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Radical Right Parties in Central and Eastern Europe. Mainstream Party Competition and Electoral Fortune

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In Central and Eastern Europe, radical right actors significantly impact public debates and mainstream policy agenda. But despite this high discursive influence, the electoral fortune of radical right parties in the region is much less stable. It has been suggested that this may be due to the fact that mainstream competitors increasingly co-opt issues which are fundamental for the radical right. However, the extent to which such tactics play a role in radical right electoral success and failure is still a subject for debate.

This book is the first to provide a systematic theoretical framework and in-depth empirical research on the interaction between discursive influence, party competition and the electoral fortune of radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe. It argues that in order to fully explain the impact of mainstream party strategies in this regard, it is vital to widen the analysis beyond competition over issues themselves, and towards their various legitimizing narratives and frame ownership. Up-to-date debates over policies of collective identity (minority, morality and nationalizing politics) in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia serve as best cases to observe these under-researched phenomena. The analytical model is evaluated comparatively using original, primary data combined with election studies and expert surveys.

Advancing an innovative, fine-grained approach on the mechanisms and effects of party competition between radical right and mainstream parties, this book will be of interest to students and scholars researching the far right and European party politics, as well as political contestation and framing.

(From the publisher's website)

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