

New and Old Politics: Twenty Years of Danish Politics

Ole Borre, June 2009

1. Background

Until around 1970 Danish politics was solidly one-dimensional, anchored to the left-right axis and dominated by class voting. However, there were signs that this tradition was breaking down. Unrest among the students, the emergence of new social movements, and splinter parties on the left wing, all showed a leftist trend in the new middle class; and a heated campaign about Danish membership of EU seemed to cut across class lines. In the landslide election in 1973 the number of parties in parliament doubled from five to ten, one-third of the electorate voting for the incoming parties. The new Progress Party, on a platform of tax protest and opposition to old-style politics, took 16 per cent of the vote, initiating a period of instability.

During the period 1975-1982, which was dominated by recession and oil crises, minority governments led by the Social Democrat Anker Jørgensen struggled with mass unemployment and budget deficits; for a time the old economic issues returned. In 1982 a centre-right coalition of four parties led by the Conservative Poul Schlüter took over on a program of restoring the Danish economy. This coalition lasted until 1988, and Schlüter managed to continue as head of minority governments until 1993. During this period, however, economic issues were increasingly being rivalled by non-material issues of security, environment, crime policy, third-world development, and problems of accommodating refugees. Actually, throughout Mr. Schlüter's period as prime minister he was often overruled on these matters, and his resignation in January 1993 was caused by a scandal related to the treatment of Tamilian refugees.

The 1990 general election indeed showed that a significant new left-right axis had emerged in voter attitudes¹. On issues of immigration, crime policy, third-world aid, and environment, voter positions loaded on a different factor than on the classical left-right issues of social reform, income levelling, control of business, and progressive taxation. On both of these issue clusters the voters of different parties had taken widely different positions. Whereas the traditional class parties mainly differed on the old economic issues, the new parties differed at least as much on the new value-related issues. The small parties were able to exploit the new value dimension in ways that the three large "class parties" – Liberals, Conservatives, and Social Democrats – could not emulate.

¹ Ole Borre, "Old and New Politics in Denmark", *Scandinavian Political Studies*, vol. 18 no. 3, 1995.

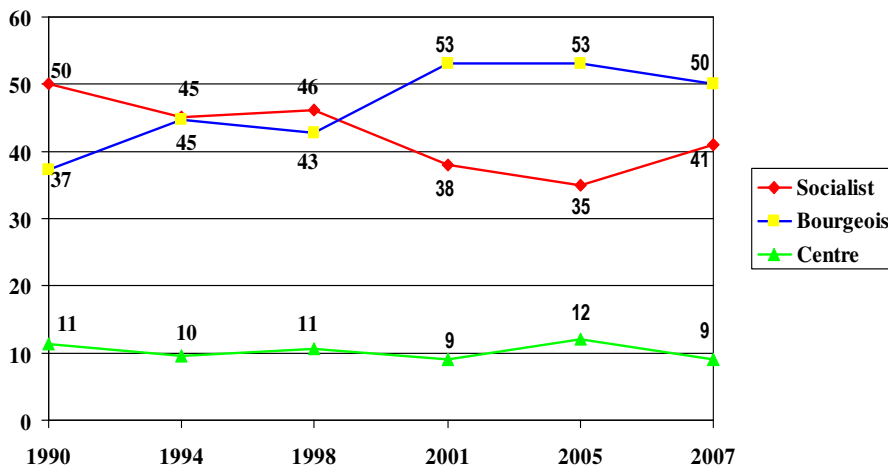
Such a development was quite in line with those theories of value voting and new politics which were put forward during the 1970s by Inglehart, Flanagan, Dalton and Hildebrandt, Miller and Levitin, and others². These theories had been formulated under the impression of the youth revolt of the late 1960s and the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970, movements that were directed both against the consumer society and against the Cold War with its restricted freedom of expression. Inglehart's study of postmaterialism in the young European generations provided empirical evidence of a process common to most West European nations.

However, these theories had not predicted the reaction against postmaterialism coming from the older and more traditional population groups; and immigration was not among the issues discussed by the theorists during the seventies and early eighties. The government that replaced the Schlüter governments in 1993, a four-party coalition led by Social Democrat Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, was unprepared for the new waves of migration, and focussed instead on breaking the rising unemployment curve. But in spite of a booming economy the 1994 election resulted in a setback for the government. A year later the Progress Party was split, one wing forming Danish People's Party, a party explicitly aimed at limiting immigration and preserving Danish culture.

