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SEKUNDÄRANALYSE VON UMFRAGEDATEN DES ZENTRALARCHIVSTHE SEARCH FOR REASONS FOR CROSS-NATIONAL ELECTION
BEHAVIOR IN WESTERN EUROPE⁺

Das folgende Papier von H.G. Peter WALLACH wird zunächst darauf eingehen, daß die führenden Parteien der meisten westeuropäischen Nationen bei den Wahlen in den fünfziger und sechziger Jahren gleichzeitig Wählerkontingente gewinnen oder verlieren, unabhängig von Ideologien, Parteistrukturen oder Kandidaten. Dann wird darauf hingewiesen, wie diese Schwankungen mit den Veränderungen im Anstieg des Pro-Kopf-Einkommens der Bewohner dieser Nationen einhergehen. Schließlich wird darauf hingewiesen, weshalb diese Analyse nur für die führenden Parteien angemessen scheint. P. WALLACH führt ein Modell vor für zukünftige Analysen von Wahlergebnissen auf nationaler Ebene und für den internationalen Vergleich.

The decline of the Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian Social Democratic Parties in the early seventies suggests a historical trend in Scandinavian politics; added to the simultaneous downturn for incumbent parties in Austria, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, and West Germany such a tendency can be discerned for most of Western Europe (INGLEHART, 1977: 291). It seems to touch the dominant parties of each nation, and only incidentally seems to reflect the achievements of lesser contending units. For this is a trend, across national boundaries, and prevalent since the fifties, of simultaneously increasing or decreasing support for the major parties. Independent of ideology, party programs,

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or the personality of candidates, it sweeps from Dublin to Vienna, and Rome to Stockholm. No matter what the determinants of voting behavior for secondary parties, identification of this continental trend suggests there are cross national reasons for Support or non-support of dominant parties. The probable reason they have not been used is that until now, the period of observations has been too short. Only the passage of a quarter of a Century now makes it possible to note the simultaneous fluctuations among dominant parties. This raises numerous questions about election analysis and the current emphasis on purely nation oriented voting results.

In this paper the trend is described, and some of the related questions are raised, probed, and tested.

Background

Dominant Parties

These parties, the subject of this paper, are the most consistent in winning a plurality of the vote for parliamentary seats and in maintaining the government.

The Trend

Except in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland these dominant parties have had similar electoral histories during the third quarter of the Century. At the end of the fifties, and again from 1965 to 1971 each increased its portion of electoral Support over that of the previous elections. From 1959 to 1968 and also in the early seventies they all suffered noticeable losses. Besides that, of the nine dominant parties, only the Swedish Social Democrats and the Austrian Peoples Party did not lose in its overall share of the electorate during the sixties. That

this is a correlative trend is evident in the nature of the similarities, the timing, and the fact that election by election surges do not exist within any of the downward or upward movements: it cannot even be ascribed to pendulum movements since where two or more elections occur within a period of downwardness or upwardness the direction for the dominant party continues. ROSE and URWIN have also observed that pendulum tendencies in voting returns cannot be assumed (1970; 302).

Statistically the significance of these relationships is only limited by the small number of nations considered. But the logic of significance factors highlights the relationships when it is discovered that each of the excepted nations and most of the secondary parties exhibit Singular patterns that do not correlate with each other or with those identified here.

Evident in the graphs is that the peaks of proportional Support occur between 1954 and 1960, and again (though generally at a lesser level) from 1965 to 1971, and there are troughs in the beginning of both decades. The table on the following page demonstrated the observations by extrapolating the proportions of increases and decreases and ascribing them to intervening years. This provides averages indicating the increases to 1957, the succeeding decreases, and the flattened decrease from 1963 to 1968 caused by offsetting peaks while overall electoral proportions are receding. The flatness of the latter results is clarified when it is noted the nations portrayed in the first graph, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have an average peak of 43.6% in 1969, while the remainder have an average peak in 1966 with a 43.1% average. Using this table it can also be noted that in 1961 only the Austrian Peoples Party increased its share of the electorate. By 1965 most dominant parties increased their shares, and in 1970 they lost once again.

