

INTRODUCTION

A Dynamic Perspective on Cleavages and the Populist Right

Value Divides and the Transformation of Western European Party Systems

The continuing presence of right-wing populist parties in Western Europe's political landscape since the 1990s is a phenomenon that escapes explanations centered on the level of individual countries. In spite of the split in 1998, Jean-Marie Le Pen came in second in the French 2002 presidential elections. He received a respectable share of the vote even in 2007, faced with a Gaullist candidate who heavily emphasized law-and-order stances and whose credibility in implementing important policy changes was obviously higher than that of a challenger no other party accepts as a coalition partner. In Austria, Jörg Haider and a handful of faithful followers left the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (Austrian Freedom Party; FPÖ), the party they had led to unprecedented electoral successes in the 1990s, after internal disputes. Nonetheless, together the FPÖ and the new Bündnis Zukunft Österreich (Alliance for the Future of Austria; BZÖ) received no less than 28 percent of the vote in the 2008 election. In Switzerland, the Schweizerische Volkspartei (Swiss People's Party; SVP) has become the country's strongest party and gained a second seat in the country's executive Federal Council in 2003. Strong right-wing populist parties also exist in Flemish Belgium and in Denmark. The populist right has become firmly entrenched in countries that differ markedly in terms of their institutions, party systems, and political cultures.

Right-wing populist parties should be seen, I suggest in this book, in the larger context of changing societal structures that have affected party systems

since the late 1960s. While European party systems continue to carry the stamp of historical class and religious cleavages, the dimensions underlying party interactions have been transformed. A first restructuring of political space occurred as a consequence of the mobilization of the New Social Movements of the left in the 1970s and 1980s (Kitschelt 1994). This process has led to a transformation of Social Democratic parties as well as to the emergence of Green or ecologist parties, as I will refer to them, which have come to constitute the left-libertarian pole of a new cultural dimension of conflict that has succeeded the value divisions characteristic of the religious cleavage. Spurred by the educational revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, the diffusion of universalistic values has thus led actors to call for the political enforcement of the principle of individual autonomy and the free choice of lifestyles. In a longer perspective, these developments can be seen as part of a long-term trend of secularization, as Scott Flanagan and Aie-Rie Lee (2003) have argued.

Already in the 1980s, however, the contours of an opposing conception of community and of a different justification of moral principles had emerged in the form of the neo-conservative movement. Intellectuals and conservative political parties placed a renewed emphasis on tradition as a necessary binding force for society and propagated solidarity in established communities, such as the family, as an antidote to the perils of individualization. While neo-conservatism remained an elitist ideology, the conservative counter-movement to the libertarian left gained momentum when the populist right, a new party type, succeeded in framing the question of identity and community in terms of “us” and “the other.” By putting the issues of immigration and the alleged inability to integrate people with different cultural backgrounds onto the political agenda, the populist right drove a second transformation of the dimensions of political conflict in the 1990s (Kriesi et al. 2006). Contrary to classical extreme-right parties, the populist right does not adhere to racism and does not reject other cultures as such; it advocates an “ethno-pluralist” ideal of preserving the distinctive traditions of national cultures.

As a consequence, a new cultural conflict gained center stage in Western European party systems in the 1990s. One side holds universalistic conceptions of community and advocates individual autonomy; the other emphasizes the right to preserve traditional communities in which common moral understandings have developed and are seen as threatened by multicultural society. These opposing positions mirror contemporary debates between liberals and communitarians in political philosophy, and in their extreme form they constitute the poles of a political dimension of conflict that runs from libertarian-universalistic to traditionalist-communitarian values. While liberal philosophers such as John Rawls (1971) emphasize universally binding norms, even moderate communitarians such as Michael Walzer (1983) are reluctant to grant abstract principles primacy over shared moral understandings within an “organic” community. New Right intellectuals such as Alain de Benoist have popularized and radicalized the latter view and have provided a blueprint for the populist right’s “differentialist

nativist” discourse, as Hans-Georg Betz (2004) and Betz and Carol Johnson (2004) have termed it.

