

Chapter 1

The Impact of Populist Parties on Party Systems

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We have all seen it happen. Imagine a large family, a set of friends, a group of co-workers, a class or a team. Within this unit, there are likes and dislikes as well as conventions about what can or cannot be said and how to get along with one another. One or more newcomers might arrive and behave differently enough that they alter the group dynamic. The same can occur if one of the regular members changes his or her behaviour. The group can respond in a myriad of ways. It can close ranks and marginalise newcomers. It can divide, with some members of the group interacting more with the newcomers and less with those who were there before. To be sure, not every newcomer alters or upsets pre-existing dynamics; indeed, some are easily assimilated into pre-existing norms and behaviour. However, others are not, and their presence forms an alternate pole that changes the unit and how its members interact through force of personality or because of who these new members are or what they do.

Readers could be forgiven for asking what this narrative has to do with European political parties and party systems. The answer is a good deal. Coping with newcomers – or with parties whose style and behaviour has changed – is something with which older parties in many European countries have had to wrestle. In the first few decades following Second World War, most Western European party systems were sufficiently static that, following Lipset and Rokkan (1967), they could be characterised as frozen (Bartolini and Mair 2007; Mair 1997). Rooted in class and religious cleavages, many parties simply relied on electorates of belonging whose support they managed to cultivate and renew. Some older parties still do, but party systems are less firmly anchored than they once were. Rates of electoral volatility and the frequency

of high volatility elections have increased, and many party systems are now more fragmented than they were in the 1950s and 1960s (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2017; Mair 2008, 2013). Reflecting transitions to democracy in southern and east central Europe, the universe of party systems in liberal democracies is also larger.

Two new party families – ‘Green’ and left libertarian parties (henceforth, collectively referred to as ‘Greens’), on one hand, and populist radical right parties, on the other – have emerged and become credible and, in some instances, formidable competitors, while Communist parties have all but disappeared or have been replaced by radical left parties (including a few that have themselves developed into populist parties). Articulating points of view different from mainstream parties, Green parties and populist parties were potential threats to the dominant position that mainstream parties previously enjoyed. Giving voice to concerns about environment, the quality of life and the quality of democracy, Green parties drew support from younger, educated voters coveted by Social Democrats. Populist parties presented a different challenge. Articulating a Manichean view that juxtaposed the demands of the people and what they truly wanted to an uncaring establishment deaf to these demands, populist parties were a potential threat not only to parties of the right but also to parties on all parts of the spectrum.

Not all the parties that forced others to sit up and take note were newcomers: in Switzerland, mainstream parties had to react to one of their own, the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), that not only assumed a populist stance but also brought about a substantial shift in the party balance in so doing. Similarly, the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) originated as a smaller nationalist and liberal party whose first impact on the party system was to provide the Socialists with a parliamentary majority in 1983. However, under Jörg Haider, the FPÖ redefined itself as a populist party and an outsider that was a newcomer for all intents and purposes.

In this volume, we examine the impact (if any) that populist parties have on the party systems of which they have become a part. Party systems are more than collections of parties. Instead, characterised by regular recurring interactions, they embody the fraternal relations among parties that regularly work together and the less-friendly relations among others that do not cooperate as readily or often. As we have noted, populist parties are not the only parties that have intruded on European party systems. Green parties often preceded them, appearing when older parties still retained more support from loyal voters; however, Green parties did not create the same stir and did not produce the same unsettling effect that some populist parties have in part because they grew more slowly. In contrast, as figure 1.1 demonstrates, populist parties have surged rapidly and often introduced an element of uncertainty into

electoral competition that Green parties – despite the challenge to establishment practices that they initially presented – did not.

Classifying populist parties has been notoriously difficult. This has to do with several issues: First, there has been significant disagreement over how to define populism (see next). Second, we need to determine which parties fit the criteria of being a populist party. Third, we find populist parties across

