

Ideology, Partisanship, and Democratic Development

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Electoral politics provides a means for society to make collective judgments about the past policies of government and the direction a future government should follow. Often elections represent a competition between groups and their contending interests within a nation. Of course, these divisions can take many forms. For a large part of the twentieth century, the economic competition between social classes seemed to dominate politics in many Western democracies. In other nations, religious, regional, or other social cleavages define the issues of electoral politics and public policy. The issues and personalities of campaigns are often derived from these competing social interests, or at least this is the presumption of many election campaigns.

At a deeper level, democracy should be a competition between different worldviews or ideologies that address societal needs. Social Democrats, if elected, approach public policy with a different framework than Christian Democrats. Liberals have a different *Weltanschauung* than Green parties. And often the reporting on elections stresses the competition between liberal views and conservative views, Left versus Right, or other ideological frameworks.

This chapter examines the roots of such political division. How does social modernization and democratization transform the ideological basis of citizens' political orientations? Furthermore, how does modernization affect partisan attitudes and voter choice?

We begin by discussing the theoretical debates about how socio-political development shapes citizens' broad political orientations. We map the distribution of these orientations—measured by Left-Right identities—for citizens in a set of contemporary democracies surveyed by the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). Because it focuses on democratic elections, the CSES nations tend to be more affluent and established democracies. This underrepresents the poorest democracies, although several of these nations are included in the CSES. The next section describes the correlates of these Left-Right orientations to illustrate their varied content. We also describe how these same developmental processes affect party attachments. Finally, we examine the extent to which Left-Right orientations are linked to party choices—the extent to which voting is ideologically based. These results allow us to describe how social and political modernization broadly affects electoral behavior.

Modernization and Political Division

Research on development and electoral politics is framed by two debates about the nature of political cleavages in democratic nations. One debate involves Daniel Bell's (1970) provocative claim that socio-economic development moderates political differences in a nation, leading to an "End of Ideology." Affluence, the growth of the welfare state, expanding employment in the tertiary sector, and increasing geographic and social mobility all contribute to the blurring of traditional political divisions based on an economic cleavage. For instance, the widely acknowledged decline in class voting in Western democracies demonstrates the moderation of the historic economic cleavage underlying a Marxist view of human development (Nieuwbeerta and De Graaf 1999; Knutsen 2006). Bell also argued that modern

societies were steadily becoming more secular, which lessens the moral content of political debate (also see Norris and Inglehart 2004).

At the same time, Bell held that deep ideological divisions are still a powerful political force in developing nations. He emphasized the importance of nationalism, ethnicity, Pan-Arabism, and other ideological conflicts in the developing world. In a recent update to his book, Bell (2000) stressed the role of ethnicity and nationalism as sources of division in developing nations.

In summary, the *End of Ideology Thesis* claims that political cleavages, and thus political conflict, will lessen as societies modernize. In part, socio-economic progress provides the resources to address the economic needs that stimulate many group conflicts. In addition, the increasing diversity and complexity of modern societies produce cross-cutting interests that blur existing lines of division. In practical terms, this implies that citizens and political parties start to converge to moderate centrist positions (e.g., Kirchheimer 1966). The most definitive study of voting behavior in advanced industrial democracies found that social divisions in voting choice were weakening, which the authors attributed to the resolution of long-standing social cleavages through the democratic process (Franklin et al. 1992: ch. 15). In short, modernization produces centripetal forces that moderate political polarization and ideological conflict.

Other evidence supported Bell's claim of the continuing potency of ethnic divisions and other social cleavages in many new democracies (e.g., Horowitz 2000; Bratton et al. 2004). The struggles over economic well-being and individual rights are still very contentious in the developing world. Thus, politics will be more polarized in developing democracies because of the centrifugal forces of divisive lines of cleavage.

A second research debate involves the content of political competition. The *Post-industrial Thesis* maintains that the extent of political division does not systematically decline because of the modernization process, but the content of political competition changes. While there might be a withering away of Marxian economic conflicts in advanced industrial democracies, this produces new political controversies over life style issues, quality of life, and self-expression issues (Inglehart 1990: ch. 9). Especially among the young, postmaterial or libertarian issues provide a new basis of political orientation. Alternatively, modernization may stimulate dormant cleavages such as regional identities, or create new bases of political competition, such as gender-based politics or ethnic/racial divisions (Deegan-Krause 2007). Thus, social modernization does not end ideological competition, but it changes the bases of electoral politics to new issues and forms of division.

Our analyses first ask whether citizens have broad political orientations that they use to orient themselves to politics, and does social and political modernization lessen polarization in such broad orientations? Then, if such orientations exist, are there systematic and predictable differences in the content of these orientations?

Citizen Political Orientations

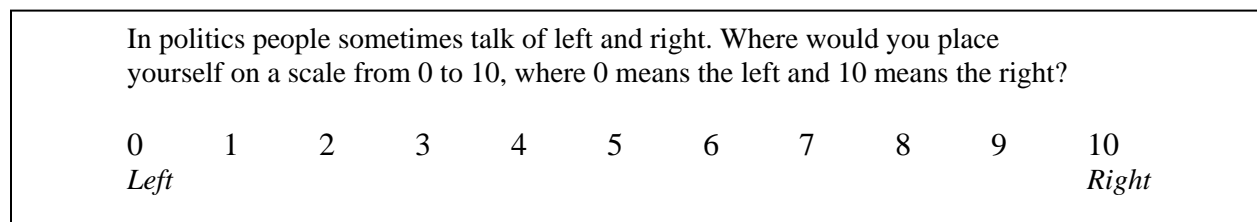
Our first empirical challenge is to compare the broad political orientations of citizens in very diverse political settings—ranging from new democracies to well-established democracies, from poor to affluent societies. The nature of political issues, and even political discourse, can vary widely across these nations, so it is impossible to meaningfully examine the End of Ideology Thesis based on a single issue or a subset of issues.

If we look beyond the specific issues of the day, some political framework or core political identity organizes political discourse in a nation and citizens' individual belief systems. Sometimes these identities are linked to a specific party, broad views of the appropriate role of government, or a political philosophy. To facilitate our cross-national comparisons, we focus on the Left-Right framework as a way to summarize individuals' political orientations and meaningfully compare the level of political polarization in a nation (Fuchs and Klingemann 1989; Knutsen 1995).

Left-Right terminology is common in elite discourse; it is frequently heard in press descriptions of parties and candidates. Electoral scholars routinely interpret shifts in party vote shares as reflecting this dynamic (McDonald and Budge 2005). In media and academic electoral analyses the Left-Right dimension provides a framework for discussing issues, party positions, and the dynamics of electoral choice.

There is a considerable academic debate on whether citizens conceptualize politics in ideological terms as implied by the Left-Right labels.¹ We have a less philosophical view of the meaning of Left-Right orientations (Inglehart and Klingemann 1976; Fuchs and Klingemann 1989). We accept that most citizens do not have a sophisticated philosophical understanding of ideological concepts such as socialism or liberalism that are often implied by the terms Left and Right. Instead, the Left-Right framework provides a source of *political identity* that helps orient the individual to politics. This identity provides a shorthand for summarizing the enduring issues of political debate—whether it is a poor developing nation or an affluent advanced industrial democracy. Ronald Inglehart has shown that most people can locate themselves on the Left-Right scale in most nations. He describes the scale as a super-issue that represents “whatever major conflicts are present in the political system” (Inglehart 1990: 273; also see Knutsen 1995; Fuchs and Klingemann 1989). This sponge-like characteristic of Left-Right allows us to meaningfully compare citizen orientations across nations.

