Summary, conclusion, and discussion: what have we learned and how to proceed?

7.1 Research question and theoretical perspective

The aim of this dissertation was to explain the sudden rise of right-wing populist Pim Fortuyn and his party during the run-up to the parliamentary elections in the Netherlands in May 2002. Fortuyn was initially associated with, and subsequently headed, the newcomer party Leefbaar Nederland (LN), which was founded in June 2001, until he was discharged and founded his own party Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in February 2002. Despite being a newcomer in electoral politics, he succeeded in attracting an enormous amount of media attention and electoral support within a relatively short period of time. Fortuyn was brutally assassinated nine days before the elections, which catapulted his anti-immigration party into a position of political power, winning 17 per cent of the vote. The outcome shattered the Netherlands’ reputation as a bastion of tolerance after years of being seemingly protected against the political backlash of social unease about immigration and growing cultural diversity seen elsewhere in Europe. The two-fold question was, firstly, how Fortuyn managed to mobilize so much mass media attention and electoral support so suddenly and so rapidly and, secondly, why such a successful rise of a right-wing populist challenger took place at that particular moment -- and not, say, four or eight years earlier.

Chapter 2 offered a brief overview of the scholarly literature on the fortunes of populist radical-right parties in Western European democracies. Explanations can be grouped into two broad perspectives: one focusing on popular grievances, and one on political opportunities and party characteristics. Scholars often borrow the market metaphor from economics distinguishing these two sets of factors into the demand-side, and the external and internal supply-side (e.g. Rydgren 2007; Mudde 2007a; Van der Brug and Fennema 2007; Norris 2005). In the economic view of voting behaviour, the policies that parties promise to deliver to the public play the same role as the goods or services offered by firms or organizations on the economic market (Downs 1957a). To be successful on electoral markets, parties not only need to identify the demands of the potential customers and correspondingly provide an attractive product, but also have to outcompete rivals who try to maintain or increase their market shares at the same time.

This electoral market perspective has been very fruitful for identifying the underlying popular grievances and political opportunities that provided the electoral reservoir that was exploited by Fortuyn. A widespread consensus among scholars has emerged that, as Van der Brug (2003: 102) has summarized, ‘voters voted for the LPF because this was the party they agreed with most on an issue they considered important: immigration’. Even though scholars disagree about whether the policy position that the LPF advocated deserves a label such as ‘extreme right’ or ‘radical right’, it has become clear that Fortuyn’s party could anyhow be considered as a ‘functional equivalent’ of classical radical right-wing parties elsewhere: its product fulfilled more or less the same electoral needs (Van Holsteyn and Rydgren 2005: 41).
However, the abrupt, disruptive manner in which the political earthquake occurred remains poorly understood. The breakthrough of Fortuyn is just one of the prominent examples that demonstrates that successes of right-wing populist contenders are not always manifested slowly and gradually in electoral politics. Political changes often have a sudden, unexpected character. Although the rise of Fortuyn seemed deceivingly understandable in hindsight, very few political scientists, journalists and politicians anticipated it. The failure of foreseeing the remarkable populist breakthrough has somewhat been disguised by post-hoc accounts that stress the fertile political conditions and electoral breeding ground that had been present. This theoretical approach offers little insight in short-term dynamics; a theory that is formulated in the language of dynamic systems is needed to fully grasp the Fortuynist revolt.

Therefore, an evolutionary approach to the analysis of economic processes seems a more fruitful perspective. Although it is common to equate the economic market metaphor with a rational choice perspective on electoral competition, this is neither self-evident nor necessary. If individuals would be capable of behaving in accordance with the assumption of forward-looking rationality of neoclassical economics, a stable mode of political affairs would quickly have to follow, i.e. a situation where demand and supply are in balance and none of the actors involved has an incentive to change his or her behaviour unilaterally (Green and Fox 2007; Tavits 2008). However, in line with common perception, political competition does not seem to be heading towards any stable situation. Evolutionary economists focus on processes of change and stress that the rationality of firms and consumers is severely limited. They have identified the ongoing introduction of innovations by entrepreneurs as an important motor of economic change (Schumpeter [1934] 1983). Innovations are hard to comprehend as the direct outcome of optimal forward-looking decision-making: experience tells us that the majority of innovations utterly fail.

Innovations can refer to a larger set of new ideas, goods, services, practices or methods (Rogers 1995). Correspondingly, the rise of Fortuyn’s party can be viewed as an new product that succeeded to rapidly spread in the electoral market. Guided by the evolutionary approach to the diffusion of innovations on economic markets, I derived two explanatory factors that have been relatively neglected or have remained somewhat unelaborated until recently in the scholarly literature on the emergence and rise of the populist far right: adaptive learning of the populist actor, and the role of the public debate.

First, diffusion of innovation theories emphasize the role of information networks and mass media when they seek to explain the successful spread of new goods, methods or ideas (Strang and Macy 2001). Like any innovative product that is inserted in any market place, a new political party requires a channel by which its message can spread among the population. Nowadays, various forms of mass media increasingly fulfil this role as they are able to connect a large number of people (Andrews and Biggs 2006).

Even though levels of discontent among the population and party positioning of the established parties in the competitive space are important determinants of political changes, the analytical utility of these factors is limited by the varying ability parties have to communicate their messages to voters. Especially during their earlier phase of development, it is likely that challenging parties need to rely on the mass media to publicize their views to national publics, as they often lack the organizational and financial resources necessary to make their positions
known. Following this theoretical lead, I argued that it is necessary to explain why some actors achieve more media access than others. Thus, besides accounting for ups and downs in the levels of electoral support, fluctuations in the ability of anti-immigration parties to express their views in the mass media should also be brought into the analysis. Therefore, in this dissertation, Fortuyn’s rise covered two separate elements: the amount of public opinion support, and having a voice in the mass media. The latter is also referred to as ‘claim making’ (Koopmans and Statham 1999a) or ‘standing’ (Ferree et al. 2002) in the public sphere. Put differently: citizens ‘bought’ or ‘adopted’ the innovation when they decided to (intend to) vote for Fortuyn’s anti-immigration party, similarly journalists and gatekeepers ‘adopted’ the new product when they decided to give mass media access to Fortuyn and his message.

