HOW DOES THE EDUCATION CLEAVAGE STACK UP AGAINST THE CLASSIC CLEAVAGES OF THE PAST?

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Abstract

This paper conceptualizes a political cleavage as the extent to which a group sharing a distinct social characteristic is over-represented in a political party. Using a robust measure, we find that 1) an education cleavage now structures voting for GAL and TAN parties in Western Europe; 2) these parties are far more cleavaged than contemporary center-left and center-right parties; 3) GAL and TAN parties are as socially structured as classically cleavaged social democratic parties in the 1950s; 4) the Republican and Democratic parties have also become strongly cleavaged on education. In neo-cleavage theory, the formation of cleavages is punctuated by periods of dealignment as prior divides lose their grip and new conflicts give rise to new political parties with distinctive social cores. There is plausible evidence that education now structures political parties in contemporary Western democracies.

KEYWORDS: education, cleavage, political parties, GALTAN, Republican party

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What aspects of social structure are mobilized in party competition? To what extent do political parties have core constituencies that provide them with durable support over time? These questions are vital in assessing the new divide that has arisen in Western societies, and they lie at the foundation of a theory of political cleavages.

We argue that classic cleavage theory needs revision to account for the rise of socially structured political parties that, contrary to the cleavaged parties of the past, cannot build constituencies on pre-existing organizations. Our argument proceeds in steps. We begin by explaining where classic cleavage theory went wrong; why it is powerful in explaining the twentieth century but fails in the twenty-first. We next explain why socially structured GAL and TAN parties emerged from the transformation of the division of labor beginning in the 1960s.[1] We claim—against classical cleavage theory—that these parties are cleavaged. Using a measure of party structuration that allows precise inter-temporal comparison, we find that GAL and TAN parties are as socially structured as classically cleavaged social democratic parties in Norway, Britain and Germany in the 1950s. The final section reveals that today the Democratic and Republican parties of the United States exhibit comparable levels of social structuration.

Revisiting Cleavage Theory

The intellectual promise of cleavage theory is to connect the structure of political alternatives in a society to its social structure. However, it is far from given that there is a connection. The predominant theory of voting and party competition is spatial theory which conceives political parties as market participants proposing policies to atomized voters in order to reap the benefits of office (Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1989).

Partisan choice is short term, oriented to particular issues, personalities, or events that have little to do with a voter's social background. Political parties are interchangeable.

Both cleavage and spatial theory expect to find an association between a voter's policy preferences and those of the party they vote for. However, cleavage theory seeks to put substance into spatial theory by hypothesizing how particular sequences of social change generate grievances that find expression in the political alternatives available to voters. This does not require that one assumes sophisticated voters. Cleavage theory begins with the premise that most people have little motivation to pay attention to politics; little understanding of the issues contested by political parties; and little capacity to think coherently about their political choices (Converse 1964). Yet, a person may be nudged in a particular direction by features of their life that they may take for granted including their gender, how they are educated, and how they work.

Ironically, classic cleavage theory is consistent with the view that contemporary politics has little structure. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) believed that the party systems they observed in the mid-1960s were more or less frozen.[2] When it became clear that this was wrong, many observers, including Lipset himself, came to the conclusion that European politics was entering an era of dealignment (Clark and Lipset 1991). However, the connection between classic cleavage theory and the absence of socially structured political parties goes deeper. Classic cleavage theory conceives party structure as the result of two features that are unlikely in contemporary party systems: first, that parties are formed from demarcated groups with explicit identities; second, that the party-voter linkage is rooted in already-existing organizations.

These two features came to be regarded as essential for a cleavage. Alongside the social structural basis, Bartolini and Mair (1990: 199, 201) identify a normative element,

‘a set of values and beliefs which provides a sense of identity’, and an organizational element consisting of, for example, unions or churches that underpin the conflict. These features, they argue, ‘play an inextricable role of mutual reinforcement . . . it is only through the historical process of mobilisation, politicisation, and democratisation that any specific cleavage acquires its distinctive normative profile and organizational network. In short, cleavages develop initially on the basis of a social stratification which sets the structural conditions for group identity, and only later do they become fully political, particularly with the development of mass democracy’.

These causal foundations make strong sense for the classic cleavage model. The parties that Lipset and Rokkan described were expressions of longstanding conflicts that fractured populations into politically mobilized, identitarian groups. Social structuration could precede party formation because the conflicts that configured European societies and ultimately generated mass political parties had their origin in major shocks—the industrial revolution and nation building—that took place decades (or centuries) before mass suffrage. Organizationally encompassed, self-conscious groups were the platforms on which Christian democratic and socialist parties were founded. These parties did not have to hunt for supporters; they were rooted in already-existing, socially closed, communities. Christian democratic voters went to church, as did their parents and their parents’ parents over generations. Socialist parties were grounded in the manual working class. Working-class organizations—unions and working-class benefit societies—long predated socialism and formed its core.

Much of the literature follows classic cleavage theory in taking an essentialist approach in which a cleavage is defined as having a social structural basis, an explicit collective identity, and a dense system of flanking organizations. It is, of course, perfectly

admissible to conceive this combination of attributes as necessary for a ‘true’ political cleavage. Yet, if one raises the possibility that, empirically, these attributes can vary independently, it can be useful to define a cleavage more narrowly.

Arguably, the social structuring of political behavior is the core attribute of a political cleavage. So we think it reasonable to say with Bornschier (2009: 2-3) that ‘Going beyond the three constituting elements of a cleavage, then, the term cleavage is usually reserved for durable patterns of political behaviour linking social groups and political organizations’. Bartolini and Mair (1990: 199) point to this as the ’empirical’ element of a political cleavage; Evans and Northmore-Ball (2017: 89) describe this as the ’intuitive meaning‘ of a political cleavage.

This more precise definition allows us to come to grips with the possibility that a cleavage can arise without already-existing organizations or solidary groups. Neo-cleavage theory conceives party system change as a recurring process in which new political parties mobilize the grievances of voters in response to systemic shocks that upset the status quo. In this theory, the formation of cleavages is punctuated by periods of dealignment as prior divides lose their grip and new conflicts give rise to new political parties with distinctive social cores.

From this standpoint, spatial theory describes a special case of low-intensity politics in a period of dealignment when political preferences are disconnected from the social forces that structure conflict in a society. The question we ask and seek to answer is whether a period of dealignment has been supplanted by the rise of a new cleavage articulated by GAL and TAN parties.

In the next section, we explain the conditions under which socially structured parties could – and in fact did – arise. The point of departure for a cleavage model of party

system change is a major shock to society that motivates opposition to the status quo on the part of groups whose lives are affected in ways that are difficult or impossible for them to escape. The resulting conflict forms a political cleavage where a) the societal shock has enduring consequences for the life chances of particular social groups and b) in response to the shock, political parties form with the support of socially structured cores.

These conditions have been met by an information revolution beginning in the 1960s that has transformed the division of labor and upended the life chances of major groups in Western society (Iversen and Soskice 2019; Hooghe and Marks 2022). On the one side are the higher educated, including particularly women and socio-cultural professionals; on the other are the less-educated, including particularly men in semi-skilled production jobs. These groups typically lead different lives at home and at work; they tend to have distinct political attitudes and affinities; and they provide core support for GAL parties and TAN parties. From the standpoint of social structuration we describe this as an education cleavage (Bornschier 2010; Grossman and Hopkins 2024; Kriesi 1998; Stubager 2010; Zingher 2022).[3]

To gauge this empirically, we measure the extent to which a social group is over-represented in a political party. This follows Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 2) in focusing on the 'core characteristics of the groups of voters mobilized by each party'. Party structure provides the key to the 'structure of political alternatives' in a society or, in E.E. Schattschneider's (1960: 71) words, which conflicts are 'organized into' politics and which are 'organized out'.