The factors determining the success of extreme-right parties in the 1980s have been quite diverse, leading Herbert Kitschelt and Anthony McGann (1995) to distinguish several types of such parties, which differ in their programmatic orientation. While some of them, such as the French Front National or the SVP in Switzerland, allegedly have an authoritarian free-market appeal, others, such as the Austrian FPÖ, are assumed to thrive more on populist anti-state pleas. These differences are conceived as the product of country-specific opportunity structures (Kitschelt with McGann 1995; McGann and Kitschelt 2005). In this first mobilization phase, anti-immigrant stances have played a minor role. And until today, extreme-right parties clearly capitalize on more than just opposition to immigration, even if that issue catalyzed their success (Mudde 1999).

If the differences were ever that stark, the “identitarian turn” of the 1990s in the discourse of right-wing populist parties, to use Betz’s (2004) expression, has resulted in a programmatic convergence across countries. Rather than mobilizing country-specific potentials, these parties thrive on an ideologically homogeneous group of voters that are located at the traditionalist-communitarian pole of the new cultural dimension of conflict. As a consequence, extreme-right-wing populist parties—or right-wing populist, for short—can be considered a common party family within the broader category of extreme-right parties. Apart from their location at the extreme of the ideological dimension running from the libertarian-universalistic to the traditionalist-communitarian position, two further attributes distinguish them from other parties. The first is their populist anti-establishment discourse, in which they draw a dividing line between themselves and the established parties both of the left and right. Second, they show a hierarchical internal structure, which sets them apart from pluralist mainstream parties and allows a charismatic leader to quickly revise the party’s positions in reaction to the changing moods of the populace. This organizational feature has enabled right-wing populist parties to rapidly seize the immigration theme, as well as to exploit new issues such as European integration. Within the wider extreme-right party family, the extreme populist right represents an ideologically more moderate subgroup by virtue of its “differentialist nativist” discourse, as well as by virtue of its explicit adherence to democratic rule. This allows right-wing populist parties to portray themselves as the ignored mainstream of society.

In the next two chapters of this book, I claim theoretically and then underscore empirically that the populist right’s ideological core consists of opposition to the process of societal modernization that has accelerated since the 1960s. Spurred by the educational revolution as a critical juncture, the more widespread endorsement of universalistic values in society has resulted in a counter-potential constituted by citizens who oppose libertarian cultural norms. Why, then, did it take the traditionalist-communitarian potential so long to manifest itself in partisan politics? After all, the libertarian-universalistic movement led

to the formation of ecologist parties and the transformation of Social Democratic and Socialist parties much earlier.

The first answer to this question refers back to the definition of the populist right outlined above: Within the broader extreme-right family, only those belonging to the right-wing populist subgroup have been successful. As Jens Rydgren (2005) has pointed out, the success of the populist right has depended on the emergence and subsequent cross-national diffusion of the “differentialist nativist” political frame. To some degree, this echoes the older distinction between “old” extreme-right parties of a fascist imprint and the “new,” post-industrial extreme-right party type (Ignazi 1992, 2003). But while the adoption of the new discourse is a necessary condition for success, it is not sufficient to account for variation in the fortunes right-wing populist parties have faced across Western Europe. Beyond ideology, two crucial factors are suggested in this book. On the one hand, the success of any new party hinges on the extent to which the traditional cleavages retain their hold on voters. On the other hand, the response of the established parties to their challenger determines whether a right-wing populist party will be able to break into the party system.

Historical Cleavages and the Rise of Right-Wing Populist Parties

Notwithstanding the increasing similarities of right-wing populist parties in terms of their discourse, their far from uniform success across Western Europe is striking. Despite experiencing similar processes of societal modernization, party systems in Germany, Britain, Sweden, and Spain have proved resilient to the rise of a party of the populist right. Rather than looking only at the profiles of their voters or at the populist right itself, the emergence of this party family must be analyzed in terms of the wider context of the party systems in which they are situated. The historical account of cleavage mobilization around class and religion suggests a straightforward answer concerning the timing and the differential entrenchment of right-wing populist parties: Established cleavages limit the space for the mobilization and political manifestation of political potentials based on new societal divisions (Bartolini 2000; Kriesi and Duyvendak 1995; Rokkan 1999). New divides will materialize only if the established cleavage structure no longer “organizes” issues cutting across existing lines of division “out of politics,” in E. E. Schattschneider’s (1975 [1960]: chap. 4) famous words.