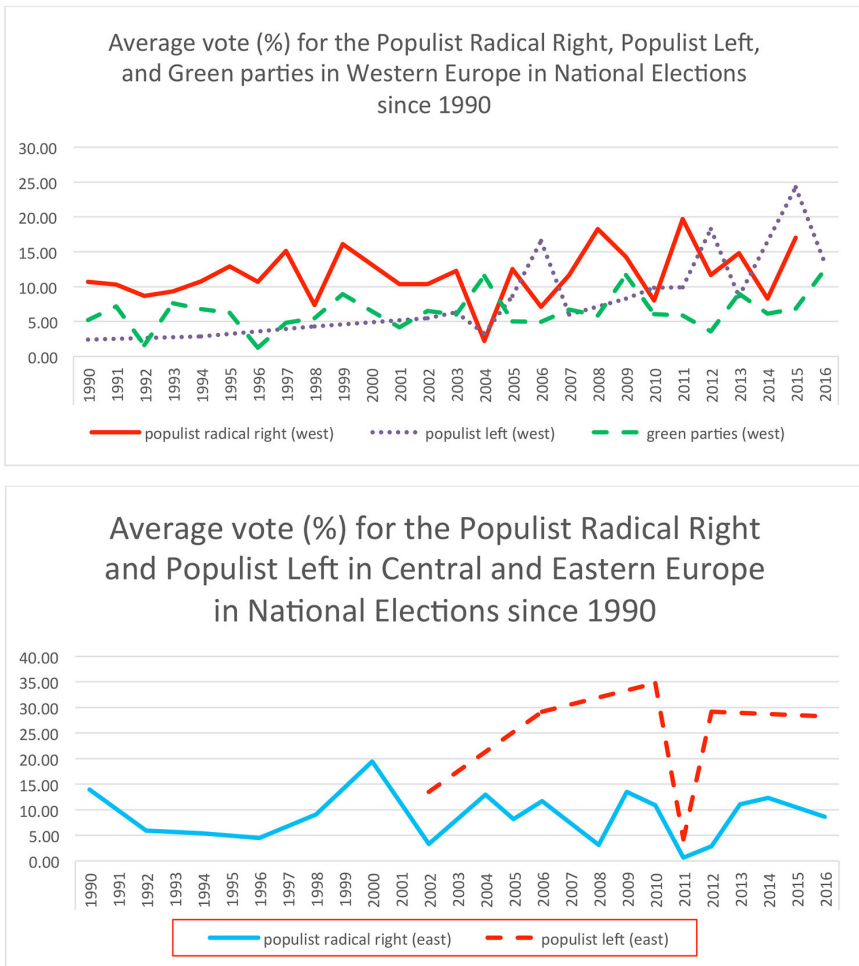


Figure 1.1

Source: Populist parties based on author's original dataset compiled using van Kessel 2015 and Döring and Manow 2017.¹

the left/right ideological spectrum. This is confirmed in figure 1.1 where we compare the share of the vote won by populist radical right, Green parties, and the populist left in elections from 1990 to 2016. Both the populist radical right and the populist left are on a small but steady climb. In particular, we see that the populist left has done well in the last ten years. However, we have to be careful because the number of cases is small. We also see that there has been a steady increase in the populist radical right in Western Europe. In most cases, the populist radical right has fared better in Western Europe than Green parties (*see* figure 1.1).

Some of these populist parties – the Freedom parties in Austria and the Netherlands and the Front National (FN) in France, for example – have become part of the political landscape. In Austria, the FPÖ grew steadily in the 1990s and then suffered a sharp decline and a split during its stint in government in the early 2000s, but its support has since rebounded. In the Netherlands, populism broke through with the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in 2002 and has been sustained by Geert Wilders' Freedom Party (PVV). Established in 1972, France's FN is an older party challenging both the mainstream right and, to a lesser degree, the left. In Austria, the FPÖ began as the third party in a system dominated by two larger parties, and the SVP, once the smallest of four parties sharing power in Switzerland, is now the largest of these parties, garnering 26–29 per cent of the vote in recent elections. Although an insider – the SVP continues to share power in the Federal Council – it often assumes the position of an outsider, sponsoring referenda opposing government policy. Obviously, these parties are no longer minor players: In several countries, populist parties have grown strong enough that they are often the second or third and, occasionally, the largest party.

Surging support that has proven more durable than many anticipated is not the only reason that populist parties have been unsettling. Two other reasons are the association of some parties (e.g. the FN under Jean-Marie Le Pen and the FPÖ under Jörg Haider) with an earlier extreme right and the ability of some populist parties to attract cross-class support. The former not only raised the spectre of old fashioned extremism but also forced mainstream parties to decide whether they should be isolated and subject to a *cordon sanitaire* or treated as a party like any other. Strategic uncertainty is compounded by the ability of many populist parties to win votes from groups that mainstream parties had at one time counted as part of their loyal bases of support. Giving voice to – but also shaping – misgivings about immigration and multiculturalism and a European Union that can appear alien and intrusive has transformed some populist parties into viable competitors. Nor is this their only source of support. Several of these parties have also cast themselves as champions of welfare state entitlements that mainstream parties – struggling to stay within EU budgetary norms – have found themselves forced to trim. However, many

would restrict benefits to those who ‘deserve’ them, that is, native-born citizens and those who have integrated as opposed to less deserving outsiders (Häusermann and Kriesi 2015). Adopting welfare chauvinist positions has enabled populist parties to win the support of those in routine occupations who in earlier decades might have supported Social Democratic or, in some instances, Christian Democratic parties. Notably, populist parties are increasingly drawing support from manual workers (Häusermann and Kriesi 2015; Oesch 2008, 2013; *see also* Jupskås, chapter 5, this volume).