In order to account for the fluctuations in these two forms of successful diffusion, I used the notion of discursive opportunities (Koopmans and Olzak 2004; Ferree et al. 2002). Fertile conditions for the spread of a new product, I argued, are to an important extent amplified and even partly generated within the public discourse. The characteristics of the public discourse open avenues for achieving vote support and a voice in the media, or rather impose constraints. Thus, all actions of actors involved in the public debate together shape the adoption of a new actor and its message.

More specifically, in this case media-based opportunities and constraints consist of the degree and the way in which other actors involved in the mass media debate reacted to Fortuyn’s public statements. Following Koopmans and Olzak (2004), I firstly postulated that visibility matters, the amount of prominence that gatekeepers and editors allocate to a certain message. Secondly, it is likely that higher amounts of public reactions (resonance) yield more successes. Finally, previous research revealed that the content of the reactions matters. The media can be a friend or a foe (Mudde 2007a) and public responses vary from negative to positive: dissonance and consonance respectively. Whereas I hypothesized that dissonance was beneficial for gaining subsequent access to the public discourse, because conflicts increase newsworthiness, there are good reasons to expect that the effect of public disapproval and criticism on popularity is negative. In terms of electoral attractiveness, a populist right-wing party probably wants to avoid becoming subject to ridicule or delegitimization in the public discourse.

In addition to the importance of diffusion channels, evolutionary theories of economic change point to the role of feedback and adaptive learning, which constitutes the second principal explanatory factor in this dissertation. I have argued that the elaboration and application of the notion of adaption to selection pressures provides a fruitful substantive contribution to current theorizing about political party competition, as it fills a remarkable gap in the literature on the populist radical right.

Surprisingly, although policy positions and ideological distances are central concepts in theories of party competition, scholars seldom identify the reasons why or mechanisms through which successful populist leaders are sometimes able to find a ‘fertile niche’ in the policy space, while many other attempts fail to do so. True, many scholars have acknowledged that we need to take into account that radical-right challengers are able to actively shape their own fate, because their successes are to a large extent shaped by their own tactical moves and ideological choices (e.g. Kitschelt 1995; Mudde 2007a; Goodwin 2006). For example, Kitschelt (1995) claimed that, in order to gain success, the radical right had to adopt a combi-
nation of a liberal pro-market position on socio-economic policies with a culturally exclusionist position. Nevertheless, this internal supply-side notion that populists have to find a so-called ‘winning formula’ to increase their chances of success is often put forward without elaborating what rules or algorithms party leaders can use in this search. Often, the way in which radical-right challengers pursue to adjust their ideological programmes to the specific competitive environment they face is not explicating at all.

The evolutionary answer to this gap is straightforward: populist party leaders adapt their position to the demands of the public and to the available opportunity structures by way of an iterative trial-and-error process. The advantage of this theoretical approach is that it requires no overly unrealistic assumptions about individuals being prospective optimizers. By continuously reproducing the options that worked, and discarding the ones that failed, firms or organizations are learning entities that gradually grope towards more profitable ways of doing things. Thus, it has been researched if and to what extent Fortuyn adjusted his political message over time by adaptive learning. It might be the reason why he apparently found a favourable ‘winning formula’ and therefore succeeded in achieving broad support and attention; this in contrast to Hans Janmaat, the party leader of the radical right-wing Centre Democrats, which demised at the end of the 1990s.

7.2 Overview of the results

The first part of this study (chapters 3 and 4) focused on the impact of the public debate. Chapter 3 has given support to the argument that the public debate in the mass media has played a pivotal role in the rise of Fortuyn. The results showed that discursive opportunities have significantly affected the degree to which his party was successful in the competition for voter support, as well as regarding Fortuyn’s ability to diffuse his claims in the public sphere. Thus, the public reactions of journalists, opinion makers, commentators and political actors to Pim Fortuyn and his party shaped both his ability to further express his views in the mass media, and to achieve more support among the Dutch electorate.

Media attention proved crucial in the mobilization of voter support. Visibility and consonance positively affected the opinion polls: the ascription of prominence by journalists to Fortuyn’s statements and positive public reactions of other actors raised Fortuyn’s popularity. In turn, voter support enhanced standing in the media. Fortuyn’s media career was furthermore shaped by the intensity of the reactions of other political actors to Fortuyn. Consonance significantly increased Fortuyn’s opportunities for claim making, whereas dissonance undermined it. Media access for his statements was also increased by restrictive statements of other politicians in the media on immigration issues. Negative claims on the issue of immigration and integration by others presumably raised the prominence of these issues and therefore also increased the relevance of Fortuyn’s political agenda and thus enhanced his ability to further diffuse his viewpoints.

Combining these two results, the consequence is an escalating spiral of electoral attractiveness and mass media standing. Such a positive feedback process can explain how a seemingly stable political status quo suddenly spiralled out of equilibrium. In other words, a
dynamic cumulative effect can explain how Fortuyn’s party managed to mobilize so much attention and support within such a relatively short period of time.

Chapter 4 focused on the moment of the populist upsurge. It addressed the question to what extent the public discourse can account for the fact that the Dutch populist challenge was relatively late and the Netherlands could long be regarded as a ‘deviant case’ (Kriesi et al. 2008; Rydgren and Van Holsteyn 2004). Therefore, the more specific research question was put forward to what extent the debate in the mass media can explain why the Dutch extreme right party Centrumdemocraten (CD) headed by Hans Janmaat had failed to break out of its marginal position during the 1990s, and eventually ingloriously disappeared from the political arena in 1998. Like in the previous chapter, supply-side explanations were extended with the argument that latent political opportunities need to manifest themselves in the public discourse in order to become relevant.

The results showed that rising opinion polls led to more public claim making. Furthermore, negative public reactions also enhanced the party’s access to the public debate. This finding supports the assertion that putting radical-right actors in a bad light is counterproductive, when the aim is to deny them media attention.

However, the radical right-wing party was not able to increase public support by making itself more prominently heard in the mass media. Neither public claim making itself, nor higher visibility for its media statements were beneficial for raising popularity. Hence, even when the CD entered the public stage, offering means to communicate with a wider audience, it did not lead to more electoral success. In contrast, public criticism of others significantly eroded the electoral support.

In sum, in contrast to Fortuyn, party leader Janmaat of the CD appeared trapped in a feedback loop of stagnation. We have to conclude that the product that Janmaat offered on the electoral market faced a decisively harmful public sphere for it to diffuse and become adopted among the population. Having a more prominent voice did not increase the number of voters; to make matters worse, it was accompanied by a larger amount of negative publicity. Thus, achieving mass media access, generated by public opinion support, was in fact counterproductive for further increasing the party’s electoral attractiveness.

