

Elite Level Conflict Salience and Dimensionality in Western Europe: Concepts and Empirical Findings*

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Abstract

This paper uses the Comparative Manifestos Project to explore both the changing salience of different issues on the party-defined political agenda and their structuration in Western Europe from the 1950s through the early 2000s. These measures of the political space, the most extensive time series measures constructed to date, allow the paper to weigh in on elite-level claims of the dealignment thesis, a complement to analyses operating at the mass level. All in all, the paper finds mixed evidence for the dealignment thesis. While the rising salience of valence issues and declining salience of references to social groups provide some support for dealignment, other changes such as the emergence of the post-materialist conflict and the continuing structuration of the political agenda are more commensurate with realignment. Arguably contrary to both, however, is the extent to which the same political conflicts dominate the political agenda today as in the past.

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What does the space of political competition in Western Europe look like? First, how many salient political conflicts are there? Are there a few (e.g., only one conflict is salient) or are there many (e.g., five conflicts are salient)? Second, what is the nature of these conflicts? They may have to do with the rate at which the state taxes income, the language in which government is conducted, the availability of abortion, or the building of new nuclear power plants, to name just a few possibilities. Third, are these conflicts related to or independent of one another? Guided by an intuitive sense that this fabric of politics might vary greatly across space and time, political scientists have sought to identify exactly how many and which conflicts are salient in particular regions, countries and time periods. Empirical knowledge of this sort is critical for theory testing in numerous political science literatures, such as that studying the formation of governing coalitions (e.g., Warwick 2005) and that exploring the quality of democracy (e.g., Powell 2000).

Of particular importance to this paper is the dealignment debate (e.g., Dalton, Flanagan and Beck 1984), to which empirical measures of the space of political competition can also contribute.¹ At the mass level, one of the central claims of the dealignment or cleavage-decline thesis is the decreasing ability of socio-demographic characteristics to explain voters' political behavior. At the elite level, the thesis concomitantly claims that the long dominant, large scale and consequential lines of political division or cleavages (e.g., Zuckerman 1975) historically rooted in these voter characteristics, such as the church-state and class conflicts featuring in Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) famous study, have been pushed off of the political agenda by frequently changing "political fads" and non-ideological valence issues such as the popularity of party leaders. In other words, party politics has become idiosyncratic and stripped of its social content (Enyedi 2008: 287). Another central elite level claim packed into the dealignment thesis is that party positions on different issues have become less related, resulting in an increasingly unstructured politics that is no longer organized around a few comprehensive lines of conflict (Ibid.: 290). Most commentators point to the 1970s as the decade in which political competition, originally "frozen" in both its content and social anchors prior to World War II, began to be transformed in these ways. But not all agree that party politics in Western Europe has changed quite so radically. Advocates of the realignment thesis, for example, agree that the salience of the foundational political conflicts has eroded, but they argue that this erosion is a direct consequence of the emergence of new conflicts such as post-materialism, also known as the "new politics" (e.g., Inglehart 1984)—a party politics that is still both ideological and structured, if differently so. Moreover, while these new conflicts may not be rooted in traditionally important socio-demographic characteristics, they nevertheless do have social anchors, such as in education (see, for example, Stubager in this volume).

To weigh in on this debate, this paper develops empirical measures of the political party-defined space of political competition in Western Europe. It initially lays the conceptual groundwork for the inquiry, differentiating between the elite and mass levels of analysis on the one hand and what it calls the raw and effective versions of the space on the other. The paper's focus upon the elite level complements the many studies that have explored the phenomenon of dealignment at the mass level of analysis. To break what Achen (1992) calls the iron triangle in voting research, an empirical assessment of cleavage politics must explore the issues at the heart of partisan political divisions as well as the demographic bases of partisan support. Further, by exploring both the changing salience of different types of issues over time (the raw space) as well as the changing relationships between or structuration of these salient issues (the effective space), the paper provides a more comprehensive portrait of the changes in Western European party politics than do other elite level studies, which have primarily focused on structuration. The paper then develops the most extensive time series measures to date of both versions of the space, which are based on the Comparative Manifesto Project's (CMP) content analysis of political parties' election platforms. This use of the CMP to measure changes in issue salience stands in contrast to the many

studies that have used it to measure changes in party positions. Further, in contrast to the limited and imprecise time span of expert surveys, which are moreover usually not directly comparable to one another, the paper's CMP-based measures allow comparison from election to election for individual countries and, for the first time, from decade to decade for Western Europe as a whole over the entire post-World War II period through the early 2000s. This enables the paper to pinpoint exactly what has changed when in a way not previously possible, and hence to provide a more systematic test of the dealignment thesis. Use of the CMP also allows for an assessment of the changing salience of valence issues and appeals to social groups, two aspects of the party-defined political agenda relevant to the dealignment thesis that expert surveys do not explore.

Last but not least, the paper turns to its findings. It uncovers what can at best be described as mixed evidence for the dealignment thesis at the elite level. For one, the political conflicts that dominate the party-defined political agenda in Western Europe today are largely those that dominated it in the past, contrary to the *prima facie* predictions of both realignment and dealignment. For another, while there have been some changes that are commensurate with dealignment's predictions, such as the rising salience of valence issues, other changes, such as the appearance of post-materialism on the political agenda and the continuing if somewhat altered structuration of the salient political conflicts, are more commensurate with the realignment thesis.

1.0 Conceptualizing the Political Space

Drawing upon the work of Stoll (2004; N. d.), the paper's initial task is to identify two definitional parameters that capture the major ways in which scholars' conceptualizations of the political space in Western Europe have diverged. At the same time, it assesses the utility of the different conceptualizations for the dealignment debate.

The first of these definitional parameters distinguishes between the elite and the mass levels of analysis. A conflict that is salient to political parties, arguably the most important elite level actors, is one that appears on the *party-defined* political agenda. Over the course of a campaign, parties compete with one another by staking out positions on these conflicts in a variety of venues, from election platforms (manifestos) to speeches by party leaders. This set of salient political conflicts or space is what parties say politics is about. Similarly, at the mass level, voters take positions on the conflicts that are salient to them, yielding a *voter-defined* political space.

In this paper, the focus is upon the party-defined space. This provides a counterpoint to the other studies in this volume as well as to the literature at large, both of which primarily draw upon survey data to elicit information about the voter-defined space (e.g., Dalton, Flanagan and Beck 1984; Kitschelt 1997; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). The preponderance of studies operating at the mass level makes sense in light of the many testable implications of dealignment that concern the attitudes, values and behavior of ordinary citizens. However, there is no guarantee that parties and voters are "in the same space", and in fact they are likely not to be (Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987: 393). Findings at the mass level accordingly cannot be automatically generalized to the elite level. Yet we need empirical knowledge about the elite level for two reasons. First, because the political divisions among elites and particularly among political parties are one of the two central components of the concept of cleavage (the other being the social divisions on which the political divisions may be based; see, for example, Zuckerman 1975). Demographics alone provide little in the way of causal explanation; investigating the issues at the heart of political competition help to flesh out the subjective link between objective social divisions and party choice, breaking Achen's (1992) iron triangle in voting behavior research. Second, because the thesis positing the decline in cleavage politics does have testable implications for the elite level and particularly for political parties, implications that have received little attention to date. Specifically, as discussed above, the

dealignment and realignment theses make competing predictions about the types of political conflicts that should appear on the party-defined political agenda. They also make competing predictions about how the different conflicts should relate to one another. The paper accordingly attempts to shed some empirical light upon the nature and structuration of the salient political conflicts in Western Europe over time, although it is important to stress that it does not assess how the social bases of these conflicts may have changed.

The second definitional parameter distinguishes between the salience of political conflicts and their structuration. The first conceptualization of the political space, which the paper henceforth calls the raw, is concerned solely with the number and nature of the types of issues (or conflicts) that appear on the political agenda. The dimensionality of the space defined by this set of salient conflicts is simply the number of salient conflicts. However, the second conceptualization of the political space, which is labeled the effective, is concerned with the relationships between salient conflicts: if a salient conflict is either correlated (overlapping) with or independent of (cross-cutting) others. Two conflicts are linearly independent or cross-cutting if the salience of one cannot be predicted using the salience of the other. The dimensionality of this lower dimensional representation of the raw space is then the number of linearly independent conflicts. Note that the dimensionality of the effective space will always be less than or equal to the dimensionality of the raw space.

