on specifically oriented organizations like national communist organizations, Trotskyist organizations, Maoist and national bolshevik organizations. The last two types of organizations have no traditions in the Czech Republic, in addition all four types of organizations are marginal.

The second chapter written by Martin Bastl deals with anarchism in the Czech Republic. He considers the beginning of the new millennium as a dominant term in anarchist movements. The main reason for this is economic globalization. Prague was just an organizer of the IMF and World Bank summit at this time (autumn 2000), and anarchist movements demonstrated against them. The main organization in this period was the Czechoslovak Anarchist Federation (ČSAF). The second important organization, the Federation of Social Anarchists (FSA), has been created from the ČSAF “ex-members”. The political programs were almost identical, but the author notes that there were some different points. While both were intended to eliminate capitalism and the state, the ČSAF emphasized environmental orientation and refused dictatorship of the proletariat, and the FSA focused on the revolutionary political and economic struggle. Anarchist movements have been characterized by a low activity and stagnation since 2002, but they were refreshed again in 2008, mainly the ČSAF. Bastl deals with political strategies of anarchist movements, but he rightly points out that anarchist movement activities are eliminated by their ideology, because they refuse state power, authority and “capitalism” of political parties. He mentions two strategies: the first one is characterized by sticking leaflets, posters and organizing demonstrations, and the second one uses violent attacks against the sympathizers of the extreme right who are the biggest opponents to the anarchists. He states that neo-Marxist and Trotskyist organizations are the only ones with a similar political programme with anarchists.

Petra Vejvodová is the author of the third chapter called Neo-Nazism. Neo-Nazi movements were very heterogeneous and politically inactive at the beginning of the new millennium. The only activities included magazines and music publishing and organizing of concerts. The new decade saw a big change in the strategic area, because they were politically more active by demonstrations. The author analyses the most important neo-Nazi organizations as the National Resistance (NO), Resistance Women Unity (RWU), Autonomous Nationalists (AN), and Anti-Antifa. The most place in this chapter is devoted to the Workers’ Party (DS). Even if the DS has never got to the Parliament, it is the most successful neo-Nazi party and has influenced not only the Czech Republic party system and society, but those in the neighboring states as well. Neo-Nazi movements in the Czech Republic are

very consistent in terms of political programmes, but there are some different attitudes. The first part of neo-Nazis is so strongly linked to the Germany's extreme right that they are willing to give up part of the Czech territory (Sudetenland). The second part of neo-Nazis (mainly the DS) is opposed to any territorial revision. Although neo-Nazi movements in the Czech Republic are too marginal, the author points out that they can be dangerous for some social segments as for radicalization, racist statements and violent behaviour.

The last chapter is about the Czech nationalistic extreme right which is less radical than the extreme right organizations described in the previous chapter. It has been written by Josef Smolík who tries to clarify the basic concepts about nationalism (national state, nation, national interests, national identity, and patriotism) at the beginning of the chapter. He analyses the development of the national extreme right in the first decade which he divides in three periods. The most popular national party has been the Association for the Republic – the Czechoslovak Republican Party (SPR-RSČ), but some organizations should be mentioned as well: National Party, Law and Justice, and Patriotic League. Neither of them has ever got to the Parliament, so they are marginal organizations now, but the author emphasizes that the next progress of the national extreme right will be determined by economic, demographic and religious changes in the society, so he doesn't exclude the rising of this ideological group in the future. Finally, he does not perceive national movements as neo-Nazi organizations, because they do not try to change the political regime, so the author calls them "radical democratic" movements.

The publication offers a complex view of two extreme ideological poles in the Czech party system. It is primarily intended for students of political science and related humanities departments, state security organs (police, intelligence), and teachers, but it is understandable to the wider public as well. I appraise this book very positively because analyzing both extreme poles of the political spectrum in one book is unique. The only negative I can see in the poor theoretical parts of the communism, anarchism and neo-Nazism chapters. The fourth chapter deals with the basic concepts of the national doctrine and it could be dealt with in the mentioned chapters, too. My comment is only complementary and nothing can change the fact that it is a valued and complex publication.

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