1. The constitutive contrasts in the national system of party constellations generally tended to manifest themselves *before* any lowering of the threshold of representation. The decisive sequences of party formation took place at the early stage of competitive politics, in some cases well before the extension of the franchise, in other cases on the very eve of the rush to mobilise the finally enfranchised masses.

2. The high thresholds of representation during the phase of mass politicisation set severe tests for the rising political organisations. The surviving formations tended to be firmly entrenched in the inherited social structure and could not easily be dislodged through changes in the rules of the electoral game.

3. The decisive moves to lower the threshold of representation reflected divisions among the established *régime censitaire* parties rather than pressures from the new mass movements. The introduction of PR added a few additional splinters but essentially served to ensure the separate survival of parties unable to come together in common defence against the rising contenders for majority power.

What happened at the decisive party-forming phase in each national society? Which of the many contrasts and conflicts were translated into party oppositions, and how were these oppositions built into stable systems?

# 2

# Critical Junctures, Alliances, and Oppositions

Our aim is to reduce to the smallest possible number the range of explanatory variables required to account for the variations in electoral alternatives among our countries:

- Why did some polities develop party oppositions over issues of *ethnic/cultural identity* while others left such issues to be settled *within* broader party fronts?
- Why did some polities develop strong parties for the defence of the rights of *organised churches and religious movements*, while some developed only small or short-lived parties of this type, and others were able to keep religious divisions completely out of politics?
- Why did the *peasantry* organise their own parties in some countries or regions, while in others they never found this necessary?
- Why did the *working classes* develop strong and unified political movements in some countries, much weaker ones in other countries, and deeply divided organisations in still others?

It is easy enough to spin out strings of explanations for one country at a time: the task is to develop a unified scheme of accounting that will hold up across a maximum of empirically extant cases. In our attempt at accounting for the marked variations in the timing, the speed, and the scope of the measures taken to institutionalise competitive mass politics we started out from a typology of the *initial conditions of nation-building*: the character of the medieval organisation of the given territory, the exposure to absolutist centralisation, the final definition of the territorial nation-state through the processes of secession and consolidation after the Napoleonic upheavals, and, finally, the size of each resultant polity and its position in the international interaction system [see Rokkan no. 107].

In our attempt at an explanation of the variations in the structuring of partisan polities we have found it fruitful to proceed through a parallel series of steps to generate a developmental typology:

- We first identify four *'critical junctures'* in the sequences of nation-building.
- We next identify the principal *cleavage lines* generated by the decisions taken at each critical juncture.
- And we finally generate from each of the possible cleavage structures *core systems of parties* and test these predictions against the historically given cases.

The gist of the argument has been summarised in the schema of developmental linkages in Figure 37.

In fact it is not very difficult to translate the succession of 'revolutionary junctures' into a straightforward account of events at four critical junctures in the political history of Western Europe:

1. The great upheavals of the *Reformation and the Thirty Years' War* left Western Europe divided into three parts:
   - a wholly Protestant North (Denmark–Norway, Sweden–Finland, Prussia);
   - a broad belt of religiously mixed territories from Ireland toward the Alps (Britain–Ireland, the Low Countries, the Rhineland, large sections of France until 1685, the Swiss cantons);
   - the Counter-Reformation countries in the east and the south (the Habsburg territories, Spain and the Italian territories, France after 1685).

2. The *National Revolution* triggered off in territory after territory in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars produced very different sorts of cleavages in the three parts of Western Europe:
   - in the Protestant North the decisive cleavages tended to be territorial–cultural: the awakening peasantry and the defenders of ethnic peripheries allied themselves with outgroups within the urban elite and developed broad 'Left' fronts against the established administrative and religious bureaucracy;
   - in the broad 'border belt' conflicts developed on two fronts: peripheral protest and Protestant dissent on the one side, movements for the defence of Catholic minorities on the other;



| *Critical juncture* | | *Crucial issue* | *Resultant cleavage* |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | *Reformation:* the 1648 settlement and the 19th and 20th century secessions | Consolidation of territorial state | 1. Peripheries vs. centre; subject ethnicities/language groups against central dominance<br>2. Moralist/religious rejection of central culture |
| II | *National Revolution:* post-Napoleonic nation-building | Control of territorial standardisation media: primarily mass education | Church vs. secular State |
| III | *Industrial Revolution:* 1850s onwards | 1. The primary economy: protection vs. modernisation (tariff issue)<br>2. The secondary economy: freedom of enterprise vs. state control; rights of owners/employers vs. rights of workers/employees | 1. Rural/agricultural vs. urban/industrial interests<br>2. Worker–owner cleavage |
| IV | *International Revolution:* Russian Revolution and After | Integration of underprivileged strata in national community | 1. Communism vs. socialism<br>2. Pacifism/neutralism vs. commitment to nation/larger alliance |

FIGURE 37. A schema of developmental linkages: revolutions, issues and cleavages

   - in Counter-Reformation Europe a deep division between radical/liberal secularisers and Catholic defenders of the privileges of the church.