Since party systems have become more volatile since the 1970s, contradictions in the understanding of the cleavage concept have limited its analytical usefulness. Different interpretations lead to diverging implications with respect to the space left by the established cleavages for the mobilization of new conflicts. Quite clearly, the socio-structural determinants of alignments along the *traditional* class and religious cleavages have lost strength. We could therefore conclude that the potential for new conflicts to emerge is large. However, new linkages between social groups and political parties have crystallized, and voting behavior continues

to have a structural basis (Evans 1999; Kriesi 1998; Müller 1999; Oesch 2008b). Rather than having vanished, the traditional cleavages seem to have been transformed, and continue to bind large parts of the electorate. The major obstacle to understanding the degree to which today's politics continues to be structured by the traditional cleavages is the gap that exists between research on the social basis of party systems and accounts that focus on political conflict.

To take into account the evolving nature of cleavages, I propose to link the structural-cleavage account with a focus on politics and parties' conflicting policy proposals. A focus on political conflict allows us to make sense of the famous "freezing into place" of European party systems that Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967) observed, a process that has remained poorly understood to this day. Cleavages remain stable and "organize out" new issues to the degree that the basic oppositions they represent continue to shape voters' understandings and interpretations of politics. Consequently, a durable pattern of political behavior of structurally defined groups—a cleavage—has its origin in the conflicts resulting from a macro-historical critical juncture, but its continued salience depends on its being kept alive by contemporary political conflict. While conflict has group-binding functions (Coser 1956), collective political identities will gradually become weaker in the absence of political disputes. As a result, cleavages will no longer be transmitted over generations if the conflict they stand for has lost its relevance, and a window of opportunity for new divisions will emerge on the political stage.

Given the role of conflict in stabilizing and perpetuating cleavages, an empirically quantifiable model has been developed that incorporates the patterns of programmatic conflict in party competition into the cleavage model. By focusing on the lines of conflict that structure party interactions in election campaigns, it is possible to analyze the interplay of established cleavages and new divisions that may or may not alter the dominant patterns of oppositions. The empirical evidence presented in this book suggests that party oppositions evolve around two conflicts in the six countries studied—France, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, and Britain. The first is the political manifestation of the traditional class cleavage, whose socio-structural underpinnings suggest that it has evolved into a broader state-market cleavage. The second dimension is a cultural divide that is reminiscent of the religious cleavage but has been enriched with new issues. Today, as a result of the mobilization efforts of the New Left and of the counter-mobilization of the New Right, it reflects an opposition between libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values.

Programmatic Lines of Conflict and Opportunities for Right-Wing Populist Mobilization

A central argument developed in this book is that the rise of the populist right is a consequence of the growing salience of the new cultural dimension of conflict at the expense of the economic state-market cleavage. Differing from

Kitschelt and McGann's (1995) idea that the "winning formula" for the extreme right combines authoritarian ethnocentrism and free-market economics, I show that these parties almost exclusively mobilize on the cultural dimension. In fact, they rally an electoral coalition that is united by relatively homogeneous cultural preferences but diverges much more in terms of orientations regarding state intervention in the economy. As the example of the French Front National most clearly demonstrates, the continued success of right-wing populist parties crucially depends on the prevalence of culturally, as opposed to economically, defined group identifications among their voters. Given the role of conflict in shaping collective identification, right-wing populist parties can thrive only if cultural conflicts are more salient to their voters than economic divisions. To assess the dynamics of success of the populist right, it is therefore essential to move beyond one-dimensional left-right conceptions of political space and to distinguish clearly between the party positions on both dimensions that are found to underlie party oppositions in Western Europe.

Obviously, right-wing populist parties cannot shape the dimensions of conflict underlying the party system alone. This study therefore considers the dynamics of competition of the party system as a whole, focusing on the programmatic positions and strategies employed by the established parties in dealing with the themes on which the populist right thrives. Previous studies have tested the hypothesis that support for the populist right depends on the convergence of the mainstream parties and the resulting political space for challengers. However, their predictions are weakened either by assumptions that party positions can be represented on a single left-right dimension, which meshes positions on the cultural and economic divides (e.g., Abedi 2002; Carter 2005) or by the implicit conviction that voters will support only parties that adequately represent them on both relevant dimensions (Kitschelt with McGann 1995). Both assumptions are problematic and do not hold up against empirical evidence.

