Value Orientations and Party Choice - A Comparative Longitudinal Study of Five Countries

by

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1. Introduction: research problems

This paper examines the impact of four central value orientations on party choice is examined over time by using cumulative files based on election surveys from five countries with long traditions of electoral surveys. These countries are Britain, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

The research problems are: Has the strength of the impact of the various value orientations increased or decreased over time? What is the relative impact of the various value orientations within each country and are there differences in the impact of the same value orientations between countries? In the multivariate analyses we examine the total impact of all value orientations on party choice in order to examine whether value orientations in general have increased their importance for voters' electoral choices. We also analyse the relative impact of what we label 'old politics' and 'new politics' value orientations. Central hypotheses in the literature about the transformation of conflict lines state that social structure has become less important for explaining party choice and that value orientations have become relative more important. We therefore analyse the relative impact of social structure, represented by social class and religion, and value orientations. Finally, we examine how perceived polarisation in the party system influences the impact of values on party choice. Do voters' perceptions of ideological differences between the parties influence the strength of the impact of values on party choice?

The paper is organised as follows: First - in section 2 - we discuss theoretical and conceptual aspects of the four value orientations that we will use as predictors for party choice. Inspired by various theories of societal and individual modernisation, the next section introduces a number of hypotheses about how the impact of various value orientations may have developed over time. We then, in section 4, outline the measurements we have taken in each country to assess the various value orientations and how these are correlated with party choice. In section 5 we perform multivariate analyses to examine and compare the impact of various types of value orientations, and to examine the impact of value orientations while controlling for traditional structural variables. In section 6 we shift the theoretical focus from modernisation theory to factors related to the political context: Rather than looking for modernisation-driven linear shifts in the impact of values over time, we consider the often cyclical changes in perceived party polarisation as a factor that may govern the impact of values. Conclusions are drawn in section seven.

1 This paper is a draft for a chapter in Jacques Thomassen (ed.): The European Voter (preliminary title).
2. Conceptual considerations concerning value orientations

Values are prescriptive beliefs that signify that certain end-states or modes of conduct are personally or socially preferable to other end-states or modes of conduct. Political values are prescriptive beliefs, which individuals would like to see implemented in the political system, and include the forms of political participation by which individuals seek to influence politics.

In European democracies, the most important value conflicts originate in the most crucial socio-political cleavages. For example, according to Lipset and Rokkan (1967), the most important political cleavages in industrial society are the religious cleavage and the class cleavage. Of the conflicts fostered by the National Revolution (e.g., religious, territorial and linguistic divisions), it was those related to religious versus more secular values that created the most uniform divisions in West European party systems. Christian values focus on the importance of Christian morals and principles in society and politics, and on traditional moral guidelines in school and society in general.

The Industrial Revolution gave rise to economic interest conflicts that were anchored in hierarchical socio-structural variables. The most important political value orientations that emerged from the Industrial Revolution were economic left-right values or left-right materialist values. These value orientations are economic in nature, and they refer in particular to the role of government in creating more economic equality in society versus the need for economic incentives and efficiency. These value orientations incorporate value conflicts related to control, power, and the degree of distribution of resources in the production sphere, and include workers' control and state regulation of the economy versus private enterprise, private property and the market economy; economic and social equality versus the need for differentiated rewards for stimulating effort (Inglehart 1984: 25; Knutsen 1995a; Lafferty & Knutsen 1984).

The moral value dimension and economic left-right values are often referred to as “Old Politics” because they capture the essence of the traditional lines of conflict in industrial society. In contrast, “New Politics” refers to value conflicts emerging from post-industrial society. More specifically, new politics-related value dimensions involve conflicts over a more modern set of issues related to, for instance, environmental quality, alternative lifestyles, social and political participation, minority rights and social equality. Some observers have argued that the tranquillity of West European electoral politics has been disrupted by the rise of new social movements and a number of Green, New Left and Radical Rightist political parties. These developments have led to a debate over the possibility of a partisan realignment on the basis of new politics issues and values.

There are, however, different ways of conceptualising the new politics value dimensions. According to Ronald Inglehart, value conflicts related to materialist/post-materialist value orientations reflect the new politics conflict dimension. Inglehart argues that "new" post-materialist values are deep rooted and stand in opposition to more traditional materialist values. He identifies a 'silent revolution' in which a gradual value change along the
materialist/post-materialist dimension takes place. This involves a shift from a preoccupation with physical sustenance and safety values, towards a greater emphasis on belonging, self-expression and quality-of-life values. The spread of post-materialist values is explained by generational replacement, the growth of the new middle class and the spread of higher education (Inglehart 1977; 1990).

Another way of conceptualising “New Politics” is represented by environmental versus economic growth values. Today this conflict is firmly rooted in the public mind, and in many West European countries conflicts over environmental values seem to be the most manifest expression of the 'New Politics' conflict. A clear manifestation of this is the emergence of green parties that have gained considerable electoral support in many western democracies.

Furthermore, Scott Flanagan has in a series of articles emphasised that Inglehart's conceptualisation of value change combines two dimensions: A materialist/non-materialist dimension and a libertarian/authoritarian dimension (Flanagan 1987; Flanagan & Lee 1988, 2003). The overarching concept that integrates libertarian values is self-actualisation, and the central value orientations within the notion of libertarian values are autonomy, openness, and self-betterment. The authoritarian value orientation "designates a broader cluster of values, which, along with concerns for security and order, includes respect for authority, discipline and dutifulness, patriotism and intolerance for minorities, conformity to customs, and support for traditional religious and moral values" (Flanagan 1987:1305). The libertarian/-authoritarian value orientations are also the central components in Herbert Kitschelt's (1994, 1995) important work on changes in the party systems of Western democracies.

Theoretically it is reasonable to argue that the materialist/post-materialist value orientation incorporates significant aspects of both of the other two post-industrial value dimensions. Therefore it is problematic to use all three in multivariate analysis since to do so is in a way to be over-controlling for some of the same phenomena.²

On the basis of the above discussion we have identified the central value dimensions that we will use for analysing the relationship between value orientations and party choice:

(1) Religious versus secular values or moral values
(2) Economic left-right
(3) Libertarian/authoritarian
(4) Ecology versus growth orientations.

² We did not find the most elaborate measure of materialist/post-materialist values, the 12-item battery, in many election surveys, and the 4-item battery was available in only a few surveys. We therefore will focus on the other two orientations.
3. Linear hypotheses about shifts in the impact of values over time

How do we expect the impact of these old and new politics orientations to change over time? The processes of modernisation affect the impact of the various value orientations on party choice in fairly complicated ways. Value change can be considered to have a compositional effect. If values are changing for example from religious to secular values and the correlation with party choice is stable, then parties appealing to religious values may decline while secular parties may increase their support. Such compositional effects may be important consequences of value change but they are not results of changes in the impact of various value orientations over time. When we focus on the changes in the impact of various value orientations over time, we are testing whether the modernisation process implies that voters consider some of their values to be more important in their voting choice than others, and whether this changes over time. The other major aspect of the modernisation process – the rise in political skill and education, often referred to as “cognitive mobilisation” – supplements this in quite complicated ways.

There are two basic hypotheses about the impact of the New Politics and Old Politics value orientations on party choice over time. We also specify more concrete hypotheses about the impact of each of the two "old politics orientations" (religious/secular and economic left-right), that in part correspond to the first two hypotheses about the changing impact of the old politics orientations.

The most systematic analysis of the impact of political value orientations on party choice is found in the 'new politics' literature, particularly the contribution of Ronald Inglehart. According to his developmental model, political conflict variables are grouped under the following three headings (Inglehart 1977: 181-182): 1) Pre-industrial variables which are more or less ascriptive variables such as religion, language, and ethnicity; 2) Industrial variables or achieved variables such as occupation, income, education and membership in trade unions; 3) Post-industrial variables which reflect individual-level value orientations, "particularly those based on post-economic needs", i.e., the materialist/post-materialist value orientations. These three types of variables are related in a developmental sequence because of their origin, and Inglehart tends to see a gradual change from the first two types of variables to the third, and particularly from the second to the third. The process of change in cleavage structure is characterised as a change from a "class-based to a value-based pattern of political polarisation" (Inglehart 1984: 26-33).