Each of these conceptualizations allows us to empirically test a central claim of the dealignment thesis at the elite level: the first concerning the number and nature of the salient issues on the party-defined political agenda, and the second concerning their structuration. Both are accordingly employed in what follows, although special attention is paid to the raw conceptualization. There are three reasons for this. The first is theoretical. While the literature's focus to date has largely been on the effective conceptualization (e.g., Budge, Robertson and Hearl 1987; Lijphart 1999; Warwick 2002), the raw conceptualization does convey valuable additional information about the salience of different political conflicts, as discussed above. By studying both versions of the space, this paper is accordingly able to paint a more complete portrait of the changes in Western European party politics relevant to the dealignment debate than existing studies have done.

The second and third reasons for the paper's novel focus upon the raw space are practical. For one, the nature of the empirical data reduction enterprise when the unit of analysis is the political party sometimes makes it impossible to elicit the effective dimensionality. Any data reduction technique such as principal components analysis requires the number of observations to outstrip the number of variables. With even the most fragmented party systems consisting of only a few (such as five or six) parties, it is often impossible to use these techniques for a single country-election. This means that almost all existing measures of the effective space average over time, countries or both.² Yet we need knowledge about the space of particular countries and, most importantly, particular time periods to assess the merits of the dealignment thesis. The raw space can at least provide some information relevant to the dealignment debate when the effective space cannot be estimated. For another, the effective space is a function of the number of parties: by definition, the effective dimensionality must always be less than or equal to the number of parties minus one (Stoll N.d.). This means that the effective conceptualization leaves us with an impoverished picture of the party-defined space for two party systems, and more generally that the effective space is shaped by factors that ideally should not play a role. The raw conceptualization again at least partially compensates.³

2.0 Data and Measures

This brings us to the empirical world. Dealignment is a set of claims about change over time. In order to test these claims, the paper must develop time series measures of both the raw and the effective party-defined spaces structuring political competition in Western Europe. In contrast to most existing studies, it accordingly does not identify either a space spanning the entire post-World War II era (e.g., Warwick 2002) or a space at one single point in time (e.g., Benoit and Laver 2006). Rather, for the common space that encompasses all Western European countries, it develops novel decennial (i.e., decade-by-decade) empirical measures of both the raw and effective spaces. It also develops country-election specific measures of the raw but not the effective space for the reasons discussed above.

2.1 Data

The paper's measures are developed using the CMP's content analysis of political parties' election manifestos (Budge, Klingemann, Volkens, Bara and Tanenbaum 2001; Budge, Klingemann, Volkens, Bara and McDonald 2006). The CMP covers eighteen West European countries from 1950 through either 2003 or 2005.⁴ It matches the quasi-sentences of each party's manifesto in each election with one of fifty-six coding categories, such as "Free Enterprise" and "Foreign Special Relationships: Positive". The number of quasi-sentences in each coding category then serves as an indicator of the salience of that set of issues to the party in that particular election.⁵

Why this data? Quite simply, because the CMP is the only existing source of extensive time series data on the party-defined salience of issues. There are three problems with expert surveys, the most prominent competing data source. First, expert surveys have almost exclusively identified party positions along a single left-right dimension, as Warwick (2002) laments—an incomplete portrait of the political space.⁶ Second, even for those surveys asking about the salience of multiple conflicts (e.g., Morgan 1976; Laver and Hunt 1992; Warwick 2005; Benoit and Laver 2006), each survey is still either a snapshot of a single time period or an average over a longer (and potentially indeterminate) time period, which precludes the development of the time series measures that are needed.⁷ Third, expert surveys do not contain data on the salience of either valence issues or appeals to social groups. Alternative sources of data such as Monroe and Maeda's (2004) computerized coding of political speech; Laver and Garry's (2000) computerized coding of manifestos; and the content analysis of newspaper editorials by Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschieer and Frey (2008) are not available for enough countries and time periods.⁸

Yet the CMP is not without its flaws. The most heated criticism has focused on its use of issue salience to construct measures of parties' positions (e.g., Laver and Garry 2000). The force of this critique is blunted here, though, because this paper does not use the CMP in such a way; rather, to it, salience is salience. Other criticism of the CMP has focused upon its reliability (e.g., Mikheylov, Laver and Benoit 2008). However, this too is less of a concern here because the measures developed below average over parties and/or decades, which should largely balance out any random errors in the data.

2.2 The Raw Party-Defined Space

2.2.1 Conflict and Issue Salience

The paper begins by assessing the salience of six theoretically interesting ideological conflicts in Western Europe over time, an approach that both updates and slightly modifies that originally introduced in Stoll (2004; N. d.). These conflicts are the socioeconomic (class); religious (church-state); ethnic (center-periphery); urban-rural; post-materialist; and foreign policy. All have appeared in numerous studies.⁹ The first four of these conflicts constitute Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) classic

set of foundational political conflicts, which were historically rooted in traditionally important socio-demographic categories. The dealignment and realignment theses both predict that these long-dominant ideological conflicts should be decreasing in salience over the post World-War II period in Western Europe. To briefly elaborate upon the content of each, the socioeconomic or class conflict that originally pitted workers against the bourgeoisie captures the Downsian (1957) battle over the proportion of economic activity left to the private sector, and hence the extent of redistribution. It encompasses issues from health care provision to the level of taxation. What this paper calls the religious or church-state conflict has appeared under different names elsewhere, such as social control and secular-clerical (e.g., Warwick 2005; Benoit and Laver 2006). This conflict revolves around moral issues such as divorce, abortion and (more generally) relations between church and state, with the historical flashpoint being religious education. The ethnic or center-periphery conflict has been called a cultural conflict by other scholars (e.g., Lijphart 1999) and relates to issues such as greater autonomy for ethno-linguistic minorities, immigration and national identity. Arguably closely related to the latter is the urban-rural conflict centered on the role of the agricultural rural sector in both politics and the economy.

By way of contrast, the post-materialist or new politics conflict initially put on the scholarly map by Inglehart (1984) is central to the realignment thesis. Arguably corresponding in many ways to Kitschelt's (1997) authoritarian-libertarian conflict, it encompasses quality of life issues, most prominently environmentalism, that are predicted to have risen in salience from the 1970s on as Western European societies became wealthier (i.e., post-industrial).¹⁰ Finally, the foreign policy conflict revolves around a country's place in the external world, such as the international organizations (such as the European Union) that it joins, the wars that it fights, and the ties that it maintains with ex-colonies. Because the salience of this conflict should be idiosyncratically influenced by external events *and* because it is not historically rooted in traditionally important voter characteristics, a rise in its salience is not *prima facie* incompatible with dealignment. However, several studies have recently argued for a relationship between some aspects of European integration and the new politics (e.g., Hooghe and Marks 1999; Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002, 2004; Marks, Hooghe, Nelson and Edwards 2006), suggesting that any rise in this conflict's salience is instead more compatible with the phenomenon of realignment (see also Bornschier in this volume, but for some arguments to the contrary, see Enyedi 2008: 295).

Turning to the nuts and bolts of the approach, the first step in measuring the salience of these conflicts is to associate CMP coding categories with each. The Appendix describes these associations, many of which are uncontroversial. The second step is to calculate the salience of each conflict. This is nothing other than the average proportion of competing parties' manifestos that are devoted to the coding categories associated with the conflict.¹¹ The interpretation is both simple and intuitive: the more that a conflict dominates the manifestos of the political parties competing in a particular set of countries and elections, the greater the conflict's salience. This is a direct extension of the CMP's procedure for calculating the salience of specific policy issues (coding categories) to individual parties. For the common Western European space, the average is taken over all of the parties competing in the country-elections that occurred in each post-World War II decade, from the 1950s to the 2000s. The 2000s is a partial decade because the CMP only runs through 2005 at the latest, which means that the findings about this decade should be viewed as preliminary. For the country-specific spaces, the average is taken over all of the parties competing in each country-election.