For scholars working within the cleavage approach, the idea that voters may experience conflicts of interest as a result of cross-cutting cleavages is in fact far from new. As a result of the recent transformation of the cultural dimension of conflict in European party systems, this problem is posed anew and has resulted in the dealignment and realignment of various groups of voters. Two important predictors emerge that structure the opportunities for the populist right. One is the *relative importance of the economic and cultural dimensions* of conflict to its potential voters; the other is the *relative salience of the various group identifications* that these voters hold. It is only the waning of collective identities based on social class that has made possible mobilization efforts based on national identity and tradition, because class identifications have typically cut across such broad ascriptive categories.

The model developed in this book analyzes the contribution of each dimension of conflict in structuring political alignments separately. It combines a focus on parties' programmatic offerings with an analysis of the preferences or the political demand of voters. Beyond addressing the question of the relative impor-

tance of the two dimensions of conflict for the mobilization of the various party families, the model centers on two factors that impinge on the chances for challenging parties to gain success. The first factor, in the tradition of Stefano Bartolini and Peter Mair (1990), as well as Hanspeter Kriesi and Jan Willem Duyvendak (1995), is the *closure* of the social groups divided by a cleavage. The degree of closure of these groups is essential, because when existing group identifications are strong, mobilization efforts along new lines of social division are difficult.

The second factor that impinges right-wing populist parties' chances is the *opportunity structure* resulting from the programmatic positions and the strategies of the established parties. Where the established parties absorb the traditionalist-communitarian potentials that gain room as a result of the weakening of the traditional cleavages, the populist right will have trouble entrenching itself. In other words, the responsiveness of the party system to the preferences of the electorate is of crucial importance. Likewise, if the established parties keep polarization around the new cultural conflicts low, they may be able to contain the manifestation of the new potential while remaining responsive to their constituencies. The approach outlined in this book thus integrates a cleavage-theoretical and a strategic, actor-centered perspective. This combination requires including the programmatic content of party competition in the analysis, for which I draw on a new data sources. In what follows, I explain how party positions are measured and then outline how the model links the positions of parties with the orientations of voters.

Measuring the Programmatic Content of Party Oppositions

An analysis of political conflict between parties and the strategies they employ should focus on election campaigns, where parties fight over which issues are most salient and communicate their positions to voters. I therefore take advantage of data based on a coding of the media coverage of election campaigns that has been collected within a larger project (Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008); these data cover one election in the 1970s and three elections in the 1990s and 2000s. The choice of these data has advantages as well as disadvantages. The advantages over expert survey data are clear: Because small political formations such as right-wing populist parties may not have marked profiles on all dimensions of political conflict salient in a party system, expert surveys risk producing data that are biased by theoretical expectations regarding parties' positions. An obvious disadvantage of the campaign data over that collected by the Comparative Manifestos Project (Budge et al. 2001; Klingemann et al. 2006) is that the campaign data cover only a relatively limited time span. Given the focus on the long-term transformation of cleavages, it would be promising to extend the analysis to the 1950s and 1960s, when, it is generally assumed, cleavages were still "frozen."

However, an important advantage of the campaign data over party manifestos and especially over expert surveys is that the positions derived from the newspaper

coverage of election campaigns more closely reflects what voters actually learn about the parties' positions. This, in turn, is heavily determined by the dominant themes of the campaign. The data therefore are more situational, which is advantageous for the present problem for a number of reasons. Because the populist right has succeeded in setting the media agenda in recent years, it has forced even those parties to take positions regarding immigration and traditionalist-communitarian values that, for example, were more occupied with economic than with cultural issues in their election programs. Furthermore, because I assume that voters' preferences and political identities are reinforced by conflict between parties, it is useful to focus on the issues that were actually disputed during the campaign. In addition, the media data offer information both on the *position* of parties regarding the issues of the campaign and on their relative *salience*. Using Weighted Metric Multidimensional Scaling, both position and salience are taken into account to create graphical representations of political space.