3. The *Industrial Revolution* added further dimensions to each national cleavage structure:
   - in the Protestant North and in the Protestant regions of the 'border belt' the growth of industrial production generated increasing tension between rural and urban interests, but this cleavage did not

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I *Reformation* | National State Church | | | | | | | | | State(s) allied with Roman Catholic Church | | | | | |
| II *National Revolution* | Strong Protestant dissent | | | | Strong Roman Catholic dissent | | | | | Secularising Revolution | | | | State–Roman Catholic alliance | |
| III *Industrial Revolution* | State close to landed interests | | State close to urban interests | | State close to landed interests | | State close to urban interests | | | State close to urban interests | | State close to landed interests | | State close to urban interests | |
| IV *International Revolution* | Minor split | Major split | Minor split | Major split | Minor split | Major split | Minor split | Major split | Minor split | Major split | Minor split | Major split | Minor split | Major split | Minor split |
| Type | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Nearest empirical examples *Larger* Early | GB (excl. Ireland) | Prussia | | | GB (incl. Ireland) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Late | | | | | | Reich | | | | Spain | | France | Habsb. Empire | | | |
| *Smaller* Early | | | Denmark Sweden | Norway Finland Iceland | | | Nether. Switzerl. | | | | | | | | | |
| Late | | | | | | | | | | | | | Austria Ireland | | Belgium Luxemb. | |

FIGURE 38. Typology of cleavage structures and its fit with the empirical cases in Western Europe



always find expression in the organisation of distinct agrarian parties;

- in economies dominated by large estates (England, Scotland, Prussia) the rural interests tended to be aggregated within broader establishment fronts;
- in countries and regions with larger proportions of smaller, family-sized farms distinct agrarian parties were more likely to emerge;
- in the Counter-Reformation countries the emerging Catholic mass parties found most of their support within the devout peasantry and were able to aggregate the agrarian interests without too much difficulty.

4. The *Industrial Revolution* also generated in each country deepening cleavages between workers and salaried employees on the one hand, employers and owners on the other, but these cleavages did not always generate unified political movements: the leaders of the last stratum of the population to be given regular rights of political citizenship were torn between their commitment to the *historical nation* they were part of, and their commitment to the *international solidarity* of their class; this was an long-established line of cleavage in most working-class movements, but the dilemma became particularly acute when one country, the Soviet Union, made itself the champion of international working-class solidarity and generated splits within each national movement.

Figure 38 sets out the four 'critical junctures' and seeks to locate six larger and eleven smaller European polities within the resulting 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 attribute space. This exercise in developmental typology may appear forbiddingly schematical. These extraordinarily varied territorial and national histories clearly cannot be summarised in a developmental typology at this level of simplicity. But this is not the purpose: the object is to single out in the multifaceted flow of events in each unit those choice points which proved most significant for the generation of similarities and differences in cleavage structures and in party systems.

Figure 39 presents [for the eleven smaller European democracies] the cleavage structures to be expected for five of the sixteen initial types [of Figure 38] and identifies the 'core' party systems generated for each structure through a set of uniform assumptions about prob-