The government, which had been reduced to Social Democrats and Radical Liberals, barely survived the 1998 election with the aid of the left-wing parties. However, the new Danish People's party had shown a fair strength, taking seven per cent of the vote. The new leader of the Liberal Party, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, set sails for a coalition that would include the Conservative Party as a government partner, and Danish People's Party as parliamentary support. The majority for such a coalition materialized when Nyrup Rasmussen, somewhat inadvisably, called an election in the wake of the 2001 terror attacks on New York and Washington. The Social Democrats went down from 36 to 29 per cent of the vote, and their losses were not compensated by gains on the left wing. The three bourgeois parties between them got 53 percent of the vote, and the Liberal Party replaced the Social Democratic Party as being the largest in terms of voter support.

² Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*, Princeton University Press, 1977; Kai Hildebrandt and Russell Dalton, "The New Politics: Political Change or Sunshine Politics?" in Max Kaase and Karl von Beyme (eds.), *German Political Studies: Elections and Parties*, London: Sage Publications, 1978; Warren Miller and Teresa Levitin, *Leadership and Change: Presidential Elections from 1952 to 1976*. Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976.

Figure 1. Three party blocks and their voting support 1990-2007.
Per cent of votes cast



Note: Socialist: Social Dem. + Soc.Peop. + Left wing lists. Bourgeois: Lib. + Cons. + Progressive + Danish People. Centre: Rad.Lib. + Cen.Dem.+ Christian Peop. + New Alliance.

Figure 1 shows the voting strength of three groups of parties at the general elections from 1990 on. The socialist block (red curve) lost the elections of 1994 and 2001, leaving the bourgeois block (blue curve) in a clear majority position in 2001. The centre group (green curve) consists of parties which have supported both the socialist side and the bourgeois side in different periods. Since the centre parties take an almost constant share of the vote, around ten per cent, they have normally been in a position to control who should form the government³. But this did not happen in 2001, nor in 2005. In the latest election in November 2007, the bourgeois majority prevailed only because of the breakdown of a new centre party, the New Alliance, during the election campaign and indeed in the days after the election.

From 2001 until 2009, when he became secretary of NATO, Fogh Rasmussen led the government of Liberals and Conservatives relying on support from the Danish People's Party. It is quite unusual for a Danish government to rely on support from the wings of the system rather than from the centre parties. The Social Democrats had tried it twice, in 1966-68 and 1971-73, both times with disastrous results. By contrast, the bourgeois coalition has proved an outstanding success in terms of voter support. The strategy of mainstream bourgeois parties to ally with the extreme right rather than with the political centre seems to be a prominent issue in several European countries in the present decade.⁴ In Denmark, in contrast to Norway, the radical right has been conceded a role as parliamentary support for a bourgeois government; but in contrast to Austria the radical right party is not conceded cabinet posts. This middle course seems so far to have been successful.

The purpose of this paper is to re-visit the new politics model in the light of this development. Do the relationships involving the two issue dimensions which were observed in 1990 hold true 17 years later? On the basis of that model, how do we explain the rise of the bourgeois vote to a majority in 2001 and its persistence until the present time? How do these facts fit with the expectation of new voter generations entering the electorate with a global outlook and anti-authoritarian attitudes? Our analysis builds on election studies from six general elections, which entails that we can study stability and change in the electorate at several points over a period of seventeen years.

³ Danish politicians like to praise themselves of a tradition for co-operative democracy, meaning governments that rely on support from centre parties. But this seems to be turning necessity into a deed. Those few elections which have produced a majority to one side (1966, 1971, 2001 and 2005) have also resulted in one-sided governments seeking support from their own wing.

⁴ See Tim Bale, "Cinderella and Her Ugly Sisters: The Mainstream and Extreme Right in Europe's Bipolarising Party Systems", *West European Politics*, Vol.26 No.3, July 2003, pp. 67-90, for a discussion of the strategic options.

2. The Two Issue Dimensions

According to the new politics model, post-industrial society induces a value conflict in which a humanistic or libertarian “new left” confronts an authoritarian “new right”. This conflict differs from the economic conflict which characterized industrial society, and which pitted a socialist “old left” against a capitalist “old right”. These terms designate value or issue publics rather than parties or movements.

First, it should be noted that the pattern of two distinct left-right dimensions that was observed in 1990 can be shown to continue throughout the six elections. This is not a trivial observation since at least two other outcomes might materialize: either the second dimension might vanish at the next election, or it might become integrated into the old one.

Table 1 presents the result of factor analysis of the same eight interview item in 1990 and 2007. At both occasions two distinct factors emerge, one for the old economic issues and one for the new value-related issues.

Table 1. Factor analysis of eight items, 1990 and 2007, after varimax rotation.