Of course the interim ascription method of the table below does not reflect the actual results if voters were to go to the polls each year. But it does provide pictorialization to the actual results in electoral movement.

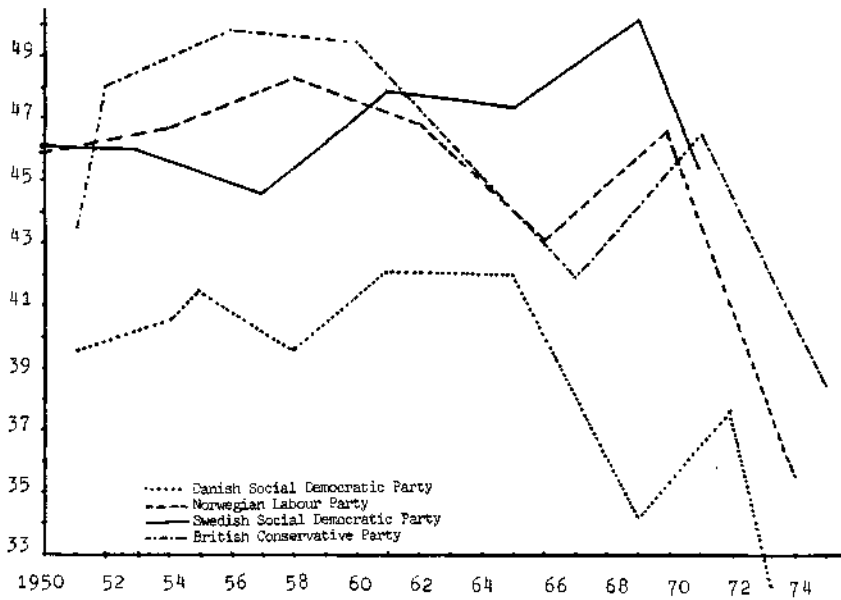
REAL AND EXTRAPOLATED PROPORTION OF THE VOTE BY DOMINANT PARTIES¹

	Austrian Peoples Party	Danish Social Democrats	Irish Fianna Fail	Italian Christian Democrats	Lux. Christian Socialists	Norwegian Labour Party	Swedish Social Democrats	U.K. Conservative Party	West German CDU/CSU	AVERAGE
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1948			41.9	48.5	41.0		46.1		31.0	
1949	44.0		43.4	46.8	38.4	45.7	46.1		34.5	42.0
1950	43.3	39.6	44.8	45.1	35.9	45.9	46.0	43.4	38.1	42.7
1951	42.6	40.2	46.3	43.5	33.3	46.2	46.0	48.0	41.6	43.1
1952	42.0	40.7	45.3	41.8	36.3	46.4	46.0	47.6	45.2	43.4
1953	41.3	41.32	44.4	40.1	39.4	46.7	45.6	47.1	46.4	43.9
1954	42.9	40.8	43.4	40.6	42.4	47.1	45.3	46.7	47.7	44.6
1955	44.4	40.3	45.0	41.0	41.3	47.5	44.9	49.7	48.9	45.0
1956	46.0	39.9	46.7	41.5	40.2	47.9	44.6	49.6	50.2	45.3
1957	45.4	39.4	48.3	41.9	39.1	48.3	45.4	49.5	49.0	45.0
1958	44.8	40.3	47.2	42.4	38.0	47.5	46.2	49.4	47.7	44.6
1959	44.2	41.2	46.0	41.6	36.9	47.5	47.0	48.2	46.5	44.2
1960	44.6	42.1	44.9	40.7	36.2	47.2	47.8	47.7	45.3	43.7
1961	45.0	42.0	43.8	39.9	35.5	46.8	47.7	47.0	45.9	43.4
1962	45.4	42.0	44.8	39.0	34.7	45.9	47.6	45.8	46.4	43.2
1963	46.1	41.9	45.8	38.2	34.0	44.9	47.4	44.6	47.0	43.2
1964	46.8	41.9	46.7	38.4	33.3	44.0	47.3	43.4	47.6	43.2
1965	47.6	40.1	47.7	38.6	33.8	43.1	48.0	42.6	47.2	43.2
1966	48.3	38.3	47.2	38.7	34.3	43.9	48.7	41.9	47.2	43.2
1967	47.4	36.2	46.7	38.9	34.8	44.8	49.4	43.0	46.8	43.1
1968	46.5	34.1	46.2	39.1	35.3	45.6	50.1	44.1	46.5	43.0
1969	45.6	35.2	45.7	39.0	34.2	46.5	47.7	45.3	46.1	42.8
1970	44.7	36.2	45.7	38.9	33.2	43.7	47.7	46.4	45.7	42.2
1971	43.1	37.3	45.7	38.9	32.1	43.9	45.3	46.3	45.3	
1972			38.8	38.9	31.1	40.9	46.4	44.9		
1973			38.8	38.9	30.0	38.1	45.3	44.9		
1974			38.8	38.9	29.0	35.3	44.9	44.9		