In the second part of this dissertation (chapters 5 and 6) the focus of attention was shifted to the strategic moves of the populist contender. Can Fortuyn’s rapid political career be better understood as a result of swift adaptation of his political message to the demands of the public and the available opportunity structure by way of an iterative trial-and-error process? More specifically, the research question in chapter 5 was to what extent Fortuyn strategically adapted his political stance concerning the integration and immigration issue, both in the course of the 2002 national election campaign, and during the years before he joined electoral politics.

I did not find any empirical support for the claim that Fortuyn was driven by success and failure in the opinion polls and mass media debate during the 2002 election campaign. This does not support the claim that successful populist right-wing leaders have a distinct ‘chameleon-like nature’ (Mazzoleni 2003) or exhibit ‘strategic flexibility’ (Ignazi 2003). But it is in line with the general tendency of established party leaders, who are predominantly policy-motivated, ideologically rigid and thus choose their policy positions relatively independently
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from past performances. In that sense, in contrast to being opportunistic, Fortuyn can be considered a ‘normal’ party leader. We have to conclude that the fact that Janmaat remained in a marginal position and Fortuyn succeeded to spectacularly break through was not due to a strategic populist strategy of the latter during the election campaign. Apparently, Fortuyn had already chosen a ‘winning formula’ at the moment when he joined electoral politics.

The second part of chapter 5 revealed how Fortuyn actually could arrive at this ‘starting position’. In the years that Fortuyn worked as a journalist writing about politics in the largest Dutch weekly magazine Elsevier (1994-2001), i.e. before he entered the stage as relevant political actor, the conclusion about his strategic adaptation is different. For obvious reasons no information feedback in the form of electoral support is available during this period, so I focused only on adaptation processes with regard to the struggle for the scarce resources visibility, resonance and legitimacy in the public debate.

Results showed that the more his statements on immigration and integration issues provoked negative public reactions (compared to criticism on other issues), the higher was the probability that Fortuyn subsequently addressed these topics again in one of his columns during the following month. This indicates that when receiving media attention for your voice is (still) anything but self-evident, any publicity is welcome and ‘no news is bad news’ (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993). Apparently, any resonance was desirable.

Concerning electoral politics, the findings of chapter 5 suggest that adaptation to the environment within the party system does not so much seem to occur through the individual adaptive learning of parties or party leaders, but that adaptive upgrading processes occur at the population level. This finding is in line with a population ecology approach of organizations (e.g. Hannan and Freeman 1977; 1984), which emphasizes that organizations have a strong tendency toward inertia. Organizations seldom succeed in making radical changes in strategy and structure. Even in the face of environmental threats, they have a fundamentally limited ability to exhibit adaptive flexibility. The stronger the structural organizational inertia, the more likely it is that the total organizational change on the population level can be reduced to the extinction of unsuccessful and the birth of new and better adapted organizations.

The outcome that we deal with relatively inflexible or hardwired ideological political actors implies that we have to rely on the role of external opportunities, instead of party-centred explanations in terms of tactical ideological shifts. But does this mean that the role of public reactions and mass media attention is all there is? Despite our conclusion that strategic flexibility of the political position appears to be not relevant, it does not necessarily imply that in order to achieve success, Fortuyn could have freely chosen any fixed policy position from the start.

Needless to say, it is not possible in the real world to test theories about events that never happened. Therefore, systematic thought-experiments were conducted in chapter 6. Agent-based computer simulations mapped out the theoretical implications of cultural evolutionary assumptions; they provided insight in the consequences of different sets of expectations concerning the presence of mass media effects and the use of or abstention from different adaptive strategies. The outcomes in chapter 6 should thus be interpreted as ‘alternative theoretical scenarios’ (Bernstein et al. 2000), not as empirical findings.
This counterfactual reasoning revealed that refraining from imposing any restrictions on parties’ ability to communicate their policy stances to voters (as a result of varying mass media coverage), generated simulated data, which resembles relatively poorly election and opinion poll data. Adding the mass media factor, which was implemented by distorting the voters’ perceived ideological distances to parties, clearly improves the model fit. In other words: the developed scenario based on the notion that the public debate yields opportunities for some parties, and constraints for others, matches actual empirical time series more closely than a scenario built without these assumptions.

Without media distortion, there is a hypothesized niche for the Centre Democrats in 1998 of about 9 per cent of the vote, whereas the simulation including this effect decimates this electoral support. In line with chapter 4, this suggests that media distortion of the radical-right party during that campaign is already sufficient to explain the meagre results of the CD in 1998 (it did not obtain any seat). In fact, hardly any unexplained variance is left in this simulation for which additional hypotheses would be necessary, such as the presumed effects of organizational weakness or lack of charismatic leadership.

The simulations also revealed that Fortuyn’s policy position seemed to have mattered. Expected party positions and amounts of support in May 2002 of the newcomer Liveable Netherlands were shown, based on different assumptions, while replaying history from its foundation in June 2001. It is shown that the initial party position of LN is clearly not the optimal electoral foundation. Another electorally sub-optimal choice is already finishing with adapting the party position to the mean position of its supporters in November 2001. Interestingly, if LN would have pursued a so-called aggregating strategy, i.e. if it had ‘listened to the people’ during the election campaign by continuously adapting to its supporters’ mean policy position, the party would have shifted its political ideology more strongly towards a more restrictive stance on multicultural society issues. The largest niche, of about 9 per cent of the vote, that is available for a media-disadvantaged challenger was a stronger anti-immigration position than the established party with the most critical stance on immigration at the time (the VVD). Any newcomer that would be looking for the most promising ‘electoral gap’ guided by this strategy would have moved there. In other words: if we set the world back to 2001, it is very likely that an adaptive populist leader of this newcomer party would have arrived at Fortuyn’s position.

This outcome supplements the previous mass media argument. It has to be stressed that explaining the rapidity and timing of the diffusion of the radical right-wing political agenda in terms of the public debate is complemented, rather than displaced. In the competition with the existing parties, discursive opportunities proved pivotal. This argument states that the ‘objective’ presence of a fertile political gap should be manifested and perceived in order to become behaviourally relevant for voters and journalists. Thus, it does not displace the following question: for exactly which kind of political ideology would mass media prominence potentially yield the most electoral support?