	<i>1990</i>		<i>2007</i>	
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 1	Factor 2
Social reforms gone too far / should be maintained	0.26	0.51	0.18	0.55
No more income levelling / should go further	-0.03	0.67	0.10	0.79
Business people should decide / More government control	0.21	0.60	0.22	0.51
More tax on high incomes	-0.21	0.73	-0.09	0.80
Immigration a threat to Danish culture	0.83	-0.01	0.82	0.07
Cut down / increase third world aid	0.58	-0.10	0.80	0.18
Stronger punishment for violent crimes	0.61	0.11	0.69	0.00
Environmental controls should not go too far	0.58	0.25	0.61	0.27
Explained variance	26 %	19 %	26 %	19 %

Both in 1990 and 2007 the first four items load on Factor 2, which represents the economic or old politics dimension. The last four items load on Factor 1 in both years. This factor represents the new politics, or value dimension. Such a factor solution is found not only in 1990 and 2007 but also at all intermediate elections. Evidently the two-dimensional model of political attitudes has come to stay in Danish politics. As the bottom line indicates, the factor containing the new issues is stronger than the old factor and accounts for more variance. This is unexpected since the long-standing priority of classical left-right issues might be thought to give the old dimension priority among the voters.

The varimax rotation used in the factor analysis ensures that the two factors are independent; but as we can see, even so there are items which load on both factors. This is notably the case with the environmental issue, which loads with a coefficient of 0.25-0.27 on the economic factor. This suggests that environmentalists tend to be leftist on the economic dimension too. Another issue, the issue of government control of business, has positive loadings of 0.21-0.22 on the value dimension. The view that business people should determine their own affairs therefore tends to be shared by the new right.

On the strength of the factor solution we construct an index of old politics position by averaging responses on the first four items, and another index of new politics position by averaging responses to the last four. All eight items are measured on a 1-5 scale and consequently both indices also have a range from 1 (left) to 5 (right). We shall divide positions on both indices into a left side with average positions 1-3 and a right side with average positions 3.25-5.

What are the effects on the party system of the co-existence of two issue dimensions? Originally it was thought to have little effect – proponents of the new politics model argued that value politics would emerge first in the public, then in the form of social movements, whereas the parties only reluctantly would take up the new issues⁵. This is because the parties have an interest in maintaining and defending particular positions on the old left-right scale, which have served as successful rallying points in past election campaigns. Hildebrandt and Dalton, for example, in their 1978 article did not even discuss the possibility that the new left might give rise to a new party in

⁵ See, e.g., Russell J. Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd edition, Chatham, N.J., 1996, p. 108: "Most of the established political parties are still oriented to traditional social divisions, and they have repeatedly resisted attempts to incorporate postmaterial issues into a partisan framework."

German politics. But in 1980 the Greens appeared on the scene, and a few years later, various anti-immigration parties appeared on the new right.

Therefore, a bolder hypothesis is that according to the logic of new politics theory, the traditional parties become internally divided on value issues. Among the social democrats, there will be splits between an authoritarian left faction and a humanitarian left faction, and among the mainstream liberal and conservative parties there will be a humanitarian right facing an authoritarian right. One or more of these splits are likely to lead to the formation of new parties.

This logic presupposes that the mainstream parties are not already split. But in the Danish case the split had already occurred on the left in 1960 with the formation of the Socialist People's Party, and on the right in 1973 with the formation of the Progress Party. Moreover, during the 1970s the party system became crowded with centre parties all looking for new and exciting issues which might arouse attention. Therefore there was really no need of new parties – not until the end of the Cold War around 1990 and the subsequent rise of the immigration issue on the political agenda. This situation, unforeseen by both researchers and politicians, opened a niche for a radical right party in Denmark, as well as in many other European party systems. In Denmark the niche was filled by the Danish People's Party, which could profit from the presence of the Progress Party in the party system since 1973.

Apart from this replacement of one party by another on the radical right, there was no need for the party system to change in terms of party positions on the leading issues. The attitudinal differences between voters of the various Danish parties have therefore proved rather stable over the years. Figures 2 and 3 show a two-dimensional position model of the party system in 1990 and 2007, respectively.

Figure 2. Average Position of the Parties' Voters on the Old and New Politics Axes, 1990.