Mainstream parties are not without advantages of their own, but they bear the burden of defending policies that may be unpopular and may find it difficult to deliver desired results or to translate them into support at the polls. The position they find themselves in is different from the immediate post-war decades. Then mainstream parties benefitted from sustained economic growth and full employment and could claim that they had delivered on their promises. By contrast, parties that govern today must grapple with intertwined problems – the cost of entitlements, the problems of interdependent economies and coping with immigration and diversity – that are proving to be far less tractable than they once were.

Populist parties have become prominent in party systems not only in older Western European democracies but also in younger East Central European democracies. Their party systems differ from those in older democracies in several key respects. Most are less firmly anchored in society, and parties position themselves differently on key dimensions (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012). Some have also proven fertile ground, if not for populist parties, then for parties employing populist appeals. In Hungary, Fidesz – initially a smaller liberal party and more recently a conservative and increasingly dominant nationalist party – leans towards populism. Along with a newer populist right party, Jobbik, Fidesz gives Hungarian politics a distinctly populist tinge. In Slovakia, the governing party in the 1990s, the People’s Party – Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS), was a left populist party (Deegan-Krause and Haughton 2009). As Casal Bértoa and Guerra (chapter 9, this volume) demonstrate, populism has been a persistent element in Polish political discourse. In the early 2000s, two populist parties, the League of Polish Families (LPR) and Self Defence (SRP), gained strength until their agenda was taken over by a conservative nationalist party, Law and Justice (PiS), an older political force rooted in the Solidarity Movement.

The emergence of populist parties has triggered the growth of a literature that has attempted to define and explain the phenomenon. In the next section, we consider what populism means, how populist parties differ from other parties and the ways in which they affect both competition for votes and competition for government.

DEFINING POPULISM

Studies of populism paralleled the growing success of populist parties. Debates regarding how populism should be defined and conceptualised ensued²: scholars studied and debated whether populism is an ideology, a style or a strategy and whether it is left-wing or right-wing (see Canovan 1999; Jagers and Walgrave 2007; March 2007; Moffitt and Tormey 2014; Mudde 2004, 2007; Weyland 2001). Although disagreements persist (particularly between Latin American and European scholars, cf. Weyland 2001), in the European context, there has been less controversy over how to conceptualise populism than some maintain (Akkerman et al. 2014). Most scholars now accept Mudde's notion that populism is a thin-centred ideology (Mudde 2004, 2007) to which other ideologies become attached. The thin-centred ideological perspective argues that populism reflects a coherent set of ideas about the world, representation and democracy, but that this worldview is not broad enough to stand on its own and that populists thus attach this worldview to other ideologies (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2013; Stanley 2008).

The thin-centred ideological approach focuses on four core components: populism begins with the 'pure people' (Akkerman et al. 2014; Mudde 2004). Focusing on 'the pure people', however, is insufficient, and 'the pure people' are thus juxtaposed with the elites, that is, those who are thought to be corrupt (Mudde 2004). In addition, populism espouses a Manichean worldview in which the two worlds are at odds with one another. The tension between 'the pure people' and the elites is framed as a battle between good and evil (Hawkins 2009; Mudde 2004). Finally, populists contend that representation is about asserting the general will (Mudde 2004), a point that Mudde articulates succinctly. Populism is

a thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus the 'corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people. (Mudde 2007: 23)

Because it is a thin-centred ideology, populism must attach itself to other ideologies. In Europe, populism has attached itself to radical right, market liberal and left-wing or socialist ideologies. The most common variant is the populist radical right. The ideology of the populist radical right is defined, in addition to populism, by its nativism and authoritarianism (Mudde 2007). However, populist liberals are neither nativist nor authoritarian, and they do not focus exclusively on law and order or moral traditionalism; moreover, immigration is not as important as it is for populist radical right parties. Notably, populist liberal parties are less prevalent in Europe, although Forza

Italia (Go Italy/FI) and the List Dedecker in Belgium are clear examples of this phenomenon (Pauwels 2010; Zaslove 2008).

Populist left-wing parties fuse populism with socialist or social democratic ideologies. Left populists frequently define themselves in opposition to neo-liberalism and globalisation (March 2007). Although some left populist parties make anti-immigration claims, more often than not they support ethnic pluralism. Nevertheless, their principal focus is on economic issues such as regulation, redistribution and income equality. In addition, opposition to the EU – and to EU-mandated austerity measures in particular – is common. Left populist parties include the Dutch Socialist Party, the German Left Party, and more recently Podemos in Spain, as well as SYRIZA in Greece. The Five Star Movement (M5S) in Italy is often classified as a left populist party, but its left/right status is increasingly less clear (Hough and Kon 2009; Kioupiolis 2016; Otjes and Louwerse 2015; Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014; Van Kessel 2015; Verbeek and Zaslove 2016).

POPULISM AND PARTY SYSTEMS

Populist parties have become significant players in several European party systems, sometimes winning as many votes as mainstream parties. Our premise is that such parties have become sufficiently strong and that their presence is sufficiently unsettling that they may have an impact on these party systems. Whether and to what extent they affect party systems is the subject of this book.

