Comment on Chou (2016).

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I enjoyed reading your prospectus. It tries to answer one of the most urgent questions we have in political science. I hope some of my comments are useful.

1 Your Research Question and Theory

- **Main Question:** Why do anti-immigrant parties exhibit so much diverse policy especially with respect to redistribution?

- **Theory:** Anti-immigrant parties change their economic policy in order to appeal to moderate voters in addition to relatively uneducated and unskilled voters (such as blue-color and agrarian constituents), who are their main supporters. In low unemployment states, anti-immigrant parties must commit to more conservative economic platforms than their supporters prefer. On the other hand, in high unemployment states, anti-immigrant parties can promote left-wing economic policy, which is expected to garner votes both from their main supporters and moderate voters. (If a party has an authoritarian past, it needs to take costly steps to credibly commit to left-wing policy).

- **Supplementary Questions:** (a) How do the economic platforms that anti-immigrant parties adopt shape their electoral performance? (b) Do anti-immigrant parties actually implement these platforms once in power?

2 Comment on Theory

**Use Different Instruments to Appeal to Different Electorate:** I think your theory can be framed in a bit broader way; How do parties use different instruments to get votes from different constituents?

1. **Different Policy Dimension:** If I am not wrong, this is your main theoretical point. Although anti-immigrant parties have fixed policy position on immigration, they can alter economic policy position to get attraction from moderate voters. I have several questions on this point.

   (a) **Flexibility of Policy Position:** How flexible are economic policy positions of anti-immigrant parties? It is usually believed that policy positions are really sticky and hard to change because of reliability (Downs 1957). Can you see economic policy change within the same party over years? (I saw variation in economic policies in Figure 1, but are they across parties or mainly within parties?)

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(b) **Party System**: Also, how anti-immigrant parties situate themselves in economic policy spectrum will depend on party system in which they compete. If there are strong parties that mainly focus on economic policy and gain votes based on their economic policy, anti-immigrant parties will have little chance to gain votes by just adjusting their economic policies a bit.

(c) **Preference of Moderate Voters**: In order to argue that anti-immigrant parties adjust its economic policy to garner votes from moderate voters, you need to have assumptions. (1) There are enough amount of voters who have not voted for anti-immigrant voters just because of their economic policy position. Such voters might be those who have anti-immigrant attitudes and support right-wing policy or those who do not care about immigration issues at all and support right-wing policy. (2) There is a enough chance to get votes from them. As I wrote above, if there is a strong party securing votes by its economic policy, even when there are enough people who do not care about immigration at all, those voters will not move to the anti-immigrant party by just adjusting its economic policy.

2. **Use Different Candidates**: I think your main empirical analysis will depend on the data on political candidate nominations in Switzerland. If I am not wrong, I think you see nomination of economic elites candidates as shift to right-wing policy. However, it does not need to be. Candidate nomination is another instrument for a party to target another electorate. As you probably know, as far as I remember vaguely, Rafaela’s new book project is partly about this candidate nomination. How do left parties in Europe tries to include Muslim constituents without destroying its party line? They strategically choose gender of candidates to signal pro or anti muslim in each district differently.

3. **Unit of Analysis**: If your theory is based on overall economic policy adjustment by anti-immigrant parties, parties are unable to target constituents in each district differently. However, if your theory is mainly based on candidate nomination adjustment by anti-immigrant parties, parties can nominate different candidates in each district so that its nomination is optimally adjusted to moderate voters in the district. On what level do you expect to see the most variation?

### 3 Comment on Research Design

1. **Conjoint Experiment**: It might be interesting to see how voters might change vote choice when an anti-immigrant party changes its economic policy position. By using conjoint analysis, you might be able to test which aspect of the anti-immigrant party get/lose support of which types of voters.

2. **Text Analysis**: It might be interesting to see how party manifesto changes over time by text analysis. You can have finer measurement (compared to just left-right scale. Left-right scale will not vary so much over time, I guess.) on how economic policy positions of anti-immigrant parties change over time.

### 4 Other Points

1. **Comparative Studies**: Although I understand that the demand-side theory does not explain the variation in Europe, if you look at all countries in the world, including Asia, I think the number of immigration will explain a lot of its variation. It might be good to have an explanation such as “demand is not sufficient condition for successful parties”.
2. **Backlash Theory**: There is a theory saying that success of far-right parties is due to backlash against success of minorities in the previous election (Bustikova 2014). This paper might be helpful to you.

Looking forward to listening to your response.

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