The other hypothesis is more general than the 'new politics' hypothesis and predicts that not only 'new politics' orientations, but also political values in general, will become more important over time. Although the major parties founded in religious and class conflicts have lost the

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3 These changes correspond to ecological and secular realignment, respectively, in the literature on models of electoral change according to the concepts alignment, and realignment (Dalton, Flanagan & Beck 1984).
commanding position they enjoyed in the 1950's and 1960's, they remain dominant in most party systems. However, with the dissolution of religious networks, and the weakening of class differences, social location is waning as a source of political cues (Dalton & Wattenberg 2000: 277; Franklin et al. 1992, Särlik and Crewe 1983). We might, however, expect support for the parties that are characterised by the politics of religious and class cleavages to be sustained by values alone. The most plausible argument for this is the notion of 'cognitive mobilization', which refers to the processes by which electors come to "possess the level of political skills and resources necessary to be come self-sufficient in politics" (Dalton 1988: 18). Low levels of education and political information typical of industrial society meant that the average elector relied on social and party cues - 'external mobilization' - to manage the complexities of politics. With the expansion of education, especially at the university level, citizens have become more politically sophisticated; with the expansion of political information, particularly the arrival of television, publics has become better informed. Thereby, electors have become increasingly independent in political matters; they are seen as being capable of forming their own judgements on political issues, and of making reasonable political decisions, like party choice, rather than following social norms, or relying on the lead given by parties (Dalton et al. 1984: 18-19, 461). This is in accord with evidence of the rise of issue voting (Franklin et al. 1992: 399-403) and the sharp increase in issue diversification (van der Eijk et al. 1992: 413) during the 1970's and the 1980's.

Furthermore, political parties possess considerable ideological and organizational resources, which enable them to change. They are capable of shifting their appeal from focusing on broad social group benefits to more focused political issues and value orientations. At the same time, there is little evidence indicating that parties change their basic ideological positions despite reducing their focus on appealing to social groups (Budge & Klingemann 2001). For example, there are no grounds for presupposing that the values embedded in the politics of class and religious cleavages have faded as class structures have changed and religious affiliations have declined. Unanchored in social divisions, these value orientations may be more fragile but nonetheless, they remain a potent basis for party choice (Knutsen & Scarbrough 1995: 498).

This more generalised notion of the increasing importance of value conflicts suggests two very different predictions: on the one hand, the progressive decline of the importance of class and religious orientations in explaining party choice, and their replacement by new politics conflicts; on the other hand, the continued importance of class and religious orientations, but supplemented and pluralized by the advance of new politics orientations. According to this latter prediction, both old and new value orientations have become more significant in explaining party choice, including when social structural variables are controlled for.

The secularisation process that has affected all countries in Western Europe is the point of departure for formulating more specific hypotheses about the changing impact of religious involvement and value orientations. There is no doubt that the secularisation process has resulted in a smaller religious segment in West European societies (Halman & Moor 1994; Jagodzinski & Dobbelaere 1995), but the secularisation process has less obvious consequences for the impact of religious/secular values than one might expect. One hypothesis predicts that
such value orientations have become less important (the declining correlation hypothesis), while another predicts a stable impact (the stable correlation hypothesis). Both hypotheses take the secularisation process for granted. However, according to the declining correlation hypothesis, the modernisation process and the secularisation process may have disrupted religious alignments in the same manner that social class has blurred. Increased social and geographical mobility, and changes in leisure patterns have undermined community integration and social bonds of all sorts, including religious networks. The Catholic Church no longer intervenes in politics and has ceased its active campaigns against parties on the Left, and in the 1970's and 1980's many Catholic clergy and organisations expressed sympathy with leftist policies (Berger 1982). The stable correlation hypothesis indicates that religious individuals are still well integrated into a religious network and that, despite comprising a smaller portion of the electorate, they maintain distinct voting patterns. The religious voters have been 'encapsulated' in religious networks and organisations, and still continue to be strong adherents of the religious parties.

As explained above, economic left-right materialist values were central to the emergence of class politics that became predominant in industrial society, and have been very important to the ideological and issue-based political struggle between leftist and rightist political parties. Regarding the development of these values over time, there are two contradicting hypotheses: one implies that left-right materialist value orientations will become less consequential, and the other implies no such decline. According to the first hypothesis, economic left-right value orientations will decrease in importance as a consequence of socio-economic and political change. The issues coupled to economic left-right value orientations have become less central to the political agenda, and at the individual level, the experiences that caused these value orientations to become important in explaining party choice, have become less fundamental.

The second hypothesis predicts a transformation of the left-right conflict in which left-right economic values orientations will remain an important predictor of party choice in post-industrial society. The economic left-right cleavage has traditionally been equated with the class cleavage, and economic left-right values have accompanied the class cleavage in the sense that they have been strongly coupled to social class. The transformation of the economic left-right lines of conflict implies that economic left-right values still have a stable and strong impact on party choice despite class and social status realignment. Economic left-right values are increasingly disconnected from social class and other status variables. This creates the potential for the left-right values to have a greater causal effect on party choice when social class is controlled for (Knutsen 1988: 345).

The various hypotheses can be summed up as follows:

1. New politics value orientations will increase their impact on party choice over time in an absolute sense and relatively, compared with both the traditional structural cleavages (religion and social class) and the old politics orientations. The impact of both the structural variables and the old politics value orientations will decline over time, and new politics orientations will increase their causal impact on party choice, even when traditional structural variables are controlled for.
2. Contrary to the first hypotheses, the impact of the total value model, including both old and new politics orientations, will increase over time. The old politics orientations as well as the new politics orientations may increase their impact due to increases in political skills, and the parties' persistent appeal to political issues and values. Alternatively, the old politics orientations may have a stable impact while the new politics orientations might increasingly supplement the impact of Old Politics, and consequently increase the impact of the total value model over time. The total value model will increase its impact on party choice even when traditional structural variables are controlled for, and will become relatively more important to the traditional structural or social cleavages.

3 and 4. While all theoretical positions hypothesise that new politics orientations will increase over the long term, there are contrasting hypotheses regarding the old politics orientations. One maintains that they might remain stable and even increase (H3), while the other maintains that they might decline (H4). Although these possibilities are included in the two first hypotheses, we discussed in separate paragraphs the reasons for the various patterns since religious/secular and economic left-right values are fairly different conflict lines despite belonging both to Old Politics.

4. Indicators, index construction and correlations with party choice

Introduction.

The questions in the election surveys often changed from election to election. It is therefore rather complicated to find measurements that can be compared over time. In the face of these difficulties, the following principles have guided our choices:

We use political attitudes as indicators of political values because election surveys contain both narrow and more broad-based issue items about voters' policy positions, rather than questions that directly tap a value. Our approach can be justified by the fact that values cannot be observed directly. We consider value orientations to be latent variables that are tapped by constrained (correlated) attitudes. There is a long tradition in political science of analysing attitudinal data to uncover a pattern, or evidence of constraint, among several attitudes. Such evidence is then interpreted as revealing, for example, the influence of ideology and values, or as evidence of a left-right ideology (Converse 1964; Campbell et al 1960: 189-94; Nie et al. 1976: chap. 8 and 9). This is our approach in this paper. Evidence

van Deth and Scarbrough (1995) use somewhat different arguments to explain why values can be tapped by attitude items. Values are dispositional concepts since they are not directly observable. They are constructs delineating some non-observable processes or phenomena. The concept of value orientations is then used as a heuristic device to facilitate the understanding of attitudes. Attitudes are more concrete beliefs related to a specific situation or object, while values transcend such objects and situations. Values influence attitudes, but the value concept can also be used heuristically, not
of constraint in political attitudes is thought to demonstrate the empirical relevance of the value concept, and the index based on constrained attitudes is thought to tap the value dimension in question. In addition to the empirical constraint criteria it should be possible to interpret theoretically in order to represent a value orientation.

The measurements we have developed are thus based on both theoretical criteria and empirical analyses. We have conducted a significant amount of correlation and factor analyses based on surveys from the five countries to examine which indicators should be included in the various measurements. The theoretical criterion is that the factors can be interpreted as tapping the value orientations discussed above.\(^5\)

We relied on indices\(^6\) instead of single indicators. However, sometimes it was impossible to construct indices because only one or two items were available in a time series. At other times several items were available in the surveys, but they were not asked consistently all times. In these instances, we relied on single indicators in order to be able to achieve consistency in measurement over time.

The dependent variable is "voting" in the last election. We treat the party choice variable as a nominal variable, keeping all parties as separate categories. Parties with only a small percentage of support (and a small N in the various election surveys) are grouped together under "other parties". This category is included in the calculation of coefficients, but otherwise not reported. The treatment of the party choice variable is mentioned in the next section for each country.

The strength of the relationship between party choice and the various value orientations is measured by the eta-coefficient from analysis of variance. This measure is a standardised measure with values from 0.00 to 1.00. This coefficient is obtained by reversing the causal order between the variables of party preference and independent value orientations, i.e., party preference is treated as the independent variable.\(^7\)

\(^5\) We have, however, excluded from the index construction items that do not indicate a policy position but are more cognitive evaluations, for example, the frequency of abuse of social security, or very concrete attitudes towards objects, for example, towards the power of trade unions, employers' umbrella organisations and various corporate organisations.

\(^6\) We use unweighted additive indices since we think it is important that the indicators are assigned the same weight in the measurements over time. Otherwise the results might be influenced by the fact that some items are weighted differently in different surveys. The construction of indices is done in the following way with regard to those who answer "don't know" to a question: They are assigned a neutral middle score on Likert-like items with originally 3-5 categories. On items with more than 5 values, those who answer "don't know" are assigned the mean score of the variable for the given year.