The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems asked respondents to position themselves along a Left-Right scale using the following question:²



and Hungarians have a Left-Right self-location. The nations with low levels of Left-Right identities are also relatively mixed. For example, only 73 percent of the British public express a Left-Right position, and the percentage drops below two-thirds only in Ukraine, Slovenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Taiwan. Furthermore, the generally high levels of Left-Right self-placements in the CSES are consistent with results from the World Values Survey (WVS) that asked the same question in many of these same nations (Dalton 2006).³

=== Figure 1 goes about here ===

The End of Ideology Thesis

The End of Ideology Thesis focuses on the extent of political polarization within a society. It implies that citizens in less developed nations are more likely to be highly polarized because of intense political divisions among competing interests. Politics may be more divisive in these nations because the political stakes are greater and the norms of reciprocity and political tolerance may be less common. In contrast,

social modernization and political development moderate political polarization, producing a more centrist and temperate political debate. Thus, the most direct test of the thesis asks if political polarization moderates with social and political development.

The sources of political polarization obviously vary cross-nationally, but this is why a summary measure such as Left-Right orientations provides a way to compare the level of polarization across nations. We calculated the percentage of the public in each nation that scored at either of the two poles of the Left-Right scale (based on those who positioned themselves on the scale). Figure 2 presents the relationship between national affluence (GDP per capita) and ideological extremism. The trendline shows a strong negative curvilinear relationship between extremism and affluence ($r=-.77$). Extremism is highest in less affluent nations, reaching over 60 percent of the public in Albania and Kyrgyzstan, with high levels in many other developing nations. Ideological extremism averages only about 10 percent of the public in the most affluent societies. Similarly, the 1999-2002 World Values Survey shows similar results for an even more diverse set of nations ($r=-.64$) (Dalton 2006: 8-10).⁴ Thus, independent of the content of political controversy, citizens in lower income nations are more likely to divide themselves into sharply opposing political camps.⁵

=== Figure 2 goes about here ===

A nation's political development is also related to the level of political extremism among the citizenry. Using the Freedom House scores of democracy, there is a strong negative curvilinear relationship ($R=-.71$) with the total percentage of Left and Right extremists.⁶ This relationship, and the correlation with economic development, might be partially reciprocal. That is, sharp polarization may also hinder economic growth and democratization for less developed nations. High levels of polarization are thus a cause and a consequence of national circumstances. However, the end product is that development and polarization display a strong negative relationship.

Our findings thus broadly affirm Bell's thesis of the decline in political polarization with socio-political development. In other words, less affluent and less democratic nations have a public that is often sharply polarized on the dominant political divisions of the nation. The centrifugal forces created by such polarization likely make elections more contentious and party cooperation after the election more difficult. This polarization can also generate strains in governing, which may lessen the performance of the government and even weaken the stability of the regime (Dalton 2006)T

Conversely, political polarization is more moderate in advanced industrial democracies. Far fewer individuals place themselves at the extreme positions on the Left-Right scale in these nations. This suggests that political competition will be more manageable in these nations, because a large moderate center provides a middle ground for political discourse and cooperation. Even when elite debates may become intense between the ideological extremes, the lack of a highly polarized public moderates these controversies. Thus, while the centrifugal forces of polarization create political strains in many developing nations, a large moderate center exerts centripetal forces in most advanced industrial democracies.

Political Cleavages and Left-Right Orientations

Social modernization also might change the sources of political division in a nation. Historically, two factors have defined the major lines of political conflict in Western democracies: economic and religious cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). In European political systems, economic conflicts were typically expressed in Marxian class-based issues such as the nationalization of industry, redistribution of income, and the government's role in the economy. Religion defined a cleavage between different

denominations or between religious and secular values. The religious cleavage generated issues such as state support for church schools, adherence to traditional lifestyles, and endorsement of family values.

The End of Ideology Thesis claims that the salience of these cleavages has decreased in advanced industrial democracies. Economic growth resolved the most pressing issues of living standards and economic security that shaped the class cleavage, and secularization has gradually lessened the impact of the religious cleavage. Other social trends attenuated regional, urban/rural, and other social divisions.

The Postindustrial Thesis, in contrast, holds that as these traditional sources of political division decrease in importance, public and eventually government attention shifts toward a new set of political needs. Issues such as environmental protection, social equality, self-expression, and life style choices typify this new issue agenda. Inglehart demonstrated that the Left-Right identities of Western Europeans were a mix of traditional economic issues and postmaterial issues (Inglehart 1990: ch. 9; also Knutsen 1995). In comparison, class, religious, and other social divisions are presumably more important bases of political cleavage in less developed nations. Region and ethnicity also may be stronger sources of cleavage in developing nations, tapping conflicts over national identity and contrasting value sets that established democracies have presumably addressed.

Comparing the content of Left-Right identities cross-nationally is difficult because the specific issues vary from election to election depending on current social conditions and the strategies of parties. In addition, the CSES does not include a battery of issue questions. Therefore, to map the sources of ideological cleavage, we compare how major social groups differ in their Left-Right positions.

We first examine the extent to which social class determines Left-Right identities, and thus the bases of political division in a nation. Social scientists probably have devoted more attention to the class cleavage than to any other demographic influence on political behavior. The class cleavage represents the economic and material problems of societies: providing for the economic security of all citizens and ensuring a just distribution of economic rewards. Issues such as unemployment, inflation, social services, tax policies, and government management of the economy reinforce class divisions. The tendency for leftist parties to derive the bulk of their support from the working class, and rightist parties to draw support from the middle class is widely replicated in electoral research (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Knutsen 2006).

The first two data columns of Table 1 describe the relationship of social class and union membership with Left-Right orientations (also see Norris 2004: ch. 5).⁷ The strongest class correlations occur in Northern European party systems (Sweden and Finland), where class politics has a long political history. In Sweden, for example, 55 percent of workers hold a Leftist orientation, compared to only 16 percent among self-employed/professionals. Class still matters in structuring Swedes' political orientations, which should translate into positions on class-based issues and voting for parties on class terms.

However, social class is only weakly related to Left-Right identities in most established democracies. Even union membership, which is a clearer measure of attachment to a working class milieu, is weakly related to Leftist orientations. Social class as a political cleavage has gradually eroded as a political cleavage in most established democracies as Bell described (Nieuwbeerta and De Graaf 1999; Knutsen 2006). Social modernization has addressed many pressing economic issues, and life changes and social relations are less bound to class position.

Social class has even weaker correlations with political orientations in post-communist societies. Most East European party systems experienced limited class voting differences immediately after the democratic transition; and in some instances the cleavage ran in the opposite direction to the West (workers holding Rightist identities). The dramatic economic changes wrought by the transition, the ambiguous position of occupation groups in the new economic system, and the fluid nature of contemporary politics blur the political meaning of social class (Kitschelt et al. 1999; Lawson et al. 1999). This does not mean that economic issues are unimportant, only that economic concerns do not have a class basis that shapes broad political identities. Most Eastern European parties are gradually integrating social class interests into their political identities, but social class and union membership do not clearly define the Left-Right orientations of most post-communist citizens.

