

that advocacy groups have few tools for holding officeholders to their campaign promises. That said, Hilton's narrative hints at the potential for group accountability. Organized labor's decision to sit out the 1972 general election and McGovern's subsequent landslide defeat remind us that groups possess electoral resources that can be marshaled for or against a candidate, even if they lack the status of convention powerbroker.

During the 1980s, the Reagan Revolution again forced Democrats to reevaluate the identity of their party. After several decisive electoral defeats, the "New Democrats" positioned themselves as offering a *third way* that was neither old nor new. Bill Clinton's rise in the party and success at the ballot box promised to institutionalize these values. Instead, New Democrats found themselves playing by the same rules as the advocacy groups but lacked the material resources and support base that others enjoyed. The decentralized party structure made lasting structural reform impossible, and policy victories like "ending welfare as we know it" were unsuccessful at reorienting the party's identity.

The final empirical chapter concerns President Obama's role as leader, beneficiary, and source of disappointment for the advocacy party. Obama's approach to developing a standalone campaign organization, often at the expense of party building, reinforced the strategy for groups to pursue redress from the administrative state. This

discussion serves as a natural conclusion to the theoretical development of the advocacy party but also raises new questions. Many groups, as Hilton notes, saw policy success during the Obama administration, despite frustration with the pace of progress. Like the Carter and Clinton case studies, the analysis of the Obama administration underscores the relative autonomy of the president. Short of idiosyncratic traits or ideological preferences, how should we make sense of any given choice the president makes, especially given the competing examples of groups both winning and losing?

Although it pays little explicit attention to the post-2016 Democratic Party, *True Blues* is nonetheless a compelling read for those pondering the major questions facing Democrats today. In discussing the 1972 labor-liberal rupture and the rise of the New Democrats in the 1980s, Hilton touches on many of the themes that continue to divide Democrats. Indeed, following electoral upsets in the 1970s and 1980s, the party wrestled with similar debates over the meaning of "identity politics" and the related challenge of recapturing blue-collar whites. Moreover, as we look to the Biden administration, Hilton's study offers important context for the larger structural challenges facing those groups that extracted promises during the 2020 elections. Whether these groups see their priorities realized will largely depend on how President Biden responds, and they may have little say in the matter.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS

The New Party Challenge: Changing Cycles of Party Birth and Death in Central Europe and Beyond.

By Tim Haughton and Kevin Deegan-Krause. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. 304p. \$115.00 cloth.
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The New Party Challenge opens with the story of "earthquake" elections that, within the last decade, have fundamentally transformed party systems in Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. But these events, dramatic as they were, were hardly unprecedented or confined to those three countries. Indeed, most countries in the region have experienced party system instability from the early 1990s onward in a pattern that Tim Haughton and Kevin Deegan-Krause describe as one of "enduring disruption": some seemingly well-established parties would see a sudden collapse in support, new parties would appear and achieve a degree of electoral success, but then most of these new parties would quickly fade and be supplanted by even newer parties.

The existence of this pattern presents a conundrum for scholars of parties and party systems. The classics of the literature tell us that parties are, among other things, devices that help office seekers solve collective action problems, allowing them to win "more, and more often" (John Aldrich, *Why Parties?* 1995, p. 25) than would be the case otherwise. From that perspective, politicians should have a strong incentive to invest in the creation and maintenance of capable party organizations, which would pay them dividends in the form of long terms in office, which in turn would have the effect of stabilizing the party system through a mechanism whereby manifold advantages (human and material resources, expertise, ability to reward supporters with patronage appointments, etc.) would accrue to existing parties, giving them an edge over any new startups. As Haughton and Deegan-Krause point out, the expectation that party systems created during the "third wave" of democratization would gradually stabilize over time was once widely shared by scholars of Central Europe, Latin America, and other world regions. But this is not how things have turned out.

So why haven't they? The authors approach the problem of accounting for the pattern of enduring instability by asking a series of narrower questions: How do new parties differ from their predecessors? Why do some new parties

fail and give way to even newer ones? What distinguishes parties that survive from those that die a rapid death?

