

## The Light that Failed: A Reckoning By Ivan Krastev The Light that Failed: A Reckoning



Ivan Krastev (Bulgarian: Иван Кръстев born 1965 in Lukovit Bulgaria) is a political scientist the chairman of the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia permanent fellow at the IWM (Institute of Human Sciences) in Vienna and 2013 14 17 Richard von Weizsäcker fellow at the Robert Bosch Stiftung in Berlin. He is a founding board member of the European Council on Foreign Relations a member of the board of trustees of the International Crisis Group and is a contributing opinion writer for The New York Times. He was Editor in Chief of the Bulgarian Edition of Foreign Policy and was a me Ivan Krastev (Bulgarian: Иван Кръстев born 1965 in Lukovit Bulgaria) is a political scientist the chairman of the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia permanent fellow at the IWM (Institute of Human Sciences) in Vienna and 2013 14 17 Richard von Weizsäcker fellow at the Robert Bosch Stiftung in Berlin. He is a founding board member of the European Council on Foreign Relations a member of the board of trustees of the International Crisis Group and is a contributing opinion writer for The New York Times. The Global Politics on Protest (UPenn Press May 2014) In Mistrust We Trust: Can Democracy Survive When We Don't Trust Our Leaders (TED Books 2013); The Anti American Century co edited with Alan McPherson (CEU Press 2007) and Shifting Obsessions: Three Essays on the Politics of Anticorruption (CEU Press 2004). {site\_link} Mittlerweile ist es unwidersprochen daß der liberale pluralistische und vor allem kapitalistische Westen – auch wenn das ein weit umgreifender Begriff ist – in den Jahren 1989/90 siegesbesoffen dem Glauben verfiel daß der Untergang des Kommunismus ein weltgeschichtlich folgerichtiges Ereignis gewesen sei und die liberale Demokratie sozusagen das natürliche Staatsmodell der Zukunft sei – und zwar global gesehen. 30 Jahre später stellen teils die gleichen Leute die damals der Meinung waren einen welthistorischen „Sieg“ errungen zu haben verwundert fest daß sich in weiten Teilen der Welt – ob im Osten Europas ob in Russland oder in China – keinesfalls demokratische Modelle westlicher Prägung durchgesetzt haben. „Gewählt“ im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes: Ob Viktor Orbán in Ungarn Jarosław Kaczyński in Polen oder – wenn auch in einem strukturell anderen System und Verfahren – Wladimir Putin in Russland wurden Vertreter einer „illiberalen Demokratie“ mit überzeugenden Mehrheiten gewählt also vom Volk in Machtpositionen gehoben und darin bestätigt. China stellt einen Sonderfall dar da das Land bei steter wirtschaftlicher Öffnung seit den 1980er Jahren politisch-ideologisch einfach seinen kommunistischen Werten treu geblieben ist und zumindest formal weiter ein Ein-Parteien-System herrscht das sich de facto längst ent-ideologisiert hat. Warum dies geschah weshalb sich gerade die osteuropäischen Länder – und Regionen nimmt man die sogenannten „neuen“ Bundesländer des wiedervereinigten Deutschlands hinzu – von den Verheißungen der sozialen Marktwirtschaft und jenen des Kapitalismus und damit auch denen der liberalen Demokratie abgewandt haben versuchen seit geraumer Zeit viele kluge Wissenschaftler und Theoretiker zu hinterfragen und zu analysieren. Ivan Krastev und Stephen Holmes legen mit DAS LICHT DAS ERLOSCH (THE LIGHT THAT FAILED; Original erschienen 2019) eine allerdings tiefgreifendere Analyse vor die nicht nur einen – wenn auch gesondert aus einem ganzen Komplex an Erklärungen herausgegriffenen – Grund für das Versagen der liberalen Demokratie in den Ländern des ehemaligen Ostblocks benennt sondern hoch interessante und auch verstörende Einblicke in die Entwicklung vor allem des nach-sowjetischen

Russland bietet. Allerdings – das machen Krastev und Holmes sehr deutlich – ahnte man ein Modell nach wie man es sich vorstellte kein real existierendes sondern eine idealisierte Form des Westens die man teils vom Hörensagen teils aus den Medien teils aber wirklich nur aus der Werbung kannte. Was im Ideal wie eine wunderbare Vorstellung einer hehren Zukunft wirkte entpuppte sich im Laufe der Zeit als ein Frankenstein-Geschöpf bei dem die einzelnen Teile aus denen es zusammengesetzt wurde kaum zueinander passen und dessen Selbstwahrnehmung zu Selbsthass Verachtung des „Schöpfers“ und Ablehnung dessen was einst verheißt wurde geführt hat. Doch während Länder wie Polen und Ungarn die teils von Leuten geführt werden die einmal in klarer Opposition zu