| Type in Fig. 38 | Characteristic cleavages: Periphery-centre | Church-State | Urban-rural | Worker-owner | Internat.-national | General 'core' systems of parties: Early | Late | Deviant cases |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | XX | | XX | XXX | X | Cons.<br>'Left' | Radical<br>Prohibit.<br>Agrarian<br><br>Soc. Dem.<br>CP (weak) | DENMARK:<br>a) No Prohibitionist split<br>b) Georgist party<br><br>SWEDEN:<br>Split Radical-Prohibit. party 12 years (1922-1934).<br>Minor Christian party 1964 |
| 4 | XXX | | XXX | XXX | XXX | Cons.<br><br>Left | Radical; Christian Prohibit.:<br>Agrarian<br>Soc. Dem.<br>CP (strong) | FINLAND: Old Finns vs. Young Finns (Independ. struggle); Swedish party<br><br>*Only in Norway*<br>NORWAY: Lab. with Comintern party 20s, CP weak except 1945<br><br>ICELAND: Merger Cons./Lib. Independ. party |
| 7 | XXX | XXX | XX | XXX | X | Lib./Rad.<br>Orthodox<br>Prot.<br>Cath. | Agr.(weak)<br>Soc. Dem.<br>CP (weak) | NETHERL.: Lib.<br>CHU<br>Anti-Rev.<br>Cath. minor<br><br>SWITZERL.: Rad. Lib.-Dem. (regional)<br>Cath.-Cons. regional |
| 13 | XXX | XXX | XX | XXX | X | Pro-larger unit<br>Cath. | Agr. (weak)<br><br>Soc.<br>CP (weak) | AUSTRIA: Pan-Germans vs. Cath.-Cons.<br><br>*Landbund* (regional, I. Rep.) strong<br><br>IRELAND: *Fine Gael vs. Fianna Fail*<br>*No church party*<br>minor<br><br>weak |
| 15 | XXX | XXX | | XXX | X | Lib.<br>Cath. | Regionalists<br><br>Soc.<br>CP (weak) | BELGIUM: Flemish party; *Volksunie*<br><br>LUXEMBOURG: none |

FIGURE 39. Cleavage structures and party systems: the eleven smaller European democracies



abilities of coalition and aggregation: these 'generated' systems are finally tested against the historically extant cases, and the principal deviations are listed (see also Chapter IV.3).[132]

None of these cleavages can be analysed in isolation: what counts is the distinctive system of interdependence generated in each country. The centre–periphery and the state–church cleavages feed into the cleavages produced by the Industrial Revolution. The Catholic political movements have throughout continental Europe proved able to cross-cut the cleavages between rural and urban economic interests generated by the Industrial Revolution; distinctly agrarian parties have rarely if ever emerged in countries or regions with strong Catholic parties. The agrarian parties in the Austrian First Republic (the *Landbund*), in Switzerland, and in The Netherlands have had very little success beyond the Protestant or secularised regions. Ireland is a very interesting case just from this point of view: in the only Catholic country *without* a distinctive Catholic party sizeable groups of farmers have found it to their advantage to put up their own candidates and organise for separate political action [see Chapter IV. 3].

In the Protestant countries the likelihood of the emergence of distinctive agrarian parties was essentially a function of the concentration of agricultural wealth and the size of the agricultural labour force: the larger the estates, the greater the incentive to develop urban–rural alliances; the greater the number of family-sized but market-oriented farms, the greater the pressures for organised action against the urban–industrial interests. This goes far to explain the contrasts between the five Scandinavian countries on the one hand and the British/Prussian cases on the other.[133]

The Industrial Revolution produced very different results in the other sectors of the economy: while the conflicts generated in the *commodity* market resulted in wide divergences of party development across the European countries, the conflicts triggered off in the *labour* market proved much more uniformly party-forming. All countries of Western Europe developed lower-class mass parties at some point or other before World War I. The decisive *contrasts* among the Western party systems clearly reflect differences in *the territorial histories of state formation, nation-building, and land tenure systems*; the worker–owner cleavage generated through the process of industrialisation tended to bring the party systems closer to each other.

This, of course, says nothing about the *character* of these working-class movements: the Industrial Revolution produced lower-class parties of one sort or another throughout the West, but these differed conspicuously in strength, in organisational unity, in ideological orientation, and in the extent of their integration into, or alienation from, each historically given polity. These variations were clearly conditioned by the earlier histories of state formation and national, cultural, and economic integration in each country: the decisive contrasts among the systems had emerged before the entry of the rural and the urban proletariats into the political arena, and the character of the emerging mass parties for lower-class protest was heavily influenced by the constellations of ideologies, organisations, and alliances they had to confront in that arena.

To aid in the mapping of these variations in the character of working-class politics our model posits a fourth 'critical juncture', an *International Revolution* [see Figure 40]. The conflict between proletarian internationalism and nation-accepting socialism emerged early in the history of the working-class movement. The dramatic events of World War I and the Russian Revolution deepened the split in the movement and produced not only militant factions but distinct and competing working-class parties. The final row of dichotomies in Figure 38 simply sorts party systems by the strength of these split-off movements in the 1920s or later. Empirically the pattern of variations is clear enough, but the theoretical derivation of the predictions is still much in doubt.