\(^7\) The eta-coefficient between party preference and scales for the sets of value orientations is identical to the Pearson's r-coefficient when the different categories of the party preference variable are given their mean scores on these scales, and identical to the canonical correlation coefficient in discriminant analysis with only one discriminating variable (Klecka 1980: 36-37).
In the remainder of this section we explain which items have been included in the various indices and which items have been analysed alone as single indicators.\(^8\) We also present the strength of the correlations between the various measurements and party choice over time within each of the countries.

**Britain**

Factor analyses of the items available in the various surveys show fairly stable patterns. There are three dimensions: A very pronounced economic left-right dimension, a dimension that contains libertarian/authoritarian items, and a moral dimension.\(^9\)

There are few issue or value items in the British election data before 1974. For the period 1964-70 we rely mainly on single indicators for the various value dimensions. Three such single items are available, two tapping the economic left-right dimension (about nationalisation and redistribution), and a third tapping the libertarian/authoritarian dimension (about the death penalty).

For the period from 1974 to 1997 and sometimes to 2001 it is possible to construct more reliable measurements of most of the value orientations, but in some surveys it is not possible to construct the indices because one or more of the items have not been asked. In the 2001 survey very few items that have been asked in previous surveys are available. Compared with previous surveys the number of issue-position items appears to be much lower.

In Figure 1A we have shown the strength of the correlations between two central economic left-right items (nationalisation/privatisation and redistribution) and one libertarian/authoritarian item (the death penalty for severe crimes, and party choice for the period 1964 to 2001. The nationalisation item was not available in 2001, at least not in the previous form, but another item about privatisation was asked in the period 1992-2001 and the correlations for this item are also included in the figure.\(^10\)

\(<\text{Figure 1 about here}>\)

It is evident that the economic left-right issues are totally dominant until the most recent elections. The correlation between party choice and the nationalisation item is 0.48 - 0.52 for

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\(^8\) The detailed question wordings of the various items can be obtained from the authors.

\(^9\) Factor analyses comprising a large series of items also showed a separate social equality dimension comprising two items, social equality for women and blacks for the period 1979-97.

\(^10\) The party choice variable in the British election surveys comprises Conservative, Labour, and Liberal parties. The Liberal party category also includes the Social Democrats, the Alliance and the Liberal Democrats.

\(^11\) The private enterprise item taps the same aspect of the economic left-right dimension as the nationalisation item does, in a new time when privatisation, not nationalisation, is on the political agenda. It is also formulated more as a principle (political value).
the period 1964-92, and then drops sharply to 0.36 in 1997. As to the redistribution item, the correlation is very strong, but it declines somewhat in 1997, and then declines dramatically in 2001. The death penalty item is much more weakly correlated with party choice (0.06-0.15), it increases in strength from 1992 to 2001, and approaches the redistribution item in 2001. Regarding the private enterprise item, the strength of the correlation with party choice is the same as for the nationalisation item in 1992, and these two items are the ones that have the highest correlation with party choice. In 1997 when the correlation declines significantly for the nationalisation item, the decline for the private enterprise item is considerably smaller, and this item is now the one that is most strongly correlated with party choice of all the items in the survey. However, in 2001 the correlation declines significantly also for this item. This item is nevertheless the item that is most strongly correlated with party choice in 2001 compared to all other items examined.

Figure 1B shows the correlations between the indices and party choice. The economic left-right index is available for such a short time that we also include the correlations for the nationalisation and redistribution item in this figure in order to compare them with the other indices for a longer period of time. The figure shows that the impact of the economic left-right values remains dominant for the period for which we have the possibility to construct the five-item index, but the correlation declines from a very high level (0.63) in the 1980s to 0.50 in 1997.

The impact of the libertarian/authoritarian orientations is fairly low until 1997 when it increases, and this increase continues until 2001. Ecology/growth orientations increase from 1979 to 1987, becoming the second largest after the economic left-right orientations, until they decline somewhat in 1992. The moral values remain weakly correlated with party choice for the period for which we have data.

In summary, the economic left-right orientations have been the dominant political value orientations explaining party choice in Britain. During the 1990s there is a large decline in the impact of these orientations, while the libertarian/authoritarian orientations increase somewhat in importance. The analysis of single items tapping the economic left-right orientations shows nevertheless that some aspects of the left-right views are still most important, while other aspects of the overall economic left-right orientations collapse.

The Netherlands

In the Dutch election surveys few issue or value items have been asked repeatedly. Therefore, the best strategy is to rely on single items.

No item tapping the libertarian/authoritarian orientations has been asked consistently, although some items have been asked more than once. We therefore picked items having the strongest correlation with party choice from each survey in which more than one item existed, and also picked items that were asked in several subsequent surveys to represent the libertarian/authoritarian dimension. It should be underscored that it is somewhat problematic
to compare the strength of the correlation of these orientations over time, and likewise difficult to compare the absolute placement of voters for different parties over time, since the distributions of the items are different.

Figure 1C shows the strength of the correlations with party choice\textsuperscript{12} for the four value orientations over time. The religious values are strongest correlated with party choice at a fairly high level (0.47-0.53) in all elections except in 1986. The impact of religious values is very stable over time and is not declining.

The impact of the economic left-right orientations is the second largest overall, and the largest in 1986. The correlations increase gradually until 1986 and then decline considerably to the same level as in the 1970s. The two new politics orientations show a lower correlation, but the impact of these orientations also increases until 1986 and then decreases somewhat. However, the correlation of the libertarian/authoritarian dimension increases in 1998 to become relatively more important than the indicator of the ecology/growth dimension.

In summary, the two old politics orientations are dominant in Dutch politics, and they are fairly stable over time, although there is a rise and fall of the economic left-right orientations. The new politics orientations are less important according to the available indicators, but nevertheless of considerable importance in absolute terms, having correlations with party choice of 0.25-0.50.

\textbf{Denmark}

Two sets of items tapping economic left-right orientations are available in the Danish surveys during the period 1971 to 1998. These were not always asked in the same surveys. One set of items is asked in all surveys from 1971 to 1984, and then again in 1990 and 1998. Another set of items is first asked in 1979 and then again in 1984 and in all subsequent surveys. Two items tapping libertarian/authoritarian values are asked in surveys between 1971 and 1981, and then other items are asked from 1987. One of the items asked in the former surveys is also asked from 1990. A single item tapping ecology/growth values is asked in most surveys since 1981. There is no indicator for religious/secular values in the Danish surveys, so we could not analyse these in Denmark.

\textsuperscript{12} The party choice variable comprises 6 categories and one additional category for "other parties" in the Dutch case. Three of these are the Labour Party (PvdA), the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and the D 66. The other three categories are based on a collapsing of various parties: The Pacifist Socialist Party, Communist Party and Radical Party that merged into the Green Left in 1989-90 have been considered as one category for the whole period.

The predecessors of the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) have been collapsed into one category in 1971 and 1972. These parties are the Christian Historical Union (CHU), Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) and Catholic People’s Party (KVP). These parties merged into CDA in 1977.

Three small Calvinist religious parties have been collapsed into one category. These parties, which often are called Calvinists Fundamentalist parties, are the Reformed Political League (GPV), Political-Reformed Party (SGP) and Reformed Political Federation (RPF).
Factor analyses show an impressively stable structure, a two-factor pattern comprising an old politics economic left-right dimension and a new politics dimension. Two indices - based on the two batteries of items - have been constructed to tap the economic left-right orientations. The two indices that are constructed for libertarian/authoritarian values are based on different items and cover very different time spans. The correlations based on these different items cannot be directly compared, and we should avoid concluding anything about a rise or fall of libertarian/authoritarian values based only on changes between the periods of 1971-81 and 1987-98. The ecology/growth measurement is based on the mentioned single item.

The figure (Figure 1D) shows that the two indices for economic left-right values are dominant in explaining party choice during the 1970s and 1980s. The strength of the correlation increases significantly from the 1970s to the early 1980s, peaks in 1984 (and 1987 for the alternative index), and then declines considerably. The second alternative index is somewhat more strongly correlated with party choice in the surveys in which both sets of items are asked. However, the trends during the 1990s are different for the two indices.

There is a large increase in the impact of libertarian/authoritarian values. A considerable part of the increase takes place from 1981 to 1987, but there is also a considerable increase during the 1970s and in the second half of the 1990s. We note that the libertarian/authoritarian index approaches and even surpasses one of the economic left-right indices in 1998. Regarding the ecology/growth index, there does not appear to be any trend in the fluctuation, but there is a large increase from 1994 to 1998. Given that the measurement is based on only one indicator, the strength of the correlation is remarkably high.

In summary, economic left-right values are dominant in explaining party choice during the 1970s and 1980s in Denmark. The impact of these values declines after the early 1980s but the trend is not constant, given a considerable increase in the correlation for one of the

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13 The index below covering the period from 1971 to 1984, and then 1990 and 1998 is called the main or first index, while the other is called the alternative or second index for economic left-right orientations.