The paper also calculates the salience of several additional types of issues that should shed some light upon the dealignment debate. First are substantively interesting subsets of issues associated with an ideological conflict. That is, for each ideological conflict, one or two of the associated CMP coding categories that showcase broader trends are picked for analysis, with the

proviso that any positional coding categories (e.g., “Welfare State Expansion” and “Welfare State Limitation”) are treated as one by combining them. The average decade-by-decade salience of each category is then calculated as described above. Examples are the categories “EC/EU” and “Special Relationships”; while both are sets of issues associated with the foreign policy conflict, a rise in salience of the former arguably provides support for the realignment thesis, given the posited links between European integration and the new politics discussed above. The exceptions are the urban-rural and religious conflicts: because each already consists of a single or effectively single CMP coding category (i.e., “Agriculture and Farmers” and “Traditional Morality, Negative and Positive”, respectively), analyses of constituent sub-sets of issues are not provided.

Second is the bundle of issues referencing specific social groups of any kind, from trade unions to farmers to homosexuals—a bundle that cross-cuts the ideological conflicts described above. The Appendix lists the corresponding CMP coding categories, which are used to calculate the average salience of social group-related appeals in different decades and country-elections as before. The dealignment thesis predicts that parties increasingly forgo appeals to social groups (especially traditional ones) as politics becomes more individualized (Enyedi 2008: 290, 296). Realignment, by way of contrast, may expect the particular groups to which parties appeal to change, but does not rule out the continued importance of such appeals. Hence, to the extent that group-specific appeals decline, support will be provided for the dealignment over the realignment thesis. This is an aspect of the party-defined political agenda that expert surveys do not empirically explore.

Third is the bundle of valence issues: non-policy issues on which almost everyone agrees (with a preference for either more or less of the thing) and to which parties can be linked to varying degrees (e.g., Stokes 1992; Clark 2009). By way of contrast, the basis for evaluating parties on the policy issues discussed above is which of the possible ideological positions they advocate. While the different types of valence issues that scholars have studied range quite widely, even extending to the policy-related topic of issue ownership, this paper follows Clark in focusing upon the non-policy issues of the competence, corruption (or integrity), and efficiency of particular leaders, parties and the government as a whole. The Appendix again lists the CMP coding categories that contain these types of issues, which allow for the calculation of the average salience of valence issues by decade and country-election in the usual manner. While the dealignment thesis predicts a rise in the salience of these types of non-policy issues at the expense of policy issues related to ideological conflicts (Enyedi 2008: 289—90, 297), realignment does not. This, too, is an aspect of the party-defined political agenda that is left unexplored by expert surveys.

Finally, the paper calculates the average proportion of party manifestos that are uncoded by the CMP by decade for Western Europe as a whole. This is done to address the issue that the CMP coding framework, designed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, might not be able to accommodate any completely new issues that might have arisen subsequent to this period, leading us to underestimate the salience of new issues on the political agenda in the 1990s and 2000s. Because the realignment thesis predicts (or at least implicitly admits to the possibility of) the emergence of completely new issues, an increase in the proportion of manifestos falling outside of the CMP’s coding scheme over time is consistent with this thesis.

2.2.2 Dimensionality

The paper then estimates the raw ideological dimensionality for each decade and country-election. The six conflicts described above are weighed by their estimated saliences using Molinar’s (1991) *NP*, which is a modified version of the well-known effective number statistic of Laakso and Taagepera (1979). Molinar’s procedure is preferred because Laakso and Taagepera’s tends to over-count the most salient conflict and hence to over-estimate the dimensionality. The Appendix again contains more detail. Because this measure by definition confines attention to the ideological

conflicts, it does not directly shine light on the dealignment thesis, except inasmuch as an increase in the salience of the foreign policy conflict, which will lead to an increase in the raw ideological dimensionality, is viewed as an indicator of dealignment. This measure does directly shed light on the realignment thesis, though: the raw ideological dimensionality will initially increase if the posited increase in the salience of the post-materialist conflict occurs.

The same procedure is used to estimate the raw issue dimensionality, where the conflicts considered potentially salient are the smaller sets of issues that constitute the CMP's coding categories. However, instead of using the original fifty-six coding categories, all positional categories (i.e., the "pro" and "anti" versions of a category) are combined to yield forty-three non-positional categories.¹² In contrast to the prior measure, this measure does bring evidence directly to bear against the dealignment thesis: by considering the salience of all of the CMP's coding categories, it takes into account the sets of valence issues that dealignment predicts should be increasing in salience at the expense of the issues associated with the foundational ideological conflicts. Hence, an increase in the raw issue dimensionality is consistent with the dealignment thesis. At the same time, however, it is consistent with the realignment thesis for the reasons discussed above. Knowledge of exactly how the salience of valence and post-materialist issues are changing over time will aid us in discriminating between these two interpretations of the quantitative data.

2.3 The Effective Party-Defined Space

Last but not least is the effective party-defined space. The paper's final task is to explore the similarities between parties' emphases upon different sets of issues in Western Europe over time, identifying the underlying latent dimensions or axes of competition. Both dealignment and realignment predict an increase in the effective dimensionality beginning in the 1970s, but dealignment expects a much greater increase than does realignment. Further, realignment makes specific predictions about the natures of the different dimensions; it arguably also expects the effective dimensionality to eventually decrease as the new politics comes to replace the old politics on the political agenda. Hence, both the number and nature of these latent dimensions in different time periods must be empirically explored. To do so, the paper applies the statistical tool of principal components analysis to the original CMP data set that has party-elections as observations and all fifty-six CMP coding categories as variables.¹³ Common techniques for deciding how many principal components to retain are used to determine the effective dimensionality. An orthogonal, varimax rotation is then applied to the initial solution to aid in the interpretation of the retained components.¹⁴ This analysis is performed on decennial subsets of the CMP data as described above to identify the effective space common to Western European countries over time. Recall that data reduction techniques like principal components analysis unfortunately cannot be used to identify the effective space in a single country-election.

3.0 Findings: Dealignment, Realignment or Neither?

Having described the measures, it is now possible to report the paper's findings about the party-defined political space in Western Europe.

3.1 The Raw Party-Defined Space

Table 1 presents the decade-by-decade estimates of the raw space that is common to all Western European countries. One of the most striking findings to emerge from this table is the extent to which the socioeconomic conflict has dominated the party-defined political agenda in Western Europe throughout the post-World War II period, contrary to the predictions of both the dealignment and realignment theses. For over fifty years, this set of issues has consumed

approximately forty percent of parties' manifestos and has been between three and four times more salient than the second-most salient conflict. As an example, the second most salient conflict in the early 2000s, the ethnic, consumed an average of only fifteen percent of parties' manifestos. Expert surveys conducted at different time points also consistently find the issues related to the socioeconomic conflict to be the most salient, although the more recent surveys find less of a gap in salience between socioeconomics and its ideological competitors than does this paper's CMP-based measure (Morgan 1976; Laver and Hunt 1992; Huber and Inglehart 1995; Warwick 2005; Benoit and Laver 2006). Yet while the socioeconomic conflict has held its ground, its nature has been subtly altered. This can be illustrated by examining the changing salience of two important sub-sets of socioeconomic issues. Favorable mentions of free enterprise and private property rights have declined from an average of three percent of parties' manifestos in the 1950s to an average of only one percent in the 2000s, but concomitantly, the average proportion of manifestos devoted to the welfare state (issues related to both its expansion and limitation) has risen from approximately six percent in the 1950s to nine percent in the 2000s.