In the Protestant and the mixed countries the differentiating criterion appears to be the *recency of the nation-building process*: the less settled the issues of national identity and the deeper the ongoing conflict over cultural standardisation, the greater the chances of radicalisation and fragmentation in the working class.

In the Catholic countries a similar process seems to have been at work but in different terms: the deeper and more persistent the church–state conflicts, the greater the fragmentation of the working class: the closer the historical ties between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the secular 'nation-builders', the less the chances of left-wing split-offs.

In the abstract schema set out in Figure 34 we distinguished four decisive dimensions of opposition in Western politics: two of them were products of what we called the *National* Revolution (nos. 1 and 2); and two of them were generated through the *Industrial* Revolution



| | Unified 'domesticable' labour movements | | Deep splits in labour movements (strong communist party wings) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Early consolidation* | | *Late independence, unification* | |
| | *Smaller* | *Larger* | *Smaller* | *Larger* |
| *Protestant* | Denmark<br>Sweden | Britain | Norway (1920s)<br>Finland<br>Iceland | |
| *Mixed* | Netherlands<br>Switzerland | | | Reich |
| *Catholic* | *Initial Church–State–Alliance* | | *Marked State–Church Cleavage* | |
| | Austria<br>Belgium<br>Luxembourg<br>Ireland | | | France<br>Italy<br>Spain |

FIGURE 40. [The International Revolution and the variations in the character of working-class politics]

(nos. 3 and 4). In their basic characteristics the party systems that emerged in Western European politics during the early phase of competition and mobilisation can be interpreted as products of *sequential interactions between these two fundamental processes of change.*

Differences in the timing and character of the *National* Revolution set the stage for striking divergences in the European party system. In the Protestant countries the conflicts between the claims of the State and the Church had been temporarily settled by royal fiats at the time of the Reformation, and the processes of centralisation and standardisation triggered off after 1789 did not immediately bring about a conflict between the two. The temporal and the spiritual establishments were at one in the defence of the central nation-building culture but came increasingly under attack by the leaders and ideologists of counter-movements in the provinces, in the peripheries, and within the underprivileged strata of peasants, craftsmen, and workers. The other countries of Western Europe were all split to the core in the wake of the secularising French Revolution and without exception developed strong parties for the defence of the Church, either explicitly as in Germany, the Low Countries, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, and Spain or implicitly as in the case of the Right in France.[134]

Differences in the timing and character of the *Industrial* Revolution also made for contrasts among the national party systems in Europe. Conflicts in the *commodity* market tended to produce highly divergent party alliances in Europe. In some countries the majority of the market farmers found it possible to join with the owner interests in the secondary sector of the economy; in others the two remained in opposition to each other and developed parties of their own. Conflicts in the *labour* market, by contrast, proved much more uniformly divisive: all countries of Western Europe developed lower-class mass parties at some point or other before World War I. These were rarely unified into one single working-class party. In Latin Europe the lower-class movements were sharply divided among revolutionary anarchist, anarchosyndicalist, and Marxist factions on the one hand and revisionist socialists on the other. The Russian Revolution of 1917 split the working-class organisations throughout Europe. Today [1967] we find in practically all countries of the West divisions between communists, left socialist splinters, and revisionist social democrat parties.

Our task, however, is not just to account for the emergence of single parties but to analyse the processes of alliance formation that led to the development of stable *systems* of political organisations in country after country. To approach some understanding of these alliance formations, we have to study the *interactions* between the two revolutionary processes of change in each polity: how far had the National Revolution proceeded at the point of the industrial 'take-off' and how did the two processes of mobilisation, the cultural and the economic, affect each other, positively by producing common fronts or negatively by maintaining divisions?