Integrating Political Supply and Political Demand in the Study of Cleavages

The focus on political conflict and on the responsiveness of parties to their constituencies requires a combination of data on the positions of parties and voters. On the political demand side, national post-election surveys are used to measure voters' positions along the dimensions of party opposition and their loyalties to ideologically defined party blocks. The model developed in this book thus bridges "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches to party-system change by combining information on parties' mobilization efforts with information on the issue orientations and partisan loyalties of voters. Reconstructing the lines of conflict found to structure party competition at the voter level, it is possible to gauge to which degree the party system is responsive to the preferences of voters. If the party system adequately reflects the preferences of voters, more polarized positions will reinforce the underlying group identifications and political identities. If polarization is weak, however, then alignments may be stabilized in the short run by the prevalence of strong social and political identities. But in the longer run, they are likely to give way to new alignments if sufficiently polarizing new conflicts emerge. By taking into account the evolving nature of political issues as well as the policy responsiveness of parties, this perspective allows an integration of the sources of stability (emphasized by cleavage theory) and the forces of change (emphasized in realignment theory) in explaining the evolution of party systems.

Combining the general polarization and responsiveness of the party system and voters' loyalties to ideological party blocks results in a typology that distinguishes several types of divide that leaves varying room for the manifestation of new conflicts and parties. In simplified form, this typology contrasts three basic situations. *Segmented cleavages* most strongly inhibit new divisions, since both parties and their electorates are characterized by high levels of polariza-

tion. Party positions closely match voters' preferences, and the two are durably aligned along the cleavage. If a divide constitutes what I call an *identitarian cleavage*, party preferences are stable due to strong collective identities of social groups. These identities, however, are not strongly reinforced by political conflict, and consequently allegiances are likely to remain stable only as long as new oppositions do not gain in importance relative to old ones. If, however, there is a mismatch between the positions of parties and voters, and the *party system is unresponsive*, voters' loyalties are likely to decline. In this case, new political actors mobilizing on old or highly salient new dimensions of conflict are likely to enter the political arena.

Applying the Model: The Countries Studied

While the theoretical approach outlined above is not geared toward a specific party family, it is applied to explain differences between countries in the entrenchment of a specific party family—the populist right. Because this book develops a general theory and then tests it on a limited number of countries, parties, and elections, the choice of the cases to be studied is crucial. My first analysis of the right-wing populist party family covers six countries: France, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, and Britain. According to the argument, political space has come to be structured similarly across Western Europe, and verifying this claim with a sample of countries that differ with respect to institutional, societal, and political characteristics amounts to a tougher test of the hypothesis. The six countries vary in size, in the degree to which they experienced an economic crisis in the 1990s, and in their political institutions, which range from clearly majoritarian in the case of Britain to highly consensual in Switzerland. Furthermore, their party systems differ, ranging from a two-party system in Britain to multiparty formats with six to seven effective parties in certain Swiss and Dutch legislatures in the 1990s.

Although the lack of information on election campaigns preceding the transformation of the traditional cleavages is regrettable, the later elections covered by the media data are ideal for the research question at hand. In each of the six countries, one election in the mid-1970s is analyzed, where we expect a first transformation of political space to have occurred under the impact of the mobilization of the New Left and the issues it has brought to the political agenda. Three campaigns in the 1990s and early 2000s cover the years in which the right-wing populist counter-mobilization gained momentum, resulting in a second transformation of the political space and of Western European party systems. Three time points in each country allow a study of the strategies employed by the established parties, as well as of their consequences for right-wing populist parties.

The results reveal that for all the differences between countries, the same dimensions of opposition have come to characterize party interactions from the 1990s on: the libertarian-universalistic versus traditionalist-communitarian and



FIGURE I.1 Advertisement from the Front National's 2007 presidential election campaign.

Source: Courtesy of the Front National. Available at <http://lepen2007.fr/blog/index.php?Photos> (retrieved February 27, 2007).

a state-market line of conflict. While the transformation of political space has thus been remarkably similar in spite of important contextual variation, right-wing populist parties have not profited to the same degree from this dynamic. Whereas they have experienced considerable electoral breakthroughs in the French, Swiss, and Austrian party systems, they have failed to establish themselves at the national level in Germany and Britain. (The Netherlands is a dubious case to which I shall return.) In a second step, I therefore apply the analytical model described above to three exemplary cases. Two of these stand for different routes to the establishment of a strong right-wing populist party, while one shows how the established parties under certain circumstances can inhibit the emergence of the populist right.

