

**Considering Cultural Conflict**  
**Class Politics and Cultural Politics in Western Societies**

Cultureel conflict overwogen  
Klassenpolitiek en culturele politiek in Westerse samenlevingen

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## Preface

I like reading book prefaces; it tells you something about the personal reasons researchers have for starting their studies. So why did I start the research reported in this book? I could tell you about a conversation I heard on the radio that took place somewhere on the streets of Rotterdam during the 2002 election campaigns for the Rotterdam local council. A journalist interviewed two people who voted for Pim Fortuyn, an older woman and her son, to find out what attracted them to this new politician, whose popularity was rising remarkably. The supporters of Fortuyn's new right party mentioned issues such as 'increasing crime rates', 'norms and values', 'restoration of social order', and 'increasing problems with immigrants' as reasons for their support. The interviewer, surprised upon discovering that the woman was entirely dependent on the state for financial support, asked the woman whether she thought she would be better off supporting a leftist party to secure her economic interests. She dismissed this idea passionately: the aforementioned problems were much more important and needed to be taken care of right now!

As in a great number of other Western countries, the Dutch political landscape was rapidly and tumultuously changing: New political parties were emerging on the right, unbolting new electorates that, much to the surprise of journalists and social scientists, did not necessarily originate from the traditional electoral base of right-wing parties, the economically better off. Instead, lower income groups and those dependent upon government support also seem to be attracted to these new right-wing parties. So why this research project? I could tell you that I shared the journalist's amazement about the voting behavior of these people and that I wanted to study this phenomenon in more detail, but the real reason is much more down to earth.

One Saturday morning, sometime in the autumn of 2001, I found an e-mail from Dick Houtman. In this e-mail, Dick explained he was looking for a PhD-student, and that he was wondering whether I would be interested in doing research on the decline in class voting. I liked the idea very much, and not long after I started working at the sociology department at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, which has been my working environment ever since.

I could not have completed this thesis without the help and support of a great number of people. First, I would like to thank my supervisors Godfried Engbersen and Dick Houtman for their support during the past few years. Godfried, thank you for creating the freedom in which it has been a pleasure to work. Dick, for your never-ending energy in discussing sociological matters and for your comments and suggestions, given frankly and constructively, I thank you very much. Your virtuous way of combining serious sociology, working hard, and having fun at the same time, makes working with you interesting, educational, and fun, all at the same time. I enjoyed working with you and I trust our collaboration will continue in the future.

Thanks also to my colleagues and friends Stef Aupers, the living sociological imagination, Willem de Koster, bald-headed linguistic miracle, Peter Mascini, phone-loving critical mind, and Jeroen van der Waal, first working-class and working first-class sociologist, for the numerous lunch breaks, constructive Lobocop meetings, TIOS talks, email conversations, and meals at local Chinese restaurants that are now closed for hygienic reasons. I would not have wanted to miss them. I also wish to thank my new colleagues of *Arbeid, Organisatie, and Management* for including me in their new research group. I look forward to working with you on the project and I trust we will achieve some beautiful and remarkable results.

I would like to thank Miranda Aldham-Breary for being so kind as to make my English comprehensible. Thanks also to my friend Andrea Straathof who provided her picture of 'Contemplating Cormorants' (*Aarzelende Aalscholvers*) that is now on the cover of this book. Special thanks to my oldest friend, Marcel van Breugel, and my newest friend, Lennart Kaslander, for their friendship and support.

My family, which has more members than I have space for on these last few lines, has always supported me in various and equally important ways, and I thank each and every one of you. Most of all, I would like to thank Dagmar for her love and trust in me. I love you and I can't wait to meet our daughter, Pippi, who will soon be born into this world.

Kudelstaart

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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$$\theta_{[i':j']k} = \exp\left(\beta_{ij}^{PC} + \beta_{i'j'}^{PC} - \beta_{ij}^{PC} - \beta_{i'j'}^{PC}\right) \exp(\omega_k - \omega_{k+1})$$

(Heath, Evans and Payne 1995: 566)

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## 1.1 Introduction

The ‘freezing-hypothesis’ put forward by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argues that the cleavages, or conflicts, that were once highly salient are still reflected in the political systems of Western countries, even though these cleavages may now be less salient. Parties organized along the lines of societal cleavages generally appeal to the interests of one conflict group while repelling others. This ensures relatively stable loyalties between parties and their supporters.

One, and perhaps historically the most important, of those conflicts that has been institutionalized in the party system is class conflict. ‘In every modern democracy conflict among different groups is expressed through political parties which basically represent a “democratic translation of the class struggle”’ (Lipset 1981: 230). Class struggle, a conflict over the allocation of material wealth, is translated into electoral ties between class position and political parties: Members of the working class generally vote for leftist parties and members of the middle class commonly vote for rightist parties.

*‘The simplest explanation for this widespread pattern is simple economic self-interest. The leftist parties represent themselves as instruments of social change in the direction of equality; the lower-income groups support them in order to become economically better off, while the higher-income groups oppose them in order to maintain their economic advantages. The statistical facts can then be taken as evidence of the importance of class factors’ (Lipset 1981: 239).*

This statistical relationship between class position and voting behavior is what is usually meant when sociologists and political scientists refer to 'class voting'. Today, however, the question is whether a thaw has set in and whether the old class-party alignments have melted away.

Clark and Lipset (1991) in their seminal article *Are Social Classes dying?*, sparked the discussion on the relationship between class and voting. Two questions are central in this discussion: Has the relationship between class and voting behavior really declined in most Western democracies since the Second World War? And, if this question is answered in the affirmative: How can this decline be explained?

### 1.2 *A declining relationship between class and voting behavior?*

In the discussion about the relationship between class and voting there are those who argue that it is declining and there are those who argue that it is not but merely 'fluctuating trendlessly' instead. The discussion revolves around three methodological issues, the measurement of class, the measurement of voting behavior, and the methods employed to assess the relationship between class and party choice, but these issues can basically be brought back to one central issue: That of (methodological) simplicity versus complexity.

Proponents of the hypothesis that there has been an ongoing decline in the relationship between class and voting behavior have tended to rely on simple measurements and statistics to support their claims. For example, they use a manual-non-manual dichotomy for class, a left versus non-left dichotomy for voting behavior, and employ 'simple' statistical procedures such as the calculation of the Alford index (resembling OLS-regression techniques, see Korpi 1972). Proponents of the hypothesis that there has been only 'trendless fluctuation' have tended to rely on more complex measurements and statistics to support their claims. For example, they use more refined measures for class position, based on class schemas with more than two classes such as the famous EGP-class schema, they use more refined variables for party choice, and more refined statistical procedures, based on log-odds ratios using multi-level techniques, to assess the relationship between class position and voting behavior.

The methodological issues dividing researchers on the question of whether the relationship between class and voting behavior has declined have by and large been resolved and gradually, consensus has been reached on this question. Particularly Nieuwbeerta's thesis *The Democratic Class Struggle in Twenty Countries (1945-1990)* and other publications (Nieuwbeerta 1995, 1996, 2001) have been important milestones on this way to this consensus. Nieuwbeerta demonstrates in conventional and statistically advanced ways that the relationship has been declining in a substantial number of Western countries. Research by Heath et al. (1996) has shown that 'in general, the multi-level and single-level models lead to similar conclusions about the changing relationship between class and vote'. More recently other sociologists have confirmed that in some particular countries, the importance of class as a means to explain voting behavior has declined. Evans et al. (1999: 93-4) conclude, for example, that there has been both 'trendless fluctuation' and a decline in class voting in Great Britain in the period 1964-1997. Weakliem and Heath (1999a, b) have also found a decline in class voting in Great Britain and in the United States. These authors, proponents of 'trendless fluctuation', seem gradually to have accepted the fact that class voting is in decline. For more evidence on the disappearance of the traditional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class, and a decline in class voting see: Brooks, Nieuwbeerta and Manza (2004), Dalton (1988), De Graaf, Heath and Need (2001), Dogan (1995; 1998), Franklin (1984; 1985), Franklin and Mughan (1978), Lipset (1981), Manza and Brooks (1999), Oskarson (2005), and Rose and McAllister (1986).

Evans (2000: 412) notes that, in the debate about the decline in class voting, 'in general, theory has lagged behind measurement and modeling', which is an euphemism for saying that this debate has been dominated by methodological issues. That a need for methodological advances is considered to be most important is demonstrated clearly in the introduction of Nieuwbeerta's aforementioned study (1995). In reviewing the debate on the relationship between class and voting he distinguishes three generations that are mainly defined by the measurement of class, the techniques that were used, and the data that were used to investigate the relationship between class and voting.

Although it cannot be denied that methodological advances have been made in this field, the general conclusion, that the relationship between class and voting is

declining, is still the same as that made in the early nineties. Meanwhile, almost all of these studies largely neglect to provide the reasons for why the working class might start to vote right and the middle class for the left. Moreover, these studies even neglect to give reasons for why these classes vote according to the traditional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightwing middle class. Most research in this field relies on statistical relationships between class and voting and does not include a theoretical explanation for working class votes for the left. The fact that traditionally the working class has voted for the left is enough reason for researchers to conclude that they do that because of 'simple economic self-interest'. This is a highly problematic assumption for three reasons. One, we can see that a focus on statistical relationships has led many researchers to stress the importance of the explanatory power of class, using measures for 'total class voting', while disregarding the actual differences in voting behavior between the classes. No matter whether a class votes right or left, the fact that there are definable class differences in voting behavior is enough for them (see also Evans 2000: 411). To conclude that 'economic self-interest' is responsible for (all of) these differences between the classes is absurd.

Two, that people in economically disadvantaged positions vote left may not necessarily have anything to do with 'economic self-interest'. Here the assumption is made that what needs to be studied are the class-based economic interests that lead workers to vote for a leftist party and members of the middle class to vote for a rightist one. Clearly, not all leftist voting by members of the working class can meaningfully be counted as class voting, i.e., as voting driven by class-based economic interests. Italian workers, Terry Clark (2001) argues, may vote for the Communists because, like this party, they favor domestic waste recycling, a motive which cannot be classified as 'economic self-interest'.

Three, there may be other, 'new', political motives or interests that oppose those of 'economic self-interest', and that remain invisible when the researcher focuses solely on the statistical relationship between class and voting behavior. That some members of the working class vote for the left and others vote for right, may have everything to do with the fact that some let 'economic self-interest' prevail, while others let other motives prevail. My first objective in this study is to abstain from the simple statistical relationships-approach and include theoretical

explanations that are implied, to clarify how a declining relationship between class and voting should be interpreted.

### *1.3 Explaining the declining relationship between class and voting behavior*

The general acceptance in sociology of the fact that the classic pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class is rapidly disappearing, raises the question of how this can be explained. Because most researchers have focused on finding out whether the statistical relationship between class position and voting behavior has declined over the years, relatively little attention has been paid to finding an explanation for the declining ties between class and voting. Two major theoretical approaches have been put forward over the years. One, focusing on hypotheses derived from class analysis, and two, focusing on the rise of a new political culture.

Nieuwbeerta (1995) investigated whether there was a decline in the relationship between class and party-preference, and tried to explain the, over-time and between country, differences in this relationship, using hypotheses derived from class analysis. He investigated, for example, the impact of differences in standard of living, size of income differences, percentage of intergenerational class mobility, trade union density, the proportion of manual workers, et cetera on the degree to which class affected voting behavior. Nieuwbeerta failed to find confirmation for most of these hypotheses (Nieuwbeerta 1995; Nieuwbeerta, De Graaf and Ultee 2000; Nieuwbeerta and Ultee 1999), thus the first theoretical approach, which remains within the class perspective, has proven by and large inadequate for explaining differences in the relationship between class-position and party choice. An alternative explanation needs seriously to be considered.

A second theoretical approach, the focus of which is centered around the work of Ronald Inglehart, focuses on the changing nature of the political culture, the rise of new political values, and the rise of new political parties in Western democracies (Clark 2001a; Dalton 1988; Inglehart 1997a; Lipset 1981). In this approach it is hypothesized that new political interests, which have little to nothing to do with old class-related interests, have grown in salience, causing the relationship between class and voting to decline or even to become reversed. This

alternative explanation has not received due attention as a means to explain why the traditional pattern is disappearing.

In the approach focusing on the rise of the new political culture, there has been traditionally a remarkable one-sided emphasis on new-leftist politics. According to Inglehart, new political parties tend to attract an electorate that is concerned about the environment and 'relatively favorable to women's rights, disabled groups gay and lesbian emancipation, ethnic minorities, and a number of other causes' (1997: 244). In other words, Inglehart uses new left and new politics 'virtually synonymously' (Flanagan 1987: 1305). This one-sided focus on new-leftist issues was not a large problem in the 1960s and 1970s. However, 'everything changed in the 1980s. New parties emerged, older ones radically innovated themselves, and both gained unprecedented consent' (Ignazi 2003: 1). Increasingly in the 1980s, Western democracies witnessed the rise of new rightist parties that received a considerable share of the vote: The FPÖ in Austria, FN and Vlaams Blok in Belgium, The Republikaner in Germany; Front National in France and the LPF in the Netherlands, to mention a few examples. This clearly contradicts those who take the viewpoint that new politics basically is mostly new-leftist politics, and it poses the problem of how to interpret these new right-wing movements. Ronald Inglehart for instance suggests that the Flemish and Walloon nationalists actually 'represent the Left instead of the Right' because they too are more concerned with cultural than economic issues and they are also interested in social change (Inglehart 1977: 239). More recently Inglehart argues that: 'New rightist groups are a reaction against broader [new leftist] trends that are moving faster than these societies can assimilate them' and that they therefore 'do not represent the wave of the future' (Inglehart 1997a: 251). As yet, there is no empirical research that convincingly demonstrates the demise or coming demise of these new rightist movements.

Those arguing that the political culture is fundamentally changing often claim that the issues of class, or materialistic issues, are rapidly declining in importance. Inglehart for instance argues that:

*'[Karl Marx's] emphasis on politics as the struggle to own the means of production captured an important part of reality in the early phases of industrial society. But with the evolution of advanced industrial society, new conflicts and new worldviews*

*have emerged, making the economic conflicts Marx emphasized less central to political life' (Inglehart 1997a: 256).*

This implies that new issues matter more and class issues matter less for the political culture as time goes by and Western democracies develop. Yet, there is no systematic comparative empirical research investigating whether class issues have declined in salience (see also: Hechter 2004: 416). Claims that the old politics of class are waning have thus largely gone unaccompanied by empirical evidence to corroborate these claims.

The dominant view in political sociology is that 'economic development, cultural change, and political change go together in coherent and roughly predictable patterns' (Inglehart 1997a: 324). More than that, many times it is argued that socioeconomic developments are the cause of political and cultural change (compare Dalton 1988; Inglehart 1997a; Inglehart and Abrahamson 1994; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Knutsen 1995; Lipset 1981). The explanation for changes in the political culture is a materialistic one, and is basically derived from the historical materialism, put forward by Karl Marx. Socioeconomic developments underlie cultural changes and the transition from an old political culture toward a new one: 'It should occur in any country that moves from conditions of economic insecurity to relative security' (Abrahamson and Inglehart 1995: 6). So, looking at the influence of materialism on political culture, one can even claim that changes in socioeconomic conditions are indirectly responsible for the demise in the relationship between party and class (Evans and Whitefield 2003).

It is, however, questionable whether developments in the economic sphere are really responsible for the changes in political culture. Dick Houtman's study *Class and Politics in Contemporary Social Science* (2003), for example, shows that the assumptions underlying the materialist approach to political and cultural change can be rejected when they are empirically tested against competing theories:

*'The problem in the sociological analysis of cultural change... is not that anyone denies modernization is more than industrial development, growing affluence, and a changing occupational structure. Instead the problem is that it is so often assumed ... that cultural change is generated by these technological and socioeconomic changes*

*in any direct way...This deficiency can, in short, be corrected in a relatively simple way by conceptualizing the cultural and industrial aspects of modernity independently from each other (Houtman 2003: 167).*

That more prosperous people have different worldviews than less prosperous people, and that more prosperous countries differ from less prosperous countries in their political culture, may not necessarily have anything to do with the degree of prosperity of people or countries. Without taking competing theories into consideration the materialist approach to politics cannot be confirmed.

In short, the class approach to politics has proven unsuccessful as a means to explain differences in the relationship between class and voting behavior. An approach focusing on the changing nature of the political culture might be successful, but it is unlikely that such an approach will be problem free.

#### *1.4 Research problem*

Many authors have argued that the rise of a new political culture in which new issues have become more important has caused the traditional ties between class position and voting behavior to decrease. Although the argument seems attractive, no one has provided convincing support for this thesis yet. The foremost aim I have in this study is to investigate whether the relationship between class and voting behavior is weaker in countries in which the political culture can be characterized as 'new'. Following on the argumentation presented above, the main research questions of the study are formulated as follows:

*Has there really been a rise of the new political culture in post-war Western democracies? And if so, why have the political cultures been changing in these countries? Are changing political cultures in Western countries really causing members of the working class to vote for the right and members of the middle class to vote for the left?*



### 1.5 Data

The empirical investigation in this study is based on three sources of data covering information about the macro level class voting, political culture, and individual values and voting behavior in twenty Western countries previously studied by Nieuwbeerta (see Table 1.1).

*Table 1.1 Countries included in this study*

Australia	Finland	Ireland	Portugal
Austria	France	Italy	Spain
Belgium	Germany	Luxembourg	Sweden
Canada	Great Britain	The Netherlands	Switzerland
Denmark	Greece	Norway	United States

Chapters 2, 4, and 5 are based on subsets of the World Values Survey data. The collection includes data on more than ninety countries around the world, more than 800 variables, and more than 270,000 interviews covering cultural and political values (compare [www.worldvaluessurvey.com](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.com)). The survey was specially designed to facilitate cross-cultural research. Four waves of data collection have been carried out since 1981. For this study, I will mainly rely on the 1990 and 2000 waves because the 1981 wave does not contain vital information on voting behavior for most of the countries discussed in this study.

Chapters 3 and 5 are based on data on party manifestos. These data have also been used by Clark (2001) to determine changes in the political culture. Budge et al. (2001: CD-ROM) quantify all post-war party manifestos of major parties in the twenty Western countries under observation. Each sentence and quasi-sentence in the party manifestos is coded into one of 56 policy priorities. The data are structured in such a way that, for each party manifesto, all sentences and quasi-sentences amount to 100 percent. All sentences covering a policy priority are summed and expressed as a percentage of the whole. A score on a policy priority thus reflects the space this priority occupies in the party manifesto. The Budge et al. data will be used to study the changes in the political culture of Western countries and to study

the effects of these changes on the relationship between class position and voting behavior.

To avoid overlap between the chapters, each of the operationalizations based on either the Party Manifesto Data or the World Values Survey Data, is discussed only once. This is done in the chapter where they are used for the first time.

In Chapter 5, I use the statistics produced by Nieuwbeerta for the period from 1945 to 1990 for the measurement of macro-level statistics on the relationship between class position and voting behavior. These data show that there has been a decline in the relationship between class and voting and as such, offer a good point of departure if one wishes to try and explain this decline.

### *1.6 Overview of the book*

This thesis consists of four empirical chapters. First I make an analysis of the reasons for members of the working class to vote right and members of the middle class to vote left (Chapter 2). Then I will look at whether or not the political culture has changed in the post-war period (Chapter 3). Then I discuss how the changes in political culture can be explained (Chapter 4). In Chapter 5 I discuss whether the changes in the political culture have really led to a decline in the relationship between class and voting behavior. The final chapter consists of a summary of my research findings and I then discuss the findings' implications for the 'death of class debate' and theories about the rise of postmodern choice politics.

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## 2 'UNNATURAL' VOTING BEHAVIOR\*

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*'Universal Suffrage is the equivalent of political power for the working class of England, where the proletariat forms the large majority of the population. ... Its inevitable result, here, is the political supremacy of the working class'.*

*(Marx [1852] 1963: 204-7).*

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### 2.1 Introduction

Studies of the class-vote relationship are typically based on the assumption that people are inclined to vote for 'the natural party of their class' (Heath, Evans and Payne 1995: 564). Which party is the 'natural class-party' and, hence, what actually constitutes 'natural' voting behavior, depends on class-based economic interests. Lipset (1970: 186) speaks of 'true class interests' in this context. To defend these true interests the working class is held to vote for parties on the left, while members of the middle class are held to vote for right-wing parties. Alford has even argued that

*'a relation between class position and voting behavior is a natural and expected association in the Western democracies for a number of reasons: the existence of class interests, the representation of these interests by political parties, and the regular association of certain parties with certain interests. Given the character of the stratification order and the way political parties act as representatives of different class interests, it would be remarkable if such a relation were not found' (Alford 1967: 68-69).*

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\* Note: this chapter is a reworked version of: Achterberg, Peter, and Dick Houtman. 2006. "Why Do So Many People Vote 'Unnaturally'? A Cultural Explanation for Voting Behaviour." *European Journal of Political Research* 45:75-92.

The empirical validity of this theoretical approach has always been the subject of discussion. Members of the British parliament, when preparing the Second Reform Bill (1867), which would enable a large part of the working class to vote, were afraid that they would lose power to the leftist parties (see also the quotation at the start of this chapter). Despite this, time has shown that members of the working class do not necessarily vote for the natural party of their class. Many of the working class voted right wing with the consequence that the rightist party stayed in power after the elections (McKenzie and Silver 1968). Although many argue that it is completely normal or natural for members the working class to vote left, this pattern has never been completely normal and has weakened in the post-war period (Nieuwbeerta 1995, 1996). Something appears to be fundamentally wrong with the basic class-analytic logic of a 'naturally' left-voting working class.

Working-class conservatives constitute only half of the problem. Many members of the middle class also vote for parties that do not match their class interests. Manza and Brooks note that, since the nineteen fifties, an increasing proportion of the higher middle class (professionals) in the United States has been voting for a leftist party (Democrats); and that since the seventies, the majority of this class has appeared to vote for the left (1999: 66-67). Here, again, there seems to be something fundamentally wrong with the logic of class analysis.

In the light of the traditional class approach, in which the terms 'natural' class parties, 'true' class interests, 'normal' class party allegiances, et cetera are used, it is difficult to understand why so many people show 'unnatural' voting behavior by failing to vote for their 'natural' parties following their 'true' class interests. This raises the question of how to explain why many people vote contrary to class interests. It is this question that is central to this chapter. I will first formulate some hypotheses that I will use to examine why members of the middle class vote for the left and members of the working class vote for the right. I will then test these hypotheses using World Values Survey-data collected in 2000 in the Netherlands, a country where the relationship between class position and voting behavior is known to be very weak, and where consequently many people vote contrary to their assumed class interests.

## 2.2 *'Unnatural' voting behavior*

Many attempts have been made to explain the phenomenon of working-class conservatism. Since the Marxist notion of 'false class consciousness' seems to have lost its credibility, various authors have wondered, without applying any empirical tests, whether economic motives could justify a working-class vote for a right-wing party. Reid (1977: 232) suggests that workers, because of their poor position on the labor market, are burdened by immigrants who compete with them for essentially the same positions (see also Burns and Gimpel 2000). Logically, then, these workers do not favor immigrants in their country, and consequently, voting for a right-wing party offers a good solution. Weakliem and Heath (1994: 246-247) suggest that workers choose for overall economic growth, which allows them to profit in the longer term, not earlier.

Reid, Weakliem, and Heath try to force the phenomenon of working-class conservatism to conform to 'accepted' class theory by considerably stretching economic interests. Although interpreting new facts with the help of existing theories is in itself not problematic, it is problematic when nothing more than this is done. That rightist voting members of the working class are guided by their economic interests is merely assumed and needs empirical investigation. Without this investigation, there is only a loose interpretation or suggestion on behalf of the researcher that does not solve any problems but instead produces more questions than it answers.

With respect to the middle class, we can also see that economic interests are being stretched analytically. In the so-called theory of the 'New Class', leftist voting members of the middle class are assumed to pursue their economic interests (Brint 1984; Bruce-Briggs 1979; De Graaf and Steijn 1997); because members of the new middle class are mainly occupied in government service, they are held to benefit from government interference because this provides them with job and career opportunities. The mere fact that members of this new class are voting left is regarded as confirmation of this general idea and researchers have not performed any direct empirical tests to assess whether this idea holds any water.<sup>1</sup> In short, we see that the economic interests of a certain class are being stretched considerably without a proper direct empirical test being conducted.

This stretching of economic class interests underlines the dominance of class analysis in political sociology: the logic that underlies class analysis is not open to discussion. In this way, one can always prove class theory, in retrospect, to be tenable for voting behavior: when workers vote for leftist parties and members of the middle class vote for rightist parties, they do so because they pursue economic (class) interests; conversely when workers vote for rightist parties and the middle class for leftist parties they also economic (class) interests, and the argument becomes circular.

This fixation on economic interests and economic voting motives is remarkable. As early as in the 1950's Lipset has pointed to rightist tendencies in the working class that had nothing to do with economic interests. In his influential article *Democracy and Working-Class Authoritarianism* (1959), he introduces a distinction between economic values relating to the distribution of wealth and income and cultural values relating to individual liberty and social order and argues that the working class is characterized by economic progressiveness, in favor of economic redistribution, and by authoritarianism (Lipset 1959: 485).

At the same time, the middle class can be characterized by its 'postmaterialism': an emphasis on individual liberty and self-actualization. Working-class authoritarianism, characterized by an emphasis on social order, and middle-class postmaterialism, characterized by an emphasis on individual freedom, are mirror images (Dekker, Ester and Van den Broek 1999; Houtman 2003; Middendorp 1991: 262). Authoritarianism and postmaterialism not only correlate strongly (and negatively) with each other, but they also correlate with acceptance or rejection of traditional gender roles and instrumental or expressive orientations towards education (Houtman 2003: 74-77, see also Middendorp 1991). In this book, I refer to this complex of moral and political values, with its emphasis on either individual freedom or social order, as authoritarianism/ libertarianism (Houtman 2003; Kitschelt 1995).

Later research has convincingly demonstrated that working-class authoritarianism is an authoritarianism of the poorly educated rather than an authoritarianism of those with a weak economic position (Dekker and Ester 1987; Grabb 1979, 1980; Houtman 2003: 23-46; Lipset 1981; Lipsitz 1965; Van de Werfhorst and De Graaf 2004): and that, logically, libertarianism is caused by a high level of

education. Much less consensus exists about the question of whether or not this effect of education on these values can be interpreted as a class effect. On the one hand there are those who argue that it can (Goldthorpe 1980), because education is generally considered to be a key indicator for class (Lipset 1981; Wright 1985). On the other hand, there are those who argue that, although education and class are strongly correlated, education cannot be equated to class (Dekker and Ester 1987; Grabb 1980; Houtman 2003).

The key question, then, is whether or not the libertarianism of the highly educated confirms the theory that explains authoritarianism/ libertarianism using class. Lamont (1987) proposes that cultural capital, i.e., the ability to recognize cultural expressions and comprehend their meaning; (see Bourdieu 1984) is decisive, (see also Houtman 2003). This suggestion is promising for three reasons. One, since Bourdieu's path-breaking work in this area, education is no longer merely considered to be a key indicator for the strength of one's labor market position, 'class in a traditional sense', it also has bearing on cultural capital (see, for example De Graaf and Kalmijn 2001; Kalmijn 1994). Two, the validity of education as an indicator for cultural capital is underscored by its substantial positive correlation with cultural participation (see for instance DiMaggio 1982; DiMaggio and Mohr 1985; Ganzeboom 1989). Bourdieu (1986) makes a distinction between education as an indicator for institutionalized cultural capital and cultural participation as an indicator for embodied cultural capital. Three, although the notion of cultural capital is typically used in studies of school success, social mobility and reproduction of social inequality, e.g., DiMaggio (1982), DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) and Niehof (1997), it also makes sense theoretically to assume that it affects libertarianism. As people have a greater ability to recognize cultural expressions and comprehend their meaning, and thus, they have more cultural capital. Such people are less likely to reject different lifestyles and non-traditional patterns of behavior as deviant and are more likely to be willing to accept them (Gabennesch 1972; Houtman 2003).