We are then in a position to assess the extent to which GAL and TAN parties are cleavaged by comparison to parties in the classic era. We find that education structures contemporary GAL and TAN parties much as occupation structured social democratic

parties in the 1950s, though the electoral footprint of the former parties is considerably smaller.

The Information Revolution

Over the past half-century, Western societies have seen a great transformation—an information revolution—that has recast the division of labor around the production, dissemination, and application of knowledge. As with prior transformations, the effects of the information revolution for party systems unfolded in stages. The first was the development of a knowledge economy and the emergence of GAL parties from the 1980s (Kitschelt 1989; Spoon 2009; Van Haute ed. 2015). The second was the rise of an education cleavage and the growth of TAN parties from the 1990s (Bornschier 2010).

A cleavage involves a distinctive pattern of conflict. At stake are issues that are baked into a person's life. The information revolution, no less than nation building and the industrial revolution, has reshaped society, creating and destroying ways of life and means of subsistence. Each of these transformations restructured life chances in ways that were difficult or impossible for a person to escape and which consequently produced a political divide with considerable staying power.

The information revolution transformed the logic of capitalist development in one vital respect: it placed an impure public good—knowledge—at the heart of productivity.[4] Knowledge is a public good in that its consumption by one person does not detract from its consumption by another. However, if left to the market, knowledge will be under-provided because its returns can only be partially appropriated by profit-making firms. Hence, governments have been induced to invest in education and research while responding to the aspirations of individuals seeking upward mobility in an expanding

economy. In the countries sampled in this paper, the proportion of the population aged 25-54 years completing post-secondary education rose from 19.2% in 1975, to 44.5% in 2023 (Eurostat 2024: Table 1; Garritzman, this issue).

The causal link between the information revolution and the transformation of party systems runs through education (Bell 1976; Stubager 2010). Individuals with post-secondary or tertiary education form the core support for GAL parties. Those with secondary education form the core support for TAN parties. The location of a person in one group or the other is fixed quite early in adulthood, usually in their teens. Whether a person has a tertiary degree or not shapes their occupational trajectory and, more broadly, their life chances, yet once that fork in a person's life has been taken it is hard to revisit. In short, education is highly consequential but weakly volitional.

The university is to the information revolution what the factory is to the industrial revolution. The factory concentrated masses of propertyless people in close proximity, alienated workers from the product of their labor, and nakedly exposed their exploitation. The university concentrates masses of practicing and aspiring knowledge workers in close proximity, detaches them from the culture of industrial society, and provides, in the words of Lipset and Dobson (1972: 146), potential 'staging areas' for protest.

Underlying the first transformation was a rapid increase in access to post-secondary education for successive post-war cohorts, the rise of a class of socio-cultural professionals, and the mobilization of women into these new occupations. These groups had distinctive grievances that led them away from conventional center-left parties (Dolezal 2010; Kitschelt 1989; Müller-Rommel 1989). They did not fit the mold of an industrial society oriented to the production of material goods for mass consumption. Many with post-secondary education in human-related fields of study tend to be

skeptical of materialism and concerned with its side-effects, including environmental degradation, global warming, and species extinction (Hooghe et al. 2024; Inglehart 1971).[5] Alongside their 'green' affinity, they also tend to have 'alternative' gender-role attitudes, and 'libertarian' attitudes on social issues, ethnicity, and cultural diversity (Kitschelt and Hellemans 1990; Kriesi 1998).

Attachment to GAL values is particularly marked among educated women (Schäfer and Steiner, this issue; Sass and Kuhnle 2023). The shift from an industrial society based on machine power and human brawn to one anchored in information processing and social interaction offers women the prospect of labor market entry in societies long characterized by patriarchal norms and glass ceilings. Because it reveals the possibility of female emancipation, the information revolution sharpens the tension between the possibility of social and economic equality and its reality (Inglehart and Norris 2000; Iversen and Rosenbluth 2006).

The second stage of the information revolution spurred TAN parties stressing traditionalism, authority, and most forcefully, nationalism (Damhuis 2020; Hooghe and Marks 2018; Kriesi et al. 2006). Beginning in the 1990s the second order effects of digitalization were a sharp decline in the cost of communication, the globalization of finance and production networks, and a corresponding transnational perforation of national societies by trade, immigration, and international governance (Hooghe and Marks 2018: 109; Hall 2022; Polk and Rosen 2024). Those who lack post-secondary education are in the crosshairs (Beramendi et al. 2015; Im et al. 2019; Kurer 2020). Technological change weakened the organizational defenses of industrial workers and intensified their vulnerability to automation and offshoring. Immigration heightened competition for jobs and housing. Less educated people, and semi-skilled male workers

in particular, lost status—'the social respect or esteem people believe is accorded them within the social order' (Gidron and Hall 2017: 61; Attewell 2021). Many feel threatened by the rise of a new socio-cultural class, the 'know-it-alls', who support GAL policies promoting gender equality and diversity (Zollinger 2024: 149).

If this line of explanation is on the right track it accounts for the GAL and TAN parties as a coherent phenomenon. The basic expectation is that those with post-secondary education, in particular socio-cultural professionals and women, are strongly over-represented in GAL parties, and conversely, those with secondary education only, in particular production workers and men, are strongly over-represented in TAN parties. So we expect education to be the master structural variable that constrains how particular occupations and how men and women align on the contemporary divide (cf. Abou-Chadi and Hix 2021; Gethin et al. (2019); Kitschelt and Rehm (2023);). We next set out how to assess this expectation systematically.

Measuring party structure

Our purpose in this section is to measure the extent to which a party is cleavaged. Like any measure, the Party Cleavage Index is based on choices about what matters and what does not. The Index operationalizes Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) notion that a cleavage can be observed in the core characteristics of the voters mobilized by a political party. The units of analysis are the voter, the party, and a group having a particular social characteristic. The focus of the measure is on the individual party, not on the party system as a whole.[6] For the purpose of the analysis this is vital because it alerts one to the possibility that one or more parties can become more cleavaged while other parties in the same party system may become less cleavaged. By making this logic explicit, the

Index reveals the deep connections between party composition, voter behavior, and electoral outcomes.

We define the Party Cleavage Index (PCI) as the difference between the proportion of a group with a particular social characteristic in the party and the proportion of the group in the wider society (Marks et al. 2023). The social characteristic of a party's core constituency will vary. For Christian democratic parties it is Catholicism, or for interdenominational Christian democratic parties it is religious observance; for social democratic parties it is class location; and for GAL and TAN parties it is education. We label the party's core constituency as *C*, and the proportion of the core constituency in the society, as *S*. Hence:

$$\text{Party Cleavage Index} = C - S$$

The Party Cleavage Index (PCI) varies from +100% to –100%. So, for example, if industrial workers form 80% of those voting for a party (*C*) and make up 50% of all voters (*S*), this party would then have an Index for industrial workers of $80\% - 50\% = 30\%$.

- **PCI is the Party Cleavage Index**: The proportion of a group with a particular social characteristic in the party minus the proportion of the group in the society.
- ***C* is the composition of a party**: The probability that a person who votes for a party is a member of a group with a particular social characteristic.
- ***S* is group size**: The probability that a voter in a society has a particular social characteristic.

We now introduce two additional variables:

- ***V* is the party's vote**: The probability that an eligible voter votes for the party.
- ***A* is group alignment**: The probability that a voter with a particular social characteristic votes for the party.

We need now to see how these variables are related to each other. Let's consider the determinants of *C*, the extent to which a particular social group dominates the composition of the party. Here we use the example of workers in a socialist party to illustrate the logic.

