

The Role of Historical Cleavages and of the Transformation of Political Space in the Rise of Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe

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1. Introduction

In the course of the last two decades, right-wing populist parties have gained sizable vote shares in France, Switzerland, and Austria. In the Netherlands, Pim Fortuyn has succeeded in breaking into a party system whose segmentation and “pillarization” once made it an example of stability. Throughout much of the post-war period, Switzerland and Austria had also been marked by a high stability of the party alternatives. In these and in other countries, the success of new parties of the right has largely surpassed that of older parties of the extreme right, which seemed to have represented a “normal pathology” resulting from tensions created by rapid change in industrial societies (Scheuch, Klingemann 1967). Certainly, the optimism of the “golden age” of growth after World War II has given way to a more gloomy feelings of malaise in the era of unemployment and austerity politics. The enduring success of right-wing populist parties, however, as well as the increasing similarity of their discourse suggest that they are more than a populist outbreak of disenchantment with electoral politics. Rather, it has become apparent that a common potential must underlie their rise.

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. More specifically, the populist right rides the tide of a broader societal movement that represents a counter-offensive to the universalistic values advocated by the New Social Movements of the left that have come up in the 1960s. The subsequent emergence of Ecologist parties and the New Left transformation of Social Democracy have caused a first restructuring of political space in the 1970s and 1980s (Kitschelt 1994). In contrast, the populist right has driven a second re-definition of the dimensions of political conflict in the 1990s (Kriesi et al. 2006). A new cultural line of conflict has thereby taken shape across Europe that opposes libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values.

As a result of their programmatic convergence, right-wing populist parties have come to occupy a position at the traditionalist-communitarian pole of the new cultural divide. Apart from their distinctive position in political space, two further attributes distinguish the populist right from other parties. 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 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 opposition to European integration. Within the wider extreme right party family, the extreme populist right represents an ideologically more moderate subgroup, both by virtue of its "differentialist nativist" discourse, as well as its explicit adherence to democratic rule.

According to my argument, these parties mobilize political potentials that oppose societal evolutions that began in the 1960s as a consequence of an enlarged structural basis for universalistic values – whose spread is an outcome of the critical juncture of the educational revolution. This of course raises the question why it took the traditionalist-communitarian potential so long to manifest itself in partisan politics, after the libertarian-universalistic movement had early on led to the formation of Ecologist parties and the transformation of Social Democratic or Socialist parties. While a first theme of this paper is to demonstrate the background of right-wing populist parties' mobilization in terms of ideology and societal potentials, the second objective is to place the emergence of this new party family in the wider context of stability and change of party systems. More specifically, I suggest that we should pay attention to the interplay between the traditional conflicts that underlie European party systems, and new political conflicts that may or may not alter the dominant patterns of oppositions. 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. In a similar vein, Kriesi and Duyvendak (1995) have argued that a zero-sum relationship exists between the strength of the existing cleavages and the political potentials for the manifestation of new conflicts.

This paper is organized as follows. In the next section, I substantiate the claim that the populist right represents a counter-movement to the New Social Movements of the left by demonstrating that the populist right's traditionalist-communitarian discourse represents a polar normative ideal to the libertarian-universalistic conviction of the New Left. In the third section, I present an analytical model that incorporates the study

of political conflict into the study of cleavages by taking into account the policy content of party competition both at the party and at the voter level. To determine the space available for the emergence of new conflicts, different types of cleavage are distinguished using three elements: The distances in parties' issue-positions across a cleavage, the degree of correspondence between the positions of parties and the preferences of their voters, and the stability of voter-party alignments. This results in a typology of different types of divide that have varying consequences for the mobilization of new conflicts.

In the final section, I present some results from an empirical application of the theoretical framework, testing the capacity of the model to explain why right-wing populist parties have been highly successful in France and Switzerland, but not in Germany. To analyze the programmatic content of party competition, I rely on data based on a sentence-by-sentence coding of the newspaper coverage of election campaigns in six countries (see Kriesi et al. 2006). By means of this data, the axes structuring political competition are determined using Multidimensional Scaling (MDS). Each cleavage is then examined separately using the model described above. On the demand side, voters' positions along these lines of conflict are measured using survey data. A comparison of the 1970s and the 1990s then provides the opportunity, first, to assess how the programmatic content of the traditional cleavages has been transformed, second, to identify which of the theoretically developed types of cleavages current oppositions correspond to, and finally, what consequences this has had on the success of the populist right.

2. The New Cultural Conflict

The advent of value-based conflicts in the late 1960s

Around 1968, new political issues came up that had more to do with values and lifestyles than with traditional, distributional conflicts. As Inglehart (1977) has put it, a "silent revolution" took place that led segments of society to question traditional societal values and forms of politics. Differing somewhat from this initial emphasis on

political styles (e.g., Offe 1985), the resulting disputes are now more often described as cultural and value-based in character. A “postmodern political conflict” has developed, which was characterized by Inglehart as an opposition between materialist and post-materialist values. As Flanagan and Lee (2003) have recently shown, an opposition between “libertarian” and “authoritarian” values continues to polarize the inhabitants of advanced industrial countries. The two authors conceive the shift from authoritarian to libertarian values as part of a long-term process of secularization, which leads from theism over modernism to postmodernism. In theism, the localization of authority is external and transcendental, and truth and morality are based on absolute principles. In modernism, it is still external, and universal, but based in and constructed by society. Finally, in postmodernism, the location of authority “has become internal and individual” (Flanagan, Lee 2003: 237). The mobilization and the counter-mobilization around the antagonisms between authority and autonomy, and between conformism and non-conformism, according to Flanagan and Lee, are expressions of this shift.

Consequently, after distributive issues had structured the left-right divide for a long time, the movements of the New Left brought value and identity issues on the political agenda. Dalton, Flanagan, and Beck (1984), together with Inglehart (1984), claimed early on that identity- and lifestyle-politics were transforming the traditional left-right dimension, leading to the political realignment of social groups that blurred the socio-structural basis of voting choice. In a similar vein, Kitschelt (1994) has then shown that in the 1980s, the value divide has created a two-dimensional political space in European party systems. Cutting across the “old” distributional axis, a line of conflict opposing libertarian and authoritarian values had come to structure the attitudes of voters. At the heart of this conflict, in Kitschelt’s account, are different conceptions of community, where the values of equality and liberty in a self-organized community form the one pole, while values centring on paternalism and corporatism form the opposite pole (Kitschelt 1994: 9-12).