The question what the relationship between education and libertarianism actually represents, cannot be answered using an assessment of the statistical effects of occupational class and/or education. Occupational class inevitably mixes up the strength of one's labor market position with the amount of one's cultural capital as

indicated by education. Such an analysis inevitably produces a 'working class' with a weak economic position and a limited amount of cultural capital and a middle class with a strong economic position and ample cultural capital. To bypass the interpretation problems posed by the use of theoretically ambiguous variables, it is necessary to use more explicit indicators for class and cultural capital (Achterberg and Houtman 2006; Houtman 2003). Consequently, I will measure class position by income. As explained above, cultural capital can be measured using the level of cultural participation by an individual (DiMaggio 1982; DiMaggio and Mohr 1985). Although I also include education in my analysis, it is no less ambiguous than occupational class, because education also taps the strength of one's labor market position and the amount of one's cultural capital (Houtman 2003: 27-28). Consequently, education is likely to have a similar effect on economic progressiveness as income, the explicit class indicator, and a similar effect on libertarianism as cultural participation, the explicit indicator for cultural capital.

In short, left-wing tendencies in the working class and right-wing tendencies in the middle class may relate to the economic domain: because of their marginal economic position members of the working class may favor economic redistribution, and because of their favorable economic position members of the middle class may oppose economic redistribution. Rightist tendencies in the working class and middle-class leftism may relate to the cultural domain: due to their low amount of cultural capital workers may be authoritarian, while due to their ample cultural capital members of the middle class may be libertarian.

These economic and cultural views have consequences for the degree in which people vote for a leftist or a rightist party. Political parties in Western countries can be ordered on a single left-right, or progressive-conservative, dimension (Budge et al. 1987; Huber & Inglehart 1995). Parties that are economically conservative are also authoritarian, while parties that are economically progressive are also libertarian. Parties on the left side of the political spectrum thus draw considerable support from those with economically progressive and libertarian values. Parties on the right draw considerable support from those with economically conservative and authoritarian values (Houtman 2003).

The above leads me to expect that cultural rather than economic interests will be decisive in explaining 'unnatural' voting behavior. I expect, therefore, that



members of the working class, having a small amount of cultural capital on average, adhere to authoritarian values that lead them to cast rightist votes. For members of the middle class, exactly the reverse is expected, because of their larger amount of cultural capital, they are expected to adhere predominantly to libertarian values that lead them to vote for leftist parties. As to left-voting members of the working class and right-voting members of the middle classes ('natural' voting), of course, the explanation offered by traditional class analysis, drawing on economic class interests, is expected to be tenable.

In making a decision about voting I expect that two interests lead to different choices: economic interests bound to class on the one hand and cultural interests bound to cultural capital on the other. If people vote in line with their class positions, i.e. vote 'naturally', I expect this to be caused by their economic positions and the associated economically progressive or conservative values (*hypothesis 1*). If people vote outside their class positions, i.e. vote 'unnaturally', this is expected to be attributable to the amount of cultural capital and the associated authoritarian or libertarian values (*hypothesis 2*).

### 2.3 Data and measures

To test my hypotheses, I used data taken from the last wave of the World Values Survey (1999-2000) for the Netherlands. Below I discuss the measurement of the main concepts that will be used.

*Voting behavior* was measured by asking respondents which party they would vote for if elections were held tomorrow. No vote responses, abstentions, and did not know were coded missing.<sup>2</sup> Responses for PvdA (Labor), GroenLinks (the Greens), or the SP (Socialist Party) were coded Left (1). Responses CDA (Christian Democrats), VVD (Liberals), D66 (Democrats), SGP/RPF/GPV (small Christian parties) were coded non-left (0).

*Economic progressiveness* was measured using five items. Respondents were asked to position their answers on a 1 to 10 scale, where 1 equated complete agreement and 10 complete disagreement. Factor analysis and reliability analysis of these items showed that a fairly reliable scale measuring economic views could be obtained (see Table 2.1). The scale for economic progressiveness was constructed by

calculating a mean score for every respondent with valid scores on at least four of the five items.

Table 2.1 *Factor and reliability analysis items for economic progressiveness*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Factor 1</i>
Incomes should be made more equal	0.49
Government ownership of business and industry should be increased	0.72
The government should take more responsibility that everyone is provided for	0.63
People who are unemployed should have to take any job available or lose their unemployment benefits	-0.62
Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas	-0.67
Eigenvalue	2.03
R <sup>2</sup>	0.41
Reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	0.63
N	658

Source: Dutch sample World Values Survey 2000

*Libertarianism* was measured using four indicators: the index for post-materialism, a scale for sexual permissiveness, a scale for gender role traditionalism, and an index for conformity as a parental value orientation, see Middendorp (1991) and Houtman (2003) who also used these four indicators to measure libertarianism using an earlier wave of the World Values Survey.

The index for post-materialism was measured using the standard four-item measure. Respondents were asked to choose two most important goals out of four possible goals. Respondents who chose 'protecting freedom of speech' and 'giving the people more say in important government decisions' were coded 'post-materialists' (4). Respondents who chose 'maintaining order in the nation' and 'fighting rising prices' were coded 'materialists' (1). Respondents who chose a post-materialist goal first and a materialist goal second were coded 'mixed post-

materialists' (3), and respondents who chose a materialist goal first and a post-materialist goal second were coded 'mixed materialists' (2).

The index for conformity as a parental value consisted of six items for which the respondents were asked to indicate which qualities children should be encouraged to learn at home. Three of these qualities, 'good manners', 'religious faith', and 'obedience', emphasized conformity, while three other qualities 'determination perseverance', 'imagination', and 'independence', emphasized the opposite. A factor analysis of the six qualities revealed that the last three qualities opposed the first three. The index was calculated as a mean score for every respondent that had valid scores on at least five of the six items.

The scale for sexual permissiveness was measured by asking the respondents to indicate on a 1-10 scale the degree to which they thought activities like 'married men/women having an affair', 'homosexuality', and 'abortion' could be justified.<sup>3</sup> Factor analysis of the items showed that all the measures tapped the same dimension and that a scale could be constructed.<sup>4</sup> The scale for sexual permissiveness was constructed by calculating a mean score for every respondent on the three items.

The scale for gender role traditionalism consisted of seven items, mainly of the Likert type, i.e. agree completely-disagree completely, which are shown below.

- When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women.
- A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.
- A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.
- A job is alright but what most women really want is a home and children.
- Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.
- If a woman wants to have a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove?
- Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled or is this not necessary?

Factor analysis showed that the items all tapped the same dimension and that a scale could be constructed,<sup>5</sup> by calculating the mean score for every respondent with valid scores on at least five items.

The scale for libertarianism was constructed by recoding all four indicators in such a way that a higher score was taken to stand for more libertarian views. To check whether the four items tapped a different ideological dimension than economic progressiveness, together with the measure for economic progressiveness, they were entered into a secondary factor analysis (see Table 2.2).

*Table 2.2 Factor analysis on scales for libertarianism and economic progressiveness, principal component analysis, method: varimax-rotation*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Factor 1</i>	<i>Factor 2</i>
Postmaterialism	0.55	0.17
Conformity as a parental value*	0.74	0.01
Sexual permissiveness	0.78	0.06
Gender role traditionalism*	0.79	0.01
Economic progressiveness	0.06	0.99
Eigenvalue	2.11	1.01
R <sup>2</sup>	0.42	0.20
N	974	974

\* Indicator reversed

Source: Dutch sample of the World Values Survey 2000

Like other research findings in the field of political sociology, the analysis presented in Table 2.2 shows that there are two clear ideological dimensions, the first measuring ideological views on cultural issues and the second measuring views on economic issues (Evans, Heath and Lalljee 1996; Fleishman 1988; Houtman 2003; Lipset 1981; Middendorp 1991). This means that, generally speaking, there is no way of predicting whether a person is progressive on one dimension when the ideological position of a person on the other dimension is known. It was clear that

the four indicators could be used to construct a scale for cultural progressivism. After standardizing the four indicators, the scale was constructed by calculating a mean score for every respondent with at least three valid scores on one of the four indicators.<sup>6</sup>

*Occupational class* was measured using a sevenfold schema resembling the EGP-class schema (see Table 2.5). Combining a 14 fold occupational schema with information on employment status and number of hours (>30) worked by the respondent, respondents were coded into one of seven classes. Unemployed and retired respondents were coded using information about their previous occupation. Following Andersen and Heath (2002) and Nieuwbeerta (1995), I regard classes V through VII as working class.<sup>7</sup>

*Income* was measured by asking the respondent to state their monthly net family income. Responses were recoded into ten categories.

Two indicators were used to measure *cultural capital*: cultural participation and educational level. Cultural participation was measured using information on whether or not the respondent indicated he or she took part in 'education, arts, music or cultural activities', and whether or not he or she did unpaid, voluntary work for 'education, arts, music or cultural activities', and the amount of time he or she spent time with people at clubs and voluntary sports, culture, or communal associations. These were scored 'weekly' (4) to 'not at all' (1). Especially the third item could at best be regarded as a very indirect measure, and as shown in the factor-analysis presented in Table 2.3 this item contributed relatively little to the common dimension.

Table 2.3 Factor analysis and reliability analysis items for cultural participation

<i>Item</i>	<i>Factor loading</i>
Culturally active	0.82
Unpaid work cultural organizations	0.83
Spend time with people in culture/sports club	0.50
Eigenvalue	1.60
R <sup>2</sup>	53.38
Reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha$ )	0.54
N	970

Source: Dutch sample of World Values Survey 2000

*Educational level* was measured using the age of the respondent at the time he or she quit full-time schooling.

In Table 2.4 by means of zero-order correlations and multiple R's, it is shown how the measures for occupational class related to those for income, education, and cultural participation.

Table 2.4 Relationships between measures for occupational class, income, education and cultural participation (Pearson's *r* (multiple R for occupational class), two-tailed test for significance, N=590).

	<i>Occupational class<sup>s</sup></i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Education</i>
Income	0.29***	--	--
Education	0.52***	0.33***	--
Cultural participation	0.18***	0.04 n.s.	0.30***

n.s. not significant; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: Dutch sample of World Values Survey 2000

Table 2.4 shows that occupational class is related to income, education and cultural participation. In general members of the working class have less income than members of the middle class, are less educated and participate less culturally than

members of the middle class. The table also shows the ambiguous nature of education, which relates to income and cultural participation in about the same degree: while there is a strong and positive relationship between income and education, the higher educated prove to have more income, there is also a strong relationship with cultural participation, the higher educated participate more culturally. Income and cultural participation showed almost no relationship demonstrating that the less ambiguous variables are not related.

#### 2.4 Results

Table 2.5 shows the distribution of preferences of members of the seven classes for a left party or a non-left party. It is remarkable that there is only a very weak relationship between class position and leftist voting behavior. Three classes, those of the lower-grade professionals, the petty bourgeoisie and the semi-skilled manual workers, vote unnaturally more often than naturally. Few correct predictions can be made on the basis of knowledge of a person's class position about the party one would most likely choose (Cramer's  $V=0.15$ ,  $p=0.04$ ). The fact that the working class is only slightly more likely to vote for a leftist party than the middle class underscores the importance of the theoretical problem that is addressed in this chapter.

Table 2.5 Left/Non-left voting behavior by class position (percentages presented/  
‘Unnatural’ voting behavior bold)

<i>Class</i>	<i>Non-left</i>	<i>Left</i>
I Higher grade professionals	68.8	<b>31.3</b>
II Lower grade professionals	40.7	<b>59.3</b>
III Routine non-manual workers	54.9	<b>45.1</b>
IV Petty bourgeoisie	46.0	<b>54.0</b>
V Supervisors manual workers	<b>42.6</b>	57.4
VI Skilled manual workers	<b>52.9</b>	47.1
VII Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers	<b>35.3</b>	64.7
N	269	303

Cramer’s V 0.14 (p=0.04)

Source: Dutch sample of World Values Survey 2000

To explain why so many members of the middle class would vote for the left and why so many members of the working class would vote for the right, I assigned the respondents to two categories, ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’ voters. Using the class schema, I assigned all members of the working class, i.e. those in classes V through VII, who said they would vote for a non-leftist party and all members of the middle class, i.e. those in classes I through IV, who said they would vote for a leftist party in the category of ‘unnatural’ voters (N=272). In the category of ‘natural’ voters, I placed all members of the working class who said they would vote for a leftist party and all members of the middle class who said they would vote for a non-leftist party (N=300).

To test the explanations put forward for these types of voting behavior and because the dependent variable in our analyses has only two values, left and non-left, I use logistic regression analysis. As mentioned above, educational level, cultural participation, income, libertarianism, and economic progressiveness are the independent variables. Class position was not included as an independent variable, because this would be meaningless.<sup>9</sup>



Two tables containing information about three estimated models are presented below for ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’ voters. The first model was used to estimate the effects of the indicators of class and cultural capital on voting behavior, the second to estimate the effects of economic progressiveness and libertarianism, and the third to estimate the effects of all variables together.

Table 2.6 *Explaining left-wing voting behavior for ‘natural’ voters in the Netherlands, Log-odds ratios presented (standard errors between brackets; N=281).*

<i>Independents</i>	<i>Model 1a</i>	<i>Model 1b</i>	<i>Model 1c</i>
Income	-0.23*** (0.07)		-0.17* (0.08)
Education	-0.40*** (0.08)		-0.28*** (0.07)
Cultural participation	0.03 (0.29)		-0.27 (0.09)
Economic progressiveness		0.52*** (0.11)	0.48*** (0.11)
Libertarianism		-0.04 (0.22)	0.37 (0.26)
Constant	3.95*** (0.69)	-2.79*** (0.69)	0.97 (0.96)
Nagelkerke pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.22	0.13	0.30

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: Dutch sample of the World Values Survey 2000

The two unambiguously cultural variables, cultural participation and libertarianism, play no role for ‘natural’ voters. Income, the indicator of the strength of a person’s economic position, significantly affects voting behavior. In the first model, I found a significant effect for income and for education, meaning that having a higher income and being higher educated leads to higher chances of voting for a left-wing party. Put differently, having a low income leads people to vote left-

wing, and being low educated also leads people to vote for a left-wing party, as may be expected following the traditional logic of class analysis.

In the second model I found a significant effect for the economic voting motives: those who were economically progressive vote more often for parties on the left. As expected, favorable views towards redistribution of wealth and state intervention lead people to vote for the left. In the third model all variables were entered together: the effects of income and education reduce somewhat in magnitude, but remain, by and large, intact. Income, education, and economic progressiveness explain 30% of the variance of the voting behavior of the 'natural' voters. The first hypothesis is thus accepted: 'natural' voting behavior can be explained by class position and by the economically progressive or conservative values resulting from this class position. This is not a remarkable finding because it is exactly what class analysis has assumed all along; however, the importance of this finding becomes clear when we look at the results of a similar type of analysis for the 'unnatural' voters (see Table 2.7).

Contrary to what was found above, income and economic progressiveness, both class-related variables, do not play a role in explaining 'unnatural' voting behavior. Cultural participation, an indicator for cultural capital, does affect an 'unnatural' vote for left or right. Those participating culturally vote more for the left than those who do not or participate less culturally. After controlling for libertarianism the direct effect of cultural participation partially disappears which means that those with ample cultural capital vote left for libertarian reasons. The effect of education is strong in both the first and the third model, which needs to be understood in a cultural sense. It indicates that people with higher levels of education tend to vote for a left-wing party.

Table 2.7 Explaining left-wing voting behavior for ‘unnatural’ voters in the Netherlands, Log-odds ratios presented (standard errors between brackets; N=262).

<i>Independents</i>	<i>Model 2a</i>	<i>Model 2b</i>	<i>Model 2c</i>
Income	-0.11 (0.08)		-0.15 (0.09)
Education	0.29*** (0.07)		0.18* (0.08)
Cultural participation	1.00*** (0.29)		0.80* (0.36)
Economic progressiveness		0.27 (0.15)	0.26 (0.14)
Libertarianism		1.54*** (0.27)	1.36*** (0.30)
Constant	-1.41 (0.78)	-4.32*** (0.86)	-4.47*** (1.15)
Nagelkerke pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.18	0.25	0.32

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: Dutch sample of the World Values Survey 2000

Note that, in the final model, about 30% of the variance of the voting behavior of the ‘unnatural’ voters is explained by level of education and libertarianism. This closely resembles the percentage of variance explained in the analysis for the ‘natural’ voters. Therefore, the cultural explanation of voting behavior is equally valuable for explaining ‘unnatural’ voting behavior as the class explanation is for explaining ‘natural’ voting behavior. In short, the second hypothesis is also accepted: ‘unnatural’ voting behavior can be explained by a person’s cultural capital and the cultural values correlated with it.

The role of education in both analyses deserves some comments. In the first analysis (Table 2.6), its effect is negative, in the second one (Table 2.7), it is positive. This confirms the ambiguous nature of education as an indicator of class and cultural capital simultaneously. It is also remarkable that, in Tables 2.6 and 2.7, the

direct effects of education, income, and cultural participation on voting behavior do not disappear after controlling for economic and cultural values. This suggests that voting behavior is not value-rationally motivated, i.e., driven by economic progressivism/ conservatism and libertarianism, and that economic and cultural identities related to economic, indicated by education and income, and cultural positions, indicated by education and cultural participation, also play a role (compare Weakliem and Heath 1994).

'Natural' voters base their votes on economic motives that flow from their economic positions, but these class-based economic interests do not drive the behavior of 'unnatural' voters. The latter is based on cultural voting motivations that are connected to cultural capital. Rightist voting members of the working class and leftist voting members of the middle class vote the way they do because their voting behavior is culturally rather than economically motivated.<sup>10</sup> Working-class votes for the left and middle-class votes for the right are, as they are traditionally expected to be, caused by economic voting motivations, attributable to the strength of a person's class position and the economic interests this entails. Rightist-voting working class behavior is likely to remain an unresolved problem as long as students of political behavior neglect the cultural dynamics that underlie voting behavior.

## 2.5 Conclusion

The class approach to politics is used to explain why some members of the working class vote for a leftist party and some members of the middle class vote for a rightist party. Class analysis with its one-sided focus on differences in economic position and the political values resulting from this is impotent when it comes to explaining why members of the working class are increasingly voting for the right and members of the middle class increasingly voting for the left. Using theoretical insights that depart from the economic logic of class analysis, I have developed, tested, and confirmed a supplementary explanation for voting behavior, which focuses on cultural rather than economic differences. The findings demonstrate that interests linked to cultural capital account for votes contrary to class interests, 'unnatural' voting behavior.

The above does not mean that class analysis has become obsolete. Although it cannot explain 'unnatural' votes, it provides a very good explanation for 'natural' ones. The proposed cultural explanation for voting behavior does not conflict with class analysis. It is another voting mechanism that in some countries, such as the Netherlands, is about as strong as the old class-voting mechanism. It thus rather supplements it by giving cultural interests, which also affect voting behavior, their due attention.

The logic of class analysis has not become completely useless when trying to explain voting behavior, and that voting behavior which follows the new cultural logic and crosscuts the old class-party alignments. As yet it remains an open question why some people vote according to class logic, while others vote according to the new cultural logic. Next chapters will take up this question.



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## 3 THE COMING OF A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE?

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*'The politics of advanced industrial societies no longer polarize primarily on the basis working class versus middle class; and the old issues, centering on ownership of the means of production, no longer lie at the heart of political polarization'*

*(Inglehart 1987: 1295)*

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### 3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I concluded that a working-class vote for the right and a middle-class vote for the left can be explained culturally, while a working-class vote for the left and a middle-class vote for the right can still be explained economically. What we now need to answer is the question why some people choose to vote culturally and others choose to vote economically. The idea that changes in the political cultures of Western countries have something to do with this is frequently put forward (see for instance Baker, Dalton and Hildebrandt 1981; Clark 1998, 2001a, b; Inglehart and Rabier 1986; Nieuwbeerta 2001).

In political sociology, there is a general consensus about the nature of old politics and the old political culture. Lipset's conception of voting as an expression of 'the democratic class struggle' (Lipset 1981) is generally accepted. Class cleavages are institutionalized in the political system, making sure that the party system reflects the interests of particular classes in Western societies (Lipset 2001). Class conflict, the conflict over the distribution of economic resources over different classes, has for a long time been central to the social-scientific literature on political behavior. In this context, Robinson (1967) points to the use of the word 'labor' in the names of political parties, which appeal to working class interests. Political culture

has traditionally been dominated by class conflict in quite a few Western industrialized or post-industrialized countries.

There are, however, some indications that after the 1960s and 1970s Western political culture has centered less on class conflict and can be increasingly characterized as 'postmodern' (Inglehart 1997a), 'post-industrial' (Rempel and Clark 1997) or simply 'new' (Clark 1998, 2001c). In this new political culture, 'new' societal cleavages allegedly have become more central. If there has been a rise of new political culture this should be noticeable in two different things: One, there should be shift in salience from old issues toward new issues, and two, there should be a changing pattern of political polarization.

There are, however three major problems in the literature concerning the changing nature of political cultures. The first problem deals with the fact that it is not all that clear what is happening to the old politics of class. Some argue, or at least seem to suggest, that class issues are no longer relevant to contemporary political cultures. Inglehart for instance argues that 'the central element of the Marxist prescription, nationalization of industry, is almost a forgotten cause' (Inglehart 1997a: 237) and that 'economic cleavages did become less intense with rising levels of economic development, they gradually gave way to *other* types of conflict (Inglehart 1997a: 259 italics in original). Evans aptly summarizes Inglehart's efforts and those of others:

*'From being the 'motor of history', the basis of the 'democratic class struggle', class has for many become an outdated and increasingly irrelevant concept – more a part of 'folk memory' than a currently significant phenomenon. The arguments of postmodernists and disillusioned socialists have been combined with those of the 'end of ideology' liberals and numerous empirical researchers to assert that class inequality has lost its political importance' (Evans 1999: 1).*

Remarkably, those who speak about the declining importance of class issues, always, like Inglehart cited above, refer to leftist class policies that are disappearing, while rejecting the notion that rightist policies can also refer to class issues. Instead, the recent neo-liberal upsurge and 'the renewed respect for market forces that have emerged throughout most of the industrial world' (Inglehart 1997: 263) are regarded



as a confirmation of the fact that the end of the traditional, class-related, program of the left is near. Yet, neo-liberal issues are just as much class issues as leftist (Marxist/socialist) issues.

As right-wing issues decline in salience, those in favorable economic positions might be less attracted to vote for a party on the right, and as these issues rise in salience, the right might estrange the working class because they clearly contrast economic interests.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, polarization is only possible if political parties and societal groups have divergent views on, for example, class issues. This implies that on every issue that is subject to polarization people can either agree or disagree. If rightist issues were not considered class issues, no polarization between parties could take place. To conclude, if one speaks of issues of class leftist issues and rightist issues are implied. It is, however, difficult to find any systematic empirical research showing that the issues of class, leftist and/or rightist ones, have lost any importance in the postwar period (compare Hechter 2004; Simmons 2004).

The second problem deals with the exact nature of new issues. Although there is a general consensus about the nature of the old issues, they are centered around class conflict, there is much less agreement about the concept of new politics (compare Pakulski 2001).

Finally, the third problem deals with the equation of the *importance* or *salience* of old and new issues and the *polarization* over these issues.<sup>12</sup> Greater salience of old and new issues may coincide with greater polarization over old and new issues, but this is not necessarily the case. It is possible that a problem is considered very important, while people agree as to how it should be solved. The recent upsurge of immigrant issues in Dutch politics might serve as a good example. As these issues have become more important than they were one decade ago, the ideological stances of almost all political parties have become more rightist in this respect, which shows that the growing salience of these issues does not by definition mean growing polarization over these issues. To sum up, it should be empirically investigated whether new issues increase in salience and whether this coincides with an increasing polarization over these issues.

My aim in this chapter is to address the question of whether there has been a shift from an old to a new political culture in Western countries in the postwar period. Three questions will be answered. One, which issues can be regarded as

new issues, and have they become more important over the years at the cost of the old issues of class? Two, has polarization over these issues increased at the cost of polarization over the old issues of class? Three, does greater importance of old and new issues really coincide with greater polarization over these issues?

### 3.2 *A new political culture?*

In general, there seems to be a consensus that the new issues are characterized as non-economic, as opposed to the old issues, which can be characterized as class issues (see for instance Clark 1998, 2001b; Heath et al. 1990; Rempel and Clark 1997). However, such a broad definition leads to an acceptance of all sorts of issues as exponents of the new 'non-class' politics, with the risk of not being able to say which elements are particularly related to a decline in class voting in retrospect. So: What issues are often mentioned as elements of new politics in the literature?

The first and dominant concept of new political issues suggests that these issues are essentially libertarian issues, reducing new politics to left-wing politics (see for example McAllister and Studlar 1995). A clear example of this concept of new politics as left-wing politics can be found in the work of Inglehart (1997), in which the concept of postmaterialism is very important, i.e., the degree to which people prefer 'new' left-libertarian goals that go beyond 'material' goals. The index for postmaterialism only generates left-wing postmaterialists and is unable to generate any right-wing postmaterialists. So in this view, people who define new issues as important are by definition ideologically leftist.

The second concept of cultural politics holds that 'new' cultural politics can be leftist, libertarian, but does not exclude the possibility of a new rightist, authoritarian, flank. In critical response to Inglehart's work on Postmaterialism, Flanagan has argued that in the measurement of postmaterialism two indicators for different, unrelated, dimensions were collapsed: An indicator for authoritarian/libertarian values and an indicator for issue salience (Flanagan 1979; 1982, 1987).

The first value dimension is authoritarianism/ libertarianism. Flanagan suggests that postmaterialism is essentially the same as libertarianism because both value types emphasize the importance of individual liberty, which is reflected in the measurement of both libertarianism and postmaterialism. The opposite of this

emphasis on individual freedom, according to Flanagan, is authoritarianism, i.e. an emphasis on social order, which is also reflected in both measurements (see also Houtman 2003; Middendorp 1991).<sup>13</sup> Flanagan's research has been empirically corroborated by other researchers who have found strong relationships between postmaterialism and libertarianism (Dekker, Ester and Van den Broek 1999; Houtman 2003; Steel et al. 1992).

The second dimension Flanagan refers to is the dimension that shows us what issues are of particular importance to the respondent. Flanagan distinguishes materialism, an emphasis on 'old political' material concerns, from non-materialism, an emphasis on 'new political' cultural concerns (Flanagan 1987). Issue salience defines which problems people define as important, but this has no direct ideological meaning. Those who define old problems, class issues, as salient can either be economically leftist or economically rightist. Those who define new, cultural, problems, as salient can either be culturally leftist, libertarian, or culturally rightist, authoritarian (Flanagan 1987; Flanagan and Lee 2003). New cultural politics, like the old politics of class, is divided into a leftist and a rightist flank.

The dominance of the idea that new cultural politics is essentially libertarian is not that odd, considering the time when new politics first emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. New politics back then was libertarian. The new politics of the time went hand in hand with the rise of several libertarian new social movements such as the peace movement, the feminist movement, and the homosexual rights movement (Kriesi 1989; Kriesi and Van Praag 1987; Roszak 1969; Zijderveld 1970). After the rise of new-leftist movements in the 1960s and 1970s, from the 1980's onwards, authoritarian movements began to appear on the political stage. These authoritarian movements were called the 'silent counterrevolution' by Ignazi (1992, 2003; see also Layman 2001; Veugelers 2000), who pointed to the emergence of new political parties at the right-wing end of the new political spectrum. Research indicates that new right-wing, or authoritarian, movements can be found within the electorate at large (Elchardus 1994, 1996; Flanagan and Lee 2003; Houtman 2003; Swyngedouw 1992, 1994).