14 The large number of Danish parties has made some collapsing of parties necessary. The analyses is based on the following categories:

1. Unity List (including its predecessors Left Socialists and Communist Party) 6. Christian People's Party
2. Socialist People's Party 7. Agrarian Liberals
4. Radical Liberals 9. Progress Party and Danish People's Party (collapsed into one radical rightist category)
5. Central Democrats Greens, Common Course, and Justice Party are grouped into the "other party" category
indices from 1994 to 1998. New politics orientations and libertarian/authoritarian values in particular are increasing their impact on party choice remarkably, in particular in the late 1990s, and are approaching the level of impact of the economic left-right orientations.

**Norway**

The economic left-right orientations are covered by several indicators in the Norwegian Election Surveys and constitute a major dimension according to the factor analyses that we conducted. However, no item is asked consistently from 1969. We have chosen to construct indices based on the items that have been asked in at least three surveys. The index is then constructed on the basis of 3 to 6 items (see Appendix 1).

In most surveys moral/religious value orientations are covered by several items that come out as another major dimension in the factor analyses, but the only question asked in all surveys since 1969 is one about abortion. We have used this to tap the moral/religious dimension.

The ecology/growth dimension is measured by an index comprising three items that are asked in all surveys since 1981 (see Appendix 1). One of these items is also asked in 1977, so it is possible to trace the development for that particular item back to 1977. The factor analyses clearly show that these items constitute a separate dimension.

There are few clear examples of libertarian/authoritarian items in the Norwegian surveys, but the factor analyses reveal a factor comprising several items tapping attitudes towards immigration and foreign aid. It is evident that this factor is a variant of the libertarian/authoritarian dimension. We have constructed two measurements of these orientations, one based on a single item which is available for the whole period 1969-1997 and another which is an index based on two items about immigration policy. We refer to these measurements below as libertarian/authoritarian item and index, respectively.

The correlations between these measurements and party choice are shown in Figure 1E. It is evident that the economic left-right orientations are fairly dominant in Norway, but that they are declining over time. The impact is largest in 1977 and 1981 (0.65-0.66), and then declines gradually to 0.47 in 1997. A closer examination of the correlation between the various items included in the index shows that all correlations decline, although the magnitude of the declines varies somewhat.

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The strength of the correlations between the two new politics orientations and party choice are of fairly similar magnitude. They have a weaker correlation with party choice than the moral dimension. The single indicator of the libertarian/authoritarian values increases gradually in importance until 1981 and then has a fairly stable impact on party choice, apart from 1993 when its impact declines somewhat. We find the same pattern of fairly similar magnitude for the alternative index based on attitudes towards immigrants and immigration policy. The ecology/growth orientations have a fairly large impact on party choice in 1981, but the impact declines gradually until 1993, and then increases somewhat.  

In summary, the old politics value orientations are most strongly correlated with party choice among the Norwegian electorate. The impact of economic left-right orientations declines considerably from the early 1980s to the late 1990s, but they remain the value orientations that are most strongly correlated with party choice. The two new politics orientations are also of significant importance, nearly of the same magnitude as the moral orientations. The effects of these orientations are not increasing in importance since the early 1980s in absolute terms, but relatively they have evidently become considerably more important because the impact of the old politics orientations has been declining in recent decades.

**Sweden**

The items in the Swedish data show a fairly stable factor solution. The economic left-right dimension is revealed as an important and dominant dimension and comprises several items in the data set. We have constructed one index that is based on two questions that have been included in the Swedish election studies since 1964. We have also constructed a second economic left-right index, which builds on three items that have been included since 1982.

Christian values constitute a separate factor in factor analyses of the various Swedish election surveys. The Christian values index builds on three items. It has a time series that starts in 1982, is interrupted in 1985 and 1988, and then continues throughout the 1990s. Summing up responses to two stimuli, which are available from 1982 and onwards, was used to create the growth-ecology scale. Finally, we have constructed an index for libertarian/authoritarian values based on two items.

Let us now track the relationship/correlation between party choice and the value indices over time (see Figure 1F). Several interesting observations can be made. First, looking at the longest available time-series, one notices that the impact of economic left-right orientations rose considerably between 1964 and 1979. However, beginning with the 1982 election, it

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16 However, according to a single item (included in the index) that has been asked since 1977, the ecology/growth dimension increased considerably in importance from 1977 (0.20) to 1981 (0.30).

seems to have receded again: in the 1998 election the association between economic left-right and party choice declines to the level of 1970. This latter downward trend is also captured by the 1982-1998 index of economic left-right.

In Sweden the index for Christian values consistently has a weaker correlation with party choice than do economic left-right orientations. The impact is fairly stable from the early 1980s to 1991 but declines somewhat thereafter. The impact of growth-ecology orientations also follows a curvilinear pattern over time. But it peaks somewhat later than that of economic left-right (in 1981). The same applies to the libertarian/authoritarian measurement.

The general conclusion is that economic left-right orientations are fairly dominant in explaining party choice in Sweden. The impact of ecology/growth values nearly equals the impact of the economic left-right orientations around 1990, but then declines relative to the economic left-right orientations. The impact of Christian values and of libertarian/authoritarian values also decline somewhat after the 1991 election.

5. Multivariate analyses

In order to test the first two hypotheses, we have to rely on multivariate analyses. Party choice - the dependent variable - is a nominal variable, and therefore conventional multivariate analyses cannot be used. Multinominal logistic regression provides a statistical method for treating dependent nominal variables. This statistical method does not contain any standardised (or unstandardised) coefficients for examining the total impact of the independent variables, neither in the bivariate nor in the multivariate case. However, it contains several measurements aimed at being an equivalent to explained variance or $R^2$. A frequently used measurement for the explanatory power in multinominal logistic regression is Nagelkerke's $R^2$ which is the measurement we have used below.

The impact of old and new politics orientations

The first and second research hypotheses concern the impact of the whole value model, and the absolute and relative impact of old and new politics orientations. We have run a series of multinominal logistic regressions to examine both the joint explanatory power of the value orientations (called “the total value model” below), as well as the impacts of the old politics and the new politics orientations, respectively.

Items corresponding to the various value orientations have not been asked in all surveys. Generally we find indicators for the old politics orientations in most surveys, including the earlier surveys, while indicators for the new politics orientations are found only in the later

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18 Since they are not explained variance, but are only based on some of the same principles, they are called pseudo $R^2$. 
surveys. Because of these data characteristics, the analysis becomes even more complicated than in the bivariate case.

Using Nagelkerke's $R^2$, we examine the "bivariate" or uncontrolled explanatory power of old and new politics orientations respectively, as well as the explanatory power of the total value model. We also report on how much explanatory power the new politics orientations have in addition to the old politics orientations, to see what these new politics orientations add to models that just contain old politics orientations.

In order to test the relative impact of the old and new politics orientations, we will report the impact of new politics orientations relative to the impact of old politics orientations (as ratios) in both ways that are indicated above:

1. The uncontrolled impact of the new politics orientations compared with the uncontrolled impact of old politics orientations.

2. The impact of new politics in addition to the explanatory power of the old politics orientations when the old politics orientations are entered first into the analysis.

The results are presented in Figures 2.

< Figure 2 about here >

Since the figure for Britain is somewhat different from those for the other countries, we comment on Britain after commenting on the figures for the other countries.

In the Dutch data indicators for both old politics orientations were available for the whole period, and the same applies to some indicators for authoritarian-libertarian values, while ecology/growth indicator is available only since 1977. We therefore present the impact of only libertarian/authoritarian orientations (for the whole period) in addition to the impact of both new politics orientations combined since 1977. As to the impact of the two old politics orientations (see Figure 2B), there is a rapid increase until 1982, then stability until 1989, and then a small decline in the 1990s. The impact of libertarian/authoritarian values fluctuates somewhat, but there is no long-term change, while the total impact of new politics orientations increases substantially until 1985 and then declines considerably due to the decline of the impact of ecology/growth orientations.

The impact of the whole value model increases substantially until 1982, but decreases from 1989, although there is a small increase from 1994 to 1998. In a long-term perspective there is nevertheless a considerable increase. The old politics orientations are fairly dominant for the whole period, but the relative impact of new politics orientations increases greatly from 1977 to 1986, comprising 29% of the impact of old politics orientations in 1977, and 70% in 1986. There is then a decline to 42-43% in 1989-98. The explanatory power of the new orientations in addition to the old is fairly stable: 12% in 1977, 16-19% in the 1980s except for 1989 (10%), and then declining to 14-16% in the 1990s.

In the Danish case, the available measurements of both old and new politics orientations complicate things somewhat. Figure 2C shows the impact of the main index for economic
left-right orientations, the libertarian/authoritarian orientations, and both of the new politics orientations for the available surveys. Results based on the alternative economic left-right index will be mentioned in the text.