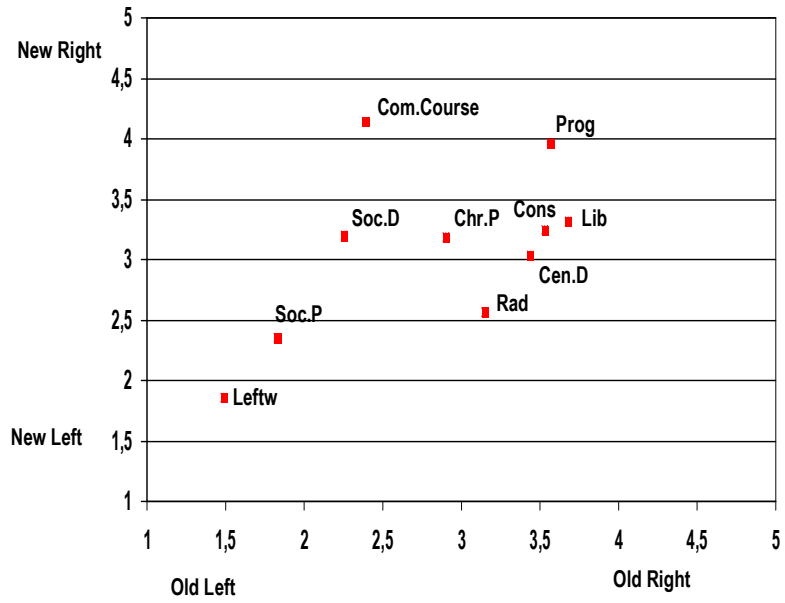
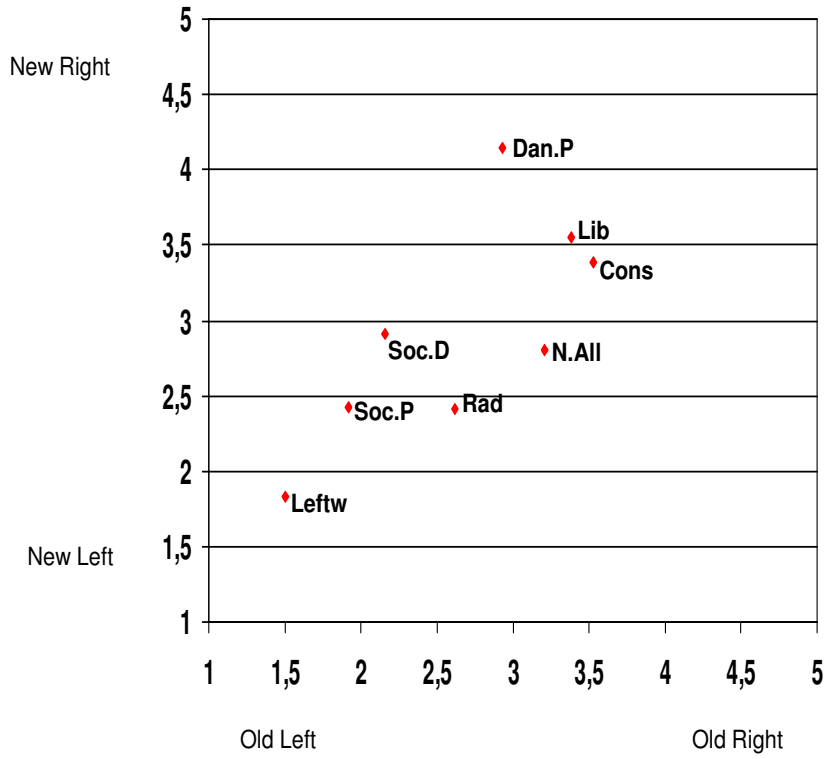


Figure 3. Average Position of the Parties' Voters on the Old and New Politics Axes, 2007.



The picture is broadly the same at the two elections. The major parties and those having supplied the prime ministers are the Social Democrats, the Liberals, and the Conservatives. The Social Democrats differ mainly on the old dimension from the Liberals and Conservatives, the latter being very close to one another. To the left and below the Social Democrats we find the Socialist People's Party voters and the more extreme voters of the Leftwing list. Above the two bourgeois parties we find the Progress Party voters in 1990 and the Danish People's Party voters in 2007. Below the centre position we find the Radical Liberal voters, who are leftist on the new dimension but centrist on the old. Finally there are a varying number of other centre parties, and in 1990 a regular new right socialist party called Common Course.

There is in both years a tendency for the parties to stretch from the lower left toward to upper right corner. This illustrates the fact that there is a slight correlation between the two indices, which rises from $r=0.15$ in 1990 to $r=0.26$ in 2007. This suggests that in the long run the two dimensions might integrate into one overarching left-right issue dimension.

There has been much talk among Danish commentators about the Liberals adopting a strategy of approaching the centre in order to compete with the Social Democrats on the old politics dimension. And indeed the Liberal position in 2007 is only 0.2 points to the right of the average voter, whereas in 1990 it was 0.8 points to the right of the average. The Social Democratic position in 2007 was 0.5 points left of the average voter, while in 1990 it was 0.6 points to the left. This means that in 1990, of the two big parties the Social Democrats were closer to the centre, while in 2007 the Liberals were closer.