Many political scientists believe we are witnessing a transition from an old political culture, driven by class conflict, to a new political culture, driven by cultural conflict. I will now discuss what has happened to the salience of old class-

related issues at both ends of the political spectrum, and how new cultural issues from the libertarian and the authoritarian ends of the political spectrum, have affected post-war Western countries.

### 3.3 *Measuring the old and new political culture*

I used the Party Manifesto Data introduced in Chapter 1 to measure political culture. Before working with these data, I weighed the data using the share of the vote a party won at a particular election, to restrict the relative influence of small (extreme) political parties on the total score of a country. If the data had not been weighed, a splinter party in a particular country would carry as much weight as much larger political party when measuring the political culture in that country.<sup>14</sup> I use the twenty countries analyzed by Nieuwbeerta to allow for comparison<sup>15</sup> (see Table 1.1). After this, I aggregated the data and calculated mean scores for class and cultural policy issues. This allowed me to create an image of the priorities that were of particular importance during specific elections in a particular country.

The scale devised by Budge and Klingemann (2001) was used to select the issues to be included in the indices for issue salience is a good point of departure. This scale is used to indicate the left-right position of a party in a country during a specific election year based on coded party-manifestos. This scale taps class issues and cultural issues, is internationally comparable, and it is possible to use it to present information for the complete post-war period for twenty Western countries.

Budge and Klingemann's scale has the disadvantage that class issues and cultural issues are included unevenly. Thus, in order to construct two comparable scales for class and cultural left-right positions of parties, some 'new' issues are added (see Table 3.1). Four indices were constructed to measure the salience of leftist class issues, rightist class issues, libertarian issues, and authoritarian issues. The indices were constructed by linearly combining the items for each scale. Higher scores on the index indicate higher salience for the issues.

Table 3.1 Scale construction indices for issue salience based on party manifestos<sup>16</sup>

<b>Class issues right-wing</b>	<b>Class issues left-wing</b>
Free enterprise*	Controlled economy*
Economic incentives*	Economic planning*
Economic orthodoxy*	Nationalization*
Welfare state limitation*	Welfare state expansion*
<b>Authoritarian issues</b>	<b>Libertarian issues</b>
National way of life positive*	National way of life negative
Traditional morality positive*	Traditional morality negative
Law and order*	Underprivileged minority groups

\* Issues that were also used in the Budge and Klingemann left-right scale.

### 3.4 Are new cultural issues becoming more important? And: What about class issues?

First, I analyzed how the salience of rightist and leftist class issues and the salience of authoritarian and libertarian issues had developed in the postwar period in Western societies. To this end I correlated the four indices for issue salience with election year (Table 3.2).

From Table 3.2 it can be seen that in two countries, Greece and Portugal, the salience of leftist class issues has risen over the years. In five other countries, the salience of these issues had significantly declined. Rightist class issues had remained important in all of the countries and I found a significant rise in salience in four countries. The results are less ambiguous for the salience of cultural issues. In one country, Finland, libertarian issues have lost their salience while in six countries these issues have become significantly more important. For authoritarian issues the same picture emerges: in one country, Luxembourg, the salience of these issues has declined, and in no less than eight countries the salience of these issues has increased.

Table 3.2 Trends per country in importance of ideologically leftist and rightist class issues and cultural issues for twenty countries (Pearson's *r*/ two tailed) (1945-1998<sup>17</sup>).

Country	N	Class leftist issues	Class rightist issues	Libertarian issues	Authoritarian issues
Australia	22	0.00	0.19	0.41	0.65***
Austria	15	-0.36	0.05	0.46	-0.25
Belgium	17	-0.31	0.01	-0.26	-0.17
Canada	17	-0.49*	0.17	0.81***	0.61**
Denmark	21	0.24	0.30	0.48*	0.83***
Finland	15	0.43	0.14	-0.65**	-0.08
France	14	0.46	0.72**	0.05	0.15
Germany	14	-0.74**	-0.16	0.81***	0.58*
Great Britain	14	-0.54*	-0.38	-0.08	0.79**
Greece	8	0.70*	0.59	-0.05	-0.44
Ireland	15	0.08	0.48	0.57*	0.58*
Italy	14	-0.15	0.77**	0.43	0.47
Luxembourg	12	0.07	0.82**	0.49	-0.58*
The Netherlands	16	-0.46	-0.37	0.88***	-0.44
Norway	14	-0.56*	0.57*	0.33	0.06
Portugal	9	0.71*	0.17	-0.09	0.05
Spain	7	0.26	-0.31	-0.05	-0.63
Sweden	17	-0.65**	0.08	0.39	0.70**
Switzerland	13	0.16	-0.28	0.79**	0.08
United States	13	0.30	0.21	-0.07	0.76**
Total	287	-0.14*	0.12*	0.24***	0.19***

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed test for significance)

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

Three conclusions can be drawn from Table 3.2. One, it is not clear whether class issues decline in salience. On the one hand left-wing issues decrease in salience while on the other right wing issues increase in salience, indicating a rise in neo-

liberalism, but no collapse of class issues to the left and right end of the ideological spectrum. Two, libertarian issues have increased in salience in the post-war period. Three, the positive trend shown for authoritarian issue salience demonstrates that these issues have become much more important today.

In summary, cultural issues to the left and right end of the political spectrum have generally risen in salience in the postwar period. Based on this evidence, I reject the common assumption that only libertarian issues have become more important, while authoritarian issues that stress the importance of traditional morality and law and order, have lost importance. Instead, new cultural issues, libertarian and authoritarian ones, are on the rise. The common view that regards authoritarian issues as elements of the old 'materialist' politics (see e.g. Clark 2001a; Inglehart 1997a) must therefore be rejected: Like libertarian issues, authoritarian issues are rising in salience and they are equally new to Western political cultures.<sup>18</sup> There is no way of telling what rising levels of postmaterialism actually represent, because when postmaterialism is measured issues such as 'maintaining order in the nation' are considered to be old 'materialist' politics, and thus research building on evidence using these indices is seriously flawed.

Next, I collapsed the indices for salience of leftist and rightist class issues and for salience of authoritarian and libertarian issues into two ideologically neutral scales to investigate how the salience of these issues has developed in the postwar period (Table 3.3).

Looking at the trend for each country separately, I found three positive and three negative trends for the salience of class issues, there was a remarkable balance in the number of countries where class issues had become more important and where class issues had become less important. A totally different picture emerges for the salience of cultural issues. There is a strong and positive trend in cultural issue salience. In two countries, Spain and Belgium, cultural issues have become significantly less important. Significant and positive trends are found for nine other countries, the United States, Sweden, Ireland, Italy, Great Britain, Germany, Denmark, Canada, and Australia. The total trends in the salience of old class issues and new cultural issues are shown in Figure 3.1.

Table 3.3 Trends per country in salience of class issues and cultural issues for twenty countries (Pearson's *r*/ two tailed; 1945-1998<sup>19</sup>)

Country	N	Saliience of class issues	Saliience of cultural issues
Australia	22	0.19	0.67**
Austria	15	-0.13	-0.10
Belgium	17	-0.22	-0.33
Canada	17	-0.31	0.75**
Denmark	21	0.42	0.81***
Finland	15	0.47	-0.37
France	14	0.76**	0.19
Germany	14	-0.78**	0.69**
Great Britain	14	-0.12	0.75**
Greece	8	0.71*	-0.43
Ireland	15	0.06	0.63**
Italy	14	0.69**	0.56*
Luxembourg	12	0.45	-0.50
The Netherlands	16	-0.54*	-0.14
Norway	14	-0.07	0.30
Portugal	9	0.56	0.00
Spain	7	0.11	-0.72
Sweden	17	-0.52*	0.66**
Switzerland	13	-0.07	0.32
United States	13	0.30	0.76**

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001 (two-tailed test for significance)

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

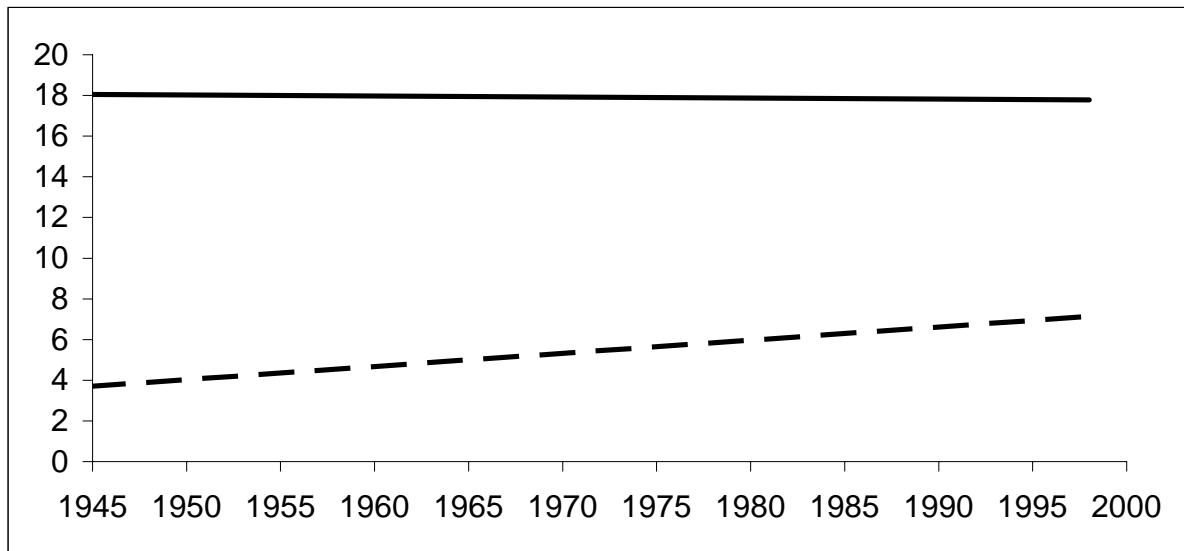
Two conclusions can be drawn from Figure 3.1. One, it is clear that class issues are more important than cultural issues. Two, it is clear that the gap between the importance of class issues and that of cultural issues is closing fast. While class issues remain as important as ever, cultural issues are rapidly increasing in salience.

In summary, in the political cultures of Western countries the issues of class have not lost ground, but have remained relatively stable in time. At the same time,



new cultural issues, whether libertarian or authoritarian, have entered the political arena.

Figure 3.1 Trends in salience of class and cultural issues, 1945-1998 (linear regression trend lines; N=291)



— Salience of class issues (Pearson's  $r = -0.01$ ; n.s.)  
 - - - Salience of cultural issues (Pearson's  $r = 0.28$ ;  $p < 0.001$ )

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

### 3.5 The end of left and right?

Running parallel to the discussion of which issues have become more, and which issues less, important in the Western countries, is the question of declining political polarization between left and right. Often arguments such as: 'The political landscape has changed. Right is no longer right, left no longer left' (Dittrich 2003)<sup>20</sup> are made. Many politicians, such as Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, have made similar observations about the blurring of left and right (Bobbio 1996). When people say that the distinction between left and right has by and large fallen away, and that political parties on the left resemble those on the right, they often argue that:

*'in its classic connotation, molded by the traditional labor movement and by socialist parties, 'leftism' implied a commitment for stronger governmental control and intervention' (Geser 1998: 235).*

'Rightism' implied the reverse: less governmental control, intervention, and economic redistribution. Here, the struggle between left and right always refers to finding a resolution for class issues.

This distinction is believed to have lost its appeal for two reasons. One, since general levels of affluence have risen sharply the major conflicts of the past, focusing on the (equal) distribution of means in society and government control and intervention have allegedly lost their relevance (Geser 1998; Inglehart 1997a). Two,

*'the end of the cold war, and the attendant collapse of communism in eastern Europe, has robbed socialists worldwide of a viable working model of collectivism in action. For some observers on the left, Labour's shift to the right denied British voters a real ideological choice. The end of ideology which Daniel Bell had anticipated in the 1960's and which Francis Fukuyama had announced in 1990 had, perhaps, finally arrived' (Sanders 1999:182; see also: De Benoist 1995; Giddens 1994).*

Moreover, the notion that differences between left and right are disappearing is encouraged by the decline of traditional class-party alignments.<sup>21</sup> People who are expected to vote for a leftist or rightist party based on class membership increasingly tend to vote for parties on the 'wrong' side of the political spectrum, and the conclusion is drawn that this implies 'the collapse of the left and right distinction' (Ignazi 2003: 6).

It is not clear whether *all* differences between left and right are disappearing. Some do not believe this, and suggest that polarization over some issues may decline while being replaced by polarization over other issues (Abrahamson and Inglehart 1995; Flanagan 1987; Ignazi 2003; Inglehart 1987; Kitschelt and Hellemans 1990; Knutsen 1998). In this view, polarization over 'old' issues tied to economic redistribution decreases while polarization over 'new' issues increases. The meaning of left and right is assumed gradually to transform: First left and right are principally polarized over class issues, while later left and right become more

polarized over cultural issues that have increased in salience in Western countries (see above). The left will increasingly emphasize libertarian policies while the right will increasingly emphasize authoritarian policies. In the words of Knutsen:

*'In advanced industrial society, 'New Politics' have become a significant line of conflict, and new parties and party families have polarised the party system along a new line of conflict. This new line has been conceptualised somewhat differently by different authors: as materialist/post-materialist, libertarian/authoritarian, or left-libertarian versus right-authoritarian' (Knutsen 1998: 65).*

The remaining part of this chapter consists of a discussion of whether polarization over new cultural issues has really replaced that over class issues.

### 3.6 *Assessing the convergence of left and right*

In studies on the convergence of left and right, three approaches are used to investigate whether differences between left and right have become smaller or have disappeared in Western countries. The major problem with these three methods is that they systematically ignore the distinction between polarization over class and polarization over cultural issues.

In the first approach a small survey is conducted of international political scientists who are asked to rank or classify political parties on a right-left continuum. Inter-coder reliability reveals that in most countries political parties are classified on one left-right dimension, justifying the conclusion that the distinction between left and right is still valid (compare Huber and Inglehart 1995; Knutsen 1998). However, no assessment is made in these studies of whether differences in polarization over class issues has evolved differently from those of polarization over cultural issues. Furthermore, the studies only deal with the recent past and are therefore not very appropriate to determine whether changes have occurred over time (Huber and Inglehart 1995; Mair and Castles 1997; but see also Knutsen 1998). Moreover, I believe this type of research has problems of validity. That political experts are able to order political parties one-dimensionally quite reliably may merely indicate that these experts have been trained to think in this way and

consequently to order political parties on one dimension (Converse 1975; Middendorp 1991; Olson and Carrol 1994). In this one-dimensional ordering of parties by experts, it is impossible to distinguish between overall polarization and polarization over class issues and cultural issues.

The second approach is to study whether there have been declining differences in left and right self-identification in the electorate. This has been done for the Dutch electorate, and declining levels of left-right polarization have been found (Eisinga, Franses and Scheepers 1996; Eisinga and Franses 1996; but see also Van Deth 1991). Although this method is promising for determining whether differences between left and right are declining in the electorate, no systematic research exists comparing several Western countries and analyzing longitudinal trends. Furthermore, studies of the decline in left-right polarization typically rely on 'overall' measures without distinguishing between trends in polarization over class issues and cultural issues. This is necessary because both 'old' and 'new' ideological orientations contribute to self-placement on a left-right scale (Kim and Fording 2000).

The third approach used party manifestos from which it can be determined whether different parties in a national context diverge or converge on a left-right scale (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987; Budge and Klingemann 2001; Michels 1993; Pennings and Keman 1994). Some of these studies conclude that left-right polarization has declined over the years (Michels 1993; Pennings and Keman 1994). Others conclude that the distinction between left and right continues to be relevant (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987; Budge and Klingemann 2001) and that there is only some 'trendless fluctuation' (Budge and Klingemann 2001:19). The often-used left-right scale of Budge and Klingemann, was constructed using class and cultural issues, but every study relies on this overall scale lumping together left-right positions on class issues and cultural issues.

In short, all three methods for assessing whether left and right have converged over the years have systematically neglected to include the possibility that left and right have become more culturally polarized in their research design. This has made it impossible to assess whether there has been a general decline in polarization over old issues and a general rise in polarization over new issues; and although some argue that differences between left and right have fallen away and other argue that

the meaning of left and right is fundamentally transforming, remarkably, no research I know of has been done to investigate whether polarization over old class issues has decreased over the years in Western countries to be replaced by polarization over new cultural issues. Despite this, the question of whether polarization over cultural issues has increased over the years and whether general polarization between left and right has declined.

Contrary to popular suggestions that polarization over cultural issues should increase (Hunter 1991), no trends in polarization over cultural issues were found in the American electorate at large (DiMaggio, Evans and Bryson 1996). Moreover, there is no agreement about the question of whether there is a clear trend in polarization over the issue of abortion, which is seen as a particularly decisive issue in the *Culture Wars* debate in the United States (Evans and Bryson 2001; Mouw and Sobel 2001). Research among European electorates yielded roughly the same conclusion: no clear trends in polarization over cultural issues could be found (Draulans and Halman 2003)<sup>22</sup>. However, although these studies reject the idea that there has been an increase in polarization over cultural issues in electorates, they all rely on trends over twenty years at a maximum, which may be too short a time to determine a true trend (Budge 2000), especially considering that this increased polarization is alleged to have taken place from the 1960's onwards.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.7 *Measuring left-right polarization*

Using the same weighed data and issues outlined above for issue salience, two scales were constructed. One, a scale for leftist or rightist positions was constructed using the upper eight items in Table 3.1, measuring class left-right positions of parties on class issues, the total emphasis for all leftist issues was subtracted from the total emphasis of all rightist issues. Two, a scale for libertarian-authoritarian party positions was constructed using only the lower six items, the total emphasis for all libertarian issues was subtracted from the total emphasis of all authoritarian issues. Higher scores on these scales stand for more rightist positions on class issues respectively authoritarian positions of political parties.

In order to validate the two scales, a general left-right scale was constructed out of the two scales. This scale corresponds very strongly to the original scale

devised by Budge and Klingemann (Pearson’s  $r$  yielded 0.86;  $p < 0.001$ ). As the original scale has proven to be a valid and reliable measure for left-right positions of political parties, this strong overlap assures that these two scales tap left-right-wing dimensions. Since some items used in my left-right scales are not used in the Budge-Klingemann Left right scale, it seems worthwhile showing that the class left-right scale and the libertarian-authoritarian scale actually tap into the left-right dimension. To this end, I calculated the relationships for five periods between the two scales and the original Budge and Klingemann left-right scale (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Relationships (Pearson’s  $r$ ) between the original Budge and Klingemann left-right-scale, the class left-right scale, and the libertarian-authoritarian scale.

Year	N	Class left-right scale and Budge & Klingemann left-right scale	Libertarian-authoritarian scale & Budge & Klingemann left-right scale
1945-1955	277	0.75***	0.36***
1956-1965	256	0.79***	0.28***
1966-1975	325	0.73***	0.44***
1976-1985	391	0.80***	0.44***
1986-1998	459	0.80***	0.50***

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$  (two-tailed testing for significance)

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

What becomes clear is that both scales tap into the left-right dimension as measured by the original internationally validated scale of Budge and Klingemann. Furthermore, the table shows that the relationships for the cultural left-right scale become stronger as time passes, indicating that cultural issues have increasingly come to the center of the left-right distinction.

In order to obtain measures for dispersion on these two scales I needed to know how much parties at particular elections in each country differed on the two subscales. Therefore, for each country and election year, I calculated a standard deviation between the parties: The more the political parties differed, the higher the standard deviation for the country in that year. The more the parties converge on

the scales, the lower the standard deviation. The higher the score for political polarization over class and cultural issues, the more political parties disagreed.

### *3.8 Is there a process of transformation going on?*

The trends in time for the polarization over class and cultural issues for each country are shown in Table 3.5. At first sight, the results show a remarkable balance between the number of countries where polarization over class issues has decreased and the number of countries where polarization over class issues has increased (11:9). However, in only one country, France, has polarization over class issues increased significantly, while in four countries, Australia, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Sweden polarization over class issues has decreased significantly.

Comparing cultural polarization in these countries, I found decreasing trends in seven countries. Three of these trends were statistically significant. In Spain, Portugal, and the Netherlands polarization over cultural issues declined in the postwar period. In the other thirteen countries increasing trends in polarization over new issues were found. In seven countries, Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Sweden, and Switzerland, polarization over cultural issues significantly increased. This supports the idea that the way the terms left and right are used has changed over the years: less polarization over class issues and more polarization over cultural issues.

Table 3.5 Trends in polarization over class and cultural issues in twenty countries, 1945-1998<sup>24</sup> (Pearson's *r*: one-tailed test for significance)

	<i>N</i>	<i>Class left-right scale</i>	<i>Cultural left-right scale</i>
Australia	22	-0.44*	0.48*
Austria	15	-0.04	0.27
Belgium	17	-0.54*	-0.31
Canada	17	-0.30	0.68**
Denmark	21	0.27	0.66**
Finland	15	0.04	0.55*
France	14	0.62*	0.41
Germany	14	-0.19	0.57*
Great Britain	14	-0.21	0.44
Greece	8	0.38	-0.28
Ireland	15	-0.30	-0.26
Italy	14	-0.02	0.32
Luxembourg	12	0.27	-0.56
The Netherlands	16	-0.52*	-0.73**
Norway	14	0.36	-0.59*
Portugal	9	0.08	-0.35
Spain	7	0.12	-0.89**
Sweden	17	-0.60*	0.53*
Switzerland	13	0.52	0.73**
United States	13	-0.02	0.02

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$  (two-tailed testing for significance)

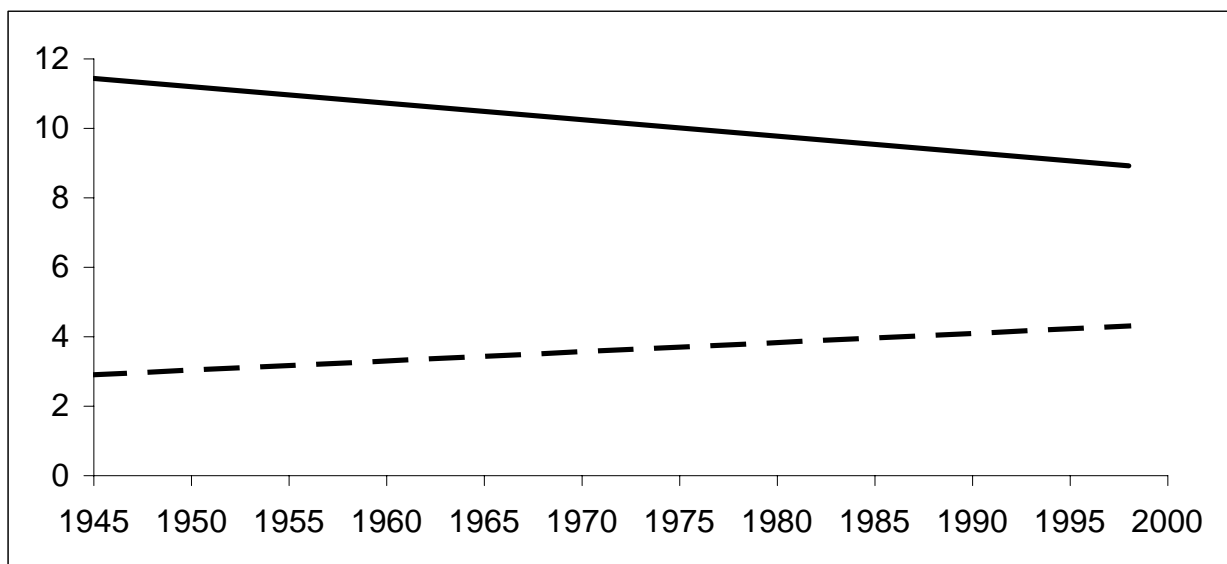
Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

The total trends in polarization over class issues and over cultural issues for all countries taken together is shown in Figure 3.2. Polarization over class issues has decreased in the postwar period, while at the same time polarization over cultural issues is increasing. Furthermore, inspection of the scatter plot of the polarization over cultural issues indicated that polarization over these issues was high in the first five years after World War II, and that it was much lower in the early fifties.



Perhaps this is one of the effects of the war, in which issues of freedom and order became more important because they were lacking during the war. This heightened polarization over these issues in this brief episode also pushes down the trend of cultural issue polarization (controlling for this Pearson's  $r$  rises from 0.19 to 0.23), and hardly affects the trend in polarization over class issues (which remains about 0.17). Nonetheless, Figure 3.2 confirms that parties still polarize more over class issues than over cultural issues. The two trend lines never intersect, indicating that polarization over class issues has been more important in the post-war period than polarization over cultural issues.

Figure 3.2 Trends in polarization over class and cultural issues, 1945-1998 (linear regression trend lines; N=291)



- Polarization over class issues (Pearson's  $r = -0.17$ ;  $p < 0.01$ )
- - - Polarization over cultural issues (Pearson's  $r = 0.19$ ;  $p < 0.001$ )

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

In summary, polarization over cultural issues has increased, while polarization over the old class issues has decreased in the postwar period. While there still is a considerable polarization over the old issues of class, today polarization is increasingly culturally based.

Are the observed differences in polarization over class and cultural issues due to movements of particular parties? Do these findings mean that the parties on the left have become more left-libertarian and more right-wing on the issues of class, while parties on the right have become more right-authoritarian and more left-wing concerning class issues? The trends for different party families<sup>25</sup> in the mean position on the libertarianism-authoritarianism scale and the class left-right scale are shown in Table 3.6.