In sum, for a concise answer to the main research question, we can identify two mechanisms that foster abrupt and punctuated, rather than smooth and gradual, political changes. Firstly, positive feedback dynamics in the public debate can account for
the rapidity, because they imply a self-reinforcing spiral. Because of the political changes in 2002, one can conclude that ‘Holland was normalized’ (Eatwell and Mudde 2004: xiv). That is to say, the Dutch political system was brought in line with the situation of most other Western European countries, which have generally faced similar socio-economic and political conditions, but experienced significant performances of radical right-wing populists much earlier. The catalyst factor in the form of a spiral of discursive reinforcement can explain how such an ‘acceleration of history’ could take place.

An electoral potential that lays fallow for a relatively long period can suddenly be fully seized upon and exploited by a political entrepreneur because human decisions to adopt an innovation (or not to do so) are interdependent. The popular opinion shapes the debate in the mass media, and public debate shapes the public: gatekeepers decide to devote mass media attention to a new product when opinion polls indicate voter support for it, and, in turn, voters’ popularity increases when gatekeepers display the product’s message more prominently. This can explain why we observed a snowball effect, generating a large wave of success within a short period of time, even when we do not observe much variation over time in the number of voters that are susceptible to the message of the populist right.

Secondly, adaptive learning of political party leaders would prevent any relatively dramatic changes. Due to its self-correcting nature, a smooth, ongoing process of individual-level policy position adjustments would generally lead to more overall stability in party systems (Mair 1997). In contrast, if policy stances are kept fixed over time, party leaders lack the capacity or willingness to (quickly) respond to changing environmental conditions. This prevents that changing popular demands and new political opportunities are immediately and constantly being taken advantage of.

This leads to more radical adjustments as more important potential driving forces behind ‘adaptive upgrading’ of the supply-side, the party system: the replacement of party leaders or even the disbanding and foundation of political parties. When established parties cannot respond to emerging societal demands, new party formation is likely to occur (Hug 2001). Without individual-level adaptation, parties thus risk decline and decay due to newcomers (Mair 1997). Given the generally large obstacles for newcomers to break into the political arena and communicate their existence and messages to voters, the supply-side can be considered as relatively fixed. As a result, an electoral niche can be neglected for long periods of time, only to be exploited when a new actor succeeds to enter the public stage.

7.3 Discussion and wider relevance of the findings

The conclusions can be extended beyond the case of the Netherlands and there are broader lessons in the theoretical approach and empirical findings of this study. Firstly, the conclusion that the sudden rise of Fortuyn’s party, and persisting marginality of the predecessor anti-immigrant party, remains inexplicable without reference to the dynamics in the public sphere might prove insightful for cases elsewhere. For instance, Sweden has, like the Netherlands, been considered an exceptional case for a long time. The public debate in the Swedish media may account for the relatively late breakthrough of the radical right Sweden Democrats (in the
recent 2010 parliamentary elections), in spite of the fact that the country already showed several important indicators (like e.g. widespread popular xenophobia) for a potential available niche for a such a party since at least 2002 (Rydgren 2002). Assuming that the mainstream moderate right-wing parties in Germany cannot be considered as a ‘functional equivalent’ of the radical right in terms of their supply (as argued by e.g. Helbling and Tresch (2010)), both political space and popular demand arguments seem insufficient to understand why a new party that attempts to exploit this niche might utterly fail. Whether for instance Die Freiheit, founded in 2010 and programatically modelled after the Dutch Party for Freedom, will spiral up or collapse in upcoming campaigns is likely to depend on the course of the public discourse.

The identification of discursive spirals supplements the predominantly static demand-and supply-side approaches that have characterized most previous research on the fortunes of the radical populist right. Earlier studies have mainly addressed the question why populist radical-right parties have advanced in some countries, but not in others (Kitschelt 2007; Ellinas 2007). This theoretical perspective is not wrong, but incomplete. Countries can be shaken up by populist radical-right contenders within a relatively short period of time when parties are furnished with the opportunities necessary to disseminate their message. The ‘usual suspects’ such as popular grievances concerning large-scale immigration and multiculturalism and a political space provided by mainstream parties are perhaps indeed necessary but not sufficient conditions for success, because these factors do not automatically and immediately translate into electoral support or media access.

A second lesson of this study, closely related to the that fact that political changes can exhibit punctuations, is that it points out why it is rather difficult to foresee when new political challengers will become important political factors. Would we have been more able to predict the timing of the political ‘normalization’ of the Netherlands, acknowledging the role of upward spirals in the public sphere? Are we, for that matter, more able to foresee political upheavals and large-scale protests in general, like the recent uprisings in the Arab world? This is doubtful. A corollary of self-reinforcing processes is that outcomes become less predictable (Baumgartner and Jones 2002). In contrast, a system that responds to perturbations in such a way that it reduces its effects (negative feedback) boils down to a self-correcting mechanism to deviations from the status quo.

The more heavily voters’ decisions to support a particular party depend on how many others have already decided to do so, the more likely we are to observe unexpected consequences due to snowball effects. In a similar vein, sudden large mass media shifts can occur if gatekeepers strongly tend to copy and reinforce each other’s decisions about what is important to cover. To the extent that Fortuyn’s media career was mainly based on such a bandwagon effect, we have to conclude that it was partly a result of a ‘media hype’ (Vasterman 2005).

When choices of individuals would be solely contingent on the choices of others, we face a process that is radically path-dependent, which can be illustrated as follows: We fill an urn with balls of three different colours, draw one ball randomly and replace it together with three new balls of the same colour, and subsequently randomly draw a ball again, etcetera. The colour that is initially chosen will tend to prevail even more in the long run. As a result, we simply cannot predict which colour will dominate the urn when it has become completely filled (Goldstone 1998). If history were to be repeated several times, with the same set of competing
balls, the competition could quickly generate completely different winners. Tiny initial differences can thus generate potentially enormous differences in final outcomes, a phenomenon which is similar to the famous ‘butterfly effect’ in chaos theory. Relatively small advantages in the opinion polls or in mass media standing can have large consequences when the public-debate dynamic strongly amplifies and feeds back on these initial differences. In fact, we can even experience a journalistic self-fulfilling prophecy (Kleinnijenhuis 2003: 158). Because the importance and relevance of political actors can be derived from the eventual actual outcomes of parliamentary elections, it even can be justified post-hoc why much publicity was devoted to the actor in the first place.

