

Preface and acknowledgments

In considering the explanation for the varying fortunes of contemporary radical right parties, my thoughts turned to my previous book, *Electoral Engineering* (2004), which had developed a set of propositions about how the institutional context of the formal electoral rules could shape the strategic behavior of parties and how, in turn, these actions could have a systematic impact upon patterns of voting behavior in the mass electorate. The simple idea was that richer insights could be derived if the comparative study of electoral systems, parties, and voters could be reintegrated, rather than treating each of these as distinct sub-disciplines. *Electoral Engineering* examined many dimensions of voting behavior and political representation, including patterns of turnout, the impact of social cleavages, and the inclusion of women in parliament, but it did not seek to apply the theory to understand the electoral fortunes of any particular party family. Building upon the approach developed earlier, this book focuses upon the puzzling advance of the radical right, to see how far the general theory could provide valuable insights into the roots of the popular support mobilized by parties such as Haider's FPÖ, Le Pen's *Front National*, and Bossi's *Lega Nord*.

The argument developed here suggests that the rules determining ballot nomination, campaigning and election are important, not just for the share of seats which are awarded mechanically to radical right challengers, but also for the effectiveness of the ideological strategies they adopt. What matters for their enduring success is less the underlying conditions in mass society, exemplified by levels of unemployment, patterns of population migration, or the growth of new social risks, than how radical right parties craft their values and build their organizations to fit the broader structural constraints set by electoral rules. In this regard, parties do not work under conditions of perfect competition; instead, their actions are constrained in a regulated marketplace by the broader institutional context.

In developing this argument, the book, as ever, owes multiple debts to many friends and colleagues. The book originated during a visit to the Research School in the Social Sciences, Australian National University, and I greatly appreciate all the warm hospitality and exception collegiality received there. The theme of the book received encouragement in conversations over the years with many colleagues and I am most grateful to all those who went out of their way to provide feedback on initial ideas, to send me advance proofs of forthcoming publications, to advise me about contemporary developments in their country, or to read through draft chapters and provide chapter-and-verse comments. Amongst others, particular thanks are due to Tim Bale, André Blais, Wouter van der Brug, Shaun Bowler, Liz Carter, Ivor Crewe, Cees van der Eijk, David Farrell, Mark Franklin, Jim Jupp, Rachel Gibson, Elisabeth Gidengil, Lynda Erickson, Jim Jupp, Jenny Mansbridge, Dave Marsh, Ian Marsh, Ian McAllister, Cas Mudde, Fritz Plasser, Marion Sawyer, Pat Seyd, Marion Sawyer, Stefaan Walgrave, and Chris Wlezien.

The book could not have been written without the evidence collected by collaboration amongst many colleagues. The study owes a large debt of gratitude to all who conducted the surveys and assembled the datasets, especially the principal investigators, as well as the funding agencies which generously supported the cross-national survey research. The primary datasets used in this book include *The European Social Survey 2002*, *The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)*, *The Expert Judgment Survey of Western-European Political Parties 2000*, *The Manifesto Research Group*, and International IDEA's *Handbook Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns*, as well as from selected case-studies. The surveys provide data from countries ranging from long-established democracies with market economies to authoritarian states and post-communist societies.

The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) is a collaborative program of cross-national research among election study teams in over fifty countries, with core funding provided by National Science Foundation under Grant Nos: SES-9977967 and SBR-9317631. The survey data is integrated, cleaned, and released by the CSES secretariat, directed by David Howell assisted by Karen Long, based at the Center for Political Studies, Institute for Social Research, at the University of Michigan.

The European Social Survey 2002 (the ESS) is an innovative, academically-driven social survey designed to chart and explain the interaction between Europe's changing institutions and the attitudes, beliefs and behavior patterns of its diverse populations. The survey will cover at least 19 nations and will employ the most rigorous methodologies. It is funded via the European Commission's 5th Framework Programme, with supplementary funds from the European Science Foundation which also sponsored the development of the study over a number of years. The project is directed by a Central Coordinating Team led by Roger Jowell at the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University. The five other partners are Bjorn Henrichsen at NSD Norway, Ineke Stoop at SCP Netherlands, Willem Saris at the University of Amsterdam, Jaak Billiet at the University of Leuven, and Peter Mohler at ZUMA Germany.

The Expert Judgment Survey of Western-European Political Parties 2000 was conducted by Marcel Lubbers at the Department of Sociology, University of Nijmegen, and the data was distributed via the Steinmetz Archive in Amsterdam.

The Manifesto Research Group/Comparative Manifestos Project, formed in 1979, has content analyzed party platforms since 1945 in twenty-five nations. The data was collected by a collaborative team led by Ian Budge, Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Andrea Volkens, Judith Bara and Eric Tanenbaum.

International IDEA's *Handbook Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns*, edited by Reginald Austin and Maja Tjernström and published in 2003, is an invaluable compilation of the regulations governing party and election funding. The author is grateful, in particular, to Julie Ballington at IDEA for making the data available in electronic format.

Draft chapters from the book have been presented at various professional venues, providing invaluable feedback and comments, including the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Chicago, the annual conference of the Elections, Parties and Public Opinion (EPOP) group at Nuffield College, Oxford, and the plenary lecture of the European Consortium of Political Research at Budapest.

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