

term value change is taking place would be to measure a population's values, wait ten or twenty years, and then measure them again.⁴

⁴ [See Chapter 19 below.]

DIMENSIONS OF IDEOLOGY IN EUROPEAN PARTY SYSTEMS

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How can the contents and intensity of party ideologies and the ideological dimensions of party systems be identified? First, as Joseph LaPalombara states, 'we can get some clues to a party's collective ideology by looking at party statutes, platforms, special programmatic statements, proceedings of party congresses, press releases, and speeches by the party's leading figures'.¹ In addition, we can observe the actual policies pursued by a party when it is in power, or the policies promoted by a party when it shares governmental power with one or more partners in a coalition. *Ideologies and programmes must be distinguished from the characteristics of the voters that parties represent.* For instance, the fact that a party receives unusually strong support from Roman Catholic voters does not automatically make it a Catholic party and does not necessarily indicate that religion is an important dimension in the party system. On the other hand, it stands to reason that there is a mutual relationship between party programmes and the objective and subjective interests and needs of the party's supporters.

A second guideline for the identification of the ideological dimensions of party systems is that we should focus on the differences *between* parties rather than *within* parties. One or

Arend Lijphart, abridged from 'Political Parties: Ideologies and Programs,' in David Butler, Howard R. Penniman, and Austin Ranney (eds.), *Democracy at the Polls: A Comparative Study of Competitive National Elections*, 1981. Reprinted by permission of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research.

¹ J. LaPalombara, *Politics within Nations* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 534.

more ideological cleavages may divide parties internally instead of from each other, and these should not be confused with those that divide the party system itself. Third, we should restrict our analysis to the ideologies of and the ideological differences between the *significant parties*, those parties that Giovanni Sartori calls 'relevant': political parties that frequently participate in cabinets and are widely recognized as acceptable coalition partners, or which are so large as to have an important impact on the system even though they are not considered acceptable governing partners. In Sartori's terminology, these are parties with either *'coalition potential'* or *'blackmail potential'*.² Finally, we should focus on the *durable ideological dimensions* of party systems and ignore the more or less programmatic differences that may emerge in one election but fade away soon afterward.

The following ideological dimensions were present in many democratic party systems in the 1970s and are likely to continue in the 1980s:

1. socio-economic
2. religious
3. cultural-ethnic
4. urban-rural
5. regime support
6. foreign policy
7. post-materialism

The first six of these dimensions correspond quite closely with the party system cleavages identified by a number of other authors. Sartori's 'four basic cleavage dimensions' are *left versus right, secular versus denominational, ethnicity versus integration, and democratic versus authoritarian divisions*; these are basically the same as the first, second, third, and fifth dimensions listed above.³ Michael Taylor and Michael Laver use the equivalents of the first through the fourth and the sixth dimensions of the list above in their study of West European

government coalitions.⁴ Lawrence C. Dodd also uses the Taylor-Laver dimensions but adds the regime support item and drops the urban-rural division.⁵ Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda propose six ideological continua, all of which they label left-right dimensions, but only four of which correspond with the socio-economic dimension of the list above; the other

TABLE 18.1. Ideological Dimensions of European Party Systems in the 1970s

Country	Socio-Economic	Religious	Cultural-Ethnic	Urban-Rural	Regime Support	Foreign Policy	Post-Materialist
Austria	X	X					
Belgium	X	X	X				
Denmark	X						
Finland	X		X	X			
France	X				X		
West Germany	X	X				X	
Greece	X				X	X	
Ireland	X					X	
Italy	X	X	X		X	X	
Netherlands	X	X	X				X
Norway	X			X			
Portugal	X				X	X	
Spain	X				X	X	
Sweden	X			X			X
Switzerland	X	X					
United Kingdom	X						

⁴ M. Taylor and M. Laver, 'Government Coalitions in Western Europe', *European Journal of Political Research*, 1/3 (Sept. 1973), 237-48. Their foreign policy dimension is limited to the Republic of Ireland where it refers to attitudes toward the Treaty of 1921. An additional dimension that these two authors use is the federalist versus unitarist dimension; I shall return to this point later with special reference to the Belgian party system.

⁵ L. C. Dodd, *Coalitions in Parliamentary Government* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 99. I have combined four of Dodd's dimensions—linguistic conflict, cultural conflict, regionalism, and German nationalism in interwar Austria—into the single cultural-ethnic dimension.

² G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 121-4.