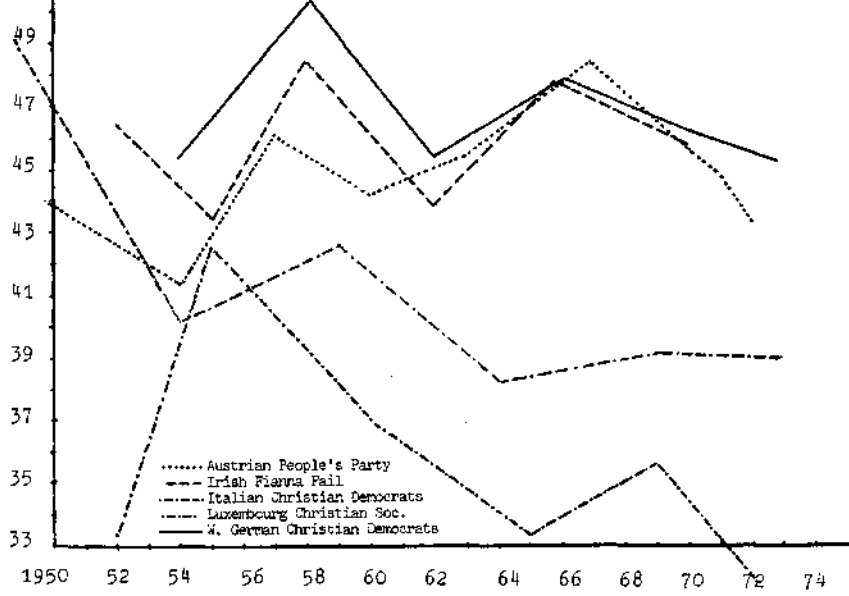
1. Data taken from Thomas T. Mackie and Richard Rose (London; 1974)

2. The 1953 figure is for the September election which sustained the government until 1957. The April election, which is marked on the graph, was part of the upward trend.

Scandinavian and British dominant parties



Dominant Parties in Ireland and on main landmass of Europe



Recognition of these European-wide trends first suggests a rejection of theories on ideological "waves" determining votes across the continent; for the dominant parties in Scandinavia are "Left" or "Social Democrat", while those in the remaining nations are "Right", "Christian", or "Conservative". Secondly it points out that the personnel and organization of political parties in specific nations is probably not determinant at the polls, at least not for dominant parties. Thirdly, the analysis of voting trends in purely national terms of class differentials, issues, or interest representativeness can be diminished. In the study of election trends, the historical role of the dominant party should first be identified.

The most important conclusion is that continental responses are responses to dominant parties, or the results for dominant parties reflect behavioral reactions to other continental trends. No matter what their persuasion, interest coalition, or experience, dominant parties are parties to be evaluated in their role as rulers. They are a stable force toward or against which voters can easily react. No matter what core of voters consistently supports each party the dominant party is most susceptible to swings in the independent vote; even if the long term direction of its support is stable, upwards or downwards, short term gains or losses are influenced by factors independent of its core strength. The dominant parties are, after all, the units subject to the "deviating elections" described so aptly by CAMPBELL, CONVERSE, MILLER, and STOKES (1964; 275); it is from their stable control that there is deviation. In European politics, when it occurs, deviation is a continuing expression of historical trends: it is a modest extension of the currents that crossed national boundaries to threaten regimes in 1848 and change them in 1933. While torn ballots continue to signify opposition to the system, support lost by the major party simply indicates disenchantment with the way the nation is governed. Even where "immobilisme" has taken hold, partial rejection of the dominant party puts all of the nation's authority structure on notice that there is an interest in change.