France is the first country studied and represents a case where a new right-wing populist party was able to establish itself early on. The Front National was the first party to adopt a modern culturalist discourse, some twenty-five years ago, and still represents something like the “avant-garde” of this party type. This is illustrated by a poster from the 2007 presidential campaign (see Figure I.1), which shows a young woman of African descent despising the established left and right for having ruined the country while supporting Le Pen's plea for

assimilation, social mobility, and laicism—indeed, some of France’s fundamental and widely shared republican values.

The second case is that of Switzerland, where an existing party of the right, the SVP, underwent a transformation from a conservative agrarian party to an exponent of the populist right. This route is similar to that of the FPÖ in Austria. While the FPÖ is generally considered a party of new extreme right (e.g., Ignazi 2002, 2003), the SVP’s status as a member of this family is more disputed, in particular because of the role that opposition against European integration has played in its success. While the country’s troubled relationship to the European Union has certainly played a role in catalyzing the SVP’s rise, my analysis establishes that Switzerland faces a transformation of its party system that is closely comparable to what is occurring elsewhere in Europe.

Finally, I analyze Germany as a country where the populist right did not experience an electoral breakthrough. This case represents a crucial test for my theoretical framework. Both in Germany and in Britain, it could be—and, in fact, has been—argued that political institutions (or in the German case, the National Socialist past) explain the absence of a successful right-wing populist party (e.g., Ignazi 2003). As I argue, there is little evidence to support the claim put forward by Terri Givens (2005) that the electoral system has played a decisive role in containing the extreme right’s success in that country. Rather, the strength of established political identities and the patterns of opposition in the party system emerge as highly distinct from those found in the countries where the populist right proved successful. Thus, Germany is not a unique case as such, and patterns of opposition in the party system are likely to play a decisive role in Britain, as well. More specifically, the contrast between the French case and the German case highlights the central importance of not only the reaction of the established right but also the major party of the left with the rise of the cultural issues. These strategies determine the polarization of the party system along the new cultural divide and shape the political potentials that right-wing populist parties can mobilize.

The Dutch trajectory cannot easily be accommodated in any of the routes sketched out. It may be argued that the liberal *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy; VVD) has pre-empted the populist right’s success by virtue of its pronounced traditionalist-communitarian position. At the same time, this did not prevent the spectacular eruption of the List Pim Fortuyn in the 2002 elections. As we will see, Pim Fortuyn’s discourse was not traditionalist-communitarian, making him fit uneasily into the right-wing populist party family. It is not yet clear whether Geert Wilders’s newly founded *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (Party for Freedom) is capable of making electoral inroads similar to those of other right-wing populist parties and establishing itself durably in the Dutch party system. Because of the ideological distinctiveness of new right-wing actors and their more recent appearance with respect to other countries, the Netherlands will have to await a separate analysis at a later point in time.

Plan of the Book

Part I of this book addresses the defining characteristics of right-wing populist parties and the potential underlying their rise. In Chapter 1, I discuss the emergence of the new cultural divide that opposes libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values and justify the claim that these are polar normative ideals. Chapter 2 argues that right-wing populist parties can be considered a common party family by virtue of their specific position regarding the new cultural dimension of oppositions, as well as by virtue of two further criteria. Drawing on the campaign data already discussed, this hypothesis is verified in an empirical analysis of party positions in three election campaigns between the late 1980s and early 2000s in France, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, and Britain.

Part II puts the mobilization of the populist right into the context of the transformation of historical cleavages that has occurred since the 1960s. Chapter 3 presents a conceptual reassessment and a development of the cleavage approach. I first discuss the various understandings of what accounts for the “freezing” of Western European party systems after the full mobilization of electorates in the 1920s. Addressing the paradox of a remarkable overall stability of party systems in the midst of massive societal changes, I highlight the central role of collective identities in the perpetuation of cleavages. As time goes by, however, cleavages appear less structured by social identities—such as class or religious denomination—and more and more become politically defined collective identities. The chapter ends with the core analytical model used in the second part of the book. I distinguish various types of cleavages and political divides, each of which has different implications for the mobilization space of political actors seeking to politicize new conflicts.