Of course, this phenomenon is in itself not necessarily merely good news for populist parties. Downs (1972) has described the way media attention goes through particular ‘issue-attention cycles’. Media attention for actors and topics can rise and fall through dynamics exogenous to ‘real-life’ developments and endogenous to the media system itself. Likewise, successes of parties that rely heavily on the news media can show a ‘flash character’. Parties can suddenly subside, like for example the right-wing populist newcomer Trots op Nederland (Proud of the Netherlands) headed by Verdonk has shown. Before its popularity evaporated into thin air after a wave of negative publicity initiated by an internal party conflict, it had succeeded to poll more than 20 virtual seats in parliament in 2008 (and crowded out Wilders’ Party for Freedom to the political margins).

Obviously, these conclusions are not necessarily limited to the realm of electoral politics only. We encounter similar escalating processes in other markets as well. For instance, cascades and self-fulfilling prophecies prominently feature in theories on behaviour in financial markets (Prast 2004). Feedback processes constitute one of the ‘largely unsolved problems’ in theory and research on protest participation (Opp and Kittel 2010: 97). They explain the explosive and surprising nature of many protest movements: often, either they fail utterly, or they experience an explosive growth once they reach a certain threshold (Granovetter 1978). Especially in so-called ‘cultural markets’ we can observe similar snowball mechanisms at work, because the intrinsic quality of products that are offered in such markets is relatively ambiguous (Salganik and Watts 2008). When people are faced with the choice which book, play, film, painting or fashion style to buy or comment on, they are strongly inclined to mainly look at the behaviour and opinion of others, because they have little guidance what to choose when they would have to choose solely based on their own preference. As Baumgartner and Jones (2002: 23) have put this as follows: ‘as long as kids want the same toys as their friends have, rather than choosing what to play with independently and in isolation from others, then we can predict that there will always be cascades and fads in the toy industry’. In other words: future surprises will remain inevitable.

Even if all participants in a social system would consider this phenomenon as undesirable, this would not automatically prevent it to occur. As a matter of fact, one might even predict that the intensity of future fads and cascades in the electoral market is likely to increase. This can be derived from the argument that a partisan and public logic of political communication is gradually being replaced by the internal media logic (Brants and Van Praag 2006; Van Aelst et al. 2008). In the former two models, respectively, journalists function more or less as mouthpieces of political parties, or they are predominantly driven by the norm of informing the
citizens as objectively, balanced and fair as possible. To the contrary, the latter model boils down to a harsh competition between mass media outlets for audience ratings. The acts of each journalist involved in the debate that contributes to the reinforcement of a hype might make perfectly sense from an individual point of view when such acts attract the attention of the public. All actions taken together, however, have negative external effects for the public debate, or even society as a whole (Castells 1997). Likewise, politicians would probably never plea for a general ‘scandalization’ or ‘demonization’ of the public discourse, although they can hardly escape making fierce statements themselves now and then, if they want to survive the ‘media battle’ for attention.

With regard to the impact of the strategic choices of a political party, I have considered its ideology, represented by the policy position, as the core feature (or core ‘trait’) that can be subject to changes over time (likewise see e.g. Budge 1994). This study thus fits in a broader research field investigating party positioning over time, a topic which has received increased attention from scholars recently. One can distinguish two strands within this field: one group of researchers focuses on the empirical study of parties’ policy strategies in real-world party competitions (e.g. Adams et al. 2004; 2005; Somer-Topcu 2009; Budge et al. 2010), and another group has applied computer simulations to study party strategies (e.g. Laver 2005; Smirnov and Fowler 2007; Laver and Sergenti 2011; Bendor et al. 2011). Whether and how parties respond to changing popular opinions or changing levels of electoral support, is at the core of understanding political representation, as the ideological congruence between citizens and policy makers is considered as one of the principal features of a democratic system (Huber and Powell 1994).

Two sets of feedback feature prominently in this literature on ideological shifts of parties: the amount of voter support (either in the form of election results or information provided by opinion polls), and the policy position of the voters (either in the form of the mean position of the total voter population or the position of one’s supporters). In line with the findings of the empirical chapters based on the discursive opportunity approach, this study enlarged the scope of this research field by introducing a third factor: the role of the public debate in the mass media.

Firstly, a theoretical contribution has been made by taking this realm into account as a selection mechanism into computer simulations of party competition. To date, prior models have implicitly assumed that all party positions are equally visible for citizens. This study showed that it is feasible and fruitful to implement the more realistic assumption that there is competition between parties for gaining attention in the public sphere. Media distortion could also be applied to simulations of other complex dynamics where the exposure to other’s behaviour via indirect information channels potentially plays a pivotal role, like outbursts of civil disturbances and ethnic violence (e.g. Epstein 2002).

With this addition, it is possible to address the question why it is relatively difficult for new parties to successfully compete with political actors which are already in the political system, even if they occupy a potentially fruitful political space. By adding such a non-policy factor into spatial models of party competition one creates ‘biased voters’ (Adams 2001). If strategic party shifts in the policy field have repercussions for levels of mass media distortion
of one’s public profile, the nature of the party competition is even more profoundly affected. Electoral support might not necessarily be enhanced when a party strategically moves closer to another rival party, as a moderating policy shift might negatively alter the amount of newsworthiness, which in turn hampers the ability to communicate its policy stances to the voters. Thus, the mass media selection mechanism can perhaps contribute to the solution of a long-standing puzzle, namely the question why parties tend to stay out of the epicentre of the policy field and tend to remain distinct from each other (e.g. Schofield and Sened 2005). A possible explanation for poor performances of centre parties would be that these fail to publicly demonstrate to voters what they actually stand for.

Secondly, the responses to feedback about mass media have been addressed in this study. Therefore, I have extended empirical studies of party responsiveness by not only investigating the extent to which programmatic shifts can be predicted by learning behaviour from polls and public opinion, but also from media performances. This study has extended prior conclusions that there is limited empirical support for vote-maximizing behaviour of political parties, and supports the view that parties are non-strategic, policy-pursuing and dominated by ideology (e.g. Budge et al. 2010). It suggests that parties neither seem to possess media-maximizing motives for changing their programmes. If we do not even find empirical evidence for adaptive shift in the case of the alleged opportunistic and ‘attention-driven’ party leader Fortuyn, it seems unlikely that we would find effects for other mainstream party leaders. Future research should establish the robustness and generalizability of this suggestion, particularly because Fortuyn did not encounter large and enduring setbacks in this respect during the 2002 election campaign.