C, in this case the share of workers in the party, depends on the size of the group of workers in the society (*S*) because the larger this group in the society the greater the pool of potential voters with this characteristic. What will then matter for *C* is the probability that a worker votes for the party (*A*). Because we wish to calculate the workers as a proportion of all voters for the party, we need to divide the product of *S* and *A* by *V*, the vote for the party. Hence, the composition of the party, *C*, (i.e. the proportion of the total vote of the party coming from its core constituency; workers in this case) is equal to the product of group size (*S*) and group alignment (*A*) divided by the vote of the party (*V*).

$$C = \frac{S\,.\,A}{V}$$

To give a numerical example, consider a socialist party that receives 30% of the total vote (*V*=.3) and 40% of the working-class vote (*A*=.*4*) in a society where workers make up 60% of the voting population (*S* = .*6*). Substituting these values in the equation above:

$$C = \frac{.6\ \times\ .4}{.3}\ =\ .8$$

The working-class composition of the party is .8, or in percentage terms, 80% of the voters for the party are workers. The Party Cleavage Index is the difference between this figure and the overall proportion of workers in the country, which is .6. So the Party Cleavage Index is $.8 - .6 = .2$, or in percentage terms 20%.

To recap: $C = \frac{S\,.\,A}{V}$

Substituting this into the first equation above, we get:

$$\text{Party Cleavage Index (PCI)} = \frac{S\,.\,A}{V} - S$$

This equation lies at the basis of the study of political parties because it captures the logical connection between social groups, group alignment, and the social structure of party support. The box below contains a formal presentation of the measure.

Consider a social characteristic *S*, and let *j* denote a group defined by this characteristic. Further, consider the political parties that structure political alternatives in an election: a specific party is indicated by *i* (for example, social democrats). We now define the social basis of party *i* with respect to a group with the characteristic *j* as:

$$P_{ij}^{S} = (\pi_{j|i}^{S} - \pi_{j}^{S})$$

Where:

π_j^S is the marginal probability that any voter belongs to group *j* with characteristic *S*.

$\pi_{j|i}^S$ is the conditional probability that a voter for party *i* is a member of group *j* with characteristic *S*.

P_{ij}^S represents the difference between the proportion of group *j* within party *i* and the overall proportion of that group among all voters.

The theoretical range of P_{ij}^S is between $-100 \cdot \pi_j^S$ and $100 \cdot (1 - \pi_j^S)$. The lower bound is reached when none of the party's electorate possesses the characteristic in question. The upper bound is reached when the entire electorate of the party consists of voters with the characteristic. P_{ij}^S allows comparison of the extent of overrepresentation of voters with any characteristic in any political party at any time point.

The measure can be reparametrized to provide insight into the determinants of P_{ij}^S when we consider the share of a group *S* with a particular social characteristic *j* in party *i* ($\pi_{j|i}^S$).

$$\pi_{j|i}^{S} = \frac{\pi_j^S . \pi_{i|j}^S}{\pi_{j|i}}$$

Where:

$\pi_{i|j}^S$ is the marginal probability that a voter with characteristic *S* votes for party *i* .

$\pi_{j|i}$ is the marginal probability that any voter votes for party *i* .

Substituting $\pi_{j|i}^S = \frac{\pi_j^S . \pi_{i|j}^S}{\pi_{j|i}}$ into $P_{ij}^S = (\pi_{j|i}^S - \pi_j^S)$

$$P_{ij}^{S} = (\frac{\pi_j^S . \pi_{i|j}^S}{\pi_{j|i}} - \pi_j^S)$$

Note: This replicates and extends Marks, Attewell, Hooghe, Rovny, and Steenbergen (2023).

The Index is strictly logical, yet has empirical implications that are worth noting. We outline three.

- ***The alignment effect***

An increase in group alignment (*A*) produces an increase in the Party Cleavage Index. However, a party may be highly cleavaged even if it fails to gain the support of most of its target group. Scenario 1 illustrates such a party where the cell percentages sum to 100%. The socialist party depicted here receives 10% of the vote (8% plus 2%), of which 8% comes from workers. So it is predominantly proletarian. Yet group alignment (*A*) is low since most workers vote for other parties. Workers make up 50% of the population, and fewer than one in six vote for the socialist party: 8% vote for the socialist party and 42% vote for other parties, so *A* = 16%. The party's Cleavage Index is high at 30%: 80% of its voters are workers in a society where 50% are workers.

Scenario 1

	Socialist party	Other parties
Worker	8%	42%
Non-worker	2%	48%

Note: Cell percentages.

Such parties have been decisive for the existence of cleavages in both the past and present. Prior to World War II, socialist parties were highly cleavaged even though most workers did not vote for them. The same applies to many other highly cleavaged parties in multi-party systems.[7]

Scenario 2 features a larger, but less cleavaged, party. This socialist party gains a larger vote than the party in Scenario 1, and it encompasses a larger proportion of workers. But it is not socially structured. Most of its vote (25% compared to 20%) comes from non-workers, and so it is less socially structured than the party in Scenario 1, and is correspondingly less cleavaged. Just 44.4% of the party is working-class in a society where workers are 35% of the population, so the Party Cleavage Index for this party is 9.4%.

Scenario 2

	Socialist party	Other parties
Worker	20%	15%
Non-worker	25%	40%

Note: Cell percentages.

These examples illustrate that the composition of a party depends on the proportion of a group voting for the party in relation to all those who vote for the party. If one does not take the size of the party's vote into consideration, larger parties will, ceteris paribus, be regarded as more cleavaged. This is the Achilles heel of the most used measure, the Alford Index, which calculates the difference between the percentage of workers who vote for a Left party and the percentage of non-workers voting for a Left party – without taking the size of the party into account. The Alford index is larger in Scenario 2 (0.18) than in Scenario 1 (0.12) even though the socialist party in Scenario 1 is 80% working class and that in Scenario 2 is mostly non-worker.

These scenarios make the point that a party can be socially structured even if the bulk of its target constituency votes for other parties. Socialist parties, for example, were

composed predominantly of industrial workers and firmly based on the worker–employer cleavage even when most industrial workers actually voted for nonsocialist parties. Similarly, as we will see below, a GAL party does not have to encompass the bulk of highly educated voters to be cleavaged; nor does a TAN party need to encompass most less educated voters to be cleavaged. What matters is the core characteristic of the groups of voters mobilized by a political party.

- ***The catch-all effect***

An increase in party vote (*V*) produces a decline in the Party Cleavage Index. This is the catch-all thesis that the larger a party's vote the more diverse its constituency is likely to be. The catch-all effect can be offset only by an increase in group alignment (*A*) or an increase in the size of the group (*S*). The decline of the classic class cleavage was driven by a decline in both *A* and *S*. In Kirchheimer's words (1966: 184), the collapse of cleavage parties was a result of 'people's party attempts to transgress the (already declining) socio-economic and cultural cleavages among the electorate in order to attract a broader "audience"' (see also Krouwel 2003).

Is a decline in social structuration the predictable outcome of a party's electoral success? The answer is yes unless the party is able to increase its vote share among its core constituency assuming that the constituency does not grow much. This is the paradox of party success. In order to break through, a party can benefit from a clearly articulated brand that appeals to a clearly articulated social group. As the party grows, it faces a trade-off between broadening its appeal and sustaining the alignment of its core constituency. This is where the closed organizations of the class cleavage model were effective in assuring the party of a captive constituency as it appealed beyond.

- ***The group size effect***

An increase in the size of the group (*S*) may increase or reduce party structure (*P*). In the baseline equation, the size of the group (*S*) appears twice: in the numerator where it is multiplied by $\frac{A}{V}$ and as the constant against which the composition of the party is assessed. What then is the effect of *S* for party structure? This depends on whether $\frac{A}{V}$ is more or less than 1. Only when the probability that a person with a particular social characteristic votes for the party is greater than the probability that any voter votes for the party, will an increase in group size *(S*) produce an increase in party structuration (*P*). If the party's share of the vote (*V*) increases, the party would have to increase its share of the vote of the group to sustain its former level of structuration. So what matters for party structuration is whether group alignment keeps pace with an increase in the size of a social group and an increase in the vote of the party.