But why voters of European nations should simultaneously feel similar about authority, or at least the dominant party, is a difficult question. Did violence, student dissatisfactions, and union demands encourage an amalgamation of support for established regimes by voters of the sixties? Was Kruschew's saber rattling, appreciation of an economic upsurge, or the realization that post war borders would remain stable among that the reasons these same parties gained support in the late fifties? Were the frustrations of "rising expectations" or the instability symbolized by American assassinations the cause for the downturn of the early sixties: or are there natural cycles that occur every eight or twelve years?

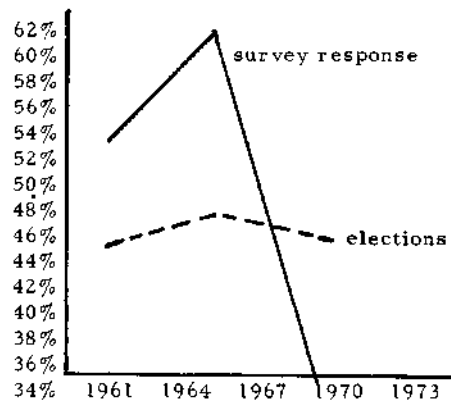
Answers cannot be found by looking at the dates the tides change; not 1959, nor 1962, nor 1969 contain events which sufficiently explain the shifts. Nor do the range of years over which peaks and dips occur provide conclusive clues. Those believing in the influence of personalities may point at discomfort with the hegemony of DeGAULLE, trust in the humanitarianism of KENNEDY, or ambivalence at the election of NIXON as reasons for changing support for the dominant party: but none of these explain why the upturns or downturns last so long, and why they influence elections so divorced from significant events.

A source for explanatory hints is survey data: especially where questions on economic, social, or psychological attitudes have been administered, there may be suggestions of causal factors. And this is just what one finds when investigating the longitudinal materials available at the Zentralarchiv für empirische Sozialforschung at the University of Cologne.

The rise and fall in trust of the dominant parties' guidance of the economy, the data indicates, correlates with that parties' results at the polls. In 1961 and 1965 the German researchers asked, What party can best improve the economic situation? In 1969 the question was worded similarly with the words "and social" added after the word "economic". In 1972 they asked, What party is best qualified to hold prices stable? The results listed below are compared to the voting results for the CDU/CSU on the following graph.

Unfortunately the indicated linkage between economic affairs, public attitudes, and election outcomes is limited by the lack of available comparison with surveys in other countries; but it does provide longitudinal data for further research into the import of attitudes on economic currents for results at the polls.

Jahr	1961		1965		1969		1972	
Primärforscher	Baumert, Scheuch, Wildenmann		Kaase, Wildenmann		Klingemann, Pappi		Berger, Gibowski u. a.	
ZA-Studie-Nr.	055		556		426		635	
Variable	V-91		V-61		V-167		V-92	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
CDU	912	53.8	872	61.9	396	34.2	674	34.6
SPD	486	28.6	418	29.7	490	42.3	619	31.7
NA/DK	298	17.6	118	8.4	251	21.7	222	11.4



Where such connections have been investigated previously they have generally been considered in terms of national economic policy, rather than international trends; for there has been little data for correlating any economic trends with electoral trends. As a result Edward TUFTE, in Political Control of the Economy, points out how properly timed expansionary policies have aided incumbent parties (1978), and in an earlier article Assar LINDBECK describes what cycles of restrictive policy followed by

expansionistic policy will be most productive at the polls (1975). However their highly focused research provides one of the clues for correlating international economic currents and electoral trends. TUFTE's indication that improved availability of disposable income improves the incumbent parties opportunity to win is especially valuable.