== Table 1 goes about here ==

Similar weak class relationships exist in the new Asian democracies of Taiwan and South Korea, and in Japan. This reflects both the weakness of the working class movement in these nations and the lack of a strong social democratic political tradition, as well as each nation's unique political history (McAllister 2008; Norris 2004: ch. 5). Class also has weak relationships with Left-Right identities for the two Latin American nations in Table 1, and there is supporting evidence from the Latinobarometer for a larger group of Latin American nations.⁸

The other main social group alignment discussed in the cleavage literature is religion. Measuring the effect of religion on political identities is more complicated than analyzing the class cleavage, especially across the wide range of CSES nations. The class composition of most industrial nations is similar, but their religious composition is quite varied. Some nations are predominantly Protestant; Mediterranean Europe and Latin America are predominantly Catholic; other nations are characterized by religious diversity; and Asian democracies have non-Western religious traditions. The political tendencies of religious denominations also vary cross-nationally (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Esmer and Petterson 2007). In some nations, Catholics lean toward the Right; in other nations they are part of a left alliance. This means that religious affiliation may produce different Left-Right orientations across nations.

The third column in Table 1 describes the relationship between religious denomination and Left-Right orientations.⁹ The continuing relevance of the religious cleavage within the established democracies is one striking finding. On average, the impact of religion on Left-Right orientations is nearly triple that of social class. In addition, feelings of religiousness are consistently related to Rightist identities across all the established democracies. Thus, religion remains part of the agenda of politics in most established democracies. It is a core value that still influences broad political identities and eventually party choices.

Overall, religion has a limited impact outside the established Western democracies. Religious differences in Left-Right orientations are modest in most post-communist states, even in Albania and Bulgaria where the population divides along Christian/Muslim lines. Religion is also generally not a basis of political polarization in Asian democracies and the two Latin American nations.¹⁰ Israel is the notable exception to this pattern, with strong relationships for religious denomination and religiosity.

The cross-national pattern of the relationship of class and religion with Left-Right orientations differs from much of the theoretical literature on this topic. The End of Ideology Thesis posits that these two cleavages are weakening in advanced industrial democracies. Yet, the strongest impact of class and religion still occurs in the established Western democracies. Similarly, the World Values Survey asked a

battery of economic policy issues, and these issues are most strongly related to Left-Right orientations in Western democracies (Dalton 2006: 12-14). Feelings of being religious also display some of the strongest correlations with Left-Right among the established democracies. The strength of these relationships in the established democracies reflects long political and partisan histories in which strong class and/or religious groups have articulated their interests and political parties represent these viewpoints.

Other global regions have different developmental courses. East European nations began their current democratic experience with weakly institutionalized social groups, a fluid political environment, and an instantaneous creation of a party system. The issues of democratization also tended to cut across class and religious lines. This limited the impact of class and religion in initially structuring political competition in post-communist nations. The new democracies of East Asia also developed without the strong class and religious polarization of Western Europe. Even the long-established Japanese political system has shown a persistent weakness of the class cleavage (Flanagan et al. 1991). The weak influence of social class on Left-Right identities also applies to the Latin American democracies in CSES. Thus, despite frequent academic claims about the global importance of social class and religion as a basis of citizen identities and political cleavage, this pattern seems most applicable to the Western democracies.

The End of Ideology Thesis also claims that national and ethnic cleavages will be more powerful in developing democracies where these political identities are still in dispute. Regional cleavages often reflect a tension between the cultural norms of the nation's political center and the contrasting values in regional peripheries. The first column of Table 2 shows that regional cleavages in political orientations now exist in many established and developing democracies. However, on average regional differences are modest in most established democracies.

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Most post-communist nations have larger regional differences in Left-Right orientations than the average for the established democracies.¹¹ Regional differences in Russia are as large as in any other nation, which might be expected for such a geographically and ethnically diverse nation. The same applies to the other developing democracies. Region is not a strong basis of Left-Right polarization in most new democracies outside of Europe, although it looks more substantial when compared to the class or religious cleavage. Complementary analyses based on the World Values Survey find that feelings of national pride—a more direct measure of nationalist sentiments consistent with Bell's thesis—are more strongly related to Left-Right orientations in Asian, African, and Latin American nations, with weaker relationships for the Western democracies (Dalton 2006: 15-16).

Another potential social cleavage contrasts the majority population and distinctive racial, ethnic, or linguistic minorities (Horowitz 2000; Saggar 2007). Bell (2000) saw these cleavages as providing a major basis of division in many developing nations, often impeding the development of democracy. Earlier studies of European party systems overlooked this cleavage because most of these nations were relatively homogeneous, although these societies are becoming more ethnically diverse. Moreover, ethnic and racial divisions may influence political orientations because they often involve sharp social differences, institutionalized networks within these communities, and strong feelings of group identity.

The CSES does not include the ethnically fragmented African and Asian nations that might best fit the theoretical pattern (such as Nigeria, or India). However, the CSES does include several new democracies with significant ethnic divisions, such as Albania, Bulgaria, Brazil, and Taiwan. While Table 2 shows moderate Left-Right differences by ethnicity or race in several of these nations, the relationships are just as strong in established democracies such as Canada or the United States.¹² (Many nations are

so homogeneous that neither race nor ethnicity was included in the questionnaire.) Only Israel displays extremely high levels of ethnic polarization for obvious reasons. Thus, ethnicity or race can be an important basis of political identities in culturally divided nations, and in developing democracies these effects may outweigh cleavages such as class or religion.

The Postindustrial Thesis maintains that new cleavages might tap the emerging divisions of advanced industrial societies. Postmaterial issues draw disproportional support from young, better-educated citizens in advanced industrial societies who support leftist programs such as those advocated by Green and New Left parties (Inglehart 1990). Education can also provide a postindustrial cleavage separating the information-rich, technologically sophisticated voter from the information-poor, unskilled voter. The traditional class alignments would suggest that the better educated will lean toward the Right because of their middle class position. The Postindustrial Thesis argues that the better educated will lean to the Left because of their postmaterial orientations.

The third column of Table 2 displays the correlation between education and Left-Right orientations. Even though social class significantly affects Left-Right orientations in many established democracies, the education relationship runs in the opposite direction: the better educated generally lean toward the Left in most established democracies. In fact, the major exceptions are nations where the class cleavage remains so strong that it overpowers educational patterns (e.g., Finland and Sweden). Post-communist parties reflect the “normal” class alignment, with the better educated leaning toward the Right in most nations. Surprisingly, in the other developing democracies the better educated have Leftist orientations. In Israel, Korea, and Taiwan this may reflect the relative affluence of these nations, which encourages postmaterial orientations (Lee 2008).

An even more direct test of the Postindustrial Thesis should be the relationship between post-material values and Left-Right identities. However, analyses from the WVS show that this value cleavage has a strong relationship across most global regions (Dalton 2006). It may be that these issues are more visible in advanced industrial democracies, because in these nations the two sides are relatively balanced. However, where differences in opinion exist in these other regions, it serves as a basis of polarization between traditional and modern values (also see Lee 2008). Taken as a whole, there is some evidence that a new Postindustrial value cleavage is emerging in affluent democracies, but this cleavage currently overlaps with other bases of political division.¹³

Gender is another potential new basis of political cleavage (Inglehart and Norris 2003). The feminist movement and the changing social role of women have brought issues of gender equity and family policies onto the agenda of most established democracies. A feminist view presumes that women lean toward leftist parties, and men toward rightist parties.

The rightmost column in Table 2 shows that gender differences in Left-Right orientations are fairly modest across virtually all nations. Still, one can see evidence of an emerging cleavage. Historically, women leaned toward the Right in most established democracies because of their religiosity, family values, and security concerns. However, changing social roles in these societies are leading many women to lean toward the Left, which is more supportive of gender equality. In half the established democracies women are more Leftist, especially so among younger women. However, in post-communist and other developing democracies the traditional pattern still emerges, with women leaning toward the Right. There is a potential for a significant gender gap in Left-Right identities, but it does not yet exist in most democracies.¹⁴

Social Modernization and Partisanship

Another possible cognitive framework for citizens consists of attachments to a political party. In established democracies, long-term psychological predispositions—party identifications—are an important cognitive mechanism for orienting oneself to politics (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960; Inglehart and Klingemann 1976). Partisanship serves as a heuristic to organize the complexities of politics, integrate information into a political belief system, and evaluate political phenomena.