This observation brings me to another point: when a radical-right party passes the so-called ‘threshold of relevance’ different mechanisms might be at work. My approach to go further back in time in order to research the evolution of the ideas of party leader Fortuyn is in line with the plea to differentiate among various phases of party development (Ellinas 2007; 2010). For example, Norris (2005) posits 3 per cent of the vote share as the critical hurdle to differentiate between ‘fringe’ and ‘relevant’ actors. Before a radical-right party, or any niche party for that matter, has emerged and gained at least a minimal level of electoral relevance, journalists and established political actors can easily ignore such marginal actors and their claims; most of their messages will probably go even entirely unnoticed.

Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that parties and organizations have a stronger inclination to adapt before they have reached the stage in which they are at least considered relevant. Analyzing the role of strategic adaptation to mass media selection for the performances of radical right actors might thus appear to be most fruitful if research concentrates on marginal groups or organizations that have hardly any voice yet or on the period prior to party leaders’ entry on the political stage, i.e. before they have reached a certain level of newsworthiness (in the eyes of the gatekeepers) or political standing (indicated by public support). When the aspiration level of an actor is to become politically relevant, satisficing would prescribe to stay put after having reached this stage.
7.4 Limitations and suggestions for future research

Despite its contributions, this study also has a number of shortcomings, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs, as well as suggestions for future research that may address these limitations and follow-up questions.

Firstly, it was beyond the scope of this study to explore what shapes the discursive opportunity variables themselves. Left untouched was the issue of underlying factors explaining shifts in visibility, the intensity and nature of the public responses, and in the amount of mass media statements of other actors on immigration and integration issues. For example, why do gatekeepers ascribe more visibility to certain actors and their messages at certain moments than others? Similarly, to what extent can we explain why actors publicly responded (or not)? Apart from endogenous media dynamics being probably at work here, one can point to other plausible accounts.

Decisions of media gatekeepers about allowing or depriving radical-right claims access to the debate, will probably share large similarities with decisions about whether or not to devote more prominent publicity to other actors. Thus, given that the ability of both Fortuyn and Janmaat to publicly voice their views profited from increasing public opinion support, it is likely that electoral popularity also influenced the amount of visibility for their claims. In general, the political standing of parties and social movement organizations affects their chances of becoming headline news or not (Andrews and Caren 2010). Likewise, there is in general probably a higher chance of public reactions of other politicians when radical-right contenders pose larger electoral threats to them.

Besides short-term factors, scholars have also pointed to more long-term societal and technological developments that have gradually shaped the facilitating or constraining characteristics of the media debate. For example, until 1989 there were only two Dutch TV channels, both publicly funded. It was already noted that, as a consequence of increased competition due to a growing number of media outlets, decisions of journalists about what to prominently cover have increasingly been determined by what sells best. Furthermore, besides an increasing role of audience-driven and profit-maximizing ‘news values’, ideas about which political claims are sensible, realistic and legitimate are rooted in relatively stable conceptions of nationhood and citizenship (Koopmans and Statham 1999a). Nevertheless, timing can play a crucial role here: when mainstream parties adopt the issues of the extreme right, it may signal to the public that extreme-right claims are no longer a taboo in the discourse (Arzheimer 2009; Thranhardt 1995). When citizens, journalists or judges update their current judgements about which political views are acceptable and which ones are not, they will probably be influenced by the developments in policy stances and corresponding performances of both mainstream and radical right-wing parties.

Secondly, a related point is the question to what extent explanations for the successful diffusion in the public debate have a more proximate character, or are rather more ultimate causes, compared with other demand-side and supply-side factors.
Rydgren (2002: 49) argues that we should put greater effort in creating hierarchies of the various explanatory factors, i.e. determine the importance of the different factors mentioned in the scholarly literature. One might argue that, eventually, structural developments and available political and socio-economic conditions matter most, as they provide the indispensable, initiating ‘deeper’ set of causes.

It should be kept in mind, though, that the task of explanation is not only to pin down the ‘final’ exogenous causes, but also to unravel endogenous processes (Biggs 2005; Sgourev 2010). These explain why mobilization can emerge and cease rapidly, on a scale of weeks or months, rather than years or decades. Thus, it should be stressed again that answers concerning the pace and pattern of the political ‘normalization’ of the Netherlands do not displace existing accounts that reveal that the political and socio-economic conditions had made the Netherlands ready for a populist revolt to occur.

Thirdly, with regard to the distinction of the relevant characteristics of the public debate, one could argue that further specification of variables is desirable or necessary. Nevertheless, this study has advanced over many prior studies in the sense that specific and actor-centred variables were derived. In contrast, in many other studies media-related variables consist of the amount of attention for different issues (like immigration and integration, law and order, the economy etcetera.) or the amount of media publicity devoted to a political party in question, irrespective of the content or actor (for exceptions, see e.g. Kleinnijenhuis et al. 2003; Bos et al. 2010; Van der Pas et al. 2011).

Future studies on the radical right could devote more attention to the question whether it is fruitful to distinguish more specific characteristics of the public debate, and if so, how to apply and measure these. In the previous chapters it was already explained that public claims on immigration do not necessarily coincide with news on ‘real-world developments’, and that the variable political claim making taps something substantively different than the amount of visibility attached to claims by journalists. Therefore, public statements of political parties can be relatively insensitive to the fluctuations in prominence that journalist attach to these claims. Further research can be improved by testing the ‘political space’ argument and agenda-setting theory together in one framework by including both general factual news coverage on immigration and political statements about immigration policies on the part of the established parties.

Furthermore, critical public responses appeared in different guises. Whereas dissonance diminished the electoral support for Janmaat, it did not for Fortuyn. I have not presented detailed descriptions of the content of the hostile public reactions towards both parties, but, in line with common perception, it has been shown before that the LPF faced less stigmatic associations with Nazism and violent extremism than the CD (e.g. Schafraad 2009). The label ‘dissonance’ may thus not have covered a constant substantive meaning over a ten-year period.