*Table 3.6 Trends in means for each country in each year on scales for the scales for class left-right positions and libertarianism/ authoritarianism twenty countries, 1945-1998 (Pearson's r: two-tailed test for significance)*

<i>Party family</i>	<i>Class left-right scale</i>	<i>Libertarianism authoritarianism scale</i>	<i>-N</i>
Ecology Parties	0.24	-0.21	45
Former Communist Parties	-0.05	-0.10	182
Social Democratic Parties	0.32**	-0.05	359
Liberal Parties	0.07	0.03	222
Christian Democratic/ Religious Parties	-0.07	-0.07	198
Conservative Parties	0.01	0.25**	247
Nationalist Parties	0.63**	0.29	45
Agrarian Parties	-0.15	0.09	101
Ethnic and Regional Parties	0.07	0.10	42
Special Interest Parties	0.22	0.24*	68
Left (first three party families together)	0.21**	-0.09*	586
Non-left (other party families together)	0.01	0.07*	923

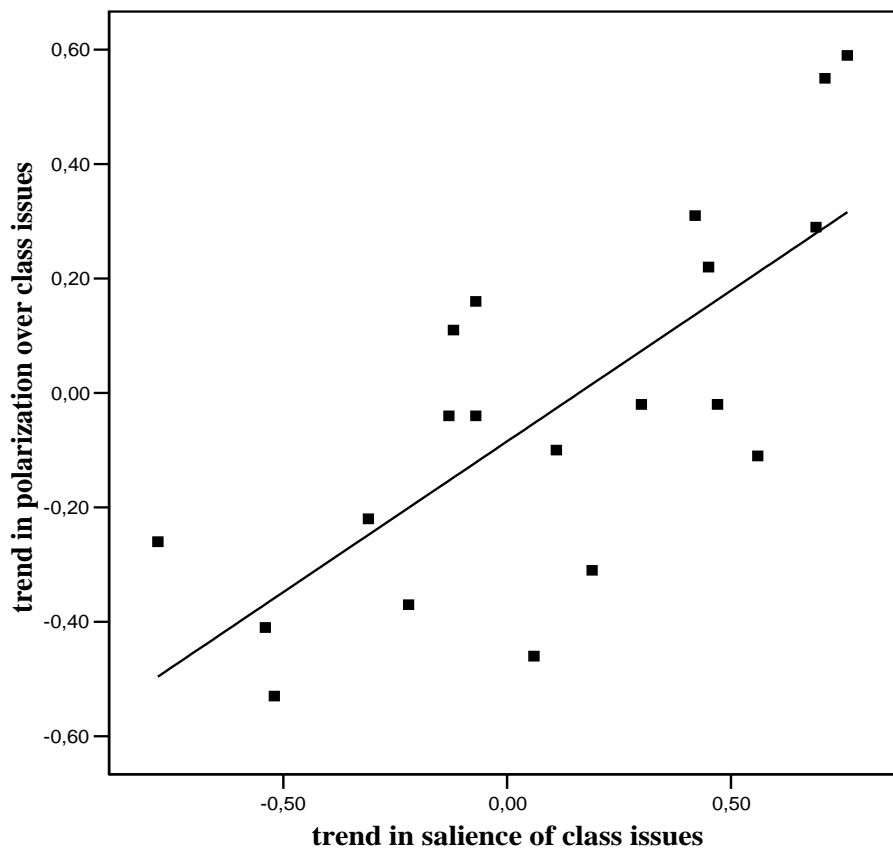
\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01 (two-tailed testing for significance)

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

In spite of the movement of the communist parties in the opposite direction, left-wing parties have generally moved to the right on class issues. Furthermore, left-

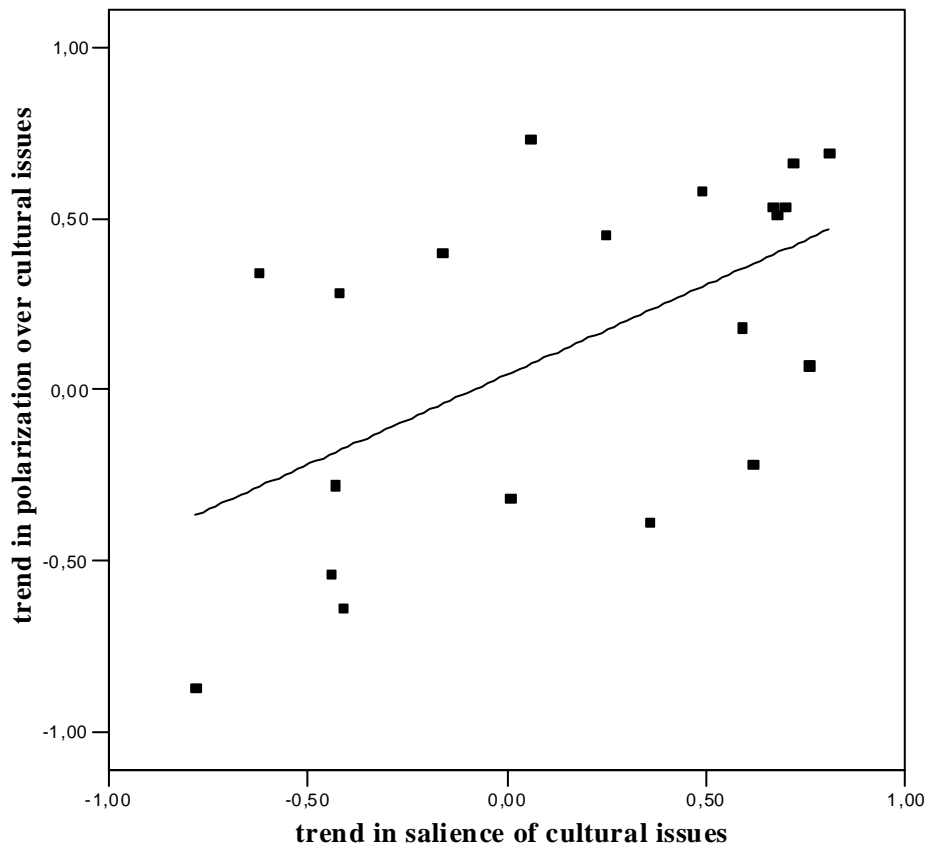
wing parties have shifted somewhat towards the libertarian end of the cultural scale. Trends within non-left parties are less clear. Christian parties, for example, move to the left on class and on cultural issues while liberal parties are remarkably stable over time on positions on the left-right scales. Conservative parties have remained stable in their opinions on class issues and have moved very strongly to the authoritarian end of the cultural scale. As shown at the bottom of the table, left parties have shifted more on the left-right scales on class and cultural issues, while for non-left parties trends are weaker and insignificant. In general leftist parties have become more rightist on class issues and more culturally libertarian. The decreased polarization over class issues is thus mainly due to movements of parties of the left. The increase in polarization over cultural issues is due to movements of parties of the left and of the right.

Figure 3.3 Trends in polarization over class issues by trends in salience of class issues for twenty countries, 1945-1998 (Pearson's  $r=0.74$ ,  $p<0.05$ , one-tailed)



Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

Figure 3.4 Trends in polarization over cultural issues by trends in cultural issue salience for twenty countries, 1945-1998 (Pearson's  $r=0.57$ ,  $p<0.05$ , one-tailed).



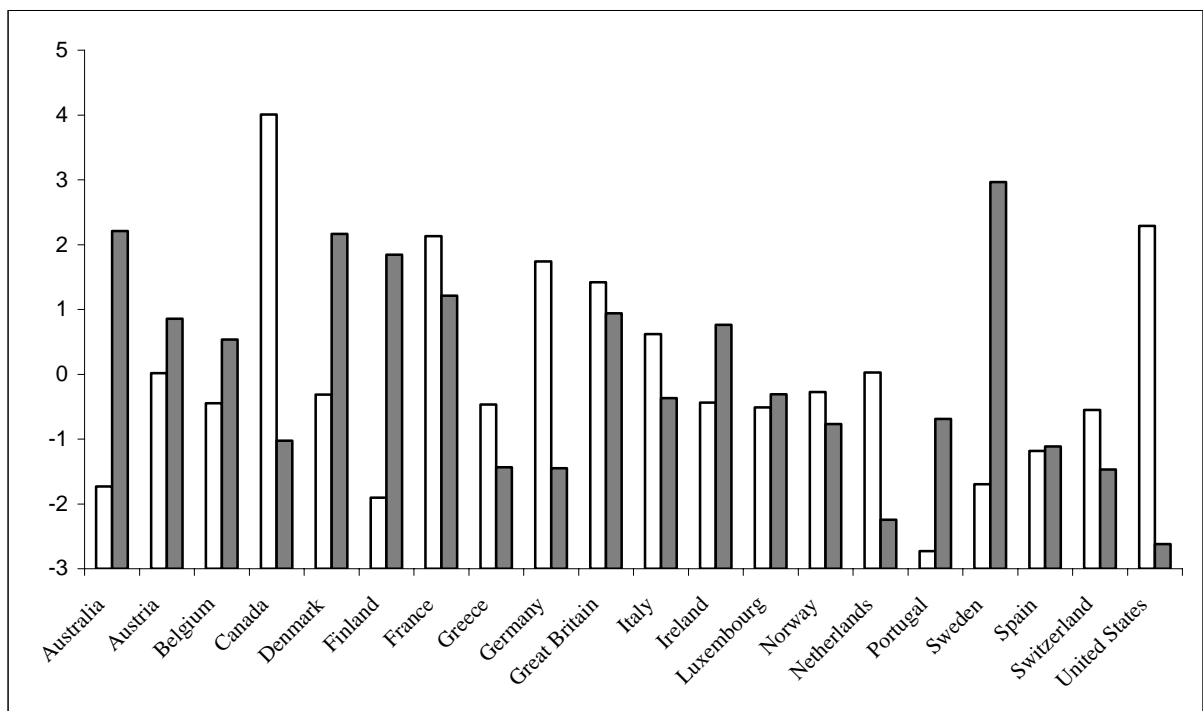
Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

The final question that must be answered is whether the salience of particular issues coincides with polarization over these issues. From Figure 3.3 it can be seen that in countries where class issues have become more salient, polarization over these class issues has also increased. In countries where the salience of these issues declined polarization also declined. This analysis shows that in general the rise or decline in salience of the old issues of class is accompanied by a rise or decline in polarization over these issues. From Figure 3.4 it can be seen that, although the relationship is somewhat weaker than that shown in Figure 3.3, this is also the case for polarization over cultural issues and the salience of these issues. As new cultural issues have

become more important in countries polarization over these issues has also increased equally. In countries, such as Spain and the Netherlands, where polarization over cultural issues declined in the post-war period the salience of these issues has also declined.

The political cultures of Western societies are defined by the degree to which the old and new issues are salient, and the degree to which polarization takes place over these issues. The political cultures of the twenty Western countries in the 1990's are shown in Figure 3.5. A clear image is obtained of the degree to which the political culture is focused on class issues in a particular country by combining the salience of class issues with the degree of polarization over these issues. The degree to which the political culture of a particular country is centered on cultural issues can be indicated by doing the same for cultural issues, see Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5 The degree to which class issues (grey colored bars) and cultural issues (white colored bars) are central to the political cultures of Western countries in the 1990s



Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1990-1998

### 3.9 *Conclusion*

In this chapter I focused on changes in political culture and asked the question whether there has been a shift in Western countries from an old political culture based on class politics, towards a new political culture, based on cultural politics.

Three problems were addressed in this chapter. One, the alleged retreat of class issues, two, the question what exactly new politics entail, and three, whether it is justified to equate polarization over new issues with the salience of these issues.

A first general conclusion is that the old politics of class show little sign of having disappeared. The issues of class remain stable, and although political polarization over these issues is declining, political parties to a large extent are still polarized over class issues. This is remarkable, since the majority of scientists working on this terrain seems to think that class politics is waning. Without any systematic, internationally comparable research to corroborate claims it is all over for the 'old' politics of class, researchers suggest that class politics are waning (compare Clark 1999; Pakulski and Waters 1996; Hechter 2004). I have shown that class issues remain a central feature in the political cultures of many Western countries today.

In spite of the rather stable centrality of old political issues, new cultural issues have become more important today, and politics has increasingly polarized over these new cultural issues. Contrary to popular belief where new politics are reduced to libertarian politics, I found a rise in salience of libertarian issues and a rise in salience of authoritarian issues. Furthermore, I have shown that parties on the left have increasingly become libertarian and that parties on the right have increasingly become authoritarian. In short, the rise of authoritarian issues is just as much an element of new politics as the rise of its counterpart. While Inglehart suggests that these new authoritarian movements 'do not represent the wave of the future' (1997: 251) there is no evidence to corroborate this claim. There is no reason why cultural politics, whether libertarian or authoritarian, is not here to stay.

I have also shown that greater salience of old and new issues goes together with greater polarization over these issues. It is thus clear that in countries where cultural issues have increased in salience, cultural polarization has also increased,

and in countries where class issues have become more important polarization over these issues has also increased.

In this chapter, I focused my attention on the question of how the political cultures of twenty Western countries have changed in the post-war period. I found that there are considerable differences in time and between countries regarding the extent to which, in a political culture, class issues and cultural issues are central. In the next chapter, I focus on finding an explanation for these differences.





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## 4 THE MALADIES OF MODERNITY AND THE RISE OF THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

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*'Since every individual has multiple identities and interests, and multiple group affiliations, the sociological question is which one of these becomes salient at particular times'*  
(Bell 2002: 391)

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### 4.1 Introduction

The logical question that follows the observations made in Chapter 3 is: How the rise in cultural politics can be explained? And this is one question I will deal with in this chapter. The dominant view in research on cultural change is that changes in prosperity and material security leads to changes in the political culture, moving away from old issues and towards new issues. Inglehart and Welzel argue for instance that:

*'Although the classic view of modernization developed by Marx, Weber, and others was wrong on many points, the central insight – that socioeconomic development brings major social, cultural, and political changes – is basically correct.'* (Inglehart and Welzel 2005: 1; see also Clark 1996: 371; Inglehart 1997b; Norris 2004: 19)

It remains to be seen whether this theoretical logic can be used to explain the changes in political culture. We need to test Inglehart's theory that increased material security underlies the transition towards new politics, Inglehart has always focused on explaining the salience of libertarian issues, while neglecting authoritarian issues which he regards as issues of the old political culture. However, these issues have also risen in importance for Western politics, so we cannot be certain that the theoretical explanation put forward by Inglehart still applies when it

comes to explaining the salience of libertarian *and* authoritarian issues. Additionally, only focusing on one explanation for changes in political cultures means that it remains unclear whether other features of the Western countries, that corroborate alternative explanations, are actually responsible for these changes. Houtman, for example, argues that the level of prosperity in a country is strongly related to aspects of what he calls 'cultural modernity' which brings about cultural change (Houtman, 2003: 83-102). When these aspects are not included the conclusion can be drawn that prosperity brings about cultural change, yet another explanation may be equally or even more plausible.

In short, in this chapter I will test whether Inglehart's materialistic logic accounts for in-time and between-country differences in political culture or whether an alternative explanation is preferred.

#### 4.2 *On the origins of the new political culture*

Inglehart's explanation for the rise of a new political culture is solely directed at explaining trends towards libertarian issues. This logic for explaining the salience of post-materialist issues is primarily materialistic (Houtman 2003). Based on two hypotheses, the scarcity and the socialization-hypothesis, Inglehart argues that those living in wealthy circumstances in their formative years (14 through 16 years of age) regard non-material issues as important. Thus, because post-war generations were brought up in a secure and wealthy environment, they do not attach much importance to material issues and instead attach more importance to non-material issues. Following this materialistic logic, it can then be understood that in the more wealthy nations material problems are not perceived to be as very urgent, as most citizens have never experienced material scarcity. Consequently, in more prosperous countries individuals will direct their attention towards new issues that go beyond material issues.

Although Inglehart's theoretical logic is primarily aimed at understanding why so many people have come to value individual freedom so highly in many Western countries, I think there is no reason not to apply the same logic to the rise of authoritarian issues. It is difficult to say why people in wealthy countries will not be worried more about issues of law and order or of traditional morality. Flanagan

argues that authoritarian issues are just as non-material as libertarian issues (Flanagan 1987); and if people tend to attach more priority to non-material issues in materially secure environments, then these issues may just as well be authoritarian.

Yet, one may wonder whether the increased importance of issues of individual freedom and social order are caused by economic developments, as Inglehart and many other sociologists would have us believe (Houtman 2003: 167). An alternative explanation for the rise of cultural politics focuses on the processes of secularization that have taken place in many Western countries. Within cultural sociology it is commonplace to suggest that because of the process of secularization, traditional Christian religion has lost its grips on the lives of individuals within these societies; and because of this, traditional Christian religion has lost its ability to 'overarch' society morally (Berger 1967). Under these circumstances the obviousness and legitimacy of the traditional moral order of values that is supported by the dominant Christian tradition decays rapidly (Wilson 1982).

Through this process behavioral rules and the self-evidence of certain types of behavior are taken less for granted, as the traditional influence of the church, as an authoritative institution, has by and large fallen away. Berger et al. argue that:

*'The typical situation in which the individual finds himself in a traditional society is one where there are highly reliable plausibility structures. Conversely, modern societies are characterized by unstable, incohesive, unreliable plausibility structures. Put differently, in the modern situation certainty is hard to come by.'* (Berger et al. 1973:17-9)

In these societies individuals have to increasingly make decisions about their own course of life. The 'standard biography' has been replaced by a 'do-it-yourself biography' (compare Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996) and more than ever before, individuals have to choose their own life course. Put differently:

*'Traditions lose their obviousness and part of their relevance. Religious beliefs and ideologies fade out and decreasingly control the lives of people. If they are followed, the rules are laid down in a less precise and less coercive manner. Concrete behavioral*

*rules are traded in for more general behavioral rules' (Elchardus 2002: 46-7, my translation into English).*

Modern life increasingly may be characterized as a search for certainty and truth because people increasingly have to choose what they think is worth living for. Whether one should be free or not, whether there are still too many rules or a lack of rules becomes more salient in a world in which the pre-given order of things has, by and large, fallen away. That cultural issues of individual liberty and social order have become salient can also be understood from the fact that these Western countries are highly secularized.

These two explanations for the rise of the new political culture differ in two respects. One, they suggest that there are different causes for the rise of the new political culture. The materialistic explanation focuses on the rise of wealth while the cultural sociological explanation focuses on the process of secularization. Two, they differ in their interpretation of the nature of the changes in political cultures. The materialistic explanation assumes that a rise in wealth causes political cultures to become less class-centered and more culture-centered. It thus leads to the expectation that political cultures are less class-centered in more prosperous countries (*hypothesis 1*) and that political cultures are more culture-centered in more prosperous countries (*hypothesis 2*). The cultural explanation assumes that the process of secularization causes political cultures to be culture-centered but does not assume that this process has led political cultures to become less class-centered. This leads to the expectation that there are no differences in the degree to which class issues determine the political culture between secularized and non-secularized countries (*hypothesis 3*). However, following the cultural explanation, it is expected that political cultures are more culture-centered in more secularized countries (*hypothesis 4*).

#### *4.3 Measurement of secularization and level of prosperity*

To test the hypotheses formulated above, I needed information on the level of prosperity, political culture and the level of secularization in Western countries. Using the three waves of the World Values Surveys, for each country under

observation, and for each year available, I calculated the level of *secularization* as the percentage of people that do not consider themselves to be member of any religious denomination. For the analyses I chose explicitly for embeddedness in religious institutional frames, because in religious denominations meaning and (traditional) values are transmitted to people (Ammerman 1997; see also Houtman 2003; Houtman and Mascini 2002; Middendorp 1991). Information was available for three years: 1980, 1990 and 2000 for most of the countries studied.

I used the World Development Indicators databank to obtain the Gross National Product expressed in purchasing power parities (in 1995 \$) to measure the *level of prosperity* in a country and year.

In the previous chapter I showed that the salience of class issues was related to the polarization over these issues: The more these issues are salient, the more political parties are polarized over class issues. The same conclusion was drawn for cultural issues. I combine the salience of class issues and cultural issues with the polarization over these issues, rendering two indicators (see figure 3.5) to measure the degree to which class and cultural issues are central to the political culture. Since no elections were held in most countries in the years 1980, 1990, and 2000, the mean of the two indicators for political culture (developed in Chapter 3) over one election prior to 1980, 1990 and 2000, and one after these years was calculated to get a more reliable picture about what issues were important in a country for these years.

#### 4.4 *An explanation for differences in political culture*

The degree to which the political culture of a country is determined by class issues is explained by the prosperity and secularization (see Table 4.1). Most countries have simultaneously become more wealthy and secular, and often these processes are linked (see for instance Norris and Inglehart 2004). Not controlling for either secularization or increasing wealth thus potentially leads to finding spurious effects.

Table 4.1 Explanation of the degree to which the political culture is class-centered, 1980-2000, zero-order correlations and multilevel analysis. Parameter estimates; Maximum likelihood. N=49 contexts in 20 countries

	Pearson $r^a$	Model 0		Model 1	
		B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant		-0.03	0.18	-0.03	0.15
Secularization	-0.02			0.12	0.13
Prosperity	0.02			0.11	0.19
Variance year level		0.39	0.08	0.39	0.08
Variance country level		0.55	0.24	0.55	0.23
Deviance		132.33		130.88	
$\Delta DF$				2	

<sup>a</sup>One-tailed testing for significance

Source: World Values Survey, 1980; 1990; 2000; World Development Indicators; Party Manifesto Data

Materialistic logic leads to the hypothesis that as general levels of prosperity rise, political cultures will be less class-centered. No evidence is found for this in Table 4.1.<sup>26</sup> The zero-order correlations and the multivariate analysis lead to the rejection of the idea that issues of class determine political cultures less in more prosperous countries. There are no significant differences between more and less prosperous countries. Hypothesis 1 is thus rejected. The other explanation leads to the expectation that there will be no differences between secularized and non-secularized countries in the degree to which class issues are central to the political culture. No relationship was found, thus hypothesis 3 is accepted.

In Table 4.2 the degree to which political cultures are determined by cultural issues is explained by prosperity and secularization is shown. Two statistically significant correlations were found. Thus we cannot confirm the hypothesis that increasing wealth or secularization is responsible for the growing attention given to cultural issues in Western political cultures. What we see is that cultural issues become more

central to the political culture in more prosperous countries, but that is equally true for more secularized countries.

*Table 4.2 Explanation of the index for cultural politics, 1980-2000, zero-order correlations and multilevel analysis. Parameter estimates; Maximum likelihood. N=49 contexts in 20 countries*

	Pearson $r^a$	Model 0		Model 1	
		B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant		-0.04	0.16	-0.04	0.16
Secularization	0.33**			0.25*	0.11
Prosperity	0.31**			0.11	0.16
Variance context-level		0.76	0.21	0.50	0.14
Variance country-level		0.36	0.14	0.30	0.10
Deviance		136.75		132.86	
$\Delta DF$				2	

<sup>a</sup>One-tailed testing for significance; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

Source: World Values Survey, 1980; 1990; 2000; World Development Indicators; Party Manifesto Data

To find out which explanation is responsible for the observed differences in centrality of cultural issues in political cultures, it is thus necessary to control for the alternative explanation using a multivariate analysis in which the autonomous influence of prosperity and secularization were estimated. A significant positive value is found for secularization. The trend towards secularization explains about 34% of differences in time and about 17% of differences between countries in the level of cultural politics.<sup>27</sup> The materialistic explanation suggests that political cultures are more culture-centered as countries become richer. However, this explanation has to be rejected because the process of secularization has been shown to be responsible for this.<sup>28</sup> In short, the cultural explanation is sustained which means that ultimately hypothesis 2 has to be rejected in favor of hypothesis 4.

Thus far, I have observed that new cultural issues have become a central feature in the political cultures of many Western countries, and that this may not be attributed to developments in the economic sphere, but to developments in the cultural sphere instead. The cultural explanation can thus be accepted: But what does this explanation mean for individual level voting behavior? I will now focus somewhat more on the cultural explanation of the twin maladies of modernity, anomie and alienation, and investigate how those affect the voting behavior of individuals.

#### 4.5 *Cultural issue salience and the twin maladies of modernity*

The basic assumption underlying much of today's sociology of institutions is that institutions are needed to order the lives of individuals, to give meaning to the lives of individuals, and to regulate social interaction (see for instance Den Hoed and Schuyt 2004; Hooghe and Houtman 2003; Tipton 2002). Some sociologists explicitly argue that institutions are the human equivalents to animal instincts: because people are biologically imperfect, social regulation is necessary to coordinate human interaction (Gehlen 1986). Institutions in other words enable social existence, and without institutions no human interaction is possible (Zijderveld 2000b).

Yet, this does not mean that institutional order is constant and not subjected to change. It cannot be denied that the modernization process radically affects the nature of institutions and the institutional environment of individuals. It must be emphasized that the process of modernization by no means implies that the institutional order is crumbling. What it means is that it is fundamentally changing (Zijderveld 2000a): on the one hand, institutions have become 'over-bureaucratized', 'formalized', 'functionally differentiated', and heavily focused on efficiency and effectiveness; and on the other hand institutions have increasingly become vague about substantial values, norms and meanings (Zijderveld 2000b: 96).

*'The church, the university, and the army, to give three arbitrary examples, modernized into efficient organizations that are managed by the principles of modern business administration....Yet, at the same time it has become less and less clear what exactly is the meaning and destiny, or to use business administration jargon, the mission of these institutions. Missions statements are usually very vague and*



*general, and as a result rather similar. That means that their substantial rationality is in decline' (Zijderveld 2000b: 96).*

This altered institutional environment changes the way people feel and behave and ultimately, what they think is important and what is not. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that, by changing the institutional environment of people, the process of modernization radically affects what people define as important, affecting the political landscape of modernized countries.

Western societies have undergone processes of modernization and rationalization, in which substantial rationality has been superseded by functional rationality. This has had serious consequences for the way institutions and people interact. According to Zijderveld, the changing nature of institutions has given rise to the two principal maladies of modernity. First, it gives rise to feelings of alienation, feelings of a presence of an overbearing institutional system. As institutions become more abstract and bureaucratized, and these institutions increasingly focus on efficiency and effectiveness, it becomes increasingly difficult for people to identify with the goals and purposes of these institutions, which causes people to perceive the institutional order as unnatural and illegitimate (Houtman 2004; Zijderveld 1970). People increasingly experience institutional pressures as 'unnatural' deviations from their true self giving rise to what Berger et al. have called 'a deepening condition of homelessness' (1973: 82) or feelings of alienation (e.g. Houtman 2004; Zijderveld 2000b).

These over-formalized and abstract institutions also give rise to feelings of anomie, i.e. feelings about an absence of a meaningful institutional order. Modern institutions no longer provide individuals with a sense of 'natural' and meaningful belonging, as the all-compassing influence of institutions on individual behavior has by and large fallen away. As the 'god-given' plausibility structures fade away, and the diversity of behavioral possibilities increases, individuals develop feelings of a lack of a meaningful institutional order (Houtman 2004; Zijderveld 2000b).

Although anomie and alienation basically refer to two different phenomena, 'the heart of these maladies is a disturbed relationship between modern men and women on the one hand and their institutional environment on the other' (Zijderveld 2000b: 201). The difference, of course, is that anomie is caused by the

experience of too little institutional control while alienation is caused by the experience of too much institutional control (Zijderveld 2000b: 199).<sup>29</sup>

These maladies of modernity seem to be rising in modernized Western countries. Research by Elchardus and Smits has shown that feelings of discontent have risen in many Western societies: confidence in central institutions such as the church, the state, the police, the parliament et cetera, has dropped tremendously (Elchardus 1998; Elchardus and Smits 2002). Inglehart and Norris have shown that in many Western countries the number of people that is thinking about the meaning of life is rising (Norris and Inglehart 2004). It is clear that the growth of the twin maladies of modernity, anomie and alienation, is reflected in rising levels of problems with meaning and identity and institutional distrust in fully modernized countries.

Since the 1950's considerable attention has been paid to the political consequences of the twin maladies in empirical research. Alienation has often been associated with the rise of new leftism in the 60's and 70's of the twentieth century. In this era, new social movements were striving for more individual freedom (Roszak 1969; Zijderveld 1970). The sixties and seventies of the twentieth century were decades in which issues of individual liberty and emancipation were highly salient. Feelings of anomie are often associated with the new right, which champions issues of law and order (Billiet and De Witte 1995; Eisinga, Billiet and Felling 1999; Ignazi 2003; Middendorp 1991). Thus it is not surprising that there is a considerable association between alienation and libertarianism on the one hand and anomie and authoritarianism on the other (McDill 1961; Srole 1956; Struening and Richardson 1965).

In short, anomie and alienation arise out of problems with institutional order. Whereas alienation refers to too much institutional pressure and to a greater emphasis on individual liberty, anomie refers to too little institutional pressure and to a greater emphasis on social order. Consequently, it may be expected that people who suffer from these twin maladies will vote more according to their cultural values than those who do not (*hypothesis 5*).

#### 4.6 Data and measures

To find out whether the twin maladies of modernity lead people to vote more according to cultural voting motives, I analyzed the voting behavior of individuals in the twenty Western countries under investigation.

The dependent variable, *left-wing voting behavior*, was measured by asking respondents which party they would vote for if elections were held tomorrow. Answers to this question were recoded in left-right scale scores (developed by Budge et al., 2001) that were also included in the manifesto data used in Chapter 3.<sup>30</sup> The advantage of this strategy is that the dependent does not have to be reduced into a crude dichotomy, and we gain a variable of quasi-interval level, enabling linear regression methods.

*Economic progressiveness* was measured as in Chapter two (a linear combination of five Likert-type items about issues such as equalizing incomes, privatization, and the protection of the economically less privileged). Factor analysis showed that the responses of the respondents to these items tapped the same value-dimension. A higher score stands for a more progressive outlook on these economic issues.

*Libertarianism* was also measured in the same way as in Chapter two (a linear combination of four indicators: Postmaterialism, a scale for sexual permissiveness, a scale for traditional values about gender roles, and a scale for conformity as an parental value). Information on one indicator, postmaterialism, was missing for Great Britain (2000). Factor analysis showed consistent high factor-loadings in all countries but one: For Finland (2000) the factor loading for postmaterialism proved insufficiently high ( $<0.25$ ) and was not used to construct the final scale. A higher score on the scale stands for a more libertarian orientation toward cultural issues.

