

viewees share the perspective behind the questions. Herbst describes polling as a “crude, authoritarian and extraordinarily rigid” way to measure public opinion that cannot hope to discern the forces at work. Other, less rigid types of measurement are not much better (the televised focus group “uses the worst of all methods . . . simultaneously”).

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## Western Europe

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*Andrew Moravcsik*

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*We Don't Know Ourselves: A Personal History of Modern Ireland*

BY FINTAN O'TOOLE. Norton, 2021, 624 pp.

**T**he centenary of Irish independence has inspired a flood of writing. Among the many traditional histories and current political commentaries, this book stands out. It charts the extraordinary economic, social, and political transformation of Ireland since 1958, the year the author was born. Before, the country was “a backwater and an irrelevance,” with an “ancient way of life” marked by low economic growth, a stagnant and emigrating population, rigid (if often hypocritical) Catholic moralism, and, O'Toole notes, no running water in most rural houses. To achieve economic and demographic growth, political and religious leaders soon embraced free trade, military cooperation, foreign travel, and Hollywood culture—yet many continued to believe they could

maintain premodern practices regarding religion, sexuality, and the traditional family hierarchy. O'Toole reserves his most scathing criticism for the hypocrisy of the last defenders of that old order, above all the Catholic Church. The author, perhaps Ireland's foremost public intellectual, employs a unique combination of intimately personal narrative, piquant facts and figures, and sharp (often ironic) commentary to describe the experience of this transformation.

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*My Secret Brexit Diary: A Glorious Illusion*

BY MICHEL BARNIER. Polity, 2021, 450 pp.

This book's title promises lurid and personal revelations. The author—a genially earnest French politician who headed the EU delegation in the Brexit negotiations—delivers neither. Yet his blandness perfectly suits the perspective on Brexit he offers. The European Commission, much maligned on the British right, emerges as a skilled, moderate, and results-oriented institution that entrusts important negotiations to experienced professionals such as Barnier. By contrast, British ministers and officials represented a fractious group of Conservative politicians who had espoused Brexit for reasons more electoral than economic—and thus had little idea what they really wanted or how to get it. Barnier records his surprise as the British side made one tactical error after another, often conceding on major issues without even seeming to grasp what was at stake. At the last minute, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's amateurish effort to

circumvent the European Commission entirely by negotiating directly with national leaders collapsed when German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron refused to take his calls. In the end, Europe out-negotiated the United Kingdom across the board. The British people—faced with confusion on the border with Ireland, severe labor and product shortages, and continuing squabbles over a host of issues from fishing to banking—are now paying the price.

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*Western Jihadism: A Thirty-Year History*  
BY JYTTE KLAUSEN. Oxford University Press, 2021, 560 pp.

A striking number of jihadi terrorists grew up in the United States or Europe. Based on an intensive 15-year study of over 6,000 members of global jihadi networks, the author explains why. Jihadis in the West are disproportionately young and are motivated by a deep desire to participate in a social movement that gives their lives meaning, rather than by any immediate experiences of deprivation or discrimination or by extreme religious conviction. Today, Europe is the center of these networks because it is home to a large number of asylum seekers and has relatively lax asylum and criminal laws. This type of jihadi movement is difficult to combat because many individuals act alone, even if their actions are coordinated through (largely online) groups. The good news is that skillful and patient police work can uncover and dismantle such networks. The bad news is that ideologues with concrete geopolitical and religious grievances can effectively harness the groups to

stage attacks—and thus the Western jihadi movement shows no signs of disappearing anytime soon.

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*Pandemonium: Saving Europe*  
BY LUUK VAN MIDDELAAR. Agenda Publishing, 2021, 208 pp.

Among the many alarmist policy experts, sensationalistic journalists, idealistic federalists, and spinning politicians who dominate debates over the European Union, the Dutch political philosopher and former policy adviser van Middelaar stands out as a balanced and thoughtful observer. Like his previous books, this one convincingly demolishes the many “false prophets” who over recent decades have predicted that the euro, the Schengen area, the common foreign policy, and even the EU itself cannot survive—a group that includes not just Euroskeptics but also surprisingly many among the EU’s leaders and supporters. Instead, he argues, crises within the EU often elicit pragmatic and permanent reforms, even if they are sometimes slow in coming. Moreover, such initiatives generally come not from a distant EU bureaucracy but from national leaders working together informally in the European Council, comfortably insulated from direct public scrutiny. The author approves of this behind-the-scenes diplomacy, although he depicts it as more egalitarian and legalistic than it really is. Convincing though much of it is, this book, compared with the author’s previous writing, relies more on philosophical pronouncements and less on an insider’s feel for how everyday policymaking works.

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*The Golden Horde: Revolutionary Italy, 1960–1977*

EDITED BY NANNI BALESTRINI  
AND PRIMO MORONI.

TRANSLATED BY RICHARD  
BRAUDE. Seagull Books, 2021, 600 pp.

Developed countries witnessed far more radical politics and more political violence in the 1960s and 1970s than they do today. This classic book, now translated into English, uses eyewitness accounts from those decades to trace uprisings of workers and students in Italy, a country where the extreme left was particularly strong. Some radicals were inspired by global events: marchers brought placards displaying Mao Zedong and Che Guevara to protests against neocolonial wars in places such as Algeria and Vietnam. Some followed cultural trends in the United Kingdom and the United States: Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg mesmerized Italian writers, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones filled the airwaves, a feminist movement took hold, and parents were unnerved by their long-haired and promiscuous children. Marxist students pressed universities to hire professors committed to the class struggle. After two decades, with the radical left waning, extremist elements took over as masked terrorists threw Molotov cocktails and splinter groups bombed train stations. The Italian state ended it all with a brutal crackdown. This sprawling book vividly portrays the chaos, confusion, and contradictions of those years.

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*The Last Neoliberal: Macron and the Origins of France's Political Crisis*

BY BRUNO AMABLE AND STEFANO PALOMBARINI. Verso, 2021, 192 pp.

This updated version of a book that first appeared during the 2017 French presidential election—in which Emmanuel Macron prevailed—argues that France has become ungovernable. In the authors' view, all the major parties in France have given up on the traditional postwar "social-liberal" compromise that combined moves toward fluid labor markets, external openness, and EU cooperation with continued redistribution, social solidarity, and upward mobility. Instead, both left-wing and center-right parties have sacrificed the latter for the former. A center-right "bourgeois bloc" is now pushing this process further, triggering rising inequality and the marginalization of low-wage labor and stoking intense disillusionment and opposition on the traditional left and the far right. Although it is certainly true that in recent decades France has moved toward more free-market policies in some areas, one cannot help sensing that these authors often miss the forest for the trees. Inequality in France today is roughly equal that in Sweden. Its levels of taxation and social spending top the European charts. Its public services—not to mention the five weeks of paid vacation guaranteed for all full-time workers—are the envy of most of its neighbors. If France's welfare-state model is collapsing, then bring on the collapse!