Two of the three other foundational ideological conflicts have either held steady or increased in salience, findings again at odds with the dealignment and realignment theses. To elaborate, the salience of the religious conflict has held fairly steady, fluctuating around an average of two percent of parties' manifestos.¹⁵ Even more contrarily (although more on this below), the ethnic conflict has almost doubled its salience from an average of eight percent of parties' manifestos in the 1950s to fifteen percent in the early 2000s. Conversely, the salience of the final foundational conflict, the urban-rural, has fallen from a high of almost six percent of parties' manifestos on average in the 1950s to less than half of that by the 1970s, a level at which it has since largely remained—a pattern supportive of both theses. Expert surveys also find a decline in the salience of the urban-rural conflict (compare, for example, even Laver and Hunt 1992 with Benoit and Laver 2006); reasonable if varying salience for the ethnic conflict in more recent surveys (e.g., Warwick 2005; Benoit and Laver 2006); and a less but still reasonably salient religious conflict (Warwick's recent finding that this conflict is of high salience is the exception).

But what about the non-foundational ideological conflicts? Commensurate with the predictions of the realignment thesis, and contradicting the predictions of the dealignment thesis, the post-materialist conflict has sharply increased its salience to almost nine percent of parties' manifestos in the 1990s from a starting point of approximately zero prior to the 1970s. However, we note the slight decline in its salience in the early 2000s. Comparing the Morgan (1976) and Warwick (2005) expert surveys reveals an even more remarkable rise in this conflict's salience, although the upswing is less pronounced when using Benoit and Laver's (2006) contemporary findings. Also arguably contradictory to the dealignment thesis, the salience of the foreign policy conflict has largely held steady, fluctuating around ten percent of parties' manifestos. Yet as with the socio-economic conflict, there have been important changes in its content, some of which lend even more support to the realignment thesis: issues pertaining to the European Community/Union (EC/EU) have received greater attention over time even as other foreign policy issues, such as the discussion of special relationships with other countries (e.g., colonies), has gradually diminished. The rising salience of EU-related issues can also be seen by comparing the Laver and Hunt (1992) and Benoit and Laver expert surveys.

More support for the dealignment thesis appears when we examine the average proportion of party manifestos devoted to social groups on the one hand and to valence issues on the other, however. Both are presented in Table 1. Appeals to social groups have decreased from an average of fifteen percent of manifestos in the 1950s to an average of eleven percent in the early 2000s, while the share of manifestos devoted to valence issues has increased from an average of about six percent in the 1950s to ten percent in the 1990s. Yet in the greater scheme of things, these observed

changes are relatively modest. Moreover, like the post-materialist conflict, the salience of valence issues has declined in the early 2000s, although too much should not be read into this given the limited data available for this decade. Finally, the average proportion of manifestos falling outside of the CMP's coding scheme since the 1980s has surprisingly drastically decreased. While this is not inconsistent with the realignment thesis, given its focus upon the relatively new ideological conflict of post-materialism, the emergence of completely new issues in the last two decades would arguably have even further bolstered the case for it.

Moving on to the two measures of the raw dimensionality, little support appears for either the dealignment or realignment theses from the issue dimensionality, which has slightly decreased over the post-World War II period. The very slight increase in the ideological dimensionality from 1.3 to 1.6 salient dimensions, by way of contrast, provides some support for realignment, but only some: it reflects the increased salience of post-materialist issues on the party-defined political agenda but also the continued overwhelming dominance of socioeconomic issues.

Not surprisingly, similar trends are generally observed at the level of individual Western European countries. Figure 1 graphically presents the salience of the six ideological conflicts; social group appeals; and valence issues for four of these countries from 1950 through the early 2000s: Belgium, France, Norway and the United Kingdom. These four countries were chosen for their collective diversity with respect to important cultural-geographic and political factors, as well as for their representativeness regarding the data.¹⁶ In all of these countries except for Belgium, where socioeconomics was briefly eclipsed by the ethnic conflict in the 1970s, socioeconomics has by far and away been the most salient conflict on the party-defined political agenda throughout the post-war period. Similarly, religion has largely maintained a steady, if small, presence. Both of these findings contradict the dealignment and realignment theses. Yet more in keeping with the realignment thesis, the salience of post-materialist issues has risen over time in all four countries, with Norway seeing the largest increase. Similarly, the urban-rural conflict has largely faded away in each, even though it took longer to do so in France than in either Belgium or Norway (the late 1990s versus the 1970s). The remaining two ideological conflicts display less in the way of cross-national similarities. The only notable trends regarding foreign policy are an increase in salience in Norway largely in the 1990s and a decrease in France over the entire post-World War II period, with a lesser decrease in the United Kingdom. Regarding the ethnic conflict, while France and the United Kingdom have both seen a substantial increase in its salience, particularly in the 1990s, Belgium and Norway have both conversely seen this conflict's salience decline after peaking in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively.¹⁷

Contradictory findings also emerge from the different countries regarding the salience of both social group appeals and valence issues over time. Explicit references to social groups of all types have declined markedly in Norway and Belgium, with the latter decline being particularly notable. France, by way of contrast, has experienced only a slight decline in references to social groups since the 1970s, and the United Kingdom has experienced a slight increase that accelerated in the late 1990s. Similarly, while the salience of valence issues in Belgium and the United Kingdom has greatly increased since the 1980s, Norway has seen little change (only a small increase) and France no change worth speaking of since a sharp drop in the 1950s that can likely be explained by the replacement of the dysfunctional Fourth Republic with the Fifth. More consistent findings are obtained from the raw ideological dimensionality, which Figure 2 graphs over time. From this figure, it can be seen that each of the four countries except for Belgium has experienced an increase in the raw ideological dimensionality, commensurate with the realignment thesis. The largest increase has been experienced by Norway: its space expanded from approximately one salient dimension in the 1950s to two by the 1990s. No clear trend is observed in the raw issue dimensionality, however, which is not displayed here in the interests of space.¹⁸

Yet in closing this portion of the book on the two theses, it is important to offer a caveat about both theoretically and empirically distinguishing between the ethnic and post-materialist conflicts. Theoretically, Inglehart's (1984) new politics, and particularly the closely related work of Kitschelt (1997), arguably makes room for a politics of identity, even though this paper believes that a distinction can be (and historically has been) made between the two. Empirically, the two conflicts are often functionally equivalent in the CMP data, given the way in which the coding categories are defined.¹⁹ Indeed, the next section will demonstrate that the two conflicts are empirically intertwined, and elsewhere in this volume, Bornschier both argues for and presents evidence that a cultural dimension of conflict opposing post-materialist, universal values with traditional, communitarian values exists orthogonal to the socioeconomic conflict from the 1970s on. With both these theoretical and empirical concerns in mind, the paper also estimated the salience of an ideological conflict that combined the post-materialist and ethnic issues, which was then compared with the salience of the remaining conflicts such as the socioeconomic.²⁰ While this broader post-materialist-cum-ethnic conflict has not surprisingly been more salient than either conflict has been individually, resulting in close to two dimensional spaces in many countries by the 1990s, the overall findings and hence the conclusions drawn remain the same as those reported above.

3.2 The Effective Party-Defined Space

Finally, the paper arrives at the effective space common to all Western European countries. The first issue is the dimensionality of this space. As Warwick (2002) has noted, the CMP's coding categories do not inter-correlate highly, even when theory unambiguously tells us that they should go together.²¹ The consequence is that the CMP data does not yield large principal components, which makes it difficult to decide how many components to retain. Indeed, using the standard criterion of retaining all components with eigenvalues greater than one, the result would be between twenty and twenty-two components for the various decades (more on this below; see Table 2).²² For the same reason, the criterion of retaining as many components as are necessary to account for a certain percentage of the variance, where this percentage is usually at least seventy, is not helpful. What is left is the admittedly subjective scree test, which plots the components' eigenvalues in decreasing order and retains those components prior to the line's flattening out.

Table 2 presents the first ten eigenvalues for each of the decades analyzed. Using this table as well as scree plots not reproduced here in the interests of space, the paper's best judgment is that three dimensions should be retained for the 1950s; two dimensions for the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s; one dimension for the 1990s; and two dimensions for the early 2000s. Of particular interest in this table is the increasing proportion of the variance explained by the first component over time, as well as the decrease in the variance explained by the second component from the 1980s to the 1990s after a steady increase up to that point. These results suggest that the dimensionality of the effective space has decreased over the post-war period, with the exception of the 2000s when it increased. However, caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions about the 2000s: the number of cases is small relative to the number of variables. At minimum, though, there is no evidence of the increase in dimensionality around the 1970s predicted by both the dealignment and realignment theses. Contrary to the dealignment thesis, politics has not become less structured since the 1970s in Western Europe. And contrary to the realignment thesis, a secondary axis of competition surprisingly existed prior to the 1970s, when the new post-materialist conflict made its big splash on the political agenda.