This conception is quite similar to the somewhat broader pattern that Flanagan and Lee (2003) have detected. As a variety of sources of the policy positions of political parties show, political space in advanced western democracies is at least two, if not three-dimensional (Warwick 2002). However, it is not clear to which degree these dimensions are really new or if they have simply been rendered more salient in the past

decades. Most probably, this is due to the fact that the new value opposition so far has only been discussed in relation to the traditional class cleavage. But even if most European party systems do not carry the stamp of all four cleavages that resulted from the national and industrial revolutions (Rokkan 2000), many European countries are characterized by more than just one cleavage. With the religious cleavage representing the second common structuring element of European party systems (Kriesi 1994: 211-234), political space in multiparty systems is likely to have been two-dimensional already before the New Social Movements of the 1960s and 1970s transformed the meaning of „left“ and „right“. Indeed, Flanagan and Lee's (2003) explicitly relate today's libertarian-authoritarian value divide to an opposition between religious and secular worldviews.

On the political left, the prominence of libertarian political issues has given rise to the establishment of Ecologist parties and a transformation of Social Democratic parties early on in the 1980s, as Kitschelt (1994) has shown. As a result of this change, they have attracted an increasing number of votes from the middle class, especially in certain constituencies of it such as among the so-called social-cultural professionals (Kriesi 1993, 1998, Müller 1999). At least initially, the impact of this new dimension of conflict has had less of a uniform impact on the political right, although Kitschelt (1995) has argued that radical right parties constituted the opposite pole on the new libertarian-authoritarian axis of conflict, and in spite of Ignazi's (1992, 2003) early interpretation of radical right parties are a “by-product of a Silent Counter-revolution” to Inglehart's “Silent Revolution”. Kitschelt's (1995: Ch. 1) explicit differentiation of European radical right-wing parties exemplifies the heterogeneity of this category.

Paradoxically, while empirical studies have shown that an authoritarian potential arose at approximately the same time as the libertarian potential (Sacchi 1998), this has not immediately resulted in strong support for traditionalist stances. For the traditionalist or authoritarian potential to be politicized in a way that mobilizes broad segments of society, it has to be connected with more concrete political conflicts that are conducive to collective identity formation. Both social movement theory, as well as Cleavage-theory teaches us that a durable organization of collective interests requires the prior construction of a collective identity (Melucci 1996, Klandermans 1997, Tarrow 1992, Pizzorno 1986, 1991, Rokkan 2000, Bartolini, Mair 1990, Bartolini 2000). Whereas the libertarian movements demanded the recognition of

difference, the traditionalist-authoritarian pattern, although equally an expression of identity politics, is essentially conservative, rather than liberating. As a conservative movement, the underlying values and goals appear more diffuse than those leading to the grass-roots mobilization of the movements of the libertarian left. Consequently, their political manifestation depends much more heavily on the deliberate molding of a collective identity by political elites.

With their “identitarian turn”, as Betz (2004) has termed it, right-wing populist parties appear to have found a political message that is conducive to collective identity formation, resulting in a convergence of their programmatic profile in a number of European countries in the 1990s (Bornschiefer 2005a). I postulate the programmatic profile right-wing populist parties to have converged regarding two features that make this party family represent the counter-pole to the libertarian left. The first centres on the new issues or discourses embodied in their anti-immigration stance, which does not involve ethnic racism, but rather what Betz (2002, 2004) has called “differentialist nativism” or “cultural racism”. A second group of issues brought up by the populist right represents a reaction against the societal changes brought about by the libertarian left, and includes the rejection of the multicultural model of society as well as universalistic values in general. Both groups of issues are theoretically as well as empirically situated at one pole of a new line of conflict that may be labelled libertarian-universalistic vs. traditionalist-communitarian, as we shall see. The next section will briefly substantiate the claim that the issues advocated by the libertarian left and the populist right are indeed polar normative ideas.

The libertarian-universalistic vs. traditionalist-communitarian axis of conflict

From a theoretical perspective, Rokeach (1973) has suggested early on that the space of possible ideological positions is two-dimensional. While Rokeach finds a number of values to structure people’s belief systems, there are severe limits to the number of combinations that are effectively viable when it comes to politically relevant values. Furthermore, the range of possibilities is limited because most combinations of values are devoid of “human activity”, as Wildavsky (1987: 6) puts it. That is, they are not viable because they have no cultural or historical material to draw upon, no relevant

paradigms or blueprints. As a consequence, Rokeach proposes a model where politically relevant ideologies are ultimately combinations of two values: freedom and equality. Similar dimensions are found in the accounts of Wildavsky and his colleagues (Wildavsky 1987, Thompson et al. 1990), and while there is disagreement concerning the labelling of the two dimensions, they essentially correspond to those propagated by Kitschelt (1994): Conflicts over the value of equality structure the state-market axis, while differing emphases on freedom structure the universalistic vs. communitarian or libertarian vs. authoritarian axis of conflict. In other words, these issues are not new as such; only their rising salience is intrinsic to post-industrial societies.

A synthesis of normative models of democracy provided by Fuchs (2002: 40-43) suggests that our conception of viable value-combinations indeed draws on existing blueprints or normative substantiations. In Fuchs' mapping, a first dimension that is observable within political thought represents the responsibility of citizens' life, opposing self-responsibility and a strong role of the state in achieving material equality, corresponding to the established state-market line of conflict. The second dimension concerns the nature of the relationship between individuals. It is exemplified by libertarian or liberal conceptions of democracy on the one hand and republican conceptions on the other.

This latter dimension is at the centre of the ongoing philosophical debate between liberals and communitarians, opposing individualist and communitarian conceptions of the person (see Honneth 1993). Implicit in this discussion is an opposition between universalistic and traditionalistic values. Although communitarian thinkers such as Walzer (1983) and Taylor (1992) only propose a (modest) communitarian corrective to liberal universalism, this debate has provided theoretical grounds for a more far-reaching critique of the universalistic principles established by Rawls (1971). As an example of the liberal account, Dahl (1989) denies any substantive values as constituting the common good. In his conception, the common good consists in the conditions of equal participation – in the universalistic democratic process itself, in other words.