Close comparative examination demonstrates that there is a correlation between disposable income and the success of dominant parties. But it is not a correlation with how much disposable income is available to each member of the population, rather it is a correlation with the rate of growth of that disposable income. For instance, if correlated with the German elections and survey results pictured on the graph above, we find that the estimated per capita increase in national disposable income for West Germany was 243 dollars in the two years preceding the 1965 election when the Christian Democrats increased their share of the electorate. But in the following two years, when their success at the polls shrank, the increase was only 87 dollars.

By using one of the few sources for comparable estimates of per capita disposable income, The Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, 1970, similar data can be established for the other countries in this study. The figures in the handbook indicate the increase in per capita income is the following:

	1960-'63	'63-'65	'65-'67	'67-'68	'68-'69	Average/yr. '60-'69
Austria	\$191	\$181	\$163	\$-75	\$140	\$ 83
Ireland	139	155	103	-17	120	55
Italy	-	139	184	84	109	86
Luxembourg	119	219	79	143	-	70
W. Germany	310	243	87	154	242	115
Denmark	349	410	331	-	306	155
Norway	268	286	291	101	143	121
Sweden	425	441	366	151	241	180
U.K.	204	222	137	129	99	88



When combined with the election results and years of elections noted in our preceding tables and graphs this material indicates that:

1. Where, since the previous election or in the previous three years there has been an increase in per capita disposable income over that of the nations average for the decade the proportion of the vote gained by the dominant party has increased.
2. Where the increase has been less than the average increase for the decade the dominant party has lost a share of the electorate, with the one exception of the 1968 Swedish election.
3. If in the previous three years the increase in the per capita disposable income has fallen below the average in any one year the dominant party lost ground at the polls even though the disposable income may have increased greatly in the other two years, with the exception of the Austrian election of 1962 and the Norwegian election of 1969.

Altogether one can conclude that insecurity in the continuation of some voters economic fortunes will lead to reduced confidence for the dominant party.

In addition the data on disposable income provides explanation for another facet of the unfolding of upsurges and downsurges in election outcomes graphed at the beginning of this paper. For the timing of the peaks and valleys on the two graphs do not quite fit with one another. The first graph only includes nations in the European Free Trade Association which primarily trade with each other and with non-European nations, while the second pictures voting returns for nations in the European Economic Community plus two nations that trade primarily with the Community and the United States. The dominant parties on this second graph are Christian or "conservative" and gained their peaks of support between 1954 and 1958, and again between 1965 and 1968, their lows occur between 1959 and 1964. The nations on the first graph, on the other hand, are Social Democratic or Labour Parties dominating Scandinavia and the Conservative Party of Great Britain, which reached their peaks between 1955 and 1960, and