To date, most research on populism and party systems has focused on populist radical right parties and why they arise and from whom they derive their support. Several studies focus on the effects of the party system on the success and/or failure of populism. For example, Ignazi (2006) and Kitschelt and McGann (1995) emphasise the extent to which the divergence (or radicalisation/polarisation) or convergence of political parties towards the middle creates opportunities for the rise of populist radical right parties. Divergence (radicalisation/polarisation) primes voters (Ignazi 2006), making them open to populist perspectives. Ignazi (2006) states, ‘Radicalization and polarization, together with the politicization of new, salient, and misconceived issues, seem to be at the heart of the dynamic that fostered the rise of extreme right parties’ (p. 212). By contrast, Kitschelt and McGann (1995) argue that convergence creates room at the margins for populist parties to emerge. Meguid (2005, 2008) approaches the problem from a different perspective by focusing on how mainstream parties decide how to react to populist radical right parties once they appear. How they respond – whether and how consistently they take dismissive, accommodative or adversarial

stances vis-à-vis the newcomer – influences the electoral fortunes of populist radical right parties.

Although numerous studies examine why different types of voters support populist parties, there is little research on how this support affects party systems. Most studies focus on attitudes, socio-economic characteristics and political allegiances, and these studies mainly conclude that immigration is the most important issue explaining why voters support populist radical right parties (Ivarsflaten 2008; van der Brug et al. 2013). By contrast, immigration is less salient for supporters of left-wing populists (or those with a left-wing ideology), and economic issues are more important (Akkerman and Zaslove 2014; Visser et al. 2014). Although the homogeneity of support for the populist radical right must not be overstated, younger men and (increasingly) the working class tend to support these parties (Arzheimer 2013; Mudde 2007; Van der Brug et al. 2013). Conversely, radical left parties, some of which are populist, are supported by both less-educated and better-educated voters as well as voters who identify as working class and are union members (Ramiro 2016).

These findings are important but do not tell us how voters' demands for certain types of positions translate into a supply of parties representing them. Scholars such as Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012) bridge these approaches. Treating both demand and supply, they focus on the ways in which parties respond to changing dimensions of conflict as well as the emergence of new parties. Their premise is that globalisation has opened up economic and cultural divides that separate globalisation winners and globalisation losers. These divides have transformed older class and religious cleavages and in some instances have led to the emergence of new parties. Mainstream parties must then decide whether to reposition in light of transformed cleavages and new competition. Populist parties are key players but their impact depends on the ease with which they can win seats and the extent to which older parties modify their positions (Grande 2008; Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012).

The few studies that consider the impact that populist parties have on party systems reach different conclusions. Bale (2003) argues that populist radical right parties reinforce the right in party systems. As mainstream right parties adopt themes from the populist radical right, they move their political agenda to the right, enabling these mainstream parties to invite the radical right parties into coalitions. Drawing these conclusions some fourteen years ago, Bale argued that party systems had become increasingly bipolar as a result. Focusing on the Netherlands, Pellikaan et al. (2003) take a different approach and argue that populist parties such as LPF have politicised a cultural dimension that has not been present in the Netherlands, which has ramifications for the ways in which parties compete over dimensions and issues. Much like Kriesi et al. (2008, 2012) and Bornschieer (2010a, 2010b), Pellikaan et al. (2003)

tap into arguments regarding the dimensional bases of party competition and the extent to which the new cultural dimension intersects the more classical left-right divide.

Mudde takes a different position. In two related articles, Mudde (2013, 2014) argued that populist radical right parties are neither as strong as others have indicated, nor have they had much impact on party systems. Mudde (2013) argues that although populist parties are the most successful post-war political family, their average electoral strength is only moderate across Western Europe. They have not had a strong presence in government and have not influenced attitudes on issues such as immigration, which were already changing. More restrictive policies on immigration and integration reflect the changing positions of mainstream right parties, which have been responding to shifts in public opinion. Although populist radical right parties may have accelerated shifts to the right, they did not cause these shifts. However, Mudde wrote in 2013 and focuses on average strengths across Western European party systems, including several in which it has been negligible.

Mudde (2014) uses Sartori's typology to consider the extent to which populist radical right parties have caused 'alterations in the systemic interactions of the relevant parties in a country' (Mudde 2014: 218). There have been no changes from two-party to multiparty systems or vice versa, nor is there any evidence of changes from one of Sartori's (1976) types to another. Although populist parties challenge some liberal democratic values, they are not anti-system parties because they are not opposed to democracy. Moreover, they have not had blackmail or coalition potential, and they have not been relevant in the sense that Sartori indicated. Further, there is no evidence of the increased bipolarisation that Bale (2003) predicted. Some countries with strong populist radical right parties have two-bloc polarised party systems but many more do not. The same is true for countries without such parties.