The decisive contrasts among the Western party systems clearly reflect differences in the *national histories of conflict and compromise across the first three of the four cleavage lines* distinguished in our analytical schema: the 'centre–periphery', the state–church, and the land–industry cleavages generated national developments in *divergent* directions, while the owner-worker cleavage tended to bring the party systems *closer to each other* in their basic structure. The crucial differences among the party systems emerged in the early phases of competitive politics, before the final phase of mass mobilisation. They reflected basic contrasts in the conditions and sequences of nation-building and in the structure of the economy at the point of take-off



toward sustained growth. This, to be sure, does not mean that the systems vary exclusively on the 'Right' and at the centre, but are much more alike on the 'Left' of the political spectrum. There are working-class movements throughout the West, but they differ conspicuously in size, in cohesion, in ideological orientation, and in the extent of their integration into, or alienation from, the historically given national polity. Our point is simply that the factors generating these differences on the left are *secondary*. The decisive contrasts among the systems had emerged before the entry of the working-class parties into the political arena, and the character of these mass parties was heavily influenced by the constellations of ideologies, movements, and organisations they had to confront in that arena.

To understand the differences among the Western party systems we have to start out from an analysis of the *situation of the active nation-building elite on the eve of the breakthrough to democratisation and mass mobilisation:* what had they achieved and where had they met most resistance? What were their resources, who were their nearest allies, and where could they hope to find further support? Who were their enemies, what were their resources, and where could they recruit allies and rally reinforcement?

Any attempt at comparative analysis across so many divergent national histories is fraught with grave risks. It is easy to get lost in the wealth of fascinating detail, and it is equally easy to succumb to facile generalities and irresponsible abstractions. Scholarly prudence prompts us to proceed case by case, but intellectual impatience urges us to go beyond the analysis of concrete contrasts and try out alternative schemes of systematisation across the known cases.

To clarify the logic of our approach to the comparative analysis of party systems, we have developed a *model of alternative alliances and oppositions*. We have posited several sets of actors, have set up a series of rules of alliance and opposition among these, and have tested the resultant typology of potential party systems against a range of empirically known cases.

Our model bears on relationships of alliance, neutrality, or opposition among seven sets of actors and sets five restrictions on alliance formation [see Figure 41].

These various elements and restrictions combine to produce an eightfold typology of basic political oppositions [which] are in fact the

*Actors*

| | |
|---|---|
| N | a central core of co-operating 'nation-builders' controlling major elements of the machinery of the 'state'; |
| C | an ecclesiastical body established within the national territory and given a large measure of control over education; |
| R | the supranationally established ecclesiastical body organised under the Roman *Curia* and the Pope; |
| D | a dissident, nonconformist body of religious activists opposed to C and R; |
| L | a co-operating body of established landowners controlling a substantial share of the total primary production of the national territory; |
| U | a co-operating body of urban commercial and industrial entrepreneurs controlling the advancing secondary sectors of the national economy; |
| P | a movement of resistance in the subject periphery against central national control. |

*Restrictions on alliance formation:*

(1) N and D and N and P will invariably be opposed, never in any joint alliance;

(2) N must decide on alliances on two fronts: the *religious* and the *economic;*

(3) on the religious front, N is faced with three options:
- alliance with C,
- a secular posture S,
- alliance with R;

(4) on the economic front, N is restricted to two alliance options:
- with L,
- with U;

(5) N's alliances determine P's choice of alliances but with these restrictions: (a) if N is allied to C, the model allows two contingent outcomes: (aa) if C is dominant, the only P option on the religious front is D, (bb) if R still constitutes a strong minority, P will be split in two alliance-groups: the response to N–C–L will be $P_1$–S–U and $P_2$–R, the response to N–C–U will be $P_1$–D–L and $P_2$–R–L: (b) if N chooses S or R, the only possible P alliances are P–S–U and P–R–L or simply P–U and P–L; P–R–U and P–S–L do not occur.

FIGURE 41. [Actors and restrictions on alliance formation]



simple combinatorial products of three successive dichotomies [see Figure 42]. Our model seeks to reduce the bewildering variety of empirical party systems to a set of ordered consequences of decisions and developments at three crucial junctures in the history of each nation:

- first, during the Reformation—the struggle for the control of the ecclesiastical organisations within the national territory;
- second, in the wake of the *'Democratic Revolution'* after 1789—the conflict over the control of the vast machineries of mass education to be built up by the mobilising nation-states;
- finally, during the early phases of the *Industrial Revolution*—the opposition between landed interests and the claims of the rising commercial and industrial leadership in cities and towns.