The social underpinnings of group alignment

Group alignment (*A*) connects cleavage theory to the study of how individuals coalesce into political coalitions to pursue collective goals. Cleavage theory is Janus-faced: an explanation of conflict structure involves an explanation of political solidarity. Who one fights against presupposes who one fights alongside. E.E. Schattschneider (1960: 62) makes this the cornerstone of his cleavage theory: 'The evolution of a major conflict (important enough to call for a mobilization of opposing forces) involves an effort to consolidate people on both sides. . . . *unification and division are part of the same process'*. [8]

The term *cleavage* expresses this directly. In Old English the verb *cleave* refers at one and the same time to a) the act of joining, sticking fast, binding together and b) separating, dividing, forcing apart.[9] This has a simple and compelling logic. Sticking together and splitting apart are complementary processes in a material that breaks along its structural plane. The reason for this is that bonds among the atoms may not be equally strong. In geology, a cleavage exists where bonds are stronger *within* a subsection than *across* the subsections so that binding and dividing are two aspects of the same phenomenon.

When applied to politics, cleavage theory conceives the bonds not as facts of nature, but as collective alignments that are socially reproduced and politically mobilized. When will a division shape the structure of the political alternatives in a party system? What may lead a division to persist? What mechanisms can sustain a political division over the lifetime of a person or reproduce it across generations?

Classical cleavage theory answers these questions in the shadow of strong, relatively closed, organizations that could underpin collective solidarity for large numbers of people over extended periods of time.[10] Spatial theory, by contrast, considers social relationships as exogenous to the self-regarding preferences of socially "atomized" voters (Downs 1957; Rogoff and Sibert 1986). In spatial theory, coalitions are evanescent, and your ally today may be your opponent tomorrow.

Between these alternatives lies a domain of inquiry into the political effects of a person's location in multiple, overlapping, educational, socio-cultural, and occupational contexts (Dassonneville 2023: ch.7). This opens the door to the possibility that those in similar locations have similar political affinities. Is entry into and exit from those locations socially closed (Kriesi and Duyvendak 1995; Mierke-Zatwarnicki et al.

this issue; Weber 1958)? Do these locations reinforce or counteract each other (Blau 1964: xi ff; Dassonneville 2023)? How are social locations related to the development of political identities (Bornschier et al. 2024: Ch 4); the mobilization in social movements (Art 2011; Borbáth and Hutter 2021; Tarrow 2021); and interaction within networks (De Jong and Kamphorst 2024; Zollinger and Attewell 2023; Munger 2024)?

Group alignment lies at the core of cleavage theory: no group alignment, no cleavage. However, a cleavage cannot be reduced to group alignment alone. A party can become more cleavaged if the group with which it is aligned grows in size. GAL parties have become more cleavaged chiefly because the proportion of college educated has grown. What matters is group alignment in relation to the size of the social group and the overall vote of the party. Social democratic parties have become less cleavaged not just because workers are less liable to vote for them, but because the size of the proletariat has declined sharply.

In the remainder of the paper we wish to lay out the facts with the help of the Index we have devised. Are cleavaged parties possible in an era in which closed organizations have weakened or died? How cleavaged were parties in the golden years of the 1950s? We have an instrument designed to measure a party's social structuration; now let's use it to compare parties across time and place.

Data and Operationalization

We pool data from Eurobarometer (EB) (1975–2000) and the European Social Survey (ESS) (2002–2020) covering 690 political parties in up to 28 European countries. Individual political parties are allocated in party families (GAL,[11] TAN,[12] Left,[13] Right[14]) on

the basis of their ideology, European party memberships, and self-description (for details see Online Appendix B).

Occupation is operationalized as manual workers in industry (EB) or as production workers (ESS) using Oesch's (2006) ISCO eight-category schema. A person is categorized as higher educated if they were in full-time education through their twentieth birthday (EB) or as having completed postsecondary or tertiary education (ESS) or were still studying at the time of the survey (EB and ESS). Gender is a dichotomous variable on the basis of self-description.

Three historical datasets provide benchmarks: the Norwegian Election Survey of 1957; the German Election Study of 1957; and the Political Change in Britain study covering the 1964, 1966 and 1970 elections. The occupational categorizations in these surveys and the EB and ESS surveys are reasonably consistent. The American National Election Survey (ANES) data provides longitudinal data (1952 to 2020) on voting, race, and education.

Online appendices detail data sources (Appendix A), explain how we code GAL, TAN, Left and Right parties (Appendix B), operationalize independent and dependent variables (Appendix C), and illustrate how we calculate the *PCI* and its components (Appendix D).

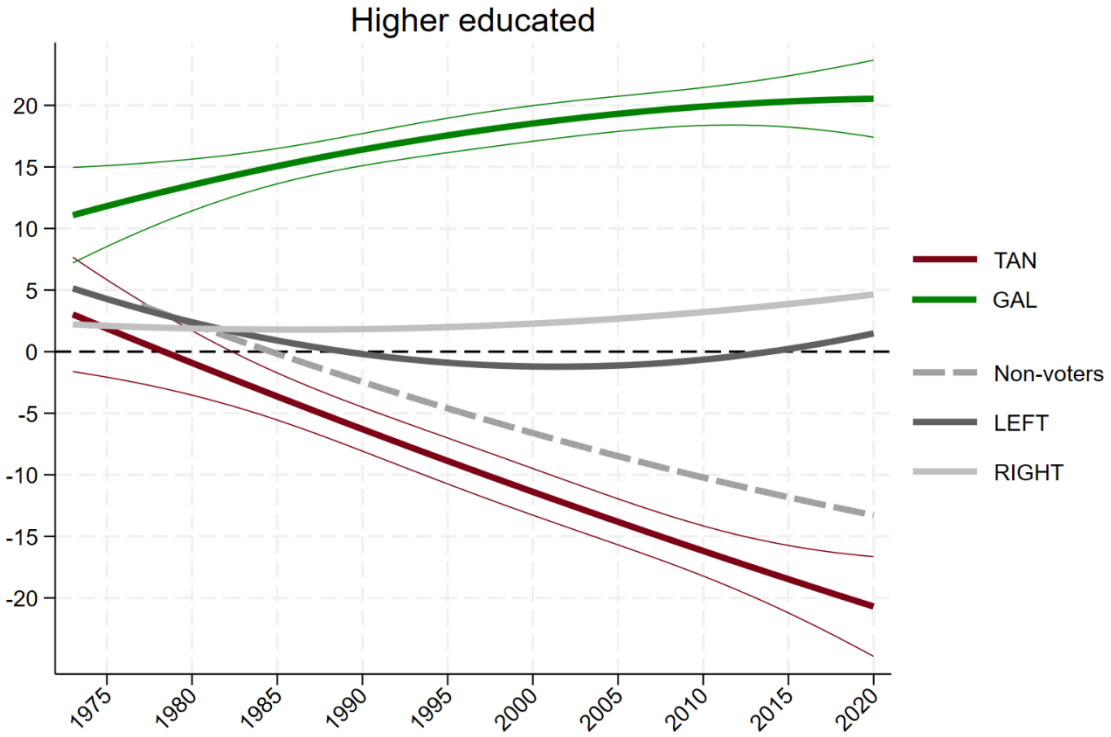
Social Structuration on the Education Cleavage

This section documents the emergence and resilience of party structuration in Europe from 1975 to 2020 combining Eurobarometer and European Social Survey data for Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Britain. GAL and TAN parties in these countries have become more structured on education,

occupation, and gender while mainstream Left and Right parties have become less structured.

Figure 1 shows that the party cleavage gap on education has widened sharply between GAL and TAN parties, from 10.1% in 1975 to 41.0% in 2020. In 1975, GAL parties had a Party Cleavage Index of 12.1% for higher educated voters, and TAN parties had an Index of 2.0%. In 2020, the values are 20.5% and –20.5%, respectively. By contrast, the composition of Left and Right parties is now roughly in line with the voting population as a whole.