The second issue is the content of these dimensions. For each decade, Table 3 presents the loadings of the CMP coding categories upon each retained and rotated component.²³ However, only categories with more than one loading of at least 0.20 are shown to simplify the presentation.²⁴

Beginning with the 1950s, the first and largest dimension is best described as an axis of traditional socioeconomic conflict: loading positively are references to free enterprise, economic orthodoxy and welfare state limitation; loading negatively are favorable references to government control of the economy and labor groups. The second component is more difficult to pin down. Loading negatively are categories such as environmental protection; culture; social justice; welfare state expansion; multiculturalism; and support for traditional morality. This component seems to combine aspects of the post-materialist, religious and ethnic conflicts, with a dash of traditional socioeconomic conflict thrown in for good measure. The third dimension is more readily interpretable. It can best be described as an axis of conflict around foreign policy and specifically around internationalism: positive loadings are obtained from favorable mentions of protectionism and infrastructure development, whereas negative loadings include favorable mentions of peace, internationalism and the EC/EU.

For the 1960s through the 1980s, the first and second dimensions of competition are similar to those of the 1950s: a primary socioeconomic axis, although one that also incorporates aspects of foreign policy, and a secondary axis with both post-materialist and ethnic overtones. Specifically, loading fairly consistently on the first, socioeconomic dimension in these three decades are references to free enterprise; the need for incentives to encourage economic enterprise; the need for economic orthodoxy; peace; opposition to the military; and positive views of labor groups. In the 1970s, concerns about social justice (such as equality) and issues surrounding the welfare state also began to load onto this dimension. Turning to the second dimension, the only category that consistently loads is culture. The interpretation of this dimension is nevertheless reasonably clear-cut: also making appearances in various decades are references to decentralization; environmental protection; technology and infrastructure development; educational expansion; and various non-labor social groups such as the middle class, professionals, women and the elderly—most of which have either post-materialist or ethnic connotations. References to the EC/EU associate with both of the two dimensions over the three decades, as do references to democracy, which can take on either foreign policy or post-materialist connotations. Hence, this analysis suggests that political competition began to become more tightly structured in the 1960s, with the foreign policy issues that had constituted a third dimension in the 1950s largely being absorbed by the first two dimensions—an especially sensible merging of socioeconomics and foreign policy in light of the ongoing Cold War.

In the 1990s, a single axis of competition came to encompass both the primary socioeconomic dimension and the secondary and now more exclusively post-materialist dimension. One need only to observe that issues such as the welfare state; the environment; social justice; the military; and free enterprise all load onto a single dimension to be convinced of this. Accordingly, this decade saw political competition in Western Europe become even more structured, contrary to the predictions of both the dealignment and realignment theses—and despite the rising salience of the post-materialist and ethnic conflicts.

Yet in a partial throwback to the 1950s, foreign policy and ethnic issues re-emerged in the early 2000s as an axis of competition that cross-cut the primary socioeconomic-cum-post-materialist dimension. This new secondary dimension might be described as embodying a conflict between the internationalism represented by the EU on the one hand and the particularism represented by the nation-state on the other, with immigration a major flashpoint (see also Bornschier in this volume). For example, the categories loading highly onto this dimension are opposition to the EU; opposition to internationalism; freedom and human rights; government efficiency; culture; support for the national way of life; and anti-multiculturalism. Such a development is not surprising given the many controversies surrounding the EU in this period, from its pending enlargement into Eastern Europe to the replacement of national currencies by the euro. Benoit and Laver (2006) also found most

Western European countries to have multi-dimensional political spaces in the early 2000s: a primary socioeconomic dimension combining elements of post-materialism and a secondary dimension usually concerning European integration. Similarly, for Western Europe as a whole in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Hooghe and Marks (1999), Hooghe, Marks and Wilson (2002), Hooghe, Marks and Wilson (2004), Marks and Steenbergen (2002) and Marks, Hooghe, Nelson and Edwards (2006) have all found some aspects of European integration related to the left-right and new politics dimensions (which are themselves closely related) but other aspects orthogonal to them.

4.0 Conclusion

The goal of this paper was to investigate the phenomenon of dealignment, otherwise known as the decline of cleavage politics, in Western Europe from a relatively novel perspective. Despite the focus of much of the literature upon the mass level of analysis, dealignment also has implications for the elite level and specifically for party politics—a gap that this paper attempted to fill. Using the Comparative Manifesto Project, the paper developed the most extensive time series measures to date of the party-defined political space in Western Europe at two levels: individual country-elections and the region as a whole by decade, both for the entire post-World War II period.

The paper first explored the number and nature of the types of salient issues on the party-defined political agenda in Western Europe, which it called the raw space. This analysis revealed that dealignment has made inroads: political parties make fewer references in their election platforms to social groups of any type today, and they also spend more time talking about non-ideological valence issues such as corruption and competence. However, the analysis also revealed that dealignment is not the best lens through which to view elite level changes in Western European party systems since the 1970s. First, the salience of post-materialist or new politics issues was found to have risen in accordance with the realignment but not the dealignment thesis. On an arguably related front, the salience of ethnic issues was also observed to rise over time. Second, contrary to both theses, the foundational ideological conflicts of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) were still found towering over the political agenda today. Particularly, the socioeconomic conflict, historically anchored in voters' relations to the means of production and revolving around issues such as equality and the state's role in the market, dominates the discourse of political parties in Western Europe in the 2000s, just as it did in the 1950s. Of course, this says nothing about how parties and voters relate: very different configurations of social groups might anchor parties' appeals about economic policy issues at different points in time. In fact, studies operating at the mass level of analysis have made just this case for realignment (see, for example, many of the other contributions to this volume). It is nevertheless a striking finding, one at *prima facie* odds with both the dealignment and realignment theses, that elite level politics retains much of its old pattern of issue salience.

The paper then explored the structuration of the party-defined political agenda. It used principal components analysis to identify the latent axes of competition, which it called the effective space, by decade. The key findings were two-fold. First, a secondary axis of competition encompassing post-materialist and ethnic issues already existed in the 1950s alongside a primary socioeconomic axis, contrary to the realignment thesis. In other words, the foundational socioeconomic conflict has a longer-than-expected history (predating the 1970s, when the new politics is conventionally held to have arisen) of being cross-cut by a values- and identity-laden conflict akin to the post-materialist. Second, despite its expansion, the political agenda has generally become more structured over the post-war period, contrary to the dealignment thesis and arguably also contrary to the realignment thesis. Most importantly, the secondary dimension that combines elements of what this paper called the post-materialist and ethnic conflicts came to overlap with

instead of cross-cut the primary socioeconomic dimension in the 1990s, a finding commensurate with that of other scholars who have used different data and worked at different levels of analyses (e.g., Kitschelt 1997; Hooghe and Marks 1999). However, the early 2000s saw the re-emergence of a cross-cutting secondary dimension that combines issues related to both foreign policy (specifically, the EU) and ethnicity (see also Hooghe, Marks and Wilson 2002)—an axis of competition that resembles the value-based and identity-driven one that Bornschier (elsewhere in this volume) argues has recently come to structure Western European politics.

Hence, this paper finds that dealignment has made a mark in Western Europe, but that that mark is not anywhere near the sea change that some foresaw. Politics remains both ideological and structured at the elite level. Moreover, the large-scale and consequential political divisions or cleavages that emerged in the first half of the twentieth century largely remain the organizing principles of partisan conflict at the dawn of the twenty-first century, even if their social bases have changed. While the emergence of a new politics cleavage in particular does provide support for the realignment thesis, this support must be qualified in light of the many aspects of the party-defined political space in Western Europe that have not changed over the post-World War II era. The paper thus agrees with Enyedi's (2008) intermediary position that cleavage politics remains relevant in Western Europe today, although its nature has been altered. An example is the rise in political conflict about issues rooted in ethnic and racial categories relative to class, to the perhaps unfounded dismay of many (e.g., Chandra 2004). As new data becomes available from the second half of the 2000s, future work should revisit the extent to which cleavage politics in Western Europe remains (somewhat) new wine in old bottles at the elite level.