A more subtle development that is not visible from the figures is that positions on the new politics index have become more closely correlated with the party choice. Applying variance analysis to the respondents' positions on each of the two indices, we find that the correlation of new politics with party choice has increased a great deal, while the correlation of old politics with party has remained almost constant. Table 2 records the eta correlations for each year.

Table 2. Eta correlation of party choice with old and new politics position

	<i>1990</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2007</i>
Party with old politics	0,64	0,55	0,59	0,52	0,50	0,56
Party with new politics	0,46	0,43	0,53	0,57	0,55	0,62
Difference Old–New	0,18	0,12	0,06	-0,05	-0,05	-0,06

The eta correlation, when squared, shows the proportion of the variance which is between-party rather than within-party variance. It will be one only if all voters of each party have the same position. As it is, the correlation starts out by being stronger for the old politics index than for the new politics index; however, from 2001 on the correlation is stronger for the new politics index. This of course corroborates the new politics theory.

However, nothing in these data explains the rising support for the bourgeois parties. To approach an explanation, we shall look at the voter flows over six consecutive elections.

3. Opinion change

Proponents of new politics theory have ventured the prediction that in the long run, mass opinions in postindustrial society would shift toward the right on the old politics dimension, because economic advances weakened the quest for income equality; on the new dimension, however, mass opinions would shift toward the left because of rising demands for freedom of expression, nonconformity in life styles, and declining respect for authority figures.

Thus, comparative research in values has projected for advanced industrial societies a shift from material to postmaterial values (Inglehart) or a shift from authoritarian to libertarian values (Flanagan). For example, working with the European Values Study of 1999, Flanagan and Lee find a clear negative correlation ($r = -0.22$) between age and new left issue positions for 12 European countries including Denmark.⁶ As the authoritarian-libertarian value dimension is almost similar for the twelve countries, and its impact on new politics issues very strong, we are led to believe that the new left will gradually outnumber the new right.

The data in Table 3, however, tell a different story. Table 3 divides the samples into two broad groups, left and right, on the economic issues as well as on the value issues. The left, as mentioned earlier, contains those scoring between 1 and 3, and the right, those scoring between 3.25 and 5 on each index.

⁶ Scott C. Flanagan and Aie-Rie Lee, "The New Politics, Culture Wars, and the Authoritarian-Libertarian Value Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies", *Comparative Political Studies*, vol . 36 pp.235-270 (2003).

Table 3. Left-right distribution of voters on economic issues and value issues 1990-2007, in per cent.

	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007
Economic issues:						
Old left	63	60	59	54	64	61
Old right	37	40	41	46	36	39
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Value issues:						
New left	48	39	38	36	49	46
New right	52	61	62	64	51	54
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

The share of voters with leftist attitudes on the classical economic issues has moved between 64 and 54 per cent. The lowest figure appears in 2001, the year when the bourgeois government came to power. On the new value issues the share of leftist voters has moved between 49 and 36 per cent. Again the lowest figure is measured in 2001. It is therefore not the case that opinions have changed toward the right so as to explain the increased preference for the bourgeois parties. On both the economic issues and the value issues the voters slid toward the right as long as the Social Democrats led the government; once the Liberals acceded to power, the voters reacted by moving toward the left on both economic and value items. They ended up in 2007 at much the same point where they started in 1990. However, as we saw in Figure 1, during the rightward turn between 1990 and 2001 the voters shifted toward the bourgeois parties, while during the leftward turn between 2001 and 2007, they did not return to the socialist parties.

The bourgeois tide in respect to voters is therefore not explained by a similar tide in rightwing voter opinions. Instead, for an explanation we must locate the social groups and issue publics in which the bourgeois tide has been strongest. Here, an inference from new politics theory, which has become central in theories of new social and political cleavages, is that competition for votes (and government) between the socialist side and the bourgeois side in the long run will operate to involve the new parties in the process of government formation.⁷ The new leftwing party will be useful to the mainstream social democratic party in so far as it can conquer voters from the bourgeois parties on certain value positions (ecology, minority rights). Conversely a new rightwing party will be useful to the mainstream bourgeois parties if it can conquer votes from the social democratic party on certain other value positions (the nation, law-and-order).