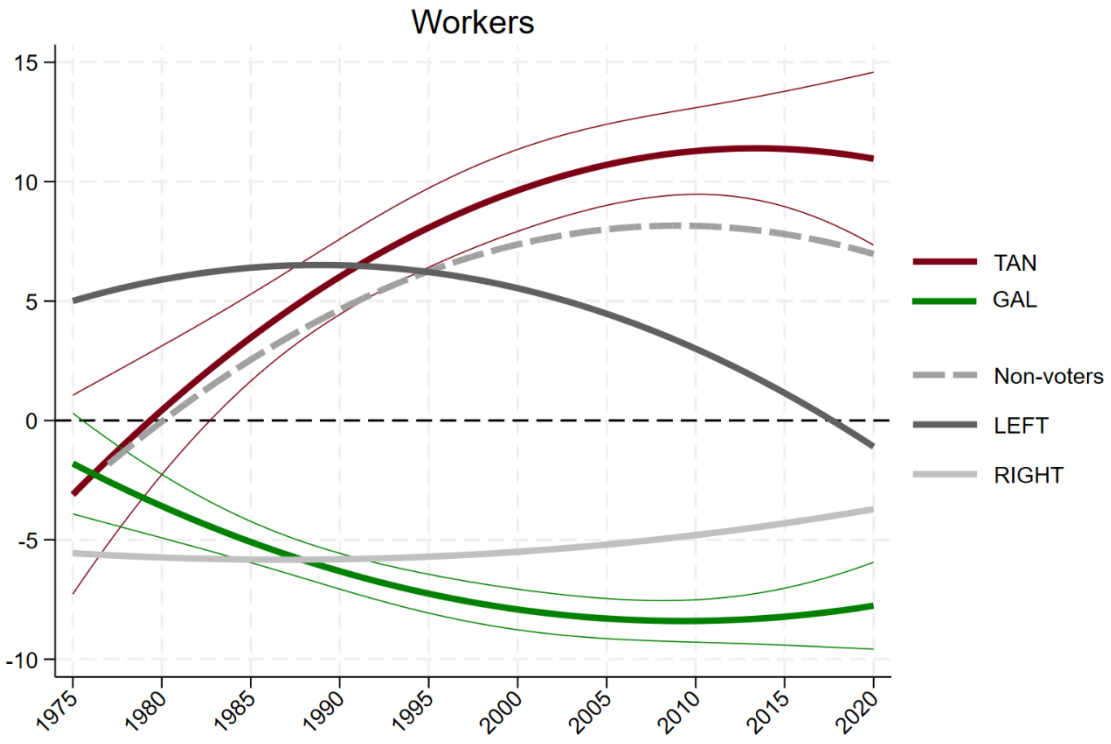
Figure 1. Party Cleavage Index for Education in Western Europe, 1975-2020



Note: The thick green slope traces the over-representation of post-secondary educated in GAL parties relative to their share in the population, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). The thick brown slope traces their under-representation in TAN parties, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). Source: Eurobarometer and European Social Survey for eight European countries from 1975 to 2020. N=2383 party-year observations aggregating information from 523,065 eligible voters who are at least 20 years old.

By the mid-1970s the class cleavage was waning. The party cleavage gap for blue-collar workers in Left and Right parties shrank from 10.9% in 1975 to just 2.9% in 2020. The erosion was steepest among Left parties, where the Index fell from 5.1% in 1975 into negative territory (–1.1%) in 2020. As we will see in the next section, in the 1950s, cleavaged social-democratic parties had values in the 20% to 30% range, so the attrition of the class cleavage was well underway by the time the series in **Figure 2** begins. By the early 1990s, TAN parties had a greater over-representation of workers than Left parties, and GAL parties had a greater under-representation of workers than Right parties. Note also that workers became increasingly over-represented among non-voters.

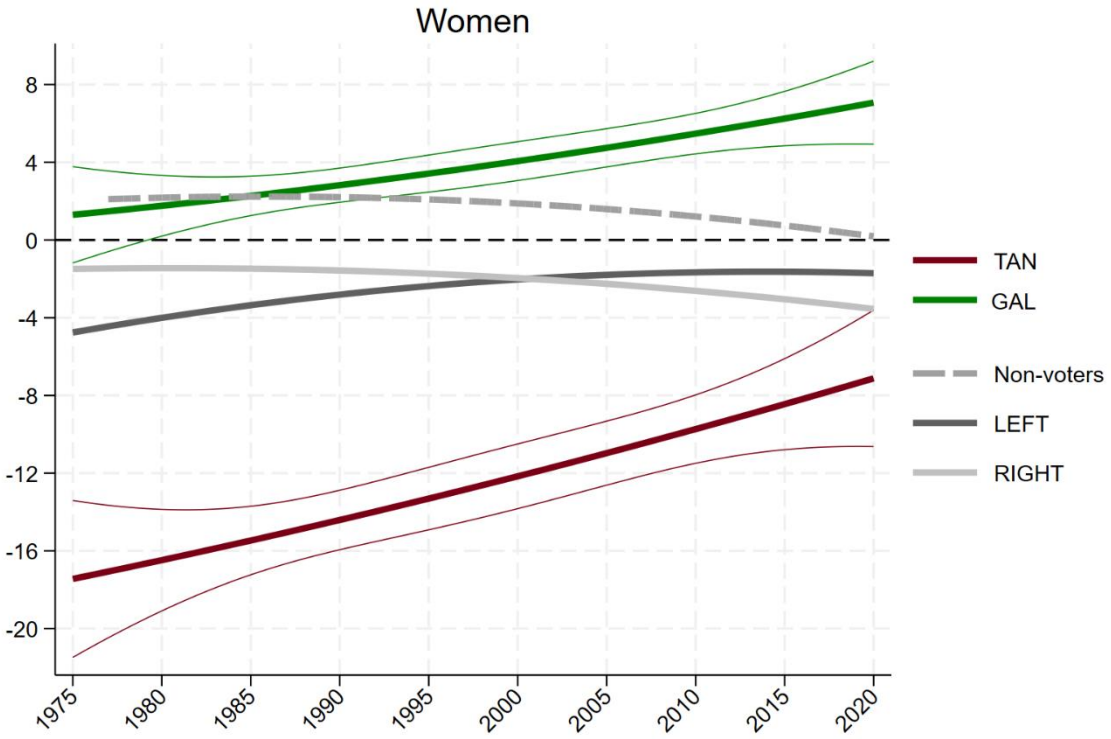
Figure 2. Party Cleavage Index for Occupation in Western Europe, 1975-2020



Note: The thick green slope traces the under-representation in GAL parties of manual/production workers relative to their share in the population, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). The thick brown slope traces their over-representation in TAN parties, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). Source: Eurobarometer and European Social Survey for eight Western European countries from 1975 to 2020.

Women are a third social group affected by the information revolution. **Figure 3** reveals that the over-representation of women in GAL parties has grown, while their under-representation in TAN parties has diminished. The gender gap has decreased slightly from 18.8% in 1975 to 14.2% in 2020.

Figure 3. Party Cleavage Index for Gender in Western Europe, 1975-2020



Note: The thick green slope traces the over-representation of women in GAL parties relative to their share of the population, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). The thick brown slope traces their underrepresentation in TAN parties, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). Source: Eurobarometer and European Social Survey for eight Western European countries from 1975 to 2020.

Overall, education is pre-eminent in structuring the constituencies of GAL and TAN parties with an Index gap of 41% compared to 18.5% for occupation and 14% for

gender, and in subsequent discussion we focus on education as the primary expression of the contemporary socio-cultural cleavage.

In the same way that the class cleavage was most sharply represented by miners and railway workers on the one side and large factory owners on the other, so the contemporary cleavage is most sharply represented by young, educated women on the one side and less-educated, male production workers on the other. Beyond this, religion plays an important role (Guth and Nelsen 2021; Rovny and Polk 2019), as does urban-rural location (Huijsmans and Rodden 2024; Maxwell 2019), and ethnicity (Ford and Jennings 2020; Rovny 2024).