den in ihren Ländern herrschenden Systemen standen in Viktor Orbáns Fall sogar wirkliche Dissidenten waren sich daran machten den westlichen Liberalismus wirklich zu simulieren in der Hoffnung aufzuholen und ähnlichen Wohlstand zu generieren liegen die Dinge bspw. Nach einer Dekade des brutalsten Raubtierkapitalismus´ während dessen übelsten Jahren Mitte der 90er Jahre der Staat nur durch eine reine Demokratie-Simulation zusammengehalten werden konnte änderte sich die Politik Russlands unter Wladimir Putin fundamental. Er mühte sich nicht die wirklichen Errungenschaften zu installieren – Menschenrechte Rechtsstaatlichkeit sozialer Ausgleich – sondern jene Verirrungen die er als bigott empfand und mit deren Imitation er meinte dem Westen die Maske herunterreißen zu können und seine wirkliche hässliche Fratze zu entblößen. Übergriffigkeit auf andere Länder verlogenen Kriege die angeblich für die Menschlichkeit allzu oft aber erkennbar nur für Rohstoffe geführt wurden innere Widersprüche – Putin wollte diese Seiten des Westens und seiner Versprechungen offenlegen. seinen herrschenden Repräsentanten: Das Volk wird „beschützt“ verzichtet dabei bereitwillig auf gewisse rechtsstaatliche Freiheiten der autoritäre Staat beweist dem Volk (und sich selbst) seine Macht gerade eben dadurch daß er Wahlen manipuliert. Krastev und Holmes bieten in dem Russland-Kapitel genau solch atemberaubende Einblicke die in westlichen Analysen selten bis gar nicht erwähnt werden die aber ihrer eigenen Logik nach zwingend sind. Während in Deutschland mit dem Aufkommen einer Partei wie der AfD (Alternative für Deutschland) offener Rassismus und Fremdenfeindlichkeit scheinbar gesellschaftsfähig wurden permanent eine Angst vor Überfremdung geschürt wurde wo man als realistisch denkender Mensch weder eine „Umvolkung“ noch einen „Untergang des Abendlandes“ erkennen kann beruhten die osteuropäischen Ängste auf geradezu gegenteiligen Analysen: Länder wie Ungarn aber auch Rumänien und Bulgarien erlebten in den 30 Jahren seit der europäischen Wende einen enormen Abfluß an Bildung und Fachkraft. Die gebildeteren Bürger dieser Länder suchten ihr Heil in (West)Europa suchten Arbeit in den westlichen Ländern studierten (wie übrigens auch Orbán) an westlichen Eliteuniversitäten und blieben oftmals dort. Zwar machen die demographischen Ängste die sich hinter diesen Abgängen oftmals eines Viertels der Bevölkerung verstecken fremdenfeindliche und demagogische Ausfälle nicht besser oder entschuldigen sie gar dennoch lernt man die Differenzen zwischen westlichen Ängsten die gelegentlich wie Kollektiv-Paranoia wirken und durchaus berechtigten Ängsten in den betreffenden Ländern zu verstehen. Deshalb wolle er ein America First das weniger bedeute Amerika zuerst sondern Amerika als Gleicher unter Gleichen ein Wettbewerb in dem es sich dann immer durchsetzen könne da es schlicht stärker innovativer und wirtschaftsmächtiger sei. Das Trump´sche Amerika will nicht mehr nachgeahmt werden es will einfach sein Ding durchziehen was im Falle dieses spezifischen Präsidenten eben auch bedeutet daß der Gewinner all der abgeschlossenen Deals alles bekommt – the winner takes it all. Wenn wie das Buch es behauptet die 30 Jahre nach dem Mauerfall und dem Zusammenbruch des Kommunismus in seiner real existierenden Variante eine Übergangsphase gewesen sind stellt sich die Frage: Was nun? China gibt darauf eine zumindest aktuell scheinbar wirkmächtige Antwort. Es beweist daß die Idee daß mit der Marktwirtschaft Liberalismus und schließlich die Demokratie wir der Westen sie kennt auf gleichsam natürlichem Wege folgten eine Fehleinschätzung war und ist. The Light that Failed: A Reckoning The Light that Failed: A Reckoning What distinguishes national populists is that they never apologize for anything that their nation has done in its entire history. Ivan Krastev a fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna and Stephen Holmes a professor at NYU School of Law provide a thoughtful and original analysis of the rise of populism and reactionary nativism

