

Social Structure, Collective Identity, and Agency in
the Formation of a New Cultural Divide:
Why a Right-Wing Populist Party Emerged
in France but not in Germany

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Introduction

The continuing presence of right-wing populist parties in Western Europe's political landscape since the 1990s is a phenomenon escaping explanations centred on the level of individual countries. In spite of the 1998 split of the Front National, Jean-Marie Le Pen came in second in the French 2002 presidential elections. He received a respectable share of the vote even in 2007, faced with a the Gaullist candidate who heavily emphasized law and order stances, and whose credibility in implementing important policy changes was obviously higher than that of a challenger no other party accepts as a coalition partner. Strong right-wing populist parties also exist in Austria, Switzerland, Flemish Belgium and in Denmark, among others. At the same time, right-wing populist parties have not achieved a breakthrough in countries such as Germany and Britain.

Right-wing populist parties should be seen, I suggest in this paper, in the larger context of changing societal structures that have affected party systems since the late 1960s. A first transformation of the underlying dimensions of conflict occurred in the 1970s and 1980s, when parties of the New Left took up the issues of the New Social Movements that had emerged after 1968 (Kitschelt 1994). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a second transformation of political space occurred, when new issues such as the defence of traditional norms and of the traditional national community rose to prominence, and right-wing populist parties achieved electoral breakthroughs in several countries. Although there is disagreement on the origin and the proper labelling of this new division, a basic consensus exists that a new cultural line of conflict now structures party competition in several Western European countries (Kitschelt 1994, Bornschieer 2005, Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). Because I interpret the populist right as part of a broad counter-movement to the universalistic principles endorsed by the New Left, I propose to characterize the antagonism underlying this cultural line of conflict as one opposing libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values and conceptions of community. Differing values that are anchored in societies' social structures are thus the basis of the new cultural conflict that has come to characterize Western European party systems.

Although this new division can be shown to structure party competition in a number of countries in Western Europe (Bornschieer 2005, Kriesi 2006), right-wing populist

parties have not emerged everywhere. In this paper, I present an analytical model that focuses on two factors that impinge on the way new conflicts and the structural potentials underlying them may be mobilized by political actors. First of all, the mobilization space available for new parties depends on *how rooted the electorate is in the older conflicts* that have brought Western European party systems into being, most notably the class and religious cleavages. New divides will only materialize if the established cleavage structure no longer “organizes” issues cutting across existing lines of division “out of politics”, in Schattschneider’s (1975 [1960]: Ch. 4) famous words. Building on this insight, my model puts central emphasis on the role of political conflict in forging, as well as maintaining the collective identities that underlie cleavages.

The second factor conditioning the chances for new political actors to assert themselves refers to the *strategies pursued by the established parties* with respect to the issues that challenging parties such as those of the populist right thrive on. Where the established parties succeed in retaining the ownership of issues related to immigration and traditionalist norms, the mobilization space for right-wing populist challengers will be restrained. In this paper, I pay special attention to the way the established parties have responded to the two-fold transformation of political space referred to above. By emphasizing the role of agency both in the initial mobilization, as well as in the subsequent perpetuation of cleavages, this approach integrates a cleavage-theoretical and a strategic, actor-centred perspective. Differing from classical cleavage approaches, then, the programmatic content of party competition and the positions parties take on political issues are central to my approach.

The interplay between these two conditioning factors will be illustrated in an analysis of the patterns of opposition prevalent in the French and in the German party systems since the mid-1970s. In France, the Front National was able to entrench itself early on in the French party system, establishing a three-block pattern of opposition between the left, the established right, and a new actor situated at the traditionalist-communitarian pole of the new cultural divide. In Germany, on the other hand, the established parties have jointly averted the entry of a party mobilizing on the issues of immigration and national identity, and the structural potentials underlying the libertarian-universalistic vs. traditionalist-communitarian divide manifest themselves in tempered form in this country.

The paper is structured as follows. In the following section, I depict in more detail how the rise of new cultural issues has resulted in a new line of conflict in Western European party systems. The second section discusses the impact of historical cleavages and political agency on the mobilization of new political divides. Building on the central role of political conflict in perpetuating cleavages, the ensuing section develops an analytical model that differentiates various types of divide that have varying consequences for the manifestation of new political conflicts and for the fortunes of new parties seeking to thrive on these conflicts.

In the fourth section, the model is applied to the transformation of the French and the German party systems. I assess the role of the existing cleavages and that of political agency in shaping the way the new structural potentials have been mobilized by political parties. After presenting some aggregate results concerning the patterns of competition prevalent in the two countries, I focus on the positions of parties and voters along the evolving cultural divide. The analysis covers one election in the 1970s and three elections between the late 1980s and early 2000s. To assess the programmatic positions of parties, I rely on data based on a sentence-by-sentence coding of the newspaper coverage of election campaigns that has been assembled within a larger research project (see Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008). To which degree party positions correspond to the preferences of their voters is assessed by measuring the positions of party electorates along the same dimensions of political conflict using survey data. The results suggest that both the strength of existing alignments, as well as the strategies of the mainstream parties have impinged heavily on the fortunes of right-wing populist parties in Western Europe in the past decades.

Value Divides, the Transformation of Western European Party Systems, and the Rise of the Populist Right

While European party systems continue to carry the stamp of the historical class and religious cleavages, the dimensions underlying party interactions have been transformed. A first restructuring of political space occurred as a consequence of the mobilization of the New Social Movements of the left in the 1970s and 1980s

(Kitschelt 1994). This process has led to a transformation of Social Democratic parties as well as to the emergence of Ecologist parties, which have come to constitute the left-libertarian pole of a new cultural dimension of conflict that has succeeded the value divisions characteristic of the religious cleavage. Spurred by the educational revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, the diffusion of universalistic values has led actors to call for the political enforcement of the principle of individual autonomy and the free choice of lifestyles. In a longer perspective, these developments can be seen as part of a long-term trend of secularization, as Flanagan and Lee (2003) have argued.

Already in the 1980s, however, the contours of an opposing conception of community, and of a different justification of moral principles has emerged in the form of the neo-conservative movement. Intellectuals and conservative political parties placed a renewed emphasis on tradition as a necessary binding force for society, and propagated solidarity in established communities such as the family as an antidote to the perils of individualization. While neo-conservatism remained an elitist ideology, the conservative counter-movement to the libertarian left gained momentum when the populist right, a new party type, succeeded in framing the question of identity and community in terms of “us” and “the other”. By putting the issues of immigration and the alleged inability of the integration of people with different cultural backgrounds onto the political agenda, the populist right has driven a second transformation of the dimensions of political conflict in Western European party systems in the 1990s (Kriesi et al. 2006). Contrary to classical extreme right parties, the populist right does not adhere to racism and does not reject other cultures as such, but advocates an “ethnopluralist” ideal of preserving the distinctive traditions of national cultures.

As a consequence, a new cultural conflict has gained centre stage in Western Europe in the 1990s. The one side holds universalistic conceptions of community and advocates individual autonomy, the other emphasizes the right to preserve traditional communities in which common moral understandings have developed, and that are seen as threatened by multicultural society. These opposing positions mirror contemporary debates between liberals and communitarians in political philosophy, and in their extreme form constitute the poles of a political dimension of conflict that runs from libertarian-universalistic to traditionalist-communitarian values. While liberal philosophers such as Rawls (1971) emphasise universally binding norms, even moderate communitarians like Walzer (1983) are more reluctant to grant abstract principles primacy over shared moral understandings within an “organic” community.

New Right intellectuals such as Alain de Benoist have popularized and radicalized the latter view, and have provided a blueprint for the populist right's "differentialist nativist" discourse, as Betz (2002, 2004) has termed it.

Apart from their location at the extreme of the ideological dimension running from libertarian-universalistic to traditionalist-communitarian positions, two further attributes can be taken to distinguish extreme right-wing populist parties from other parties (Bornschiefer 2007a). The first is their populist anti-establishment discourse, in which they draw a dividing line between themselves and the established parties both of the left and right. Secondly, they exhibit a hierarchical internal structure, which sets them apart from the pluralist mainstream parties, and which allows a charismatic leader to quickly revert the party's positions in reaction to the changing moods of the populace. This organizational feature has enabled right-wing populist parties to rapidly cater the immigration theme, as well as to exploit new issues such as European integration. Within the wider extreme right party family, the extreme populist right represents an ideologically more moderate sub-group, both by virtue of its "differentialist nativist" discourse, as well as its explicit adherence to democratic rule. This allows right-wing populist parties to portray themselves as the ignored mainstream of society.

Historical Cleavages, Political Agency, and the Mobilization of New Political Divides

Notwithstanding the increasing similarities of right-wing populist parties in terms of their discourse, however, their far from uniform success across Western Europe begs an explanation. Looking for factors that may account for the highly uneven success of these parties, the historical mobilization of cleavages evolving around class and religion in fact suggests a straightforward answer: Established cleavages limit the space for the mobilization and political manifestation of political potentials and divides (Rokkan 2000, Kriesi and Duyvendak 1995, Bartolini 2000). New divides will only materialize if the established cleavage structure no longer "organizes" issues cutting

across existing lines of division “out of politics”, in Schattschneider’s (1975 [1960]: Ch. 4) famous words.

Applying this perspective to contemporary developments, however, requires a conceptual re-assessment of the cleavage approach. While the narrow focus on the social structural underpinnings of voting choices in much of the literature on cleavages has been criticized early on (Sartori 1968), a new strand of research focusing on the role of agency in cleavage formation has emerged only recently (e.g., Enyedi 2005, Deegan-Krause 2006). In this paper, I suggest to pay attention to the role of agency both in the *initial formation* of a cleavage, as well as in its subsequent *perpetuation*. Figure 1 illustrates the role of political conflict by showing how it relates to the three elements that Bartolini and Mair (1990: 213-220) have conceptualized in their widely acclaimed definition of a cleavage.