Classic Benchmarks

How can one make sense of the social structure of contemporary GAL and TAN parties? To come to grips with this question, we broaden our frame of reference to compare GAL and TAN parties with the classic cleavaged parties of the past. As benchmark we turn to the most widely present cleavage in modern European history: the class cleavage.

One reason why this has not been done is that fine-grained electoral data is biased to recent decades.[15] However, political surveys in Europe predate the destructuration of the class cleavage. Stein Rokkan and Henry Valen conducted the first electoral survey of Norway in 1957. In the same year, the *Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach* fielded a comprehensive electoral survey in Germany. The first such survey in Britain was conducted by David Butler and Donald Stokes in 1964. These provide invaluable information that allow us to calculate the Party Cleavage Index and its components for three classically cleavaged parties: the German Social Democratic party, *die*

Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands; the Norwegian Labor party, *Det norske Arbeiderparti*; and the British Labour party.

The German Social Democratic party

Despite abandoning revolutionary Marxism, softening anti-clericalism, and de-emphasizing its heritage as a movement party with an interlocking union wing, the postwar German Social Democratic party was a strongly cleavaged party receiving the bulk of its support from the industrial working class (Ebbinghaus 1995: 84). In 1957, three in four voters for the party were blue-collar workers, an over-representation of 28.1% compared to the proportion of blue-collar workers in the society as a whole (**Table 1**). Of those who voted for the party in the 1953 election, 69% mention its class character when asked why they voted for the party (Linz 1959: 60; Janowitz and Segal 1967).

Table 1. Party Cleavage Index for workers in the German SPD in 1957 and 2020

	1957[a]	2020[b]
Party Cleavage Index	**27.4%**	**1.9%**
% workers in society (*S*)	47.4	14.7
% workers in SPD (*C*)	74.8	16.6
% workers voting for SPD (*A*)	34.3	29.0
% SPD vote (*V*)	21.7	25.6

Note: [a] Bundestag election of 15 Sept 1957; the official SPD vote was 31.8%. Source: Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach (2015), N=1,953 (including non-voters). [b] Bundestag election of 24 September 2017; the official SPD vote was 20.5%. Source: ESS round 10 (2020), N=6,687 (including non-voters).

Things look different from the standpoint of the voter. A party that receives a quarter or less of the overall vote is unlikely to command majority support from a large sector of society, and in 1957 47.4% of eligible voters were blue collar workers. So, on an overall vote of 21.7% in our sample, the Social Democrats received just 34.3% of the working-class vote. Juan Linz notes this in his dissertation (1959: 60) but rightly stresses

that ‘In terms of its social base, the SPD is, nevertheless, one of the great democratic working-class parties of the West (together with the Scandinavian, British and Belgian socialist parties)’. Workers were cross-pressured by the religious cleavage. As Neumann (1951: 101) predicted, ‘It is exceedingly unlikely that, no matter what the political situation in Germany is, the Social Democratic Party can substantially increase its vote and its control, primarily in view of the religious stratification in Germany and the tight control exercised by the Catholic political party over Catholic labor’.

The right column in **Table 1** exposes the demise of the SPD as a cleavaged party over the following 63 years. By 2020 the party no longer overrepresents workers much at all (Index=1.9%). The SPD vote in 2020 is roughly equivalent to that in 1957, but everything else has changed. The proportion of workers in the society has dropped by two-thirds; workers now make up just 16.6% of the party; and just 29% of this declining group votes for the party, a proportion not much greater than that of the electorate as a whole.

The Norwegian Labor party

In the 1950s the Norwegian Labor party was the epitome of a tightly knit working-class party in a multi-party system with crosscutting territorial and moral/religious cleavages (Converse and Valen 1971). From 1927 until 1961, when the radical-left Socialist People’s party split off, the Labor party effectively monopolized the political representation of a labor movement built around a centralized union federation encompassing about half of the entire workforce, alongside cooperatives, local associations, a youth organization, and thirty-nine local and national newspapers (Martin 1974: 87; Bartolini 2000; Ebbinghaus and Visser 1999). The union federation, the LO, had formed the party in 1887, and it continued to be integral, so much so that every party member was obligated to join

an LO-affiliated union or form one in their workplace if no local union existed (Martin 1972: 153). In short, the Labor party was a classic cleavaged party in the Lipset/Rokkan mold.

At the same time, the party also appealed to diverse constituencies, including small farmers, fishermen, and government employees. From 1935 to 1971, it gained between 40% and 50% of the vote, and from 1935 to 1981, nine of thirteen governments were Labor majority cabinets. Few catch-all parties have had wider or more effective nets. As **Table 2** shows, the constituency of the party was moderately biased to the working class: blue collar workers formed 44.9% of the population, and 63.4% of the party, a difference of 18.5%.

Table 2. Party Cleavage Index for workers in the Norwegian Labor Party (AP) in 1957 and 2020

	1957[a]	2020[b]
Party Cleavage Index	**18.5%**	**–2.3%**
% workers in society (*S*)	44.9	11.7
% workers in the Labor party (*C*)	63.4	9.4
% workers voting for the Labor party (*A*)	69.5	19.4
% vote for the Labor party (*V*)	49.2	24.2

Note: [a] Storting election of 7 October 1957; the official AP vote was 48.3%. Source: Rokkan and Valen (2010), N=1,308 (including non-voters). [b] Storting election of 11 September 2017; the official AP vote was 27.4%. Source: ESS round 10 (2020), N=1,201 (including non-voters).

The contrast between the classically cleavaged party of the past and the Labor party today is even greater than for the SPD because the Labor party's vote has dropped sharply along with its class affinity. The logical consequence of a declining vote, holding other variables constant, is a higher PCI because the relative size of a core group increases as a party's overall vote declines. But the effect of this for the Labor party is drowned out by a 74% decline in the blue-collar workforce, and a collapse in blue-collar alignment with

the party from 69.5% to 19.4%. The result is an *under*representation of production workers in the party, and a negative Cleavage Index.

The British Labour party

No less than the German Social Democrats or Norwegian Labor party, the British Labour party was regarded as a prime example of a heavily cleavaged party. A survey published in the *American Political Science Review* noted that post-war Britain is widely regarded as 'the prototypical example of class-based politics . . . Despite the alternation of parties in government, class remained by far the most significant determinant of voting choice in the British electorate, thereby underpinning the general stability of the party system' (Kelley et al. 1985: 720). In the oft-cited words of Pulzer (1967: 98), 'Class is the basis of British party politics; All else is embellishment and detail'.

Table 3. Party Cleavage Index for workers in the British Labour Party in 1964 and 2020

	1964[a]	**2020[b]**
Party Cleavage Index	**21.5%**	**–1.0%**
% workers in society (*S*)	53.2	10.6
% workers in Labour Party (*C*)	74.7	9.6
% workers voting Labour (*A*)	65.1	24.3
% vote for Labour (*V*)	46.4	26.8

Note: [a] Parliamentary election of 15 October 1964; the official Labour vote was 48.0%. Source: Butler and Stokes (1979), N=1,813 (including non-voters). [b] Parliamentary election of 12 December 2019; the official Labour vote was 32.1%. Source: ESS round 10 (2020). N=1,055 (including non-voters).

The proportion of workers voting for the Labour party in 1964, at 65.1%, and the party's overall vote, at 46.4%, approach the Norwegian Labor party's worker dominance (**Table 3**). Britain's plurality system is instrumental for the size of Labour's vote, and the high group alignment of workers to the party was helped by the fact that workers in Britain

were not lured away from their class roots by a cross-cutting cleavage. Hence, the Labour party was a relatively pure example of a class party. 'In no other democracy', as Zuckerman (1982: 139) noted, 'are the bonds between social-structural and political phenomena and between class and vote for each person said to be as powerful as in Britain'. Workers composed almost three-quarters of the party which, compared to the proportion of workers in Britain as a whole, produces an Index of 21.5%.