The model spells out the consequences of the fateful division of Europe brought about through Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. The outcomes of the early struggles between State and Church determined the structure of national politics in the era of democratisation and mass mobilisation three hundred years later. In Southern and Central Europe the Counter-Reformation had consolidated the position of the Church and tied its fate to the privileged bodies of the *ancien régime*. The result was a polarisation of politics between a national–radical–secular movement and a Catholic–traditionalist one. In Northwest Europe, in Britain and Scandinavia, the settlement of the sixteenth century gave a very different structure to the cleavages of the nineteenth. The established churches did not stand in opposition to the nation-builders in the way the Roman Catholic Church did on the continent, and the 'Left' movements opposed to the religious establishment found most of their support among newly enfranchised dissenters, nonconformists, and fundamentalists in the peripheries and within the rising urban strata. In Southern and Central Europe the bourgeois opposition to the *ancien régime* tended to be indifferent if not hostile to the teachings of the Church: the cultural integration of the nation came first and the Church had to find whatever place it could within the new political order. In Northwest Europe the opposition to the *ancien régime* was far from indifferent to religious values. The broad 'Left' coalitions against the established powers recruited decisive support among orthodox Protestants in a variety of sectarian movements outside and inside the national churches.

| CRITICAL JUNCTURES AND CLEAVAGES | | | TYPE | COALITIONS AND OPPOSITIONS | | | | PARTY SYSTEMS | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | N's Commitments | | | P's response | Closest Empirical Examples | | |
| *First dichotomy:* REFORMATION | *Second dichotomy:* DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION | *Third dichotomy:* INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION | | *Religious front* Option | Condition | *Economic front* Option | | Country | 'N' party (parties) | 'P' parties |
| State controls national church | National church dominant | Commitment to landed interests | I | C dominant | C | L | P–D–U | Britain | CONS. vs. LIB.: | Celtic fringe Dissenters Industry |
| | | Commitment to urban interests | II | C dominant | C | U | P–D–L | Scandi-navia | CONS. vs. 'LEFT': | AGRARIANS CHRISTIANS RADICALS |
| | Strong Roman [Catholic] minority | Commitment to landed interests | III | C R strong minority | L | $\frac{P_1–S–U}{P_2–R}$ | | Prussia/ Reich | CONS. vs. | BAVARIANS LIB. *ZENTRUM* |
| | | Commitment to urban interests | IV | C R strong minority | U | $\frac{P_1–D–L}{P_2–R–L}$ | | Nether-lands | LIB. vs. | Calvinists: CHU, AR Catholics: KVP |
| State allied to Roman Catholic Church | Secularising revolution | Commitment to landed interests | V | S | L | $\frac{P_1–U}{P_2–R}$ | | Spain | LIB. vs. | Catalan *LLIGA* Carlists |
| | | Commitment to urban interests | VI | S | U | P–R–L | | France Italy | LIB./RAD. vs. | CONS.–CATH.–CHR. |
| | State allied to Roman Church | Commitment to landed interests | VII | R | L | P–S–U | | Austria | CHR. vs. LIB.: | Pan-Germans Industry |
| | | Commitment to urban interests | VIII | R | U | P–L | | Belgium | CHR./LIB. vs. | Flemish separatists |

FIGURE 42. [Configurations of cleavages, coalitions, and parties: a typological model]



The distinction between these two types of 'Left' alliances against the inherited political structure is fundamental for an understanding of European political developments in the age of mass elections. It is of particular importance in the analysis of the religiously most divided of the European polities: types III and IV in our 2 x 2 x 2 schema [see Figure 42]. The religious frontiers of Europe went straight through the territories of the Low Countries, the old German Reich, and Switzerland; in each of these the clash between the nation-builders and the strong Roman Catholic minorities produced lasting divisions of the bodies politic and determined the structure of their party systems. The Dutch system came closest to a direct merger of the Southern/Central type (VI–VIII) and the Northwestern: on the one hand a nation-building party of increasingly secularised liberals, on the other hand a Protestant 'Left' recruited from orthodox milieus of the same type as those behind the old opposition parties in England and Scandinavia.

The difference between England and The Netherlands is indeed instructive. Both countries had their strong peripheral concentrations of Catholics opposed to central authority: the English in Ireland, the Dutch in the south. In Ireland, the cumulation of ethnic, social, and religious conflicts could not be resolved within the old system; the result was a history of intermittent violence and finally territorial separation. In The Netherlands the secession of the Belgians still left a sizeable Catholic minority, but the inherited tradition of corporate pluralism helped to ease them into the system. The Catholics established their own broad column of associations and a strong political party and gradually found acceptance within a markedly segmented but still cohesive national polity.