Appendix: Measuring the Raw Party-Defined Space

First, measuring the salience of the six potentially salient ideological conflicts requires CMP coding categories to be associated with each of the conflicts. These associations are:

- Socioeconomic: PER401, “Free Enterprise”; PER402, “Incentives”; PER403, “Market Regulation”; PER404, “Economic Planning”; PER406, “Corporatism”; PER407, “Protectionism, Positive”; PER408, “Protectionism, Negative”; PER409, “Keynesian Demand Management”; PER410, “Productivity”; PER411, “Technology and Infrastructure”; PER412, “Controlled Economy”; PER413, “Nationalization”; PER414, “Economic Orthodoxy”; PER415, “Marxist Analysis”; PER503, “Social Justice”; PER504, “Welfare State Expansion”; PER505, “Welfare State Limitation”; PER506, “Educational Expansion”; PER507, “Educational Limitation”; PER701, “Labor Groups, Positive”; PER702, “Labor Groups, Negative”; and PER703, “Middle Class and Professional Groups”.
- Ethnic: PER301, “Decentralization”; PER302, “Centralization”; PER601, “National Way of Life, Negative”; PER602, “National Way of Life, Positive”; PER607, “Multiculturalism, Positive”; PER608, “Multiculturalism, Negative”; PER705, “Underprivileged Minorities”; and PER706, “Non-economic Demographic Groups”.
- Religious: PER603, “Traditional Morality, Positive” and PER604, “Traditional Morality, Negative.”
- Urban-rural: PER703, “Agriculture and Farmers”.
- Post-materialist: PER416, “Anti-growth” and PER501, “Environment”.
- Foreign policy: PER101, “Foreign Special Relationships, Positive”; PER102, “Foreign Special Relationships, Negative”; PER103, “Anti-imperialism”; PER104, “Military: Positive”; PER105, “Military: Negative”; PER106, “Peace”; PER107, “Internationalism, Positive”;

PER108, “EC-EU, Positive”; PER109, “Internationalism, Negative”; and PER110, “EC-EU, Negative”.

A limited number of country- and time-specific modifications to these associations are introduced to deal with the CMP’s unfortunate inclusion of disparate issues in several categories, primarily those relating to the non-socioeconomic conflicts. For example, the categories PER502, “Culture”, and PER605, “Law and Order”, are sometimes associated with the post-materialist conflict; sometimes with the ethnic conflict; and sometimes with no conflict. See the supplemental paper for details.

Second, to measure the salience of both explicit references to social groups and valence issues, CMP coding categories containing these types of issues are identified:

- Social Groups: PER701, “Labor Groups: Positive”; PER702, “Labor Groups: Negative”; PER703, “Agriculture and Farmers”; PER704, “Middle Class and Professional Groups”; PER705, “Underprivileged Minority Groups”; and PER706, “Non-economic Demographic Groups”.
- Valence Issues: PER303, “Governmental and Administrative Efficiency”; PER304, “Political Corruption”; and PER305, “Political Authority”.

Third, the ideological dimensionality for the k th country-election (or decade) is calculated using Molinar’s (1991) version of the effective number, NP_k , as follows:

$$NP_k = 1 + N_k \frac{\left(\sum_l R_{k,l}^2 \right) - \max_l R_{k,l}^2}{\sum_l R_{k,l}^2},$$

where $R_{k,l}$ is the average salience of the l th conflict in the k th country-election (or decade) and N_k is the well-known effective number of conflicts for the k th country-election (or decade). The issue dimensionality is calculated comparably using the average saliences of the forty-three non-positional CMP coding categories.

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	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
<i>Conflict and Issue Salience</i>						
Socioeconomic	42	43	41	40	39	41
(Free Enterprise)	3.0	2.7	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.4
(Welfare State)	5.8	7.0	6.7	7.3	7.4	9.0
Ethnic	8.1	10	12	13	13	15
(Multiculturalism)	1.2	0.82	0.89	0.65	1.1	1.7
(Centralization)	1.4	2.3	3.0	3.0	2.8	2.9
Religious	2.2	1.5	2.4	1.9	2.7	2.7
Urban-rural	5.8	3.8	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.7
Foreign policy	11	12	8.3	9.9	9.7	9.6
(EC/EU)	0.93	1.7	1.6	1.9	3.3	3.4
(Special Relationships)	2.3	1.8	0.93	0.89	0.44	0.41
Post-materialist	0.22	0.90	3.8	6.6	8.8	7.0
(Environmental Protection)	0.22	0.90	3.6	5.9	7.2	5.7
Social Groups	15	13	12	12	10	11
Valence	6.3	5.3	6.5	9.0	10	8.3
Uncoded	13	13	12	7.5	3.7	2.7
<i>Raw Dimensionality</i>						
Ideological Dimensionality	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.6
Issue Dimensionality	24	22	22	22	22	19

Table 1: Empirical measures of conflict salience, issue salience and raw space dimensionality by decade based on CMP data from 1950—2003 for Western European countries (2005 for the United Kingdom). Salience is measured by the average percentage of political parties’ manifestos devoted to the set of issues, with the salience of sub-sets of issues of ideological conflicts shown in parentheses.