Mudde's (2014) argument is consistent with the insistence of students of party systems that electoral change is not the same as party system change (Mair 1997), but it leaves key questions open about the impact that stronger populist parties have had on party competition. As we have already seen, populist parties in many party systems have become significant competitors that rival mainstream parties. If we want to know what impact they have, we need to examine what difference parties that have blackmail potential and are clearly relevant make in electoral politics and competition for government. Of crucial importance is how mainstream parties respond to competition from populist parties: Do parties change strategies, altering the ways in which they approach voters, or modify positions and the ways in which they present themselves? Competition for government is different: here we want to know whether shifts in party strength and the presence of populist parties (a) precludes parties from forming coalitions that they had previously preferred and

(b) opens opportunities for the formation of alternate coalitions that would not otherwise be possible.

In addition, Mudde's (2014) argument focuses on whether party systems have changed from one of Sartori's (1976) types to another – that is, from a two-party system to a multiparty system or vice versa, or from moderate to pluralist.³ Sartori's typology is a masterful instrument, but it is based on party systems as they were in the 1960s and 1970s, and it no longer differentiates party systems as effectively as it once did. Over time, the category of polarised pluralism – distinguished by the presence of not only anti-system parties but also centrifugal drives and a hollowing out of the centre (Sartori 1976: 131–138) – has emptied and most cases now fit under moderate pluralism, albeit with more parties than Sartori anticipated (Mair 1997, 2006; Wolinetz 2006). This development leaves open questions about variations among systems of moderate pluralism and whether there may be changes occurring in them. Before considering changes from one type of party system to another, we must investigate whether there have been changes in the ways in which parties organise two key activities, competition for government and competition for votes. Competition for government is the facet of party competition that Mair (1997, 2006) urged students of party systems to consider as opposed to changes among types. Competition for votes takes us into the electoral arena. It includes not only how parties contest elections but also how they frame issues and define what competition is about. This is the facet of party competition that Schattschneider (1960) alluded to when he wrote about changes in the scope of conflict.

Populist radical right parties are the single most successful new post-war political family. Mobilising around thin-centred ideologies that combine a Manichean view of elites who are deaf to what the people really want with diverse points of view – opposing immigration, multiculturalism and the European Union with a social populism that defends the entitlements of native-born citizens in the case of many populist radical right parties – they have mounted a substantial challenge to mainstream parties. As a result, there have been changes in electoral alignments. Many populist parties are now as large as, if not larger than, the mainstream parties with which they compete. If we want to understand their impact on party systems, we need to examine what happens not only when populist parties appear but also what happens when they grow. Our discussion suggests two key facets: competition for votes and the ways in which parties frame what elections are about and the ways in which they organise competition for government. To be sure, party systems are not determined by a single party but are the products of the collective interaction of multiple parties. However, that does not prevent us from examining the ways in which mainstream parties react to the challenges that populist parties mount and from considering whether these reinforce or

weaken changes in party competition that were already underway, or, more broadly, the impact that they have on party systems.

Framework for Analysis

Two broad categories emerge from our discussion: competition for votes and competition for government. These go to the heart of what party systems are about.

Competition for Votes

Competition for votes refers not only to election campaigns and the positions that parties take when they publish manifestos but also to how parties frame issues and define what elections are about. Parties and party systems provide voters with definitions of the choices facing them. Once election campaigns are underway, these definitions may not prevail, but they are important starting points if we want to understand what occurs in elections. They also vary over time and across party systems. It is that variation and the contribution that populist parties make to it that interests us.

One thing that populist parties are said to do is to reset agendas, forcing other parties to address issues that they might otherwise neglect. This resetting of agendas is explicit not only in arguments such as those made by Kitschelt and McGann (1995) that attribute their rise to issue space left open by mainstream parties but also in arguments that discuss the ways in which other parties respond. Thus, Meguid (2005, 2008) argues that mainstream parties respond to populist radical right parties in one of three ways – dismissing or ignoring what the populist party has to say; accommodating it, in effect taking on their demands; or opposing it directly – and that this response affects how well the challengers do. Although Meguid focuses primarily on electoral outcomes, she is also discussing ways in which agendas are set and reset. So too are others such as Mondon (2013), who argues that populist parties not only put issues such as immigration on the agenda but also encourage parties on the right to incorporate their positions. Whether and to what extent these positions are incorporated is a matter that subsequent chapters consider. In some instances, mainstream parties may have already modified their positions before populist parties appear in responding to the electorate.

Defining what party competition involves speaks not only to the ways in which issues are defined but also to the underlying dimensions along which parties compete. It was commonplace to note that although voters regularly placed not only parties but also themselves on left-right scales that most Western European party systems divided not only along social class and redistribution lines but also along lines involving religion and religiosity

(Lijphart 2012). Many scholars argue that these alignments are changing and that a new cultural divide, the integration-demarcation dimension, has either supplanted or transformed an earlier one, religion and religiosity (Bornschieer 2010a; Kriesi et al. 2008, 2012). This re-alignment can occur in different ways: In some instances, the socio-cultural dimension replaces religion and religiosity as a second dimension dividing parties and voters. In others, differences between those with Green, alternative, or left-libertarian perspectives and those who begin from more traditional, authoritarian, or nationalist points of view load on the left-right dimension, so that competition takes place on a single modified dimension. The chapters that follow explore this notion by considering whether the scope of conflict from election to election is defined in the same manner and the degree to which elections themselves have become an argument about the scope and definition of what conflict should be.