³ Ibid. 336. However, Sartori's left-right dimension also includes the 'constitutional left-right' cleavage which concerns 'how equal laws relate to societal inequalities' (p. 337).

two are the secular—denominational conflict and divergent foreign policy outlooks (favouring international alignment with the 'Western bloc' versus the 'Eastern bloc' of nations).⁶ To the dimensions identified by these various scholars I have added the cleavage between 'materialists' and 'post-materialists', which Ronald Inglehart has found to be of great, and probably growing, significance in industrialized societies.⁷

The incidence of these seven ideological dimensions in the party systems is indicated in Table 18.1. This table is based on my own, necessarily subjective, judgement, but I believe that the majority of my decisions are straightforward and non-controversial. On the other hand, there are a number of difficult cases, and I shall point these out as I discuss each of the ideological dimensions.

1. *The Socio-Economic Dimension.* The four leftist versus rightist party positions on socio-economic policy enumerated by Harmel and Janda provide a good summary of the basic components of the socio-economic dimension of ideology: (1) governmental versus private ownership of the means of production, (2) a strong versus a weak governmental role in economic planning, (3) support of versus opposition to the redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor, and (4) the expansion of versus resistance to governmental social welfare programmes.⁸ The first three of these components coincide with what Martin Seliger calls the three socio-economic 'core issues' of the left—right dimension.⁹ This dimension is listed first in Table 18.1 because it is the most important of the ideological dimensions and because it is present in all of the democratic party systems.

This conclusion appears to contradict the end-of-ideology theory, which is especially concerned with the socio-economic

6 R. Harmel and K. Janda, *Comparing Political Parties*, Supplementary Empirical Teaching Units in Political Science (Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 1976), 33–5.

7 R. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Peoples* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

8 Harmel and Janda, *Comparing Political Parties*, p. 35.

9 M. Seliger, *Ideology and Politics* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976), 214–16.

ideological dimension. In fact, as Leon D. Epstein points out, it is the end of *socialist* ideology that the theory focuses on.¹⁰ However, we can speak of the *end* of ideology only when we use the ideal-type meaning of ideology. When the term 'ideology' is used in the broader sense, as an empirical category including various degrees of ideological thinking, we have to speak more modestly of a *decline* of ideology. This decline, fuelled by the unprecedented growth in economic prosperity of the Western democracies in the 1950s and early 1960s, occurred particularly with regard to the question of governmental ownership of the means of production. In addition, the leftist positions on economic planning, income redistribution, and social welfare programmes—and the rightist responses to these policy preferences—have become more moderate. Seymour M. Lipset, writing in 1964, argues that this convergence of socio-economic ideologies marks the development of the new ideological agreement of 'conservative socialism' which he calls '*the ideology of the major parties in the developed states of Europe and America*'.¹¹

With the advantage of hindsight, this judgement—which was partly a description and partly a prediction—appears to have been premature. For one thing, the economic problems of the 1970s, have heightened left—right tensions. Moreover, even though the objective growth of the total economic pie makes its division among different groups and classes in society easier, the economic expectations of these groups inevitably remain subjective and relative. As Lipset himself emphasizes, 'as long as some men are rewarded more than others by the prestige or status structure of society, men will feel *relatively* deprived'.¹² There has also been a growing awareness that economic prosperity and the distribution of prosperity are to a large extent politically determined. Robert A. Dahl argues that 'since any particular allotment reveals itself more and more clearly

¹⁰ L. D. Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (New York: Praeger, 1967), 286.

¹¹ S. M. Lipset, 'The Changing Class Structure and Contemporary European Politics', in Stephen R. Graubard (ed.), *A New Europe?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), 362.

¹² S. M. Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1963), 444–5.

nowadays to be a product of political decisions and less and less an act of God, nature, or the inexorable operation of economic laws, conflicts over the distribution of income might, if anything, become more numerous even if less intense.¹³

The importance of political influences on economic policies and performance has been confirmed by a spate of recent studies of the political-economic nexus. It is especially interesting for the purposes of this chapter that these studies show significant differences between the socio-economic policies pursued by leftist-oriented and rightist-oriented governments. David R. Cameron, Edward R. Tufte, Frank Castles, and Robert D. McKinlay show that leftist governments have systematically produced a higher rate of growth of the public sector of the economy, larger central government budgets, more income equalization, and higher levels of performance with regard to educational expenditures and public health than rightist governments.¹⁴ Douglas A. Hibbs, jun., finds that when a choice has to be made between price stability, favoured by the parties of the right, and full employment, favoured by the left, 'the macroeconomic policies pursued by left-wing and right-wing governments are broadly in accordance with the objective economic interests and subjective preferences of their class-defined core political constituencies'.¹⁵ Hibbs's finding on price stability is disputed by Andrew T. Cowart, but the two authors agree on the greater sensitivity of leftist governments to the problem of unemployment. Cowart also argues that, in general, leftist governments have been considerably more interventionist in both monetary and fiscal policy making.¹⁶ The evidence

¹³ R. A. Dahl, *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 398.