Like Left-Right orientations, partisanship typically encapsulates a mix of political values and a sense of how “people like me” normally stand politically. Partisanship also guides the decision to participate in election campaigns and politics in general. A vast literature demonstrates the importance of party attachments as a central element of democratic politics (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). Thus, Weisberg and Greene (2003: 115) conclude: “Party identification is the linchpin of our modern understanding of electoral democracy, and it is likely to retain that crucial theoretical position.”

The development of partisan loyalties may be even more significant for new democracies. Partisanship involves attachment to a key political institution that integrates citizens into the new democratic political order. Research thus treats the growth of partisanship as a sign of developing ties to the new democratic system. This applies to democratizing societies (McDonough et al. 1998; Toka 1998) and Latin American democracies (Mainwaring 1999; Hagopian 1998). The development of partisanship also can indicate a transformation in mass loyalties from a charismatic leader who created the new political system to more enduring party organizations.

The classic model of partisanship presumes that these attachments strengthen as nations democratize and establish stable party systems (Norris 2004: ch. 6; Dalton and Weldon 2007). However, there is mounting evidence that partisanship is eroding in advanced industrial democracies, which contradicts the classic partisanship model. Dalton and Wattenberg (2000, ch. 2), for example, find that the percentage of party identifiers has decreased in 17 of the 19 advanced industrial democracies for which long-term trends are available. Figure 3 illustrates this pattern for four large established democracies. In the United States, for example, about three-quarters of American public were partisan identifiers in the 1950s and early 1960s, and this decreased by 15-20 percent by the 2000-04 elections. Britain, France, and Germany follow a similar downward trajectory in the percentage attached to a political party. Indeed, a variety of attitudinal and behavioral measures document a general erosion in partisanship in most advanced industrial democracies (Clarke and Stewart 1998; Berglund et al. 2005: 199-201; cf. Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002).

=== Figure 3 goes about here ===

One explanation for partisan dealignment is the diminishing value of partisanship in contemporary politics. The mass media fulfill many of the information functions once performed by political parties; citizen groups are active in interest articulation; and parties recruit fewer members. In addition, many better-educated citizens have the political skills to make their own political decisions without strict reliance on habitual party ties (Dalton 2007).

The dealignment thesis primarily applies to advanced democracies because their socioeconomic development produces the societal and individual conditions that weaken partisanship. But there is some evidence that dealigning forces are also present in developing societies. For instance, Sánchez (2003) assembled an impressive time series of opinion surveys that documents the slow weakening of partisanship in Costa Rica between 1978 and 2002 (also see Hagopian 1998). The time period for post-communist societies is shorter, but the evidence of strengthening party ties is also ambiguous.

It is difficult to precisely compare levels of party identification across nations because linguistic and political differences affect how this concept is interpreted in each nation (Budge et al. 1976). In the United States, for instance, the concept of a partisan independent is widely understood, while this terminology is uncommon in many other democracies. The structure of other electoral systems also affects the nature of party identities. At the same time, most electoral scholars accept that most voters develop such long-term, affective partisan attachments, even if they occasionally vote for another party.

To measure partisanship the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems asked the following question:

Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party? Which party is that? Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?

This question sacrifices the notion of long-term partisan identity for a feeling of closeness to a party. This should make it easier for respondents to express an attachment; and these attachments may be more directly related to immediate vote preferences because of the phrasing of the question.¹⁵ Still, the question taps affinity to a party separate from vote, and it can be used in systems with diverse party traditions.

Because partisanship is learned from electoral experience, either the individual's experience or experience inherited from one's parents, partisanship should be more common in nations with a longer history of stable party competition (Dalton and Weldon 2007). The question is whether dealignment is now reversing this pattern in long-established democracies.

Figure 4 presents the level of party attachments in each CSES nation as a function of the age of the party system to represent the continuity of the nation's electoral experience.¹⁶ A nation has a younger party system age if it is a new democracy or if there has been considerable party turnover that weakens the acquisition of stable party attachments. We find a positive relationship between the age of a party system and the percentage of partisans in the nation ($r=.48$).¹⁷ The average percentage of partisans in established democracies (48%) is half again higher than in new democracies (30%).

=== Figure 4 goes about here ===

At the same time, one can see a non-linear pattern in partisan development. The percentage feeling close to any party is limited in many new democracies or systems with unstable party systems, such as several post-communist nations and the new East Asian democracies. Party attachments are more common in middle age party systems. And then partisanship dips among the oldest party systems. Surveys from a single point in time cannot test such a developmental sequence, but the longitudinal trends in Figure 3 show that partisanship has declined in advanced industrial democracies.

In summary, the levels of partisanship in established and new democracies are broadly similar, but represent separate political conditions. For most of the established democracies, social modernization has weakened affective party ties in recent years. This may signal the development of a more discerning public that votes based on the issues and candidates of a campaign, rather than inherited partisan loyalties. The weakening of party identities thus increases the potential for political orientations such as Left-Right to have a stronger impact on voting choice.

The creation of stable party systems and routinized electoral processes should slowly develop stronger party identities in new democracies (Dalton and Weldon 2007). Such attachments to parties are an important element in the development of stable and meaningful democratic elections. These party attachments will mobilize citizens to participate in the electoral process, provide a heuristic for

judging the issues and candidates in a campaign, and provide the cognitive cues that help citizens orient themselves to the world of democratic electoral politics. Once established, however, these identities may also be eroded by the forces of social modernization—but the initial step for new democracies is to develop party attachments in the first place. Thus, as Almond and Verba (1963: 86) wrote, “Open and moderate partisanship, then, are essential to a stable democracy.” Tracking the growth of partisanship in new democracies is an indicator of their democratic development.

Left-Right and Voting Decisions

The ultimate outcome of electoral politics is to make a voting decision. As the impact of long-term partisan predispositions (social group cues or party attachments) on voting decisions weaken in advanced industrial democracies, issue opinions and other campaign factors may exert an increasing influence. In their comparative study of voting behavior, Franklin et al. (1992, 400) conclude: “If all the issues of importance to voters had been measured and given their due weight, then the rise of issue voting would have compensated more or less precisely for the decline in cleavage politics.” There is also evidence of a shift towards a more candidate-centered politics (Wattenberg 1991; Aarts, Blais and Schmitt 2005). Candidate-centered voting has potentially far-reaching implications for contemporary electoral politics, but it lies outside of this chapter's coverage.

One form of issue voting involves controversies reflecting the long-standing economic or social divisions in a nation, such as concerns about social inequality or economic well-being. For instance, the apparently growing emphasis on economic performance as a basis for voting may illustrate such patterns (Lewis-Beck and Stegmair 2007). Voters are judging parties on their economic achievements, but these judgments are not as firmly based on class or social group positions as in the past.

Other issues arise from new political controversies, such as the postmaterial concerns of advanced industrial societies, new aspects of identity-politics, or issues linked to democratic transitions and marketization (Inglehart 1990; Dalton, Shin and Chu 2007; Lawson et al. 1999). These issues expand the boundaries of politics to include topics that were once the prerogative of markets or individual choice. Until recently, politicians and voters did not even know that problems of global warming and ozone depletion existed. Furthermore, new issues can provide a political base for new parties and reorient the voting patterns of the young. The available longitudinal data suggest that postmaterial values gradually have strengthened as a predictor of party preferences in Western democracies (Knutsen 1995).