⁷ See Tim Bale, *op.cit.*

This scheme entails that among the new left there will be progress for the leftwing party, while among the new right, the rightwing party will flourish. Consequently issue voting will rise on the new politics issues. Concerning the mainstream parties, we do not expect their vote on the new issue positions to change dramatically, because these parties concentrate on guarding their positions on the old left and old right, re-enacting old ideological battles about the size of public budgets, taxes, private ownership, and welfare provisions.

The prediction about rising issue voting on value issue comes true in the Danish data. Table 4 shows the combined bourgeois vote among the left and right on the value issues at each of the six elections.

Table 4. Per cent voting for bourgeois parties 1990-2007, by opinion on value-related issues

	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007	Change
New right	46	54	53	70	72	71	+25
New left	30	31	21	26	33	28	-2
Difference	<i>16</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>43</i>	

As the table makes very clear, the bourgeois vote increased among the authoritarian new right but stayed almost constant among the humanistic new left. The result was that the difference between these two groups, or what amount to a simple index of issue voting, rose from 16 percentage points in 1990 to 43 in 2007. Thus, the bourgeois parties acquired their majority by conquering the new right *without losing votes on the new left*. This fact is so decisive that it meant little that opinions turned somewhat toward the left after 2001, as we saw in Table 3.

Looking at the individual elections, we see that the rise in this novel type of issue voting was almost linear between 1990 and 2001. However, until 1998 the bourgeois vote had declined just as much among the new left as it had increased on the new right – about ten per cent of the vote. So, the first half of the period followed the expected pattern of polarisation without a bias to either side. It was the 2001 election which created the bourgeois bias by enabling the bourgeois parties to stop their defections on the new left, in addition to completely taking over the new right.

The most likely reason for this bourgeois bias is something not discussed by new politics theory, namely, the fact that new right issues of immigration and law-and-order are more potent and immediately understood than new left issues such as ecology or minority rights. At the 2001 election 22 per cent of the political problems mentioned by the voters, and 42 per cent of the mass

media articles, dealt with immigrants and refugees.⁸ Thus the political agenda played in the hands of the Liberal Party and Danish People’s Party, the two parties which had most strongly criticised the government’s immigration policy. The result was that the bourgeois strategy worked: the mainstream parties were able to maintain their support among voters with new left attitudes while the radical right party made deep inroads among voters with new right attitudes. To see this in more detail we have to separate the vote into four blocks as in Table 5.

Table 5. Voting pattern 1990 and 2007, by attitudes on value issues

	<i>New Left Issue Positions</i>			<i>New Right Issue Positions</i>		
	<i>1990</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>Change</i>
Moderate right (Lib+Cons)	28	25	-3	36	44	+8
Rightwing (Prog+DanP)	2	3	+1	10	27	+17
Total bourgeois parties	30	28	-2	46	71	+25
Moderate left (SocDem)	36	32	-4	39	20	-19
Leftwing (SocP+Unitary)	18	24	+6	4	6	+2
Total socialist parties	54	56	+2	43	26	-17

The bourgeois vote is shown in the upper part of the table. Among people with new left attitudes nothing happened, as the Liberal and Conservative parties almost held their combined strength⁹. Among those with new right attitudes, by contrast, the rightwing party (Progress Party in 1990, Danish People’s Party in 2007) grew from 10 to 27 per cent of the vote; and this in no way damaged the moderate parties, which increased their vote from 36 to 44 per cent.

The lower part of the table shows that corresponding socialist strategy of conquering the voters with new left attitudes failed. The leftwing parties duly increased their share of the vote from 18 to 24 per cent; but this occurred at the expense of the Social Democrats, and at the same time the Social Democrats suffered a dramatic defeat among voters with new right attitudes, where the party was reduced to half its size.

⁸ Jimmy van der Brugge and Henning Voss, ”Årsager til de socialistiske partiers tilbagegang i perioden 1990-2005” [Causes of the decline of the socialist parties during the period 1990-2005], Chap. 6 in Jørgen Goul Andersen et al. (eds.), *Det nye politiske landskab* [The new political landscape], Aarhus: Academica, 2007.

⁹ However, the Liberal party replaced the Conservative party as the major bourgeois mainstream party after the Tamilian refugee affair in 1993.

As the table also makes clear, the new wing parties really deserve this label so far as new politics is concerned: the rightwing parties get only 2-3 per cent of the vote of the new left, and conversely, the leftwing parties only get 4-6 per cent of the new right electorate. A similar level of specialisation does not occur on the old politics dimension.

On the economic issues, indeed the picture of electoral change is quite different. Table 6 shows the extent of issue voting on the old politics dimension.

Table 6. Per cent voting for bourgeois parties 1990-2007, by opinion on economic issues.