¹⁴ D. R. Cameron, 'The Expansion of the Public Economy: A Comparative Analysis', *American Political Science Review*, 72/4 (Dec. 1978), 1243-61; R. Tufte, 'Political Parties, Social Class, and Economic Policy Preferences', *Government and Opposition*, 14/1 (Winter 1979), 18-36, esp. pp. 28-30; F. Castles and R. D. McKinlay, 'Does Politics Matter? An Analysis of the Public Welfare Commitment in Advanced Democratic States', *European Journal of Political Research*, 7/2 (June 1979), 169-86.

¹⁵ D. A. Hibbs, jun., 'Political Parties and Macroeconomic Policy', *American Political Science Review*, 71/4 (Dec. 1977), 1467-87.

¹⁶ A. T. Cowart, 'The Economic Policies of European Governments, Part I: Monetary Policy', and 'Part II: Fiscal Policy', *British Journal of Political Science*, 8/3, 4 (July, Oct. 1978), 285-311, 425-39.

can be summarized in the following statement by Tufte: 'The single most important determinant of variations in macro-economic performance from one industrialized democracy to another is the location on the left-right spectrum of the governing political party. Party platforms and political ideology set priorities and help decide policy.'¹⁷

2. *The Religious Dimension.* The second most important ideological dimension concerns party attitudes and policies towards religion and religious values. On this dimension, too, a decline of ideology has occurred. In the continental European countries with mixed Catholic-Protestant populations and histories of Catholic-Protestant antagonism, interreligious tensions have largely disappeared and the two groups have even tended to unite politically. The Christian Democratic Union of the Federal Republic of Germany was founded as a joint Catholic-Protestant party. In the Netherlands, the Catholic party and the two main Protestant parties presented a single list in the 1977 parliamentary elections and are planning to merge into a single party organization, the Christian Democratic Appeal. Only in Switzerland do the Christian Democrats remain an almost exclusively Catholic party. Moreover, both the explicitly religious parties and their anticlerical opponents have moderated their claims and counterclaims to a large extent. On the other hand, the religious and secular parties are still divided on a range of moral issues, such as questions of marriage and divorce, birth control, abortion, sex education, and pornography. These issues became especially prominent in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Most of the party systems with an important religious cleavage can be found in continental Western Europe, excluding Scandinavia. West Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands all have major Christian Democratic or Social Christian parties. In France, the original Christian Democratic party, the MRP, and its several successors have lapsed into insignificance, but the Gaullists now occupy the position of a conservative pro-Church party.

¹⁷ Tufte, 'Political Parties, Social Class, and Economic Policy Preferences', p. 35.

Spain and Portugal are problematic cases. It would have been logical to expect the formation of Christian Democratic parties in these countries after the restoration of democracy. However, partly as a reflection of the decline of ideology along the religious dimension in the 1970s, the politicians belonging to this persuasion decided to participate in broader centre-right political groupings: the Union of the Democratic Centre in Spain and the Centre Social Democrats in Portugal. Hence the religious cleavage affects intraparty rather than interparty relations.

The end-of-ideology proposition with regard to the religious dimension appears to be disconfirmed by the emergence of Christian Democratic parties in all of the Nordic countries, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. Such parties were founded in Finland in 1958, in Sweden in 1964, and in Denmark in 1970. The Finnish and Danish, but not the Swedish, parties have achieved parliamentary representation. However, none of these parties can be regarded as 'relevant' according to Sartori's criteria. Only the older Norwegian Christian People's party, established in 1933, has played a significant political role and has participated in three cabinets.