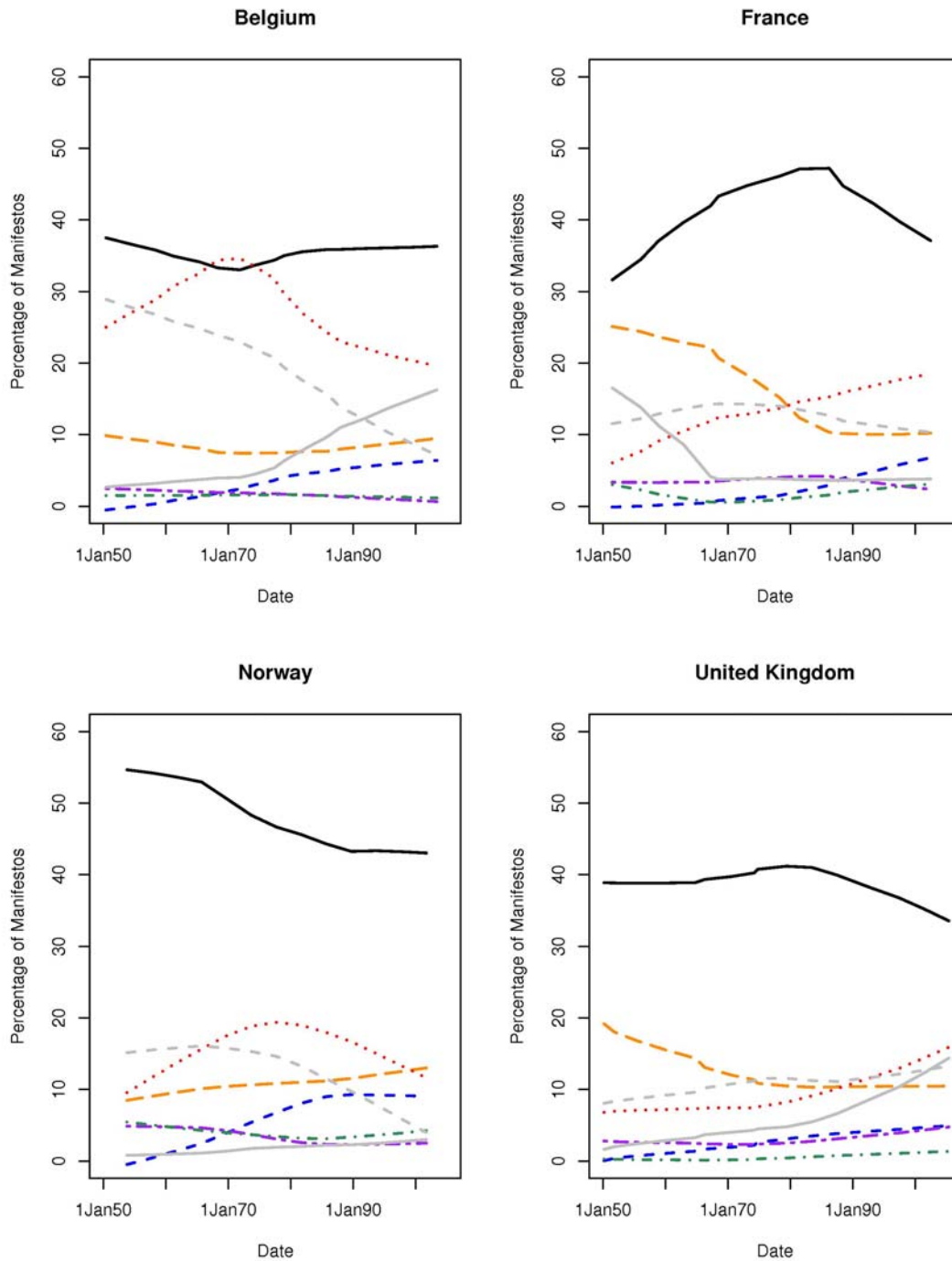


Figure 1: LOWESS smoothed conflict and issue salience in four Western European countries, 1950—2003 (2005 for the United Kingdom): socioeconomic (solid black); ethnic (dotted red); foreign policy (long dashed orange); religious (dot-dashed green); urban—rural (two dashed purple); post-materialist (dashed blue); valence (solid gray); and social groups (dashed gray).

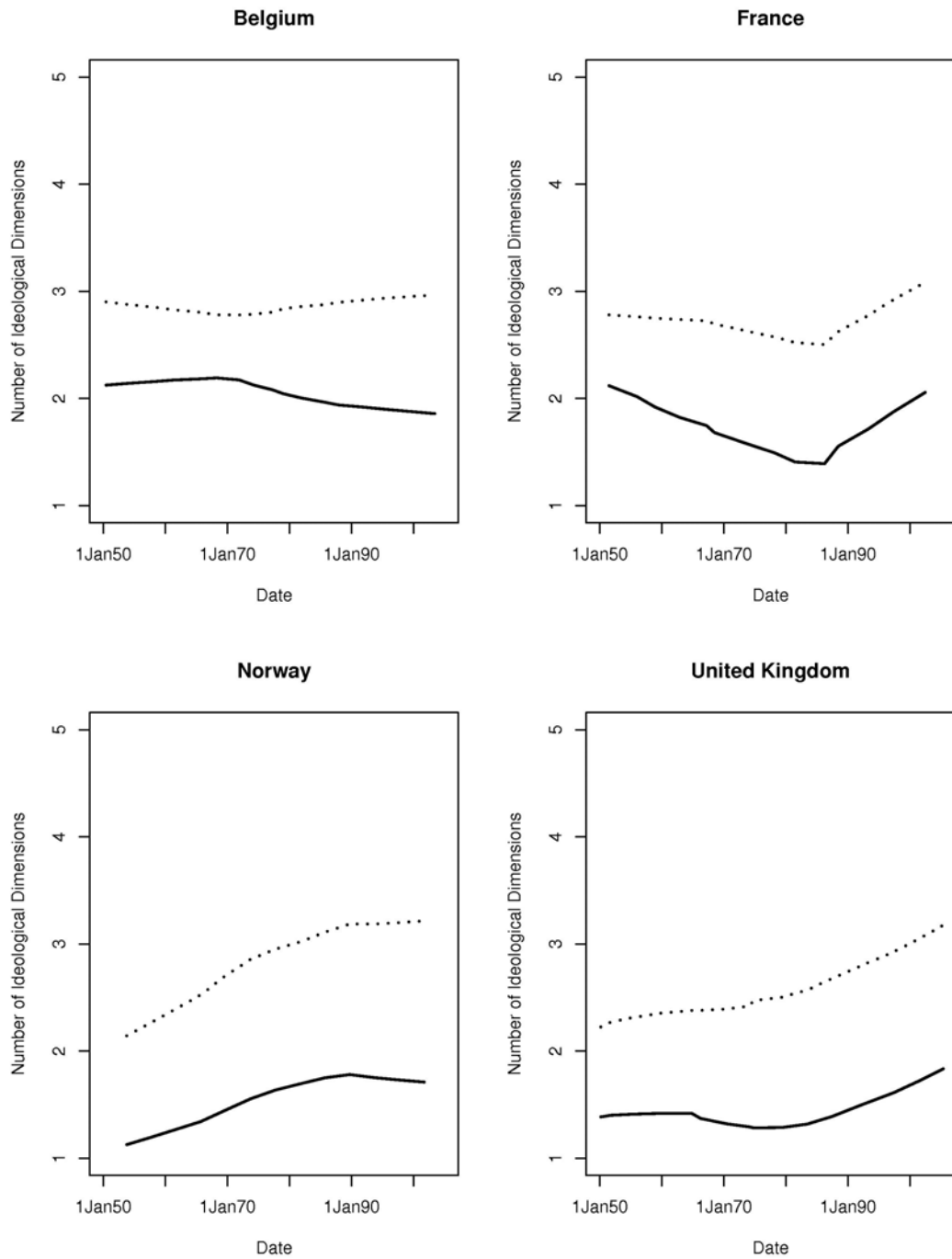


Figure 2: LOWESS smoothed raw ideological dimensionality in four Western European countries, 1950—2003 (2005 for the United Kingdom). An alternative measure using the standard effective number of Laakso and Taagepera (1979) is shown in dotted black.

Component	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
1	3.1	3.7	3.7	4.2	4.2	5.5
2	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.5	2.9	4.0
3	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	3.0
4	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.7
5	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.0	2.5
6	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	2.2
7	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.1
8	1.8	1.9	1.7	1.8	1.8	2.1
9	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.8	1.7	1.8
10	1.7	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6

Table 2: Eigenvalues of the first ten components, in descending order, from principal components analyses of CMP data from 1950—2003 for eighteen Western European countries (2005 for the United Kingdom) by decade.

Component	1950s			1960s		1970s		1980s		1990s	2000s	
	1	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	2
Anti-imperialism			-0.34			0.22					-0.23	
Military (-)	-0.26			0.34		0.26		-0.25		0.26	-0.27	
Peace	-0.21		-0.29	0.26				-0.24			-0.20	
Internationalism (+)			-0.26									-0.21
EC/EU (+)			-0.30				0.25					
EC/EU (-)				0.23								-0.25
Democracy						0.27			-0.23			
Decentralization					0.28		0.25					
Government Efficiency								0.22		-0.21	0.23	
Free Enterprise	0.30			-0.26		-0.29		0.29		-0.29	0.20	
Incentives				-0.23		-0.21		0.21		-0.21		
Technology & Infrastructure		-0.23	0.24		0.30				0.31		0.24	0.22
Controlled Economy	-0.20			0.26								
Nationalization	-0.25			0.24		0.25					-0.24	
Economic Orthodoxy	0.35			-0.28	-0.20	-0.30		0.23				
Marxist Analysis									-0.24		-0.21	
Environmental Protection		-0.27					0.22			0.25	-0.18	
Culture		-0.28			0.31		0.30		0.25			0.23
Social Justice		-0.22				0.20		-0.24		0.22	-0.25	
Welfare State Expansion		-0.29							0.21			
Welfare State Limitation	0.23					-0.21		0.21		-0.23	0.21	
Education Expansion		-0.31			0.27				0.24			
Law & Order						-0.22				-0.26	-0.23	
Multiculturalism (+)		-0.24			0.27		0.24					
Labor Groups (+)	-0.32			0.30		0.23				0.20	-0.26	
Middle Class & Professionals					0.25		0.23					
Underprivileged Minority Groups							0.27		0.20			
Non-economic Demographic Groups					0.29		0.30					
Total Variance Explained (%)	5.8	5.3	4.8	6.7	5.5	6.6	5.6	7.4	6.2	7.5	9.9	7.1

Table 3: Loadings of CMP coding categories (more than one loading ≥ 0.20) on the retained and varimax rotated (except for the 1990s) components from principal components analyses of CMP data from 1950-2003 (2005 for the United Kingdom) for eighteen Western European countries by decade.