Competition for Government

As with competition for votes, competition for government speaks directly to reasons why students of politics pay attention to parties and party systems. Competition for government involves the roles that parties play in narrowing the available alternatives and supporting governments. Much of the literature considers parties in parliamentary systems in which the durability of cabinets depends on the ability of parties to form governments and to provide them with sustained support. Competition for government is different in presidential and semi-presidential systems but is no less important.

Noting that Sartori's typology no longer differentiated as well as it once did, Mair (1997, 2006) proposed an alternate scheme based on competition for government. Mair proposed investigating whether patterns of coalition formation are open, with frequent recourse to novel coalitions; partially closed, with incomplete or partial alternation among combinations of parties that had occurred before; or closed, with full alternation in government. Mair also suggested a second facet, the extent to which parties resorted to previous combinations or had recourse to novel coalitions, which directed attention away from classification and towards the structure of competition.

Examining the structure of competition provides an additional way to assess the impact of populist parties. Building on Mair's analysis of the impact of Green parties, Bale (2003) argues that the presence of populist parties has led to a bipolarisation of party systems, with governments on the left alternating with a centre-right strengthened by support from the populist radical right. Denmark and Norway provide support for Bale's hypothesis, but other cases do not fit this mould. In Austria, the FPÖ and the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) have narrowed rather than enlarged coalition

opportunities, leading to the repeated formation of increasingly narrow versions of the grand coalitions that governed Austria from 1945 to 1966.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

If we want to know more about the impact that populist parties have, we must look more closely at parties and party systems. The chapters that follow provide an opportunity to do so. In choosing cases, we have attempted to keep several things in mind. First, we wanted to have a regional cross section. Thus, we have chosen party systems from Scandinavia, Southern Europe, Northern Continental Europe, and Central and Eastern Europe. We have also included diverse types of party and political systems. All are multiparty systems, but some are simpler, whereas others are extended multiparty systems with more rather than fewer parties (Wolinetz 2006). The former include Austria, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Hungary, and the latter include Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, France, Italy and Poland. Of these, several are bipolar: the principal competition is between completing blocs, sometimes but not always dominated by a single larger party and sometimes competing in distinct clusters, as parties do in Fifth Republic France, Second Republic Italy and Poland. We also include several countries considered to be consensual democracies (Denmark, Norway and Sweden), three sometimes considered to be or to have been consociational democracies (Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland), two newer democracies (Hungary and Poland) and semi-presidential France. All have or have had strong populist radical right parties. However, some, such as the Netherlands, have left populist parties, and the post-1994 Italian party system includes not only a populist radical right, the Lega Nord (LN), but also the People of Freedom (PdL), which is, like its predecessor, FI, a liberal populist party, and, more recently, Beppe Grillo's M5S, a left populist party.

The chapters that follow fall into overlapping groups. We begin with Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands and then consider the Scandinavian countries and Finland, France and Italy, and Hungary and Poland. In so doing, we begin with three countries considered not only consensual democracies but also consociational systems and then move on to Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, four countries also considered consensual democracies. We then consider France and Italy, both bipolar multiparty systems in which parties often compete in blocs or clusters, and finally, two newer democracies, Hungary and Poland. Arranging chapters in the order we have chosen, we invite readers to consider a variant of a hypothesis that is common in the literature: Kitschelt (2002) argued that consensual democracies are a breeding ground for populist parties because populists react to the putatively closed and elitist decision making that frequently occurs before

and after elections. As a core purpose of populism is to break consensus, then we should expect populist parties to have their greatest impact on consensual democracies' party systems. However, the chapters that follow demonstrate that there is considerable difference between the Scandinavian countries (which have had sharper patterns of government and opposition, with coalitions of the left and right alternating in power) and Austria, Switzerland and the Netherlands. Although it may be disputed whether any or all should be labelled consociational, there is no doubt that the latter three have had a wider incidence of power sharing and less complete alternation in government than Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

The first four chapters offer an opportunity to explore the differential effects that populist parties have had in several countries considered more consensual than others. In chapter 2, Franz Fallend and Reinhard Heinisch examine the impact of Jörg Haider's FPÖ on the Austrian party system. They begin with the transformation of the FPÖ into a populist party and then trace its rise in a system characterised by cartelisation, long periods of grand coalitions and neo-corporatist decision making. Initially, the steady rise of the FPÖ appeared to transform the Austrian party system. Its entrance into government in 2000 appeared to solidify an increase in the number of parties, producing the first signs of polarisation and the move to a bipolar party system. However, subsequent divisions in the FPÖ, the formation of a new party (the BZÖ), the FPÖ's reversion not only to voting seeking but also to earlier populist radical right positions and renewed coalitions between the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats raise questions about the extent of change. Nevertheless, the FPÖ placed new issues – opposition to migration, Islam and the EU – on the agenda and injected the mass-elite dichotomy into a party system that is now more polarised. However, the Social Democrats and Christian Democrats shared power until the 2017 election and – along with unions and employers – drove public policy.