The main pattern in the Danish case is that the old politics orientations are fairly stable, although peaking in 1980s\textsuperscript{19} and in 1990, and then declining somewhat. The new politics orientations greatly increase in particular from 1994 to 1998, and have a larger impact than old politics orientations in the late 1990s. The dramatic change in the Danish case can be illustrated by comparing the impacts of old politics and libertarian/authoritarian orientations where we have data for a long time span. In 1971 the (uncontrolled) impact of the old libertarian/authoritarian orientations comprises only 9\% of the impact of the old politics orientation. In 1990 this has increased to 56\%, and in 1998 to 110\%. The impact of the two new politics orientations comprises 50\% of old politics in 1981, 77\% in 1990, and 143\% in 1998.

We also find a large increase when we examine how much explanatory power the new orientations contribute in addition to the old: Libertarian/authoritarian adds 8\% in 1971, 11\% in 1981, 44\% in 1990, and 94\% in 1998. Both new politics orientations add 35\% to the explanatory power of old politics in 1981, 58\% in 1990, and 119\% in 1998. In Denmark in 1998, new politics orientations have a larger explanatory power than old politics orientations even when the old orientations are entered first into the analysis. This contributes to a pattern whereby the impact of the value model increases substantially over time, and there is no decline from the 1980s or early 1990s as in the other countries.\textsuperscript{20}

In summary, the total value model is increasing over time in the Danish case due to the increasing impact of new politics orientations that approaches the impact of the old politics orientations. The case is partly one of supplementation whereby the new orientations are adding to the explanatory power of the old, and partly one of supplantation (in particular for the main index), whereby the new orientations are replacing the impact of the old. This is exactly what we should expect from Inglehart's theory of a cleavage transformation from old politics to new politics.

In the Norwegian case (Figure 2D), we are able to analyse the impact of the old politics orientations and libertarian/authoritarian values for the whole period 1969-97, and in addition ecology/growth values from 1981. We see that the impact of old politics orientations increases greatly from 1969 to 1981, and then declines considerably.

\textsuperscript{19} Indeed, we have seen from the bivariate analyses that there was a clear peak in 1984, but because the new politics orientations could not be measured in that survey, 1984 is dropped from the figure.

\textsuperscript{20} Based on the alternative index for economic left-right values (not shown), we do find the same pattern, i.e., that the impact of new politics orientations approaches the impact of old politics. However, the impact of new politics does not surpass the impact of old politics.
The total value model greatly increases its explanatory power from 1969 to 1981, but then its explanatory power declines considerably. When the ecology/growth orientations are included from 1981, they increase somewhat the explanatory power. Nevertheless the pattern is one of decline from 1981 to 1997 for the whole value model.

The impact of libertarian/authoritarian orientations increases over time, but during the period for which we have data for both orientations, the impact of new politics orientations does not increase. The impact of new politics orientations is fairly stable, with a tendency to decrease somewhat in the 1990s. The old politics orientations primarily shape the pattern for the whole value model, showing a sharp increase until 1981, and then declining. Because of the strong decline of the impact of old politics, the relative impact of new politics increases in the Norwegian case: from 42% in 1981, to 59% in 1989 and 1997. In a longer perspective, we can compare the impact of libertarian/authoritarian values with that of old politics: In 1969, the impact of libertarian/authoritarian values amounts to only 7% of the impact of old politics, increasing to 21% in 1981, and 41% in 1997. When the old politics orientations are entered first into the analyses, new politics orientations increase the explanatory power of the model, reaching 17% in 1981. This increases gradually to 32% in 1989, and 34% in 1997.

In summary, the impact of the value model can be represented by an inverted “U” in the Norwegian case, with a sharp increase until 1981, followed by a gradual decline. These changes are reflected in the impact of the whole value model. New politics orientations show a tendency to increase their impact on party choice in a long-term perspective, but they have a fairly stable impact since 1981. Compared to the old politics orientations, the new politics orientations clearly increase their impact relatively over time.

For Sweden we are able to examine the combined impact of the various value orientations for only a brief period because only economic left-right values were available before 1982. We therefore use the alternative (and more comprehensive) index for economic left-right values which does not show as pronounced a decline as the main index which was available for a longer period.\(^{21}\)

Figure 2E shows that the impact of the old politics orientations declines somewhat in recent decades. It should be underscored that in Sweden this decline takes place after a considerable increase in the impact of the dominant old politics orientations, the economic left-right orientations. The new politics orientations increase their impact from 1982 to 1991, and then decline considerably. In 1998 their impact is at the same level as in 1982 and 1985, and at about 60% of the 1991 level. The declines from about 1990 to 1998 are indeed larger for

\(^{21}\) Regarding moral values, we have used just one indicator (about Christian values in politics) in the index as our measurement in the multivariate analyses because this indicator was available also in 1988, while the other two indicators used in the index were not available in either 1985 or in 1988. This indicator is correlated with party choice at about the same level as the index, and the correlation follows the same pattern over time as the index.
new politics than for old politics orientations, and comprise a significant component of the slight overall decline for the total value model.\textsuperscript{22}

The explanatory power of the value model is large in the Swedish case. There is a small increase from 1982 to 1988, followed by a small decline to the late 1990s.\textsuperscript{23} The ratio between the old and new politics orientations' explanatory power thus follows an inverted “U” curve: It increases from 1982 to 1991, and then declines to about the same level as in 1982. The new politics orientations add 11-12\% to the explanatory power of the old orientations in 1982 and 1985, and then this increases to 20-22\% in 1991 and 1994, but then drops to 15\% in 1998.

In the British data it is very difficult to examine all orientations over time, and impossible to do so with indices based on the same indicators. In Figure 2A we have shown some ways of examining the impact of all value orientations over time based on the same indicators and indices. These measurements are explained in section 4 above and are referred to as models 1-4 in accordance with the numbering in Figure 2A.\textsuperscript{24} The two longest time series are based on one economic left-right and one libertarian/authoritarian issue (the death penalty issue). Both models 1 and 2 show a clear decline of the value model. This is caused by the strong decline of the impact of the economic left-right issues as shown in the previous section. The third model, which includes indices and indicators for all four value orientations, shows a fairly stable pattern, but these measurements are only available for three elections before 1997. Finally, the fourth model, which includes the comprehensive index for economic left-right orientations and the index for authoritarian values, shows a clear decline. This model generally displays the largest explanatory power, even larger than the four-value orientations model.

The relative strength of old and new politics orientations for explaining party choice can be seen, in the bivariate case, from Figure 1A based on the eta-coefficients as to the two first models. For the first model (regarding the private enterprise item in 1997 and 2001), economic left-right orientations remain dominant, although the death penalty issue approaches the impact of old politics in 2001. According to the second model, it is evident that old politics is dominant until 2001, when the two issues have about the same impact on party choice. According to the third and fourth model which we are not able to trace after 1992 and 1997, respectively, the old politics orientations are dominant, although new politics

\textsuperscript{22} When we examine the contributions by examining the impact of old politics orientations and how much additional variance new politics explains, the impact of old politics declines by 0.035, and new politics by 0.037.

\textsuperscript{23} The decline is larger when the main index for economic left-right values (index 1) is used, in accordance with the findings from the bivariate analyses above. Using this measurement of economic left-right values, the whole value model reaches 0.50 in 1982 and 1988, and then declines gradually to 0.42 in 1998.

\textsuperscript{24} We have however made one change: Because the impact of the nationalisation issue declined so much in 1997, and was not available in 2001, in the first model we have substituted it with the private enterprise issue in 1997 which was available also in 2001.
orientations are increasing their relative impact. According to model 3, which has the most comprehensive measurement of both old and new politics orientations, the relative impact of new politics increases from 0.19 in 1979, to 0.43 in 1983, and then declines to 0.32 in 1992. According to model 4, the increase is from 0.22 in 1983, to 0.31 in 1997.

In summary, the evidence from the British data is difficult to examine because of the lack of consistent time series. Nevertheless, it indicates that value orientations explain less variance in party choice in the elections in 1997 and 2002. There is also evidence that new politics orientations increase their impact relative to old politics orientations.

**The impact of value orientations and social cleavages**

In this section we will examine the impact of value orientations when traditional old politics social cleavages are controlled for. This analysis examines the causal impact of the value model on party choice because social structural variables are prior variables in a causal sense. The first hypothesis implies that new politics orientations should increase their causal impact over time in an absolute sense, and that old politics orientations and the traditional structural variables should decline. The second hypothesis states that value orientations generally (the value model) should increase their causal impact and that the traditional structural cleavages should decline, at least relative to the value model.

We control for religious denomination and social class, and partly for church attendance. These variables are the central old politics structural variables derived from the Lipset-Rokkan model. It should be underscored however, that our conclusions about the relative impact of social structure and value orientations are based solely on the main traditional social cleavages, not on all structural variables.