The situation in 2020 is a familiar story of a five-fold decline in the proportion of workers in the society from 53.2% to 10.6%, an even sharper decline in the proportion of workers in the party from 74.7% to 9.6%, and a corresponding drop in the proportion of workers voting for the party, from 65.1% to 24.3%. All of this produces an Index of –1.0%.

How do contemporary GAL and TAN parties compare with these classic cleavage parties and what can we learn from this?

GAL and TAN parties in time

This section estimates the Party Cleavage Index for GAL and TAN parties in the 1990s when these parties were getting on their feet and in the late 2010s, the latest time for which we have survey data. The rise of GAL parties preceded TAN parties, so we begin with GAL parties in the early 1990s, and TAN parties five years later. Our sample consists of the six countries for which we have commensurate EB and ESS data: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Our purpose is to analyze general rather than country-specific patterns of change. Aggregating across countries and survey waves has the added benefit of increasing reliability for small parties that have few surveyed supporters.

GAL parties

Today post-secondary educated voters comprise 69% of voters for GAL parties (**Table 4**). Voters with less than post-secondary education comprise 71.8% of TAN parties (**Table 5**). The Index for GAL parties for 2016-2020 is 22.2% and for TAN parties it is 18.7%, figures which are comparable to those for working class parties in Britain (21.5%) and Norway (18.5%) following World War II.

Table 4. Party Cleavage Index for higher educated in GAL parties in six countries

	1990-1994	2016-2020
Party Cleavage Index	**14.4%**	**22.2%**
% higher educated in society (*S*)	29.8	46.8
% higher educated in GAL party (*C*)	44.2	69.0
% higher educated voting GAL (*A*)	19.8	22.3
% GAL vote (*V*)	14.4	15.2

Note: Country averages for the PCI and its components are estimated across five Eurobarometer waves (1990-94) or across the three most recent ESS waves (2016-20). Calculations are derived from survey estimates and include non-voters. See Appendix D for a breakdown by country.

The British and Norwegian labor parties gained over 45% of the national vote, whereas GAL and TAN parties received an average of just 15.2% and 8.3% respectively in the late 2010s. The difference is important because a larger party can expect to have a more diverse constituency. This is the *catch-all effect* that flows from an expanding vote share. This effect can be offset in two ways: first, and most obviously, by aligning the core group more closely to the party; and second by a commensurate increase in the size of the group in the population.

GAL parties have become more structured as their vote has increased. The proportion of higher educated voting for these parties rose from 19.8% to 22.3% as the share of this group in the population expanded by more than half from 29.8% to 46.8%. The chief driver of the large increase in the share of highly educated in GAL parties (from

44.2% to 69.0%) is the massive growth in higher education. But as that growth has taken place, GAL parties have also brought the educated into closer alignment.

This is the key to whether GAL parties will continue to be cleavaged. Will they increase their share of the educated vote in line with their overall share of the vote?

There is certainly space for this. Compare the proportion of higher educated who vote GAL— 22.3%—to that of workers who voted for the British/Norwegian labor parties— 65% to 70%. In the first two postwar decades, the classic labor parties gained vast numbers of voters in catch-all fashion, but retained their class character because they further increased their appeal among industrial workers. The vitality of the labor movement reduced the trade-off between class and catch-all electoral appeals. This is testimony to the three-fold character of the classic cleavage model (Bartolini and Mair 1990): the social structure of electorally successful socialist parties was sustained by their organizational depth and their class appeal. GAL parties cannot fall back on equivalent encompassing intermediate organizations but sustain group alignment in less formal ways through social movements, shared experience in the division of labor, and participation in social and virtual networks.

TAN parties

TAN parties are similarly cleavaged, but the ingredients are different (**Table 5**). Whereas GAL parties are rooted in a social segment that has grown, TAN parties are rooted in a declining segment. The increase in the over-representation of voters with secondary education in TAN parties reflects the fact that the share of less educated voters in the party has declined less sharply (from 79.8% to 71.8%) than the share of such voters in

the population (from 69.0% to 53.2%). In other words, TAN parties have been able to bring the less educated segment in somewhat closer alignment (from 8.0% to 11.3%).

Table 5. Party Cleavage Index for lower educated in TAN parties in six countries

	1995-2000	2016-2020
Party Cleavage Index	**10.8%**	**18.7%**
% lower educated in society (*S*)	69.0	53.2
% lower educated in TAN party (*C*)	79.8	71.8
% lower educated voting TAN (*A*)	8.0	11.3
% TAN vote (*V*)	6.9	8.3

Note: Country averages for the PCI and its components are estimated across five Eurobarometer waves (1995-2000) or across the three most recent ESS waves (2016-20). Calculations are derived from survey estimates and include non-voters. See Appendix D for a breakdown by country.

If TAN parties increase their vote, they will remain cleavaged only if they expand their share of the less educated vote faster than the decline of the group in the population. This is the alignment strategy of a hedgehog party, a party that grows by burrowing ever more deeply into a declining group.[16] The alternative strategy is to diffuse the party's appeal beyond the declining group, catch-all fashion, and so weaken the over-representation of that group in the party.

This points to a fundamental contrast between TAN and GAL parties. It is one thing to have a core group that is growing or stable, but another to have a core group that is declining, and where the incentive to go catch-all is all the more apparent. To remain cleavaged, TAN parties must increase alignment of their (declining) core group, whereas GAL parties need to sustain alignment of their (increasing) core group.

American Exceptionalism and the Education Cleavage

The United States is an interesting case for a theory that detects the wellsprings of the education cleavage in the information revolution because the country is at the leading

edge in the expansion of the knowledge economy along with the expansion of higher education and the emergence of a new socio-cultural class. What then are the implications of cleavage theory, and in particular the education cleavage, in the United States?

Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 31) mention the United States only in passing, chiefly as a 'deviant' case that did not have a major socialist party. The failure of socialism in America arguably stands for the failure of cleavage theory to encompass a country characterized by plurality elections, separation of powers, federalism, and porous catch-all parties (Lipset and Marks 2000: ch. 2). However, the American political system refracts, rather than negates, cleavages. Cleavages exist *within* the major parties as well as between them in a system where establishing a third party is, under normal circumstances, suicidal. The result is that the pattern of Democratic and Republican support is like a marble cake in which the educational cleavage is layered on prior ethnic, racial, and North/South divides.

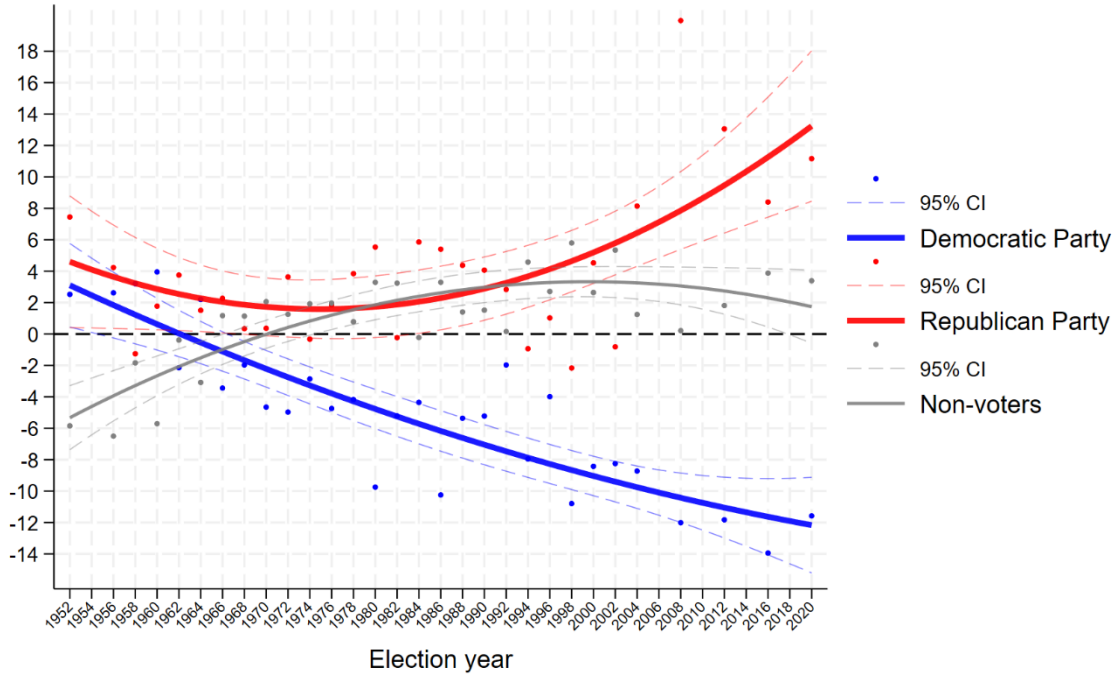
The first political effect of the information revolution was the eruption in the 1960s of student and feminist movements radicalized by civil rights, patriarchy, and the Vietnam war (Tarrow 2021). In the 1950s, the Democratic party was composed predominantly of less educated voters, but it was now moving in the opposite direction. By the 1960s the Democratic party became the party of educated voters, including the students who supported George McGovern in 1968 against the party's traditional blue-collar base. Figure 4 reveals that the process can be observed in ANES surveys in the 1960s and has continued until the present.