Faced with a diversity of issues across elections and electoral systems, it is difficult to compare the impact of issues across the large set of nations discussed in this chapter. This, again, is where the inclusive nature of Left-Right orientations facilitates our analyses. We presume that Left-Right attitudes act as a “super issue,” summarizing positions on the issues that are most important to each voter. Some voters’ Left-Right attitudes reflect positions on traditional economic conflicts; others’ Left-Right attitudes reflect postmaterial or foreign policy issues. Specific issue interests may vary across individuals or across nations, but Left-Right orientations provide a way to summarize a citizen’s overall political views.

Many factors might affect the degree of issue or Left-Right voting in an election. Our emphasis on the relationship between social modernization and electoral politics leads to the expectation that Left-Right orientations are more likely to influence voting in advanced industrial democracies with established parties that have clear Left-Right identities. These societies also have more sophisticated electorates who are less likely to vote on fixed social cues or party attachments, and more likely to vote

on the issues and candidates of a campaign. In contrast, in new democracies the partisan choices are often less clearly defined. Voters are also less likely to have complex and sophisticated issue beliefs because they are learning the democratic electoral process. In short, the level of socio-political development should affect the level of Left-Right voting in elections.

Figure 5 displays the correlation between Left-Right attitudes and voting choice in each nation with a legislative election, with nations arrayed by their level of affluence.¹⁸ In every case, Left-Right orientations are a significant, and often a very strong, predictor of voting choice. In France, for example, a full 96 percent of self-identified leftists favored a leftist party (Communists, Socialists, or Greens) in the 2002 legislative elections, compared to only 14 percent among self-identified rightists (Cramer's $V=.34$). In overall terms, however, the relationship is stronger in more affluent democracies as shown by the trendline in the figure; and separate analyses display a similar relationship for the Freedom House measure of democratization.

= = = Figure 5 goes about here = = =

This developmental pattern may initially appear counter-intuitive, because we have previously shown that ideological polarization within the electorate decreases with social and political development. Even though there are fewer ideological extremists in advanced industrial democracies, Figure 5 shows that there is greater congruence between the Left-Right position of voters and their party choices in these nations. Or in other words, the public in developing nations may be more polarized in their Left-Right orientations, but these orientations are not as clearly translated into their party choices. The representation of Left-Right orientations in party preferences works better in established democracies, all else being equal.

At the same time, these developmental processes appear secondary to the pattern of party competition in a nation. If parties offer clear Left-Right choices, then voters can more easily transfer their orientations into party choices. Using a measure of party system polarization (Dalton 2008), we found that Left-Right attitudes have the greatest impact where parties offer clear Left-Right options. Even in new, less affluent democracies such as Albania and Bulgaria, Left-Right orientations are very strongly related to vote choice because the parties are highly polarized along Left-Right lines. Similarly, there is considerable variability in the relationship between Left-Right orientations and vote in the established democracies that reflects the degree of political choice offered by the parties. France, Iceland, and Sweden, for example, have highly polarized party systems that facilitate Left-Right voting, while Australia, Belgium, and Canada have party systems with moderate party polarization, which attenuates Left-Right voting.¹⁹

In summary, this is another example of the development course of electoral politics. Socioeconomic and political development appear to foster issue voting as party systems become established and citizens become more sophisticated voters. Yet, the campaign choices of political parties in offering Left-Right or issue choices have an even greater impact on whether citizens can readily translate their political orientations into party choices.

Social Modernization and Electoral Politics

This chapter has tried to map how social and political development broadly shape citizen orientations and the patterns of electoral behavior in a polity. Central to our conclusions is the relationship between socio-political modernization and the extent of Left-Right divisions within the public. There is convincing evidence that the degree of ideological polarization among the citizenry declines with modernization. Like many aspects of political development, this may occur because less polarized nations find it easier

to develop and democratize. In addition, there are strong theoretical and empirical reasons to think that modernization encourages centripetal forces that reinforce democratization. In this sense, development leads to a moderation of ideology if not an end of ideology.

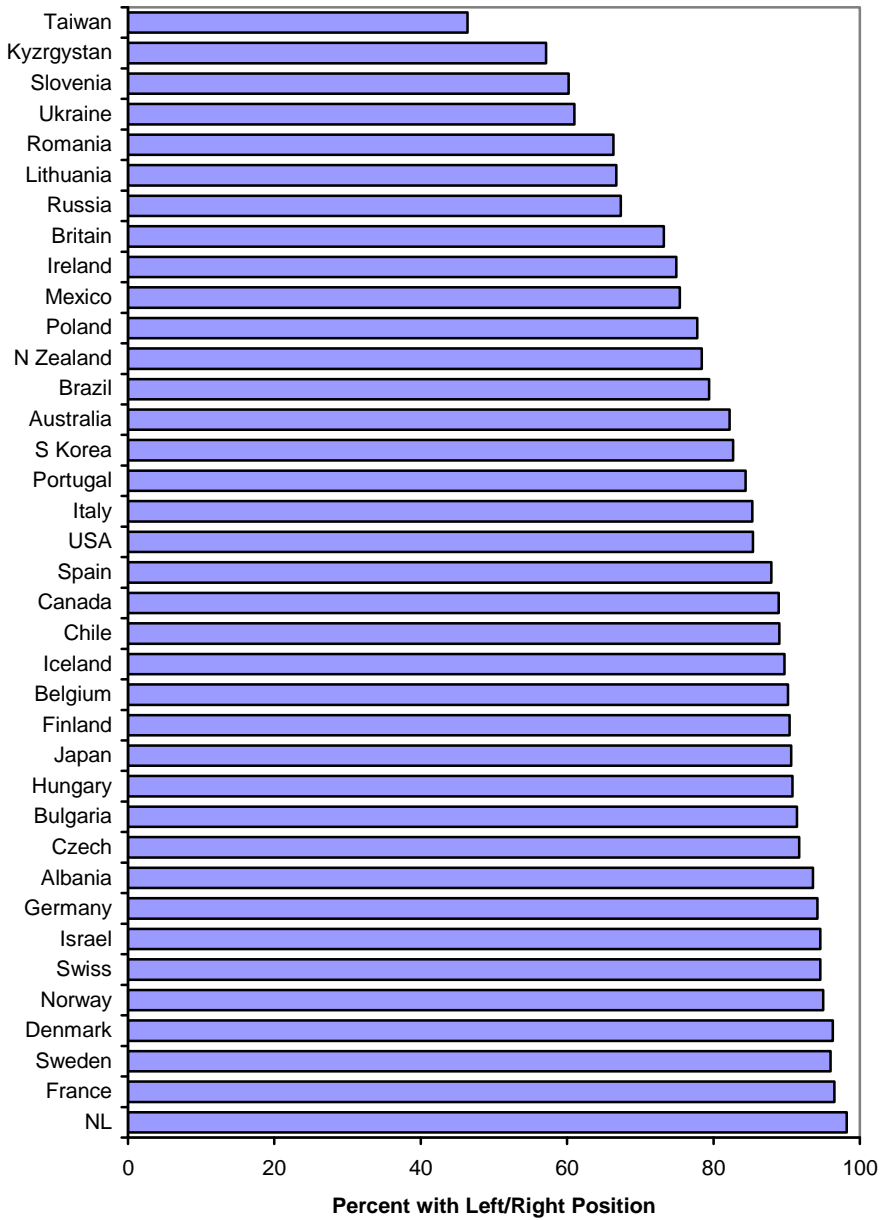
A nation's social and political conditions also shape the nature of electoral politics. Even though class and religious cleavages in advanced industrial democracies have weakened in recent decades, these cleavages remain more important in shaping citizen Left-Right identities than in other global regions. Western democracies also show signs of developing new cleavages based on education, gender, and possibly ethnic divisions. Yet even though these publics are less polarized politically (in Left-Right terms), voters are more likely to translate their political orientations into their voting choices.