Even moderate communitarians such as Michael Walzer (1983, 1990) and Charles Taylor (1992) have argued that universalistic principles may violate cultural traditions within an established community and therefore engender the danger of being

oppressive. If humans are inherently social beings, the application of universalistic principles may lead to political solutions that clash with established cultural practices. And since the liberal-universalistic theory no less than other accounts ultimately depends on the plausibility of this conception of the individual, this view cannot be considered as more objective than a communitarian approach, as Taylor (1992) argues. Communitarians, on the other hand, urge us to acknowledging the fact that our identities are grounded in cultural traditions, and that an individualistic conception of the self is misconceived.

Philosophical currents of the European New Right have borrowed from communitarian conceptions of community and justice in their propagation of the concept of “cultural differentialism”, claiming not the superiority of any nationality or race, but instead stressing the right of peoples to preserve their distinctive traditions. This discourse, in turn, has proved highly influential for the discourse of right-wing populist parties (Antonio 2000, Minkenberg 2000). Thus, the liberal-communitarian debate may well have rendered such ideas more plausible, although I would not go as far as suggesting a substantial affinity between the two currents, as Birnbaum (1996) has claimed. However, what seems plausible is that communitarian arguments have provided a “blueprint” (in the above-mentioned sense) or a broader justification for the right-wing populist parties’ differentialist discourse, which is much harder to attack intellectually than biological racism.

From a theoretical point of view, then, the defence of cultural tradition and a rejection of the multicultural model of society represent a counter-pole to individualistic and universalistic conceptions of community. Immigration is directly linked to this conflict since the inflow of people from other cultural backgrounds endangers the cultural homogeneity that thinkers of the New Right as well as exponents of right-wing populist parties deem necessary to preserve. Equally present in communitarian thinking as well as in the discourse of the populist right is an emphasis of the primacy of politics over abstract normative principles. In Walzer’s (1983: Ch. 2) account, the right to self-determination within a political community includes the right to limit immigration in order to preserve established ways of life.

If the reasoning so far is correct, one thing that is left to explain is the timing of the hypothesized convergence in programmatic profile. If the populist right represents a reaction to the values of the New Left, why was this reaction not immediate? And if right-wing populist parties' common programmatic profile after their "identitarian turn" (Betz 2004) was "invented" by the French Front National in the early 1980s and then adopted by other parties in a process of cross-national diffusion of frames, as Rydgren (2005) has argued, why did it take parties such as the *Swiss People's Party* or the Austrian *Freedom Party* several years to reach their high levels of electoral success? Here, I suggest that we have to address the relationship between traditional political dividing lines, such as the class and religious cleavages, whose importance may have declined, and the rise of new cultural divisions. To the degree that the collective identities and organizational loyalties related to the traditional cleavages decline, they leave room for the mobilization of new group divisions.

3. Cleavages and Lines of Conflict: A Typology of Alignments and Their Implications for the Mobilization Potential of New Conflicts

Cleavages and lines of opposition

The historical cleavages that have led to the formation of European party systems continue to play an important role in the structuring of political competition. Indeed, "the party alternatives, and in remarkably many cases the party organizations, are older than the majorities of national electorates" (Lipset, Rokkan 1990 [1967]: 134). However, this does not mean that there is no change in the content of the conflicts carried out between parties. On the contrary, as Mair (1997) has insisted, the historical party organization's remarkable resilience over time is precisely due to their ability to adapt to structural and cultural changes, and thereby to remain responsive to the preferences of the citizenry. However, building on the notion that conflict has group-binding functions (Cosser 1956), we can expect the stability of group attachments underlying a cleavage to depend on the degree of conflict between parties regarding

the issues tied to traditional cleavages. Accordingly, a perceived de-emphasis of traditional conflicts in the eyes of voters opens the way to a rising salience of other dimensions of conflict. As Schattschneider (1975: Ch. 4) has put it, every form of political organization has a bias to the mobilization of some conflicts while not being receptive to others. More specifically, political identities related to traditional cleavages based on class and religion have typically crosscut broader ascriptive or identity categories based on ethnicity. It is only when the established cleavage structure no longer “organizes” issues cutting across established lines of division “out of politics”, in Schattschneider’s famous words, that new issues can ascend. An assessment of the structuring power of the established cleavages therefore requires an analysis of the policy opposition that structure interactions in the party system.¹

The aim in this section is briefly to present 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. This results in a typology of different types of divides that have varying consequences for the mobilization of new conflicts, such as the antagonism between libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian conceptions of community. At the same time, the approach presented in this section is not specifically focused on right-wing populist parties, but provides a general model to assess the chances for new political conflicts to gain room.

In order to analyse political conflicts, I use the term *line of opposition* to denote a polarization which structures party competition in a given election. Through its tight conjunction with the policy level of party competition, it denotes 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

1 This argument is presented in more detail in Bornschieer (2007a, 2007b).

present within an electorate, but not every cleavage finds expression in a separate line of opposition.

At the same time, 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 (Lipset, Rokkan 1990 [1967], 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 may 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. Drawing on the work of Bartolini and Mair (1990: 19-52, 68-95), as well as Kriesi and Duyvendak (1995), we can differentiate cleavages 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 *saliency of a divide*, I depart from their approach in focusing on the *polarization* regarding the issues around which it 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 follows from the central role I attribute to political conflict in perpetuating cleavage structures (Bornschieer 2007a, 2007b).

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 *saliency* of a divide. (2) The *match between the positions of parties and their voters* along this line of opposition, 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 1 shows the possible combinations of these three elements. The starting point for analysis is a single dimension structuring 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 1, 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*. The term segmentation comes from depictions of consociational democracy and there denotes deeply rooted identities such as language or religion. However, following Mair (1997: 162-171), it can fruitfully be used for any deep political opposition entailing strong loyalties and party preferences of certain 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. 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 1: 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>Party 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 between parties are low. Congruence with their electorates' preferences being given, this means that electorates are not far apart either. The first case is that of an *identitarian cleavage*, where party preferences are stable due to strong collective identities of social groups, constituting 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 (but see Barry 1978 and Powell 2000). 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 in political identity 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. An exception to this scenario would be if the established parties agreed not to address issues evolving around new oppositions, which would open space for anti-cartel parties.