With respect to the initial mobilization of social structural divisions or grievances, social structural, collective identity, and political organization – the three elements emphasized by Bartolini and Mair (1990) – represent a mobilization sequence. A shared understanding of group membership is a necessary condition for the emergence of a cleavage because individuals will only join together and act on behalf of their membership in the group if they share a collective identity that allows them to overcome the free-rider problem (Pizzorno 1986, 1991, Melucci 1996). Empirical research has provided ample empirical support for this proposition. As Tarrow (1992: 177) points out, “If the social movement research of the last two decades has shown anything, it is that grievances are not sufficient to trigger collective action, that this requires someone who can take advantage of political opportunities, develop organizations of some kind, *and interpret grievances and mobilize consensus around them*” (emphasis added). Collective identities, in other words, are “produced by the social construction of boundaries” (Eisenstadt and Giesen 1995: 74). Clearly, then, political agency and conflicts between parties play an important role in creating cleavages.

Once cleavages have been established by the presence of political parties that articulate the underlying antagonism, the continuance of political conflict plays an important role for the long-term fate of the division. Only if the group identifications underlying the cleavage are kept alive by ongoing conflicts over conflicting policy positions will members of an objective social category remain loyal to the parties that

once claimed to act on their behalf. A focus on political conflict allows us to make sense of the famous “freezing into place” of European party systems that Lipset and Rokkan (1967) observed, a process that has remained poorly understood to this day, as Mair (2001) has stated. Cleavages remain stable to the degree that the basic oppositions they represent continue to shape voters’ understandings and interpretations of politics, thereby “organizing out” new issues. New voters are socialized into the existing structure of cleavages, and develop cognitive schemas that allow them to interpret new issues in terms of basic ideological divisions. They also acquire political identities that help them to locate themselves within their schematic representation of politics, making it possible to take political decisions with little information at hand. Consequently, how much room the established cleavages leave for new conflicts therefore depends on the persistence of the collective social and political identities they entail.

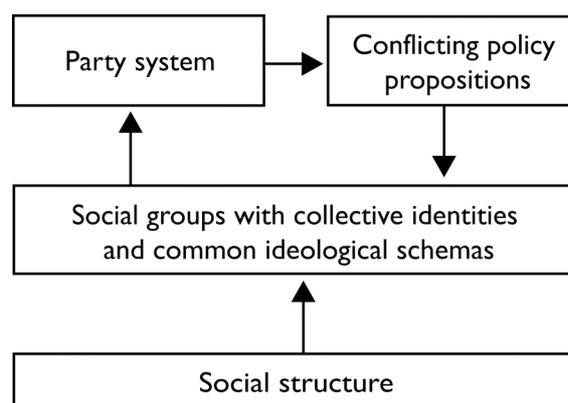


Figure 1: Social structure, collective identities, and their reinforcement by parties’ differing policy propositions

A durable pattern of political behaviour of structurally defined groups – a cleavage – therefore has its origin in the conflicts resulting from a macro-historical critical juncture, but its continued saliency depends on its being kept alive by disagreement between key political actors. Conflict has group-binding functions (Coser 1956), and collective political identities will therefore gradually become weaker if they are not reinforced by political conflict. By the same token, cleavages will no longer be transmitted over generations if the division they stand for has lost its relevance, and a window of opportunity for new conflicts will emerge on the political stage.

Determining the space for new conflicts therefore requires the inclusion of the divergence of parties' policy positions into the study of cleavages. In the next section, I develop an empirically quantifiable model that focuses on the interplay of established cleavages and new divisions that may or may not alter the dominant patterns of oppositions.

Political Conflict and Opportunities for Right-Wing Populist Mobilization

If the premises outlined in the preceding section are correct, then two important factors impinge on the chances of challenging parties gaining success. The *first factor*, in the tradition of Bartolini and Mair (1990), as well as Kriesi and Duyvendak (1995), is the *degree of closure* of the social groups divided by a cleavage. The closure of social groups is essential because when existing group identifications are strong, mobilization efforts along new lines of social division are difficult. The *second factor* impinging on the chances for right-wing populist parties is the opportunity structure resulting from the programmatic positions and hence the *strategies of the established parties*. Where the established parties absorb the traditionalist-communitarian potentials that gain room as a result of the veining of the traditional cleavages, the populist right will have difficulties in entrenching itself. In other words, the responsiveness of the party system to the preferences of the electorate is of crucial importance here. Likewise, if the established parties keep polarization around the new cultural conflicts low, they may be able to contain the manifestation of the traditionalist-communitarian potential, while at the same time remaining responsive to their constituencies.

The aim in this section is to outline a conceptual framework that allows for an empirical examination of the content of oppositions in party systems and the strength of political alignments that these oppositions entail. I develop a typology of different types of divides that have varying consequences for the mobilization of new conflicts. The analytical strategy developed provides a general model to assess the chances for new political conflicts to gain room, and will be employed in this paper to explain the differing fate that right-wing populist parties have faced in France and Germany.

In order to analyse political conflicts, I use the term *line of opposition* to denote a political conflict that structures party competition in a given election. Through its tight

conjunction with the policy level of party competition, it refers to something clearly distinct from a cleavage. Such a dividing line can, but does not necessarily exhibit a homogeneous social structural base, however defined. First of all, the number of lines of opposition does not necessarily coincide with that of the cleavages underlying the party system. A cleavage is something we do not necessarily encounter in everyday politics: Representing a (durable) pattern of political behaviour of social groups, linking them to specific political organizations (Bartolini and Mair 1990: 213-220), it cannot be observed without analyzing the social structural basis or the stability of political preferences of social groups. In principle, a number of cleavages may be present within an electorate, but not every cleavage will find expression in a separate line of opposition.

At the same time, I adhere to the view that the contemporary impact of the historical cleavages lies primarily in having shaped party systems in the crucial phase of mass enfranchisement and mobilization, which led to their subsequently “freezing”, and not so much in the immutability of a cleavage’s social structural basis (Sartori 1968, Mair 2001, Bornschier 2007a, 2007b). I therefore propose to lay primary emphasis on the stability of the links between social groups and parties, and pay less attention to the social structural homogeneity of the groups underlying a cleavage. A cleavage structure then denotes a *durable pattern of political behaviour of socially or politically defined groups*. In the model presented here, I regard the *stability of alignments over time* as the crucial factor distinguishing short-term alignments from cleavages. To the degree that we find durable alignments, it is highly probable that they represent a transformed or a new cleavage. Unstable alignments, on the other hand, be they structural or not, are either short-term deviations from the established patterns of cleavage politics, or a herald of an unfreezing party system.

Different types of divide and resulting mobilization potentials for new conflicts

Starting from the assumption that existing alignments condition the room for new conflicts to emerge, different types of cleavage can be differentiated that have variable consequences for the mobilization capacity of new conflicts. While some cleavages may be at the centre of political disputes, others presumably have a more identitarian role, and stabilize alignments because the social groups divided by them (still) share a

collective identity. Following Bartolini and Mair (1990: 19-52, 68-95), as well as Kriesi and Duyvendak (1995), cleavages can be differentiated along two dimensions, namely, salience and closure. *Salience* denotes the importance of a cleavage relative to other divides in a party system, while *closure* refers to the stability of the social relationship represented by the cleavage. Together, these elements condition the stability of political alignments. A cleavage, according to these authors' conceptualization, is important if it structures party preferences to a high degree and if voters do not change allegiances for a party on one side of the cleavage to one belonging to the opposite camp.

From Bartolini and Mair (1990), I retain the notion that the closure of social groups opposing one another along a line of cleavage can be analytically grasped by means of the stability of partisan alignments. In determining the *salience of a divide*, I depart from their approach in focusing on the *polarization* of parties and voters regarding the issues around which the conflict evolves, rather than on cross-cleavage volatility. The latter says little about how virulent a conflict actually remains. The polarization of the party system along a specific divide is thus measured by way of the differences between parties' programmatic statements. If parties' positions are far apart along a line of opposition, it represents a salient dimension within the party system. This conception follows from the central role of political conflict in perpetuating cleavage structures postulated in the preceding section.

The next analytical step is to relate oppositions in the party system to the attitudes of voters. In determining the chances for a realignment to occur as a consequence of a new dimension of conflict, the match between the positions of parties and that of their respective electorates is crucial: It allows an estimation of the degree to which the party system is responsive to voters. Because the term cleavage has usually been reserved for relationships where political parties represent durable oppositions in the preferences of social groups, I consider a rough match in the positions of parties and their voters as a defining feature of a cleavage. Over the long run, a miss-match between the two will presumably lead to an erosion of the link between parties and their social constituencies. This leads to a waning of the cleavage and opens space for new alignments based on other group attachments.

This results in an analytical schema combining three elements: (1) The *polarization of parties' positions* along a line of opposition, indicating the *salience* of a divide. (2)

The *match between the positions of parties and their voters* along this divide, allowing an estimation of the responsiveness of the party system to the preferences of the electorate. (3) The degree of closure a division entails in terms of the organizational loyalties of social groups. Like Bartolini and Mair (1990), I am not interested in partisan loyalties to individual parties, but in the *stability of preferences for ideological blocks of parties along a divide*, which represent the broad divisions reflected in voters' ideological schemas. Stable preferences indicate closure and strongly rooted political identities, while unstable preferences are an indication of a fluid line of opposition or cleavage. Closure gives an indication of the collective identity component of an alignment. If this component is strong, it will delay the manifestation of a new opposition even if parties have converged in their positions and if the conflict is pacified. Figure 2 shows the possible combinations of these three elements. The starting point for analysis is a single dimension that has been found to structure political competition in a particular election in a country. The analysis of a number of elections can then reveal either dominant patterns or evolutions in the types of divide.