*Alienation* was measured using three items. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought it would be a good, or a bad, thing if in the future there would be a 'greater emphasis on the development of the individual' and whether a 'simple and more natural lifestyle' would be a good thing. Respondents were coded into two groups: those believing that these developments would be a good thing and those feeling the opposite or indifferent towards the issues. Further, the respondents were asked how often, if at all, they think about the meaning and

purpose of life. Responses to this question were recoded into two categories: respondents who said they often think about the meaning and purpose of life, and those thinking less about these issues. Factor analysis on these items showed that to a large extent the responses of the respondents to these items go together very well, those who think about the meaning and purpose of life a lot are also the ones who think that leading a simple, more natural life and more emphasis on individual development would be a good thing.

*Anomie* was measured using five items. The first item asked the respondent whether he or she agreed that 'most people can be trusted'. The other four items asked whether the respondent had confidence in certain central institutions such as the church, the police, the parliament, and civil services. Factor analysis on these items showed that to a large extent the responses of the respondents to these items group very well, those who did not think that most people can be trusted were less inclined to have confidence in the aforementioned institutions.

After combining the items linearly into two scales for alienation and anomie, which correspond only in a very modest way, Pearson's  $r=0.04$  ( $p<0.001$ ), for each country the scales were split around the mode into two dummies, indicating whether a respondent was high or low on alienation and anomie. Combination of these dummies yielded four categories of respondents: those low on both scales (1), and those high on anomie and low on alienation (2), those high on alienation and low on anomie (3), and those high on both anomie and alienation (4).

*Income, education, and cultural participation* were measured in exactly the same manner as in Chapter two.

#### 4.7 Results

Using simple correlations I investigated whether there were any differences in voting motivations between people that were high on anomie and alienation and those who were not. Four zero-order correlations are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Relationships between left-wing voting behavior and economic progressiveness and libertarianism for four categories of respondents: those neither anomic nor alienated, those anomic not alienated, those alienated not anomic, and those anomic and alienated for twenty Western countries (Pearson's *r*)

	Libertarianism	N	Economic progressiveness	N
Neither anomic nor alienated	0.11***	7,299	0.26***	7,151
Anomic not alienated	0.17***	2,623	0.26***	2,560
Alienated not anomic	0.21***	6,440	0.20***	6,325
Anomic and alienated	0.24***	2,671	0.25***	2,618

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$  (two tailed testing for significance)

Source: World Values Survey 2000

Table 4.3 shows a comparison of the way in which four categories of people motivated their voting behavior. It shows that people with libertarian and economically progressive values were more inclined to vote for a leftist party. However, for libertarianism the effect varies considerably between the four categories. For those who were anomic and alienated the effect of libertarian values on voting behavior was more than twice as strong than that for those who are neither anomic nor alienated. Depending on whether a person was alienated and anomic, his or her libertarian values led to a vote on the left. The differences between the groups are negligible for economic progressiveness, with a smaller coefficient for those who were only alienated but not anomic.<sup>31</sup> The fifth hypothesis is accepted: those suffering from the twin maladies of modernity, alienation and anomie, vote more according to their cultural values.

#### 4.8 Conclusions

Many researchers claim that the driving force underlying cultural change is economic development. Rising prosperity induces cultural change, is the simple yet attractive argument. The fact that in many wealthy countries there are many postmaterialists (Inglehart 1997) or that in these countries the political culture is

more culture-centered (this study) does seem to validate these claims. In this chapter I investigated why in late-modern countries cultural issues are central to the political culture.

I have shown that differences in wealth are not decisive for the degree to which cultural issues (or class issues) are central in a political culture. Instead, I have shown that the changes in political culture are attributable to the process of secularization: political cultures will become more oriented to issues such as individual freedom or social order as levels of secularization rise. This suggests that the degree to which the institutional order feels 'natural' is decisive for the degree to which people define cultural issues as important. I investigated this in the second part of the chapter.

In modernized societies institutions become more 'abstract' and 'formalized', and gradually lose an eye for substantial meanings and values. This disturbs the 'natural' relationship between man and the institutional order, giving rise to the twin maladies of modernity, anomie and alienation. In this chapter, I showed that people vote more according to their authoritarian/ libertarian values. If people suffer from the twin maladies of modernity, they vote more according to cultural values.

The cultural explanation that was put forward in this chapter stresses the importance of the institutional rather than the socioeconomic environment for the rise of cultural conflict in late modernity, and puts the dominant modernization approach into perspective; not all changes we see are always directly attributable to changes in the socioeconomic sphere.

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## 5 CLASS VOTING IN THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

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*‘Though long-established party loyalties and institutional ties link the working class to the Left and the middle class to the Right, the social basis of new support for the parties and policies of the Left tends to come from middle-class sources’*  
(Inglehart 1990: 259).

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### 5.1 Introduction

In several books and articles, Ronald Inglehart has tried to link the rise of new politics to the decline in the relationship between class and voting behavior. Inglehart develops an argument, which contains three steps. One, he argues that a new political dimension has risen at the cost of the old political dimension:

*‘The shift towards postmodern values has brought shift in the political agenda throughout advanced industrial society, moving it away from an emphasis on economic growth at any price.... It has also brought a shift from political cleavages based on social class conflict toward cleavages based on cultural issues and quality of life concerns’* (Inglehart, 1997: 237).

Two, he argues that: ‘Postmaterialists come from middle-class backgrounds, but they support change’. And that ‘this is conducive to a decline in class voting, as middle-class postmaterialists move left, and working-class materialists move to the right’ (Inglehart, 1997: 254). Three, Inglehart shows that class-based voting has been declining in a vast number of Western countries, using Alford indices (see also Inglehart, 1977; 1984; 1990).

Geoffrey Evans criticizes Inglehart's evidence for declining levels of class voting, which are based on simple left-right dichotomies and simple manual-non-manual dichotomies, and argues that the simplicity of such evidence 'conceals the real complexities of class voting' (1999: 3-4). Notwithstanding the fact that research has shown that using statistically enhanced tools renders much the same conclusions about the decline in class voting (Heath, Yang and Goldstein 1996; Nieuwbeerta 1995), and that most of the volume *The End of Class Politics* that was edited by Evans (1999) seems to indicate that class voting has been in decline (Clark 2001b) both Evans and Inglehart miss the more important point. A direct test of whether the relationship between class and voting has declined as new political issues are more central to the political culture is still missing. This makes it impossible to conclude whether the 'new politics' perspective is a 'full-blooming alternative approach' (Nieuwbeerta 1995: 201) that can be used to explain variations in the relationship between class and voting and whether the decline in class voting is associated with a concomitant rise in cultural politics (see also Hechter 2004: 412). Although it is true that a new cultural-political axis has emerged (see Chapter 3), it is still unclear whether and how the observed differences in the relationship between class and voting behavior are attributable to differences in the political culture. In this chapter, I focus my attention on this question.

## 5.2 *Class-party alignments in the new political culture*

In Chapter 2, I argued that considering the simple relationship between class and voting behavior obscures two almost equally important mechanisms. The first mechanism of class voting leads people with less favorable economic positions to value economic redistribution, which in turn leads them to vote left. Those with favorable economic positions vote right because they value laissez-faire policies and have no interests in economic redistribution. The second mechanism, cultural voting, leads people with little cultural capital to vote right because they have authoritarian values, while those with ample cultural capital are inclined to vote left because of their libertarian mind-set. As these two mechanisms to a certain degree cancel each other out, one cannot be sure what a declining relationship between class and voting actually means, because it can be interpreted in three ways.

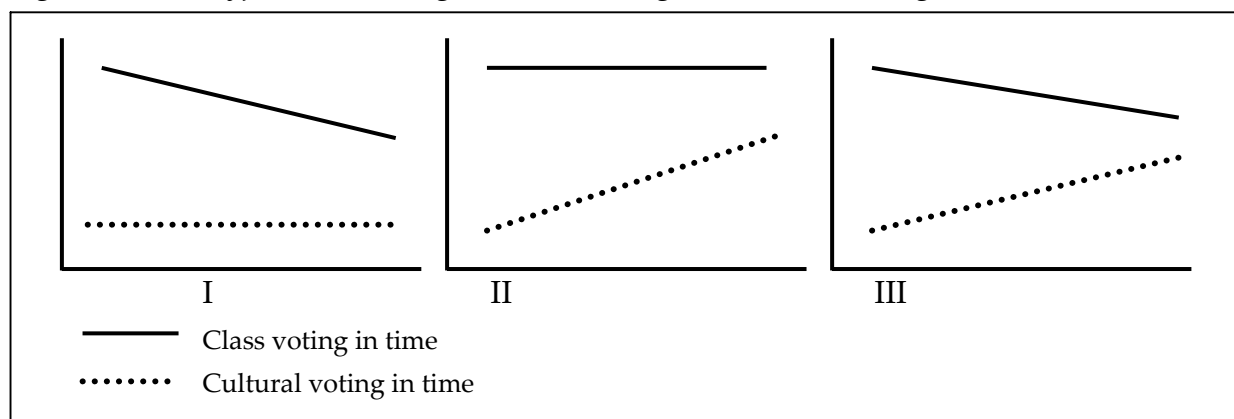


One, it may mean that the mechanism of class voting has become weaker: fewer people in poor economic positions value economic redistribution, which in turn leads them to vote for a rightist party and fewer people in favorable circumstances favor laissez faire policies, which leads them to vote for a leftist party more often.

Two, it may mean that the mechanism of cultural voting has become stronger (compare Weakliem and Heath 1999a): an increasing share of people with high cultural capital votes left because of their libertarian views and an increasing share of people that is low on cultural capital votes right because of their authoritarian views.

Three, a combination of the two aforementioned options, a decline in class voting and an increase in cultural voting – may be responsible for the declining relationship between class and voting behavior (see Figure 3.1).<sup>32</sup>

Figure 3.1 Hypothetical changes in class voting and cultural voting



In order to link the decline in the relationship between class and voting to the observed changes in the political culture, two questions must be answered: Which of the above three options is correct? And: Can these changes be explained by differences in political culture?

Is there any evidence for declining levels of class voting over time? The relationship between class position and economic orientations has been remarkably stable over time (Achterberg and Houtman 2003; Svallfors 1999) or has increased (De Beer 2004). In a comparison of several Western European countries, Knutsen (1995) shows that there are differences in the degree to which economic motives

affect voting behavior. More than that, he shows that economic motives affect voting behavior strongest in the more modern European countries, which suggests a positive trend in time. Achterberg and Houtman (2003) showed a marginal decline in the degree in which economic orientations affect voting behavior in Great Britain 1974-1997, and Knutsen and Kumlin (2005) showed that economic orientations have not lost their relevance in most European countries. Based on this evidence, a general decline in economic voting behavior is very unlikely.

The second option, i.e. increasing cultural voting, is very likely for two reasons. One, ties between education, one of the indicators for cultural capital, and libertarianism are stronger in more secularized and modern countries (Houtman 2003; Scheepers and Te Grotenhuis 2002), which makes it possible to assume that these ties will have increased with time. Two, the ties between cultural orientations and voting behavior are stronger in more modern countries (Knutsen 1995) and have become stronger in time (Achterberg and Houtman 2003; Knutsen and Kumlin 2005; Middendorp 1991).

Finally, if there are any differences in economic and cultural voting behavior, these changes must be explained by changes in political culture. Since people can be old left, old right, new left, or new right, the fact that people define economic or cultural issues as important has no direct impact on voting behavior. Research by Dekker et al. (1999) and Flanagan (1982) has shown that at an individual level, no predictions about party choice can be made from knowing whether a respondent defines cultural or class concerns as salient (see also Aardal and Van Wijnen 2005). Does this mean that there is no use for issue-salience whatsoever? No. Flanagan suggests, without giving empirical evidence for this, that

*'An authoritarian-libertarian value preferences scale will tell us whether the respondent is likely to support the New Right or New Left issue agenda. A materialist-non-materialist value priorities scale will tell us whether the New Politics kinds of value concerns or the Old Politics economic issues will be foremost in the voter's mind when he or she makes a choice' (Flanagan 1987: 1306-7).*

Research by Fournier et al. (2003) showed that the degree to which issues are perceived as salient conditions the impact of policy preferences on voting behavior.

The more particular issues are perceived as salient, the more impact policy preferences tied up with the issue will have on actual voting behavior. Layman and Carmines (1997) showed that the effect of religious traditionalism on voting behavior is stronger for those who define cultural problems as salient (see also Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). At the individual level issue salience serves as a condition: for those who define class problems as salient, class motives will be most important, while for those who define cultural problems as salient, cultural motives will be decisive for their voting behavior.

Two clusters of hypotheses have to be tested in order to investigate whether the decline of the familiar pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class is related to the changes in political culture. The first cluster deals with class voting. I expect that at a contextual level differences in time and between countries in the relationship between class and voting behavior can be explained by the degree to which a political culture is class-centered: I expect to find a stronger relationship between class and voting in contexts where the political culture is more class-centered (*hypothesis 1*). Focusing on the relationships between class position, economic orientations, and voting behavior, I expect to find stronger ties between class position and voting behavior (*hypothesis 2*), and between economic progressiveness and voting behavior (*hypothesis 3*) as class issues are more central to the political culture.

The second cluster of hypotheses deals with cultural voting. I expect that at a contextual level differences in time and between countries in the relationship between class and voting behavior can be explained by the degree to which the political culture is oriented to cultural issues: I expect to find a weaker relationship between class and voting (*hypothesis 4*) in political cultures that are more culture-centered. Focusing on the relationships between cultural capital, libertarianism and voting behavior, I expect to find stronger ties between cultural capital and voting behavior (*hypothesis 5*), and between libertarianism and voting behavior (*hypothesis 6*) as cultural issues are more central to the political culture.

### 5.3 *Data and measures*

In this chapter I test macro-level and multi-level hypotheses. I use the statistics produced by Nieuwbeerta for the measurement of the macro relationship between class and voting behavior. Nieuwbeerta (1995) used a multitude of election surveys to study the alleged decline in class voting. To this end, Nieuwbeerta calculated the measures of class voting for twenty countries and four post-war periods, I have used these as dependent variables in my analysis. I used two indices for class voting: the Alford index, a traditional measure for class voting, and the Thomsen index, a log-odds based measure. Nieuwbeerta clustered the class voting statistics into four periods: 1945-1960, 1961 to 1970, 1971 to 1980 and 1981 to 1990. The other measure for class voting that Nieuwbeerta used, the Kappa index, will not be used in this chapter, for reasons given by Clark (2001c; see also Achterberg and Houtman 2003; Hechter 2004). The Kappa index is based on the calculation of a standard deviation, and it only indicates the degree to which the classes vary in their left-wing voting behavior. The Kappa index cannot give any answer to the question of which class is voting left-wing or which class is voting right-wing. All values for class voting for the four periods in the twenty countries under investigation are presented in Table 5.1. Higher scores for Alford and Thomsen indices stand for stronger relationships between occupational class and voting behavior.

Table 5.1 *The relationship between class and voting in twenty countries measured by the Alford-index (A) and Thomsen-index (T) 1945-1990.*

Country	1945-1960		1961-1970		1971-1980		1981-1990	
	A	T	A	T	A	T	A	T
Australia	32.9	1.38	29.3	1.22	27.8	1.16	19.4	0.80
Austria	-	-	27.4	1.12	28.9	1.28	18.3	0.76
Belgium	-	-	25.4	1.21	17.9	0.87	16.4	0.80
Britain	37.3	1.64	38.3	1.67	24.3	1.07	23.4	0.90
Canada	7.0	0.30	7.7	0.31	-	-	4.0	0.27
Denmark	39.8	1.82	52.0	2.33	28.1	1.18	20.9	0.97
Finland	48.4	2.17	50.2	2.24	36.9	1.60	35.7	1.52
France	24.4	1.01	18.3	0.76	17.0	0.72	11.7	0.48
Germany	36.0	1.55	24.8	1.06	14.9	0.61	13.4	0.55
Greece	-	-	-	-	12.3	0.53	9.7	0.47
Ireland	-	-	14.1	0.88	8.7	0.77	7.3	0.70
Italy	26.6	1.13	14.5	0.66	17.8	0.73	13.1	0.53
Luxembourg	-	-	-	-	24.8	1.10	18.8	0.86
The Netherlands	14.0	0.61	14.7	0.65	21.8	0.94	15.5	0.68
Norway	52.5	2.39	32.0	1.38	33.8	1.43	20.5	0.84
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.9	0.62
Spain	-	-	-	-	18.4	0.75	15.5	0.63
Sweden	51.0	2.26	40.7	1.73	37.3	1.57	32.7	1.36
Switzerland	-	-	-	-	17.6	0.82	12.8	0.80
U.S.	16.2	0.67	7.7	0.36	10.9	0.46	8.1	0.34

Source: Tables 3.1 and 3.5 from Nieuwbeerta (1995: 45, 53).

The two indices for the relationship between class and voting strongly converge. The correlation, my own calculation, between the indices is 0.98 ( $p < 0.0001$ ). Hence, I will present the results using only one dependent variable: The Alford index.<sup>33</sup>

As in Chapter 4, I measured the degree to which a political culture is oriented to either class or cultural issues as a combination of the degree to which these issues were salient and the degree to which political parties polarized over these issues.

As in Chapters 2 and 4, I used the World Values Survey data to measure individual level voting behavior, cultural participation,<sup>34</sup> income, education, economic progressiveness,<sup>35</sup> and libertarianism.<sup>36</sup>

#### 5.4 Results

The level of class voting is known for 65 country-period combinations or contexts (see Table 5.1). To find out how the changes in political culture affected the level of class voting in the periods of 1945 to 1960, 1961 to 1970, 1971 to 1980 and 1981 to 1990 in the twenty countries, I calculated mean scores for the two indices for political culture. These mean scores were related to the mean level of class voting. Since the four periods are nested within the countries, multilevel analysis was used to determine how differences in political culture were related to differences in class voting controlling for each other. The results are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Differences in the relationship between class and voting by political culture (1945-1990). (multilevel analysis; 4 periods within 20 countries; N=65).

	Model 0		Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant	-0.09	0.18	-0.07	0.17			-0.08	0.16
Class-centered political culture			0.21*	0.11			0.18*	0.11
Culture-centered political culture:					-0.32***	0.10	-0.32***	0.10
Var. country level	0.59	0.22	0.43	0.19	0.51	0.19	0.40	0.17
Var. period level	0.37	0.08	0.38	0.08	0.31	0.07	0.33	0.07
Deviance	154.7		152.1		145.4		143.1	
Δ Df (model 0)	--		1		1		2	

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001; one-sided-tests for significance

Sources: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998; Indices Nieuwbeerta

The first model splits the variance into two levels, a country level and a period level. The constant in the model reflects the mean level of the relationship between class and voting as measured by the Alford index, accounting for variance at both levels. The indicator for the degree to which class issues are central to the political culture is entered in the second model. As the analysis presented in Chapter 3 showed, the degree to which class issues are central to the political culture has been relatively stable over time. Thus, it is not very reasonable to expect that this would relate to in-time differences in the relationship between class and voting, since the general trend in this relationship is a decline. However, this does not rule out the possibility that differences in the relationship between class and voting between countries are not related to differences in the degree in which class issues are central to the political culture. As model 1 shows, the degree to which class issues are central to the political culture does not explain any differences in time, and therefore, it cannot account for the decline in the relationship between class and voting behavior.

Differences in the relationship between class position and voting behavior between countries, can be explained by the centrality of class issues: differences between countries in the strength of the relationship depend to a large extent (27%) on the degree to which the political culture is centered on issues of class. The more these issues are central to the political culture, the more class affects voting behavior in that country.

The other indicator for political culture, the centrality of cultural issues, was entered in the third model. The degree to which the political culture is centered on cultural issues is strongly related to differences in the relationship between class and voting. Contrary to the conclusions drawn about the degree to which the political culture is centered on class issues, the centrality of cultural issues can explain differences in time, and as such, this can explain why the relationship between class and voting behavior has declined over the years. Differences in time (16%) and differences between countries (14%) can be explained by the degree to which cultural issues are central in a political culture; the more they are, the weaker traditional class party ties are. In other words, as political cultures are oriented to new cultural issues members of the working class increasingly vote right and members of the middle class increasingly vote left. The last model was used to investigate the effects of both indicators, the degree to which class and cultural

issues are central to the political culture, on the relationship between class and voting behavior, but this does not lead to any different conclusions for the hypotheses 1 and 4, which are both accepted. The relationship between class and voting is stronger as class issues are more central to the political culture. As cultural issues are more central the relationship between class and voting is weaker.

The results raise the question whether or not cultural voting is stronger in political cultures where cultural issues are more central. Based on these aggregate-level relationships, I cannot draw the conclusion that cultural voting is stronger in political cultures. To answer the question, I analyzed whether class voting is stronger in political cultures that are more class-centered and whether cultural voting is stronger in political cultures in which cultural issues are more central (see Table 5.3).

In the three models that are shown in Table 5.3, left-wing voting behavior is explained by indicators for cultural capital, cultural participation and education, and for class position, income and education, and by indicators for political culture, the degree to which the political culture is centered on class and cultural issues. The first model shows only two significant effects. Those with a high income will generally vote for a rightist party, and those participating a lot culturally will generally vote for a leftist party. This model thus basically confirms that there is class voting, i.e. those in economic favorable positions vote right, and cultural voting, i.e. those with ample cultural capital vote left. The bottom of the Table 5.3 shows that these effects vary significantly across countries. In some countries the effect of cultural participation and income is stronger than in other countries. It is important to note that there is no significant effect for education. This confirms that education both measures someone's economic position and his or her cultural capital. Furthermore, compared to the effects of cultural participation and income, the effect of education varies considerably across countries: In some countries higher educated people will vote left, while in other countries they vote right.

The second model is used to investigate whether the effects of cultural participation and income depend on the degree to which political cultures are oriented to cultural and class issues. From the second model it can be seen that there are significant interaction-effects of political culture with income and cultural participation. In countries where the political culture is centered on cultural issues



cultural participation leads more to a vote for the left than in countries where culture issues are not central to the political culture. Likewise, in political cultures where class issues are central, those with higher incomes are more likely to vote for a right-wing party than in political cultures where class issues are less central.

In the third model, these interaction effects disappear after controlling for the interaction-effects of education with political culture. We see that higher educated vote more for a leftist party in countries where cultural issues are more central, and that they vote more for a rightist party in countries where class issues are more central to the political culture.

Table 5.3 Explaining leftist voting behavior by income, education, cultural participation, and political culture in twenty Western countries (multilevel analysis N=28,500 in 37 contexts)

Independents	Model 1 <sup>37</sup>		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant	-0.00	0.06	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.06
Year <sup>38</sup>	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.07	0.06
Income	-0.07***	0.01	-0.08***	0.01	-0.08***	0.01
Cultural participation	0.03***	0.01	0.04***	0.01	0.04***	0.01
Education	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.02
Class-centered P.C.	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.06
Cultural-centered P.C.	-0.07	0.05	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.05
Income X class-centered P.C.			-0.03*	0.01	-0.02	0.01
Cult. participation X cultural-centered P.C.			0.04*	0.01	0.01	0.01
Education X class-centered P.C.					-0.06**	0.02
Education X cultural-centered P.C.					0.05*	0.02
Var. individual level	0.89	0.01	0.89	0.01	0.89	0.01
Var. context level	0.10	0.03	0.10	0.03	0.10	0.03
Var. income	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Var. cultural participation X 10 <sup>-1</sup>	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
Var. education	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00
Deviance	77883.9		77719.2		77704.4	
ΔDF			2		2	

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01 (two-tailed testing for significance)

Sources: Party Manifesto Data, 1985-1998; World Values Survey data, 1990-2000

To summarize, the degree to which those in favorable economic positions vote for rightist parties, and those in marginal economic positions vote for leftist parties

depends on the centrality of class issues in the political culture. This pattern is stronger when class issues are more central. Furthermore, the degree to which those with ample cultural capital votes for a leftist party, and those with little cultural capital vote for rightist parties depends on the centrality of cultural issues in a political culture. This voting pattern is stronger as cultural issues are more central. Can these voting patterns be explained by the fact that economic voting motives and cultural voting motives affect voting behavior more strongly in political cultures where class and cultural issues are more central? (See Table 5.4).

The two models in Table 5.4 are used to estimate the effects of two voting motives, education, and political culture on voting behavior. The previous analysis showed that the interaction effects of education with the degree to which the political culture is oriented to class issues and cultural issues explain away the interaction effects of income and cultural participation with the two indicators for political culture. Thus, income and cultural participation were omitted from the models.<sup>39</sup> Omitting income and cultural participation leads to a negative relationship between education and voting for a leftist party: the higher educated more often vote for rightist parties. The first model also shows that respondents with economically progressive views are more likely to vote left, as are those with libertarian views. Moreover, the effects of these voting motives significantly vary between countries: In some countries economically progressive views are more likely to lead to a vote for the left than in other countries, and in some countries libertarian views are more likely to lead to a vote for the left than in other countries. The second model was used to investigate whether this was caused by differences in political culture.

The two positive and significant interaction effects show that economic voting motives affect voting behavior more strongly in class-centered political cultures and that cultural voting motives affect voting behavior more strongly in culture-centered political cultures. Those with libertarian views will be more inclined to vote for a leftist party if they live in a country where cultural issues are high on the political agenda. Those with economically progressive views will be more inclined to vote for a leftist party if they live in a country where the old issues of class are high on the political agenda.

Table 5.4 *Left-wing voting behavior explained by two voting motives, indicators for political culture, and by interaction effects between voting motives and political culture (Multilevel regression models, N=37,294 in 37 contexts: method = maximum likelihood)*

Independents	Model 1 <sup>40</sup>		Model 2	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant	0.02	0.07	0.02	0.07
Year	-0.12	0.11	-0.12	0.11
Education	-0.10***	0.02	-0.11***	0.02
Economic progressiveness	0.26***	0.03	0.27***	0.03
Libertarianism	0.20***	0.02	0.20***	0.02
Class-centered P.C.	-0.04	0.06	-0.04	0.04
Culture-centered P.C.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
Education X culture- centered P.C.	0.04**	0.01	0.04**	0.01
Education X class- centered P.C.	-0.03*	0.01	-0.03	0.02
Economic progressiveness X class- centered P.C.			0.08**	0.02
Libertarianism X culture-centered P.C.			0.05*	0.02
Var. individual level	0.74	0.01	0.74	0.01
Var. context level	0.08	0.02	0.08	0.02
Var. education	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Var. economic progressiveness	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01
Var. libertarianism	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00
Deviance	92407.5		92376.1	
ΔDF			2	

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001 (two-tailed testing for significance)

Sources: Party Manifesto Data, 1985-1998; World Values Survey data, 1990-2000

## 5.5 *Conclusion*

In the previous chapters I focused on the changing nature of the political culture, and on finding an explanation for the fact that so many people in relatively poor economic positions nowadays vote for right-wing parties. This chapter set out to show that the decline in the relationship between class and voting behavior is caused by the changing nature of the political culture. Two conclusions may be drawn. One, in class-centered political cultures the conventional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class is stronger than in countries with political cultures that are not centered on class issues: Those in poor economic positions and those with economically progressive values vote more for leftist parties. In culture-centered political cultures the ties between cultural capital and voting behavior are stronger: those with ample cultural capital and those with libertarian views vote more for leftist parties in these countries.

Two, the degree to which a political culture is oriented to class issues cannot explain why the relationship between class and voting behavior has declined over the years. It can however explain why in some countries this relationship is stronger than in other countries. The degree to which political cultures are oriented to cultural issues can explain why the relationship has declined over the years and why in some countries the relationship between class and voting behavior is stronger.

The observed decline in the relationship between class and voting behavior can be attributed to the changing nature of the political cultures in Western democracies. Traditional class party alignments are stronger in countries in which class issues are more prominent on the political agenda, and weaker in countries where cultural issues play a more prominent role.