There are similarities between Austria and Switzerland. In his chapter on the SVP, Oscar Mazzoleni also traces the transformation of an established party into a populist party in the 1990s. The SVP – and the Zurich wing of the party under the leadership of Christoph Blocher in particular – reacted against the established elites and consensus decision making. Mazzoleni concludes that the party system and competition for the Swiss Federal Council have undergone significant changes, including de-institutionalising the rules that govern the decision-making process. Under pressure from the SVP and the inter-party dynamic that it triggered, cooperative rules which sustained the Swiss power-sharing model for several decades have weakened. Pursuing an 'insider-outsider' strategy, the SVP cooperates with other parties in government, but it also uses referenda to pursue its own objectives. There have been important shifts in the party balance. In addition, a more competitive

pattern has gradually developed in Swiss politics, which is reflected in higher levels of volatility, electoral mobilisation in diverse settings and an increasingly adversarial logic in parliamentary arenas and referenda. Nevertheless, these changes are more limited than changes in other European countries.

Sarah de Lange's chapter on the Netherlands analyses the considerable changes that have occurred in the Dutch party system since 2002, including the transformation of a party system divided by communitarian, economic and ethical dimensions into a two-dimensional system divided by economic and cultural concerns; shifts in party positions in both dimensions; and increased fragmentation, polarisation and volatility, resulting in shorter-lived cabinets. The Dutch party system changed from moderate pluralism, albeit with a large number of parties, to a system bordering on polarised pluralism. Whether these developments can be attributed to populist parties is another matter. Although many of these developments have been exacerbated by the success of populist parties, all were evident before either the LPF or the PVV had appeared and reflect the weakened position of mainstream parties, particularly the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA).

In chapter 5, Anders Jupskås compares the impact that first and second generations of populist parties have had on the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish party systems. Jupskås argues that the first generation mobilised anti-establishment feelings. By contrast, the second generation has challenged the dominant structural cleavage by tapping into a social cultural dimension. However, the impact of the second generation of populist parties on competition for government has been the same. The first generation of populist parties led to an eclectic range of governments, particularly in Denmark. By contrast, the second-generation Danish People's Party (DF) and, to a lesser extent, the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP) have been incorporated into bipolar patterns of competition for government, in which the former has served as a support party for governments of the right and the latter has served both as a support party and coalition partner for governments of the right. By contrast, neither the Sweden Democrats (SD) nor its predecessor, New Democracy (ND), have been deemed suitable coalition partners in Sweden. Nevertheless, Swedish parties have sustained a bipolar competition and have resorted to cross-bloc arrangements to prevent populist challengers from exercising influence.

In chapter 6, David Arter examines the impact of the Finns Party (PS) and its predecessor, the Finnish Rural Party (SMP), on the Finnish party system. Populism in Finland has been a 'family business' dominated first by Veikko Vennamo, then his son, and, more recently, a chosen heir apparent, Timo Soini. Both parties found support among displaced populations and people opposed to a foreign influence. Neither the PS nor the SMP, the oldest of the populist parties treated in this book, have had much effect on competition for government. The SMP was initially excluded from coalitions because

of personal animosity between Vennamo and Finland's long-time president, Uhro Kekkonen, but was eventually included once Kekkonen had left office. Its successor, the PS, was not formally excluded but was not included in coalition formation negotiations until the 2011 and 2015 elections. However, including the SMP in 1983 and the PS in 2015 led to no change in what was already an eclectic and innovative pattern of competition for government.

In chapter 7, Gilles Ivaldi traces the development of the FN and examines the impact that it has had on the French party system. One of the oldest parties of its type, the FN is a well-organised party that has cultivated a loyal base of support. In so doing, it has entrenched itself in the French party system. Ivaldi explores the paradoxes of the populist radical right in France: Mainstream parties have attempted to maintain a *cordon sanitaire* around the FN, but this boundary has eroded over time. The majoritarian electoral systems that elect France's President and National Assembly have limited the FN's impact on competition for votes to the role of 'nuisance' (primarily for the right but for the left as well, on occasion). However this 'limitation' has not prevented the FN from influencing the policy agendas of other parties. Notably, parties of the right have adopted some of its positions on immigration and law and order. Nevertheless, through 2016, the FN had not altered the bipolar character of the French party system, which continues to be characterised by competition between blocs dominated by the Socialist Party (SP) on the left and the Union for a Popular Majority (UMP) on the right. Historically, these blocs (particularly on the right) periodically regroup and reorganise under new banners.

