

Acknowledgements

My interest in right-wing radicalism emerged outside of academia. Growing up in rural Eastern Germany in the 1990s and 2000s, the radical right pervaded much of my teenage life. I am very grateful to my family and friends, most importantly Fliege, Jana, Marian, Anika, Nippel, Thessa, Clemens, Dana, and Elvi who raised and socialised me in a way that I never felt attracted by these groups. When I had to take a side, I joined the hippies, punks, metalheads, indies, and ravers who all gathered in the Nevermind, the only place for alternative subcultures in the region. A whole generation is eternally grateful to Ilka, Ivo, Lutz and all of the others who ran this place, even while working regular jobs.

My constant personal struggle with right-wing radicalism also sparked my academic interest in this phenomenon. I wanted to know what was going on inside the radical right and why so many people my age joined them. The Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder) has been the base for my academic research during the last 15 years. I owe special thanks to Michael Minkenberg for his patient and encouraging supervision of my dissertation. His full support continued even after I started a new job outside academia at Cultures Interactive, which took my focus off this project. I would also like to thank Timm Beichelt for his constructive feedback on my academic projects. My gratitude extends to Malisa Zobel, Anja Hennig, Artur Kopka, Tobias Peter, Zsuzsanna Végh, Anca Florian, Andrea Pirro, and Cas Mudde, who provided valuable feedback on bits and pieces of my research in various colloquia and workshops at the Viadrina, and to Michaela Grün, who always motivated me to continue my academic work. I owe special thanks to Aaron Martin for his thorough, skilful, and patient editorial work on the manuscript.

On several research trips and, in particular, during numerous seminars, workshops, and conferences with Cultures Interactive, I had the opportunity to meet experts, such as Olga Gyárfášová, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Radu Cinpoș, Péter Krekó, András Bíró-Nagy, Kiril Avramov, Louis Wierenga, Petra Mlejnková, Vladislava Vondrová, György Tatár, Tina Gažovičová, Radka Vicenová, Lukáš Zorád, Maros Chmelík, Kita Boncheva, Dorothea Bregin, Magdalena Chustecka, Júlia Vida, and János Wágner, who shared with me their insights on the radical right, politics, culture, history, and night life in different parts of Central and Eastern Europe. I

would like to thank the entire team at Cultures Interactive for the professional exchange and the opportunity to work in and on Central and Eastern Europe. All these encounters helped to improve this book and, more importantly, my personality.

During my time at the Viadrina I also met Maria, Fo, Pınar, Elaine, Bartek and Léa, some of the best friends you can imagine. Utopia e.V. and in particular our music venue, the Garage, came to replace the Nevermind, which had to close after so many influential years. Thank you to Anika, Kermit, Janek, Rhena, Simon, Sarah, Franzi, Robert, Laura, Willi, Basti, Frank, Jochi, and everyone else who spent their time and energy to run this place that so often created the necessary diversion from my academic work. Among all my friends, Anika holds a special place, for we have been partners in crime ever since we met in school and after school in the Nevermind. Thank you for your friendship and the great company over all these years.

Finally, I would like to thank some people without whom this book would have never seen the light of day. My parents and grandparents always encouraged me to pursue my ideas and dreams, even if they seemed utterly strange to them. Thank you for the freedom, your love and trust! I am also indebted to Bartek who supported me with this project from the very beginning. His feedback on the final manuscript and many earlier drafts has been invaluable, as has his friendship outside of academia. I owe my deepest gratitude to Ulli. Thank you for your love, friendship, and patience, for keeping me sane and for having my back, particularly during the final stages of the project.

This book is dedicated to our cats Paula, Szymek, and Marie. They could not care less but they have been a constant source of happiness and distraction during a long and demanding research process.