The South European Right in the 21st Century

Italy, France and Spain

Since the European-wide domination of social democratic governments during the mid-to late-1990s, Right-wing parties have returned to power in the three largest Mediterranean democracies – Italy, France and Spain. This alternation has been symptomatic of growing majoritarianism in Southern Europe, a trend which has gone against much of the rest of the continent, and of a decline in clientelist effectiveness also traditionally seen as the Southern 'norm'. This volume assesses the subsequent periods of incumbency of these three governments, considering the salient features of each in their reaction to winning government and implementing policy, given their divergent historical roots and paths to power. In particular, it focuses on the evolving role of perceived extremist elements on the Right, and adaptation to a European arena which imposes a level of continuity on incumbents of whatever hue, attempts to defend national interests notwithstanding. Lastly, it considers the extent to which the swing to the Right has already reached its peak, given the evidence of recent national and regional elections in France and Spain.



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