(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. 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 appears to be the case regarding parties' stances towards European integration (Bartolini 2005, Kriesi et al. 2006). In these cases, where 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. Cartellization can be further 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.

One of the problems involved in an analysis centring on parties and their respective electorates is that a non-responsive party system can generate both support for new or anti-establishment parties, as well as abstention from voting. For example, right-wing populist parties quite often seem to recruit their voters from previous non-voters, as the example of the French Front National shows (Mayer 2002). More generally, Goldthorpe (2002) has for instance argued that while class voting may be in decline, the relationship between class and non-voting may fortify as a result of the processes of modernization and globalization. Thus, any analysis seeking to gauge the chances of the emergence of new lines of opposition should keep an eye on non-voters. I will therefore take abstention into account when measuring the stability of alignments.

4. An Empirical Application of the Model: The New Cultural Conflict and the Varying Success of the Populist Right

In this section, I present some aggregate-level results from an application of the model to the study of patterns of opposition in three Western European countries. The aim is to explain why right-wing populist parties have emerged in France and Switzerland, while parties of this type have remained largely without success in Germany. France and Switzerland were chosen because they represent two different routes to the emergence of a right-wing populist party. France is a case where a newly founded party of this type gained success from the early 1980s on, while in Switzerland an

established conservative party underwent a transformation to a party of the populist right. The first step in the analysis is to determine the dimensionality of political space in these three countries, and to determine the lines of conflict underlying political competition. I then demonstrate how the ideological blocks along the resulting divides are identified and how the polarization of the party system and the match between the positions of parties and their voters are measured. For reasons of space, the presentation of the procedure is only illustrative, and I concentrate on the final results of the analysis.

Determining the dimensionality of political space in the parties' programmatic offer

To be able to identify the lines of conflict structuring political competition in democratic elections, I rely on data based on the media coverage of election campaigns in six European countries. 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 been collected within the research project "National political change in a denationalizing world" (Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschier, Frey 2006), and is based on a sentence by sentence coding of party positions as reported in the newspaper coverage of election campaigns, using the method developed by Jan Kleinnijenhuis and his collaborators (see Kleinnijenhuis and De Ridder 1998 and Kleinnijenhuis and Pennings 2001). For each election, we selected all articles related to the electoral contest or politics in general during the last two months before Election Day in a quality newspaper and a tabloid. The data covers one election in the 1970s and three more recent elections that took place between the late 1980s and early 2000s. Parties' programmatic offer is coded in the two months preceding each election. The election in the 1970s serves as a point of reference before the most recent restructuring of conflicts in Western European party systems took place. More specifically, in the 1970s we expect 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 rise of the New Right, is traced in the three more recent contests.

To code political issues, a detailed schema was used, distinguishing between 200 or more categories. For the statistical analysis, they were regrouped into 12 broader categories. In the following, the content of these categories is specified. All categories have a clear direction, and actor's stance towards them can be either positive or negative. The abbreviations in brackets refer to the ones used in later figures:

Economic issues

- *Welfare*: Expansion of the welfare state and defence against welfare state retrenchment. Tax reforms that have redistributive effects, employment programs, health care programs. Valence issues such as statements “against unemployment” or “against recession” were dropped if there was no specification whether the goal was to be achieved by state intervention or by deregulation.
- *Budget*: Budgetary rigor, reduction of the state deficit, cut on expenditures, reduction of taxes that have no effects on redistribution.
- *Economic liberalism (ecolib)*: Support for deregulation, for more competition, and for privatisation. Opposition to market regulation, provided that the proposed measures do not have an impact on state expenditure – this is the distinguishing criterion from the Welfare-category. Opposition to economic protectionism in agriculture and other sectors.

Cultural issues

- *Cultural liberalism (cultlib)*: Support for the goals of the New Social Movements: Peace, solidarity with the third world, gender equality, human rights. Support for cultural diversity, international cooperation (except for the European Union and Nato), support for the United Nations. Opposition to racism, support for the right to abortion and euthanasia and for a liberal drug policy. *Cultural protectionism, coded negative*: Patriotism, calls for national solidarity, defence of tradition and national sovereignty, traditional moral values.
- *Europe*: Support for European integration – including enlargement – or for EU-membership in the cases of Switzerland and Austria.
- *Culture*: Support for education, culture, and scientific research.
- *Immigration*: Support for a tough immigration and integration policy, and for the restriction of the number of foreigners.
- *Army*: Support for the army (including Nato), for a strong national defence and for nuclear weapons.

- *Security*: Support for more law and order, fight against criminality and political corruption.

Residual categories

- *Environment (eco)*: Calls for environmental protection, opposition to atomic energy.
- *Institutional reform (iref)*: Support for various institutional reforms such as the extension of direct democratic rights, calls for the efficiency of the public administration.
- *Infrastructure (infra)*: Support for the improvement of the infrastructure.

The data are now analysed using Multidimensional Scaling (MDS), which results in a graphical representation of parties and issues in a low-dimensional space in every country. The grouping of the issues into economic, cultural, and residual categories is provided for illustrative purposes and does not determine the analysis. To give salient relationships between political actors and issues more weight than less salient ones, a Weighted Metric Multidimensional Scaling is used. There are always distortions between the “real” distances and their graphical representation in the low-dimensional space resulting from the MDS, but the weighting procedure ensures that the distances corresponding to salient relationships between parties and issues will be more accurate than less salient ones. The results thus take into account both position and saliency.