3. *The Cultural-Ethnic Dimension.* In their developmental theory of cleavage structures and party systems, Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan identify four basic sources of party system cleavages. These are, in addition to the left-right and religious dimensions, already discussed, cultural-ethnic cleavages and the divisions between rural-agrarian and urban-industrial interests.¹⁸ The cultural-ethnic dimension does not appear as often as the religious dimension, because eleven of the sixteen countries are ethnically homogeneous or contain only small and insignificant minorities. Moreover, of the remaining five countries with potential cultural-ethnic divisions

¹⁸ S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, 'Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction', in S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 1-64. See also R. Rose and D. Urwin, 'Social Cohesion, Political Parties and Strains in Regimes', *Comparative Political Studies*, 2/1 (Apr. 1969), 7-67.

between the parties, only two have clear interparty cleavage dimensions.

Switzerland is often regarded as the plural society *par excellence*, but its party system reflects mainly religious and left-right differences, and linguistic issues are virtually absent at the national level. Even the protracted discussions concerning the Jura Problem did not stimulate interparty divisions or the emergence of other linguistic controversies. In Spain, regionalist and autonomist parties won almost 10 per cent of the vote in the 1979 elections, but this vote was divided among several disparate groupings; the largest ethnic party is the Catalan Convergence and Union party with only 2.7 per cent of the vote and 9 out of 350 seats. One or more of these parties may acquire coalition potential in the future, like the small Swedish People's party in Finland, which is a very frequent coalition partner, but they do not possess the potential to participate in government at the present time.

In the United Kingdom, similarly, the Scottish National party and other minority parties are too small to have a significant impact on national interparty relations. When the Callaghan cabinet in its last two years (1977-9) had become a minority government, it was dependent on support from the Liberals, the SNP, and other small parties, but this unusual situation cannot be considered sufficient grounds to credit the SNP with coalition potential.

At the other extreme is the Belgian party system in which the cultural-ethnic dimension has become a sharp dividing line between the two communities and their parties. During the 1960s three explicitly linguistic parties established themselves as important actors on the Belgian political scene: the Volksunie in Flanders, the Walloon Rally in Wallonia, and the Francophone Democratic Front in bilingual but mainly French-speaking Brussels. Subsequently, between 1968 and 1978, the three national parties—the Christian Social, Socialist, and Liberal parties—split into autonomous Flemish and Francophone organizations. It may also be argued that there are two different cultural-ethnic dimensions in Belgian party politics: a dimension of Flemings versus French-speakers in which the linguistic parties are at opposite ends of the scale and the older, still more nationally oriented parties take a centre

position, and a federalist-centralist dimension with the linguistic parties on one side and the traditional parties on the other.

4. *The Urban-Rural Dimension.* Differences between rural and urban areas occur in all democracies, but they constitute the source of party system cleavages in only a few. Even here, it is somewhat questionable whether these differences can be regarded as ideological or programmatic, although it should be remembered that they entail not only divergent industrial versus agrarian objective interests but also the subjective contrast between urban and rural style of living.

Where agrarian parties are found, mainly in the Nordic countries, they have tended to become less exclusively rural and to appeal to urban electorates, too, prompted by the decline of the rural population. A clear indicator of this shift is that the Swedish, Norwegian, and Finnish agrarian parties all changed their names to 'Centre party' between 1957 and 1965. The Danish Liberal party also originated as an agrarian party but now similarly tries to portray itself as a centre party.

5. *The Dimension of Regime Support.* This dimension occurs in democracies as a result of the presence of important parties that oppose the democratic regime or that, as in the case of the Gaullists during the French Fourth Republic, demand a drastic overhaul of the democratic form of government. In contemporary democratic systems, the dimension of regime support is significant mainly when there are sizable Communist parties: in France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Finland.

With regard to this dimension, too, a decline of ideology appears to have developed. Especially in Italy, France, and Spain, 'Eurocommunism' has been adopted, signalling basic changes in Communist attitudes towards both democracy and foreign policy. However, the debate about the nature of Eurocommunism is not about whether these Communist parties have changed. The crucial question is whether they have changed sufficiently and whether their new outlook can be regarded as stable and durable. Table 18.1 is based on the cautious judgement that it is still too early to be sure that a fundamental and permanent reorientation has taken place.

It may also be argued that a few of the six party systems with

a significant regime-support dimension of cleavage should be classified in this way because of anti-regime challenges not only from the left but also from the right. In particular, the Italian Monarchist party and neo-fascist Social Movement and the Francoist parties in Spain (the Popular Alliance in the 1977 election and the Democratic Coalition in the 1979 election) are such right-wing authoritarian parties. However, these parties have been weaker than the Communists in the two countries; they have no coalition potential; and their strength is not really sufficient to give them blackmail potential.