Church attendance is problematic to use as a control variable because we can expect it to be highly correlated with our measurements of religious values. Research by Wolfgang Jagodzinski and Karel Dobbelaeere (Jagodzinski & Dobbelaeere 1995: 87-96) has shown very strong correlations between church attendance and religiosity or religious/secular values. On the basis of European Value Surveys (I and II) they find that the correlations vary between 0.41 and 0.73 in different countries. A correlation of this magnitude is very rare in survey research. In addition to the strong correlations, there is strong evidence that pronounced changes in religious values are paralleled by similar changes in church attendance. Therefore, these authors assert that church attendance can be used as an indirect measurement of religiosity or religious/secular values. One of the present authors makes the same assertion in several works analysing surveys in which direct measurements of religiosity are not available (see Knutsen 1995a, 1995b, 1997). Due to the strong correlations between church attendance and religious values, one should be
careful in controlling for church attendance when examining the impact of religious/secular values which are included in our value model.\textsuperscript{25}

Since church attendance is often regarded as a structural variable, we have also done analyses in which it is included, and we report how its inclusion in the structural model influences our findings. However, the results we report in the figures are solely based on social class and religious denomination.

In the Scandinavian election studies, religious denomination is not included. Church attendance is only available in a few the Danish and Swedish surveys. Therefore, our main social structure model contains social class in these countries.

The results from the main analyses are shown in Figure 3. The lines show:

1. The impact of the structural variables (social class and religious denomination)
2. The controlled impact\textsuperscript{26} of old politics values and the total value model\textsuperscript{27}
3. The overall impact of both social structure and value orientations (referred to as the whole conflict model in the text)

\textless Figure 3 about here >

For Britain we use the first value model (see Figure 2A) in our main analysis since it has the longest time series as well as significant explanatory power. Social structure and value orientations have fairly equal impact on party choice according to Figure 3A. Both social structure and value orientations have a declining impact over time, and the pattern is one of structural and value dealignment. We note that social structure has a somewhat greater impact than value orientations in the 1960s, and then value orientations have a somewhat greater impact until 1992. Then there is a pronounced decline in the impact of values, so that values and social structure have a fairly equal impact in 1997 and 2001. Social structure contributes to the reduced explanatory power of the whole model from the 1960s until the 1980s, but the large decline from 1992 is mainly explained by the reduced impact of value orientations.

\textsuperscript{25} We have examined the correlations between church attendance and religious/secular values in the four countries in which both measurements are available. The correlations vary considerably. In the Netherlands and Sweden the correlations are very high, on average 0.487 and 0.472, respectively. They are much lower in Britain and Norway, 0.236 and 0.250, respectively. The high correlations in the former countries make the problem of this variance highly relevant. It should be underscored that only when one analyses the impact of value orientations does this problem manifest itself, because the high correlation makes it difficult to differentiate the impact of each of the variables.

\textsuperscript{26} Except where noted, we refer to the controlled impact of the value orientations below. This also refers to the figures that show only the controlled impact of value orientations, not the uncontrolled impact.

\textsuperscript{27} This is measured by the change in Nagelkerke's $R^2$ starting from the analyses in which only social structure is included, and continuing in the analyses in which values are also included.
Compared to the explanatory power of the value model when social structure is not controlled for, about 70% remains on average when social structure is entered first into the analyses. This percentage increases gradually from about 65% to 80%.

Church attendance adds less than 0.013 to the explanatory power of the two structural variables in all surveys, and none of the conclusions above is altered in any way if it is included in the structural model.

The analyses of the other models show very similar results. However, for the fourth model in which a comprehensive index for economic left-right orientations is used, value orientations have considerably stronger explanatory power than social structure in all three surveys (1983, 1992 and 1997).

In the Dutch data, social class is only available in the 1981 survey, while religious denomination and church attendance are available in all surveys. Figure 3B shows the results of the analyses based on religious denomination and social class in 1981, while we refer to the results based on only religious denomination from the 1970s in the text.

Contrary to the British case, social structure is more influential than value orientations for the whole period. The impact of value orientations is on average about 60% of the impact of social structure, and this is fairly stable over time, except in 1986, when the impact of values reaches a peak of 80%. Compared to the explanatory power of value orientations, less than half (44% on average) is left when the structural variables are entered first into the analyses, and this is fairly stable over time, except for a peak in 1986 (53%).

Religious denomination is more influential of the two structural variables, and is much more influential than (old politics) values in the 1970s. It is in fact more influential than value orientations for the whole period except in 1986, at which time the value model has about the same explanatory power. However, the impact of religious denomination declines considerably during the 1970s, while the impact of value orientations increases. The explanatory power of old politics values increases from 29% to 62% of the impact of religious denomination from 1971 to 1977, and it is probably the case that the relative impact of value orientations would have increased considerably even if social class had been available in the 1970s.

In summary, social structure is considerably more important than value orientations in explaining party choice in the Netherlands. This is a fairly stable pattern over time. However, the analyses of religious denominations and value orientations in the 1970s indicate that there might have been a relative change during the 1970s.

Church attendance adds on average 0.07 to the explanatory power of social structure. The explanatory power of the structural model is even more dominant when church attendance is included, and the conclusions about changes over time would not be changed since the additional explanatory power is fairly constant.

In all the Scandinavian countries the structural model is represented by social class because religious denomination is not available.
The figure for Denmark includes more information than for other countries because we have also included analyses in which the old politics orientations and libertarian/authoritarian values are included, in addition to the three surveys in which the whole value model is available (see Figure 3C). For comparison over a longer time period the analyses based on old politics orientations and libertarian/authoritarian values will be used to represent the whole value model.

The impact of social class fluctuates somewhat but declines after 1990. Value orientations have smaller explanatory power than social class until 1987, except in 1981 when the impact is similar. After 1987, values become more important than social class. The figure shows clearly how influential the new politics orientations are in this respect. The large increase in the impact of the value model is exclusively caused by new politics orientations. These changes imply that the relative impact of social class and value orientations changes dramatically over time. In the period 1971-77, the impact of the value model is on average 0.75 of the impact of social class. This ratio increases to 1.13 in 1990, and 2.75 in 1998! Value orientations keep on average about 65% of their original strength. This increases gradually from about 60% in the early 1970s, to 80% in 1998.

Church attendance is available in only three Danish surveys, 1971, 1979 and 1987. This variable indeed adds to the explanatory power of social class, in particular in the two surveys in the 1970s. However, the relative impact of value orientations compared to social class and church attendance increases considerably, and surpasses the impact of the former variables in 1987. It is very unlikely that a control for this variable, had one been available, would have changed the dramatic increase in value orientations in the 1990s, and the same applies to the relative impact of social structure (including church attendance) and value orientations.

In Norway, we see from Figure 3D that value orientations are totally dominant when compared to social class for explaining party choice, except in 1969. We note the strong decline of the impact of social class. The impact of old politics values is 1.4 times greater than the impact of social class in 1969. The ratio increases gradually to 14.5 in 1993, and then declines to 12.4 in 1997. The impact of the whole value model is even 15-16 times higher than the impact of social class in 1993 and 1997! Nearly all of the original impact of the value model remains when social class is controlled for, on average 98%. We note, however, a clear tendency towards dealignment in the Norwegian case in the sense that the impact of the whole conflict model declines considerably after 1981, from about 0.70 to 0.54.

28 This long-term comparison is based on old politics and libertarian/authoritarian orientations. For the whole value model, the relative impact increases from 0.66 in 1981, to 1.24 in 1990, and 3.12 in 1998.

29 The analysis for 1987 is based on the alternative index for economic left-right values.
Church attendance is available for all surveys. When this variable is included along with social class in the model, it adds from 0.083 to 0.163 to the surveys’ explanatory power. Church attendance and social class have an explanatory power of 0.263 in 1969, at which time they approach the explanatory power of value orientations. However, their explanatory power gradually declines to 0.098 in 1997, and the value model adds, gradually over time, 2.5 to 4.5 times as much explanatory power.

In summary, value orientations are very dominant compared to the structural variables included in our structural model in the Norwegian case. Although the impact of value orientations declines from 1981, their relative impact increases because the impact of the structural variables also declines considerably.

The Swedish case is similar to the Norwegian case in the sense that value orientations are dominant (see Figure 3E). The impact of the various components is fairly stable over time, although all components tend to decline in strength. This is reflected in the explanatory power of the whole conflict model, which decreases from 1982 to 1998. Value orientations explain on average 1.9 times as much as social class. This ratio increases from 1.36 in 1982, to 2.30 in 1991, and then declines to 1.72 in 1998. About 70% of the explanatory power of the value model is retained when social class in entered first into the analyses. This ratio is fairly stable over time.

Church attendance is available from 1985 in the Swedish surveys. When it is added to social class, the impact on party choice increases from 0.19 to 0.27, and approaches the impact of value orientations. However, value orientations still have 20% greater explanatory power than social class and church attendance. The relative impact of values peaks in 1991 (40% larger), but is fairly stable for the other surveys (about 20%).

In summary, value orientations are considerably more important than the structural variable(s) in explaining party choice in Sweden, and most of the impact remains when social class (and church attendance) is controlled for.