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## 6 WOBBLING AND FLOATING IN A POST-CLASS SOCIETY?

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*A New Political Culture is emerging, but its recognition is long overdue – largely because many intelligent persons wear analytical lenses that are still focused on class politics*  
(Clark 1996: 373).

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### 6.1 *The research problem*

Traditional ties between class position and voting behavior have weakened: declining numbers of the working class are voting for leftist parties while numbers of the middle class are increasingly voting left. This fact underpins the research problem addressed in this study. In this study my aim was to explain these waning class-party ties by the changing nature of the political culture. The three research-questions used to structure the work undertaken for this study will now be briefly reiterate.

*Has there really been a rise of the new political culture in post-war Western countries?*

The importance of issues and the polarization engendered by such issues together determine whether a political culture is oriented towards old, class related, issues or new, cultural, issues. Although some sociologists imply that the old issues of class have, by and large, disappeared from the political landscape, this was not confirmed by my research. Class issues have remained an important feature in the political culture and, despite showing some decline, polarization over these issues is still very high. Although the politics of class have been shown to be more stable than some have thought it to be, there have been important changes in the political cultures of Western countries. These changes differ from the dominant view on new politics, which stresses the rise of new-leftist (libertarian) issues. New-rightist

(authoritarian) issues are equally important aspects of the new political culture, and have risen tremendously in salience. And political parties have become increasingly polarized over these issues: Rightist parties have become more authoritarian and leftist parties have become more libertarian. These changes in the political culture show that there is an ongoing rise in cultural conflict in Western societies.

*Why have political cultures changed?*

The dominant view on modernization proposes that economic developments bring about cultural changes. While it is true that in wealthy Western countries the political culture is more culturally centered, the existence of such a relationship does not inevitably mean that a rise in prosperity has caused the rise of a new political culture. Modernization is more than economic development alone it is a multi-faceted phenomenon. To close ones eyes for these other facets is not conducive to understanding cultural phenomena such as the rise of a new political culture. This was demonstrated by my taking an alternative cultural explanation which focused on other aspects of modernization into consideration. I found that political cultures are more culturally centered in countries where the institutional embeddedness of people in churches is low. Furthermore, the rise of new, culturally centered, cultures cannot be attributed to the rise of prosperity that these countries have certainly witnessed. Instead, increasing secularization in these countries has led to a stronger political focus on issues of individual freedom versus social order. As modern individuals are increasingly detached from traditional institutional structures that pre-order their lives, such as the church, cultural issues become more important for the political cultures of Western countries.

The rise of a new political culture that focuses on cultural conflict, can also be understood from the perspective of the two principal maladies of modernity, anomie and alienation. Whereas the first refers to feelings of too little institutional control, and thus yields a cry for more social order, the second refers to feelings of too much institutional control, and a corresponding cry for more individual freedom. The rise of new-leftist, which accentuate individual rights and tolerance of diversity, and new-rightist, which accentuate a strong moral order and more cultural homogeneity, issues and the increasing polarization of Western politics over these issues can thus be interpreted as expressions of feelings of anomie and



alienation. Logically, people who suffer from these maladies of modernity vote more according to cultural values.

The rise of cultural conflict, which is expressed via changes in the political culture and increases in voting according to cultural values, can thus be seen as an expression of the changing institutional environment that people have to cope with today. It is not because they are rich, but because they have lost their sense of belonging that people increasingly direct their attention to cultural issues.

*Are changing political cultures really causing members of the working class to vote for the right and members of the middle class to vote for the left?*

That the middle class votes right and the working class votes left can be explained using class analysis. The class-related motives that were inferred, those in lower income groups supporting economic redistribution and those in higher income groups supporting laissez-faire policies, underlie the voting behavior of these income groups. The mechanism of class voting is still valid, and voting behavior can, therefore, still be understood as a democratic translation of class struggle: but this is only half of the story.

The second mechanism controlling voting is not related to class differences but to differences in cultural capital. This mechanism is driven by the idea that it is completely normal for those with little cultural capital to vote for right-wing parties and for those with ample cultural capital to vote for left-wing parties. Those with ample cultural capital have more libertarian values while those with little cultural capital have more authoritarian values. Those with ample cultural capital thus support leftist policies that stress issues such as individual freedom and non-conformism, while those with little cultural capital support rightist policies that stress the importance of maintaining order and conformism. Because those in favorable economic positions are often the ones with ample cultural capital, and those in marginal economic positions are commonly the ones with little cultural capital, the mechanism of cultural voting diametrically opposes that of class voting. A simple statistical relationship between occupational class position, merging class with cultural capital, and voting behavior obscures these two voting mechanisms, resulting in confusion about the question whether a declining relationship between

class-position and voting actually means that class voting has declined, cultural voting has increased, or both.

In this study I have shown that the mechanism of class voting is stronger in political cultures that are oriented to class issues. In these political cultures the economic position and the class related voting motives affect voting behavior more strongly, strengthening the ties between class and voting; however, as there is little to no change in the degree to which class issues are central to the political culture, differences in political culture cannot explain why the overall relationship between class and voting has declined. Consequently, there are no reasons to assume that class voting has declined over the years.

The mechanism of cultural voting has strengthened over the years. In political cultures that are centered on cultural issues those with ample cultural capital and those with libertarian values are more inclined to vote for leftist parties, and those with little cultural capital and authoritarian values are more inclined to vote for right-wing parties. In the post-war period political cultures have become more culture-centered, and because in these political cultures the mechanism of cultural voting behavior is stronger, the overall relationship between occupational class position and voting behavior has diminished. That the working class has increasingly been voting for rightist parties and the middle class for leftist parties is thus attributable to the fact that their cultural capital and concomitant cultural beliefs increasingly gives rise to this kind of voting behavior.

## 6.2 *Changing analytical lenses*

The quotation heading of this chapter carries with it the thought that if one wants to understand certain social phenomena this will be only be possible if the proper set of conceptual tools (or analytical lenses) is used. Although one-sided viewpoints may help sociologists to conduct their research thoroughly, they may also prevent them from seeing certain empirical elements and may cause them to misinterpret the empirical facts that they find.

*'Theory, Albert Einstein once said, determines what we can observe. Louis Althusser, a contemporary French Marxist philosopher, slightly transformed this proposition by*

*saying that theory also determines what we cannot observe (...). Theoretical questions are always embedded in conceptual structures, and if those structures lack certain pivotal elements (concepts), certain questions cannot or will not be asked' (Wright 1979: 57).*

A one-sided view on new politics as left-libertarian politics, for example, causes problems when faced with the emergence of right-authoritarian parties, issues, and sympathies in the electorate. Acknowledging that these types of issues are not material issues but non-material and that these issues do not represent the old material issues but are the opposite of new libertarian issues, leads to a more sound understanding of the changes in the political cultures of Western countries and prevents us from attempting to push these phenomena in the straightjacket of old politics where they clearly do not belong.

Another example is that of the explanation of the rise of the new politics. While it may be tempting to reduce everything to differences in prosperity or to broader socio-economic developments, in this thesis I have shown that this leads to a misinterpretation of the reasons why new cultural conflict is emerging. Closing one's eyes to developments in the institutional environment of people, leads to the false conclusion that socio-economic factors are decisive.

'The concept of 'class' has (...) often been seen by critics of sociology as a defining characteristic of the discipline: sociologists, they hold reduce everything to class' (Scott 1996: 1). The dominant one-sided view of class and class-analysis in political sociology leads sociologists to fail to recognize that the emergence of the new political culture, in which cultural conflict has become important, is responsible for the declining traditional ties between class and voting. Staying closely within the class perspective, i.e. deriving their hypotheses from class-analysis, will ultimately not lead to a satisfactory explanation for the working class move to the right and the middle class move to the left. Taking into consideration alternative theories, as I have done in this thesis, will help us to increase our understanding of this phenomenon.

In short, one-sided foci on libertarian politics, on material explanations of cultural change, and on class-analysis as a means to explain the declining relationship between class and voting behavior, lead to misinterpretations if such

thinking is not confronted with alternative foci. Using a more open and eclectic view thus opens up new theoretical and empirical possibilities and promotes due attention being paid to new explanatory ideas.

### 6.3 *Living in a post-class society?*

*Rumors about my death are greatly exaggerated.* If there is one sentence often used in the debate about the political consequences of the class cleavage, it is this one (compare Hout, Brooks and Manza 1993; Manza and Brooks 1996; Nieuwbeerta 2001; Scott 2000). Users of this famous quote refer to the 'Death of Class' debate, which has produced research literature with titles such as 'Are Social Classes Dying?' (Clark and Lipset 1991), 'The Death of Class' (Pakulski and Waters 1996), 'The End of Class Politics?' (Evans 1999) and 'The Breakdown of Class Politics' (Clark and Lipset 2001).

The basic argument of those reporting the death of class:

*'is directed against all claims that advanced societies remain class societies in any other than general historical sense (...), including claims that class analysis is useful in identifying the structure of inequalities, social divisions, and sources of dynamics in such societies' (Pakulski and Waters 1996a: 670).*

The questions whether social class still has meaning to the daily lives of people, and consequently whether social class as a sociological concept is still valuable, are heavily debated. Given the centrality of the concept of social class to sociology, the answer to these questions cannot be given lightly: compelling forensic evidence for this death should be put forward. That:

*'The field of politics ...would cease to be – as it has been increasingly throughout the history of industrial society – 'economics by proxy', i.e. a set of activities reducible virtually in full to the competition between groups claiming their share in allocation of goods and the making of authoritative decisions about this allocation' (Bauman 1982: 197),*

and that social class, thus, is no longer able to structure politics would surely be one of the most compelling arguments to corroborate claims of the attendant death of class and structural dealignment.

Two phenomena are generally taken to indicate the political death of class: its declining ability to structure voting behavior and the political culture (Clark and Inglehart 1998; Clark and Lipset 1991; Hechter 2004; Pakulski and Waters 1996a, b). Both these 'facts' of evidence are problematic. One, a declining relationship between class and voting behavior cannot be taken to indicate that class analysis has become useless for explaining voting behavior, because this would mean that cultural voting is increasing. Although class analysis cannot be used to explain why some members of the working class vote right and some members of the middle class vote left, in Chapter 2, I called this 'unnatural' voting behavior, it still provides a very good explanation for working-class votes for the left, and middle-class votes for the right, i.e. 'natural' voting behavior. The proposed cultural explanation for voting behavior does not conflict with class analysis: it cannot explain 'natural' votes but it can be used to explain the 'unnatural' votes. It thus rather supplements class analysis by giving cultural interests, which also affect voting behavior, their due attention. Acknowledging the importance of such a cultural explanation may eventually even be the only way to keep seeing the political significance of class for voting behavior. Precisely its traditional dominance in the study of voting behavior seems to be the principal cause of the current impression that the explanatory power of the class approach to politics is on the wane. Class analysis may be saved from premature death by breaking up its virtual theoretical monopoly. Paying due attention to crosscutting cultural interests and voting motivations does exactly this. After all, not considering the mechanism of cultural voting easily leads to the mistaken conclusion that class no longer has any value for explaining voting behavior.

Two, there is little evidence for the marginalization of class issues in the political cultures of Western democracies. If class has been dying, there would surely be no need to structure politics according to the old issues of class (Abrahamson and Inglehart 1995; Inglehart 1997a; Inglehart and Rabier 1986). However, as Stonecash argues, 'Presumably any assessment of this issue, to be valid, should ask people about conflicts over policies that have material

consequences' (2000: 152). To measure whether people and political culture have turned their backs on the old politics of class, one should ask questions about issues that are central class issues: allocation of means, redistribution, economic inequality, government interference in the economy and so on. The rise of 'postmaterialism' in Western democracies, therefore, cannot be interpreted as an indication that class issues are becoming less important:

*'To ask a series of questions that do not ask about material conflicts, and then use the results to argue that material concerns are declining is surely one of the oddest logics of analysis ever presented in social science' (Stonecash 2000: 152).*

The empirical evidence put forward in this study shows that class issues have lost little of their importance. Oddly enough, the extent to which political cultures can be classified as 'postmaterialist' does not say anything about the degree to which material class-related issues are important to the political cultures of Western democracies. Although there are differences between countries, above all, class issues are likely to be a constant factor in Western politics.

In sum, the decline in the relationship between class and voting does not indicate the failure of the class-mechanism to structure voting behavior, and class issues have remained, to date, central issues in Western political cultures. To conclude that we are all living in a post-class society and that class is dead is to greatly exaggerate. Class is alive, old ties between class and voting behavior still exist, and we are still living in a class-society.

#### *6.4 Wobbling and floating electorates?*

In political sociology much work is dedicated to identifying the cleavages that are politically salient and that structure voting behavior. Following the work of Key (1955), political sociologists often use the realignment-dealignment terminology, when they study the relationship between social cleavages and voting behavior (see for example Clark 1996; Crewe and Thomsen 1999; Elchardus 1996; Inglehart and Rabier 1986; Kaufman 2002; Manza, Hout and Brooks 1995; McAllister and Studlar

1995). The key to the matter is the question whether we should take the decline in class voting as an indication of structural dealignment or realignment.

If dealignment is taking place, old ties between cleavages, such as class, and electoral behavior diminish or disappear without new ties appearing in their place. Apart from fact that class has not lost its relevance for voting behavior, those arguing that there is a process of dealignment going on suggest that there are no new electoral ties emerging. Van der Eijk et al. for example suggest that

*'(t)he most salient feature of the political landscape that emerges with the end of cleavage politics is precisely the fact that it has no clear universal features' (Van der Eijk et al. 1992: 430),*

thus concluding that the decreasing influence of class on voting behavior is signifying dealignment. Instead, politics will be less a matter of stable alignments, and more unpredictable. In this context some speak of 'fluid', 'wobbling' or 'floating' electorates, which means that people can now 'begin to choose' whatever party they prefer without considerations of class or of other social cleavages (Rose and McAllister 1986). In this context, Pakulski and Waters speak of the emergence of 'choice politics' (1996a: 132-148).

Others suggest that the declining relationship between class and voting signifies a process of realignment: the old cleavages are gradually being replaced by other (new) cleavages, accompanied by their own political alignments (Elchardus 1996; Hechter 2004; Houtman 2003; Inglehart 1997a; Norris 1999; Wattenberg 1995). There is, though, some disagreement about the exact nature of the cleavages that are becoming electorally important. Some argue that there are no structural cleavages and that the main political fault-line is that of values (Inglehart 1997a).

*'Political coalitions and voting patterns will lack the permanence of past class and religious cleavages. Without clear social cues, voting decisions will become a more demanding task for voters, and voting decisions will become more dependent on the individual beliefs and values of each citizen' (Dalton 1988: 175).*

Moreover, following Inglehart closely, Knutsen argues that

*'materialist/postmaterialist value priorities will become an increasingly important political conflict in post-industrial society. A transformation of the cleavage structure is taking place in advanced industrial society, from ascriptive (pre-industrial) variables and achieved or hierarchical (industrial) variables to political value variables. New value cleavages are gradually replacing the traditional socio-structural cleavages in the Lipset-Rokkan model for freezing political alignments'* (Knutsen 1995: 4).

That these authors – Dalton, Inglehart, and Knutsen – emphasize the importance of values as a new political fault line is remarkable because they all acknowledge the generational base (Knutsen 1995: 4; Inglehart 1990:67; Dalton 1988: 87) of these values, and the considerable support for new (libertarian/ postmaterialist) values among sections of the new middle class (Knutsen 1995: 4; Inglehart 1990: 331-332; Dalton 1988: 153-160) and among higher educated (Knutsen 1995:4; Dalton 1988: 90; Inglehart 1990:330). Consequently, also according to these authors structural cleavages underlie these values conflicts.

In this respect, they thus do not fundamentally differ from other authors who argue that there are new structural cleavages underlying the process of realignment: based on membership of status groups (Bell 2002; Hechter 2004; Turner 1988), educational differences (Lipset 1981), or cultural capital (Houtman 2003; this study) new conflicts arise that are fought out in the political arena, bringing forth new alignments between a societal base and voting behavior. These new alignments diametrically oppose the old 'traditional' class-party alignments, causing members of the middle class to vote left, and members of the working class to vote right. Clearly the dealignment-thesis is not supported and the realignment-thesis is. To argue that modern political landscapes do not have universal features is completely uncalled for: there are simply more features. While class issues have remained a salient feature of Western political cultures, new cultural issues have emerged as a political factor of great importance, increasingly driving people to vote along new cultural lines. If electorates are wobbling or floating then, they are all wobbling or floating in the same, cultural, current.



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## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> *The Theory of the New Class: Cultural Capitalizing Class?*

### *Introduction*

The focus of this thesis is providing an explanation for unnatural voting behavior based on differences in cultural capital and libertarianism. Yet when I present papers and give lectures, I am frequently asked about 'New class' theory. Although this theory cannot be used satisfactorily to explain working class conservatism, it deals with leftist tendencies, more concrete: libertarian tendencies, within the new middle class. Is the cultural capital approach to be preferred over the new-class approach? Given the central place of 'new class theory' in the debate over class and politics, any thesis on this theme should pay some attention to this question.

### *Cultural capitalizing class?*

The basic principal is simple: class schemas of the past reflected industrial class-positions, and thus, with the transformation of many industrial economies into post-industrial or service economies, we should change the class schemas accordingly to reflect changing class positions (compare Güveli, Need and De Graaf 2005: 258). Some even speak of the 'necessity' to adapt the occupational class schemas (Güveli, Need and De Graaf 2005: 261). Increasingly people work in new social and cultural service occupations while primary production jobs are rapidly disappearing in Western societies (e.g. Steijn, Snel and Van der Laan 2000).

While theorizing about the new class has been going on for some time now (see for instance Bell 1980; Bruce-Briggs 1979; Esping-Andersen 1993; Kriesi 1989; Savage 1991) the empirical application of the idea that conventional class schema's should be altered, is still relatively scarce (see for original empirical research de Graaf and Steijn 1997; Güveli, Need and De Graaf 2005; Steijn 1997), and the search for the best adaptation of well-established class-schemas such as the EGP-class schema is still going on. Yet, although the number of schemas varies with each study, there are some common features of these studies and schema's that can be criticized.

One, these studies try to show the validity of the new class schema by comparing the new schema with the old class schema in the degree in which they predict, or explain, voting behavior (De Graaf and Steijn 1997; Güveli, Need and De Graaf 2005) or cultural and economic value orientations (de Graaf and Steijn 1997; Steijn 1997). However, it seems to me that new more differentiated schemas always

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explain more variance than the simple ones. So, extrapolating this trend in increasing complexity of occupational class schemas, would surely lead to the use of 380 or more occupational dummies when trying to explain as much variance as possible, eventually leading to the conclusion that class still is very important. It is true, newer schemas can explain all sorts of behavior and all sorts of differences between people better than the old schemas, but it also become increasingly difficult to say exactly what these new schemas measure exactly.

Two, extending on the first point, it's not all that clear what the new class schemas measure. Some even have called them a 'linguistic and sociological muddle' (Bell 1980: 145). Some have argued that the liberalism of new class can best be understood as an expression of their high level of education (Brint 1984) or cultural capital (Lamont 1987). Extending on this Houtman argues that instead of measuring new class divisions, those focusing on the new class, of social and cultural specialists, are 'mixing up class and cultural capital' (Houtman 2003: 163). To my knowledge, there is no empirical research assessing whether new class divisions actually tap cultural capital. There are strong indications that this is the case. Steijn (1997: 141), for example, studying the ideological effects of the new class schema, shows that the new schema explains differences in cultural ideological views much better than differences in economic ideological views, out of two economic views, the new class schema has only a significant relationship with one, while the other is not significant. As research has shown that these values are not so much dependent on economic or class divisions as they are on differences in cultural capital (see Houtman 2003), I expect that the adaptation of the old class schemas into new ones is an attempt to 'cultural capitalize' class even further. In the next sections, I will investigate this hypothesis.

#### *Data and measurement*

In this research note I use the same data as that used in Chapter 2: the Dutch sample of the 2000 wave of the World Values Survey. All measures are identical to those employed in Chapter 2, with the exception of the class schema. For reasons of comparability, in this thesis I have chosen to use a sevenfold class schema strongly resembling, but not identical to the EGP-class schema; because no detailed information on occupations was available in the 1990 wave. In this research note, however, this is not a problem, as detailed information in ISCO-codes was available for the 2000 wave, which allowed me to code respondents into an old and a new class schema using the conversion tools of Ganzeboom and Treiman (2005) and the adaptations to it developed by Guveli et al. (2005) in which EGP-classes 1 and 2 are split into four subclasses.

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*Results*

Before assessing whether the new class divisions actually tap differences in cultural capital, I investigated how the old and new class schema explain differences in income and cultural capital (see Table i).

*Table i Multiple correlation coefficients of two class schemas with indicators for economic and cultural capital and libertarianism*

	<i>Old Class Schema</i>	<i>New Class Schema</i>	<i>N</i>
Income	0.29***	0.29***	590
Education	0.39***	0.41***	625
Cultural participation	0.18***	0.28***	625
Libertarianism	0.30***	0.35***	633

\*\*p<0.01;\*\*\*p<0.001

Source Dutch Sample of the World Values Survey, 2000

Table i shows that for explaining differences in income there is little difference between the two class schemas. The old class schema taps into economic differences just as well as the new class schema. There is also hardly any difference for education, although it must be noted that the relationship between education and the new class schema is slightly higher. The real difference between both schemas is that the new schema taps differences in cultural participation much better than the old class schema. Compared to the old schema, the new class schema approximates cultural capital more closely. This is also shown in the relationships between the class schemas and libertarianism: The new class schema explains libertarianism better than the old schema. But is this due to the fact that it is related stronger to cultural capital? (See Table ii)

Table ii Explaining libertarianism by indicators for cultural capital and the new class schema (Linear regression analysis, method=enter, beta's presented; N=624)

<i>Independents</i>	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>
Higher technocrats	REF.	REF.
Higher social and cultural specialists	0.06	0.03
Lower technocrats	-0.11*	-0.03
Lower social and cultural specialists	0.14*	0.11
Routine non-manual	-0.13*	-0.03
Self-employed	0.03	0.03
Working class	-0.24***	-0.10
Education		0.25***
Cultural Participation		0.15***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.11	0.19

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01;\*\*\*p<0.001

Source Dutch Sample of the World Values Survey, 2000)

The first model shows that there are some differences between the classes in libertarianism. Together with the working class, lower technocrats and routine non-manual workers are more authoritarian than the other classes. Lower social and cultural specialists are ideologically most libertarian, even more so than the higher social and cultural specialists. The differences in libertarianism, however, are completely attributable to differences in cultural capital, because after controlling for education and cultural participation all differences between the classes disappear in model 2. In short, the liberal views of the new class are completely attributable to the amount of cultural capital of each class. Although the new class schema taps cultural capital even more so than the old class schema, and relates more strongly to libertarianism, one cannot conclude that the new schema is therefore better. On the contrary, the new schema makes it even harder to tell what it measures.

### *Conclusion*

Various accounts show that measures for class obscure the fact that they mix class and cultural capital. In this research note I have shown that the new class schema, more so than the old class schema, is related to differences in cultural capital. Many studies trying to show the relevance of such a new class schema rely heavily on comparing the explained variance of the old and new schemas for voting behavior

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and libertarian views, and because of this they tend to bypass the problem of validity: Is the measure for class still measuring what it ought to measure? Without considering what the new class schema is measuring or indicating exactly, class becomes an empty shell, just designed to maximize the explained variance, without giving us insight about why this new class schema explains libertarian views so much better than the old schema. With the introduction of newer class schemas, political scientists and sociologists continue to ‘cultural capitalize’ class even more which has serious consequences for the conclusions drawn from their work:

*‘If one defines class in these increasingly broad ways, adding new political cleavages as they arise day by day, class can never die!’ (Clark 2001c: 14).*

It is true that an increasing number of people are employed in occupations that would fit within the new class, but that does not automatically imply that new political movements and values can be explained by these new class divisions. Or as Chris Rootes puts it:

*‘Once sociologists overcome their embarrassment at believing in the critical and emancipatory value of what they do,..., once they cease to regard education [or cultural capital for that matter, PA] as a demographic variable which is merely a more or less adequate surrogate for class or component of socioeconomic status, and once they permit themselves the luxury of taking seriously the values by which most of the world,..., attempts to live, then we shall discover that class is all very well in its place, but that its place in the analysis of the new politics is really very limited’ (Rootes 1995: 231).*

## <sup>2</sup> *Cultural Capital, Cross-Pressures, and Non-Voting*

### *Introduction*

In the past, people have made remarks to me about non-voters. What about non-voters? In most literature concerning the phenomenon of non-voting, non-voting is posed as a threat to the legitimacy of democracy (see e.g. Bennett and Dresnick 1990; Norris 2004; Rose 2004). If voters do not show up, how can meaningful representation of their interests exist? In the post-war period the problem of declining turnout rates has grown tremendously in most Western countries, especially in the United States (Norris 2004; Patterson 2002; Rose 2004; Wattenberg 2002; see also Pacek and Radcliff 2003 who observe that turnout-rates for European parliament have also been falling dramatically).

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Given the importance of the problem, it may not come as a surprise that considerable social scientific attention has been paid to explaining the phenomenon of non-voting (see for an overview Anduiza Perea 2002). However, remarkably little is known about the relationship between changes in political culture and lower rates in voter turnout. In this thesis I investigated whether two voting motives, an economic and a cultural voting motive, act as cross-pressures, causing members of the middle class to vote culturally left and economically right, and members of the working class to vote culturally right and economically left. As with the rise of the new political culture, these motives have come to cancel each other out, overall levels of class voting measured as the degree to which members of the middle class vote left and the degree to which members of the middle class vote right have declined. In this research note I aim to investigate how non-voting is related to the rise of conflicting ideological interests.

#### *Coherence in ideological beliefs and non-voting*

The degree to which conflicting pressures lead people to vote for different parties also leads to non-voting:

*'In general, the more pressures brought to bear on individuals or groups which operate in opposing directions, the more likely are prospective voters to withdraw from the situation by 'losing interest' and not making a choice' (Lipset 1981: 211).*

Non-voting thus may be caused by conflicting pressures (Almond and Verba 1963: 95; Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudet 1972 [1944]). As economic and cultural motives conflict, people are more likely to refrain from voting.

As is mentioned elsewhere in this study, in the electorate at large economic and cultural ideological beliefs are largely uncorrelated (Evans, Heath and Lalljee 1996; Fleishman 1988; Houtman 2003; Lipset 1981). Members of the working class and of the middle class can combine progressive beliefs in one domain with conservative in the other. In elites however, views are one-dimensionally ordered: economic progressivism goes together with libertarianism (see Middendorp 1991: 253). Bourdieu suggested that cultural capital is responsible for this. Political capital indicates the ability of an actor to produce a political response to a political question (Bourdieu 1984). For this Bourdieu examines the frequencies with which people respond to a political question by answering they 'don't know'. It appears that respondents from the lower classes tend to respond with 'don't know' far more often than respondents from higher classes. Bourdieu suggests this is an effect of education: people with higher education will be more able to formulate their

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opinion in a consistent ideological fashion. For those with ample cultural capital, I thus expect that economic and cultural motives will conflict less than for those with less cultural capital. This may explain why non-voting is often found to be over-represented within segments of the working class. Furthermore it is expected that the degree in which these voting motives do not conflict causes people to vote: the more people suffer from conflicting voting motives, the less they are likely to vote.

#### *Data and measurement*

The same data was used for the analysis as that used in Chapter 2. The same measures were used, they do not need further introduction, so only the measurement of three concepts needs to be addressed here.

*Non-voting* was measured by recoding the voting intention of the respondents. Those indicating they did not know what to vote, who abstained from voting, or did not vote were grouped, while those who voted for any party were grouped in to a dummy. A higher score on this dummy stands for non-voting. *Cultural capital* was measured by combining educational level with cultural participation. *Coherence* was measured by multiplying the two standardized scales for economic progressiveness and libertarianism: those with progressive scores on both scales now get a positive score on the coherence scale. Those with negative low scores on both scales, economic conservatives that are also authoritarian, get a positive score on the new coherence scale, the old mathematic rule: negative\*negative=positive applies. Those with either negative scores on the cultural scale and positive scores on the economic scale or vice versa get negative scores on the coherence scale.