In the three countries, political space proves to be clearly two-dimensional, since the move from a one-dimensional to a two-dimensional representation results in the clearest improvement in the goodness-of-fit of the solution. The results of the analysis are presented in Figure 2. Because the dimensions underlying the three campaigns between the late 1980s and early 2000s remain the same in every country, only the latest election is shown in Figure 2. It has to be kept in mind that the dimensions resulting from the MDS analysis are not substantially meaningful. The solution can therefore be freely rotated and it is possible to lay theoretically meaningful axes into the distribution. In the solutions, a first line has been drawn between “welfare” and “economic liberalism” as representation of the traditional state-market cleavage. The second line of conflict is a cultural opposition. As a consequence of the mobilization of the New Social Movements of the 1960s and 1970s, cultural liberalism has emerged as

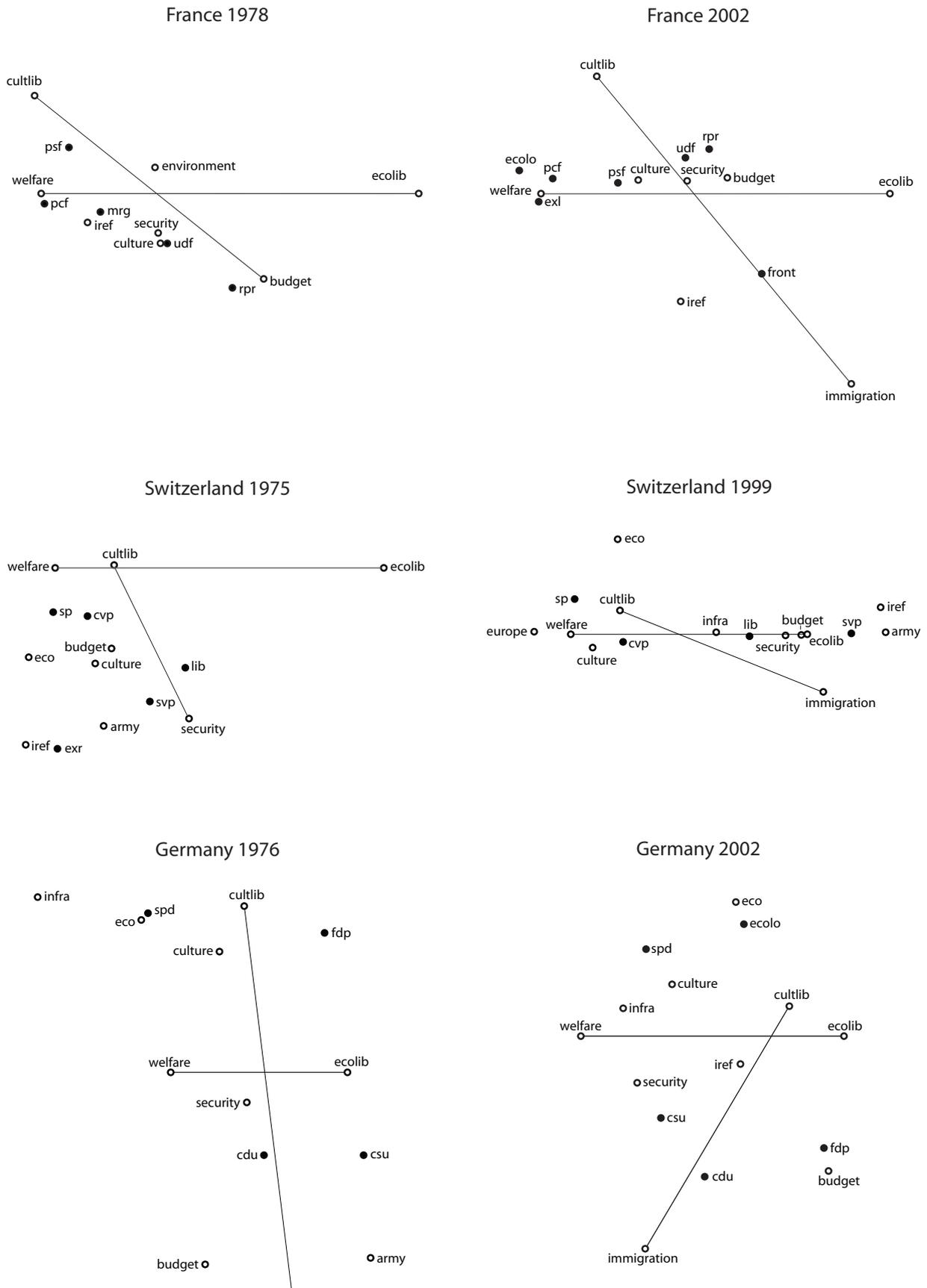


Figure 2: Political space in France, Switzerland, and Germany, mid 1970s and late 1990s/early 2000s. Positions of parties and issue categories

a polarizing issue already in the 1970s. The counter-pole is formed by budgetary rigor, law and order stances (“security”), 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 election, then, a common cultural dimension of conflict is visible that evolves around the cultural liberalism and anti-immigration stances. 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 (denoted in the figures as “immigration”), on the other hand, captures stances regarding the theme the populist right has used for its construction of a collective identity based on the demarcation from people with cultural backgrounds different from that of the majority population.

Measuring polarization, match, and the stability of alignments

The next step in the analysis is to measure the positions of parties and the overall polarization of the party system along each of the two divides identified. Party positions along a single divide cannot be derived from the MDS-solutions, and I therefore calculate their average position regarding the two categories that make up the dimension. As an indicator of the overall degree of polarization a divide entails in a particular election, 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.²

Figure 3 shows the example of the cultural dimension in the French 1988 campaign (the bars under the positions of parties and electorates show the standard deviations of the programmatic stances issued by parties and of the attitudes of their voters,

² Listings of the survey items used and their assignment to the 12 categories employed in the analysis of the supply side are available from the author upon request.

respectively, and indicate how much electorates overlap). The mean positions of parties and voters cannot be compared directly, because they have been measured on different scales, but it is possible to measure 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. The results from the correlations is displayed below Figure 3. In the example, the match in positions is very high, indicating an almost perfect correspondence between parties' and electorates' positions, which is plausible when looking at their respective locations.