based upon the theory of imitation. *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning* English: *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning* This is PoliSci as I love it: Krastev and Holmes rethink the current state of the world by focusing on the concept of imitation and they manage to provide a new perspective for the analysis of the present and the projection of the future. A very very short synopsis would be this: After the wall came down former Soviet satellite states were eager to imitate the West which ended in their disillusionment; Russia on the other hand spend some time appeasing the West until they took up a strategy of cynical imitation of the West that exploits the West's weaknesses; now the American President dropped the idea of American exceptionalism and the intent to export democratic political ideas (a foreign policy ideal that shaped the new world order after WW II especially Germany) and started imitating Russian authoritarianism. They talk about how people in Eastern Europe perceived their new status to be that of lesser Europeans trying to keep up how they suffered under the migration of young citizens to the West and they point out that the fact that the Soviet Empire imploded in the first place is largely due to the successful nationalist movements inside the individual states - but all of this does not mean that they sympathize with the new right-wing leaders there on the contrary. The chapters about Putin and Trump are particularly strong because the fact that both of them lie is not the main point of the line of argument it's just a given: As important as the discussion about the loss of truth is these rhetorical decisions are all part of a much larger political worldview and a social darwinist strategy aiming at subjugation and humiliation. Putin wants to humiliate the West that deems itself the winner of the Cold War - for him this fight is not yet over and he tries to prove that the West is cynical about its values by subverting Western political behavior. While I partly felt like the authors might over-estimate Trump's level of reflection and I was rather bothered by the insufficient discussion of the role of the EU (which mainly features as an anonymous bureaucracy - a stereotype that is not only unfair but in times of Brexit also rather dangerous) I was for the most part deeply impressed by this book as it does not repeat what we keep hearing again and again why did things go wrong and why are things still going wrong. Presenting the subsequent drive for democratization and liberalization as processes of imitation the authors discern three strategies which all explain the path that Russia the post-Soviet satellites and communist China followed after 1989: The difference between post-communist China post-communist Central Europe and post-communist Russia closely tracks the distinction between three styles or strategies of development: namely imitating the means (or borrowing) imitating the ends (or converting) and imitating the appearances (or simulating). They were aspiring converts whose identification of normalization with Westernization eventually allowed a reactionary counter-elite to capture the most politically potent symbols of national identity. In Russia by contrast post-Soviet elites merely pretended that they were imitating Western norms as well as Western institutions when they were only using the façade of democratic elections and voluntary market exchanges based on legally secured private-property rights to preserve their power pocket the country's wealth and block the kinds of democratic reform that would have threatened insider privilege and perhaps led to state collapse and further territorial disintegration. The analysis of Russia's holding the mirror to the USA by following the exact same (vile) practices but justifying them as We just do here (eg Crimea) what you did there (Serbia and Kosovo) was truly enlightening in many aspects both when it comes to Russia's strategy and to USA's worldviews. *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning* Why did the West after winning the Cold War lose its political balance? In the early 1990s hopes for the eastward spread of liberal democracy were high. *Reckoning* with the history of the last thirty years they show that the most powerful force behind the wave of populist xenophobia that began in Eastern Europe stems from resentment at the post-1989 imperative to become Westernized. *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning* Ivan Krastev wrote a great opinion piece in the New York Times about how Boris Johnson was going to solidify his recent electoral win among the former labor voters: continue hammering on the themes of Brexit - Britain first anti-immigrant - and beef up social welfare programs that the British working class depends on. Krastev and Stephen Holmes take the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall as their jumping off point to ask why the apparent triumph of liberal democracy has sputtered doused by the rise of a politics that channels the

