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Pegida: Die schmutzige Seite der Zivilgesellschaft? Bielefeld: Transcript, 2015.

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Unlike the parliaments of other Western European countries, the German Federal Parliament had not hosted a populist party that based its election campaign on outright anti-Muslim populism until 24 October 2017. On that day, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) entered the Bundestag with 13% of the national vote. Yet, a protest movement that fed on a mixture of anti-elitist and anti-Muslim sentiments had been developing in Germany since the mid 2000s, first with the help of social media and the Internet, before increasingly moving onto the streets and finally into several regional and the national parliaments.

This report on Pegida contains narrative descriptions and insights based on observations made during demonstrations, several hours of qualitative focus group discussions and online surveys among those who identify themselves as *Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes* (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West; PEGIDA). The authors' research for this detailed description is located within the field of studies on protests and movements (*Protestforschung*), a subfield of political science. Franz Walter from the University of Göttingen and his team maintain that the movement arose from a Facebook group. By 2015, Pegida had nearly twice as many likes on Facebook as all the political parties in the German Parliament combined. While the first demonstration, in October 2014, was attended by only 350 people, a month later 3,500 were present and in December 15,000 people joined what the organizers called '*friedliche Spaziergänge*' (peaceful walks). Investigating the biographies of the founders of Pegida, who have organized weekly demonstrations in Dresden, in the state of Saxony, since October 2014, the authors place them either in the right-wing spectrum or in criminal milieus; Lutz Bachmann, for example, a key member of the organization, was sentenced to three years in jail for robbery. The movement is, however, carefully presenting itself as non-violent, moderate and bourgeois; it explicitly aims to fight against the infiltration of religious minorities, especially Muslims, into European societies. But those who demonstrated with Pegida were not only turning against the presence of Islam and Muslims in Germany and advocating for the preservation of Judeo-Christian culture but were also chanting slogans directed against the mainstream press as '*Lügenpresse*' (lying press) and against elected representatives whom they called '*Volksverräter*' (betrayers of the people). The organizers also criticize the gender neutralization of the German language.

This monograph's greatest strengths are its detailed account of the narratives that were shared by the demonstrators in focus group discussions and its

description, based on quantitative surveys, of demonstrators' social and political backgrounds. Participants in at Pegida demonstrations, like those taking part in many other demonstrations, are unhappy with political and social conditions, but they do not focus on their own situation. Protests involving those on both the political left and political right are—according to the authors— attracting people who are integrated and secure rather than marginalized. Pegida has been most attractive to middle-aged men with no religious affiliation and with an above-average education, who were, on the whole, gainfully employed and living in and around the capital of Saxony, Dresden. Most demonstrators share a certain pride about their *Heimat* and think of their hometown as a very special place. Leaving seems not to be an option at all for them. They feel strongly connected to the Saxon people, a connection that is reflected in statements such as '*Ich bin überzeugter Dresdner*' (I am a staunch Dresdonian') or '*Ich bin militanter Sachse*' (I am a militant Saxon) (p. 95). At the same time, the demonstrators were offended by the representation of their movement in most media outlets and by politicians as right-wing or racist. They eloquently related their connection to the freedom movements in 1848 and 1989 in Saxony and understood themselves to be followers of a local tradition. The movement, it appears, gave people an opportunity to express a slowly rising sense of discontent, the notion of being powerless and speechless. Being together with masses of people on the street who shared the impression that they were being cheated by the elites was described as both a surprise and a relief. The visible presence of 'Islamists' and migrants in society was mentioned by many interviewees as a major long-term trigger, but several events in 2014 gave the movement momentum: the escalation of the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine, the associated fear of war and other developments in Iraq and Syria with the self-declared Islamic State, in addition to local plans to build shelters for refugees in the city of Dresden. Here, the authors draw a parallel between Pegida and other German protests in the past. Demonstrations against power lines and wind turbines have been similarly sparked by construction measures that were about to change the residential and living environment. However, the initiatives against renewable energy did not gain a comparable momentum. The three authors reason that objecting to changes in energy policy does not have a wide enough frame of protest to gain nationwide attention.

Interestingly however, critical representations of the weekly demonstrations in the media and the mobilization against Pegida did not discourage people from attending but seems to have motivated many of those who talked to the researchers to join the movement. Disapproving reports became a catalyst, because they sustained a sense of being deprived of the right to speak and voice certain opinions freely. Hence, Pegida and its followers are unhappy not