Post-communist nations seem to be gradually developing a system of cleavage-based politics. Rapid democratization created new parties that have gradually established political identities linked to basic societal interests, and thus group based politics is evolving. Similarly, party attachments in these nations were initially weak—because democratic parties and electoral politics were new experiences—and these attachments are strengthening over time. But the inchoate nature of many of these party systems means that citizen orientations are less strongly related to voting choice.

The other new democracies in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems are too few and diverse to broadly represent other developing democracies. Yet, they suggest a pattern that seems common in many developing nations. Class and religion generally have less weight in shaping citizens' Left-Right orientations in these nations, and postmaterial cleavages are not definitive. Instead, citizens appear to draw upon region, ethnic, and national identities to shape their basic Left-Right identities. Yet, despite the fact that these publics are often highly polarized in their Left-Right orientations, this does not translate into citizen voting choices based on their Left-Right positions.

In short, as democracy develops, the nature of the electorates systematically changes in both the level of political division and the sources of division. Moreover, citizens appear better able to use elections as a means of meaningful political choice, which is the ultimate objective of democratic electoral politics.

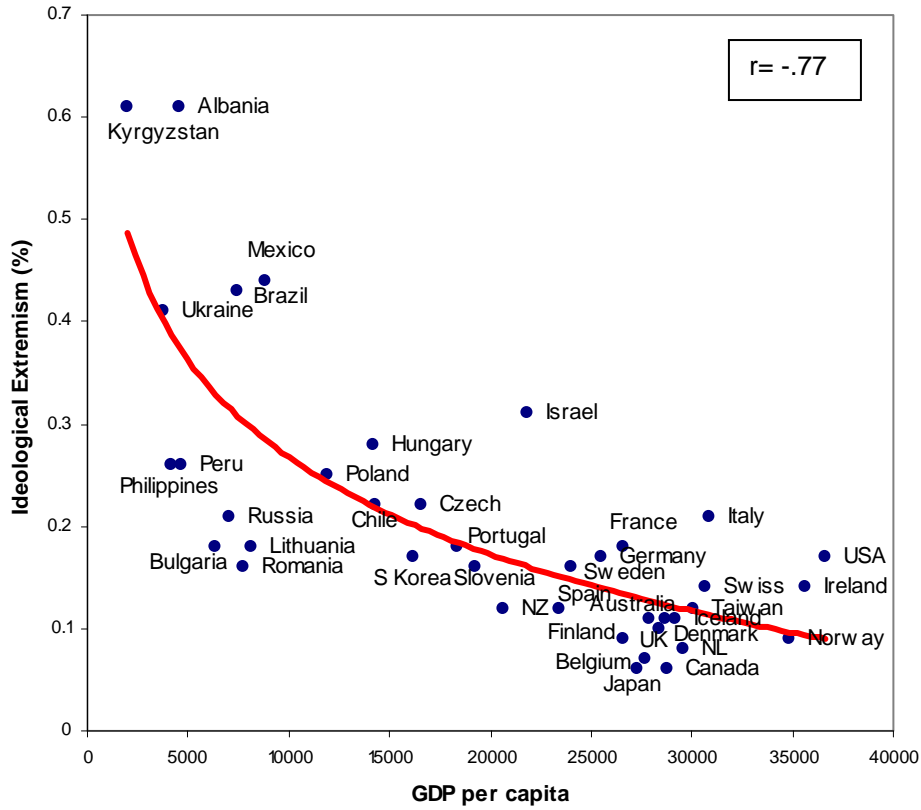
Figure 1. The Percentage of the Public Who Can Position Themselves on the Left-Right Scale



Note: The figure displays the percentage of the public in each nation that can position themselves on the Left-Right scale.

Source: CSES Module II and Lithuania and Ukraine from Module I.

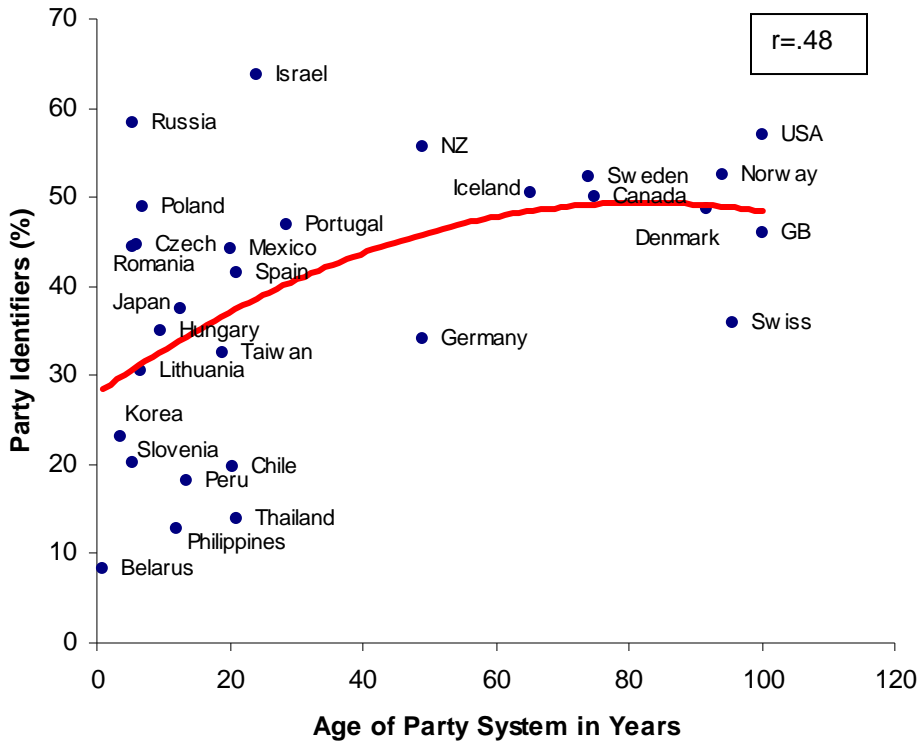
Figure 2. National Affluence and the Percentage of Left-Right Extremists



Note: The figure displays the percentage of the public in each nation that positions themselves at the extremes of the Left-Right scale by the GDP/capital (ppp) of each nation.

Source: CSES Module II; Lithuania and Ukraine from CSES I.

