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Review: From Tax Populism to Ethnic Nationalism: Radical Right-Wing Populism in Sweden by Jens Rydgren

Gene Deerman

Eastern Illinois University, medeerman@eiu.edu

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He neatly reviews previous literature, from Kohl to Lamont, to show how low-level manual workers are more morally conservative and less tolerant of minorities than high-level, nonmanual employees. These class differences are found across the four countries. Svallfors argues that education is to key to these differences and, interestingly, speculates as to whether conformist attitudes may be further impediments to mobility.

Overall, Svallfors establishes that class remains a powerful influence on people's attitudes about the society in which they live. The nature of authority relations in the workplace, influenced by trade unions, and the role of political parties in government and opposition explain why class differences in attitudes are more pronounced, somewhat counterintuitively, in more equal Sweden than in the more unequal United States. Politics matters even if collective class strategies are being undermined now. A key issue for future research is whether the influence of class on attitudes will remain important in countries like Sweden. Moreover, it will be interesting to see more research of this kind embracing the former Eastern bloc countries of Europe as they are "integrated" into the West. Lots of new issues are posed.

This book is not necessarily to be read from cover to cover. It is one to be dipped into, as it includes plenty of nuggets of gold. I found myself interested in intercountry differences as well as class differences in attitudes. I shall be drawing on the book for my comparative teaching on the United States and the United Kingdom. This book, beautifully crafted by Svallfors, guides the reader gently through complex analyses of data. It can only give comparative secondary analysis a good name.

From Tax Populism to Ethnic Nationalism: Radical Right-Wing Populism in Sweden. By Jens Rydgren. New York: Berghahn Books, 2006. Pp. 138. \$60.00.

M. Eugenia Deerman
Eastern Illinois University

What conditions are likely to lead to the rise of right-wing groups? Social scientists have examined this question largely in the context of social movements. The work of Daniel Bell and Richard Hofstadter in the social movement tradition initially established the antimodern character of the right. Later studies of the religious right refuted that association and ushered in a new wave of research examining the right as a movement like other movements. By the 1990s, studies of right-wing movements around the world were beginning to accumulate. *From Tax Populism to Ethnic Nationalism* offers an examination of right-wing mobilization within institutionalized politics through an analysis of the rise and fall of a radical right-wing populist party (RPP). This work relies upon a case study of New Democracy, an RPP that gained a place in the Swedish

parliament in 1991, only to lose it after one three-year term. Rydgren's analysis shows that New Democracy successfully employed the populist antiestablishment strategy and presented itself as a satisfying alternative to growing discontent with status quo politics and a salutary response to new issue-based cleavages.

Rydgren's data include newspaper accounts, survey data, party materials, and the secondary literature. He uses the 1991 Swedish Election Survey to explain the rise of New Democracy. Unfortunately, as the author notes, sample size limitations curtailed use of the 1994 and 2002 surveys in explaining the fall of New Democracy and the subsequent failure of RPPs in Sweden. The provocative excerpts from party materials suggest that they could have been used to greater advantage; for example, in the discussion of how New Democracy leveraged political opportunities into party gains, I would have liked to see more internal party press items to better appreciate the actions of party members.

In Rydgren's analytic model, there are several relevant political opportunity structures: the emergence of voter perceptions that extant parties do not meet their needs (niches), voter realignment/dealignment processes, the emergence of newly salient issues, convergence of political parties within Sweden's political landscape, relationships with elites, the relative openness of the political system, and the availability of favorable frames. A fascinating and causally important element of this model is the emergence of niches in the electoral arena. Niches make it possible for new parties to present themselves as an antidote to voter discontent with established political parties, especially when the first four political opportunity structures are also present.

Rydgren's analysis highlights the importance of attending to how political actors take advantage of available political opportunity structures. In the case of New Democracy, its ideological and organizational profile were key. A combination of welfare chauvinism and ethnopluralist xenophobia (in particular, "soft" racism relying on frames such as reverse discrimination) allowed New Democracy take advantage of two new developments: (1) Sweden's rightward shift and (2) the advent of a niche caused by dealignment/realignment processes.

The abrupt fall of New Democracy highlights the importance of organizational structure and strategic choices. Conflict (exacerbated by a top-down hierarchical organizational structure) between the leadership and its members, and among the leadership itself, gravely weakened the party. In addition, New Democracy was unable to shift its strategy when, in response to a recession in 1991, voters returned their attention to socioeconomic issues (and away from the conservative take on sociocultural issues, including the issue of immigration that made New Democracy attractive in the first place). Rydgren concludes that successful Swedish RPPs remain unlikely as long as socioeconomic issues continue to trump sociocultural issues and mainstream parties remain distinct enough to leave little political space for new parties.

Rydgren stays close to his case, New Democracy, and concisely shows how political opportunities, organizational structure, and access to resources make possible the emergence of an RPP. Though the value of case studies is sometimes overlooked, Rydgren's contribution here is significant. In particular, his case-study approach enables careful examination of historically contingent events, from the onset of a recession in 1991 to the availability of media attention.

Rydgren's theoretical model relies on political opportunity structures, a conceptual apparatus used in social movement studies that is notoriously susceptible to devolving into an "anything goes" ad hoc model. The great strength here is that Rydgren specifies the parameters of each political opportunity structure in his model and then tests each with empirical evidence.

Two limitations merit consideration. The first is that without attention to the prior history of far-right parties in Sweden, New Democracy appears to emerge as the first party of its kind in the late 20th century. In fact, Sweden's inconsistent policy toward Nazi Germany during the 1930s and 1940s suggests that Swedish right-wing sympathies have much longer histories. Sweden officially declared neutrality in the fall of 1939, and yet the nation preserved trade relations with Germany at least until 1939 and allowed Nazi political parties to operate legally within its borders through nearly the end of the war (though very few Swedes voted for these parties and none gained political power). Once World War II ended, Sweden did take in all concentration camp survivors who arrived at its borders, and refugees from the Baltic region were also generously welcomed. Given this history, there is good reason to believe that the roots of New Democracy are deeper than Rydgren's study acknowledges. The second limitation is that Rydgren leaves readers guessing about how the work engages and contributes to a broader field of study. Certainly, scholars of the right know how few empirical studies of right-wing mobilizations exist; consequently, this book is a clear contribution. A less specialized audience for this book exists, however, and I believe that such readers would have benefited from a brief discussion in either the introduction or the conclusion about how this work fits within scholarship on the right.

Even given these limitations, Rydgren contributes much needed work on political mobilization and right-wing politics as manifested in the successes and failures of right-wing political parties.