6. Political values and political context

Thus far, we have tested linear developmental hypotheses. These hypotheses all predict either linear decreases or linear increases over time regarding the explanatory ability of political value dimensions. Unfortunately, only a few of these hypotheses have passed our empirical tests with particular grace. While the effects of virtually all value dimensions vary over time, surprisingly little of this variation fits the linear predictions derived from variants of modernisation theories concerned with topics such as secularisation and cognitive mobilisation. Rather, it is evident that substantial peaks and dips are a common feature of the data. This is especially true for what is still the most important value dimension in West European politics – economic left-right values – in which we have found an inverted U-shaped development over time, with the strongest impact of values in the beginning of the 1980s. In this section we will attempt to account for such non-linear variation in the impact
of values by considering a crucial feature of the political context: the extent to which parties manage to communicate large ideological differences to voters.

We expect that the intensity of elite conflict affects the extent to which values matter in political choices among mass publics. This expectation has both empirical and theoretical grounds. Empirically, the initial phases of the American “belief system debate” (Converse 1964) led scholars to conclude that American voters were “innocent of ideology” (Kinder & Sears 1985: 664). That is, whereas American political elites evidently thought about political issues in terms of value-charged ideological labels such as “conservative,” “liberal,” “left,” and “right,” the ordinary American of the late 1950s did not seem to structure his or her political views in a parallel manner. Later studies, however, seemed to show that values and ideology came to play a more important role in the climate of greater disagreement and polarisation between parties and candidates that marked the late 1960s and early 1970s (Nie, Verba & Petrocik 1976). This period may be contrasted to the first two decades following the Second World War which was a period of relative political calm and economic prosperity. It was a period that lacked significant ideological disagreement between parties and candidates, and during which the American public was less prone to use overarching values as guides to political choices than was later the case.

In related research, comparative inquiries have documented that the European voter is less innocent of ideology than his counterpart across the Atlantic. For instance, based on data from the 1970s and early 1980s, Granberg and Holmberg (1988) reported that ideological constraint, stability, and voting were more widespread in Sweden than in the US. This difference was attributed not to inherent cultural differences, but to the different nature of political conflict in the two countries. The prediction that emerges from these studies is that the impact of a value orientation on voting will be stronger the more polarised the party system is along that value dimension (for similar discussions, see Niemi & Westholm 1984; van der Eijk, Franklin & Oppenhuis 1996: 357-8; van Wijnen 2001: chap. 9; Kumlin 2001).

At least three mechanisms may be at play here. First, if party representatives use overarching ideological concepts in a consistent manner, more citizens may be stimulated to do likewise. Expressed differently, if parties present coherent issue packages that are explicitly tied together by labels such as “left” and “right,” then more voters should learn to use such value-laden concepts themselves.

Second, polarised party conflict may also make it easier for citizens to choose on the basis of values. As Zaller (1992: 44-5) and others have noted, it is easier for people to make value-based political choices if they possess a rich supply of “cueing information.” This is information about the relationship between their values and the incoming information. People simply cannot use basic values as a reliable guide to choices if they do not have reliable indications as to which party is “left,” “pro-family,” “pro-market,” and so on. On the other hand, when politicians persistently mix ideological cues into their statements, values can begin to function as a perceptual screen with which citizens orient themselves towards the political information flow. They can resist arguments and messages from parties that do not seem to stand for the values they prefer. Conversely, they can accept messages from
parties that communicate cues signalling shared values. Another reason why polarised party conflict increases the impact of values is that such conflict generates better and more widely used cueing information.

A third mechanism has to do with affective responses to polarised party conflict. We argue above that if party representatives make frequent use of value-based rhetoric and ideological labels, more citizens will do so too. Moreover, we know that frequently used orientations tend to become more emotionally strong; people feel stronger about opinions and attitudes that they express and use often. In turn, we also know that emotionally strong orientations are typically more accessible in voters’ minds, compared to less intense orientations (see Sears 1993: 139; Lavine 2002: 238). More clearly polarised ideological party conflict may thus increase the electoral impact of values by making values more emotionally charged and more accessible in citizens’ minds.

Let us now test the hypothesis empirically. In order to measure the extent to which the political context is marked by ideological disagreement and choice, we make use of people’s perceptions of party positions along the left-right continuum. That is, for each election we calculated the mean absolute perceived difference between the major left-wing party and the major right-wing party. This variable should be able to tap the extent to which the party system is perceived by voters to offer a wide range of value-related cues and choices, and should therefore have a potential impact on the importance of values in structuring party choice.30

Taking an election as the unit of analysis, we regress the explanatory power of the total value model for each election to the mean perceived difference between the major left-wing party and the major right-wing party. The explanatory power of the total value model is measured by the multinomial logistic Nagelkerke’s $R^2$ reported in Figure 2. Our reason for focusing on the total value model, rather than on any of its particular components, is that the left-right semantics have proven to function as encompassing spatial metaphors with a capacity to incorporate aspects of all the value dimensions investigated here (Inglehart & Klingemann 1976: 257-8; Fuchs & Klingemann 1989; Knutsen 1995c; Oscarsson 1998: chap. 8). In other words, previous findings suggest that if a party is perceived to be located to the left, it can mean that it is perceived to be opposed to Christian moral values, that it favours economically leftist policies, that it takes an anti-authoritarian stance, or that it takes some

30 The following parties were used: UK: Labour and the Conservatives; Norway: Labour Party and Conservative Party; The Netherlands: Labour party (PvDA) and People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD); Sweden: Social Democrats and Conservatives; Denmark, Social Democrats and Liberals (Venstre). The reason for concentrating on major parties is that they often present voters with images of the approximate ideological positions of the two main government alternatives. Moreover, the two major parties generate a large portion of the media coverage and campaign information that reach voters. Of course, one could also imagine a more complicated measurement which would take into account all differences between parties and which would weight these according to party size. However, we decided to use the simpler measurement because we value parsimony, and because the simpler measurement manages to account for a lot of the variation we seek to explain.
mix of all those positions. In short, a polarised left-right political context provides ideological cues that may make usage of all value dimensions easier for voters. Of course, it would have been useful to have access to perceived polarisation measurements for all the separate dimensions involved here, but such information has simply not been consistently included in the election studies investigated here.

The results can be inspected in Figure 4. Since there tends to be quite large differences in the impact of values, especially between Britain and other countries, we find it useful to display a separate regression line for Britain.

< Figure 4 about here >

The data lend quite some support to the hypothesis. Specifically, the predicted pattern is reflected by both the upper regression line \((r=0.68; \text{adjusted } R^2=0.43)\), as well as by the lower British regression line based on only four cases. In other words, perceived party polarisation between major left-side and right-side parties can account for a significant amount of the domestic and transnational variation in the impact of values. For instance, according to the model, it is understandable that the total impact of values in Britain tends to be lower than in other countries, because the perceived ideological distance between major political parties has been smallest there in the elections for which we have valid measurements. Of course, the lower polarisation cannot explain all of the difference. By the same token, it follows that the impact of the total value model is high in Swedish elections because Swedish voters recognise larger differences between their two major parties. And it is equally understandable that the impact of values in Dutch and Norwegian elections usually lies somewhere in the middle.

The models can also be used to understand changes within countries over time. For example, they help in explaining why the already weak impact of values in Britain has declined even further in the 1990s. They show us that perceived party polarisation has gradually declined to an all-time low in 2001. Similarly, they offer an explanation as to why the impact of values in Sweden and the Netherlands has dropped in the 1990s compared to the early 1980s. Again the reason is that the perceived distance between parties seems to have diminished. Moreover, in Denmark there is only one election study (1998) for which we have both perceived polarisation data and estimates for the total value model. It is satisfying, however, that this election lies close to the regression line generated by comparative data. Finally, the Norwegian pattern is the least clear-cut, particularly the 1981 election, which is an anomaly that breaks the otherwise relatively consistent pattern. Despite a mere average level of party polarisation, this election produced the strongest effects of value orientations on party choice that we have been able to record. However, if we leave aside this anomaly (which we have done in the estimation of the regression line), Norway conforms to the pattern recorded for the other countries in which greater perceived left-right polarisation is associated with greater explanatory power of political value orientations.

Finally, it is worthwhile to consider the antecedents of perceived party polarisation. If the latter shapes the impact of values, why do people come to form differing perceptions? One
troubling possibility is that perceptions are just rationalisations of attitudes and behaviours (Granberg 1993:70-5; Krosnick 2002: 117-19). More specifically, it is conceivable that voters report larger differences between parties precisely because they are already evaluating politics in terms of overarching value orientations. Of course, this would turn our causal assumption on its head as we have assumed that perceptual variation is at least partly related to differences in the external political-informational context. The contextual factors we have in mind include the messages and cues that parties send to voters through direct campaigning and election manifestos, or indirectly via mass media debates and interviews. In addition, it is likely that media coverage and interpretations offered by journalists have independent effects, in that the media to some extent can choose how to portray differences between parties.