grievances of those - mainly white middle and working class people - who were left behind by the neoliberal heyday of the last three decades. Although I am persuaded by their arguments the triumph of strongman politics I think their book suffers from trying to fit them all under a unifying theoretical framework such as the 'Age of Imitation. The Light that Failed: A Reckoning Grāmata kas būtu pelnījusi visas desmit zvaigznes bijusi vien Goodreads šāda opcija - reti gadās lasīt tekstu kur katrā lappusē burtiski dzirksteļo oriģinālas idejas. Protams ne jau viss ir ideāls par diezgan daudzām interpretācijām idejām un secinājumiem noteikti var strīdēties taču svarīgākais šajā gadījumā ir un paliek intelektuālais stimulē autoru prasme ievadīt diskusiju par lietām kuras jau sen būtu vajadzējis vērtēt un pārvērtēt The Light that Failed: A Reckoning “Не е тайна че смяната на страната е полесна от промяната на страната. Под това твърдение с готовност биха се подписали бившите съветски сателити след падането на Берлинската стена когато нетърпението им да заменят една натрапена отвън политическа и икономическа система с тази на западната пазарна икономика и либерална демокрация беше в основата на онази неповторима енергия от началото на 90-те. Отвореността към света отстъпи на провинциалното капсулиране проевропейските настроения - на антиевропейската реторика а либералният космополитизъм беше възприет като заплаха за националната идентичност. Доброволната и желана имитация на демократични институции постави тези държави в сложни психологически отношения с държавите-примери с придружаващите имитацията чувства на малоценност и възхищение. Неслучайно Иван Кръстев и Стивън Холмс търсят именно психологическите основания на популизма в държавите от Централна и Източна Европа заедно със съответните му национални модификации в Русия и САЩ от ерата “Тръмп”. беше първото по-сериозно разклащане на либералната идея причините за възхода на популистите не са толкова финансови (двете крепости на популизма - Полша и Унгария се справят икономически относително прилично) колкото социални и демографски - обезлюдяването на тези държави след отварянето на границите засилва усещането им за загуба на собствена физиономия на фона на все по-национално размитите западни общества. Оттам и вкопчването в националистически митове за “автентично полското” “истинския унгарец” и “традиционното християнско семейство” за кръвната връзка с дедите - опасни алузии от които обичаше да се възползва един друг режим. Също така самата идея че след рухването на единия полюс в Студената война либерализмът няма алтернатива като идеология е още един коз за отправяне на предизвикателства от кандидат-авторитаристите. При Русия трансформацията преминава от повърхностна симулация на капитализъм до откровено пародиране на западния модел с обратен знак за да се стигне до ролята на “търпелив рушител” на западния ред. Няма да се спирам на американския случай защото Тръмп е минало (макар че според някои тръмпизмът не е) а и защото ми се струва че тази част от книгата е относително слаба на фона на другите две - с по-изразен публицистичен характер за сметка на дълбочината на анализа. Авторите не оплакват края на либералния ред такъв какъвто го познавахме доскоро като дори си позволяват известен оптимизъм по отношение на това което наричат “политически алтернативи”. “Корените на авторитарния шовинизъм и ксенофобия в Централна и Източна Европа се крият в политическата психология а не в политическата теория. But that is yesterday’s future replaced now with central European governments dismantling liberal democracy authoritarian regimes in Russia and China causing trouble around the world and many established liberal democracies suffering from serious political dysfunction. In trying to explain what is going on The Light that Failed: A Reckoning reads to me more like a pre-20th century political classic than contemporary political analysis (one of its authors Stephen Holmes has previously written excellent books on the history of liberalism and its critics; I have ordered the English-language books of his Bulgarian co-author Ivan Krastev). It seems that the Soviet-era idea of voting only for the people in power still has some sway “‘popularity’ in Russia is consequence not a cause of the power one yields’. The former communist European countries share with Russia serious population and demographic issues (Krastev and Holmes describe Russia as combining European birth rates with African mortality rates). Large numbers of young people have left for the Western countries that