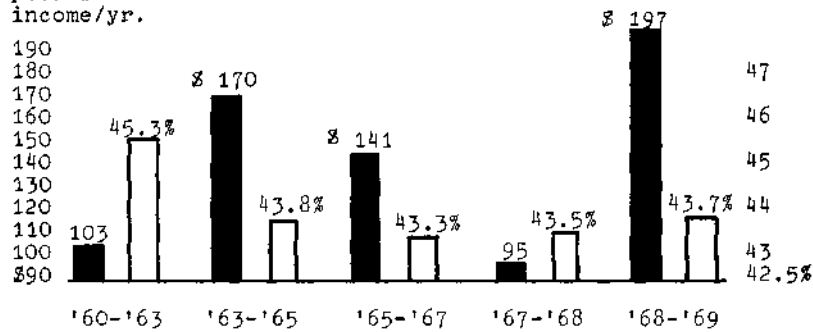


COMPARISON OF SHIFTS IN SUPPORT FOR DOMINANT PARTIES AND SHIFTS IN THE INCREASE OF PER CAPITA DISPOSABLE INCOME

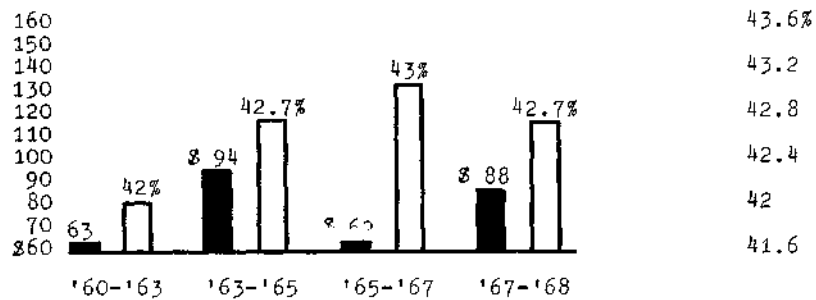
Scandinavian Nations and Great Britain

Average £ increase in per capita disposable income/yr.

Average % of support for dominant parties in terms of P. 12



Nations on main land mass of Europe and Ireland



The time lag caused by fewer elections in the countries represented in the lower graph is evident in the figures.



between 1968 and 1971; their lows are in evidence between 1961 and 1968. As the preceding graph indicates these offsetting movements, during the sixties, correlate with offsetting changes in the rate of increase in per capita disposable income.

The results could indicate change in international economic trends first affects the Economic Community nations and then moves to the others. Similarly support for the dominant parties starts with the nations on the main continent of Europe and then moves to the others. And those who are skeptical about the correlation by suggesting the latter result is purely a function of election dates need only be reminded the nations on the first graph had eight elections compared to six for the period in most of the nations on the other graph.

So some interesting research can now follow. Most is related to why economic trends disperse as they do, and why and when election results follow such trends. Taken with the research of Rein TAAGEPERA, reported during this panel, there is reason for interpreting why the electorate would place so much economic responsibility on a dominant party. For he proves that parties with more than 30% of the vote have even a higher representation in parliament than they deserve by direct proportionality. Thus it is evident their weight makes them especially responsible.

The Potential For Secondary Parties

The Exceptions

Survey Data, Population Data, And Further Research

In the absence of additional information there is evidence of the material necessary to corroborate the inferences of this article. For surveys on parties as holders of authority have hardly been applied in Europe.

The kind of pertinent research that is consistently undertaken equates declining support for the system with declining participation at elections or the increase of purposive negation of ballots (LIPSET and ROKKAN, 1967: P.E.P., 1969). It does not provide effective differentiation between reduced support for the governors, reduced support for the system, and changes in economic conditions.

Studies on partisanship and voter inclinations at the polls usually raise a different series of questions. They emphasize the linkage between social background and policy preferences, with party choice. Yet even in their increasing number there are few genuine cross national surveys or longitudinal projects that compare attitudes of the same population from election to election (BUTLER and STOKES, 1969). In those nations where there is a tradition of election surveys there have been questionnaire items on the popularity or capability of particular regimes (Infas, 1966, 1972, 1976), and on the ability of contending parties to govern (BUTLER and STOKES, 1969; 365). But, except for the Civic Culture project (ALMOND and VERBA, 1963; ZA-Studien-Nr. 0027 to 0031) few surveys test respondents attitudes towards authority or their association of the dominant party with authoritative roles. Were such issues raised a number of questions could be answered; is dominance and authority an issue by which voters evaluate parties and make voting decisions? Which portions of the population account for such factors at different elections? When do components such as governmental inability to maintain order, the threat of external or internal disruptions, or economic expectations underlie cross national reactions to dominant parties? Why do these reactions coincide across national boundaries?

Evidence for some of the answers can be found in two kinds of literature, that on persistence and change in party fortunes, and the work on the rise of second parties.

The most traditional assumption of these studies is that the continuity of major parties is due to the established social divisions in a polity and the historical role of the parties in being identified with those divisions (LIPSET and ROKKAN, 1967). Analysis based on this assumption concludes that the probable party membership and voting decisions of individuals can be ascertained by knowing his or her occupation, ethnic and religious identity, and family background (ALFORD, 1963). Expansion of party fortunes, this infers, will occur from an extension of the franchise, recruitment of interests not previously committed to the party, or a restructured and changed salience in interest attachments. In fact, these are methods secondary parties seem to have used aptly; Liberal and Labour Parties in Great Britain have gained from voting reform acts, the German Social Democrats purposely changed their platform in 1959 to attract middle class and professional voters, and increased urbanism seemingly reduced rural influences on voters and thus aided the turn of the century Democrats in the United States.