As in Europe, a GAL movement was followed by a TAN reaction to the second-order economic and cultural effects of the information revolution. Global production

networks, offshoring, and automation eviscerated the market returns to semi-skilled (predominantly male) labor, while many less-educated, predominantly White, voters recoiled against multiculturalism, feminism, and woke. The Republican party was transformed into a party of the less educated, Whites, and males around grievances related to trade, immigration, and the decline of traditional values (Hochschild 2016; Pierson and Schickler 2024). **Figure 4** reveals that the over-representation of less-educated Whites in the Republican party took off more than three decades ago, in the 1990s, and has continued since (Grossman and Hopkins 2024).

By 2020, as **Table 6** shows, less educated Whites were twice as large a share of Republican voters as they were of Democratic voters (54.5% compared to 27.3%). When we subtract these figures from the share of less educated Whites in the population as a whole (39.4%), this produces an gap of 27.3 between a positive Index of 15.2 for the Republican party and minus 12.1 for the Democratic party.[17] If the trajectories depicted in **Figure 4** persist, by the time of the next presidential election in 2028 the Democratic and Republican parties will be about as cleavaged as the social-democratic parties of Northwest Europe following World War II.

Figure 4. Party Cleavage Index for education and ethnicity in the United States, 1952-2020



Note: The thick red slope traces the rise in over-representation in the Republican party of lower educated Whites compared to their share of the population, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). The thick blue slope traces their growing under-representation in the Democratic party, with 95% confidence bands (thin lines). Lower educated are those with some college education or less; Whites are those who self-identify as white or non-Hispanic; Republican/Democratic/non-vote reflects their reported vote in the House elections. Source: ANES cumulative file from 1952 to 2020.

Table 6. Party Cleavage Index for lower educated Whites in 2020

	Democrats	Republicans
Party Cleavage Index	**–12.1**	**15.2**
% lower educated Whites in the society	39.4	39.4
% lower educated Whites in a party	27.3	54.5
% lower educated Whites voting for a party	23.0	40.7
% vote for a party	33.2	29.4

Note: Weighted 2020 ANES data corrected for quota bias. Eligible non-voters included in the calculations.

Conclusion

Are political parties cleavaged on education? Our findings are threefold.

- Contemporary GAL and TAN parties are moderately or strongly structured by comparison to social democratic parties in the 1950s. This is meaningful because we are observing social democratic parties at a time before Lipset and Rokkan (1967) wrote their classic paper and well before the onset of dealignment.
- The social structuration of GAL and TAN parties is far greater than that of contemporary center-left and center-right parties. As mainstream parties have lost their distinctive social bases, GAL and TAN parties have preserved, and even strengthened, theirs.
- Group alignment with GAL and TAN parties has increased over the three or four decades that we observe them, but it remains low compared to the classic cleavage parties of the past. Alignment is more pronounced among educational subgroups: younger, higher educated, women; those educated in socio-cultural fields rather than in technical fields; in the US, less-educated Whites. This suggests that it is useful to take a micro-group approach that is sensitive enough to evaluate the differential effect of the information revolution on educational subgroups.

These findings suggest that we need to think afresh about the sources of political division. How might a cleavage develop from social experiences in the absence of the formal organizations that underpinned cleavages in the past? Contemporary research engages several possibilities. Group solidarity may arise in the perception of social boundaries that congeal into 'winners' versus 'losers' (Kriesi et al. 2006); 'universalists' versus 'particularists' (Beramendi et al 2015; Westhauser and Zollinger 2024); 'open' versus 'closed' (Hetherington and Weiler 2018); or 'GAL' versus 'TAN' (Bakker et al. 2020; Crulli 2023). Research on identity, social networks, social media, and social movements

needs to engage the scope conditions under which these may function as a substitute for classic cleavage organizations.

Political parties today lack the organizational thickness and social closure of parties in the Lipset/Rokkan model, but they may still motivate and mobilize grievances. Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 6) observe that 'Conflicts and controversies can arise out of a great variety of relationships in the social structure, but only a few of these tend to polarize the politics of any given system'. GAL and TAN parties play a decisive role in this way by transforming potential conflict into actual, polarizing, conflict.

Endnotes

[1] GAL stands for green, alternative, libertarian. TAN stands for traditionalist, authoritarian, nationalist. GAL and TAN parties are listed in the Online Appendix.

[2] Even as they were writing, Lipset and Rokkan were aware that the ground was shifting. In the concluding section of their 1967 article (54ff) they observed that the 'old, established alternatives are increasingly irrelevant'.

[3] In terms of issues, one can speak of a socio-cultural or transnational cleavage (De Vries 2018; Jackson and Jolly 2021). From a party perspective, one can speak of the GAL/TAN cleavage (Börzel and Risse 2009; Schäfer and Steiner, this issue).

[4] Information that is not kept in secret or sheltered by patent is a public resource (Stiglitz 1999: 310).

[5] Lipset and Rokkan (1966: 54) observed that 'high mass consumption societies' had generated 'a great deal of frustration, alienation, and protestation among . . . the young, and quite particularly, the *students* . . .'

[6] Measures of party system structuration include a.o. Best (2011), Elff (2007), Goldberg (2020), and Lachat (2007).

[7] E.g. The Christian Social Union in Imperial Austria-Hungary and the MRP (Mouvement Républicain Populaire) in post-World War II France were expressly Catholic parties that failed to encompass most Church-going Catholics.

[8] Schattschneider's italics.

[9] From *gleubh-* (Proto-Indo-European) "to tear apart" and *gloi-* "to stick."

[10] This is more problematic than usually considered. Even in its heyday the working class was composed of separate groups of workers in particular occupations represented by distinct unions (Marks 1989; Bartolini 2000).

[11] Green parties, social-liberal parties, and new left parties are categorized as GAL (see Online Appendix B for operationalization).

[12] Radical nationalist parties are categorized as TAN.

[13] Socialist, social-democratic, and traditional radical left parties are categorized as Left.

[14] Conservative, Christian-democratic, and economic liberal parties are categorized as Right.

[15] Notable studies using aggregate information at the party level are Bartolini (2000), Benedetto et al. (2020), De Vries and Hobolt (2020), and Emanuele (2024).

[16] Protestant confessional parties are archetypal hedgehog parties (Marks et al. 2023). They have become more cleavaged as their vote has declined.

[17] These figures use ANES weights introduced for 2020 which produce slightly different numbers for 2020 than the continuous series in Figure 6.

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