In chapter 8, Bertjan Verbeek, Andrej Zaslove and Matthijs Rooduijn examine the impact of populist parties on Italy's First Republic and Second Republic party systems and consider whether populism might be ushering in a further transformation. Although present at the beginning of the First Republic, populist parties did not play a major role in Italian politics until the late 1980s. Since then, their presence in a substantially reconstructed party system has increased. The LN is a populist party, but so are the PdL and the M5S. In the 2013 elections, some 50 per cent of the vote went to one of the three. These authors argue that the regionalist populism of the LN was an integral part of the fall of the post-Second World War party system, whereas the move towards a fragmented bipolar system after 1994 was facilitated by the ability of the centre-right to appeal to high levels of voter dissatisfaction with political elites and by its ability to establish an anti-left coalition. The chapter concludes with some reflections on the rise of Beppe Grillo's M5S.

Chapters 9 and 10 address the cases of Poland and Hungary, two Central European countries that have or have had electorally significant populist parties. Both are newer democracies, but the two have very different party systems. Of the two, the Hungarian party system institutionalised earlier and

has fewer parties. By contrast, the Polish party system institutionalised later and has ended up with more parties and a bipolar pattern of competition that includes not only competition between blocs of parties on the left and right but also competition within the blocs. In chapter 9, Ferdinand Casal Bértoa and Simona Guerra examine the impact of populist parties in Poland. Populism has been a persistent element in Polish political discourse. However, populist parties were only represented in the Sejm from 2000 to 2007. These parties triggered a ninety-degree change in the axes of political competition, but the positions they espoused were taken over by the conservative nationalist party, PiS. The absence of any prolonged representation has meant that populist parties have had only a minimal impact on the party system, but the PiS' appropriation of populism and the positions advanced by populist parties are present in the current divisions between transition winners and losers.

In chapter 10, Zsolt Enyedi and Dániel Róna examine recent changes in the Hungarian party system. Central to their discussion is a shift to the right that has not only provided a popular majority to a conservative nationalist party (Fidesz) that is increasingly populist but also led to the rise of a populist radical right party (Jobbik) that won 17 per cent of the vote in the 2010 parliamentary elections. Enyedi and Róna focus on the interaction between Fidesz and Jobbik, examining not only the ways in which they influence one another's positions but also the ways in which Fidesz uses Jobbik to stake out positions that it sometimes later adopts. In so doing, Enyedi and Róna describe an asymmetrical pattern in which the Hungary Socialist Party (MSZP), Fidesz and Jobbik compete for votes, but only the MSZP and Fidesz compete for government.

In chapter 11, Steven Wolinetz compares the impact that populist parties have had on competition for votes and competition for government. Taken together, these cases indicate that populist parties have had a substantial impact on what party competition is about. As with Green parties, populist parties have been vehicles through which new issues and concerns have found expression in party systems or, if issues like these have already been taken up by mainstream parties, receive additional emphasis because populist parties take ownership of them. One consequence is that competition increasingly takes place on a new socio-cultural dimension, sometimes but not always orthogonal to the state-market dimension. In contrast, changes in competition for government have been more muted. Variations depend not on the type of political system or the initial structure of competition but rather the degree to which populist parties have been incorporated into older structures of competition. Although the initial response to the emergence of populist parties was typically been to quarantine them through a formal or informal *cordon sanitaire*, such arrangements often break down. In several instances, populist parties have been incorporated into the politics of coalition

formation in ways that preserve key features of the system, such as bipolar competition. However, incorporating these parties has come at a price. Mainstream parties no longer command the support that they once did. In some instances, they have preserved their position only by enlisting parties on their flanks as supporting parties or coalition partners. Whether populist parties have an impact depends whether they have grown large enough to prevent mainstream parties, their support diminished, from forming coalitions they would have otherwise preferred or, alternatively, makes it possible to form coalitions that would not otherwise be possible. As such, populist parties are one of several factors contributing to changes in party systems. Wolinetz concludes by reflecting on party system change and the ways in which we study it. Although the literature emphasises the considerable continuity that Western European party systems have shown, it may be time to think more about the changes that have occurred.

NOTES

1 Some parties have been reclassified (i.e. the Dutch Socialist Party) and some added since they did not exist when Kessel compiled the list (i.e. Podemos). Ideological orientation and electoral results are based upon ParlGov. “Radical right” was preferred over “right-wing.” Some ideological orientations have been recalibrated when the authors, based on the literature, disagreed with the classification (i.e. the Dutch Freedom Party was classified as Radical Right and not as conservative). For a full list of additions and changes, please contact the authors.

2 Arguments made in this section are based upon previous work. See, for example, Akkerman et al. 2014; Akkerman and Zaslove 2014.

3 Mudde also considers whether populist parties have affected vertical (pillarisation), horizontal (politics on different levels of government) or functional dimensions of competition, but he does not indicate why we should expect populist radical right parties to affect these dimensions.

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