I now explain the content of the four quadrants and of the individual cells in the schema and briefly state what the implications of the various types of alignment are for the mobilization capacity of new political oppositions:

(1) Starting at the top left of Figure 2, we find a situation combining high party polarization and a match in positions of parties' and voters, indicating that voter preferences are also polarized. With parties and voters being durably aligned along a line of opposition, this corresponds to a highly *segmented cleavage*, in other words a deep-rooted political opposition that entails strong loyalties and party preferences of social groups. As a consequence, the electoral market is tightly restrained and leaves little room for the emergence of new lines of opposition or new political parties. At the extreme, such a structure of opposition rules out any real competition between parties. In political systems characterized by pillarization, where the Netherlands at least used to be a prominent example, each party has its own constituency, and they do not really compete at all. Presumably, therefore, this is the structure of conflict that *most strongly inhibits the emergence of a new conflict* at the centre of the party system. In this category we find on the one hand established cleavages that have either preserved their salience or have been reinvigorated by new issues, or, on the other hand, highly salient new divides that have come to structure politics.

Figure 2: Types of divide as a function of polarization, responsiveness, and social closure

	Match		Mismatch	
Polarization of parties	Stable alignments	Unstable alignments	Stable alignments	Unstable alignments
high	<p>SEGMENTED CLEAVAGE</p> <p>both parties and voters highly polarized and durably aligned along the dimension</p>	<p>EMERGING LINE OF OPPOSITION</p> <p>segmented opposition cross-cutting other dimension and lacking closure</p>	<p>UNRESPONSIVE PARTY SYSTEM (organizational cartellization)</p> <p>OUT-DATED CLEAVAGE</p> <p>Established loyalties check emergence of new conflicts</p>	<p>UNRESPONSIVE PARTY SYSTEM (organizational cartellization)</p> <p>OUT-DATED CLEAVAGE</p> <p>Unanchored party system: High potential for realignments or anti-cartel parties</p>
low	<p>IDENTITARIAN CLEAVAGE</p> <p>Alignments stabilized by strong political identities, historically formed</p>	<p>COMPETITIVE POLITICAL DIMENSION / SCHUMPETERIAN COMPETITION</p> <p>Performance of government decisive for voting choices</p>	<p>UNRESPONSIVE PARTY SYSTEM (Issue-cartellization)</p> <p>Possibly a NEW DIMENSION OF CONFLICT</p> <p>Identification checks emergence of new conflicts/ realignments</p>	<p>UNRESPONSIVE PARTY SYSTEM (Issue-cartellization)</p> <p>Possibly a NEW DIMENSION OF CONFLICT</p> <p>High potential for anti-cartel parties/ realignments</p>

A corresponding case where preferences are volatile, exemplified by the field to the right, points to an *emerging line of opposition*. Competing with other, crosscutting divides, it lacks strong partisan loyalties. Voting choices are therefore dependent on the relative salience of this line of opposition as opposed to other divides in a given election. Should the division prove to be temporary, patterns of party competition will not change much. If, however, the conflict remains salient for voters, it is likely to lead to realignments resulting in a political structuring and then stabilization of alignments along this divide. The driving force of such realignments is either an outsider-party or

an established party reorienting itself in order to attract new voters beyond its traditional constituency.

(2) Moving down to the two bottom-left cells, we find a situation where the distances both between parties, and between their electorates are low. The first case is that of an *identitarian cleavage*, where party preferences are stable due to strong collective identities of social groups that form political sub-cultures. Here, closure remains high due to enduring group attachments that carry the imprint of historical conflicts. But since the underlying collective identities are not reinforced by contrasting programmatic stances of parties, preferences are likely to remain stable only as long as new oppositions do not gain in importance relative to the old ones. However, even if this happens, and if the new oppositions crosscut existing constituencies, the rise of a new line of opposition will at least be tempered or delayed by the force of existing loyalties.

In the right-hand cell of this quadrant, we find a *competitive political dimension*, which is close to Schumpeter's (1942) characterization of party competition: Elections serve to elect competing teams of politicians that try to convince voters in the electoral market. In theory, as Downs (1957) has argued, this results in their targeting the median voter. In a situation conforming to these criteria, voters can choose among parties by virtue of their performance in office. If new potentials were to arise, newcomers could in principle find fertile ground, because there is little political identification to check the emergence of new conflicts. However, since the established parties do not have any strong links to specific constituencies that keep them accountable, they are relatively free to re-orient themselves and to absorb new issues, limiting the chances for challengers to gain success.

(3) I now turn to the two cases in the bottom-right corner, where the party system is feebly polarized and at the same time fails to represent voters, implying that party electorates are characterized by more diverging policy preferences. Leaving aside for a moment the third criterion pertaining to the stability of alignments, this can be the case in two contrasting situations: Either the established parties have converged along a line of opposition and are thus *unresponsive* to their voters, for whom the dimension remains salient. Some would argue this being the case for the state-market dimension as a consequence of the move to the centre of Social Democratic parties associated with their "Third way" modernization. The other possibility is that the established

parties have not (yet) taken clear positions along a *new dimension of political conflict*. Parties can try to avoid doing so for various reasons, for example because they are internally divided concerning new issues, as it has been argued in the case of parties' stances towards European integration (Bartolini 2005, Kriesi et al. 2006). In these cases, in which parties' positions do not differ much, while voter preferences are polarized, we have evidence for what I propose to call *issue-specific cartellization*.

If party alignments are stable, and social closure is high (the left-hand cell in this quadrant), existing political identities will retard processes of realignment. But since the positions of the established parties are similar, and because no visible conflicts over policy reinforce group attachments, existing party loyalties can be expected to decline. If this happens, we move to the right-hand cell, where new conflicts are likely to gain room. This is *probably the most advantageous situation for anti-establishment parties* to emerge, since they can on the one hand advocate programmatic positions that are not represented within the party system, and on the other hand denounce the other parties for not being responsive to the preferences of voters. In fact, this corresponds to a prominent explanation for the rise of right-wing populist parties in the 1980s (Katz, Mair 1995, Kitschelt 1995, Ignazi 1992, 2003, Abedi 2002).

(4) Finally, moving to the top right cells, we find two situations of a mismatch between the positions of parties and voters. In both cases, parties' positions are far apart on the dimension, but the *party system is unresponsive* to the positions of voters, and thus reflects an *out-dated cleavage*. As the preceding two cases in quadrant 3, such constellations are supposedly related to Katz and Mair's (1995) thesis of party system cartellization. Situations of cartellization can be differentiated to refer either to the established parties keeping specific issues off the agenda, which I have termed *issue-specific cartellization*, or to their ability to inhibit the entry of new competitors, partly due to their privileged access to state resources. The latter case, which may be termed *organizational cartellization*, is relevant for the two cases of polarized, but unresponsive party systems in this quadrant, where the established parties manage to restrict competition. Similarly, grass root party members or parties' clinging to their old core constituencies make impossible an ideological moderation. If alignments are stable, then the conflict, although pacified on the voter side, still engenders loyalties. One cell to the right, a similar situation has already led to a waning of partisan attachments: the party system does not reflect voters' preferences and is *unanchored* in

the electorate. Hence, the *emergence of a new line of opposition is possible either due to the reorientation of an established party, or to the entry of a new competitor* de-emphasizing the established line of opposition for the benefit of a new one.

An Empirical Application of the Model: The New Cultural Conflict and the Varying Success of the Populist Right in France and Germany

I now turn to some results from an application of the model just presented. A focus on the patterns of opposition prevalent in France and Germany in fact reveals how the Front National was able to break into the French party system, while parties of this type have remained largely without success in Germany. The theoretical point of departure of this analysis lies in the changing nature of cultural conflicts in Western Europe. Various studies have shown that the political space in France and Germany, as well as in other countries, underwent a dual transformation between the 1970s and the 1990s, first under the impact of the mobilization of the New Left, and then as a consequence of a counter-mobilization of the populist right (Kriesi et al. 2006, Bornschier 2005, 2008, Dolezal 2008a). Based on an analysis of the policy statements of political parties in election campaigns, these studies empirically identify a two-dimensional pattern of opposition that now characterizes political competition in Western Europe. The first dimension of conflict is characterized by the antagonism between economic liberalism and support for the welfare state, corresponding to the political manifestation of the traditional class cleavage. The second dimension involves cultural issues. As a consequence of the mobilization of the New Social Movements of the 1960s and 1970s, issues relating to *cultural liberalism* have polarized parties already in the 1970s. This category includes support for the universalistic goals of the New Social Movements such as peace, gender equality, human rights, as well as issues such as support for cultural diversity, international cooperation, support for the right to abortion, and opposition against patriotism, the defence of tradition and national sovereignty, and traditional moral values.

In the 1970s, the counter-pole to cultural liberalism is formed by *budgetary rigor*, calls for *law and order*, or support for the *army*, all of which can be interpreted to

represent a neo-conservative counter-pole to cultural liberalism. In the more recent elections, a common cultural dimension of conflict has emerged, whose poles are constituted by cultural liberalism on the one hand, and *anti-immigration stances* on the other. These two categories embody the libertarian-universalistic vs. traditionalist-communitarian line of conflict. Cultural liberalism conveys both support for universalistic values, as well as the repudiation of the opposing normative ideals, namely, the defence of tradition, national sovereignty, and traditional moral values. Opposition to immigration and calls for a tough integration policy, on the other hand, have been used by the populist right in its attempt at constructing a collective identity that is based on the demarcation from people with cultural backgrounds that differ from that of the majority population.