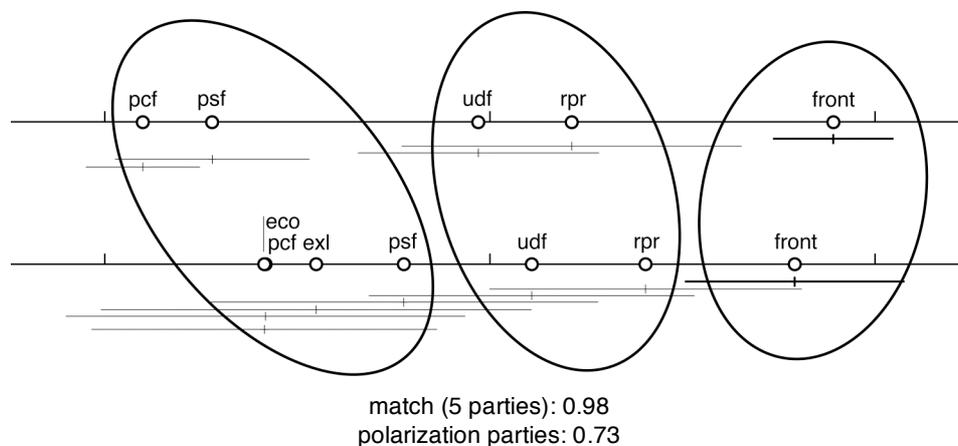


Figure 3: Positions of parties and voters, and identification of ideological blocks along the cultural dimension, France 1988

In analyzing the stability of alignments between voters and parties, I am interested in the degree to which a line of opposition engenders loyalties, which indicate social closure of the groups divided by an opposition. Loyal voters are those who vote for a party belonging to the same ideological block in a number of consecutive elections. As urged before, it is crucial also to take into account non-voting, since abstention may be an antecedent to the reconfiguration of preferences. Loyalty in my conception then implies that a voter regularly turns out to vote for his/her ideological party block. The alternative measure, volatility, would only take into account those voters who actually shifted from one block to the other in two consecutive elections, while all those who did not vote in one of them would be excluded from the analysis. By focusing only on wholesale shifts in party preferences, volatility disregards possible erosions of loyalties

that are more gradual, but nonetheless result in new political potentials. To measure the stability of alignments, I use recall questions from the surveys.

Concerning the economic divide, two ideological blocks can be defined based on the sides they take with regard to the traditional class cleavage. The classification of most parties is relatively easy using what Bartolini (2000: 10-11) calls a “genetic approach”, namely, identifying those parties as belonging to the left that have their roots in the process of lower-class enfranchisement and the rise of the class cleavage, characteristic of the structure of industrial conflicts. Bartolini’s classification thus provides a good starting point. The more difficult question concerns Christian Democrat and newer parties, in particular the so-called New Left parties and the populist New Right, which emerged since the late 1960s and are not the product of the conflicts of the industrial age. In most countries, Ecologist and New Left parties clearly have their origins in movements that are considered “movements of the left” (Kriesi 1999), but apart from this genetic criterion, I will also use parties’ empirically determined positions in political space for the classification. The Swiss Christian Democrats cannot be assigned to the left or right block (Frey 2006) and therefore form an ideological block of their own.

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 and the economic dimension 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 new party families is that they take extreme positions at the respective poles of the new cultural dimension of conflict and primarily mobilize along this dimension, while they have a rather indeterminate position with regard to economic conflicts (Bornschiefer 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. Large gaps between mean positions and low levels of overlap in the spread around these positions indicate a segmentation of competition. If

such a pattern is manifest over at least two elections, it seems reasonable to consider the parties separated in this way as belonging to different ideological blocks.

In the example shown in Figure 3, three blocks can be identified. First of all, because neither the positions of parties, nor those of their electorates reveal a divide between Old Left and the New Left, and because the overlap is especially large on this side of the spectrum, the left as a whole constitutes the first block (PCF, PSF, extreme left and Ecologists in the example). The second block is made up of the established right, the RPR and UDF. Finally, because both the Front National, as well as its voters lie far away from the established right, the populist right forms a New Right block of its own. Based on this classification, the share of voters can be calculated that chose the same party in the preceding election and in the one under study, resulting in the measure for the stability of alignments. Table 1 shows the ideological blocks identified in the analysis of the four elections in each of the three countries. In Switzerland and 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, Switzerland, and Germany

| | State-Market-Cleavage | Cultural divide |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| France 1978-2002 | <i>Left:</i> Extreme left, PCF, PSF, Ecologists, MRG <i>Right:</i> UDF, RPR/UMP, Front National | <i>New Left:</i> Extreme left, PCF, PSF, Ecologists, MRG <i>Centre-right:</i> UDF, RPR/UMP <i>New Right:</i> Front National |
| Switzerland 1991-1999 | <i>Left:</i> Extreme left, Social Democrats, Ecologists <i>Christian Democrat:</i> CVP <i>Right:</i> FDP (liberals), SVP | <i>New Left:</i> Extreme left, Social Democrats, Ecologists <i>Centre-right:</i> CVP, FDP (liberals) <i>New Right:</i> SVP, other extreme right parties |
| Germany 1994-2002 | <i>Left:</i> SPD, Ecologists <i>Right:</i> CDU/CSU | <i>New Left:</i> Ecologists <i>Old Left:</i> SPD <i>Right:</i> CDU/CSU |

Types of divide in France, Switzerland, and Germany

We now have the three elements necessary to classify election according to the analytical model summarized in Figure 1: Polarization, match, and stability. Figure 4 shows the nature of economic conflicts in the three countries studied 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 1). The grey lines indicate (admittedly arbitrary) cut-off points for the classification which are, however, only used as rules of thumb.