never experienced communism depriving their home countries of the people most likely to support liberal democracy rupturing relations between the generations and exacerbating concern among those who remain about their country's future. But because the communists had imprisoned their own people the right to travel was one of the most important freedoms of the post-communist era (and one that still exists despite other political reversals). Although their foreign-born residents are currently a low proportion of their total population leaders of Central European countries believe that the free movement of people could change the nature of their small and ageing societies particularly if the migrants are from culturally very different countries in Africa and the Middle East. Migration and the global financial crisis are among the reasons why for many of those remaining in Central Europe the countries of Western Europe are no longer models they want to imitate. The US with its strong civil society and liberal democratic political culture has much better prospects of self-correction than does Central Europe (Russia is I think doomed to despotism). The willingness of Trump's supporters to accept and repeat his untruths is for him a useful test of their loyalty (like participation in sham Russian elections is a test of loyalty to Putin),

But rather makes new connections and paints a bigger picture: You can learn more about the book on our latest podcast episode: *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning* In 1989 the Berlin Wall was breached: In 2019 the world in general and Europe in particular seems as divided as ever, It's the only book I've discovered to date that presents so many convincing explanations of what has been happening in the world since 1989, It goes beyond just explaining events by providing answers to the questions what went wrong.

Because politicians lose respect even among their supporters when caught out. The Trump phenomena is striking not just because of his indifference to the truth but because so many Americans don't care enough to drop their support: *The Light that Failed* is not intended to be the last word on any of its subjects: I'll look out for reviews from people who know much more about Russia and Central Europe than I do, But I found it a fresh and stimulating take on why the future looked better yesterday than it does today. *The Light that Failed: A Reckoning* An average blend of my tribe is the best tribe there is and I want the good old times back: From 2004 to 2006 Krastev was executive director of the International Commission on the Balkans chaired by the former Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato: From 2004 to 2006 Krastev was executive director of the International Commission on the Balkans chaired by the former Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato: He was Editor in Chief of the Bulgarian Edition of Foreign Policy and was a member of the Council of the International Institute for Strategic Studies London (2005 2011): His books in English include *After Europe* (UPenn Press 2017) *Democracy Disrupted*, He is a co author with Stephen Holmes of a forthcoming book on Russian politics. Paradigmatisch war es Francis Fukuyama der mit seinen Thesen vom „Ende der Geschichte“ diese Haltung vertrat. Wer Augen hatte zu sehen und Ohren um zu hören der ahnte früh daß dies ein etwas naiver Ansatzpunkt war. Vielmehr sind es ganz unterschiedliche meist un-ideologische Modelle mal mehr mal weniger demokratischen Anstrichs die zunehmend gewählt werden. *DAS ANDERE ENDE DER GESCHICHTE* und legte eine essayistische Studie der Entwicklungen seit 1989 vor: Der Kernbegriff um den die Autoren kreisen ist der der „Nachahmung“: Sie konstatieren daß die Länder Osteuropas nach 1989/90 damit begannen die liberalen Demokratien des Westens teils zu imitieren teils in leicht abgeänderter Form zu adaptieren, Zunächst war dies Ausdruck des Glaubens und der Hoffnung auf recht schnellem Wege den Wohlstand zu erreichen den man im Westen vermutete, Die Enttäuschung die solcher Nachahmung folgen musste war diesen idealisierten Vorstellungen inhärent. Schnell jedoch kommen die Autoren zu Differenzen und deutlichen Unterschieden der Ausprägungen dieser Nachahmungen. Nachdem Putin feststellen musste daß er sich auf westliche Versprechen - keine Ausweitung der NATO bspw. - nicht verlassen konnte imitierte er die westliche Demokratie immer stärker ex negativo, Krastev und Holmes konstatieren hier eine extrem kurzsichtige Politik deren Movens durchaus auch Rache ist, Zugleich verfolgt Putin das Ziel Russland dessen Trauma des Verlusts nach