In the empirical application of the model, I take the existence of a two-dimensional political space that is characterized by these two dimensions as given. The further analysis focuses on the way the established parties have dealt with the issues relating to the older state-market cleavage and those associated with the new cultural divide, and how their differing strategies have opened the way for the emergence of a strong right-wing populist challenger in France, but not in Germany. More specifically, if the structure of political space is similar in the two countries, then two factors may account for the differential success of the populist right. First of all, the state-market may have remained more salient in Germany than in France, and could have prevented realignments based on voter preferences concerning the new cultural issues. In other words, the continuing polarization of parties and voters along the economic divide may have prevented the emergence of a party with a decidedly traditionalist-communitarian profile by “organizing out” the corresponding political issues. A second explanation for the lack of success of the populist right lies in the differing strategies of political parties in dealing with issues related to multiculturalism and universalistic norms.

In the following, I explain how the analytical model developed in the preceding section is operationalized. For reasons of space, this discussion is necessarily brief, and the reader interested in the details of the procedures is referred to Bornschier (2007a). I then present some aggregate results concerning the nature of oppositions in the two countries, employing the typology set out in Figure 2. Finally, a closer look is taken at the strategies that the established parties pursued in election campaigns in the 1970s and since the late 1980s.

The empirical implementation of the analytical model

The first step in the analysis is to measure the positions of parties along each of the two divides that structure oppositions in the two countries. To determine the positions of parties along the economic and the cultural divides, I rely on data based on the media coverage of election campaigns. Because I assume that voters' political identities are reinforced by conflict between parties, this data has the advantage of tapping parties' policy positions regarding those conflicts that were actually fought out during election campaigns. The data has been collected within the research project "National political change in a denationalizing world" (Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschie, Frey 2006), and is based on a sentence by sentence coding of party positions as reported in the newspaper coverage of election campaigns (for more details on the data, see Kriesi et al. 2006 and Dolezal 2008b). The data covers one election in the 1970s and three more recent elections that took place between the late 1980s and early 2000s. Parties' policy-related statements were coded in the two months preceding each election. The election in the 1970s corresponds to a situation in which the first transformation of the traditional political space has taken place under the mobilization of the New Left. The second transformation, driven by the issues relating to immigration and cultural protectionism, is traced in the three more recent contests.

Party positions along the economic dimension are calculated as the mean of their stances with respect to support for the welfare state and economic liberalism throughout the time period under consideration. Positions along the cultural dimension, on the other hand, are calculated differently in the 1970s and the later contests. In the 1970s, the cultural dimension is stamped by cultural liberalism and budgetary rigor, in both countries, and additionally by support for the army in Germany (Bornschie 2007a), and parties' position is calculated by the mean of their position regarding these issue categories.¹ From the late 1980s on, party positions along the cultural dimension are expressed by their mean position with respect to cultural liberalism and immigration policy.

1 The mean is weighted by the relative salience of the issue, which gives the more important issues more weight in determining the positions of parties. Tables containing the issue-positions of parties and the salience of the issues in the two countries are available online: <http://www.ipz.uzh.ch/forschung/lfsforschung/npw/tables.html>.

As an indicator of the overall degree of polarization a divide entails in a particular election, which is necessary to implement the model developed in the preceding section, the standard deviations of parties' positions is a straightforward solution. In order to measure the match between the positions of parties and their electorates, the dimensions found to structure the supply side of party competition are reconstructed on the voter side using survey data. Most of the issue categories can be operationalized using demand side data, and I use principal component factor analysis to combine the various survey items that correspond to the categories into an index. The survey items used and their assignment to the categories employed in the analysis of party positions are found in the Appendix. The mean positions of parties and voters cannot be compared directly, because they have been measured on different scales, but it is possible to assess the congruence of representation by calculating the correlation between positions. Because this taps only the covariance between positions, the differing scales are not a problem.

To measure the stability of alignments, I use recall questions from the surveys to identify the share of voters who loyally turn out to vote for a party belonging to the same ideological block. Abstention from voting, in other words, is taken as a possible antecedent to a reconfiguration of preferences. Concerning the economic divide, two ideological blocks can be defined based on the sides they take with regard to the traditional class cleavage. This criterion is more difficult to apply in the case of some more recently formed parties, namely the Ecologists and those of the populist New Right. However, the Ecologists in both countries clearly lean to the left in their economic posture and the Front National, does, overall, lean more to the right in this respect. The assignment of these parties to the left and right blocks formed by the state-market cleavage is therefore rather unambiguous (see Table 1).

The identification of the relevant blocks along the cultural dimension is more difficult, because we do not have established criteria such as those relating to the class cleavage as a starting point. From the theoretical point of view, we can expect up to four blocks along the cultural divide: (1) New Left parties, (2) the classical parties of the left, (3) those of the established right, and (4) New Right parties, represented by the populist right. The distinguishing criterion of the two more recent party families is that they take extreme positions at the respective poles of the new cultural dimension of conflict, while they have a rather indeterminate position with regard to economic conflicts (Bornschieer 2007a). Empirically, not all of these blocks may be discernible in

every country. Furthermore, the distinction between Old Left and New Left is not necessarily an easy one, since New Left parties can either be newly founded parties such as the Ecologists, or result from the transformation of an older Socialist party. To define the blocks, I therefore use the empirically discerned distances between parties' and voters' positions along the cultural dimension (for examples, see Figures 6 and 7). Large gaps between mean positions and low levels of overlap indicate a segmentation of competition. Table 1 shows the ideological blocks identified in the analysis of the two countries. In Germany, the patterns of opposition in the 1970s do not reveal clearly discernible ideological blocks, and the analysis therefore begins in the 1990s.

Table 1: Ideological blocks along the economic and cultural dimensions of conflict in France and Germany

	State-Market-Cleavage	Cultural divide
France 1978-2002	<i>Left:</i> Extreme left, Communists (PCF), Socialists (PSF), Ecologists, Left-wing Radicals (MRG) <i>Right:</i> Union for French Democracy (UDF), Gaullists (RPR), Front National	<i>New Left:</i> Extreme left, Communists (PCF), Socialists (PSF), Ecologists, MRG <i>Centre-right:</i> Union for French Democracy (UDF), Gaullists (RPR) <i>New Right:</i> Front National
Germany 1994-2002	<i>Left:</i> Social Democrats (SPD), Ecologists, Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) <i>Right:</i> Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) Free Democrats (FDP)	<i>New Left:</i> Ecologists <i>Old Left:</i> Social Democrats (SPD), Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) <i>Centre-Right:</i> Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU), Free Democrats (FDP)

The overall nature of economic and cultural oppositions in France and Germany

Leaving aside for a moment the stability of alignments, Figure 3 shows the nature of economic conflicts in France and Germany in one election in the mid-1970s and three more recent elections. For ease of representation, only the first two elements of the model are shown, namely, the polarization of the party system and the match between the positions of parties and their electorates, which indicates the responsiveness of the party system to voter preferences. The resulting four quadrants correspond to four

basic types of divide, each of which is further differentiated in the full model according to the stability of alignments that the line of conflict entails (see Figure 2). The grey lines indicate (admittedly arbitrary) cut-off points for the classification which are, however, only used as rules of thumb.

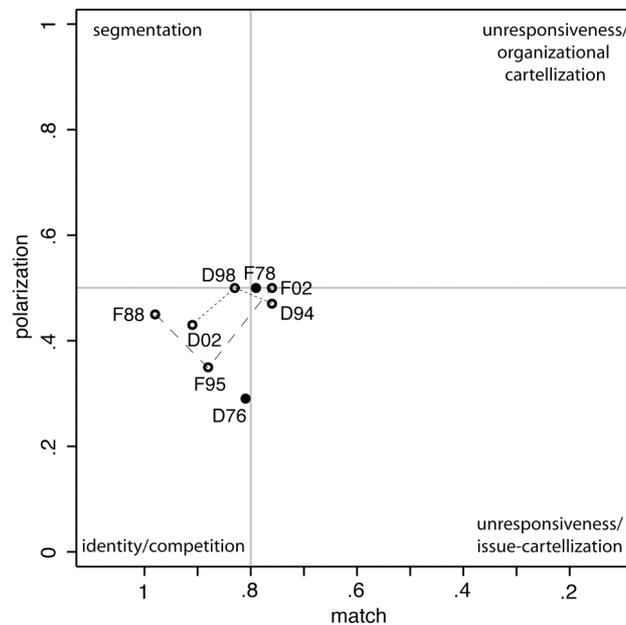


Figure 3: Patterns of opposition along the state-market cleavage in France and Germany

While there are elections that exhibit a somewhat lower match between the positions of parties and their voters, the state-market cleavage represents an identitarian divide in most elections in the two countries by virtue of medium to low levels of polarization and rather responsive party systems. While voter loyalties to the ideological party blocks defined by the state-market cleavage continue to be rather strong in both countries (see Figure 4), economic conflicts already in the 1970s have therefore not been very strongly reinforced by political conflict, and the situation is similar one or two decades later. Given the state interventionist conviction of the French left, this may come unexpected, but it becomes plausible if we take into account that the posture of the parties of the right is a far cry from being market-liberal. The state-market cleavage in both Germany and France is thus kept alive by the relatively strong political identities associated with it, rather than by segmented patterns of opposition.