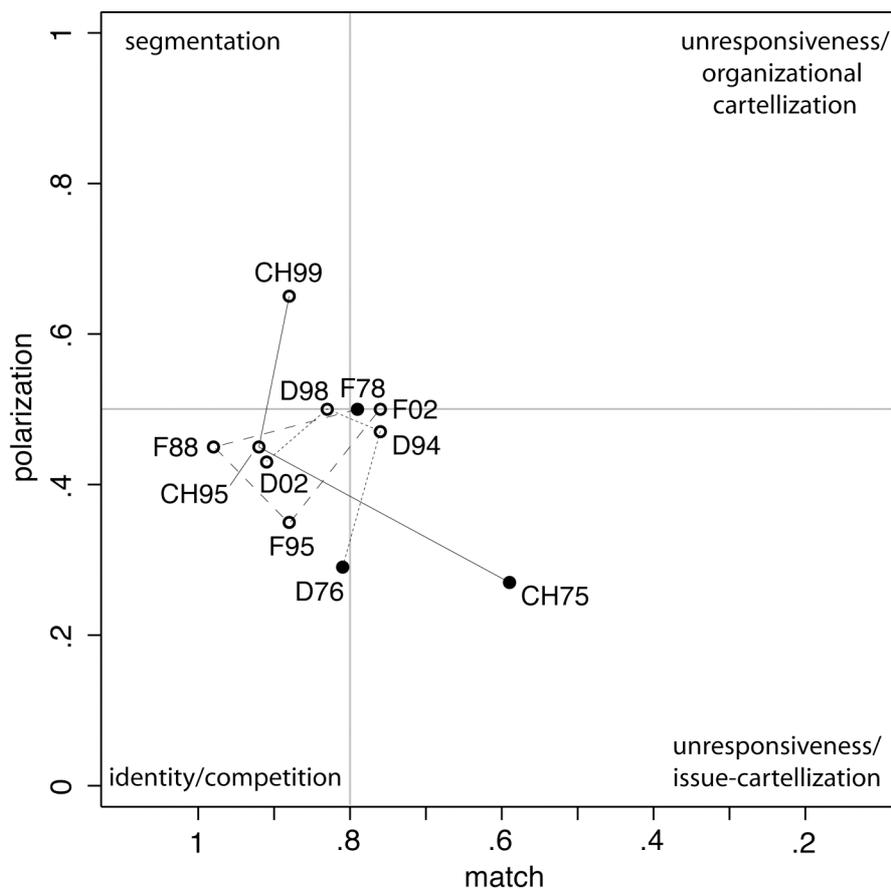


Figure 4: Patterns of opposition along the state-market cleavage in France, Switzerland, and Germany

While there are elections in which the match in the positions of parties and their voters is somewhat lower, the state-market cleavage represents an identitarian divide in most cases 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 strong (see Figure 5), economic conflicts have therefore not been very strongly reinforced by political conflict already in the 1970s, and the situation is similar one or two decades later. Switzerland is an exception to this general picture, in that the party system was first unresponsive in the 1970s and then became more strongly polarized along this dimension than in the other countries towards the end of the 1990s.

The state-market cleavage 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 the other countries. 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.

As Figure 6 reveals, patterns of opposition have become more segmented along the new cultural line of conflict than along the economic divide in Switzerland and France. In both countries, alignments were still structured by the religious and class cleavages in the 1970s, and the manifestation of the left-libertarian agenda in party competition first led to a loss of responsiveness of their party systems, and then to reconfigurations of partisan alignments and parties' political offer. By the 1990s, 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. At the end of this process of party system transformation, parties closely mirror the positions of the electorate. Right-wing populist parties are an integral part of a segmented pattern of oppositions in

Switzerland and France, and clearly have an electorate of their own in ideological terms.

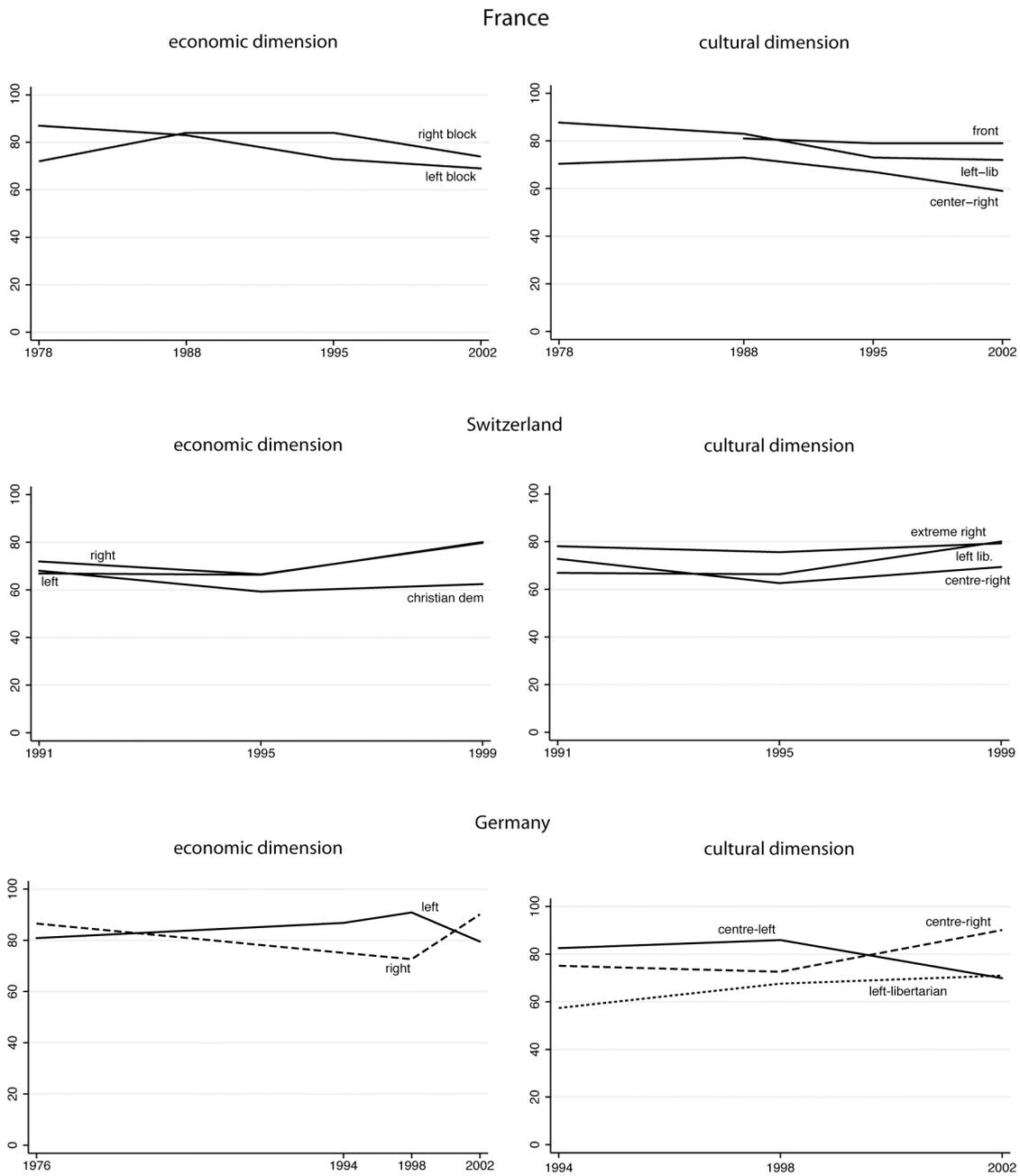


Figure 5: Stability of alignments along the economic and cultural dimensions (measured as the percentage of voters who chose a party from the same ideological block in two consecutive elections)