#### *Results*

The relationship (Pearson's  $r$ ) between cultural capital and coherence is +0.14 ( $p < 0.01$ ). The more cultural capital a respondent has, the more progressive views on economic issues go together libertarian views. Logically then non-voting behavior should be concentrated within groups low on cultural capital. Before testing whether this was the case, we tested whether economic and cultural beliefs go together more strongly within the group of voters than within the group of non-voters:

*Table i Relationship between economic progressivism and libertarianism in two groups*

	Voters	Non-voters
Pearson's <i>r</i>	0.18**	-0.15
N	882	91

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

Source: Dutch sample of the World Values Survey 2000

There is a moderate relationship between progressive economic beliefs and libertarian beliefs within the category of voters. Within the group of non-voters, the relation is reversed and borders on significance. This indicates that within the group of non-voters the two motives operate in opposite directions, which may be why they less often vote than the voters:

*Table ii Non-voting explained by cultural capital and coherence of ideological beliefs: logistic regression analysis, log-odds ratios presented (N=1008)*

Independents	Model 1	Model 2
Constant	-2.38**	-2.38**
Cultural Capital	-0.43**	-0.38*
Libertarianism		-0.13
Economic progressivism		0.07
Coherence		-0.59*
-2 Loglikelihood	573.921	566.468
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	0.04	0.05

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

Source: Dutch sample of the World Values Survey 2000

It appears that respondents that are low on cultural capital are less apt to vote than those with a lot of cultural capital. This effect remains after controlling for the coherence of ideological motives. Not all non-voting behavior of those that are low on cultural capital can be explained away by their conflicting ideological views. The more ideological motives go together, the more people are likely to vote, but differences between groups with more and less cultural capital continue to remain relevant. It also must be noted that not much variance of non-voting can be explained. Apparently non-voting is determined by other cross-pressures and factors than investigated here.



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### *Conclusion*

Conflicting ideological voting motives can cause people to abstain from voting. Those with little cultural capital are especially likely to refuse to vote, as the conflict between the two ideological beliefs is stronger among these people. I thus argue that the conflict between the two voting motives has become greater with the transformation from an old to a new political culture, in which both old class issues and new cultural issues are important. The rise of non-voting may very well be caused by the rise of ideological conflict; this should be noticeable especially among people with low levels of cultural capital. As non-voting has risen throughout the Western world, this may indicate that the economic and cultural ideological views conflict more than they did in earlier times. This has important implications for the conclusions that are drawn in this study.

I underestimate the development of the conflict between economic and cultural motives, by not including non-voters in the research design, a group of people for whom economic and cultural motives are in conflict most. As those affected most by conflicting ideological interests withdraw from the voting process, and as such, are not included in the analyses reported here, I only find increasing ideological conflicts among those who are affected least by this conflict of ideologies.

<sup>3</sup> In Chapter 4 use the last wave of the World Values Survey and measure sexual permissiveness using these three items extended with two other items, 'sex under the legal age of consent' and 'prostitution', which were not available for the Netherlands in the 2000 sample.

<sup>4</sup> Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is 0.63.

<sup>5</sup> Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is 0.68.

<sup>6</sup> The correlation between the two ideological dimensions is 0.15 ( $p < 0.001$ ).

<sup>7</sup> Goldthorpe (1980) considers classes VI and VII to be the working class(es). It can also be argued that members of class III also belong to the working class because the nature of their work is highly routinized (Wright 1979). If classes VI and VII rather than classes V, VI and VII are regarded as the working class, this does not substantially change the results as they are reported in this chapter.

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<sup>8</sup> Multiple correlation coefficients in this row based on regression analysis with dummy variables for class positions as independent variables. All three regressions showed that the working class participated less culturally, had lower education and lower income. Coefficients (betas) for education: Class I: 0.23 Class II:0.62 Class III:0.32 Class IV: 0.36 Class V: 0.18 Class VI:-0.01 Class VII: ref. Coefficients (betas) for income: Class I: 0.22 Class II:0.31 Class III:0.20 Class IV: 0.16 Class V: 0.18 Class VI:0.08 Class VII: ref. Coefficients (betas) for cultural participation Class I: 0.07 Class II:0.28 Class III:0.18 Class IV: 0.17 Class V: 0.05 Class VI:0.08 Class VII: ref.

<sup>9</sup> I have already shown that class-position only affects the vote weakly. More than that, it is this very circumstance that underscores the relevance of the problem addressed in the current chapter. To find out whether, as expected, the logic of class analysis applies only to the 'natural' voters, with 'unnatural' voting stemming from cultural capital and libertarianism, unambiguous and explicit indicators for class and cultural capital need to be used. Moreover, including class position and simultaneously applying the distinction between 'natural' and 'unnatural' voting would produce a perfect explanation for both sub-samples, because class positions have been used to code the respondents into the two categories. By implication, all members of the working class in the category of 'natural' voters vote left wing, while every member of the middle class votes right wing. The reverse applies to the category of 'unnatural' voters: we already know that all members of the working class vote for a right-wing party, while all members of the middle class vote for a left-wing party.

<sup>10</sup> *Voting for New Political Parties*

#### *Introduction*

The new mechanism of cultural voting can also be tied to the emergence of new political parties to the left and right end of the political spectrum.

*'In advanced industrial society, 'New Politics' have become a significant line of conflict, and new parties and party families have polarised the party system along a new line of conflict. This new line has been conceptualised somewhat differently by different authors: as materialist/post-materialist, libertarian/authoritarian, or left-libertarian versus right-authoritarian. The parties that polarise the party system along this new line of conflict are first and foremost new the party families - leftist socialist and greens versus radical rightist parties' (Knutson 1998: 65).*

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Most research on voting for new political parties only considers voting for either green – libertarian parties or extreme right-wing, authoritarian parties, although there are some exceptions here considering the emergence of a new cultural cleavage in party politics (Elchardus 1996; Swyngedouw 1992, 1994). Achterberg and Houtman (2006) investigate how the new mechanism accounts for the vote for a new leftist or an old leftist party, without considering the old versus new rightist vote in the Netherlands. In this research note I will investigate whether the mechanism of cultural voting explains voting for new left wing and new right wing parties. At the time of the third wave of the World Value Survey, no new right-wing parties had emerged in the Netherlands, I therefore investigate the situation in Belgium, where new leftist and new rightist parties had emerged and drawn considerable support from the electorate.

#### *Explaining the vote for new political parties*

When searching for an explanation as to why someone would vote for a party on the new left researchers often point at the huge support these parties find among members of the middle class (compare Güveli, Need and De Graaf 2005). Voters for these parties are usually higher educated, young, based in the middle class and employed in government services (Poguntke 1987: 78). The development of new left-wing values and new-leftist middle class is central to research concerning cultural change (Inglehart, etc), and new social movements and classes (Brint 1984; Bruce-Briggs 1979; Güveli, Need and De Graaf 2005; Kriesi 1989). These new-leftist values are characterized by a strong emphasis on individual freedom and self-actualization and a rejection of traditional moral values and conformism. Such libertarian values depend mainly on a person's level of education (Van de Werfhorst and De Graaf 2004) or cultural capital (Houtman 2003; this study). In short, it is expected that a vote for a new-leftist party, or for an old leftist party, can be explained by cultural capital, and the libertarian values associated with it.

At the same time, research concerning voting for new rightist, or extreme right-wing, parties shows that these parties mainly draw support from voters that are in many respects the mirror image of those voting for new-leftist parties: Instead of originating in the (higher) middle class, they have working class or lower middle class backgrounds (Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers 2002; Lubbers and Scheepers 2001), instead of higher educated they are lower educated (ibid.), and instead of libertarian, they are authoritarian. Derks (2002) showed that educational level is one of the most important predictors for a person to vote for a new right-wing party. Again, voting for new right-wing parties thus seems to be associated with differences in cultural capital and the cultural values associated with these

differences. A vote for a new right-wing party or for an old right-wing party can thus expectedly be explained by cultural capital and the cultural values associated with it.

There seems to be a clear relationship between cultural capital and voting for new political parties. New-rightist parties draw considerable support from those with little cultural capital, new-leftist parties draw support from those with ample cultural capital. In short, voting for new political parties may be explained using the mechanism of cultural voting behavior.

*Data and measurement*

As explained above, in this note I analyze the Belgium sample from the World Values Survey 2000, because in this country both new-leftist and new-rightist parties have emerged that have drawn considerable support. Cultural capital, income, economic progressivism, and libertarianism were measured as explained in Chapter 2. Voting behavior has been measured differently. Two dummies were constructed. The first was used to measure whether respondents intended to vote for a new left-wing party (AGALEV/ECOLO) or an old left-wing party (SP/PS). The second dummy was used to measure whether respondents intended to vote for a new right-wing party (Vlaams Blok/ Front National) or an old right-wing party (VLD/ PRL-FDF-MCC).

*Results*

Table i shows that the vote for a new leftist or an old leftist party can best be understood from cultural a perspective.

*Table i*      *Voting for a new leftist party (2) or an old leftist party (1) in Belgium (logistic regression analysis, log-odds ratios presented, N=412)*

<i>Independents</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>s.e.</i>
Income	-0.13	0.11
Education	0.53***	0.13
Cultural participation	-0.35	0.27
Economic progressiveness	0.15	0.13
Libertarianism	0.39**	0.11
Constant	0.10	0.08
Nagelkerke pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		0.13

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: Belgium sample of the World Values Survey, 2000

The choice to vote for new or old left parties does not appear to depend much on economic motives. This is not surprising, because few voters are able to say in what way these two 'lefts' differ with respect to their ideas on socio-economic policy. Consequently, supporters of the two parties differ only with respect to libertarianism and educational level, which is associated with their amount of cultural capital. Supporters of the old left are more authoritarian and lower educated than those of the new left.

Table i demonstrates that members of the middle class who vote for a leftist party do so for cultural reasons: they vote left because they have libertarian values. It appears that libertarian values lead people to vote for a 'new left' party. 'Unnatural' voters from the middle class, in short, vote predominantly for 'New Left', while 'natural' voters from the working class, following their authoritarian values, vote predominantly for old left parties. The above leads me to expect that a similar explanation will prove tenable for the distinction between old and new-rightist parties (see Table ii).

*Table ii* Voting for new rightist parties (2) or old rightist parties (1) in Belgium (logistic regression analysis, log-odds ratios presented, N=284)

<i>Independents</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>s.e.</i>
Income	-0.11	0.07
Education	-0.29*	0.13
Cultural participation	0.18	0.10
Economic progressiveness	0.16	0.14
Libertarianism	-0.36*	0.15
Constant	-1.03***	0.21
Nagelkerke pseudo R <sup>2</sup>		0.07

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: Belgium sample of the World Values Survey, 2000

Here, again, voters for old and new right parties do not differ significantly in their economic views or position (income), which means that the vote for old and new right parties cannot be explained economically. It can, as was expected, be explained culturally. Those lacking cultural capital, i.e. those with low levels of education, and those with authoritarian values, vote for new right-wing parties, while people with ample cultural capital and with libertarian values are the ones voting old right.

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Table ii demonstrates that members of the working class who vote for a rightist party do so for cultural reasons: they vote right because they have authoritarian values. It appears that authoritarian values lead people to vote for a new right party. 'Unnatural' voters from the working class, in short, vote predominantly for new right while 'natural' voters from the middle class do not vote new right because their libertarian values do not permit them to do so.

### *Conclusion*

In this research note I have shown that voting for a new political party or for an old political party can best be explained culturally. These new parties tend to draw support from groups mainly differentiated by the cultural position and cultural outlook. New-leftist parties mainly draw support from those with ample cultural capital and with concomitant libertarian views, new-rightist parties tend to draw support from those with little cultural capital and authoritarian beliefs. Economic differences or differences in economic views have nothing to do with voting for either of these parties, thus, although these new parties tend to reverse the traditional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class, the emergence of these new political parties, to the left and to the right side of the political spectrum, has nothing to do with the old economic cleavage. It represents the emergence of a new political axis that is mainly centered on a cultural cleavage.

<sup>11</sup> See also Ransford (1972) who shows that the left can also estrange the working class if it only focuses on libertarian issues. Likewise, the right can estrange the working class if it pays too much attention to economic issues, which are not the main reason why those in less favorable circumstances vote for right wing parties.

<sup>12</sup> Of which I am myself guilty, compare Achterberg (2005) where I analyze only salience of issues and constantly speak of polarization over these issues.

<sup>13</sup> In the, most popular, four-item measure for postmaterialism, the two postmaterialist goals: 'protecting freedom of speech' and 'giving people more say in important political decisions' can be seen as good examples of libertarian goals. The emphasis on social order is highlighted in one of the two indicators, in the four-item measure, for materialism, which enables respondents to choose 'maintaining order in the nation' as a goal. In short, three out of four indicators in Inglehart's index for postmaterialism are also indicators for libertarian values.

<sup>14</sup> This, though, does not affect the results in any significant way.

<sup>15</sup> Later, in Chapter 5, I will analyze how difference in political culture relates to the macro-level differences in class voting that were found by Nieuwbeerta.

<sup>16</sup> The exact issues used in the scales and a short description of the items can be found below (copied from Budge et al. 2001: 222-228)

Item	Item nr.	Description
Controlled economy	per412	General need for direct government control of economy; control over prices, wages, rents, etc; state intervention into the economic system
Economic planning	per404	Favorable mentions of long-standing economic planning of a consultative or indicative nature, need for government to create such a plan
Nationalization	per413	Favorable mentions of government ownership, partial or complete including government ownership of land
Welfare state expansion	per504	Favorable mentions of need to introduce, maintain or expand any social service or social security scheme; support for social services such as health service or social housing
Free enterprise	per401	Favorable mentions of free enterprise capitalism; superiority of individual enterprise over state and control systems; favorable mentions of private property rights, personal enterprise and initiative; need for unhampered individual enterprise
Economic incentives	per402	Need for wage and tax policies to induce enterprise; encouragement to start enterprises; need for financial and other incentives such as subsidies
Economic orthodoxy	per414	Need for traditional economic orthodoxy, e.g. reduction of budget deficits, retrenchment in crisis, thrift and savings; support for traditional economic institutions such as stock market and banking system; support for strong currency
Welfare state limitation	per505	Limiting expenditure on social services or social security; otherwise as "welfare state expansion", but negative
National way of life positive	per601	Appeals to patriotism and/or nationalism; suspension of some freedoms in order to protect the state against subversion; support for established national ideas

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Traditional morality positive	per603	Favorable mentions of traditional moral values; prohibition censorship and suppression of immorality and unseemly behavior; maintenance and stability of family; religion
Law and order	per605	Enforcement of all laws; actions against crime; support and resources for police; tougher attitudes in courts
National way of life negative	per602	Against patriotism and/or nationalism; opposition to the existing national state; otherwise as “national way of life positive”, but negative
Traditional morality negative	per604	Opposition to traditional moral values; support for divorce, abortion, etc.; otherwise as “traditional morality positive”, but negative
Under-privileged minority groups	per705	Favorable mentions to underprivileged minorities who are defined neither in economic nor in demographic terms, e.g. the handicapped, disabled, homosexuals, immigrants, refugees etc.

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<sup>17</sup> For Greece, Portugal, and Spain the periods of observation started in respectively 1974, 1975, and 1977.

<sup>18</sup> I tested whether there is a relationship between the degree to which cultural rightist issues are salient and the degree to which cultural leftist issues are important. The analysis showed that in countries where cultural leftist issues are more important cultural rightist issues are also more important (Pearson’s  $r$  equals 0.17;  $p < 0.01$ ). For the salience of economic leftist and rightist issues no statistically salient relationship could be found. I also tested whether there is a relationship between the salience of economic rightist issues and cultural rightist issues: There proved to be a negative relationship (Pearson’s  $r$  equals -0.11;  $p < 0.05$ ) indicating that in countries where economically rightist issues are important, culturally rightist issues will be of less importance. Between the saliencies of cultural and economic leftist issues no statistically significant relationship was found.

<sup>19</sup> See note 17.

<sup>20</sup> See: [Hhttp://www.borisdittrich.nl/article.php?sid=190H](http://www.borisdittrich.nl/article.php?sid=190H); last visited 23 March 2005. Translated from Dutch by author.



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<sup>21</sup> More concrete: the degree to which the working class votes for a left party and the middle class votes for a right party has declined (see among others: Nieuwbeerta 1995; Houtman 2003).

<sup>22</sup> Sometimes increasing polarization is found, as is in the case of Paul de Beer (2004: 26), who found 19 declining trends in cultural polarization and 32 increasing trends in cultural polarization, but still concludes that there is no clear trend (2004: 27). The odds of finding increasing trends instead of decreasing trends in polarization are 1.68 to 1. I wonder what results would lead him to conclude that there is an increase in cultural polarization.

<sup>23</sup> *Increasing cultural conflict among Western publics: myth or reality?*

### *Introduction*

It is difficult to show that cultural polarization among Western publics is taking place, this is partly due to researchers not using long enough time span for their research. Additionally, in the dominant body of literature the main focus has always been on the electorate as a whole, which consists of many individuals. In this research note, I will take a more sociological point of view and argue that the rise of cultural conflict is not characterized by the diverging cultural views of individuals. I argue that when we look at the cultural views of people divided into categories, increasing polarization may be found, even when we look at a relatively short time period of twenty years.

The one-sided focus of Inglehart c.s. on libertarian values has empirical validity. In an extensive body of research he has shown that there is a shift toward libertarian beliefs (compare Abrahamson and Inglehart 1995; Inglehart 1977, 1990, 1997a). Inglehart even shows that the rise in postmaterialism is not a singular phenomenon, but is reflected in a libertarian shift on a whole range of cultural values concerning, among others, respect for authority, sexual and marital behavior, and parent child ties (Inglehart 1997a: 267-292). For most of these values, Inglehart finds a libertarian shift. Others go on to argue that this tremendous move to the libertarian end of the ideological spectrum means that people increasingly agree with each other about resolving cultural problems. Cultural homogeneity, then, logically is increasing over time (compare Duyvendak 2004; Inglehart 1997a).

In the light of the counter-revolution perspective, in which the libertarian shift is matched by an authoritarian backlash, these results are at first sight, crushing. How can there be an authoritarian backlash, if no such trends are found within the

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electorate? See Chapter 3 for the analysis of the political culture showing that there is a rise of authoritarian issues.

*Cultural conflict: who against whom?*

Although some believe that rising levels of libertarianism exclude the possibility of rising levels of cultural conflict, empirical research from the early seventies onwards leads to the expectation that cultural conflict between certain groups in society is rising. Miles Simpson for instance, has shown, in a comparison of four countries, that the effect of education is variable (Simpson 1972). Since then, considerable attention has been given to the variable effects of variables such as education (Houtman 2003; Weil 1985), and religious affiliation (Houtman 2003; Scheepers and Te Grotenhuis 2002). All these studies have shown that the effects of these individual characteristics are stronger in more modern countries, implying that the differences in libertarianism between those with a religious affiliation and those without will be greater in more modern countries. Similarly, differences between higher and lower educated people in their libertarian values will be greater in modernized countries.

As societies modernize, an increasing share of the population becomes highly educated and less religious. Thus there are likely to be more people who have no religious affiliation and are more highly educated in modern Western societies, and one can expect to find higher levels of libertarianism in these societies.

The above means if only trends based on the analysis of individual data are taken into consideration, the growing differences between higher and lower educated and between religious and secularized people will be ignored, and the conclusion may be drawn that individuals in modernizing societies are becoming more alike (libertarian). This explains why researchers fail to observe growing levels of cultural conflict in these societies, which is basically a struggle between lower and higher educated and between religious and secular people.

Thus, the researcher should not search for growing cultural differences between individuals, because these individuals are more alike, instead they should take a more sociological point of view, and compare different categories in the divergence or convergence of cultural views.

*Data and measurement*

Data taken from the World Values Survey were used, because a longer period of time was preferred, and because all variables necessary for the analysis were available in the three waves of the World Values Survey, all three data waves were included.

The measurement of the cultural indicators, postmaterialism, conformity as a parental value, sexual permissiveness, and gender role traditionalism, was done as described in Chapters 2, 4, and 5, with two differences. Since, in this research note, I intend to compare standard deviations over time, it was important that each scale was measured identically in each country and each year. Each scale should have the same potential range to compare the standard deviations across time. One, all items in all scales were used to linearly construct a cultural scale, except for postmaterialism, which was already standardized. Two, the scale for gender role traditionalism was measured using only two items: 'If a woman wants to have a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove?' and 'Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled or is this not necessary?', as no other items were included in the 1980 wave of the survey.

Religious participation was measured using a question about how often the respondent attended religious services, answers running from 1, more than once a week, to 8, never. Educational level was measured as described in Chapter 2, recoded into 10 categories.

### *Results*

Before I investigated whether cultural conflict had increased, I investigated whether overall levels of libertarianism had risen in Western countries.

*Table i* Means of four cultural scales in twenty Western countries

<i>Year</i>	<i>Gender-role traditionalism</i>	<i>Sexual permissiveness</i>	<i>Conformity as parental value</i>	<i>Postmaterialism</i>
1980	2.18	3.15	1.43	1.85
1990	2.12	3.32	1.45	2.02
2000	2.15	4.23	1.49	2.02

Source: World Values Survey 1980-2000

Based on the evidence presented in Table i, the conclusion can be drawn that there is a small tendency toward libertarianism in Western democracies. On three of the four indicators there is a positive trend. This, however, does not mean that there has not been an increase in cultural conflict, because the mean educational level has risen and people have become more secularized, so the rise in libertarianism might be due to these phenomena. This is why a different strategy needs to be employed to determine whether people increasingly differ from each other in their cultural values. Below I compare the divergence on cultural issues of various categories in

the electorate based on religious participation and educational level. For each of the eight categories of people based on their religious participation, and for each group of people based on their level of education, I calculated the mean score on the cultural scales. Next, for each country and year I calculated the standard deviation between these means, which are presented in Tables ii and iii. There are also some differences between the countries, not shown here, but it will suffice to say that growing polarization between these categories is found for most countries.

*Table ii Standard deviation between means on scales based on divisions in religious participation in twenty Western countries.*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Gender role traditionalism</i>	<i>Sexual permissiveness</i>	<i>Conformity as parental value</i>	<i>Postmaterialism</i>
1980	0.30	0.85	0.07	0.19
1990	0.28	0.97	0.09	0.17
2000	0.32	1.10	0.09	0.16

Source: World Values Survey 1980-2000

Table ii shows that on three out of four cultural scales the means of the religious groups have been diverging in the past twenty years, which proves that the tendency toward libertarianism is not equal over the whole electorate. Differences between the religious groups on these scales have become larger over the years, supporting the idea that there is a growing cultural conflict. The same analysis was done for groups based on educational level (see Table iii)

*Table iii Standard deviation between means on scales based on divisions in educational level in twenty Western countries.*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Gender role traditionalism</i>	<i>Sexual permissiveness</i>	<i>Conformity as parental value</i>	<i>Postmaterialism</i>
1980	0.23	0.85	0.07	0.20
1990	0.24	0.87	0.09	0.22
2000	0.29	1.08	0.11	0.21

Source: World Values Survey 1980-2000

Table iii shows that on three out of four cultural scales the means of categories based on educational level have been diverging in the past twenty years, much like the analysis showing the trends in divergence of religious categories. Differences between the educational and religious categories on these scales have become larger

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over the years, again supporting the idea that there is a growing cultural polarization between these groups.

The results of the analysis do not mean that those attending religious services quite often, and lower educated people have become more authoritarian over the years under investigation, they also moved towards the libertarian end of the scale, only not as much as those never attending religious services and higher educated people. Thus the relative differences between these groups have increased: today the higher educated differ more from the lower educated, and the more religious differ more from the less religious people in their values concerning cultural issues.

### *Conclusions*

When focusing on individuals, and measuring whether cultural views diverge between individuals, most researchers come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as growing cultural conflict, and I am not going to argue with the fact that most individuals converge on cultural values, but this does not mean that cultural polarization is not increasing. However, when considering cultural conflict as a struggle between groups defined on the basis of education and religious participation, I found that the mean cultural views of these groups are diverging, giving support to the idea that cultural conflict between categories of people is growing. So, cultural conflict does not mean that the individuals are polarizing over cultural values, it means that groups or categories of individuals tied together by shared characteristics are polarizing over cultural values.

<sup>24</sup> See note 17.

<sup>25</sup> Parties included in the data were coded into party families.

<sup>26</sup> The intra class correlation ( $\rho$ ) in Model 0 equals 0.41, which means that 41% of the variance is located at the year level and that 59% of the variance is located at the country level. Including the indicators for secularization and prosperity in Model 1 did not result in any explained variance. With a difference of two degrees of freedom, the reduction in deviance is too small to conclude that Model 1 fits the data better. In other words, Model 1 is no significant improvement to Model 0 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

<sup>27</sup> The intra class correlation ( $\rho$ ) in Model 0 equals 0.68, which means that 68% of the variance is located at the year level and that 32% of the variance is located at the country level. Looking at the difference in the deviance and the number of degrees

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of freedom consumed the conclusion may be drawn that the second model provides a significant improvement of the fit ( $p < 0.05$ ).

<sup>28</sup> That the differences in time can be explained by secularization can be ascribed to the process of secularization that has taken place in the two decennia under survey. Differences between countries can also be explained, albeit to a lesser extent, by differences in secularization between the countries. We should take in to account, however, that in a country such as the United States church membership has always been high, compared to other countries, and that this pushes down the between-country effect of church membership, especially because in this country cultural issues are traditionally high on the political agenda (compare Hunter 1992). Nonetheless, a process of secularization is also taking place in this country (Norris and Inglehart 2004), and at the same time cultural issues are increasingly becoming a political force (Achterberg, 2004; Layman 2001; Hunter 1992). As in countries, also in the United States, church membership generally declines, cultural issues are increasingly finding a prominent place in the political culture.

<sup>29</sup> According to Dick Houtman anomie and alienation can best be described as ‘social agoraphobia’ respectively ‘social claustrophobia’.

<sup>30</sup> The left-right score that was used per party was calculated as the mean position of each separate party at the last two elections before 1998.

<sup>31</sup> In a linear regression model, by means of including interaction effects for the four groups and the voting motives, it could be tested whether these observed differences are statistically significant. There are no statistically significant differences between the groups in the degree to which economic progressiveness affects voting behavior. The degree to which libertarianism affects voting behavior, though, varies significantly between those suffering from either one of the two maladies of modernity, or both, and those not affected by either one of them.