For those parts of the electorate that do not have strong allegiances to the left and right economic blocks, however, the economic divide is likely to have evolved into a competitive political dimension, where the performance of governments is decisive for voting decisions. In the long run, as established political identities fade, this is what we would expect for the entire electorate. In France, an overall decline in the stability of alignments to these blocks has been witnessed since the 1970s, while they have remained rather stable in Germany. Loyalties related to the state-market cleavage have thus delayed, but not organized out completely the rising prominence of political identities related to the new cultural divide.

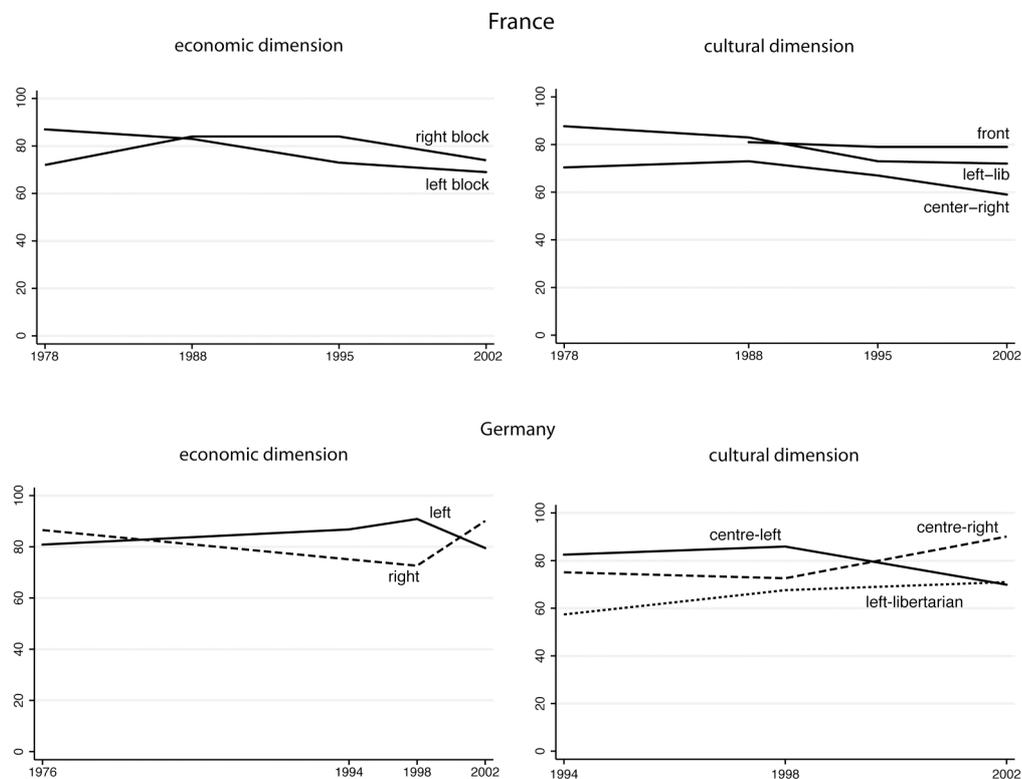


Figure 4: Stability of alignments along the economic and cultural dimensions (measured as the percentage of voters who chose a party from the same ideological block in two consecutive elections)

While the nature of oppositions is thus quite similar along the economic dimension in the two countries, patterns of conflict differ much more strongly with respect to the cultural dimension, as Figure 5 reveals. In France, the party system has become more segmented along the new cultural line of conflict than along the economic divide. While alignments were still structured by the religious and class cleavages in the

1970s, the manifestation of the left-libertarian agenda in party competition first led to a loss of responsiveness of the party system, and then to a reconfiguration of partisan alignments and parties' political offer. By the late 1980s, under the impact of the mobilization of the populist right, a three-block structure has emerged in which the poles are constituted by the left-libertarian and the traditionalist-communitarian blocks, with the centre right squeezed in the middle, as we shall see later. At the end of this process of party system transformation, parties closely mirror the positions of the electorate. The Front National is an integral part of this segmented pattern of oppositions in France, as we shall see later on. How, then, could a similar transformation of political space have so different consequences with respect to the resulting configuration of the party system? The next section analyses the strategies of the established parties in dealing with the new cultural issues that have shaped political controversy since the 1970s.

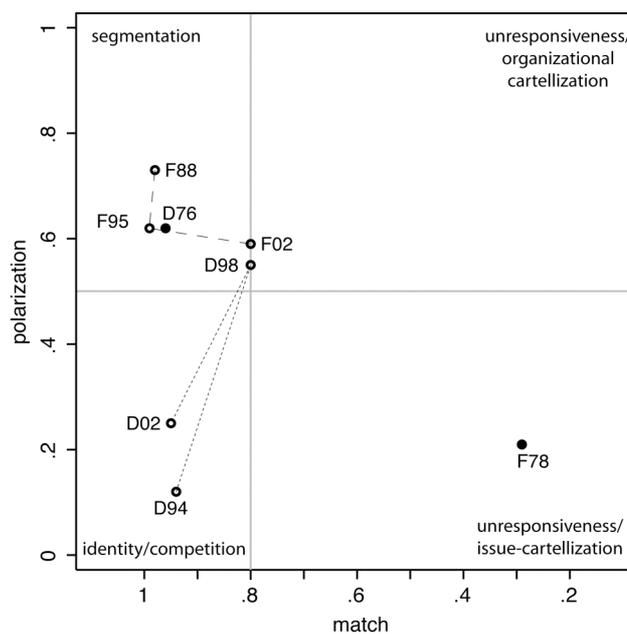


Figure 5: Patterns of opposition along the cultural divide in France, Switzerland, and Germany

The strategies of the mainstream parties and the space for the populist right in France

France is one of the prime examples that corroborates Ignazi's (1992, 2003) influential claim that the established parties of the right pushed a radicalization of political discourse which right-wing populist parties later thrived on. This occurred first in 1977, when the right-wing government announced plans to repatriate immigrants, countering first successes of the left in the wake of its ascendance to power, and confronted with rising levels of unemployment. This provoked a counter-mobilization of the unions and the non-communist left, as well as by parts of the right, leading the government to abandon the plan (Martin 2000: 256ff.). Nonetheless, as Figure 6 shows, with the exception of the Gaullist RPR, the mainstream parties did not differ strongly with respect to their position on the cultural dimension in the 1978 parliamentary election. In this and the following figures, a position to the left indicates a libertarian-universalistic stance, while a position to the right denotes a defence of tradition as against these universalistic principles. The party names corresponding to the abbreviations can be found in Table 1.

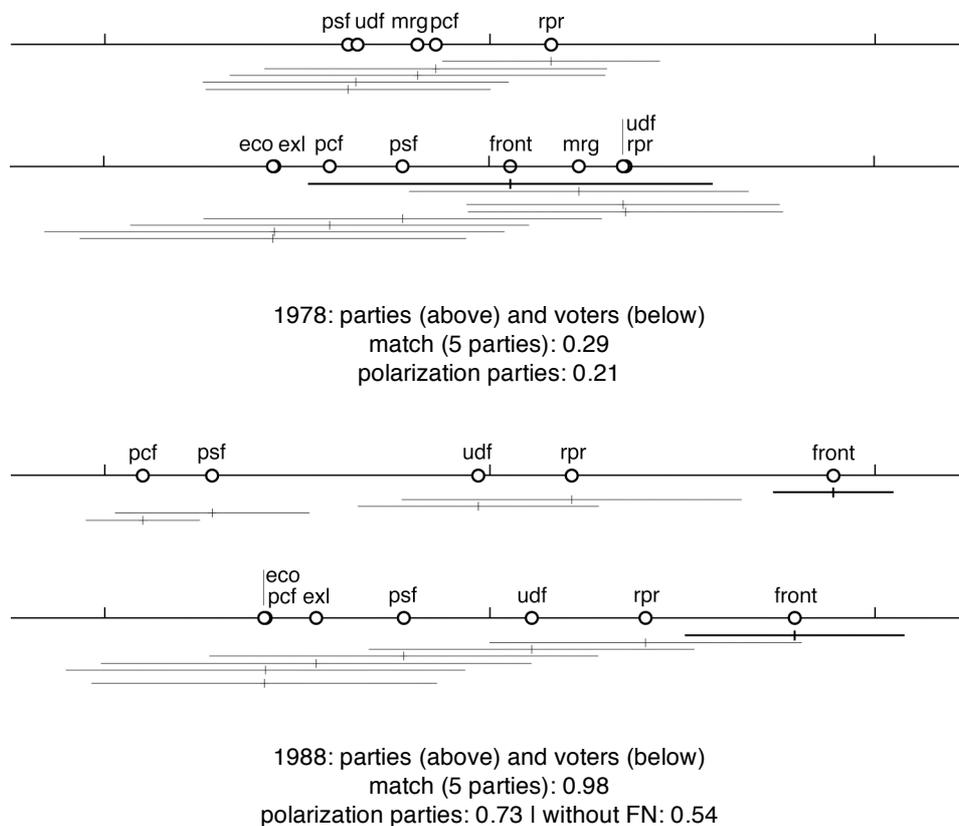


Figure 6: Parties and voters on the cultural divide in France, 1978-2002

The established right played with ideological polarization again after it found itself in opposition after 1981. When the Socialist government under Mitterrand decided to regularize illicit immigrants and abandon the death penalty, the right reacted promptly and radicalized its discourse to oppose these measures. On the other hand, the Socialist left faced difficulties with respect to economic policy making, and was soon forced to abandon its ambitious plan at stabilizing the economy using Keynesian demand stimulation. Confronted with the early successes of the Front National, it promoted anti-racism as a central issue to fill its ideological void, as Perrineau (1997: 49-50) states, defending a multiculturalist “recognition of difference”. This strategy is likely to have contributed to the rising salience of the cultural as opposed to the economic dimension of conflict. Furthermore, it reinforced the Front National’s ownership of the immigration issue (see also Meguid 2005).