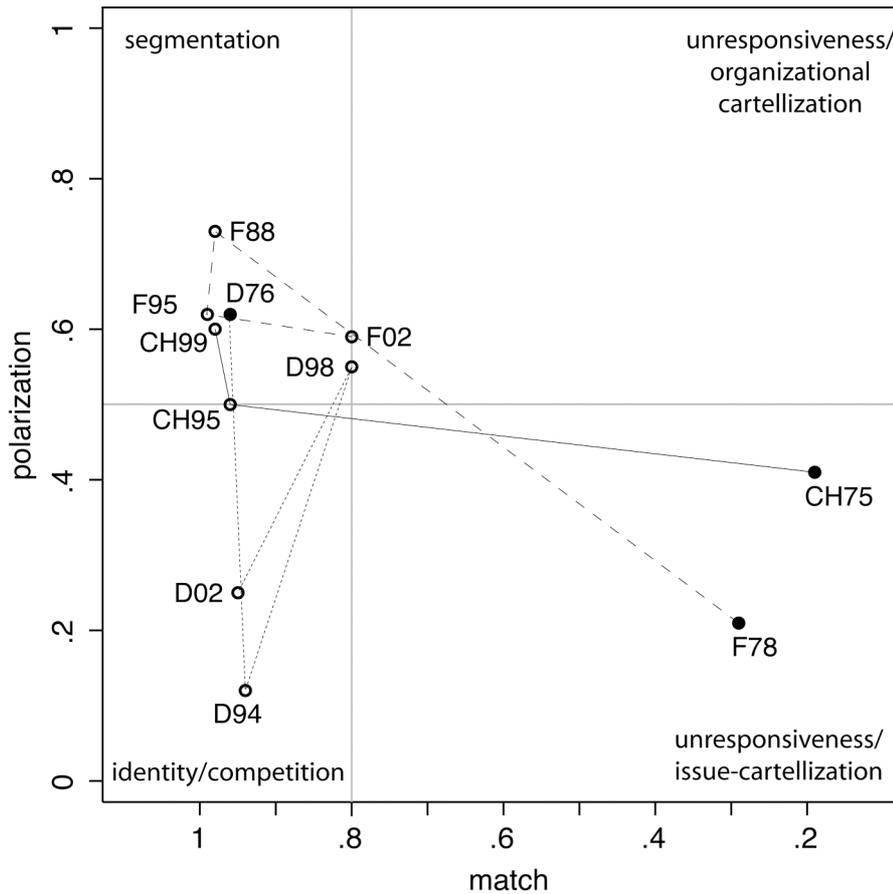


Figure 6: Patterns of opposition along the cultural divide in France, Switzerland, and Germany

The comparison between those two countries where the populist right has been successful with the case of Germany reveals interesting differences in the patterns of competition. In contrast to France and Switzerland, party oppositions in the 1970s were segmented along a libertarian-traditionalist line of conflict in Germany. While retaining responsiveness in the later elections, the party system has become less polarized in two of the three more recent elections, however. With the exception of the 1998 campaign, the pattern of oppositions has been rather centripetal in Germany. In the absence of a strong right-wing populist challenger, the two major parties of the left and right have succeeded in keeping polarization low along the cultural divide of the 1990s, while strong political identities related to the left and right ideological blocks stabilize alignments (see Figure 5). Because the 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 in Germany. However, even in this country, it is not the state-market cleavage that hinders a polarization and subsequent segmentation along the new cultural divide, but rather the strategies of the established parties of the left and right.

In France and Switzerland, on the other hand, where 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. Right-wing populist parties in these two countries command the highest loyalties of all ideological blocks along the cultural dimension, and it is unlikely that their voters should abandon them all too soon. 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. Consequently, the cultural antagonism is not only the more salient divide for the voters of the populist right (Bornschier 2007a), but it is also likely to remain more important for them than the state-market cleavage. What is more, 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.

5. Conclusion

The main aim of this paper has been to present a model that links the rise of right-wing populist parties to the lines of conflict that structure oppositions in party systems. By way of the collective identities and cognitive schemata they provide for the interpretation of politics, established cleavages condition the room for the mobilization of new conflicts that cut across the old divisions. Because political conflict is essential to the reproduction of political identities, it is important to link historical cleavages to

the policy level of oppositions in party systems, over and above the three constituting elements of a cleavage suggested by Bartolini and Mair (1990). As a first step in an analytical procedure that seeks to differentiate between different types of divide that leave varying room for the mobilization of the populist right, I have therefore proposed to empirically determine the lines of opposition between parties in election campaigns.

The analysis of three Western European countries, namely, France, Switzerland, and Germany, shows that political conflicts in the 1970s as well as in more recent elections are structured by an economic and a cultural dimension of conflict. While the economic dimension reflects the traditional state-market cleavage, the meaning of the cultural dimension has been transformed under the twin mobilization efforts of the New Left and the extreme populist right. In the 1970s, it was no longer intimately linked to religion, but reflected an opposition between the libertarian goals brought up by the New Social Movements of the 1960s and 1970s and neo-conservative calls for the preservation of tradition and cutting back the state. Due to the counter-mobilization of the extreme populist New Right, the conservative pole of the cultural divide is now not only characterized by an opposition to the universalistic conceptions of the New Left – the latter including the right to difference, societal permissiveness – but also by an anti-immigration stance. The latter represents an attempt at community construction based on the exclusion of culturally different citizens. Drawing on various theoretical perspectives, I have argued that the issues associated with the resulting conflict can be interpreted in terms of an opposition between libertarian-universalistic and traditionalist-communitarian values or conceptions of justice.

Given the importance of the new cultural divide in political competition and the strong partisan loyalties it entails, this conflict has evolved into a cleavage that has displaced the religious opposition as the second cleavage dimension in various Western Europe party systems. However, depending on the nature of the established cleavages on the one hand, and on the strategy of the established parties on the other, the opportunities for right-wing populist parties have varied. While the established parties of the left and right in Germany have prevented a segmentation along the new cultural cleavage and have contended the right-wing populist potential, right-wing populist parties have entrenched themselves firmly in the French and Swiss party systems. They

contribute to and are an integral part of the segmented nature of the new cleavage in these countries.

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