6. *The Foreign Policy Dimension.* The Eurocommunism and decline-of-Communist-ideology debates also concern the question whether the Communist parties have undergone a truly fundamental shift in their traditionally pro-Soviet or pro-Chinese attitudes. Table 18.1 reflects the same judgement on this dimension as on the dimension of regime support. The only exception is Finland, whose neutralism with a slight pro-Soviet tilt is broadly supported by the Communist and non-Communist parties alike as well as by the government of the Soviet Union.

The French party system is characterized by a second foreign policy dimension which concerns the parties' attitudes towards European integration. It divides both the two main parties on the left, the pro-integration Socialists and the anti-integration Communists, and the two main parties on the right, the pro-integration Republicans and the anti-integration Gaullists. The same cleavage has appeared in the three new member states of the European Community—the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark—as well as in Norway, which, after a divisive referendum, declined to join. In these countries, the cleavages were often more intense within some parties, particularly the British and Norwegian Labour parties, than between the parties, but there were also clear interparty differences, such as between the British Labour party on the one hand and the Conservatives and Liberals on the other and between the Irish Labour party and the other two main parties of Ireland. Nevertheless, these divisions may be only temporary, and they are therefore not marked in Table 18.1. The foreign policy dimension that is indicated for Ireland in Table 18.1 refers to

the split between Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael on the Treaty of 1921. It is of mainly symbolic significance in contemporary Irish politics, but it does result in at least slightly different attitudes towards the Northern Ireland problem.

7. *The Materialist versus Post-Materialist Dimension.* One question prompted by the end-of-ideology theory is whether the ideological synthesis of 'conservative socialism' represents the end of the ideological dialectic or merely a new dominant thesis which will be challenged by a new antithesis. Two elements of such an antithetical ideology emerged as a reaction to conservative socialism in the 1960s and 1970s. One is the ideology of participatory democracy, which can be seen as a reaction to the impersonality, remoteness, and centralization of bureaucratic decision-making created by conservative socialism. Dahl predicted in 1966 that this rejection of the 'democratic Leviathan' would be one of the new dimensions of opposition in democratic regimes.¹⁹ The other element of a new antithetical ideology is environmentalism, a reaction to the economic growth orientation of conservative socialism.

Both participatory democracy and environmentalism fit the cluster of values of what Inglehart terms 'post-materialism'. Inglehart found that especially among young middle-class people in Western democracies a high priority was accorded to goals like 'seeing that the people have more say in how things get decided at work and in their communities' and 'giving the people more say in important government decisions'. Moreover, in the richer nations the cluster of post-materialist values also included the objective of 'trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful'.²⁰

Post-materialism has so far not become the source of a new ideological dimension in many party systems. The only examples are Norway and Sweden, where the Centre parties have made a smooth transition from old-fashioned rural to modern environmentalist values, and the Netherlands, where two new

parties, Democrats '66 and Radicals, have espoused participatory ideology. The two Dutch parties are relatively small, but they were cabinet coalition partners from 1973 to 1977. The Swedish and Norwegian Centre parties are larger; in fact, the Centre party of Sweden was the largest non-Socialist party from 1968 until 1979, and it supplied the prime minister for the two coalition cabinets of Centrists, Conservatives, and Liberals formed in 1976 and 1979. The Swedish case also shows the salience of the environmentalist dimension, because it was on the issue of nuclear energy that the first of these three-party cabinets was split from the outset and on which it disintegrated in late 1978.

The limited impact of post-materialism is not really surprising because it is always difficult for new issue and cleavage dimensions to become represented in an established party system. In addition, the post-materialists are still only a small minority. In Inglehart's 1970, 1973, and 1976 surveys in the old Common Market countries and in Great Britain, the average proportion of post-materialist respondents that he found was a meagre 11.5 per cent.²¹ Another obstacle to a post-materialist breakthrough in the party system is that the post-materialist activists have tended to work through the leftist parties where their middle-class background has clashed with the traditional working-class orientation of these parties, and where the essentially conservative nature of the environmentalist ideology is not easily reconcilable with the leftist self-image of progressivism.

²¹ Ibid. 104.

¹⁹ Dahl, *Political Oppositions*, pp. 399-400.

²⁰ Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*, pp. 40-50. The other post-materialist values are much vaguer ('progress toward a less impersonal, more humane society' and 'progress toward a society where ideas are more important than money') or not really new ('protecting freedom of speech').