The result of the strategy of the left in conjuncture with the rise of the Front National is mirrored in the evolution of the patterns of opposition between 1978 and 1988, which are visible in the positions of parties and voters in Figure 6. In the 1978 election, only the RPR pursued a polarizing strategy by issuing more traditionalist stances, while a number of parties fail to represent their voters adequately, most prominently the centre-right UDF. Overall, there is a very low match in positions on the supply side and on the demand side, as indicated beneath each of the graphs. In other words, the party system is clearly unresponsive to the electorate.²

In the 1988 campaign, this situation has changed dramatically. The results presented in Figure 6 underline the polarizing strategy of the Socialists and the Communists, which is expressed in their move towards the libertarian-universalistic pole on the divide. From 1988 on, a traditionalist position to the right of the figure is coupled with exclusionist stances regarding foreigners. With the Front National catering the opposing traditionalist-communitarian pole of the divide, polarization surges between 1978 and 1988. While the RPR has not changed its position very much, the UDF now lies at quite a distance from the parties of the left, resulting in a programmatic convergence of the established right. However, this has not averted the rapid erosion of the UDF’s support base. The most important finding is that the Front National mobilizes an electorate whose location is similarly extreme to the party itself.

2 The Front National’s position cannot be determined in 1978 due to an insufficient number of statements in the media. The position of its voters, on the other hand, is very dispersed along the cultural dimension, resulting in a centrist average position. It thus seems as if the party did not primarily mobilize on this dimension at the beginning of its rise.

Although there is some overlap between relatively traditionalist supporters of the RPR and the less traditionalist followers of the Front National, a large number of the latter's voters are located at the extreme of the dimension (the bars beneath the average positions show the standard deviation of party statements and voter orientations). The relatively large spread of the RPR's issue statements underlines the party's difficulty in defining its position on the cultural dimension, and its voters are also more dispersed along the spectrum than those of the Front National.

While the electorates have also become more polarized than in the 1970s due to the mobilizing efforts of the parties, it is the strong increase in polarization of the party system that restores the responsiveness of the party system, indicated by a close match in the positions of parties and voters. Overall, we face a situation of *deep segmentation* of which the Front National is an integral part: *The party system is responsive with or without the Front National and its voters*. Both the party and its voters – which represent roughly a sixth of the electorate – lie at the extremes on the cultural divide and strongly contribute to the segmented nature of opposition on this axis, which was already revealed in Figure 5. This basic pattern is reproduced in the 1995 and 2002 elections, which are not shown in the figure for reasons of space.

No space for the populist right in Germany?

How do the strategies of the established parties in Germany differ from those of their counterparts in France? Since World War II, the two Christian Democrat sister parties have proven a remarkable capacity of integrating the entire right-wing spectrum. Smith (1976), in discussing Germany's "restricted ideological space", points out that "The early ability of the CDU to spread itself across the previously rigid lines of German society led to the assimilation of a large proportion of the electorate within a single umbrella-party" (1976: 402). Until today, it is widely held that the extreme right's marginality is due to the ability of the established right to take up the latter's issues, to occupy its positions in a more moderate and acceptable way, and to thereby integrate potential supporters of extreme right-wing parties (Minkenberg 1997: 155, Jaschke 1999: 141-2, Niedermayer 2006: 119, Dolezal 2008a). In the following brief sketch, I wish to show that the established right first failed to respond adequately to the challenge resulting from the rise of the New Left, resulting in the emergence of the

Republikaner party in 1983, followed by a number of electoral surges. However, German unification and the immigration issue provided the Christian Democrats with an opportunity to regain credibility among traditionalist-communitarian voters, thereby again restricting the political space available for the extreme right.

Germany witnessed a “renaissance of conservatism” in the 1970s as a reaction to the 1968 student movement and to the formation of a social-liberal government after the 1972 election, which performed a policy shift regarding the communist countries in the east (the so-called “Ostpolitik”). Confronted with the decline of religiosity and a programmatic vacuum, the Union parties endorsed the *Zeitgeist* by stressing the importance of the family for moral guidance, and by propagating a new historical and national consciousness (Grande 1988). As Figure 7 shows, the positions of the mayor parties and of their voters were much more polarized in the 1976 election in Germany than was the case in the late 1970s in France. The Social Democrat SPD and the FDP, their Liberal coalition partner, have strongly endorsed the universalistic norms of the New Social Movements, and the SPD thus has a clear New Left profile. The position of the CDU and CSU, the Christian Democrat sister parties, on the other hand, reflects their neo-conservative profile. As indicated by the match between political supply and demand, the party system represents voter preferences almost perfectly, and a two-block structure is clearly discernible at both levels. It has to be kept in mind, however, that the 1976 election represents a situation in which the immigration issue had not yet appeared on the political agenda. Furthermore, the rather rightist position of non-voters suggests a political potential not absorbed by the Christian Democrats.

The new conservative-liberal coalition that took office in 1982 had announced a moral and intellectual renewal (“geistig-moralische Wende”), which can be interpreted as a neo-conservative counterpart to the New Left political agenda. Even if patriotism symbolically made come-back under Kohl’s chancellorship, the Union parties failed to perform the promised “turn” in terms of concrete policies, however (Ignazi 2003: 74-5, Grande 1988: 69). This was one of the mayor reasons provoking the breakaway of the extreme right Republikaner from their Bavarian Christian Democrat mother party. The founding of the Republikaner party is widely held to have resulted from the space created by the Union parties’ failure to fulfil their promises, which in turn was due to tensions between competing factions within the party (Minkenberg 1992: 70-2, Grande 1988: 70-1, Ignazi 2003: 75).

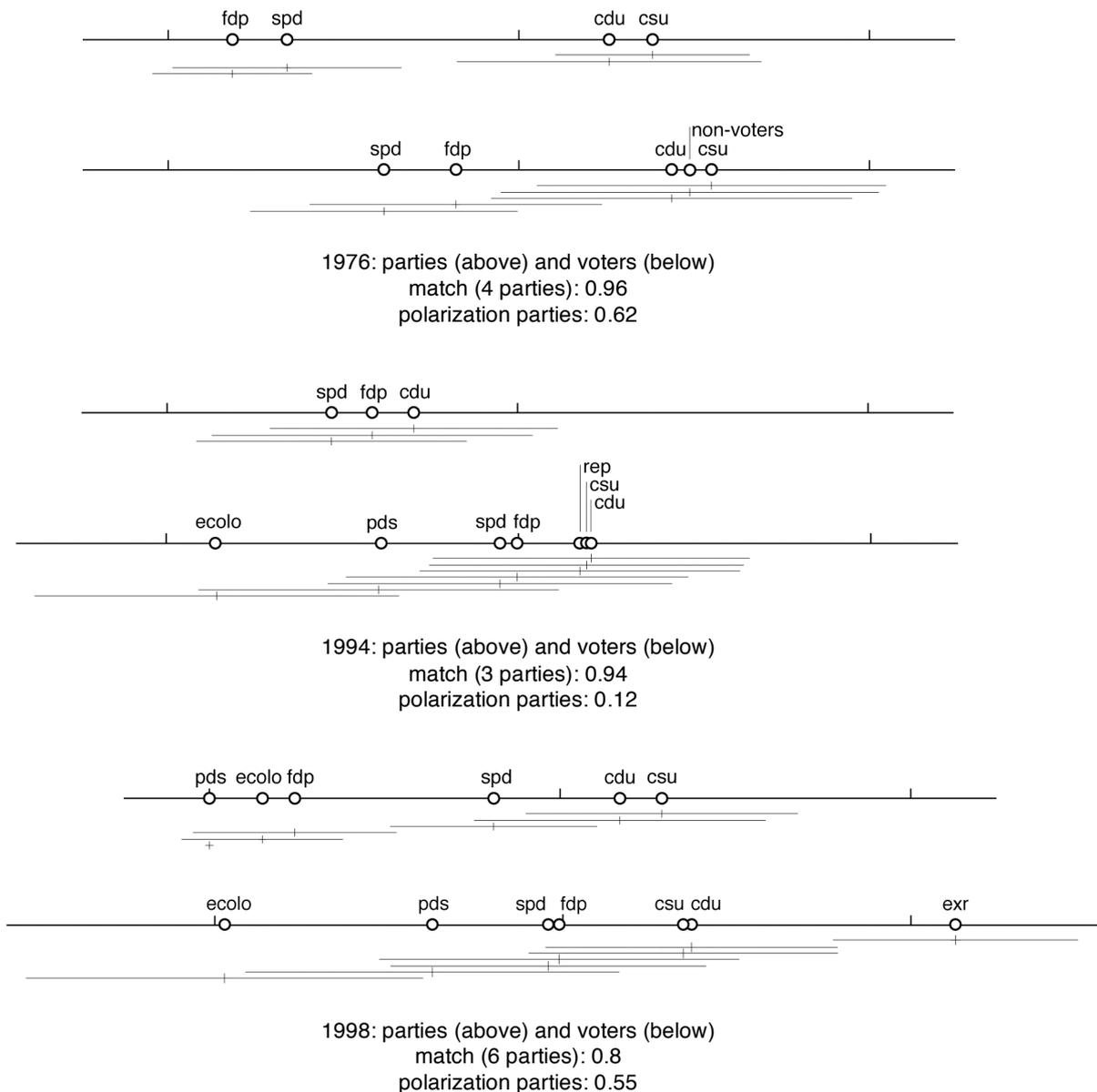


Figure 7: Parties and voters on the cultural divide in Germany, 1976-1998

In other words, the Union parties, as a party with a pluralist and democratic internal structure, showed difficulties in absorbing the traditionalist political potential that resulted from the mobilization of the New Left. The odds for such a strategy improved, however, with the rise of two new issues on the political agenda. For one thing, the Union orchestrated the re-unification of the country under Helmut Kohl's leadership and thereby deprived the extreme right of one of its central themes of the post-war decades (Stöss 2005: 38-40, 86). For another, the CSU and parts of the CDU took up the immigration issue already in the early 1980s. A few weeks before the fall of the social-liberal coalition, CDU leader Helmut Kohl demanded the reduction of the

number of foreigners in Germany, and the CSU continued to campaign against refugees (Thränhardt 1995, Schmidtke 2004).