	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007	Change
Old Right	67	70	70	73	77	79	+12
Old Left	20	27	24	35	39	36	+16
<i>Difference</i>	47	43	46	38	38	43	

The bourgeois parties increased their vote by 12 percentage points among the liberal voters on the old right and 16 per cent among the socialist voters on the old left. These changes are roughly parallel, making for an index of issue voting that varies only between 47 in the beginning and 42 in the end. Thus, issue voting has declined slightly on the classical economic issues. But there is certainly a possibility that it may decline further; as the table shows, the 2005 election gave the bourgeois parties 39 per cent of the old left voters, and it is only the latest election which has turned the tide of bourgeois progress.

4. The role of class and education

One consequence of the new politics model is that voters in both the working class and the middle class will be split on value-related issues. One part of the middle class, recently made popular as Richard Florida's "creative class"¹⁰, should join forces with the socialists because of their inclination toward new left positions, while another part, identified with the old middle class and the petty bourgeoisie, should vote for the mainstream or radical right parties. However, also the workers should split into a group of authoritarian workers, who may vote for the new rightwing party, and another group staying with the traditional socialist party or moving to the leftwing party.

¹⁰ Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 2001, and Richard Florida and Irene Tinagli, *Europe in the Creative Age*, 2004

Table 7. Per cent voting for bourgeois parties 1990-2007, by social class and position on economic issues.

	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007	Change
Old Left workers	11	28	24	43	43	45	+34
Old Right workers	51	53	62	70	68	76	+25
<i>Total, workers</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>+34</i>
Old Left middle class	24	29	23	31	37	29	+5
Old Right middle class	66	76	71	75	81	75	+9
<i>Total, middle class</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>+3</i>
<i>Diff. middle-working class</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>-8</i>	

Table 7 shows that the bourgeois parties have been extremely successful in increasing their vote among workers with old left views – from 11 per cent in 1990 to 45 per cent in 2007. Consequently social class has almost lost its importance; at the beginning of the period, both class and economic issues were important variables in explaining the bourgeois vote. But this changed already in 1994, and even more in 2001. The dramatic increase of rightwing voting among the workers resulted in a situation in which these parties had 53 per cent of the vote both among the workers and among middle class voters.

Basically this is the picture also today, although the 2007 data seem to indicate an even more extraordinary situation in which the bourgeois parties are stronger in the working class than in the middle class – in effect a negative value of the so-called Alford index of class voting.

The virtual disappearance of the class difference in bourgeois voting contrasts against the high level of issue voting on the economic issues, which we noted in Table 5. It must logically imply that Danish workers are today no more socialist than the average middle class members – if they were, they would vote socialist.

If social class has lost its effect, schooling is expected to become more important in the new “knowledge society”. Since around 1960, when the new left entered Danish politics in the form of the People’s Socialist Party, the traditional bourgeois vote of the academic voters has been weakened. The student revolt of 1968-70 entailed that the new generations of academics began to vote for leftwing parties. The result was that by 1990 there was practically no difference between the academic voters and other voters in terms of bourgeois strength: 38 percent in both groups voted bourgeois. However, from 1998 onward an “education gap” has emerged, and by 2007 the bourgeois parties have a majority (56 per cent) among those with short schooling but at the cost of

constituting a clear minority (37 per cent) among those with long schooling¹¹. The education gap stems from a particular reluctance of those with long education to vote for Danish People’s Party. But also the liberal Prime Minister alienated the academic vote when in a New Year speech in 2002 he said that “people can manage without experts and taste judges”.

Table 8. Bourgeois Vote 1990-2007, by School Education and Value-Related Attitudes

	1990	1994	1998	2001	2005	2007	<i>Change</i>
12+ years schooling:							
New Right	53	72	64	82	85	71	+18
New Left	33	35	20	22	30	23	-10
<i>Total, 12+ years of schooling</i>	38	47	37	46	45	37	-1
7-10 years schooling:							
New Right	46	51	54	67	69	69	+23
New Left	29	29	23	29	36	36	+7
<i>Total, 7-10 years of schooling</i>	38	44	45	55	57	56	+18

Table 8 shows that across the whole series of six elections, the bourgeois parties have increased their vote among those with primary education by 18 per cent, while they have lost 1 per cent among those with secondary education. Thus the pattern is very clear: it is those with primary schooling who have generated the bourgeois majority. Nonetheless positions on new politics issues continue to be important. Within the group of voters having primary education, the bourgeois increase is strongest on the new right with 23 per cent, as against only 7 per cent on the new left. Among those with secondary and higher education the bourgeois parties gained 18 per cent of the vote on the new right but *lost* 10 per cent on the new left. It is obvious that both low education and new right position have drawn voters to the bourgeois camp.