Given the authors' focus on new parties, it is not surprising that the book opens with an effort to conceptualize "newness." This is crucial because much party system change comes in the form of splits and mergers among existing entities; consequently, volatility indicators such as the Pedersen Index are highly dependent on the specifics of what counts as a new party. Settling on the standard of "strict transformation" (i.e., birth, death, or fundamental reconfiguration), the book then offers the reader a collection of amazingly detailed diagrams showing the evolution of national party systems in Central Europe. These are followed by a presentation of various summary statistics capturing different aspects of electoral volatility across the region.

The authors then address how new parties differ from existing ones and how the character of that difference has changed over time. Their main findings are that the more recently created the party (1) the less investment it tends to make in building up a large membership base, a complex organizational setup, and a physical infrastructure of local offices; (2) the more it tends to rely on the very fact of its novelty, often combining it with antiestablishment and anticorruption appeals; and (3) the more leader-dependent it tends to be in that it both emphasizes the unique skills or qualities of its leader and is less likely to replace that leader during its existence.

On the question of why some parties survive and others fail, the book finds that factors aiding survival include a well-developed organizational structure, an enduring programmatic appeal, and a model of leadership that is more complex than dependence on a single individual. But these factors are more likely to be found in older organizations—those established in the 1990s or even earlier (e.g., communist successor parties or their erstwhile satellites). This, in a nutshell, is the authors' explanation of why Central European party systems are experiencing an ongoing churn of new party formation and failure: the very characteristics that help new parties make their initial splash—a charismatic leader, an appeal based mostly on novelty, a lightweight (or nonexistent) organizational infrastructure—are the ones that ultimately spell their doom. The results are party systems with a set of hidebound but resilient dinosaurs at one end of the age spectrum and a continuous stream of flash-in-the-pan startups at the other end.

As with any project of this scope and complexity, there are aspects of this book that leave the reader wishing that an additional chapter or two had been devoted to revisiting and reassessing its theoretical underpinnings in the light of assembled empirical findings. My review began by mentioning Aldrich's take on the nature, origins, and purpose of parties, but if there is one thing that our discipline isn't short of, it would be various alternative

conceptualizations—ranging from the view of parties as "fighting organizations" to the idea that they are devices for organizing coalitions among political actors and various groups in the wider society. Some parties could be many of these things; others could be just one thing first and foremost.

What I am suggesting here is that the answer to the questions of why parties are born and why they die may depend on what these parties are and what they are for. To take an extreme example, when a political entrepreneur registers a Potemkin-like "party" solely for the purpose of getting his or her name on the ballot and then discards it when it outlives its usefulness (and there were certainly such cases to be found in Central Europe), this is no more puzzling than when a business entrepreneur registers a throwaway, hollow shell LLC solely for tax purposes. But when a party is created as a serious effort to forge an electoral coalition of various social groups, the reasons behind the failure of such an effort require a different and more in-depth explanation.

In short, the term "political party" covers not one thing but many. In fairness to the authors, they do attempt to disaggregate it when discussing different dimensions of party strength, such as organizational complexity, type of appeal, and quality of leadership. But arguably more analytical mileage could be extracted from the assembled empirical data by constructing a more elaborate typology of parties (or using one of the many existing ones), drawing some hypotheses about the expected lifecycles of the various types, and then testing these hypotheses in the post-1989 Central European context. This would make a suitable follow-up project to the present book.

The New Party Challenge makes a valuable contribution to the field of electoral politics and will be of interest to Central European area specialists for its remarkable depth of empirical detail and to comparative scholars for its thought-provoking insights into the mechanisms behind party system stability and change.

Citizen Support for Democratic and Autocratic

Regimes. By Marlene Mauk. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

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Scholars of regimes often assume that democracies and autocracies rely on fundamentally different strategies to legitimate themselves in the eyes of citizens. In *Citizen Support for Democratic and Autocratic Regimes*, Marlene Mauk aims to show that in fact there is significant common ground in the sources of citizen support across political systems. The book's basic premise is that the