Illiberal Politics in Neoliberal Times: Culture, Security and Populism in the New Europe

Abstract:
The rise of rightwing populism has brought into question prevailing assumptions in social science about multicultural Europe. In this compelling study of populist politics, Mabel Berezin argues that the emergence of the movement in the 1990s was a historical surprise rather than an expected event. She questions whether rightwing populism would exist in the absence of the Maastricht Treaty and the subsequent intensification of cultural and economic Europeanization. Using an innovative methodology, Berezin analyzes the French National Front in relation to the broader context of Europeanization and globalization. She unpacks the political and cultural processes that evoke the thin commitments characterizing citizen support, and shows that we cannot make sense of rightwing populism without considering the historical legacies and practices, both national and international, within which it arises. This book makes a novel argument about the relationship between democracy and political and social security.

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