5. Regression models of the bourgeois vote

The new politics model is primarily a model of issue and value voting. That is, social background variables are not considered to have a direct impact on the vote, such as is the case in models of class voting, ethnic voting, or other models of social conflict. These conflicting groups are supposed to enter the political struggle by taking opposite or at least different positions on issues. Thus, issue and value positions are supposed to intervene between social positions and the

¹¹ A detailed analysis is found in Rune Stubager, *The Education Cleavage: New Politics in Denmark*, Århus: Politica, 2006.

partisan vote. We may test this assumption by means of regression analysis of the bourgeois vote for 1990 and 2007. Three models will be estimated for these years. Model 1 contains only the old and new politics positions as independent variables. Both the old and the new politics index are for this purpose scored in five positions from -2 to +2.

Table 9. Regression Models of the Bourgeois Vote, 1990 and 2007

	1990			2007		
	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>
Old Politics index (1-5) ¹²	.19**		.18**	.14**		.14**
New Politics index (1-5) ¹³	.04**		.04**	.17**		.16**
12+ years schooling		-.01	.02		-.17**	-.05
Manual worker		-.27**	-.16**		-.03	-.05
Female gender		-.06	-.02		-.07*	-.02
Postwar generation		-.08*	.00		-.10**	.00
Urban residence		-.15**	-.06*		-.10**	-.09**
Constant	.41	.56	.47	.53	.66	.61
Multiple correlation	.55	.27	.56	.60	.22	.61

Here we note that the effect of old politics position has declined over the years from a 19 to 14 per cent increase in the bourgeois vote by each step on the five point scale; at the same time the effect of new politics position has increased dramatically from a mere 4 per cent in 1990 to 17 per cent in 2007.

Model 2 contains the most important social background variables, all in the form of dummy variables taking the value of 1 or 0. For 1990 this model indicates a strong negative effect of working class occupation, and an almost equally strong negative effect of urban residence (defined as living in towns over 50,000 inhabitants). A smaller negative effect is that of belonging to the so-called “red” postwar generations (born 1946-60). For 2007 the corresponding model has lost the

¹² On the summed-up indices of old and new politics, which run from 4 to 20, positions 4-7 are coded -2; 8-10 are coded -1; 11-13 are coded 0; 14-16 are coded +1; and 17-20 are coded +2.

¹³ As above.

class effect, but acquired an education effect, just as we found in Tables 7 and 8. Furthermore, the 2007 model contains a significant tendency for women to vote less bourgeois than men.

In the combined Model 3 the issue effects are almost unchanged from Model 1, while most of the social effects vanish, because they are channelled through the issue positions of the voters. It is particularly interesting that the education effect almost disappears by controlling for issue positions. This is due to the tendency of those with higher education to have new left attitudes, and therefore it is not due to an idiosyncratic reluctance of the educated strata to vote bourgeois. The same cannot be said for the effect of urban residence, the only social effect that “survives” the control for attitudes. The bourgeois parties are 9 per cent stronger in the countryside than in the towns among voters with similar attitudes. The bourgeois victory is predominantly a victory for “rural Denmark”, a culture which is in several ways a retrenchment against the forces of globalisation and post-modernity.

10. Conclusions

The new politics model, by now thirty years old, has been useful in the case of Denmark by successfully predicting the rise of value issues such as problems concerning the environment, immigration, minority cultures, freedom of expression, and several others on the political agendas of advanced industrial societies. It has also successfully predicted the decline of traditional class voting and the rise of educational classes such as the “creative class”. However, the generational change toward more humanistic and less authoritarian values that is inherent in the model has not been accompanied by the rise to power of new left parties. If anything, new right parties have dominated the scene in Denmark, as in several other European countries. Their common focus has been the problems raised by immigration and ethnicity, and in Denmark these issues have been higher on the political agenda than in most other countries. One should therefore recognise that the new politics model has been successful in pointing out options, opportunities, challenges, etc.; but it performs rather poorly in predicting voting behaviour and actual policy. Undoubtedly, from the start the model was biased toward post-materialism and new social movements. It was a theory of value change and social change rather than a theory of political change. A comprehensive theory of political change should also consider party strategies and issue agendas. The opening of the borders around 1990 and the emergence of the multiethnic society generate a new set of issues, to which the party systems of different European countries respond differently. What is most conspicuous in the Danish case is the stability through almost twenty years of the attitudes associated with the new

politics dimension, and the sensitivity of party fortunes to these attitudes – i.e., the rise of value-based issue voting, and the subsequent bourgeois coalition based on the new right.

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