It is in no way the purpose of this paper to offer a complete test of the proposition that perceived polarisation depends on such contextual variables. We have, however, considered empirically one of the potential factors: the extent to which the major parties display ideological differences in election manifestos as measured by data from the Manifesto Research Group. It transpires that there are indeed correlations between the actual party polarisation indicated by manifestos and the extent to which voters perceive differences. These observations fit well with those of Oscarsson’s (1998: chap. 9) study of party perceptions in Sweden over the last 40 years, which indicated that changes over time in voter perceptions of ideological party positions correspond rather well with actual changes in party ideologies. Findings such as these make it less likely that perceptions are merely products of internal rationalisation. Rather, they seem to be related to external contextual conditions that are controlled by parties, the media, and other elite actors. Of course, it is still notable that the correlation coefficients are quite weak, which suggests that election manifestos are but one of the contextual-informational factors at play here.

7. Conclusions

Let us now go back to the hypotheses that were formulated in section 3 and ponder what the analyses have shown:

We start with hypotheses 3 and 4 about the impact of the two old politics orientations: The bivariate findings in section 4 were surprising. Basically, we found a curvilinear pattern for the economic left-right orientations: The correlations with party choice increase until the 1980s, and then decline during the late 1980s and 1990s. Only in Britain is there a long-time trend towards decline, which is found in the elections of 1997 and 2002. As to the moral orientations there is no consistent trend. There is a decline in Britain and Sweden, a stable

31 The correlation between the perceived distance between major parties and the distance between parties according to the manifestos is 0.31 ($r$); and the correlation between the perceived distance between major parties and the total manifesto ideological range is 0.64.
correlation with party choice in the Netherlands, and a curvilinear pattern with a peak in the early 1980s in Norway.

It should be underscored that the declining impact of economic left-right orientations from the 1980s to the late 1990s and early 2000s is substantial in all countries. One way of interpreting this decline is to focus on the time lag between the decline of the social class cleavage and the decline of value orientations, economic left-right orientations, which are associated with that cleavage. While the value conflict remained important and even increased during the 1970s and early 1980s, the class cleavage declined. From the mid-1980s until the 1990s, the economic left-right values tend to follow social class in becoming less important in explaining party choice.

The combined impact of the old politics value orientations follows a curvilinear pattern in accordance with the pattern for each of the two orientations. This is most pronounced in the Netherlands and Norway, but it is also found in Denmark and Sweden. The strongest tendency for old politics orientations to decline from the 1990s is found in Britain, followed by Norway, but it is evident also in the other three countries. This is in accordance with the first hypothesis, which posits a decline in the impact of old politics values.

The new politics orientations have certainly increased their impact on party choice in the long term, in accordance with the first hypothesis. Our analysis shows that their impact has increased from the 1970s to the 1980s. We are not able to trace the development for both sets of new politics orientations from the 1970s for most of the countries, but the evidence we have been able to put forth clearly shows an increase. This applies to the Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, and also to Sweden, although we only have data showing an increased impact from 1982 to 1991 in Sweden. It also applies to the ecology/growth orientations in Britain. However, there is no universal linear trend demonstrating that these orientations increase their impact on party choice from the 1980s. In the Netherlands, the impact peaks in 1986, in Sweden in 1991, and in Norway the impact is largest in the 1980s, and declines in the 1990s. The combined impact of the two new politics orientations peaks in 1983 in Britain as shown in the separate analysis of the new politics orientations in model 3 from Figure 2A, while the impact of libertarian/authoritarian values continues to increase in the 1990s. Only in Denmark is there a clear and almost linear increase of the new politics orientations.

The old politics orientations are still more important, but new politics orientations tend to increase their impact relative to the old, as we have seen in the first part of section 5. In a long-term perspective, we find a clear relative increase of new politics orientations, in accordance with hypothesis 3, but there is again no linear increase. This is shown in Figure 5, which depicts the ratio of the impact of new politics orientations (uncontrolled) to old politics orientations for the main models we have used in the analyses.

In the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden, the new politics orientations sometimes explain almost half as much as the old politics orientations, but there are again no linear increases.
The relative impact of new politics orientations increases dramatically in Denmark as the figure shows, placing the relative impact of new politics orientations in Denmark at a much higher level than in the other countries. The relative impact of new politics orientations in Britain is comparatively lowest, but it increases according to the main measurement.\textsuperscript{32}

Value orientations have a large impact on party choice. Based on the averages from the surveys from the period 1980-2001, the Nagelkerke's $R^2$ are 0.52 in Norway and Sweden, 0.48 in the Netherlands, 0.41 in Denmark, and 0.25 in Britain. However, in Britain, the figure is considerably larger for the model with the largest explanatory power (model 4), 0.37.

Further, in more direct support of hypothesis 2, the overall impact of value orientations (the total value model) seems to have increased from the 1960s to the 1980s in most countries. Britain, however, appears to be a deviant case, as our analyses based on mostly old politics values have shown. Moreover, only in Denmark do we find a large increase in the overall impact of values. In the Netherlands, there is a small decrease after the peak in 1982, and in Sweden there is a decrease after 1991. The largest decreases are found in Norway (0.18) where there is a gradual decrease from the peak in 1981, and in Britain (0.10) where nearly all the decrease takes place from 1993 to 2001. In summary, hypothesis 2 is confirmed in a long-term perspective, while short-term trends from the 1980s to about 2002 must be seen as anomalies that cannot be explained by cognitive mobilisation.

The inclusion of the traditional social structural variables shows that value orientations have a large causal impact compared to the main social cleavages in the Lipset-Rokkan model. Only in the Netherlands does social structure have larger causal impact on party choice than value orientations, while in Britain the impact of the two types of conflict variables are about the same. In both countries the relative impact is fairly stable over time. In the three Scandinavian countries, value orientations have a larger impact than social structure, and the ratio of the explanatory power of the two types of conflict variables increases significantly over time, indicating that value orientations become relatively more important.

Furthermore, most of the impact of value orientations remains, even after structural variables are controlled for. This indicates that most of the bivariate impact of values is not spurious. Only in the Netherlands is the impact of values reduced, on average, to less than half of the original explanatory power (44%), while 60-70% is retained in Britain, Denmark and Sweden, and even 90% in Norway. The reduction caused by the control tends to be smaller over time in all countries except the Netherlands. This is probably associated with the smaller impact of social cleavages on party choice that we find in all countries since the early 1980s, except the Netherlands. All of this means that changes in the relative impact of social cleavages and value orientations are also in accordance with the second hypothesis.

\textsuperscript{32} The more comprehensive model of new politics orientations (model 3) shows, however, a substantially higher ratio for new politics orientations, which is closer to those in the other countries.
Nevertheless, it must be underscored that the linear cognitive mobilisation hypothesis (H2), predicting a more or less consistent rise in the impact of values over time, only receives support in a long-term perspective. This leads us to an important conclusion: In order to reach a more complete understanding of the variation in value effects, one must also take into account the rather volatile and unpredictable political contexts in which modernisation processes take place. In particular, one needs to consider the extent to which the major political actors manage to make voters notice internal ideological differences. This contextual factor appears to regulate the impact of values, whereby the causal mechanisms include the extent to which citizens learn to make use of ideological labels and concepts, the extent to which they receive ideological cues in order to choose on the basis of values, as well as the affective strength with which values are endorsed. In particular, based on our results, we would suggest that the apparent decrease in perceived party polarisation in the 1990s has helped reduce the extent to which especially economic left-right values matter for party choice.

While the reasons for such contextual changes in recent years lie beyond the scope of this paper, a couple of general points can be made. Most importantly, the fall of European communism and the Berlin Wall seem to have had a moderating effect on the leftist sides of West European party systems. Socialist solutions to political problems evidently came to be perceived as less viable throughout the decade. The slogans of “New Labour,” “die neue Mitte,” and the “third way of Social Democracy” illustrate this trend.33

The notion of a de-radicalisation of the West European left in the last decade is further supported by the party polarisation data. Examining ten-year averages for major wing parties, there are clear indications of a decrease in major wing party polarisation in most countries examined here. What is more, in the Netherlands and Sweden it is indeed the major Social Democratic parties that have moved towards the centre, although major Conservative parties occasionally contribute to the depolarisation of ideological conflict by moving towards the centre from their more radical neo-liberal programs of the 1980s (particularly in Britain).

All this underscores the major point that the political context created by elite actors in the parties and the media seems to have large short-term and non-linear temporal influences on the salience of political values. Taking the economic left-right in the last decades as an example, it appears as if a long-term trend towards stronger value effects – arguably created by cognitive mobilisation – has been strongly off-set by recent changes in the electoral context. Of course, an implication here is that the impact of left-right values could very well

33 In addition to these short-term observations, scholars have also found theoretical reasons to believe that there has been a long-term decrease in left-right party polarisation in Western Democracies. Moreover, utilising the same comparative manifesto data as this book, Caul and Gray (2000: 211-15) find empirical evidence that this hypothesis stands up well in a comparison of the 1950s and the 1980s.
increase again on short notice if political elites and the media act to widen the perceived ideological gaps between major political alternatives.

In the end, the extent to which political values structure political choices depends on more than linear societal modernisation trends. The standpoints and actions of political parties are also influential in this respect.
Literature.