<sup>32</sup> *Why Did He Call That Guy a Bozo?*

### *Introduction*

An element that is accepted as belonging to new politics is the growing salience of ‘ecological’ issues in political cultures (Bean and Kelley 1995; Clark 2001a; Heath et al. 1990; Inglehart 1990). These ‘ecological’ issues essentially incorporate environmental concerns, policies to protect the environment and problems of

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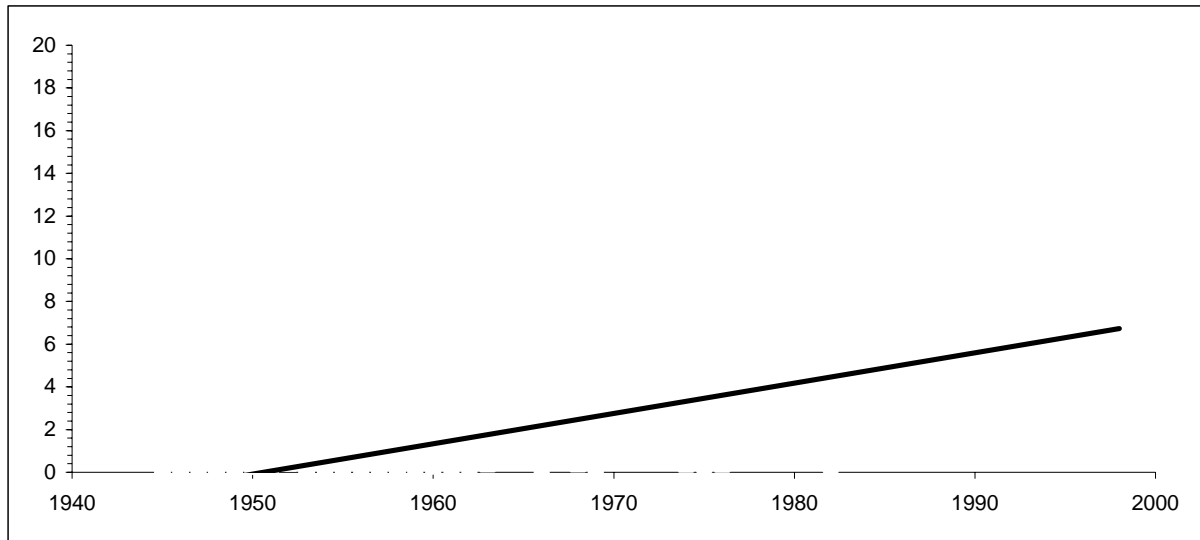
sustainable development. Some refer to these issues as 'quality of life issues' (Heath et al. 1990; Inglehart 1990; Inglehart and Rabier 1986), which includes a range of issues among which environmental issues and cultural issues. Others refer to new issues as 'merely' ecological issues (Bean and Kelley 1995). The problem with this collapse of these two types of issues, is that these two issues do not seem to be tapping the same dimension. There are two reasons for this. One, there is scientific confusion about the question whether or not postmaterialism, or libertarianism, and environmental concerns tap the same ideological dimension (Brechtin and Kempton 1994, 1997; Dunlap and Mertig 1997; Kidd and Lee 1997; Lee and Kidd 1997; Steger et al. 1989). Two, although the empirical evidence for a bi-dimensional structure in economic (old) and cultural (new) beliefs is abundant (Evans, Heath and Lalljee 1996; Fleishman 1988; Houtman 2003; Lipset 1959; Middendorp 1991) little is known about the question whether environmental concerns really are different from the old economic values. This is remarkable since willingness to protect the environment seems to be closely tied to the economic interests of individuals. Those with relatively little financial resources are less willing to pay for the environment. It might therefore be better empirically to assess the rise of environmentalism and its implications for the relationship between class and voting in its own right, i.e. detached from other 'new' political issues.

#### *Environment-centered political cultures?*

First, I investigated whether the new environmental issues have gained salience in the twenty Western democracies under investigation (see Figure i). To measure environmental issue salience using the data on party programmes, two policy priorities were combined. In the first policy priority environmental protection, (quasi-) sentences concerning issues such as 'the preservation of the countryside and forests, the general preservation of natural resources against selfish interests, the proper use of national parks, soil banks, and environmental improvement' (Budge et al. 2000: 226) were coded. In the second policy priority, anti-growth economy, (quasi-) sentences concerning issues such as 'anti-growth politics, steady state economy and green politics' (ibid.) were coded. Factor analysis on both policy priorities leads to a first factor with an eigenvalue of 1.31. This factor explains about 66% per cent of the variance. Both factor loadings are positive and have a value of 0.81. A higher score on the index, which is constructed by saving factor scores, stands for a greater political salience of green or environmental issues in a particular country in a particular election-year.

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Figure i      *The salience of class and environmental issues (trend: Pearson correlation = +0.62;  $p < 0.01$ )*



Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

Since the 1950's environmental issues have sharply increased in salience in the Western world. In all countries but Canada and the United States environmental issue salience has increased tremendously (not shown here). Thus, new environmental issues have now joined the political spectrum. Since polarization over these issues is unlikely to take place, concern for the environment seems to be exclusively linked to the left side of the political spectrum, in Table i, I investigated whether party families have increasingly attached importance to these issues.



*Table i Trends and means per party-family in salience of environmental issues (Pearson correlations/ two tailed/1945-1998)*

Party family	Salience of environmental issues	
	Mean	Trend
Ecology parties (N=45)	26.84 <sup>a</sup>	-0.12
Former communist parties (N=140)	3.55	0.56***
Social democratic parties (N=287)	3.14	0.53***
Liberal parties (N=210)	3.25	0.53***
Christian / religious parties (N=174)	3.87	0.52***
Conservative parties (N=175)	2.17	0.44***
Nationalist parties (N=35)	4.22	0.41**
Agrarian parties (N=86)	4.70	0.64***
Ethnic and regional parties (N=39)	3.76	0.51***
Special interest parties (N=49)	1.87	0.50***

<sup>a</sup> Differs significantly from other party families at the p=0.05 level (Student-Newman-Keuls post-hoc analysis)

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001 (two-tailed testing for significance)

Source: Party Manifesto Data, 1945-1998

Not surprisingly, from Table i it can be seen that that ecology parties attach more importance to environmental issues compared to the other parties. Furthermore, environmental issues have become more salient in all parties to about the same degree, except for the ecology parties, which already were set up to pay a lot of attention to these issues. The conclusion may be drawn that there is little difference between left and right parties when it comes to the salience of environmental issues: all parties attach about the same importance to these issues, and therefore it is hard to speak of increasing polarization over these issues. The salience of these issues has grown in all parties to a similar extent.

#### *Social stratification, environmental concerns, and voting behavior*

Has the rising salience of environmental issues also caused the traditional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class to disappear? To answer this question I investigated whether a second voting motivation, environmental concern, cross-pressures people to vote against their class-based economic interests. Environmental concerns are prevalent in the high-educated middle class groups and appear less within the low educated working class groups (Cotgrove and Duff 1980; Eckersley 1989; McAllister and Studlar 1995; Van Liere and Dunlap 1980). Ecological orientations also appear to determine voting behavior: people who are

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more concerned with the environment tend to vote for left-wing parties (Bean and Kelley 1995; Rohrschneider 1993; Van Liere and Dunlap 1980). In this context, the way in which presidential candidate George Bush senior, in the 1992 presidential campaign, tried to persuade a number of industrial workers to vote for him is illustrative. Reacting to Clinton's running mate, Al Gore, who had recently written a book about environmental policy, he said, "Why do I call this guy a bozo? It is because if these bozos are elected we will be up to our necks in little owls and no one will have a job" (Mair et al. 1999: 316-317). By calling Gore a 'bozo', Bush tried to win votes by appealing to old workers' interests that are not in line with 'new' ecological interests. In this way, it is understandable that working class members, who would 'normally' vote for the Democrats, would now vote for the Republicans.

The foregoing shows that the traditional pattern of a leftist voting working class and a rightist voting middle class may also be undermined by environmental allegiances, giving rise to rightist voting behavior in the working class and leftist voting behavior in the middle class. Following the same logic as with cultural voting, I expect environmental motives to affect voting behavior more strongly as environmental issues become more central to the political culture.

#### *Data and measures*

For the analysis below the last two waves of the World Values Survey are analysed. The index for environmental concern was constructed using three Likert-type items: 'I would give part of my income if I were certain that the money would be used to prevent environmental pollution', 'I would agree to an increase in taxes if the extra money is used to prevent environmental pollution', and 'The government has to reduce environmental pollution but it should not cost me any money' (Inglehart 1995). Note that in all questions the main question taps the question whether a respondent would be willing to pay for a reduction in pollution, tapping directly into the economic interests of the respondent. Those who have little money and are in a poor economic situation will not be inclined to pay more than they have to.

In the 2000 wave of the World Values Survey only two of these questions were asked, the item regarding the increase in taxes was asked in all contexts. The item concerning the willingness of the respondent to pay for a reduction of pollution was asked in Norway and Australia. Factor analysis performed on these items showed, for each context, that the three items load very high on the first dimension, indicating that each of these items separately can be taken to indicate environmental concern. Index scores were calculated as mean scores for each respondent who had valid responses on at least two items.

*Results*

Before analyzing whether people concerned with the environment increasingly vote left as green issues are more important in a particular context, I investigated whether environmental concern is associated with income and education (see Table ii).

*Table ii Environmental concern, education and income. Multilevel regression models (N=26,540 in 36 contexts, method: maximum likelihood)*

Independents	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant	0.11	0.09	0.16	0.09	0.32**	0.10
Year	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.03**	0.01
Income			-0.10***	0.01	0.06***	0.01
Education					0.15***	0.01
Variance individual level	1.01	0.01	0.99	0.01	0.98	0.01
Variance context level	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Deviance	116861.1		116405.0		115782.8	
ΔDF.			1		1	

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: World Values Survey, 2000

Two conclusions may be drawn from Table ii. One, it appears that environmental concern grows with increasing income and higher levels of education. Two, the effect of income cannot be explained away by including an indicator for education, which means that the environmental concerns of the middle classes are not completely due to their high levels of education. This may be attributable to the ambiguous measure for environmental concern, which taps a person’s concern for the environment and also a person’s ability to pay for environmental measures.

Before investigating whether environmental concerns affect voting behavior more strongly in contexts where environmental issues are very important, I first investigated whether the relationships between income, education, and voting are weaker in countries where environmental issues are more important.

*Table iii Leftist voting behavior explained by education, income and salience of environmental issues. Multilevel regression models (N=26,540 in 36 contexts, method: maximum likelihood)*

<i>Independents</i>	<i>Model 1</i>		<i>Model2</i>	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Constant	0.19*	0.08	0.19*	0.08
Year	-0.42*	0.01	-0.42***	0.01
Income	-0.05*	0.02	-0.05*	0.02
Education	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02
Environmental issue salience	0.32***	0.01	0.32***	0.01
Income X environmental issue salience	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Education X environmental issue salience	0.07***	0.01	0.07***	0.01
Environmental concern	--	--	0.08***	0.02
Environmental concern X environmental issue salience	--	--	0.03*	0.01
Variance individual level	0.69	0.01	0.69	0.01
Variance context level	0.14	0.04	0.14	0.04
Variance slope income	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00
Variance slope education	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Variance slope environmental concern	--	--	0.01	0.00
Deviance	70467.3		70130.1	
$\Delta DF$			3	

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01; \*\*\*p<0.001

Source: World Values Survey, 2000

First, it appears that the effects of income and education vary considerably between contexts. However, the differential influence of income on voting behavior has little to do with the idea that in some contexts environmental issues are more important than in other contexts. The variation in the effect of education can be explained by the salience of environmental issues. In those contexts where environmental issues are not salient higher educated people will vote more for a right-wing party, while in contexts where environmental issues are salient, higher educated people will vote for a leftist party.

Table iii shows the results of my investigation of whether environmental concerns affect voting behavior stronger in contexts where environmental issues are more prominent. The hypothesis was confirmed. Those concerned with the environment are more inclined to vote for a left-wing party than those less concerned with the environment, and as environmental issues become more important those concerned with the environment are inclined to vote even more leftist. I found that environmental issues rose tremendously in importance during

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the post-war period. As in contexts in which environmental issues are more salient environmental concerns more strongly affect voting behavior, this means that environmental voting has increased sharply in the post-war period in most Western countries. In sum, as new environmental issues become more important, the traditional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class becomes less 'natural'.

### *Conclusion*

In this note I investigated whether another new voting mechanism, i.e. that of environmental voting, has grown, increasingly leading those with low levels of education to vote right and those with higher levels of education to vote left, undermining the conventional pattern of a leftist working class and a rightist middle class. In this note I show that these environmental issues have grown in salience over time, and elsewhere (Achterberg 2004) I showed that the rise in environmental issue salience has led to lower levels of class voting. In contexts in which environmental issues are important the working class tends to vote right and the middle class tends to vote left, is can be explained by the fact that in these contexts environmental voting is stronger: In these contexts the higher educated will vote more to the left, and those concerned about the environment will also vote more to the left. Parallel to new cultural alignments there is evidence for new environmental alignments in late-modern societies that crosscut the old class party alignments.

<sup>33</sup> Use of the Thomsen index does not lead to substantial different results than those reported in this chapter.

<sup>34</sup> In the 1990 wave of the World Values Survey the question about the degree the respondent spends time with people in clubs and voluntary sports- culture- or communal associations was not asked. Given the relatively low factor loading (see Table 2.3) this item was not used in the indicator for cultural participation.

<sup>35</sup> The scale for economic progressiveness was measured as in Chapter 2 and 4. Information on four items was available for nine contexts, Germany, Belgium, United States, Canada, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Luxembourg and Portugal, all in 2000. In three contexts, Denmark, 2000, Sweden, 2000, and Greece, 2000, information was only available for three items. Factor analysis showed that the responses of the respondents to the items used to measure economic progressive views tapped the same value dimension. This showed that in five contexts, France

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1990, United States 1990, Portugal 1990, Britain 2000, and Ireland 2000, one item should be removed from the scale, as their factor loadings were too low (<0.25). Scale scores were calculated as the mean for each respondent who had at least three valid responses on the items above.

<sup>36</sup> The scale for libertarianism was measured as in Chapter 2 and 4 using four indicators: the index for postmaterialism, a scale for sexual permissiveness, a scale for traditional values about gender roles, and a scale for conformity as an educational value.

No values for postmaterialism were available for Great-Britain (2000). The answers to the items measuring sexual permissiveness were factor analysed: In 22 contexts all items were asked in the survey, in three contexts, Denmark (1990), Spain (2000) and Italy (2000), four items were asked and in eleven contexts, France, The Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, United States, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Australia and Portugal all in the 2000 WVS-wave, only three items were asked. For all contexts, only one dimension was found in the responses of the respondents, representing sexual permissiveness. The scale was constructed by calculating a mean score for each respondent who had at least three valid responses to the items used.

In 28 contexts all items for the scale for traditional values about gender roles were asked the survey, in one context, Sweden, 1990, six items, in four contexts, United States (2000), Canada (2000), Norway (2000), and Australia (2000) five items, and in three contexts (Ireland (2000), Switzerland (2000) and Austria (2000)) only three items were asked in the survey. Factor analysis showed that the responses to these items all tap one dimension. Scale scores were calculated as mean scores for each respondent who had valid responses on at least three items.

The scale for conformity as an educational value consisted of six items in which the respondents indicated which qualities children should be encouraged to learn at home. Factor-analysis showed that in 30 contexts there was a clear one-dimensional model, and that in six contexts, France (1990, 2000), Britain (2000), Denmark (2000), Belgium (2000) and Switzerland (2000), one of the factor loadings was insufficiently high (<0.25) and a scale could be constructed out of the five remaining items. After recoding the items emphasizing the opposite of conformity the final scale was constructed by calculating the mean score for each respondent who had at least four valid scores on the six items.

All four indicators were factor analysed for the final scale measuring libertarianism. Information for one indicator, postmaterialism, was missing for Great Britain (2000). Factor analysis showed consistent high factor-loadings in all

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contexts but one: For Finland (2000) the factor loading for postmaterialism proved to be insufficiently high ( $<0.25$ ) and was not used to construct the final scale. The scale score has been calculated for each respondent as a mean standardized score of the four indicators. A higher score on the scale stands for a more libertarian outlook toward cultural issues.

<sup>37</sup> In multi-level analysis it is common practice to build a nested model, by starting with an empty model and then adding a variable at each step. Here, for reasons of brevity, I have chosen not to report all these steps in the analytic process, and only to report the three final steps that matter most for the hypotheses that were tested. With an initial variance of 0.90 at the individual level and an initial unexplained variance of 0.13 at the context level, the intra class correlation ( $\rho$ ) in Model 0 equals 0.13, which means that 13% of the variance is located at the context level and that 87% of the variance is located at the individual level.

<sup>38</sup> Although here, there are three levels: the individual, the context and the wave or year of survey level, I choose not to include the last level mentioned, because the variance on this level is low. Conforming to Rasbash et al. (2000: 95) I include a dummy for year of survey instead.

<sup>39</sup> Giving a spectacular rise of the N, which is mainly due to the variable income, a lot of respondent refuse to give information about this.

<sup>40</sup> Here, as in the previous table, for reasons of brevity, I have chosen not to report all these steps in the analytic process, and only to report the three final steps that matter most for the hypotheses that were tested. With an initial variance of 0.86 at the individual level and an initial unexplained variance of 0.14 at the context level, the intra class correlation ( $\rho$ ) in Model 0 equals 0.14, which means that 14% of the variance is located at the context level and that 86% of the variance is located at the individual level. The difference in explained variance at the context level is mainly due to the somewhat different N, which is reported in the previous note.





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## SAMENVATTING

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De politiek van Westerse landen is sinds lange tijd georganiseerd langs diverse maatschappelijke conflicten. Een van die conflicten, misschien historisch gezien wel de belangrijkste, is dat tussen de economisch beter gesitueerden en de minderbedeelden. In elke moderne democratie, zo betoogde Lipset eerder al, wordt er een klassenconflict uitgevochten via de stembus. Politieke partijen zijn georganiseerd langs de lijnen van de diverse klassenbelangen en trekken elk een eigen specifieke achterban aan. In deze zin is stemmen niets minder dan een voortzetting van de klassenstrijd waarin het conflict over de verdeling van de middelen wordt vertaald in vaste banden tussen klassenpositie en partijen. Linkse partijen vertegenwoordigen de arbeidersklasse en streven naar economische herverdeling terwijl rechtse partijen de middenklasse vertegenwoordigen en ernaar streven de economisch gunstige positie van de middenklasse te consolideren. Daarom wordt vanouds gevonden dat arbeiders vaker op een linkse partij stemmen en leden van de middenklasse op een rechtse. Echter, dit patroon van een links stemmende arbeidersklasse en een rechts stemmende middenklasse is in veel Westerse landen aan erosie onderhevig, zonder dat duidelijk is waarom.

In dit proefschrift is getracht te verklaren waarom arbeiders in de loop der tijd steeds rechtser en leden van de middenklasse steeds linkser zijn gaan stemmen. Omdat, zoals uit onderzoek van Paul Nieuwbeerta blijkt, aan klassenanalyse ontleende hypothesen hiervoor weinig vruchtbaar zijn gebleken, is gekozen voor een alternatieve benadering. Voornamelijk voortbouwend op het werk van Ronald Inglehart, wordt in deze benadering gesteld dat de opkomst van een nieuw politiek conflict, dat niets te maken heeft met het oude klassenconflict, verantwoordelijk is voor de erosie van het klassieke patroon van een links stemmende arbeidersklasse en een rechts stemmende middenklasse. De drie onderzoeksvragen die ik hierbij gebruikt heb, zal ik hieronder kort weergeven en de voornaamste resultaten samenvatten.

*Is er sprake van een opkomst van een nieuwe politieke cultuur in naoorlogse westerse landen?*

De politieke cultuur van een land wordt bepaald door de mate waarin oude, klassengebonden, en nieuwe, culturele, thema's belangrijk zijn en de mate waarin de politiek rondom deze thema's is gepolariseerd. Hoewel sommige sociologen zoals Bauman, Inglehart, Pakulski en Clark stellen dat de oude klassenthema's steeds minder bepalend zijn geworden voor de politieke cultuur van Westerse landen, is daar weinig bewijs voor. Klassenthema's zijn nog steeds zeer bepalend voor de politieke cultuur: ze zijn over het algemeen even belangrijk gebleven, en is de polarisatie over oude klassenthema's nog steeds zeer groot.

Hoewel klassenthema's dus nog steeds, meer dan Baumann, Inglehart, Pakulski en Clark denken, bepalend zijn voor de politieke cultuur in Westerse landen, is deze op een ander vlak toch aanzienlijk veranderd. De dominante benadering van nieuwe politiek benadrukt slechts het belang van nieuw-linkse of libertaire thema's waarin het belang van individuele vrijheid, tolerantie en non-conformisme centraal staat. Deze zijn in de loop der tijd inderdaad steeds belangrijker geworden. Daarnaast zijn ook nieuw-rechtse of autoritaire thema's, waarin het belang van een sterke morele orde, conformisme en culturele homogeniteit worden benadrukt, steeds belangrijker geworden. Deze thema's kunnen, in tegenstelling tot wat Inglehart beweert, helemaal niet tot oude politiek gerekend worden. Politieke partijen zijn dan ook steeds meer gepolariseerd geraakt rond culturele thema's. Rechtse partijen steeds meer autoritair beleid gaan nastreven, terwijl linkse juist steeds meer libertair beleid zijn gaan nastreven. Deze veranderingen in politieke cultuur laten dus zien dat culturele conflicten in Westerse landen steeds bepalender zijn geworden voor de politieke cultuur.

*Waarom is de politieke cultuur veranderd?*

De dominante benadering van modernisering in de politieke sociologie stelt dat toenemende welvaart culturele veranderingen met zich meebrengt. Terwijl het wel waar is dat de politieke cultuur in de meest rijke landen meer bepaald wordt door culturele thema's, betekent dit niet automatisch dat de toegenomen welvaart hier verantwoordelijk voor is. Modernisering is immers meer dan alleen toegenomen welvaart, het is een meerdimensionaal fenomeen. En door de ogen te sluiten voor

deze andere aspecten kan niet met zekerheid worden vastgesteld waarom de politieke cultuur in Westerse landen zo is veranderd. Een alternatieve, cultuursociologische, verklaring die zich richt op een van deze andere aspecten van modernisering is daarom eveneens onderzocht. Hieruit bleek dat politieke culturen van landen meer gericht zijn op culturele thema's naarmate mensen meer gesecculariseerd zijn. Sterker nog, niet de toename in de welvaart, maar de toegenomen secularisering in deze landen is verantwoordelijk voor de opkomst van een nieuwe politieke cultuur waarin culturele thema's steeds meer de politieke agenda bepalen. Naarmate moderne individuen steeds minder zijn ingebed in kerkelijke gemeenschappen die hun leven en waarden voorstructureren, en dus minder zekerheid kunnen ontleenen aan dergelijke gemeenschappen, nemen problemen rond individuele vrijheid en sociale orde verder toe.

De opkomst van een nieuwe politieke cultuur waarin culturele conflicten een steeds voornamere plaats innemen, kan begrepen worden vanuit het perspectief van de 'twee principale ziekten van de moderniteit', anomie en vervreemding. Terwijl anomie verwijst naar gevoelens van te weinig institutionele controle en inbedding, en een verlangen naar meer sociale orde oproept, verwijst vervreemding juist naar gevoelens van te veel institutionele controle en inbedding, en roept daarmee een verlangen naar minder sociale orde en juist meer individuele vrijheid op. De opkomst van het belang van nieuw-linkse en van nieuw-rechtse thema's en de toenemende polarisering tussen links en rechts op dit vlak, kan dus begrepen worden als uiting van de opkomst van zowel anomie en vervreemding. Mensen die aan een van beide ziekten van de moderniteit lijden stemmen dan ook meer aan de hand van hun culturele waarden: Mensen met autoritaire denkbeelden stemmen vaker op rechts en mensen met libertaire denkbeelden stemmen vaker op links als ze anomisch of vervreemd zijn.

De opkomst van culturele conflicten, die tot uitdrukking komt in de veranderingen in de politieke cultuur is dus een gevolg van de veranderende institutionele omgeving waar mensen mee te kampen hebben. Culturele thema's worden niet belangrijker omdat mensen steeds rijker zijn geworden, maar omdat de institutionele omgeving van mensen in afnemende mate 'natuurlijk' of 'vertrouwd' aanvoelt en mensen hun gevoel van 'thuis zijn' hebben verloren.

*Dragen de veranderingen in de politieke cultuur er toe bij dat leden van de arbeidersklasse steeds meer op rechtse partijen gaan stemmen en leden van de middenklasse steeds meer op linkse?*

Dat leden van de middenklasse op een rechtse en leden van de arbeidersklasse op een linkse partij stemmen kan nog steeds verklaard worden aan de hand van de klassenanalyse. De klassengebonden motieven die vanouds worden verondersteld, dat de arbeidersklasse voor economische herverdeling is om haar economische positie te versterken en dat de middenklasse hier juist tegen is om haar gunstige economische positie te consolideren, blijken nog steeds in sterke mate het stemgedrag te bepalen. Het mechanisme van klassengebonden stemgedrag is dus nog steeds geldig, en stemgedrag is dus nog steeds een uiting van de democratische klassenstrijd. Maar dit is enkel de helft van het verhaal.

Het tweede mechanisme dat het stemgedrag stuurt is niet gerelateerd aan klassenpositie maar aan cultureel kapitaal. Vanuit dit mechanisme geredeneerd is het volstrekt normaal dat mensen met weinig cultureel kapitaal op rechtse en mensen met veel cultureel kapitaal op linkse partijen stemmen. Deze laatsten zijn namelijk overwegend libertair ingesteld terwijl de eersten juist autoritair zijn ingesteld. Mensen met veel cultureel kapitaal steunen dus veelal een links-libertair beleid waarin het belang van individuele vrijheid en non-conformisme centraal staat, terwijl mensen met weinig cultureel kapitaal juist rechts autoritair beleid steunen waarin de nadruk ligt op het handhaven van de orde.

Doordat mensen in een gunstige sociaal economische positie vaak veel en mensen in een ongunstige sociaal economische positie vaak weinig cultureel kapitaal hebben, werken de twee stemmechanismen elkaar tegen. Voor arbeiders geldt dat hun ongunstige sociaal-economische positie leidt tot een stem op links terwijl hun gebrek aan cultureel kapitaal hen juist leidt tot een stem op rechts. Voor leden van de middenklasse geldt dat hun gunstige sociaal-economische positie leidt tot een stem op rechts terwijl hun overvloedige culturele kapitaal hen leidt tot een stem op links. Om te bepalen in hoeverre klasse het stemgedrag bepaalt, is een simpele relatie tussen klasse enerzijds en stemgedrag anderzijds dus niet afdoende omdat het twee stemmechanismen meet die elkaar opheffen. Aan een afnemend verband tussen klasse en stemgedrag kan daarom niet worden afgezien of

klassengebonden stemgedrag echt minder sterk is geworden, of cultureel stemgedrag belangrijker is geworden, of beiden.

In landen waar de politieke cultuur sterker wordt bepaald door klassenthema's is het klassengebonden stemgedrag sterker. In deze landen bepalen de klassenpositie en de bijbehorende economische stemmotieven het stemgedrag sterker dan in andere landen waarin de politieke cultuur minder gericht is op klassenthema's. Echter, omdat in de tijd gezien politieke culturen zich niet hebben afgewend van traditionele klassenthema's kan de mate waarin deze thema's de politieke cultuur bepalen niet verklaren waarom de relatie tussen klassenpositie en stemgedrag is afgenomen. Er zijn dus geen goede redenen om aan te nemen dat het klassengebonden stemgedrag is afgenomen.

Cultureel stemgedrag, echter, is wel steeds sterker geworden. In politieke culturen die sterker bepaald worden door culturele thema's stemmen mensen met veel cultureel kapitaal en libertaire waarden vaker op een linkse partij en mensen met weinig cultureel kapitaal en autoritaire waarden vaker op een rechtse partij. In de naoorlogse periode zijn in politieke culturen van Westerse landen culturele thema's in toenemende mate bepalend geworden, waardoor cultureel stemgedrag steeds sterker is geworden en waardoor de relatie tussen klasse en stemgedrag is afgezwakt. Het feit dat zij wonen in landen waarin culturele conflicten steeds groter zijn geworden heeft er dus toe geleid dat arbeiders steeds meer op rechts en leden van de middenklasse op links zijn gaan stemmen.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

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Since 2002 Peter Achterberg (1977) has been working at the department of Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam, and at the Amsterdam School for Social science Research (ASSR). He is currently working as a post-doctoral fellow studying the changing support for the welfare state and changing patterns of solidarity in Western societies. He has published some papers in: *European Journal of Political Research*, *International Sociology*, *Mens & Maatschappij*, *Sociologie*, *Sociologische Gids*, *Mens & Maatschappij*, *Tijdschrift voor Sociologie*, and *Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken*.