Obviously, then, the established right pursued a similar strategy to that of its counter-part in France in the early 1980s. The crucial difference, however, lies in the reaction of the left. Using Meguid's terms (2005), the Socialists in France pursued an "adversarial strategy" regarding traditionalist-communitarian issues, making multiculturalism a central claim, while the SPD employed a "dismissive strategy" by systematically downplaying the immigration question. In retrospect, Helmut Schmidt explained that the SPD in 1980 had decided not to ask for local voting rights for foreigners because this went "against the instincts of our core electorate", namely, their blue-collar constituency (Thränhardt 1995: 327, Schmidtke 2004: 166-7). In the early 1990s, the SPD again avoided a stretching of the ideological space. When Germany was confronted with large numbers of migrants and refugees from Eastern Europe and former Yugoslavia, spurring a wave of extreme right activism and violence, the Union parties, then in government, reacted promptly. They modified the constitution to allow for a far more restrictive immigration policy. The Union parties argued that the "threshold of tolerance" and of the capacity to assimilate foreigners had been reached, and succeeded in forcing the SPD into the so-called "asylum compromise" (Schmidtke 2004: 169). The resolute reaction of the Union and the agreement of the SPD to the new asylum law ousted the issue from the political agenda.

The integration of foreigners became a more polarizing issue in 1999 when the red-green coalition announced to reform Germany's nationality law and attempted to allow the dual nationality for long-standing foreign residents and their children. In response, the Union parties launched a large debate on national identity, the CDU's parliamentary leader Friedrich Merz demanding that immigrants must conform to Germany's "guiding culture" ("Leitkultur"). As a consequence, the new nationality law was drafted in close collaboration with the opposition, because the government wanted to keep the issue out of partisan politics. In the event, the proposition was watered down considerably.

The positions of parties and voters presented in Figure 7 show a clear break between the situation in the mid-1970s and the three more recent contests, where the old contrast is no longer present. The most striking feature of the new pattern is that the two major parties, the SPD and the CDU, no longer take strongly opposing

positions, and that the same holds true for their electorates. In the 1994 contest, a year after the new immigration law took effect, the SPD and CDU lie very close to one another, a finding confirmed in the later elections. Together, the major parties lie closer to the libertarian-universalistic pole in 1994, move to the centre of the spectrum in 1998, and then move back to the left in 2002 (the basic pattern of oppositions remains similar in 2002 and is therefore not shown in Figure 7 for reasons of space). In the 1994 election, newspapers very much focused on the three traditional German parties, and we cannot place the smaller actors, which tend to take much more extreme positions in the later contests.

A new pattern of opposition has thus emerged, which is characterized by similar political stances of the SPD and Union parties, while the smaller parties occupy the universalistic space to the left of the SPD, which the latter has abandoned since the mid-1970s. This pattern mirrors the distribution of preferences on the voter side. Except for 1998, where the figure for match barely reaches the level indicating congruent representation, the correlation between the positions of parties and those of their voters is very high, indicating that the party system is responsive to voter preferences. While large parts of the electorate are thus bound into an alliance with two major centrist parties, the forefront of the New Left is mobilized by the Ecologists, whose voters consistently lie at the universalistic pole of the divide. This implies an imbalance in the party system, since there is no counter-pole to the Ecologists mobilizing voters at the traditionalist-communitarian extreme of the preference distribution. A potential for differentiation would exist on the right, however. Since the centre of the axis halves the distribution of respondents, and many voters therefore clearly lie to the right of the average CDU/CSU voter.

However, apart from the small group of extreme right followers, these voters do not seem inclined to support new or anti-establishment political parties. In fact, it is interesting to note that those who voted for the Republikaner in 1994 do not appear more extreme than Christian Democrat voters at all. This could indicate that a considerable share of them were protest voters, as Westle and Niedermayer (1992) have suspected, while Falter (1994) has found evidence that these voters in fact hold extremist world-views. With the data used here, however, reliable conclusions are precluded by the extremely limited number of Republikaner voters in the sample (N=9). In the two more recent elections, where there are more respondents, the situation is different. Here, the voters of the Republikaner, the NPD, and the DVU are

subsumed under the (unreformed) extreme right label, and this electorate is clearly situated at the extreme of the cultural dimension. As we would expect, they express fierce opposition both against immigration and cultural liberalism. At the same time, these parties are unable to mobilize voters beyond their core constituency of hard-line authoritarians.

To explain the absence of success of a right-wing populist challenger in Germany, the established parties' handling of the immigration issue appears most relevant, apart from the stigmatization that is associated with supporting parties that appear as right-wing extremist. By and large, the established parties have kept the immigration issue off the political agenda after the reform of the immigration law, containing its saliency. To a large degree, voters with traditionalist-communitarian world-views vote for the Union parties. However, it does not seem that the Union parties permanently mobilize the traditionalist-communitarian potential by virtue of their extreme position, but rather that this potential most of the time remains latent and does not manifest itself politically. This, in turn, is only possible because of the collusive strategy the major parties of the left and right generally pursue, combined with the Union's moving to the right whenever the immigration issue actually surfaces in the public debate. As the bars indicating the standard deviation of voter preferences shows, the electorates of the SPD and Union parties are characterized by similar degrees of heterogeneity and overlap to some degree. Only the Ecologists consistently mobilize a markedly universalistic-minded electorate and thus escape the centripetal dynamic. To a more limited degree, the same holds true for the post-socialist PDS, but in the elections under study here, this remains a phenomenon confined to Eastern Germany.

The centripetal nature of competition between the major parties of the left and right along the cultural divide helps to explain the limited success of parties attempting to mobilize a similar clientele as right-wing populist parties do in other countries. By leaving the libertarian-universalistic spectrum to the Ecologists, the Social Democrat party has abandoned the New Left conviction it displayed in the 1970s and has moved to a more orthodox "Old Left" position. Although these loyalties are in decline, blue-collar workers, which together with those who have low levels of formal education represent the core clientele of right-wing populist parties in other countries, have remained more faithful to the Social Democratic left in Germany than elsewhere (Pappi, Mnich 1992, Pappi 2002). And this is the case despite the fact that skilled and unskilled workers as well as citizens with little formal education have developed

relatively anti-universalistic and anti-immigrant orientations since the 1970s to a similar degree in Germany as in other Western European countries (see Kriesi et al. 2008 and in particular Dolezal 2008a). It is quite plausible that the SPD has prevented the alienation of this electorate as a consequence of its centrist stances regarding the conflict between libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian conceptions of community.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to develop a model that can explain first, the emergence of new divisions – that may eventually consolidate into cleavages – and secondly, why new conflicts result in the entry of new parties into the political arena some cases and not in others. This implies paying attention to how firmly electorates are anchored in the older divisions that have brought Western European party systems into being, which is the central focus of the cleavage approach, as well as to the varying strategies the established parties may employ. First of all, whether or not the established parties continue to take conflicting positions with respect to the older cleavages has important implications for the chances for new divisions to manifest themselves in politics. Secondly, the strategies of the established parties may differ with respect to new, potentially dividing issues that shape the political agenda due to the mobilization of social movements or of new parties seeking to redraw the lines of conflict structuring the party system. The analytical strategy developed in this paper encompasses both of these aspects. And as the application of the model to France and Germany has shown, these factors indeed impinge on the way the new cultural conflict between libertarian-universalistic vs. traditionalist-communitarian has manifested itself in political life, and on the transformation of the party system that this has resulted in.

Both in France, as well as in Germany, the force of the traditional class and religious cleavages has declined. Despite exhibiting rather low levels of polarization on the party and on the voter side, however, the state-market cleavage still entails rather strong partisan loyalties that retard the manifestation of new political potentials, especially in Germany. While the issues related to the state-market opposition continue to play an important role in election campaigns, it has been the waning of the religious cleavage that has paved the way for the emergence of a new cultural divide across

Western Europe. While the libertarian-authoritarian antagonism characteristic of the 1970s was still reminiscent of the issues related to the religious cleavage, the meaning of the cultural divide has been transformed by the advent of the issue of community on the political agenda. As a result of new issues related to immigration and multiculturalism, a transformed line of opposition has taken shape throughout Western Europe.