1990/91 im Westen nie wirklich wahrgenommen wurde wieder als Großmacht auf die politische Weltbühne zu hieven. Dabei bieten die Autoren erstaunliche Einblicke in die Simulation einer Demokratie: die ofenkundig manipulierten Wahlen in Russland als genau so gewollt. Gerade die Manipulation von der jeder weiß stellt den starken Staat aus: Sie beschreiben dies als eine Art unausgesprochenen Akt zwischen der Bevölkerung und dem Staat bzw: Dies zu können ist die eigentliche Aussage des gesamten Vorgangs, Das daraus illiberales staatliches Verhalten resultiert ist allerdings besorgniserregend und keineswegs zwangsläufig oder folgerichtig: Der Titel des Buches spielt auf eine Geschichte von Rudyard Kipling an die er einst mit zwei Enden ausstattete: Einem pessimistischen und einem optimistischen, Genauso sehen Krastev und Holmes den Ausgang der aktuellen politischen Situation global gesehen, Allerdings postulieren sie in ihren Schlußkapiteln eine Entwicklung die zunächst auf wenig Gutes hoffen lässt, Im Fall der USA unter Donald Trump thematisieren sie die Ängste des Nachgeahmten. Trump behauptet offen die Nachteile der Nachahmung für den Nachgeahmten der dadurch nur Nachteile habe da er gebe aber wenig dafür bekomme. China wiederum sehen die Autoren als die eigentliche Herausforderung der Zukunft. Es will die Errungenschaften westlicher Industrie und Wirtschaft doch zu seinen eigenen nicht-demokratischen Bedingungen. Vielmehr zeigt China dem Westen daß man auch in einem autoritären Ein-Parteien-System durchaus erfolgreich wirtschaften kann dabei aber die Demokratie komplett außen vorlässt, Ein Modell das vor allem für westliche Politiker vom Schlage eines Donald Trump oder Boris Johnson durchaus attraktiv wirken könnte, So bleibt die Zukunft - wie meist - offen und die Geschichte schreitet voran auch wenn westliche Konservative dies lange nicht wahrhaben wollten, Um auf den aktuellen Stand des Diskurses zu gelangen sollte man DAS LICHT DAS ERLOSCH unbedingt lesen, Es hilft einzuschätzen zu verstehen aber auch den Alarmismus aus der Debatte zu nehmen, Trotz seines etwas hart klingenden Untertitels - EINE ABRECHNUNG - ist dies ein im besten Sinne des Wortes aufklärerisches Werk, To behave like a villain while presenting oneself as a victim is the nationalistic populist singular conceit: The Light that Failed examines the post- 1989 failure of liberal democracy in Eastern Europe Russia and the emergence of Trump in the United States: Their overarching argument is that after the fall of the Berlin Wall the push to imitate the western democracies of Europe and the US caused a considerable backlash: While I initially intended to elaborate on the authors' ideas in some depth I was just diagnosed with Covid and lack the energy, So instead I am posting links to a detailed analysis of their ideas. I also want to thank GR friend Meike for recommending the book. The authors dedicate one third of the book to the post-Communist transformation in Eastern Europe to Russia and to the US each. They are looking for explanations in order to understand and to develop better policy alternatives not to excuse racism and bigotry. Trump is in turn fascinated by Putin's dismissal of Western values values he doesn't share, I've never thought about this complex web of issues under the lense of imitation and I'm intrigued. In the last part of the book the authors briefly discuss China a nation that imitates Western economic strategy without adopting democratic or social policies. The Light that Failed: A Reckoning An utterly engrossing book that illuminates so many aspects of the post-communism realities we are facing today, Central European elites at first genuinely embraced imitation of Western values and institutions as the quickest path to political and economic reform: China by contrast was both openly and clandestinely borrowing from the West while insisting that the country's developmental trajectory retained its 'Chinese characteristics', Employing joint-venture agreements to force Western firms to transfer innovative technologies to their Chinese partners neither involves democratic hypocrisy not puts national identity at risk, Similarly while one-third of all foreign students at American universities are from China they study mostly science and engineering not liberalism and democracy. Lastly the authors' analysis of Trump's presence and popularity on the world scene made so much sense: Trump persuaded a lot of Americans that America can be great without being good, That is why the authors consider him a "radically transformative political figure" not a "brief deviation of a purportedly normal order. " As one of the author says in a recent interview:He has done something that's unheard of, He is the first president in American history who has openly declared that America does not stand for a teachable idea. We