A comparison of the Dutch and the Swiss cases would add further depth to this analysis of the conditions for the differentiation of parties within national systems. Both countries come close to our type IV: Protestant national leadership, strong Catholic minorities, predominance of the cities in the national economy. In setting the assumption of our model we predicted a split in the peripheral opposition to the nation-builders: one orthodox Protestant opposition (P–D–L) and one Roman Catholic (P–R–L). This clearly fits the Dutch case but not so well the Swiss. How is this to be accounted for? Contrasts of this type open up fascinating possibilities of comparative historical analysis; all we can do here is to suggest a simple hypothesis. Our model not

only simplifies complex historical developments through its strict selection of conditioning variables, it also reduces empirical continuities to crude dichotomies. The difference between the Dutch and the Swiss cases can possibly be accounted for through further differentiation in the centre–periphery axis. The drive for national centralisation was stronger in The Netherlands and had been slowed down in Switzerland through the experiences of the war between the Protestant cantons and the Catholic *Sonderbund.* In The Netherlands the Liberal drive for centralisation produced resistance both among the Protestants and the Catholics. In Switzerland the Radicals had few difficulties on the Protestant side and needed support in their opposition to the Catholics. The result was a party system of essentially the same structure as in the typical Southern/Central cases.[135]

Further differentiations of the 'N–P' axis in our model will also make it easier to fit the extraordinary case of *France* into this system of controlled dimension-by-dimension comparisons. In our model we have placed France with Italy as an example of an alliance/opposition system of type VI: Catholic dominance through the Counter-Reformation, secularisation and religious conflict during the next phase of nation-building in the nineteenth century, clear predominance of the cities in national politics. But this is an analytical juxtaposition of polities with diametrically opposed histories of development and consolidation—France one of the oldest and most centralised nation-states in Europe, Italy a territory unified long after the French revolutions had paved the way for the 'participant nation', the integrated political structure committing the entire territorial population to the same historical destiny.

To us this is not a weakness in our model, however. The party systems of the countries *are* curiously similar, and any scheme of comparative analysis must somehow bring this out. The point is that our distinction between 'nation-builder' alliances and 'periphery' alliances must take on very different meanings in the two contexts. In France the distinction between 'centre' and 'periphery' was far more than a matter of geography; it reflected long-standing historical commitments for or against the Revolution. As spelled out in detail in Siegfried's classic *Tableau* (1913), the *Droite* had its strongholds in the districts which had most stubbornly resisted the revolutionary drive for centralisation and equalisation,[136] but it was far more than a movement of



peripheral protest—it was a broad alliance of alienated elite groups, of frustrated nation-builders who felt that their rightful powers had been usurped by men without faith and without roots. In Italy there was no basis for such a broad alliance against the secular nation-builders, since the established local elites offered little resistance to the lures of *trasformismo,* and the Church kept its faithful followers out of national politics for nearly two generations.

These contrasts during the initial phases of mass mobilisation had far-reaching consequences for each party system. With the broadening of the electorates and the strengthening of the working-class parties, the Church felt impelled to defend its position through its own resources. In France, the result was an attempt to divorce the defence of the Catholic schools from the defence of the established rural hierarchy. This trend had first found expression through the establishment of Christian trade unions and in 1944 finally led to the formation of the MRP *[Mouvement Républicain Populaire].* The burden of historic commitments was too strong, however; the young party was unable to establish itself as a broad mass party defending the principles of Christian democracy. By contrast, in Italy, history had left the Church with only insignificant rivals to the right of the working-class parties. The result was the formation of a broad alliance of a variety of interests and movements, frequently at loggerheads with each other, but united in their defence of the rights of the central institution of the fragmented *ancien régime,* the Roman Catholic Church. In both cases there was a clear-cut tendency toward religious polarisation, but differences in the histories of nation-building made for differences in the resultant systems of party alliances and oppositions.

We could go into further detail on every one of the eight types distinguished in our model, but this would take us too far into single-country histories. We are less concerned with the specifics of the degrees of fit in each national case than with the overall structure of the model.[137] There is clearly nothing final about any such scheme; it simply sets a series of themes for detailed comparisons and suggests ways of organising the results within a manageable conceptual framework. The model is a tool and its utility can be tested only through continuous development: through the addition of further variables to account for observed differences as well as through refinements in the definition and grading of the variables already included.