The nature of this conflict differs in the various countries, however, and whether or not a right-wing populist party has been able to assert itself impinges heavily on the pattern of oppositions prevalent in the party system. In France, as in other countries in which the populist right has made its breakthrough in the 1990s, the segmented pattern of oppositions along the cultural line of opposition suggests that the phase of realignment has come to an end, and that the new division has consolidated into an enduring cleavage. The Front National commands the highest loyalties of all ideological blocks along the cultural dimension. Given the strength the populist right has reached, it is rather improbable that disputes over the proper definition of binding norms, over what constitutes the basis of the national community, and over the challenge posed to national sovereignty by European unification should recede all too soon. Political conflict will therefore reinforce the collective political identities underlying the antagonism between libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values. For those who have been socialized into the new structure of conflicts, cognitive representations of politics centre on cultural, and not economic antagonisms. Considerable parts of the Front National's electorate acclaim Jean-Marie Le Pen's statement that the terms of left and right have become meaningless and that the real antagonism has to do with identity.

In Germany, on the other hand, oppositions along the cultural divide have oscillated between a segmented and an identitarian cleavage since the 1970s, facilitating the containment of the extreme right potential. The Social Democrats' abandonment of the decidedly libertarian-universalistic position they had held in the 1970s, together with the Christian Democrats' ability to crown out their occasional right-wing populist competitors has resulted in a rather centripetal pattern of oppositions in Germany. Because the Christian Democrat Union parties have retained the ownership of the issues related to traditionalism and immigration, and have the continuing ability to rally voters holding traditionalist-communitarian preferences, the structural potentials related to the new cultural conflict manifest themselves in tempered form. Contrary to earlier studies, the analysis has revealed that the most important factor impinging on

the fortune of the populist right in Germany lies in the moderate position of the mainstream left. While the Social Democrats' abandonment of their libertarian-universalistic stance has spurred the support for what has become one of the most successful Ecologist parties in Europe, this has also resulted in a centripetal pattern of competition between the two major parties that has prevented a segmentation of party and voter positions along the cultural divide.

Similarly to France, however, it is not the strength of the state-market cleavage that precludes a stronger polarization along the cultural line of conflict. In fact, competition along the economic cleavage in the two countries most of the time is characterized by what I have termed an identitarian opposition, where the loyalties of voters, rather than ongoing political conflict stabilize alignments. The absence of a right-wing populist party in Germany thus depends on the continuing ability of the major parties of the left and right in keeping issues related to immigration out of politics and on the capacity of the Christian Democrats to cater the issue should it force its way on the agenda. The dominance of the Christian Democrats in the right-wing spectrum gives them considerable leeway to shift their positions when new issues emerge and to take pronounced stances without risking to lose to a more centre-right competitor. The situation in France in the 1970s was quite different in this respect (see Bornschier 2008). Competition within the right and the Gaullists' attempt to displace the centre-right UDF as the dominant party of the right put the issues of national sovereignty on the agenda for the first time, and the Gaullists are now haunted by a ghost they had helped to bring to birth.

Appendix A: Datasets Used for Demand Side Analyses

France

1978: Enquête post-électorale française, 1978 (q0062)

1988: Enquête post-électorale française, 1988 (q0601)

1995: Enquête post-électorale française, 1995 (q0891)

2002: Panel électoral français 2002 (PEF 2002)

Germany

1976: Wahlstudie 1976 (ZA0823)

1994: Nachwahlstudie 1994 (ZA 2601)

1998: Politische Einstellungen, politische Partizipation und Wählerverhalten im vereinigten Deutschland 1998 (ZA 3066)

2002: Bundestagswahlstudie 2002 (ZA 3861)

Appendix B: Issue Categories and Indicators Used for Demand Side Analyses

Table A.1: Relevant issue-categories per election and those operationalized on the demand side, France and Germany

	Economic dimension		Cultural dimension		
France					
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Budget	
1978	X	X	X	–	
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Immigr	
1988	X	X	2 dim.	X	
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Immigr	
1995	–	2 dim.	X	X	
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Immigr	
2002	–	X	X	X	
Germany					
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Budget	Army
1976	X	X	X	–	–
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Immigration	
1994	X	X	X	X	
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Immigration	
1998	–	X	X	X	
	Welfare	Ecolib	Cultlib	Immigration	
2002	–	X	X	X	

Note: X denotes that the category can be operationalized and that a single dimension results from the factor analysis. In two cases, the solution is two-dimensional (“2 dim.”), and both underlying variables are used for the construction of the axis. See Bornschieer (2007a) for a detailed explanation of this procedure.

Table A.2: Indicators used for the operationalization of issue-categories on the demand side in France

1978

var	description	category
t26	supprimer avantages pour réduire inégalités sociales	welfare
t27	élargir le secteur nationalisé	ecolib
t29	limiter augmentation du niveau de vie pour lutter contre l'inflation	ecolib
t30	interdire les licenciements	ecolib
t71	supprimer le droit de grève ?	ecolib
t64	fier d'être français ?	cultlib
t73	pouvoir prendre la pilule avant la majorité ?	cultlib
t77	rôle de l'école : discipline ou esprit critique ?	cultlib
t87	envoyer les enfants au catéchisme	cultlib

1988

var	description	category
q1a6	Salaires égaux: n'encouragent pas à travailler	ecolib
q4	Difficultés économiques: Etat doit-il contrôler entreprises ?	ecolib
q31a2	Etat : devrait garantir revenu minimum	welfare
q31a9	Rétablir impôt sur grandes fortunes	welfare
q2a1	Couple non marié : condamnable ?	trad. values
q2a2	Avortement : condamnable ?	trad. values
q2a3	Infidélité : condamnable ?	trad. values
q2a4	Homosexualité : condamnable ?	trad. values
q31a6	Femme : faite pour élever les enfants ?	trad. values
q31a7	Société : il faut une hiérarchie	cultlib
q10	Rôle de l'école : discipline ou esprit critique ?	cultlib
q1a4	Fier d'être français	cultlib
q31a5	Juifs ont trop de pouvoir en France	cultlib
q31a8	Normal que les musulmans en France aient des mosquées	cultlib
q1a9	Trop d'immigrés en France	immigration
q31a3	On ne se sent plus chez soi comme avant	immigration

1995

var	description	category
q36	priorité: compétitivité ou situation des salaires	ecolib
q20a2	l'Etat intervient-il trop ou pas assez dans la vie économique	ecolib
q7a1	trop d'immigrés en France	immigration
q7a6	on ne se sent plus chez soi comme avant	immigration
q7a3	homosexualité est acceptable	cultlib
q7a5	normal que les musulmans en France aient des mosquées	cultlib
q7a7	normal qu'une femme puisse avorter	cultlib
q22a1	rôle de l'école : discipline ou esprit critique	cultlib
q20a1	rôle de la femme (à la maison ou même rôle que hommes)	cultlib

Positive/negative feelings:

var	description	category
q21a4	compétition	ecolib
q21a5	profit	ecolib
q21a6	syndicat	ecolib
q21a7	nationalisation	ecolib
q21a12	privatisation	ecolib
q21a2	féminisme	cultlib
q21a8	autorité	cultlib
q21a13	islam	immigration

2002, Wave 2

var	description	category
xq237	interdire les licenciements	ecolib
xq239	Difficultés économiques: Etat doit-il contrôler entreprises ?	ecolib
xq255	recherches sur le génôme humain	cultlib
xq58	rôle de l'école : discipline ou esprit critique	cultlib
xq39p2_4	les juifs ont trop de pouvoir en France	cultlib
xq39p2_1	trop d'immigrés en France	immigration
xq39p2_3	immigrés : source d'enrichissement culturel	immigration

Table A.2: Indicators used for the operationalization of issue-categories on the demand side in Germany

1976

var	description	category
v503	Staatliche Kontrollen vs. wirtschaftliche Entscheidungen	ecolib
v505	Wohlfahrtsstaat: Staat vs. Eigenverantwortung	welfare
v504	Öffentliche Ordnung vs. persönliche Freiheit	cultlib
v518	Einstellung Scheidungsrecht	cultlib
v519	Einstellung Abtreibungsrecht	cultlib
v506	Politisches Mitspracherecht der Kirchen?	cultlib

1994

var	description	category
v39	Skala zur staatlichen Wirtschaftsbelebung	ecolib
v42	Skala zu staatlichem Wohnungsangebot	ecolib
v104	Zustimmung, dass Gehorsam und Disziplin wichtig	cultlib
v100	Mehr oder weniger Geld für Renten/Pensionen	welfare
v27	Wichtigkeit, dass Staat für mehr Wohnungen sorgt	welfare
v30	Wichtigkeit Zuzug von Ausländern zu regeln	immig
v41	Skala: Ausländerzuzug erleichtern/erschweren	immig
v44	Müssen sich Ausländer anpassen?	immig
v45	Ausländer zurückschicken?	immig
v46	Politische Rechte für Ausländer	immig
v47	Ausländer – Ehen mit Deutschen?	immig

1998

var	description	category
v177a	Verantwortung Staat Arbeitsplatz für jeden	ecolib
v350b	Einstellung Nationalisierung wichtiger Unternehmen	ecolib
v176c	Wichtigkeit Gleichstellung	cultlib
v350a	Stolz Deutscher zu sein	cultlib
v350c	Wieder Mut zu einem starken Nationalgefühl	cultlib
v174b	Skala Immigration	immig
v350l	Überfremdung durch Ausländer	immig
v350n	Zustimmung Ausländer sollten Landsleute heiraten	immig
v350r	Verständnis für Angriffe Asylbewerberheime	immig

2002

var	description	category
v350b	Einstellung Nationalisierung wichtiger Unternehmen	ecolib
v350a	Stolz Deutscher zu sein	cultlib
v350c	Wieder Mut zu einem starken Nationalgefühl	cultlib
v174b	Skala Immigration	immig
v350l	Überfremdung durch Ausländer	immig
v350n	Zustimmung Ausländer sollten Landsleute heiraten	immig
v350r	Verständnis für Angriffe Asylbewerberheime	immig

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