But recent studies indicate the assumption, and applicable methods, overlook some explanatory characteristics. Those investigators concentrating on the continuity in the support of major parties find that where cleavages change and voters acquire new occupations there are only limited adjustments in party identification. Where parties are well organized, ROSE and URWIN wrote in 1970, the fluctuations in their support are minor even if other social divisions are varying and complex (311). Four years later ROSE added that heterogeneity can define a party as well as identification with particular interests. This has led to the 1977 analysis by ZUCKERMAN and LICHBACH that, once established, party identification rather than interest association determines voting behavior (550). Thus they emphasize how persons first identify with a party, rather than what groups support the unit.

This leads to generational descriptions of party fortunes. They join census data to voting results, in their article, "Stability and Change in European Electorates", to conclude that once a party dominates an age category it will continue to be the choice of those in the generation as they become older; as a result a party will dominate the electoral scene as long as the generations in which it has sufficient strength prevail at the polls. But if a younger generation aligns with a second party there is a possibility the once dominant party will succumb as that generation becomes a larger share of the electorate (548-551). The authors thus explain the ability of the German Social Democrats and Italian Communists to threaten in the seventies. It also provides reasons why formerly dominant parties throughout Europe are declining in the seventies. This is the period post war babies are becoming a major portion of the electorate.

But generational justifications for long term trends can not be applied to short term variations. These surges and declines in dominant party support between 1950 and 1970 seem to have taken place while average support of the parties remained steady (URWIN and ROSE). If we assume the continuity rests on a bedrock of generational support we must ask if variations come from those with weak allegiance to the dominant units; after all, the range of fluctuation is only five percent of the voters for the dominant parties on the land mass of Europe, and less than nine percent of those in more peripheral nations. Since these changes do not relate to variations of the proportion of voters going to the polls, or to the proportion negating ballots, they cannot be investigated in other terms.

This suggests the appropriate question; who are these voters of "weak" allegiance, especially since they primarily respond to economic factors? The answers can then be approached through all applicable methodology. For instance analysis of West German voting returns, district by district, for the period of this study indicates that the greatest fluctuations in Christian Democratic support, generally reflecting the national rises and declines, took place in the north German, non-catholic, urban centers; with every district in Hamburg displaying them. Similar fluctuation in

support can be found in Swedish urban centers. Are these the groups most susceptible to economic trends?

Two relevant insights are contained in the classic American studies Voting and The American Voter. The first is that those unaware of the sociopolitical allegiances of persons with whom they associate are most likely to have weak party attachments (BERELSON, LAZARFELD, and McPHEE, 1954: 138). The second ascribes such behavior to young voters who have not developed stronger loyalties (CAMPBELL, CONVERSE, MILLER, and STOKES, 1964: 93). Applying these conclusions to a European nation, David BUTLER and Donald STOKES arrived at three classifications of reasons for electoral change: the first is associational, the second is generational, and the third is tied to the information and perceptions they have on issues and leaders (1969). This means, in terms of this paper, that the perception on issues and leaders is really in terms of the perception individual voters have of their economic future when judging dominant parties.

Conclusion

When these various factors are placed in a model that represents the findings of this presentation they indicate that:

1. Where the nation has a dominant party the fluctuations in that party's fortunes at the polls is primarily determined by fluctuations in international economic trends.
2. Second parties are most likely to be victorious if they are within striking distance of the percentages for the dominant party and if the dominant party is turning downward in the share of the electorate it receives.
3. The primary measure of analysis for secondary parties is the traditional one of national occurrences, ideology, party organization, and leadership.

4. Secondary parties can become dominant parties if they gain sufficient voters over a period of generational change to have the base of support for a challenge of primary parties .
5. At the point when they become dominant parties the fluctuations in their fortune will become more correlated with the economic fortune of groups of their weaker supporters, than of the traditional forces that have affected their rise.

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