certainly shouldn't have gone into Iraq and Afghanistan to help Iraqis and Afghans: If we had gone there to take the oil and take the minerals that would have been fine in his mind: The only reason ever to use military force is to steal other countries' wealth, He says America is not morally superior to any other country: He says it in crowds and people will scream USA USA! No other president has ever done such a thing, And yet the transformation of Eastern European countries gave rise to a bitter repudiation of liberalism itself not only there but also back in the heartland of the West, In this work of political psychology Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes argue that the supposed end of history turned out to be only the beginning of an Age of Imitation, Through this prism the Trump revolution represents an ironic fulfillment of the promise that the nations exiting from communist rule would come to resemble the United States. In a strange twist Trump has elevated Putin's Russia and Orbán's Hungary into models for the United States, I had stumbled across this opinion piece; needless to say I wanted to read more by Krastev. I have not read a more compelling explanation of Donald Trump's popularity. One major problem with the book is the clumsy theoretical framing around the concept of imitation: 'The argument about 'imitation' the argument about political psychology vs political theory these arguments require a much longer more pointed work: The 'Light that Failed' is a great exploration of recent history; it is messy political psychology or theory or whatever else it is trying to be, "В следването на добрите примери принципно няма нищо лошо. Към днешна дата уви от този първоначален ентузиазъм не е останало много, Където популизмът е на власт той не се уповава на интелекта: " The Light that Failed: A Reckoning The Light that Failed's first sentence says 'the future was better yesterday', Thirty years ago there were high hopes for the future of liberal democracy especially in Central Europe which had just peacefully ended communist rule, The Light that Failed has evidence and examples but not the relentless facts and data of recent journalistic or academic accounts: Instead its contribution is the categories it uses to understand events and its psychological insight. Individuals and societies are always copying each other but this process can be experienced in very different ways: In Central Europe the first post-communist political leaders and many of their people wanted to imitate the West: democracy individual freedom a market economy: And a triumphalist West wanted its model to be imitated; including in countries where the political elites and many of their people were not asking for advice, In the early post-communist era the Central European and Russian experiences had major points of difference, For the Central Europeans the end of communism meant liberation and hope: For the Russians it was humiliation: defeat in the Cold War disintegration of the Soviet Union and falling living standards: They did not want to imitate the West; that they felt pressure to do so was another sign of their weakness. When Russia borrowed Western ideas it usually did so cynically, As Krastev and Holmes say simulating democracy was politically useful for the Russians in the 1990s. Russia's political elite found faking democracy easy because they had been faking communism for decades: In Russia and other ex-communist countries the shift to private property was abused by the former communist elites for self-enrichment. Russia still has elections but this is imitation in form rather than substance about the governing elites maintaining their control rather than risking being replaced: Rigged elections do not give voters a genuine choice but instead inform the regime about the loyalties and competence of lower-level officials. The political struggle in Russia is not between rival forces seeking democratic mandates but between these lower-level officials vying for approval from the powerful: By introducing