Chapter 4 discusses how this model is implemented empirically. Since the methods and analytical procedures I use are innovative, they are explained step by step and illustrated using concrete examples from the country chapters to come. The aim of Chapter 4 is to make the country studies easily accessible by avoiding technical considerations and to serve as a reference for those interested in the details of the procedure. The chapter begins by explaining, in more detail than is necessary for the preliminary analysis in Chapter 2, the collection and characteristics of the media data used throughout the book. I then explain how the dimensionality of political conflicts is determined and develop measures for the positions of parties and electorates along lines of conflict and the cohesiveness of these positions, and for the responsiveness of the party system to voters’ preferences. Furthermore, the key concepts to capture social structural position—class and education—are presented.

In Part III, the model is tested in three countries. Each case is embedded in a discussion of the specialized literature on the context of the national party system and the fate of the populist right in the respective country. I discuss the traditional cleavages that underlie the party system, as well as how firmly the

party system remains anchored in social structure. The country chapters also assess how the established parties have dealt with the issues evolving around a traditionalist-communitarian defense of community and what the resulting potentials for a right-wing populist mobilization are. Alternative explanations are reviewed, and the results generated by my analytical model are validated with prior qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Beyond the common approach, each of the country chapters fleshes out country-specific ways in which the traditionalist-communitarian potential is mobilized and identifies additional determinants of the success of the populist right. The French case, which is presented in Chapter 5, sets the stage for the country studies. Beyond the programmatic innovations of the Front National itself, it highlights how the fortunes of the populist right are conditioned by the strategies pursued by the established parties in dealing with the cultural issues that have been debated since the late 1960s. Furthermore, it shows how the Front National has proved versatile in domains that do not belong to its ideological core, such as changing its position with respect to the state-market divide and taking up concerns about European integration.

The analysis of the rise of the Swiss People's Party in Chapter 6 underlines the similarities in the political potentials on which right-wing populist parties thrive, despite the central role commonly attributed to European integration in explaining the success of the Swiss People's Party. What is frequently referred to as an "openness to the world versus demarcation" divide in Switzerland is in fact only a variant of the more general antagonism between libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values. Similarly to France, alignments in Switzerland were still structured by religious and class cleavages in the 1970s, and the manifestation of the left-libertarian agenda in party competition first led to a loss of responsiveness of these countries' party systems, and then to reconfigurations of partisan alignments and parties' programmatic offerings. By the 1990s, under the impact of the mobilization of the populist right, party systems in both countries were characterized by a three-block structure. The poles were constituted by the left-libertarian and right-wing populist blocks, with the center-right uneasily squeezed in the middle. At the end of this process of party-system transformation, right-wing populist parties became an integral part of a segmented pattern of opposition in Switzerland and France and clearly had an electorate of their own in ideological terms.

The German case, presented in Chapter 7, underlines the importance of the strategic responses of the established parties to new political potentials and illustrates the usefulness of the general model in explaining the absence of a strong right-wing populist challenger. Because the Christian Democrats have retained ownership of the issues related to traditionalism and immigration, they have continued to rally voters who hold traditionalist-communitarian preferences. Thus, the structural potentials related to the new cultural conflict manifest themselves in tempered form in Germany. In particular, the German case underlines the strength of an approach that focuses on the party system as a whole: The way

the left is transformed by the left-libertarian movements turns out to impinge heavily on the mobilization of the traditionalist-communitarian potential. Thus, the centripetal pattern of competition between the two major parties of the left and right has played the dominant role in averting the entry of a right-wing populist challenger at the national level.

The Conclusion summarizes the results and their implications for party-system and cleavage theory. The analysis presented in this book underlines that the new cultural conflict can now be regarded as institutionalized. In those countries where the populist right has made a breakthrough, it has evolved into a segmented cleavage that has displaced the religious opposition and has settled as the second major structuring dimension in these party systems. The evidence also suggests that the configuration of the party system impinges heavily on the strategies chosen by the established parties, leading to the emergence of right-wing populist parties in some cases and to their failure in others.