Fourthly, in line with the previous current of thought, it can be pointed out that the ideologies of the two radical-right parties differed, and that these differences might have had crucial consequences. In chapters 3 and 4, the amount of claims of both parties was analyzed, not their precise content. Although the empirical investigation of the number and visibility of claims of
radical-right actors themselves over time in the mass media is in my view already a considerable improvement over examining the total amount of media publicity for the radical right in general, irrespective of the speaker, future research on how the public debate shapes divergent fortunes could be further improved by scrutinizing in more detail the actual content of mass media statements. In the introduction, I have pointed out that the political agenda of the CD and LPF can be considered comparable because they shared the tough anti-immigrant stance as their unique selling point. However, it can be argued that the claims of both parties were still somewhat distinct in their ideological character.

The results have shown that a more prominent voice in the debate enhanced Pim Fortuyn’s electoral attractiveness, whereas this pivotal effect was absent in the case of Hans Janmaat. Acknowledging that the size of the potential electoral reservoir for an anti-immigration party has been relatively stable over time, this raises the follow-up question to what extent these different effects of media visibility can be explained by the fact that the political statements of Janmaat and Fortuyn actually differed (see also e.g. Pauwels 2010). It has been argued that Fortuyn’s potential appeal to the Dutch electorate was considerably larger because he promoted a civic instead of ethnocentric type of nationalism (Akkerman 2005; Rydgren 2008). Also some ‘new left’ issues, such as gender equality, were incorporated into his anti-immigration agenda (Akkerman and Hagelund 2007).

Carter (2005) demonstrated a relation between the type of ideology radical-right parties employ and their levels of success, although she encountered some notable exceptions. The Dutch CD seems a deviant case: most of the party’s ideological counterparts have flourished, like in Austria (FPÖ), France (FN) and Belgium (VB). The ideological character might not only have direct effects on the fortunes of parties, it can also interact with other explanatory factors. Golder (2003) finds that increasing unemployment and high levels of immigration only yield more electoral success for the group of extreme-right parties labelled ‘populist’, but not for the ones that are labelled as ‘neofascist’. Despite these two examples, to date, research that elaborates the internal supply-side notion that one’s specific ideological stance crucially matters, and systematically tests effects of radical-right parties’ platforms is relatively scarce (for another exception see e.g. Kitschelt 1995); the focus on external opportunities and demand-side factors has clearly prevailed. Instead of figuring as an explanatory factor, party ideology has played a more dominant role in delimiting the dependent variable.

The two studies cited above illustrate a remarkable weakness that, in my opinion, has severely hampered a fruitful elaboration of explanations based on ideological positioning: Carter considers the CD as similar in ideological outlook as for instance the FPÖ, FN and VB, based on an extensive typology that (in theory) distinguishes no less than 16 mutually exclusive sub-types within the family of the radical right; in contrast, according to a straightforward dichotomy outlined by Golder, the CD is different from these three other radical-right parties. For some reason, many scholars seem to reason only in clear-cut categories instead of gradual distances. This does not only concern the identification of differences within the broad group of radical-right parties, but also the attempts to distinguish the mainstream from the radical right. Notwithstanding the consensus about the evident ‘usual suspects’, the black and white treatment of cases results in more discussions and difficulties than necessary. In the case of the LPF, many scholars have categorized the party as radical or extreme right, whereas others have
rejected such a label. For example, Mudde (2007a) categorizes the LPF as neoliberal populist instead, Rydgren (2008) introduces the new label ‘new’ radical right-wing to capture the distinct character of the party (which it shares with the Norwegian Progress Party), and Ignazi (2003: 219) calls the LPF a ‘quite unfathomable phenomenon’.

In this respect, future work in this field could benefit from studies on external opportunities in the form of the political space provided by the mainstream parties, which has led to much more fruitful research and findings (e.g. Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Arzheimer 2009; Koopmans et al. 2005; Norris 2005; Meguid 2005). In contrast to party-centric explanations, the ideological niche available on the electoral market is usually measured with continuous variables. For example, Arzheimer (2009) uses the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) data to estimate the degree of ‘toughness’ of the established parties (i.e. any party that is not considered as part of the extreme right, which in this case includes Fortuyn) on the issues associated with the extreme right, like multiculturalism, the national lifestyle, and law and order.

I admit that many subtle differences between ideological programmes of parties are lost when we reduce them to one gradual scale that incorporates several related topics like the support for a tough immigration policy, opposition to multiculturalism, or opposition to increasing European integration. True, it is difficult to pinpoint the difference between a ‘classical racist’ and ‘cultural racist’ argument for a restrictive immigration policy (Wilkes et al. 2007) with a one-dimensional measurement. However, the main advantage is that it is easier to formulate and test theories on the impact of party positioning on the electoral fortunes of parties that includes both the views of populist contenders and the views of the establishment in a comparative manner into one model. It is actually not even necessary to distinguish two clear-cut categories of parties at all.

In a similar vein, this dissertation has reasoned from the analytical possibility and utility to position all Dutch parties’ ideological stances in one political landscape. With regard to the issues of integration and immigration, the political claim analysis data revealed a difference in ‘toughness’ between the LPF (-0.80) and CD (-1.00) that was almost identical to expert survey scores on the item immigration: -0.83 and -0.97 respectively (Laver 1995; Benoit and Laver 2006). Based on these relatively small differences, it was therefore not surprising that the empirically embedded simulations revealed that both parties could potentially have mobilized a relatively similar share of the electoral reservoir if assumed that voters are ‘sincere’ and solely guided by ideological proximity.

At first sight, it seems somewhat unlikely that relatively small ideological differences between two parties can deliver such disproportionately large differences in media attention and electoral support. However, scholars who pursue to advance simulation experiments by adding

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73 Research on party positioning has mainly relied on the CMP data, which has systematically excluded new and small niche parties, but the analysis of other data like expert surveys or mass media statements provide good alternatives. For example, Kriesi et al. (2008) use a two-dimensional policy space to demonstrate the differences and similarities in the supply offered by both the populist and mainstream parties in several Western European countries. See likewise Koopmans et al. (2005) for the issues of immigration and integration.

74 I have converted the expert scores to a -1 to +1 scale. The original scores were respectively 18.3 and 19.7 points on a 20-point scale.
endogenous media dynamics are likely to be confronted with the puzzle of butterfly effects mentioned earlier. Even when a small policy shift yields only a small increase in electoral support, this can in turn diminish the bias of mass media and subsequently further boost the opinion polls. Thus, Janmaat remained a marginal phenomenon, while Fortuyn evolved into a winner, in spite of relatively small initial differences.