new candidates and policies at elections the governing elites gain an opportunity to renew and rebrand themselves, Alongside this cynicism there was as The Light that Failed argues a genuine problem in transplanting ideas and institutions, The social and cultural conditions for democracy in Russia were missing: The communists had destroyed civil society and the social groups that might have otherwise formed the basis for political parties, People in Russia don't think of politics as a way of improving their lives - it generally hasn't in the past, Subversive imitation of the West also influences Russia's foreign policy with revenge for Russia's humiliations a major motive, Russian interference in US politics is a mocking copy of US intervention in the politics of other countries, When Russia invaded Crimea Putin's justification lifted passages of text directly from Western leaders supporting their intervention in Kosovo, He aims to highlight hypocrisy and to

show that Western principles hide Western self-interest. In Central Europe as noted the post-communist era started out much more positively than in Russia. But since then things have deteriorated badly with 'illiberal democrats' coming to power in Poland the Czech Republic and Hungary. Thirty years on from the fall of communism these countries again have much in common with Russia. As Krastev and Holmes note this is an unusual post-revolutionary pattern - normally people on the losing rather than winning side of a revolution go into exile. The demographic vulnerability of Central European countries partly explains the anti-immigration politics of its populist leaders, Highlighting the migrant crisis in Western Europe also serves to make it a less attractive place for young Central Europeans. But even without these issues the process of Westernisation and EU membership had become an affront to national dignity. The soft colonisation of Brussels was much more benign than the hard colonisation of Moscow; every new EU country freely applied to join: But once in EU membership could still feel like control from the outside (and hence Brexit outside the scope of this book), Although principally about Europe The Light that Failed also discusses Trump given the obvious parallels between him Putin and Central European leaders: But Trump highlights how even countries with long democratic histories are vulnerable to political disturbance. The specific aspect of the Trump analysis I will mention because of its parallels to the communist era is his attitude to truth: Krastev and Holmes cite George Kennan's Cold War analysis of Russian disbelief in truth, Rather than statements being judged genuinely true or false with true statements valuable and false statements not the Russians looked for a statement's purpose or effect. Something was true not because it was based on an independently verifiable reality but because it served the Party's interests, Something was false not because it was incorrect but because it served a purpose contrary to the Party's interests. Similarly Trump seems not to care whether what he says is true or false being only concerned whether his statements will help him 'win': And 'paying no price for telling easily exposable untruths is an effective way to display one's power and impunity': There will always be liars and it is a cliché of democratic politics that politicians don't always tell the truth: But usually straight-out lies statements that are known to be untrue in the moment they are said are rare in democratic politics.

. Highly recommended. In 1991 the Soviet Union collapsed. Why? The Light that Failed is a brilliant book. Nun ca. Philip Ther untersuchte bspw. in Russland ganz anders. So beschreiben sie bspw. Auch mit gewissen westlichen Vorurteilen räumen die beiden auf. Daran lassen auch die Autoren keine Zweifel aufkommen. Eine brutale Vorstellung internationalen Handels und Handelns. Denn hier hört die Nachahmung auf. China will nicht nachahmen China transformiert.<https://www.law.nyu.edu/news/ideas/st>.<https://neweasterneurope.eu/2020/07/0>. It is shocking how much sense these arguments make. They were strategic impostors. They were ingenious appropriators. It shouldn't be a model for other countries. It has no right to lecture other countries. It's not exceptional. He says this. Johnson is a Tory. Vladimir Putin Donald Trump Victor Orban. Въпреки че финансовата криза от 2008 г. Как и с какви средства - вече знаем. Времето ще покаже дали имат право. And so it was. The book's central concept is imitation