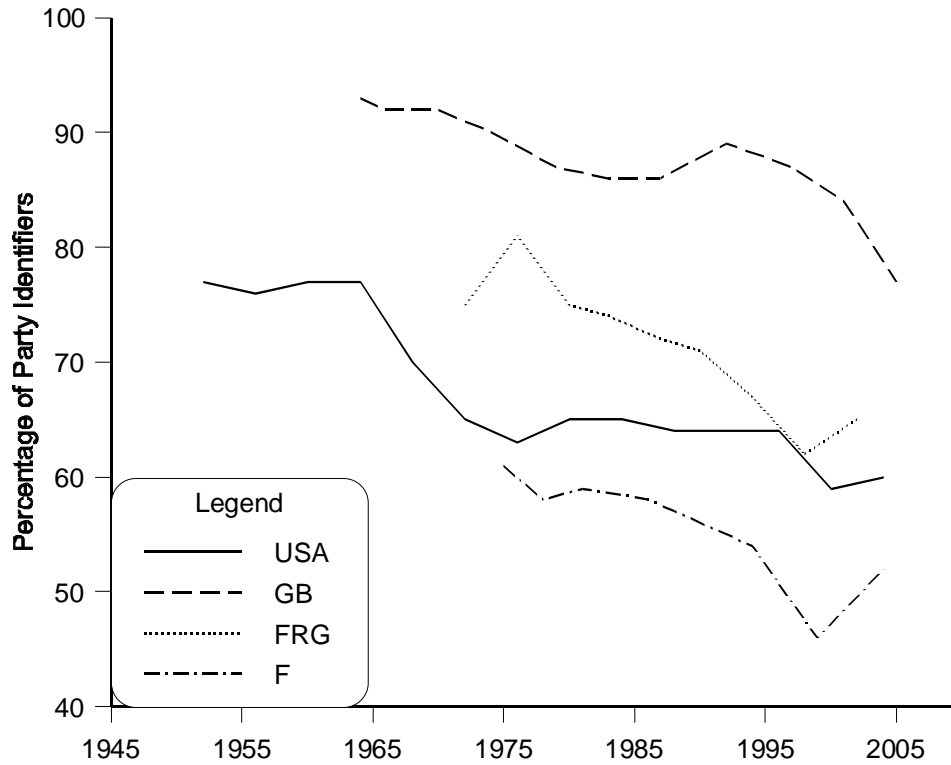
Figure 4. Age of Party System and Strength of Partisanship



Note: The figure displays the percentage of the public that expresses a party attachment by the age of the two major parties (see endnote 14).

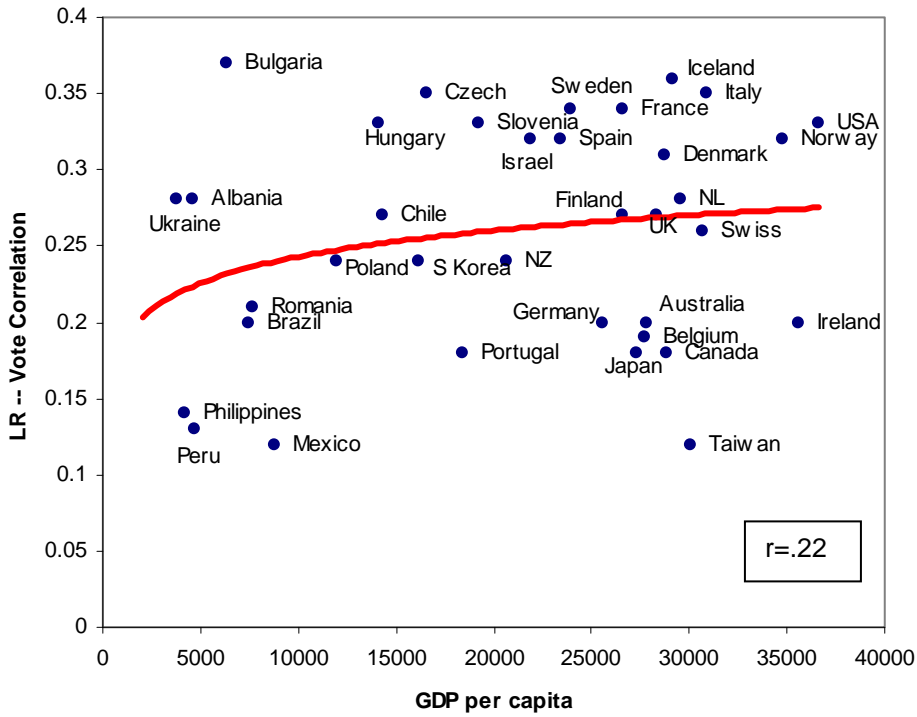
Source: CSES Module I.

Figure 3 The Percentage of Partisan Identifiers in Four Nations



Sources: United States, 1952-2004, American National Election Studies; Great Britain, 1964-2005, British Election Studies; Germany, 1972-2002, German Election Studies (Western Germany only for 1990 to 2005); France, Eurobarometer Surveys (1975, 1978, 1981, 1986, 1988), European Election Studies 1994, 1999, and 2004).

Figure 5. National Affluence and the Correlation between Left-Right Orientations and Voting



Note: The figure displays the Cramer's V correlation between Left-Right orientations and legislative vote choice on the vertical axis; the horizontal axis is national GDP per capita.

Source: CSES Module II and the Ukraine from Module I.

TABLE 1 The Relationship between Left-Right Orientations and Class and Religion

	Class	Union Member	Religious Denomination	Religiosity
Established Democracies				
Australia	.03	.18	.25	--
Belgium	.03	.08	.18	--
Canada	.01	.07	.26	.08
Denmark	.07	.07	--	.15
Finland	.25	.04	.23	.23
France	.12	.11	.26	--
Germany	.03	.16	.21	.09
Great Britain	.00	.15	.25	.08
Iceland	.06	.04	--	--
Italy	.05	.15	.04	.16
Japan	-.03	.15	.10	.08
Netherlands	-.03	.03	.26	--
New Zealand	.09	.14	.20	.10
Norway	.08	.10	--	--
Portugal	.05	.14	.14	.20
Spain	.17	.11	.20	.35
Sweden	.30	.19	--	.12
Switzerland	--	.15	.16	--
USA	.06	.12	.32	.25
<i>Average</i>	<i>.08</i>	<i>.12</i>	<i>.22</i>	<i>.17</i>
Post-Communist Countries				
Albania	-.06	.05	.08	.22
Bulgaria	--	.00	.07	--
Czech Republic	.19	.04	.16	.16
Hungary	-.06	-.03	.09	.11
Kyrgyzstan	.00	--	.14	--
Poland	.03	.00	.10	.17
Romania	--	-.04	.06	.02
Russia	--	-.04	.09	.02
<i>Average</i>	<i>.02</i>	<i>.00</i>	<i>.10</i>	<i>.12</i>
Other Nations				
Brazil	.00	.07	.17	.08
Chile	--	--	.11	--
Israel	-.05	.05	.33	.26
Mexico	-.02	.03	.09	.06
South Korea	.08	.03	--	.07
Taiwan	-.04	-.04	.19	--

Note: Entries are Pearson correlations, exception for religious denomination, which are eta correlations. Dashes indicate the question was not asked in this survey.

Source: CSES Module II.

TABLE 2 The Relationship between Left-Right Orientations and Social Characteristics

	Region	Race/ Ethnicity	Education	Gender
Established Democracies				
Australia	.10	.08	-.13	-.05
Belgium	.07	--	.01	-.03
Canada	.17	.13	-.05	.02
Denmark	--	--	-.02	-.07
Finland	.21	.10	.15	.04
France	-.08	.10	-.04	.04
Germany	-.08	.21	--	.03
Great Britain	.16	.15	-.04	-.02
Iceland	--	--	-.10	-.10
Italy	.21	--	.04	.00
Japan	.10	--	-.13	.05
Netherlands	.06	--	-.03	-.07
New Zealand	.03	.11	-.07	-.04
Norway	.14	--	-.01	-.07
Portugal	.13	--	-.06	.04
Spain	.27	--	-.05	.04
Sweden	.20	--	.13	-.07
Switzerland	.16	.06	-.07	-.09
USA	.13	.32	-.12	-.06
<i>Average</i>	.15	.14	-.04	-.03
Post-Communist				
Albania	--	.08	-.06	.04
Bulgaria	.18	.18	.16	.02
Czech Republic	.17	--	.16	-.05
Hungary	.17	.08	-.04	.05
Kyrgyzstan	.18	.15	.03	.03
Poland	.09	--	.06	.00
Romania	.19	.05	.06	.00
Russia	.27	.15	.02	.08
<i>Average</i>	.18	.12	.04	.02
Other Nations				
Brazil	.19	.13	-.15	.02
Chile	.13	--	-.01	.02
Israel	--	.40	-.12	.03
Mexico	.11	.09	-.09	.09
South Korea	.26	--	-.07	-.03
Taiwan	.15	.11	-.06	.04

Note: Entries for education and gender are Pearson correlations, statistics for region and race/ethnicity are eta correlations. Dashes indicate the question was not asked in this survey.