Obviously, it is in such a case hard to establish a priori which specific political platform will set into motion an upward spiral, and which one will remain marginal. Many thought that the political career of Fortuyn was over in February 2002 when his fierce anti-Islamic statements had been unmasked as extreme right. The difficulty of establishing a threshold beforehand resembles the difficulty of defining the ‘region of acceptability’ in directional voting theories. In this view, voters will reward parties that are like-minded concerning a specific issue and that express their opinion with the greatest intensity, provided that the appeal of intensity is within a certain acceptable limit.

Finally, I will return to the explanation of breakthroughs of populist leaders in terms of their outstanding charismatic appeal. This explanation has been dismissed as unconvincing in the theoretical background chapter as it suffers from circular reasoning. This study suggests that charisma is better seen as an emergent characteristic, that is to an important extent generated by the actions and reactions of others, rather than by the skills and personality of the concerning leader. This interpretation is in line with a more sociological understanding of leadership, which Gibb has articulated as follows: ‘Leadership is not a quality which a man possesses; it is an interactional function of the personality and of the social situation’ (cited in Femía et al. 2009: 2). In contrast, a classical perspective on leadership has primarily focused on the unique and heroic personalities of great leaders, and often depicted them as almost all-powerful figures capable of controlling and manipulating crowds (Femia et al. 2009).

Arguments related to charisma stress that strong, evocative and simplistic language is what really counts. These arguments reflect a third way of defining the concept of populism, namely predominantly as a certain communication style, independent of the content of the policy position that is advocated. Mazzoleni noted that visible and controversial leaders like Haider or Le Pen are endowed with distinctive public-speaking skills: their messages are often formulated in ‘highly emotional and tabloid-style phrases’ (2003: 5). Besides interpreting the core characteristic of populism as an ideological position, or alternatively as an algorithm that guides party positioning, I have neglected this third interpretation as explanatory factor in this dissertation. However, I am not convinced that the distinctive public-speaking skills of Fortuyn provide crucial additional insights for answering the research question and understanding the rapidity and timing of his rise.

Mudde (2004a: 542) considers the interpretation of populism as an emotional and simplistic discourse directed at the gut feeling of people as ‘highly problematic to put into operation in empirical studies’, because it is very difficult to distinguish whether a statement mainly expresses emotions or rather well-considered thoughts. In relation to this, disentangling the evaluations of parties and party leaders is notoriously difficult as the two are strongly associated (Andeweg 2001). Relying on counterfactual reasoning might prove fruitful in this case. For instance, Van Holsteyn and Andeweg (2010) found that the overwhelming majority of the
supporters of Geert Wilders choose party loyalty over personal loyalty: only one quarter of them responded that they would still have voted for him in the hypothetical situation that he would have been the leader of another party.75

A second problem of the ‘evocative language argument’ is that employing slogan-based language constitutes the core of political campaigning from the left to the right (Mudde 2004a). All parties, irrespective of their platform, will pursue to address both heart and mind of voters. Typical illustrations from the 2002 election campaign are quoting from the diary of Anne Frank by De Graaf, the former leader of the progressive liberal D66, or the exclamation ‘The Netherlands, wake up!’ during a political speech of Melkert, the Labour Party leader at that time. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that Janmaat’s unsuccessful career is principally a result of the lack of using simple and strong language. Lucardie (1998: 116) remarked that the party leader could not be considered as particularly eloquent, but he could be considered very ambitious, experienced and at ease as a public speaker and debater. He even observed that Janmaat was ‘often too emotional to convince anyone but his own supporters’. After an analysis of the role of personality factors in modern elections, King (2002) concluded that elections remain overwhelmingly political contests. One of the main reasons, he argued, is that a strong preselection process takes place: those who evidently lack ambition or public-speaking skills will not be chosen and put forward by the party as its leader anyway.

Some other non-policy related traits of successful leaders, such as ‘portraying self-confidence’ in public (see e.g. Van der Pas et al. 2011), are admittedly less vague and easier to operationalize than charismatic appeal, but clearly suffer from likewise circular reasoning. For instance, the euphoric, self-assured tone of Fortuyn in a notorious debate following his surprising victory in the local elections in March 2002, and corresponding manifest irritation of the incumbent party leaders, can only be understood in the context of a radical shift in the balance of power, which increased uncertainty about subsequent developments. With regard to waves of contentions, Koopmans (2004b) has noted that, contrary to the classical collective behaviour approach, so-called ‘moments of madness’ do not foremost originate from changes in the states of mind of protesters, but from changes in the interactions across the social system.

Experimental findings from political psychology on how the electorate decides have led Lau and Redlawsk (2006) to the conclusion that people mainly go with their gut feeling when party leaders hardly differ on the issues they put forward. If lacking information about substantive differences, voters are more strongly inclined to choose the one who they most identify with, or based on how the party leaders make them feel. Given the common wisdom that Fortuyn had outspoken views on the multicultural society that were unrepresented by any other party, evocative and strong language seems a more relevant and important factor if one would address the decisions of voters when several like-minded radical right-wing parties are in competition with each other.

This was for instance the case in the Dutch 2006 national elections: four ideologically similar right-wing populist parties participated (headed by Stuger, Nawijn, Pastors and Wilders respectively), moreover, the conservative liberal VVD had a candidate on its list (Verdonk) who also conveyed a populist message of defending Dutch identity. As it is unlikely that voters

75 Unfortunately, the question did not contain any information about the politician’s new party.
have been able to notice the relatively small ideological differences between the views, it is implausible that these can fully account for the divergent electoral fortunes (Bos et al. 2010). Findings indicate that the amount and nature of the mass media attention were more decisive: what Wilders clearly distinguished from the other successors of Fortuyn was his greater publicity (Kleinnijenhuis et al. 2007b).

To the extent that the media debate should be considered as an external property that cannot be controlled and moulded by one single actor, this observation emphasizes again that successful leadership depends as much on the surrounding situational context as on individual traits. Given that the causes of the emergence of mass media phenomena like Fortuyn at least partly originate from all interactions of all individual actors involved in the debate, only a co-ordinated hush-up of the claims of populist right-wing contenders seems to be a possible counterstrategy if one’s goal is to reduce their successes. However, the question whether a modern democracy should be satisfied with the absence of a political voice that expresses and represents the views of a substantive group of citizens, remains unanswered.