Notes

¹ See Enyedi (2008) for a recent review of this debate.

² For example, Warwick (2002) estimated an empirical space for the entire post-World War II period and all Western European countries, whereas Budge, Robertson and Hearl (1987) estimated country-specific empirical spaces that spanned all available elections for each country. One way around this problem with expert surveys is to use the individual experts' ratings of parties as the units in specific country-time period analyses, a slight of hand performed by both Laver and Hunt (1992) and Benoit and Laver (2006). However, as Warwick (*Ibid.*: 119) points out, this is an artificial inflation of the number of cases that has the downside of introducing inter-expert variance into the analysis.

³ Note that the latter two issues do not arise for the voter-defined effective space because the number of voters is large, unlike the number of parties.

⁴ These eighteen countries are Austria; Belgium; Denmark; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Iceland; Ireland; Italy; Luxembourg; the Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; and the United Kingdom. The CMP's coverage actually begins in 1945, but the first five years of elections (until 1950) are dropped here to allow for the resumption of more normal politics in the aftermath of World War II. Coverage ends in 2003 for all countries except the United Kingdom, for which it ends in 2005.

⁵ See Budge et al. (2001), and particularly the Appendix to this volume, for a detailed description of the project.

⁶ Prominent examples of such surveys include Castles and Mair (1984) and Huber and Inglehart (1995). While the latter did ask respondents to suggest a second dimension of political conflict in their country, only a few did so, and among those few, there was little agreement about the identity of the second dimension.

⁷ Budge (2000) discusses the indeterminacy of expert judgments touched upon by the second of these points; see also Warwick (2002: 112 and note 18). Even elite surveys that replicate at least some portions of earlier surveys with the goal of facilitating comparison over time span only a very limited number of years. For example, while the surveys of Laver and Hunt (1992) and Benoit and Laver (2006) enable one to compare expert judgments of salience between the late 1980s and early 2000s, a rigorous assessment of the dealignment thesis requires data from prior to the 1970s. The only earlier survey, that of Morgan (1976), covers the entire period from 1945 to 1973 and moreover is not directly comparable to later ones. Comparability is an issue here and elsewhere because the different surveys explore different sets of issues and cover different countries. To illustrate, Warwick's (2005) survey does not include any foreign policy issues, in contrast to Laver and Hunt's. More in-depth reviews of existing expert surveys, as well as of other data generation procedures such as surveys of political elites like parliamentarians, can be found in Stoll (2004) and Benoit and Laver (2006). Regarding the latter, political elite surveys have been few and far between; moreover, only elites from a single country (e.g., Jackman 1998) and/or a single time period (e.g., Iversen 1994) have usually been surveyed. Note that the indeterminacy of expert surveys may also extend to the elite versus the mass level of analysis. That is, are experts really evaluating the salience and/or positions of parties themselves, or might they actually have party voters in mind?

⁸ For example, the Kriesi et al. (2008) data begins in the 1970s and covers only a few subsequent elections in six Western European countries.

⁹ Take, for example, Lijphart (1999), who assesses the salience of all six of these conflicts over the post-war period in order to construct his well-known measure of the effective issue dimensionality of party systems.

¹⁰ Note that Warwick (2005) views the authoritarian-libertarian conflict as closely related to the religious conflict instead of to the post-materialist.

¹¹ This paper does not follow scholars such as Benoit and Laver (2006) in weighing each party by its vote share because its goal is to keep the party- and voter-defined spaces separate. Only parties that are politically significant according to Sartori's (1976) influential criteria are included in the CMP, and for the purposes of this paper, all such parties should be allowed to contribute to the party-defined space.

¹² For example, the category PER603, "Traditional Morality, Positive" is combined with category PER604, "Traditional Morality, Negative". Using the original fifty-six coding categories will obviously yield a higher issue dimensionality; however, because there are only thirteen actual issue categories underlying the twenty-six positional categories, the better measure of the issue dimensionality is obtained from the smaller, non-positional set of categories.

¹³ Technically, the input is the data's correlation matrix because the variances of the coding categories differ by several orders of magnitude. Principal components analysis is more appropriate than factor analysis because no assumptions are made about the underlying latent structure. Rather, the paper's goal is for the data to speak for itself—which is exactly what principal components analysis allows it to do. An exploratory factor analysis nevertheless yields results in the same ballpark. Using the more aggregated, non-positional set of CMP coding categories described above (i.e., where positional sub-categories are combined) yields reasonably similar if less interpretable results except for the 1970s, for which one might make the case for retaining more (between three and five) components.

¹⁴ Similar, if somewhat less interpretable, results are obtained using the original, unrotated components.

¹⁵ This is likely an underestimate of this conflict's salience, stemming from the structure of the CMP's coding categories. See the supplemental paper for more details.

¹⁶ For one, this group includes an Anglo-Saxon country, a Scandinavian country, a large continental country, and one of the Benelux countries. For another, it includes three EU members and one non-EU member, although one of the EU members is not a member of the Eurozone. Graphs of the remaining fourteen Western European countries included in the analysis can be found in the supplemental paper. Note that the non-parametric robust locally weighted regression (LOWESS) smoother developed by Cleveland (1979) is applied to the data prior to plotting to help bring out trends in salience over time. Intervals that contained two-thirds of the data points were used, as is standard. The supplemental paper also contains unsmoothed graphs.

¹⁷ Expert surveys generally lead to similar conclusions. One example is that they, too, have found an ethnic and/or a centralization-decentralization dimension (the latter of which is surely rooted in the ethnic conflict) to be very salient in Belgium (e.g., Morgan 1976; Benoit and Laver 2006). Another is that Benoit and Laver found environmental policy (i.e., post-materialism) to be relatively more salient in Belgium and Norway than in France and the United Kingdom.

¹⁸ Graphs of the raw ideological dimensionality for the other fourteen Western European countries included in the analysis are available in the supplemental paper. Graphs of the raw issue dimensionality for all countries are also presented there.

¹⁹ One need only think of the Scottish National Party's demands for the decentralization of political authority in the United Kingdom versus a Green party's demand for decentralization to increase participation in the democratic process, both of which are coded as belonging to the CMP's "Decentralization" category.

²⁰ As usual, these results can be found in the supplemental paper. Future research will hopefully be able to use new data sources to do a better job of empirically assessing the salience of these two conflicts than this paper was able to do.

²¹ For example, in the entire CMP data set, the categories "Military: Positive" and "Military: Negative" only correlate at -0.11, despite the fact that they are obviously related. Besides the reasons offered by Warwick such as the saliency theory-driven methodology of the CMP's content analysis, another less fundamental explanation may be that the data does not come close to following a normal distribution. To elaborate, many observations have values of zero for many coding categories; most coding categories that are non-zero contain small values; but at the same time there are extreme outliers with large values. Accordingly, the empirical distribution resembles either an exponential or a log-normal, and for non-normal data, the correlation coefficient has a smaller range than the usual reference interval of [-1, 1]. See Shih and Huang (1992) for more details.

²² Specifically, twenty-two components would be retained for the 1950s; twenty for the 1960s; twenty-one for the 1970s; twenty for the 1980s; and twenty-one for both the 1990s and early 2000s.

²³ The exception is the 1990s, for which loadings are reported for the original, unrotated first component given that only one component is retained. Nevertheless, if two components are retained and the usual varimax rotation is performed, similar results are obtained.

²⁴ Categories that had only one loading of at least 0.20 are: foreign relationships (positive), the third component of the 1950s; military (positive), the 1990s; human rights and freedom, the second component of the 2000s; constitutionalism, the second component of the 1950s; political corruption, the second component of the 1980s; political authority, the second component of the 1980s; corporatism, the second component of the 1950s; protectionism, the third component of the 1950s; national way of life (positive), the second component of the 2000s; traditional morality (positive), the second component of the 1950s; and multiculturalism (negative), the second component of the 2000s.