Source: CSES Module II.

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Endnotes

¹ Many public opinion researchers have questioned whether ordinary citizens can understand and utilize abstract political concepts like “Left” and “Right.” For a discussion of this topic in advanced industrial democracies see Converse (1964), Lewis-Beck et al. (2008, ch. 9) and Fuchs and Klingemann (1989). See Mainwaring (1999) for a discussion on developing democracies.

² The data in this chapter are drawn from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems. The first module of CSES was conducted between 1996 and 2001 and the second module was done between 2001 and 2006. These data and documentation are available for free download at www.cses.org. We supplemented this with the original data for France that included prospective vote in the 2002 legislative election, the Chilean survey with a corrected Left-Right variable, and the 1998 Philippines survey. The nations in each figure/table vary because some variables are not available in all surveys.

³ On average, 89% of the public in the CSES nations positioned themselves on the Left-Right scale, and 84% percent in the 1999-2002 WVS nations that overlap with CSES II. In the WVS, 97% of the Taiwanese respondents place themselves on the Left-Right scale.

⁴ The five WVS nations with the highest percentage of Left-Right extremists were: Uganda (50%), Mexico (47%), Morocco (43%), Dominican Republic (43%), and El Salvador (41%).

⁵ The same pattern emerges for the United Nations Human Development Index ($r=-.78$) in the CSES nations (logarithmic curve). Furthermore, people are not polarized toward the Left in one nation, and the Right in another; the percentage of both extremists in a nation is positively related ($r=.51$). National affluence is also negatively related to both the percentage of Leftist extremists ($r=-.56$) and Rightist extremists ($-.74$).

⁶ Freedom House codes nations on both political rights and civil liberties. We combined the two scores to measure democratic development. The overall index was recoded so that higher values are more democratic. These data and documentation are available from www.freedomhouse.org. There is a very strong relationship between national affluence and democracy ($r=.70$), which makes it difficult to empirically separate the distinct effects of these two national characteristics.

⁷ To fit the Marxian framework, we code social class as 1) working class, 2) white collar middle class, and 3) self-employed and professionals. Union membership is a three-point scale in most nations: 1) respondent is a member of a union, 2) someone in household belongs to a union, and 3) no union member in household. In some nations the family membership question was not asked, so we use only a question on the respondent’s union membership.

⁸ The 2003 Latinobarometer surveyed 17 Latin American nations (www.latinobarometro.org). We used a measure of interviewer perceptions of the respondent’s social status because an occupation or union question comparable to the CSES was not available. The average correlation (Pearson r) between social status and Left-Right identities was .07, and only one nation had a correlation about .10.

⁹ The CSES coded approximately two dozen religious denominations and those with no religious affiliation. The largest single group were Catholics, followed by Protestants, and then Eastern Orthodox, Muslims, and Buddhists. The religiosity question asked: Would you say you: 1) Have no religious beliefs, 2) are not very religious, 3) are somewhat religious, or 4) are very religious. See the study documentation at www.cses.org.

¹⁰ We replicated the religiosity and Left-Right analyses with the 2003 Latinobarometer for 17 Latin American nations. The average Pearson r correlation was only .06.

¹¹ Regional differences are often strengthened when they find formal representation in the party system, such as in Britain (Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru), Canada (Bloc Québécois), Germany (the PDS/Linke) and Spain (EAJ/PNV and CiU).

¹² Comparing distinctive populations across nations is complicated because the primary division can be based on race, ethnicity, or language. Table 2 uses ethnicity as the most general measure, but in some nations only race was available and this is substituted for ethnic differences.

¹³ For instance, education and social class effects are cross-cutting as we have noted. Also, gender equality and religious values also tap traditional/modern value differences, so the interpretation of these issues can be ambiguous (Dalton 2006; Inglehart and Norris 2003).

¹⁴ However, the WVS finds that attitudes toward gender equality are often strongly related to Left-Right orientations in less developed nations where the status of women was severely restricted and there are new international pressures to reform gender policies. This is another example of where traditional/modern values may have differential patterns in developing nations and advanced industrial democracies (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Dalton 2006).

¹⁵ Barnes et al. (1988) compared the traditional American party identification question and a party closeness question. They found high correlations between both measures at two timepoints and general consistency in the correlates of both questions.

¹⁶ The source for the age of the party system is Bargsted (2007). We capped the age of the party system at 100 years, figuring that by this time (or before) party attachments should have reached an equilibrium point. In addition, we adjusted the age of the party system in a few nations because there was an extensive period of a non-democratic regime that would have disrupted partisanship. For instance, the CSES gives the Czech party system an age of 67.5 years in 2002, but the democratic transition was only 12 years earlier.

¹⁷ We replicated the analyses with the CSES Module II nations, which show virtually no relationship between the age of the party system and levels of partisanship ($r=.03$). We suspect this is because of the CSES partisanship question is susceptible to short-term electoral effects. For instance, several nations increased partisanship by 20 percent or more between the two modules; real party identifications would not change so rapidly.

¹⁸ A fully defined model would include social characteristics in predicting vote. As noted above in the case of region, we expect that when political parties explicitly emphasize social identities, this may increase the influence of social characteristics on voting behavior beyond their relationship with citizens' Left-Right identities. This contrasting pattern of correlations is apparent in some nations in our analyses, but not in others.

¹⁹ We combined GDP/capita and a measure of the ideological polarization of the party system derived from Dalton (2008) in a multiple regression analysis to predict the strength of Left-Right voting in a nation; ideological polarization has a much stronger impact on the degree of Left-Right voting in a nation ($\beta=.72$), while national affluence has a more modest impact ($\beta=.23$).

Others, notably David (1972), have developed indexes of state partisanship based on the vote for a wide variety of state offices. The rationale for classifying the states on the basis of partisanship is the measurement of meaningful differences in the two parties' relative chances of winning elections. Presumably, some states almost always elect Democrats and others almost always elect Republicans, with others in the middle enjoying the presumed ideal condition of "competitive" elections. To what extent are statewide election outcomes determined by state levels of Democratic versus Republican partisanship Start studying Partisanship and Ideology. Learn vocabulary, terms and more with flashcards, games and other study tools. What is political ideology? - individual beliefs, opinions, and attitudes with respect to the way he/she feels that member should act - image of good society and means of constructing it - set of propositions that makes demands on human behavior. What is the role of govt (golwater ideology)? - govt should maximize personal and political freedom - maintain internal order - keep foes at bay - administer justice. who gets what? - common man gets what he deserves. who rules? - people should rule. political ideology as multidimensional - socially - fiscal - cultural. social ideology. - schools ideology, partisanship, and polarization group ideologies what is it? belief system configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound. Ideology, Partisanship, and Polarization. Professor Jacob Smith. University. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Course. Analyzing Public Opinion POLI 209. Academic year.